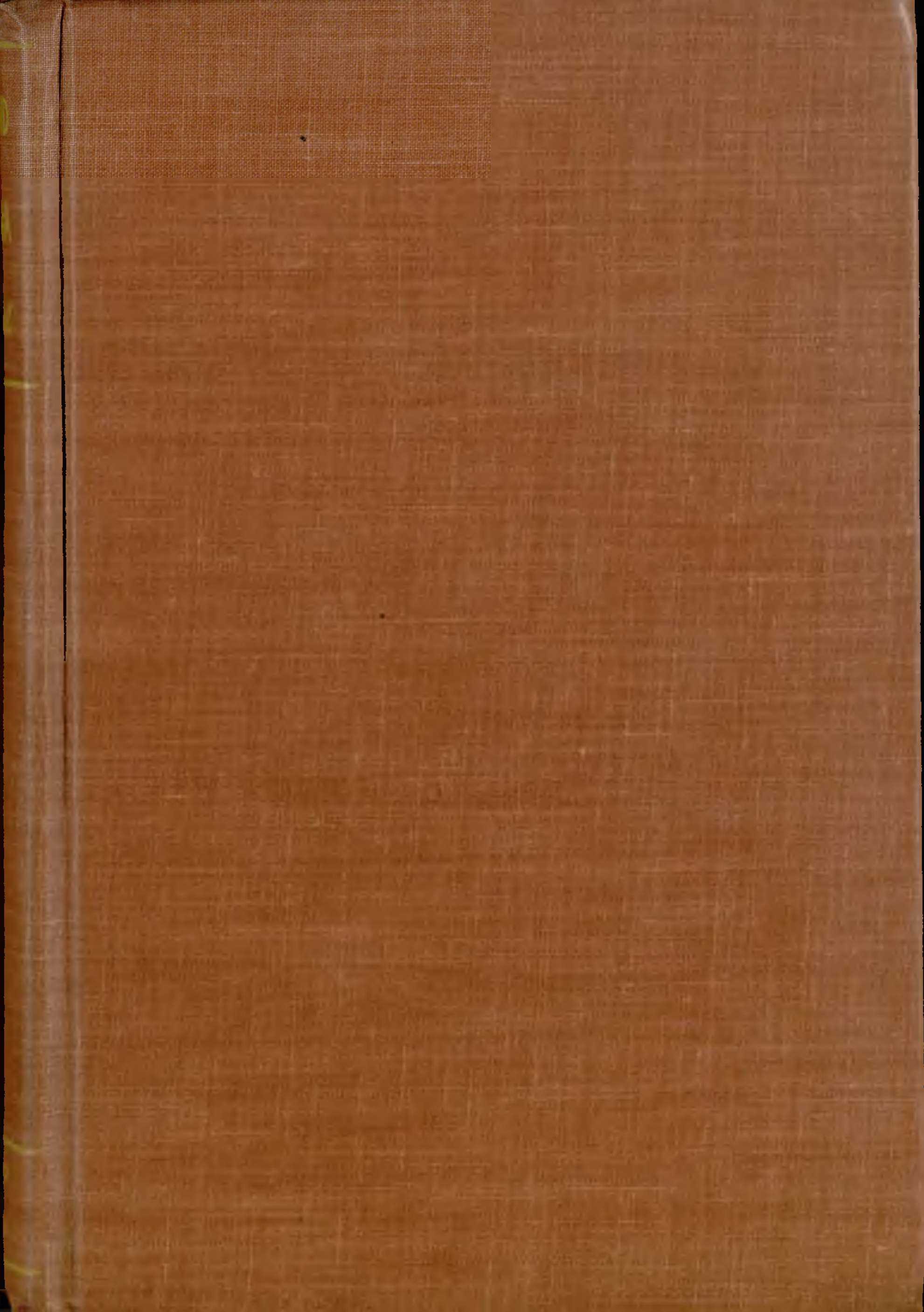

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POLAND AND RUSSIA

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POLAND AND RUSSIA:

THE LAST QUARTER CENTURY

BY

ANN SU CARDWELL

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Author's Foreword

The history of Polish-Soviet relations is here reviewed with but one purpose in mind—that this volume should be a presentation of the facts. In his introduction to a translation of Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*, Joseph Gavorse has this to say of the Greek historian: "His view was that facts carry their own judgment, and that after ascertaining them, the only art the historian needs is that of statement so precise and direct that the facts alone convey the full content of their inner significance."

The autumn of 1943 marked the 25th anniversary of the beginning of Polish-Soviet relations and with that quarter-century's end the world is approaching the close of another world war. New relationships are destined to arise. It is time to cast up the accounts of the past.

The presentation given does not go back beyond 1917. It is not a history of Polish foreign relations. It has no concern with any countries besides Poland and the Soviet Union except as they are drawn into the Polish-Soviet orbit. It is concerned with no questions, no matter what their importance, excepting those directly affecting Polish-Soviet relations. It is not an account of the relations of the Polish-Russian peoples, nor of conditions prevailing inside the Soviet Union, except as they affected the Poles. Since the presentation begins with 1917, it has nothing to do with Polish-Tsarist-Russian relations.

The people of the United States are tremendously interested in achieving a lasting peace. To make that peace they surely should know the areas which they must of necessity

consider. None of these areas is of greater significance than Eastern Europe, for embers left smouldering there are certain to start another conflagration. Yet regarding few parts of the globe is there greater confusion in American thinking than with regard to Eastern Europe.

However, interest both in the Soviet Union and Poland is everywhere manifest and because of that and because the time seems ripe, this brief record is offered American readers.

Out of innumerable conversations, letters, and a mass of documentary material—much of it not yet made public and hence not quoted verbatim—this record has been written. Most generous help has been given by scores of friends, Poles and Americans, experts on Central and Eastern Europe, and "average readers." To all these helpful friends, those who have answered my many questions and those who have patiently and constructively criticized the manuscript, my grateful thanks.

This point, however, should be made quite clear. All interpretation of facts, in so far as there is interpretation, is mine.

Readers of the book are entitled to know something of the author's background for such writing. Here it is in brief. My husband and I are Americans; neither of us has any Slavic blood. Neither of us is a Roman Catholic. Our home was in Warsaw from October 16, 1922 until September 17, 1939, the day the Red Armies invaded Poland. At midnight of that day my husband and I crossed the Polish-Rumanian frontier. During those seventeen years in Poland we had extraordinary opportunities for travel and for getting acquainted with people of all classes. We knew pre-war Poland from east to west and north to south. We went over it by train, automobile, peasant wagon, and on foot. Our friends were many and among all social classes.

Through my husband's business connections I had opportunity to become acquainted with many of the outstanding Polish leaders of all groups. Our interest in Polish life and

history grew as we got hold of the language and learned more of the country and people; and we had gradually acquired a modest Polish historical library, with especial regard to the sixteenth century.

Study of Polish history naturally involved study of the history of Poland's neighbors. Hence we did much reading about Russia and the people of that vast land. In 1936, after long preparation through the study of Russia, past and present, particularly of the ideology of the Bolsheviks, we spent most of July in the Soviet Union. We could find our way about without the help of guides and were not members of a party except on the Intourist-conducted visits to such places as museums.

Our first stop in the U.S.S.R. was at Leningrad, whence we proceeded by stages to Gorki on the Volga, took the boat trip to Stalingrad, stopping in Kazan, and Samara, now called Kuibyshev. Our next visits were at Rostov on the Don, Dniepropetrovsk, the great dam at Zaporozhe, and Kiev. For me the trip was one of immense educational and eye-opening importance.

We have also enjoyed extensive, and sometimes repeated, leisurely journeys in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, and Yugoslavia. Thus, because we could get about and talk with people without the aid of guides and interpreters, we gained a knowledge of Eastern Europa which I believe I may, with all modesty, say is equalled by that of few Americans. Similar travel, and in some cases residence, in most of the states of Central and Western Europe have rounded out our European education.

Back of this European experience, travel, and study lie ten years of residence in the heart of the Pacific, and still farther back, a Master of Arts degree in philological and historical research.

Contents

		PAGE
	Author's Foreword	vii
CHAPTER		
I.	*Origins*	1
II.	*The Polish-Soviet Frontier Is Fixed*	10
III.	*Neighbors*	20
IV.	*German Proposals*	31
V.	*The Soviet Union Takes Over*	52
VI.	*The New Situation*	72
VII.	*Disposition of the Deported*	93
VIII.	*The Polish Government Offers to Forget*	114
IX.	*Autumn 1941*	122
X.	*On the Road to the Break*	138
XI.	*The Disputed Provinces*	158
XII.	*Is the Comintern Dead?*	168
XIII.	*Further Developments*	182
	Bibliography	197
	Appendix I	201
	Appendix II	223
	Index	246

CHAPTER I

Origins

1. Emergence

Poland was not a newly created, but an ancient, state that had never ceased to live as a nation.

In the sixteenth century the Commonwealth of Poland was one of the largest and most influential states in Europe. Its decline began when its gentry, jealous lest the king become too powerful, refused to grant sufficient funds to maintain adequate defense, even though predatory neighbors on either side were building up superb standing armies. As a consequence, in 1772 Frederick the Great of Prussia and Maria Theresa of Austria found excuse to take the first slices of Poland. In 1793, each took another portion, and in 1795 they completed their reprehensible undertaking, thus causing Poland as a state to disappear from the map.

Modern Poland and the Soviet Union present a study in contrasts. One thing, however, they have in common. That is, the time and, indirectly, the cause of their appearance upon the international stage, for both emerged from the war of 1914-1918.

After a century and a half of stubborn struggle against the governments that had partitioned their lands and declared their state non-existent, the Poles, in late 1918, were in the process of uniting. Thus the new Poland was an instance of restoration. Regained national status and reunion of what had been forcibly separated were the cause of rejoicing among Poles that is not comprehensible to citizens of a state which has never suffered the loss of its independence.

The Soviet Union emerged in Russia as an outcome of the break-up of that ancient and strongly centralized Empire. Later it was developed into a federation of States yet more centralized.* Revolution, long talked about and often showing its head in Tsarist Russia, had at last taken over. But those who ultimately guided the course of that movement were not kinsmen of the Russian revolutionaries of earlier days. Fate, and the Germans, who sent Lenin in a sealed car into Russia, brought the Bolsheviks upon the scene at the opportune moment. Lenin and Trotsky, the one in Switzerland, the other in New York, dreaming their dream of world revolution, had little thought in those days of their exile that in 1917 they would succeed the Tsar of all the Russias.

But these two men were on the spot when the crucial moment came, and quick action put the Bolsheviks in the saddle and saw them riding to command. Out of revolution and civil war, out of the wreckage of a vast empire where the Four Freedoms certainly did not reign, rose the federation of socialist states to be known as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, kindling the hope in some Russian groups that the day of freedom was at hand.

Before leaving this discussion of the emergence of the Soviet Union and of Poland, attention should be called to another factor in the situation. The Germans were in Kharkov until January 3, 1919: they were still in Kovno in December 1919. They were defeated in the West but still strongly entrenched in the East, and the Allies were not moving to dislodge them.

*Federation, as applied to the states in the Soviet Union, does not have the same meaning as it has among Western peoples. The Republics of Yakutsk and Komi, for example, are provinces rather than states, and these are only two among many. The Soviet Government is highly centralized, and detailed instructions go to local governments from Moscow. State rights as we know them do not exist. Authority in all matters rests in Moscow.

COMMONWEALTH of POLAND up to 1772

PARTITIONS

1772 Russia, Prussia & Austria —..—..—..—..—..—..—..

1793 Russia, Prussia — — — — — — — — — — — — — —

1795 Russia, Prussia & Austria . . . .

Poland up to September 1, 1939 ~~~~~~~~~~

If the Poles had not risen against the Germans and, by December 27, 1918, when they took Poznan, freed Polish territory completely from German control, the Russians would have found it much more difficult to clear the Germans from their own territory and to establish their independence of foreign domination. Thus, to some extent at least, even though indirectly, the Russians were indebted to the Poles at this critical point in their history.

2. *Characteristics*

With reference to the size of Poland and the Soviet Union a map, or better a globe, must be consulted. The former, in its restored area, consisted of 150,470 square miles; the Soviet Union comprised 8,095,728. In other words, the Soviet Union was more than fifty-three times the size of Poland.

Within Soviet Union boundaries live peoples of many races and many tongues. Hence the designation Soviet Union is far more fitting to include all these regions than was ever the imposed name of Russia. The inhospitable provinces of the north and east, the former with their bitter cold, the latter because of oppressive heat and barrenness, are sparsely populated and in great part still inhabited by primitive nomadic tribes. The bulk of the 170,000,000 population lives west of the Volga, tracing a line that starts at that river's source.

Yet despite the fact that the population is in the west, the civilization and orientation inherited by the people of the U.S.S.R. was Byzantine and Eastern. The Russian Orthodox Church, a daughter of Byzantium, and the early Mongol and Tatar invasions that brought centuries of Tatar overlordship with its inevitable impact upon cultural, economic and social life, are together responsible for this Eastern orientation.

Polish associations and connections, on the other hand, have always been with the West. From earliest times Poles have

studied in the universities of France, Italy and Switzerland. In the sixteenth century the universities of Padua and Bologna were especially popular with them. Geneva and Basle were centers for Polish groups. Young Polish nobles spent time at western courts, familiarizing themselves with western ways and diplomacy. The Poles have always been given to travel in other lands. They are, like most Slavs, linguists of unusual ability. Also they have been ready to accept and make part of their own whatever they have found in the civilization of other peoples that has attracted them. Hence Polish travellers and Poles who lived abroad for a time in the employ of the government took back to Poland foreign cookery, foreign fashions, foreign books and foreign ways of life; and innumerable French, Italian and German words were incorporated into the Polish language. Roman law was the subject of most serious study, and notable books on that subject were written by Poles who later became leaders in their own national life.

At the time of the eighteenth century partitions of Poland, large numbers of Poles emigrated to France and Britain, even to America. Paris became the true Polish center of that time, where Polish libraries, Polish societies, Polish teaching could exist without Russian or German restrictions. Since the beginning of the present war, Poles have stressed their intellectual and ideological ties with the Latin civilization—that same civilization from which springs the life of Britain, France and America—rather than with the East. The invasions of the Tatars and the Mongols, beginning with 1241, were repulsed by the Poles and Tatar influence on Polish life came chiefly through introduction of the Poles to the exotic East. This western orientation of the Poles naturally drew them into the path of progress, and the civilization of modern Poland was understandably more advanced even in 1918 than was that of the Soviet Union.

Leading the two new states were men of quite different char-

acter and ideals. Polish leaders were seeking reunion of Polish territories and the establishment of a security that would permit normal development of a long oppressed and suppressed nation. Bolshevik leaders looked at the Soviet Union as just one step in the process of world revolution under the aegis of the proletariat.

3. Revolution

Revolution is a word that stirs to uneasiness the sober thinkers of every land. It is not surprising then, that notwithstanding general recognition of the need of change in the Russian regime, the outcome of the October Revolution (1917) was awaited with reserve. Moreover, the Allies found themselves in a difficult position. Tsarist Russia had been one of them. Bolshevik Russia withdrew. But other Russian groups were in sympathy with the Allies. Unspeakable chaos and anarchy reigned throughout the broad Russian lands, offering perhaps a further opportunity for German and Austrian adventures. It must also be remembered that although defeated in the West the Germans still had powerful and well-equipped armies in the East, that Lenin owed his presence in Russia to the Germans, and that he had already, by the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, given the Germans a large part of the Ukraine where was located approximately half of Russian industry, not to mention some 40,000,000 people. In view, therefore, of these circumstances, Allied intervention in Russia in 1918 was a project not entirely without justification.

4. The Polish-Bolshevik War

After the Treaties of Brest-Litovsk in February and March 1918 between the Central Powers and the Bolsheviks, which took Russia out of the war, the Bolsheviks moved into territory as the German troops withdrew. Though Poland was not yet free and restored, Poles were uneasy over the movement west. And with reason, for the Bolsheviks had announced their intention of in-

cluding eastern Polish provinces within the White Ruthenian Soviet State and were harassing the Polish border lands just as they are today. The Armistice came in November 1918. Months passed and still the eastern boundaries of the now free and independent Poland were undetermined.

Pilsudski, Polish Chief of State and Commander of the Polish armed forces, a leader of distinguished ability and political acumen, a statesman thoroughly conversant with the history of Central and Eastern Europe, had as his goal an Eastern European federation with Poland as the nucleus, something akin to the regional federation idea advanced now in many quarters. Such a federation, Pilsudski was convinced, could insure security for the small states that justly should arise in Eastern Europe. Otherwise, there would always be the menace of a powerful Germany on one side and an expansionist Russia on the other.

With this in mind, when hope of an agreement with the Bolsheviks disappeared, when the Poles had information that the Bolsheviks were preparing to attack them, Pilsudski signed a pact with Petlura, then chief of the Ukrainian state, in which the frontier between Poland and the Ukraine was fixed. Pilsudski promised aid in freeing the Ukrainian state from Bolshevik control, and the two states agreed to be independent but allied.

Pilsudski had resisted pressure exerted by the Allies to join them in intervention against the Bolsheviks in 1918, declaring that he would not take sides in Russian civil war, that he would not interfere in Russian internal affairs and fight to restore the monarchy. His purpose, he said, was to help peoples with a tradition of freedom to regain that freedom. Among such peoples were those of the Ukraine. This is the background of his pact with the Ukrainian leader.

On May 8, 1920, Pilsudski's forces took Kiev, but the Red Armies, no longer obliged to fight in opposition to Russian troops —generally referred to as White Russians—led by Denikin and

Wrangel, were able to throw all their strength against the Poles. Under such circumstances the latter, far inferior in numbers, were compelled to begin withdrawal from the steppe of the Ukraine, the forests and the marshlands of the north. Close behind them came the Red Armies, pursuing the retreating Poles across the plains of Poland, until by mid-August the elated Bolsheviks were in the outskirts of Warsaw, with Marshal Tukachevsky, the Red Army's commander, declaring that his troops were starting a conflagration that would sweep over all Europe. "Soldiers of the worker's revolution!" he had said in his order of the day issued in Smolensk on July 2nd. "Turn your eyes West! For it is in the West that the fate of the world revolution will be decided. Over the dead body of reactionary Poland leads the road to the world revolution. On our bayonets we shall bring happiness and peace to the working people of the world. March westward, march to decisive battles, to glorious victories. Close ranks! The hour of offensive has struck; march forward to Vilno, Minsk and Warsaw!" (1) Bolshevik ambitions and Bolshevik confidence had mounted with each mile the Poles were pushed back across the sandy plains, through the marshes and the forests. Before Warsaw and to the north-west of it, however, the Red Army was compelled to halt and face about for a retreat that was more rapid than had been the advance.

Defeat of the Red Army by the Poles came without help from any quarter except that of General Weygand's French mission. Actual hindrance came from the Czechs who refused to grant transit for military equipment and aid across Czechoslovakia. President Masaryk frankly gave it as his opinion that Poland could not survive and advised the Allies against giving the Poles assistance. (2) In Danzig, the dockworkers refused to unload cargoes of arms consigned to the Poles.

The defeat was a stunning blow to the high Bolshevik hopes, for as M. Zinoviev described the reaction of the delegates to the

Soviet Congress in session July 1920: " . . . Every morning the delegates with immense interest crowded in front of the map. This was to a certain extent symbolic. The best representatives of the international proletariat, holding their breath, one might say with halting pulses, followed every advance of our troops, and all clearly understood that the fulfillment of the military task would mean the speeding of the international revolution. All knew that the fate of the international proletarian revolution literally depended at that time on every forward move of our Red Army." (3)

But this was a battle of significance not only to Poland and the U.S.S.R. but to the whole world. In writing of it Lord D'Abernon (4), a recognized authority, says that there is justification for supposing that it was as much a factor in preserving the civilization of Europe as were the struggles of earlier centuries when Poland was known as the outpost of that civilization.

This authority states further that had the Soviet armies been victors in this battle of Warsaw, there would have been great danger of Bolshevism spreading over Central Europe, possibly over the entire Continent. He calls attention to the well-laid communist groundwork in preparation for taking over Germany, pointing out that communist agents were in German cities, that leadership had been assured and the names of persons to be eliminated by murder listed.

Thus it was that in 1920 the Bolsheviks were in control of what was Eastern Poland for a period lasting a few months at most. The Red troops were primitive men and their procedure with captured Poles and Polish property was in full accord with what is associated with uncivilized peoples. Such were the ways of fighting men in the Cossack and Turkish wars, and such was the inheritance passed on to certain backward Russian populations. Civilians among the enemy fared no better than soldiers. Innumerable instances of torture and mutilation before a cruel

execution have been documented. While the civilized West may shudder over them it should not find them surprising, for it is dealing with men from an area that was centuries behind it in enlightenment.

As for administration of occupied regions in 1920, the Bolsheviks were not prepared to attempt it. Instead, there was only universal terror, destruction, and looting. Destruction was rife, for beautiful books, pianos, rare works of art were condemned as signs of the bourgeois and democracy. Polish memories of this period do not contribute to good feeling in 1944.

CHAPTER II

The Polish-Soviet Frontier Is Fixed

1. The Curzon Line

From November 11, 1918, the date Poles recognize as the day of their nation's rebirth, until March 18, 1921, two years and four months, the boundary between Poland and the Soviet Union was in question. The Peace Conference had left it to be settled by the Allied Supreme Council, a body to which a number of projects and protests were submitted by Poles and Russians of both the old and new regimes. The boundary proposal originated with a self-constituted committee from the Russian émigrés in France. (The Allies were in contact with the Russians of the old regime, for in 1918 and 1919 the outcome of troubles in Russia was by no means certain.) On December 8, 1919, the following decision, here translated from the French, was handed down:

"The Chief Allied and Associated Powers, recognizing the necessity of relieving as soon as possible the political uncertainty in which the Polish nation finds itself, but without reference to stipulations concerning the final fixing of the eastern frontier of Poland, declare that from the present they recognize the right of the Polish government to proceed, under the terms already provided for by the Treaty of June 28, 1919 with Poland, with the organization of a regular administration of the territory of the former Russian Empire situated west of the line here defined. [Here follows in detail the course of the line. See Map.]

"The rights which Poland should have in the territories east of that line are expressly reserved.

"Done in Paris, December 8, 1919.

"President of the Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers. G. Clemenceau" (5)

This settled nothing. It was merely a temporary line for administrative purposes, not a boundary, and specific pains were taken in the wording of the declaration to make that point clear: " . . . but without reference to stipulations concerning the final fixing of the eastern frontier of Poland."

The line desired as a Russian boundary on the west by the Russian émigrés practically coincided in the north with the boundary drawn at the time of the third partition of Poland (1795) between the Russian Empire and East Prussia. In addition to the Polish territory which the Russian Empire had then taken, the émigrés in Paris now asked for all of Eastern Galicia and part of Western Galicia, which had been Austria-Hungary's share of partitioned Poland.

Efforts toward reaching a settlement of Polish-Bolshevik troubles continued to be made, from time to time, by both the Poles and the Bolsheviks. Through their Council of People's Commissars the latter, on January 28, 1920, made a statement from which the following excerpt is taken:

"In accord with the peace proposal made December 22, 1919, the Council of People's Commissars declares that the Red Armies will not advance beyond the present line of the Russian front. That line now passes through the following points: Dryssa, Dzisna, Polock, Borysov, Parycz, the station Ptycz, the station Bialokorovicze; and in the Ukraine through Czudnov, Pilawa, Deraznia, and Bar." (6)

This declaration, addressed to the Polish Government and the Polish people, was signed not only by Lenin, but also by Chicherin, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and Trotsky, Commissar for Defense. The line suggested in it is usually referred to as the "Borysov Line." A glance at the map on which it appears will show how far to the east of the frontier as fixed by the Riga Treaty this armistice line proposed by the Bolsheviks ran.

In July 1920 the Polish Prime Minister, Wladyslaw Grabski,

went to Spa in an effort to secure help against the invading Bolsheviks. The reply of the Powers was that they could not give help but would serve as mediators. The Poles agreed to the British proposal—the French were taking no part—that the administrative line suggested by the Allied Supreme Council on December 8, 1919 be regarded as an armistice line; but again care was taken to make it clear that acceptance of this did not affect Polish rights to the east. Along this line, the Polish army was to halt on the west, while the Bolshevik troops were to remain 50 kilometers to the east of the line. But as the administrative line did not go beyond the old Russian frontier some provision had to be made for a line running far to the south. It was therefore proposed that in Galicia each army should remain where it was at the time of the armistice, after which each would withdraw for a distance of 10 kilometers, thus leaving a neutral strip between them of twice that width. Lord Curzon, at that time British Foreign Minister, sent a note with the proposal to Moscow. Although not a part of the agreement made with the Poles, the British also suggested to the Bolsheviks that the administrative line should be extended, turning west toward Przemysl before it took a southerly direction to the Carpathians. But this was not the armistice line, nor was it anything to which the Poles had agreed. The actual Curzon Line stopped at the Bug River at a point where the old Austrian and Russian frontiers met; from there on it was to have been a line running between the Polish and the Bolshevik armies.

The Bolsheviks immediately rejected this offer, replying that "if Poland will turn directly to the Soviet Government, that Government will not refuse but in most friendly spirit will consider the Polish proposal for an armistice; also that the Soviet Government is ready to give Poland a more favorable line than that now proposed by the English. The Soviets see in that

POLAND

Up to September 1, 1939 ~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

Borysov Line, January 28, 1920 — — — — — — — — —

So-called Curzon Line July 10, 1920 . . . .

frontier, disadvantageous to the Poles, the influence of reactionary Russia." (7)

This Bolshevik position was reiterated in other official notes, among them Kamenev's dispatch to Lloyd George, then British Premier. "Moreover," said this dispatch, "the Russian Government stands strongly by its recognition of the freedom and independence of Poland, and also of its good will to recognize to the Polish State broader frontiers than those indicated by the Supreme Council, and communicated in the British note of July 20th."

The *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* has this to say in its discussion of the Polish-Bolshevik War: "On March 18, 1921 the peace treaty was signed. In accordance with its provisions Poland kept Galicia and part of White Ruthenia. However, the new Polish-Soviet frontier was far less advantageous to the Poles than the one which was proposed to Poland by the Soviet Government in April 1920. The frontier determined after the Polish-Soviet War runs 50 to 100 kilometers west of the line which was suggested at the beginning of the war. This means that Soviet Russia emerged victorious from this struggle against the forces of counter-revolution." (8)

The origin and lack of significance of the so-called Curzon line should be borne in mind, since it occurs so frequently in today's discussions. In reality it was not Lord Curzon's suggestion but was proposed in a letter sent to the Peace Conference by a committee from the Russian exiles in France. The letter, dated April 9, 1919 (9) was signed by Prince Lvov, Serge Sazonov and Makhlakoff—all well known political figures in Tsarist Russia. Russian in origin, naturally it was drawn in favor of the Soviet Union. It was never intended by the Allies as anything but a temporary administrative expedient.

2. Minsk and Riga

With the rapid advance of the Red Army into Poland and things looking black for that country, the Poles, although the Bolsheviks had taken no notice of the note sent in July, in August proposed negotiations for a settlement, and the Bolsheviks accepted. Minsk, the capital of the White Ruthenian province, was named as the meeting place and at 4 o'clock on the morning of August 14, 1920 the Polish delegates, little dreaming that on the very next day the Red Army would go down to defeat, set out for Minsk. The Bolsheviks would not agree to cessation of hostilities, hence the Polish delegates had to pass through a battle front. Reaching Minsk they were greeted with news of Warsaw's fall, the Minsk "Gwiazda" (10) stating that "the red flag has been hoisted over Warsaw." Keeping the Poles in ignorance of what was actually occurring until August 22, (11) when from the headlong flight of Bolshevik troops the Poles could themselves learn the truth, the Bolsheviks presented peace terms (August 19) only slightly better than those laid down by the Russian committee in Paris. When these were rejected, Marshal Tukhachewsky ordered a proclamation bearing his signature to be posted on the walls of Minsk. It read: "The Polish delegation dastardly breaks off negotiations. Composed exclusively of spies and espionage agents, the Polish delegation is trying to take advantage of its position to further espionage aims." (12)

On learning what was the actual state of affairs the Polish delegates demanded that the peace negotiations should go on in a neutral country. Riga, capital of Latvia, now recognized as a free and independent state, was agreed upon. Although a city with a long history, for in the thirteenth century it was a center of the activities of the Knights of the Sword, later associated with the Knights of the Cross of unsavory memory, it has always

played a major role in the life of north-eastern Europe. It is a coveted port, a gateway to the outer world and a point of dispersal for a vast hinterland. It was a flourishing member of the Hanseatic League, and the Baltic barons and merchants, of German origin, continued to thrive throughout the centuries. Riga, then, was easily accessible, had suitable accommodations, and was not cut off from the world; and thither the delegations travelled, to meet for the first conference September 21, 1920.

Quite different was the atmosphere here from that in the dreary, ugly city of Minsk, where the Bolsheviks planned to name the terms and their delegation was composed of peasant-garbed revolutionary fanatics, unfriendly, secretive. To Riga no such men were sent. Instead, there was an entirely new group, led by the well-groomed, smartly dressed, amiable, man-of-the-world—Abram Joffe.

In this changed atmosphere it was obvious that the Bolsheviks desired to reach an understanding with the Poles, although the first proposal they submitted was one the Poles could not be expected to accept. That was merely a matter of form and face-saving.

3. *The Significance of Lenin's Signature*

The Poles had two documents of inestimable value to them in these negotiations. They had these at Minsk and used them in staving off conclusions when they still were under the belief that the Red Army was winning. But since a victor can always dictate terms, these documents at that time were only expedients to prolong negotiations. Here in Riga, with the Bolsheviks defeated and anxious to come to terms, such documents were above price.

The first was the text of a decree issued by the Soviet People's Commissars, August 29, 1918 and bearing Lenin's signature. Article 3 reads as follows:

"All agreements and acts concluded by the former Russian Empire with the government of the Kingdom of Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire in connection with the partitions of Poland are annulled forever by the present Resolution, in view of the fact that they are contrary to the principle of self-determination of peoples and to the revolutionary, legal conception of the Russian nation, which recognizes the inalienable right of the Polish nation to decide its own fate and to become united." (13)

This was a perfectly clear statement, needing no elucidation. By abrogating the partition treaties of the eighteenth century and recognizing Polish national rights, the Bolsheviks were merely ipso facto putting the Polish boundaries back where they were when the first partition (1772) took place.

The other card in the hands of the Poles was the declaration of the Soviet People's Commissar already referred to, of January 28, 1920, regarding an armistice line. Beginning at the north, the line proposed by the Bolsheviks ran from sixty to ninety miles east of the frontier as drawn, and in the south from thirty to fifty miles east of it. From this it was manifest that the Bolsheviks would not stand stoutly for territory to the west of that line.

This indeed proved to be the case. On September 24th, at the first session of both delegations, Abram Joffe, the Bolshevik leader, read a declaration, from which the quotation below is an excerpt. The line offered in this was comparable to that once proposed by the Bolsheviks as an armistice line:

"Point two: The Russian Socialist Federation of Soviet Republics is ready to sign immediately an armistice and preliminary peace conditions on the basis of recognizing as the boundary between Poland and the R.S.F.S.R. a line running considerably east of the line proposed by the Supreme Council December 8, 1919, with East Galicia to the west of that line." (14)

Negotiations went forward rapidly, for both sides were

anxious for peace. Agreement was reached in all fundamental matters as early as October 5, 1920 and the peace treaty, known as the Treaty of Riga, was signed March 18, 1921. The Republics of White Ruthenia and the Ukraine, as was stated in Article two of that treaty, abandoned all claims to the territories situated west of the line drawn, while Poland relinquished all rights to lands east of the line. The Treaty was thus concluded between Poland on one side and the Republic of Russia, White Ruthenia and the Ukraine on the other, for not until July 6, 1923 did the Central Executive Committee vote to give the reconstituted Russian state the name of Union of Socialist Soviet Republics.

4. *Mr. Dabski and Mr. Joffe Comment*

At the time of the official signing of the Treaty the chairman of each delegation commented upon the work accomplished and the end reached.

Mr. Dabski, the chairman of the Polish delegation, spoke in fairly definite terms. (15)

"In common understanding," runs part of his speech, "we have traced the frontiers and we have decided that neither party shall interfere in the internal affairs of the other; we have granted every privilege to the national minorities; we offer the greatest possible facilities for the choice of citizenship; we have come to an agreement in many complicated questions concerning economy and the settlement of accounts; we have laid the foundation for future relations both economic and political; we have tried to solve all questions in a manner equitable and just; we have each made concessions to the other, not only with the object of reaching an understanding but of rendering our future relations easier."

"I have already emphasized the importance," said Mr. Joffe in reply, "to any peace negotiations of the atmosphere in which they are carried on. I should like also to stress the fact that

although international conditions changed several times during the Polish and Russian-Ukrainian Peace Conference the atmosphere in Riga was invariably one which favored the carrying on of negotiations and rendered it easier to reach a favorable decision."

The speaker's affable manner augured well for the future.

Here it is in place to call attention to the fact that by this treaty made in 1921, for the first time since 1772 this eastern frontier was fixed by peaceful negotiations and not by violence.

Two years later almost to the day (March 15, 1923), acting for the Western Powers, the Conference of Ambassadors recognized by resolution the frontier as fixed in Riga. The United States also formally recognized it, the then American Minister to Poland, the distinguished American diplomat, Hugh Gibson, presenting a note to that effect to the government in Warsaw on April 5 of that year (1923).

5. *Polish Resignation of Rights*

In signing the Riga Treaty the Poles renounced rights to territoy and populations that the Bolsheviks were prepared to recognize as Polish. Had the Poles gone so far as the Lenin-signed document declaring the partition agreements made by Tsarist Russia null and void gave them the right to do and demanded all territory that had been Polish in 1772, modern Poland would have been the larger by 120,000 square miles, and the 1,500,000 Poles left by the Treaty in the U.S.S.R. would have been included within its boundaries. These boundaries would have followed a line only a little west of Smolensk and Kiev and would have taken in much of what is now known as the Ukraine. Though research into the early records has shown that these territories had been largely reclaimed from the wilderness by Poles, Poles resigned all rights to these lands.

The Polish population figure noted above is that given by

one of the Bolshevik delegates in a statement made during the negotiations. The Soviet daily "Izviestia" of January 29, 1940 stated that according to the January 1939 census there were 626,905 persons in the U.S.S.R. of Polish nationality. Since many thousands of Poles left in Russia in 1920 suffered the fate of "kulaks" or bourgeois, and since there was no truly Polish press, school, church or other institution to help keep nationality alive, it is testimony to Polish patriotism that the number given by "Izviestia" still proclaim themselves Poles. Persons who are best informed on this subject consider that this number is far below the actual residual Polish population, from those left in Russia in 1920, in the U.S.S.R. today. According to such authorities, one million would be more nearly correct.

The number of Russians left on the Polish side did not exceed 150,000. Certain sources give the figure 130,000. Very few of these Russians were peasants or even considered as permanent residents of any community. The majority of them were the families of men who had been sent from Tsarist Russia to serve as officials in various categories of government service in Poland under the old Russian regime. These people had no sympathy with the Bolshevik revolutionary leaders and entertained no desire to return to their native Russia.

This element was not a factor in the years to come, either for Poland or the U.S.S.R. It is only mentioned to show the relative size of the Polish minority on one side and the Russian minority on the other.

CHAPTER III

Neighbors

1. Beginnings

War at an end, the peace treaty signed, it appeared that all was now set for neighborly co-operation, for "a definite, lasting and honorable peace based on mutual understanding," as expressed in the official introduction to the Treaty of Riga.

That there was wide divergence in the ideologies of the peoples of the two states was fully recognized and accepted. While the Polish socialist and agrarian parties led in the reconstitution and reconstruction of restored Poland, and the Polish social program was to be one of the most liberal and progressive in the world, Poles were still individualists, still uncompromising believers in private property and private enterprise and initiative. Polish peasants wanted land in their own name, not membership in a collective, and Poles of all classes, people strongly predisposed to religion, adhered firmly to their ancestral Catholic faith.

But the ideologies and domestic affairs of each state, as Mr. Dabski said at Riga in the excerpt quoted from his speech, were not matters to concern the neighbor state. As long as the ideology was not exported there could be no complaint. Certainly each state had a right to determine its own policy, without regard to the likes or dislikes of its neighbor or any other state. That there would be annoyances and minor troubles, even frontier clashes, no one for a moment doubted. After almost seven years of unsettled conditions, 1914-1921, on this more than

900 miles of newly established frontier, minor conflicts were bound to occur before normal life could be fully established. But if the governments were in accord the inevitable border troubles could be handled.

Successful co-operation looked promising from another angle. During the advance of the Red Army into Poland, the Bolsheviks had openly stated that they were carrying communism into the West. Some of these statements have been cited on preceding pages. When this march west failed, communists admitted that hopes for an immediate communist victory were gone. Even before the Red Army defeat a new policy that leaned toward capitalism had been introduced in the U.S.S.R. That was NEP (New Economic Policy), instituted by Lenin himself at the Tenth Communist Party Congress, March 8 - 16, 1921.

Certainly this was in the way of reconciliation, offering an opportunity for co-operation with capitalist states. So also were the orders issued by Soviet officials serving abroad as to the communist vocabulary. They were to be more particular about not giving offense.

Yet in these same years, 1920-1921, Moscow was giving other orders. To communists in Poland came instructions to engineer strikes and to engage in all sorts of minor destructive activities. Little success attended these efforts and the Poles were not disturbed by them.

Not until 1923 was there anything in the way of "direct action." This was the year of the communist putsch in Germany. The Comintern leaders were convinced during its preparation that it would succeed, as was made clear in a report of Zinoviev, chairman of the Comintern, in the summer of 1923 at the Second Convention of Polish Communists.

"The German revolution," he states, "is inevitable and the very near future will bring a showdown. It will come in a few months, maybe even earlier . . . " (16)

Farther on in the same report we find " . . . it is a hundred per cent sure that our party and the Soviet Union will prove without any further delay that . . . we have waited only for the decisive moment to throw all our strength into the scale of an international proletarian revolution and of a German revolution."

That may explain the orders given communists in Poland, explain the blowing up of ammunition stores in Warsaw, resulting in the death of some one-hundred-fifty persons and the injury of some thousand others. I was in Warsaw when this took place and remember the shock of the explosion, the wonderment of the people, and the pall of smoke that hung over the Citadela area. If the revolution had succeeded in Germany, as the Comintern felt certain it would, Poland, lying between that state and the U.S.S.R., would naturally have been the next in order. What was going on was preliminary softening up.

2. The Comintern and the U.S.S.R.

It is not right to leave this subject of Comintern activities without going a bit farther into the background. The Third International was a Bolshevik institution, the instrument for putting communist ideology into action, and directed from Moscow, the acknowledged seat of communism.

Communism calls for a devotion and dedication similar to that called for, but seldom received, from adherents of religious faiths. Its ethics and morals are not those of Christian, Jew or Moslem. It knows no right or wrong, except with reference to success of communist policy and the furtherance of communist ideals. Anything which helps the party is right and not only permissible but obligatory. Treaties, agreements, promises are kept or broken with this as the measuring stick. Conduct is thus regulated.

This is generally recognized but it may be well to quote opin-

ions on communism held by persons who have a right to speak.

Herbert Morrison, in a speech at the time the British communists were seeking affiliation with the British Labour Party, of which Morrison is a member, said: "The trouble with the communists is that they have dual-purpose minds. They tell you one thing and mean another." (17)

"For a communist, ethical and moral demands are bourgeois prejudices that must be observed by his opponents but never by himself, "recently wrote a former member of the Polish Parliament, a man who has had long political experience.

And in his book *Radicalism as an Infantile Disease of Communism* (Berlin 1930, p. 42) Lenin wrote that a communist "must be ready to do anything, to make sacrifices, and if necessary, to use every possible deceit, fraud, illegal method, silence and concealment of truth."

What is not generally recognized is that it is according to communist standards and not ours that those who accept and live by these principles should be judged. They have a right to expect that, and others should not be surprised to find them obedient to the ideals—however mistaken or perverted these others may judge such ideals. Whether one does or does not believe that communists have no right to interfere in the affairs of others will have no weight with communists. If on the day it concluded an agreement with the Polish government relative to communication between the two countries the Soviet government sent guerrilla bands across the Polish frontier, in Bolshevik eyes that was not hypocrisy. If after ratification of the Kellogg Pact, done with great enthusiasm, the Comintern issued instructions that vigorous opposition to that Pact be at once begun, there is nothing in the action contrary to communist standards and ethics. Each such act was done in the name of advancing the communist cause.

The only course left to other states under such circumstances

is that of keeping on the alert and forestalling or blocking such moves. For example, to prevent the raiding and disorganization of life in the Eastern Polish provinces in those first years by bands from across the border, General Sikorski, then Minister of War, organized a special corps of picked soldiers and placed them under the direct control of the Minister of the Interior.

Yet failure to understand this vital point—that the communists and the Soviets must be judged by their standards and not those the West professes to live by—is a fatal mistake which all too many Anglo-Saxons unconsciously make. The Golden Rule is useless as a guide in dealing with the Soviets, for they do not recognize it and consider those who do naive.

According, then, to their accepted standards, the Bolsheviks were doing nothing improper in directing agitation in countries which they stamped "capitalist" and hostile to the welfare of the proletariat. Among these countries was Poland. Poland has always been looked upon by ambitious Germans as the key to the East. It was regarded by the tsars as the key to the West, and so it was regarded by their successors.

"The true function of Poland," said Manuilski at the Third Congress of the Communist Parties in March, 1925, "is to form a barrier preventing the spread of the communist idea westward. For that reason the international proletariat must consider as its task the smashing of capitalistic Poland and turning it into a Soviet Republic." (18)

As for the relations of the Comintern to Moscow, points eleven and fourteen from the twenty-five-point program adopted at the Fifth Comintern Congress, August 1923, make that clear. Point eleven provides that all personnel, including all communist members of parliaments and legislative bodies the world over, must take orders from Moscow. The fourteenth point states that each party affiliated with the Comintern is under obligation to render every possible assistance to the Soviet Union in

its struggle versus all counter-revolutionary forces, and goes on to specify how this is to be done. (19)

3. *Difficulties along the Way*

Difficulties in the execution of the articles of the Treaty of Riga were in plenty. In reality only the first two articles were speedily carried out, namely the bringing of the war to an end and the frontier delimitation. Repatriation of prisoners of war, the interned, refugees went on slowly. It was still an action of impressive proportions when I went to Poland in October 1922. Joint committees from the Soviet Union and Poland worked for fifteen years over the return to Poland of libraries, art, archives and similar treasures looted and removed to Russia, a looting that began with the first partition (1772) and continued as a policy through the whole Russian domination, to take on still greater extent in the Polish-Bolshevik war. The time estimated for this committee's work had been two years. In this instance it was not the Bolsheviks but Russian experts, all men of the old regime, since they alone in Russia were qualified for such service, who made the difficulty. The Bolshevik members did not care.

But when it came to carrying out the remaining articles of the Treaty, the Poles met delay, excuses, obstacles at every turn. It was slow progress that was made, and sometimes none at all even in twenty years. Take the matter of Poland's right of transit across the U.S.S.R. to the Near and Far East. Article XXII of the Treaty stipulated that "the contracting parties grant one another the free passage of goods on all railways and waterways open to transit." The article went on to say that this would be in effect even before the commercial treaty, provided for in the Treaty itself, was drawn. It explained that by "free transit" the contracting parties understand that goods transported through Poland from Russia and the Ukraine or to Russia and the

Ukraine, and likewise from Poland and to Poland through Russia and the Ukraine, would not be charged with any transit duties or other charges.

This was of great importance to the Poles whose communications with Persia, Afghanistan, China and Japan were infinitely shorter via land routes across the U.S.S.R. than by sea, and since there was a well-established trade between certain manufacturing centers in Poland with these countries, dating even from the eighteenth century, this transit arrangement was most desirable.

But during the first years after the Treaty was signed Poland was refused transit on the ground that the U.S.S.R. railroads and rolling stock were in such bad condition after the war that they could not handle even Soviet demands. In later years the reason for refusal was that in all the U.S.S.R. there was no such thing as "a railway open to transit," because this phrase referred only to special lines designed for transit and the U.S.S.R. had not yet built any such. When this excuse could no longer be maintained, the Council for Labor and Defense issued a decree concerning transit and listed the goods and industrial products not admitted for transit across the U.S.S.R. All the goods the Poles wished to ship to the East were in this list.

4. *On the Credit Side*

There were, however, real achievements to mark up on the credit side. Russia's way to the west lay straight across Poland. So there was readiness on the U.S.S.R.'s part to sign a provisional agreement regulating travel through the frontier posts on the Moscow-Warsaw line. This agreement was concluded November 27, 1921. On February 27, 1923 a sanitary convention was signed by both states, and on May 24th of the same year, a postal and telegraphic accord. While these seem minor matters they were of no little significance in marking the beginning of getting on together. This was new business.

On April 24, 1924 a substantial improvement was made in the matter of railway use by the conclusion of a railway convention between Poland and the U.S.S.R. It did not solve the problem for Poland but it did decidedly better conditions in other respects.

Months of negotiations over the matter of consulates ended July 18, 1924 with an agreement satisfactory to both parties. Border incidents of no consequence, such as of people unwittingly crossing the frontier due to the fact that the setting up of boundary marks was going forward slowly, of peasants going from one village to another or to a meadow for hay or to bring home wandering cattle, produced many problems. To handle these the Jampol convention was signed August 3, 1925 and on June 3, 1933 became a new agreement. Commercial relations got their first real impulse in 1925. On May 9 of that year, after much exploration and many trials at winning confidence and an entry into economic fields, a group of Polish industrialists, thoroughly familiar with the Russian market and having the assurance of Polish Government backing, organized the joint stock company "Polros."

This was eminently successful, and the Soviets followed with the "Sovpoltorg" (Soviet-Polish Commerce), its co-founders being the Soviet Government and "Polros," with the latter putting in seventy-five percent of the capital and the Soviet Government to put in twenty-five percent from the profits made as its contribution, affirming that the major part of the funds should be put up by "Polros," since this organ was granted "Sovpoltorg" as a concession. This was hardly in accord with the facts, as the object of the organization was only the encouragement of Polish-Soviet trade and there was no intention of building factories or developing industrial branches.

On January 31, 1926, a few days after the establishment of "Sovpoltorg" in Moscow, the Poles opened a Polish-Soviet

Chamber of Commerce in Warsaw. This proved a useful body, aiding successfully in the development of economic relations.

On February 19, 1939 a Polish-Soviet Commercial Treaty was signed—almost eighteen years after the signing of the Treaty of Riga, although Article XXI of that Treaty expressly stated that negotiations for such a treaty were to be undertaken six weeks after the ratification of the Peace Treaty.

A passport convention was agreed upon April 30, 1926, which made it easier for Poles to get Russian visas, and in September of that year still another railway agreement was made.

However, none of these were to be rated with what was known as the "Litvinov Protocol" renouncing war, signed February 9, 1929 by the U.S.S.R., Poland, Latvia, Estonia, Rumania and later by Lithuania, the Free City of Danzig, Turkey and Persia; and with the Non-Aggression Pact of 1932, the Convention regarding the Definition of Aggression (1933), and the prolongation of the Pact of Non-Aggression of 1934 to December 31, 1945.

The path of the negotiations leading to the consummation of these pacts was long and devious. The revolutionary leaders of the Soviets were mistrustful of all their western neighbors, particularly France and Britain, whom they suspected of wishing to restore capitalism in Russia. They believed that Poland was subservient to these Powers, with no independent policy of her own, and that should an attempt at restoration of the monarchy take place, that attempt would be made through Poland and that Polish troops would be employed. This being the Soviet conviction, it was then to Soviet interest to work in two directions, namely, disarmament of her neighbors and bilateral and not regional agreements except in the matter of disarmament.

At the invitation of the Soviets to Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Finland, delegates from these countries and with a Pole acting for Rumania—since Bessarabia was claimed by the

U.S.S.R. these states did not have diplomatic relations—met in Moscow in 1922 to discuss disarmament. It soon became evident that the purpose of the Soviets was only to spread the idea that they wished disarmament and that nothing would come of the discussions, as the smaller nations would not agree to decrease armament without a non-aggression guarantee on the part of their more powerful neighbor. Poland proposed such a non-aggression pact, whereupon Moscow announced the conference at an end, as further discussion was futile.

But during this conference the delegates of the smaller states had opportunity to get acquainted and draw together on various points, which resulted in a conference between them in Helsingfors January 16, 1925, where they concluded various agreements for cooperation in economic and cultural spheres.

This drawing together of the lesser states made the Soviets uneasy, and they took measures to prevent closer association among them by sending out an invitation to Poland to conclude with the U.S.S.R. a pact of non-aggression. Poland accepted the invitation, but negotiations dragged on for years, Poland being desirous of a regional pact, the Soviet Union anxious to pull Poland away from the Baltic states.

The Kellogg Pact (August 27, 1928) paved the way for progress. On December 28 of that year Litvinov addressed a note to the Polish Minister in Moscow, suggesting that the U.S.S.R. and Poland should put the terms of that pact into effect as soon as each of their governments had ratified it, without waiting until all the primary signatories had done so. The Polish government accepted this suggestion, obtained the Soviet's agreement to inviting other states to participate, and the protocol was signed February 9, 1929.

The Soviets, it is stated, did not expect Poland to act thus quickly and independently, convinced as they were that Britain and France were directing Polish policy. From that date their

attitude toward Poland changed and the years between 1929 and 1939 were a period of decidedly more correct and friendly relations between the two states, permitting the conclusion of the above-mentioned Non-Aggression Pact and other conventions.

Quite apart from political and commercial spheres, the Poles and the people of the Soviet Union were moving forward on a road of understanding. Groups of scientists, artists, engineers, social workers, industrialists, merchants, literary folk in the later years went from Poland to the U.S.S.R., to see what the Soviets cared to show, to exchange views with Soviet colleagues, sometimes, as in the case of concert singers, to entertain. Similar groups from the U.S.S.R. enjoyed Polish hospitality. Soviet literature was widely read in Poland. The atmosphere was one of growing friendliness.

CHAPTER IV

German Proposals

1. Hitler Approaches the Poles

Through Marshal Goering, in January 1935 Hitler made his first approach to the Poles suggesting a joint attack by Germany and Poland on the U.S.S.R. Both at the hunting lodge in the great Polish forest of Bialowieza, where he was a guest, and in Warsaw the Reich Marshal "was very outspoken in his conversations." In conversations with Polish generals he outlined far-reaching plans. He gave it to be understood that the Ukraine would become a Polish sphere of influence. (20)

This was the beginning, and it was not a delicate feeler or sounding but a clear and urgent invitation. Through one Reich official after another these efforts to get the Poles to join Germany against the Soviet Union continued to be made at intervals up to and through January 26, 1939. On that date von Ribbentrop made a Warsaw visit where he gave his opinion of U.S.S.R. strength and position in a talk with Marshal Smigly-Rydz. (21) However, at this time the Germans must have realized that the Poles would not be tempted, for on January 5th Hitler in an interview with Foreign Minister Beck at Berchtesgarden had opportunity to learn how adamant was the Polish stand. (22)

That the Poles were being sought as an ally against the U.S.S.R. must have been known to the Soviet government. At the same time that government must have realized that there was little ground for fears that the Poles would yield to German urging. The Polish policy had been consistently one of refrain-

ing from joining any "ideological bloc;" Poland would not belong to the anti-Comintern, or plainly speaking to an anti-Soviet group. The Soviets knew that the Polish policy was, as Foreign Minister Beck repeatedly stated, neither pro nor anti towards any neighbor, but that it was strictly pro-Polish. They knew that Marshal Pilsudski had offered to attack Germany in a preventive war in 1933, when it was common knowledge that the Germans were building an army. They also had their recently signed non-aggression pact with Poland. So far as the U.S.S.R. was concerned, with Poland standing stubbornly against German demands, it was evident that Poland was a shield and not a menace to the U.S.S.R.

If that were not enough there was yet another fact of which the Soviet foreign policy experts must have been aware even though they may not have phrased it thus. Every Polish Foreign Minister had one outstanding task and that fourfold; points one and two, to see to it that neither Germany nor Russia attacked Poland; point three, that they should not unite and partition her; point four, that they should not attack each other and fight it out on Polish territory. If Poland threw in her lot with either Germany or the U.S.S.R. it would be her fate to be ground between the upper and nether millstones.

2. *Temporary Strain in Polish-Soviet Relations*

Polish-Soviet relations in truth did not appear to be affected by the Hitler proposals. As noted earlier, these years were part of the period when Polish-Soviet relations were at their best. But between September 23 and October 10, 1938, Soviet planes passed over Polish territory several times each day, Soviet soldiers fired on Polish border patrols and on Polish field workers, and several instances of petty raids across the frontier into Poland occurred. A convention existed for the regulation of such acts (Convention of June 3, 1933), but the Soviet officials

either refused to meet with the Poles or denied the charges brought.

The explanation of this situation is found not directly in Polish-Soviet relations but in the Munich Pact of September 29, 1938 and its consequences. The U.S.S.R. had been left out of the Munich negotiations. The British-German declaration after that conference might forecast some sort of working alliance between those two countries and then include France, Britain's partner, and Italy, Germany's. The capitalist bogey might raise its head. Here might be a coalition against an isolated U.S.S.R., when what the U.S.S.R. had really desired to see as the issue of the Munich meeting was the line-up of Britain and France against Germany. Added to this, Poland was asking the return to her of Teschen by Czechoslovakia. All this together gave the U.S.S.R. with its agreement to go to the aid of Czechoslovakia excuse for its infractions of the Polish-U.S.S.R. treaty.

When things calmed down a bit and the Poles, who had no part in the Munich affair, made it clear that they were not in any wise responsible for the isolation of their Eastern neighbor, the atmosphere cleared and the following Declaration in the form of a joint communique from the two governments was published in both the Polish and the Soviet press November 26, 1938. It read:

"Relations between the Polish Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are and will continue to be based to the fullest extent on all the existing Agreements, including the Polish-Soviet Pact of Non-Aggression dated July 25, 1932. This Pact, concluded for five years and extended in May 1934 for a further period ending December 31, 1945, has a basis wide enough to guarantee the inviolability of peaceful relations between the two States."

3. Change in German-Soviet Relations

After January 1939 it was manifest that something had happened which was effecting a change in German-Soviet relations. Perhaps it was Hitler's failure to make the Polish Foreign Minister yield at Berchtesgaden. The Germans may have felt that if four years of work on the Poles left them as hopelessly stubborn in their stand as they had been at the beginning, it was time to abandon, at least for the present, an anti-Soviet policy.

The first evidence of this change was the discovery in the last of January 1939 of plans for a visit of Herr Schnurre, a high official in the German Foreign Office, to Moscow. The Germans were not ready to publicize this visit to a government with which they were presumably on such unfriendly terms. Preparations for the journey had been made in all secrecy. Hence when talk of it in Moscow and other European capitals became general, the visit was called off, though the emissary was already en route.

But news of that projected visit was not the only evidence of a change in the German-Soviet atmosphere. Reports that at the New Year's reception to the diplomatic corps in Berlin the German Chancellor had "talked longer with the Soviet Ambassador than with anyone else" (23) were seen as extremely significant. References made to Germany in a speech of the Soviet Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Potemkin, showed the veering of the wind. And if further testimony were needed, it was furnished by Stalin himself in his speech before the Eighteenth Congress of the Federal Communist Party in March 1939, in which he charged that the capitalist press in Western Europe had been accusing Germany of planning to create a Ukrainian state in Carpathian Ruthenia, through which accusations these journalists hoped to poison German-Soviet relations.

This was a direct about-face of which the world did not at

once take cognizance, and in view of it, Soviet readiness to take up negotiations with Britain and France on the surface presents a problem. However, when it is recalled that the Soviets had hoped that Munich would result in war between Great Britain and France against Germany, that they feared an agreement unfavorable to the U.S.S.R., it is understandable that they would welcome a state of affairs prohibiting an anti-Soviet coalition of the Western Powers. The U.S.S.R. was now on friendly terms with all these nations. It was not disturbed by the German occupation of all Czechoslovakia in March, as it had been by the concessions made by the Munich agreement, and there were no Soviet-Polish border incidents as in 1938.

4. *Soviet and Other Countries, Including Poland*

Polish-Soviet relations at this time were most amicable. In mid-February Minister Beck paid a three-day visit to Moscow and on February 15, 1939, the official communique (24) was issued stating that Mr. Beck and Mr. Litvinov had carefully reviewed the whole international situation, and that their "exchange of views . . . revealed a community of opinion in regard to many of these problems, as well as the lasting decision of the governments they represent to continue their endeavors for a further improvement in mutual relations between the Republic of Poland and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics."

Yet on January 8 it had been Mr. Litvinov who advised the Polish Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. to lose no time in completing trade negotiations with the U.S.S.R. "in order to forestall German intrigue." (25)

Writing from Moscow to the Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs for Poland on May 23, 1939, some three months after the Commercial Treaty was signed, the Polish Ambassador Grzybowski said: "It looks . . . as if when making any kind of agreement with this State we have to consider only the actual fact

that it is made, and not the gain which may result from its conclusion." (26)

And the discussions concerning quotas, which began in March, were never concluded.

But friendly relations with other countries in the spring of 1939 and the great tension prevailing throughout all Europe offered the U.S.S.R. extraordinary opportunities for spreading communist doctrine. It was the general conviction that the Soviet Union would do everything possible to keep out of the war, to wait until the "capitalist" countries had exhausted each other and then step in and take over. With this their policy, the Soviets had of necessity to prepare the way for the end they strove for; hence the intensive underground work carried on by the Comintern in the Baltic States, Poland and the Balkans and the demands upon Finland and the Baltic States that these countries accept a Soviet guarantee to their independence. These demands were refused, for the governments of these states knew that such a guarantee would certainly mean the location of Soviet troops at strategic points in their countries.

In April, Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs Potemkin made a tour of the Balkans for the purpose of increasing Soviet prestige. On his way back to Moscow, he stopped off in Warsaw (May 10) and in conversation with the Polish Foreign Minister "made it clear that the Soviet Government takes an understanding attitude to our point of view with regard to Polish-Soviet relations, which are now developing quite normally. The Soviets realize that the Polish Government is not prepared to enter into any agreement with either one of Poland's great neighbors and understand the advantage to them of this attitude." (27) Furthermore, on May 31, 1939, in a speech made by Molotov before the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. this reference was made to Poland: "As is known, a special communique was published in February last confirming the development of good neighborly

relations between the U.S.S.R. and Poland. A certain general improvement is now noticeable in our relations with Poland." (28)

Soviet words were friendlv, notwithstanding the slow progress made with the Commercial Treaty, the removal early in May 1939 of Maxim Litvinov from the position of Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and the assumption of those duties by the then Premier Molotov. Litvinov's views on "fascism" and "collective security" were well known, and had he been dismissed immediately after the Munich Pact, which put the seal on "collective security" failure, the action would have been understood. Coming seven months later, it could be interpreted as indicating only one thing—a decided change in Soviet foreign policy had taken place. That being so, all the neighbors of the U.S.S.R. found themselves directly interested.

5. *Poland and the Soviet-British-French Negotiations*

When it was manifest that there would be no agreement between Britain and France with Germany, the Soviets very willingly accepted the British and French offer to negotiate and in the spring of 1939 a commission from these two governments went to Moscow for that purpose. The history of that effort as a whole has no place in these pages, but because Poland's position made discussion of her attitude a necessary part of these negotiations certain points must here be noted.

Poland's relations with Great Britain were steadily growing closer. After the failure of the Munich Pact to insure peace, Premier Neville Chamberlain was resolved to make no further concessions to Hitler. On March 31, 1937 he made the following statement to the House of Commons:

"As the House is aware, certain consultations are now proceeding with other governments. In order to make perfectly clear the position of His Majesty's Government, in the mean-

time, before those consultations are concluded, I now have to inform the House that during that period, in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound at once to lend the Polish Government all support in their power." (29)

And a special dispatch to the New York Times of April 2, 1939 reads as follows: " . . . a semi-official statement was issued this afternoon saying that with regard to Danzig and the Corridor, it is held in London it is up to Poland to decide if at any moment it feels its independence is threatened."

Poland did not wish a unilateral assurance but a reciprocal agreement. Regarding this Mr. Chamberlain thus informed the House of Commons on April 6: " , , , It was agreed that the two countries were prepared to enter into an agreement of a permanent and reciprocal character to replace the present temporary and unilateral assurance given by His Majesty's Government to the Polish Government. Pending the completion of the permanent agreement, Mr. Beck gave His Majesty's Government assurance that the Polish Government would consider themselves under an obligation to render assistance to His Majesty's Government under the same conditions as those contained in the temporary assurance already given by His Majesty's Government to Poland." (30)

Foreign Minister Beck spoke for his Government. "Colonel Beck had no hesitation today in giving the reciprocal pledge that committed his country to a possible war against Germany. Any other course, he told the British, would be unworthy of a great power. It was not Poland's way to receive a one-sided benefit, he said." (31)

German-Polish relations were growing more acute with each week. On April 28, 1939 in a Reichstag speech (32) Hitler had

repudiated Germany's Pact of Non-Aggression with Poland. To this repudiation the Polish Foreign Minister in a speech before the Polish parliament on May 5 had made no uncertain reply. As I sat in our Warsaw home and listened over the radio to that brief speech, restrained in phraseology but unyielding in tone, and heard the immediate roar of approval I knew, as did everybody in Poland, that there was no turning back. Hitler had challenged and the Poles would not let the gauntlet lie while the challenger contemptuously walked over them.

Three days after this May 5th speech of the Polish Foreign Minister, the Polish Ambassador in Moscow had his first interview with the newly appointed Foreign Commissar, Molotov. After expressing his pleasure over the Polish stand in regard to German demands, Mr. Molotov began sounding for Polish reaction to a Soviet offer of a unilateral guarantee and concluded with a summary of Soviet proposals laid before the British about April 20 (1939) detailing possible Soviet co-operation with Britain and France. Three of these points were of immense concern to Poland; namely, military co-operation by the admission of Soviet troops into both north and south Poland, Poland's repudiation of her alliance with Rumania, and a declaration by the British that their guarantee given Poland applied only to Poland's western frontiers. (33)

A few days later the Polish Ambassador sent to Mr. Molotov a résumé of the Polish attitude in these matters. Poland could not, he said, accept a unilateral guarantee, neither could it agree to a mutual guarantee, for should it be engaged in conflict with Germany, it would have no resources with which to go to the aid of the Soviets. Poland could not agree to collective negotiations. The definite position it would take would depend on the outcome of the British-French-Soviet negotiations. No decisions taken regarding Poland would be accepted unless the result of bilateral agreement. Nor could Poland repudiate its treaty with

Rumania, which was purely defensive in character, and not, as charged, directed against the U.S.S.R. The Polish Ambassador stressed the scrupulous loyalty of the Poles in their relations with the Soviet Union and remarked the favor with which Poland looked upon the British-French-Soviet negotiations which were to begin the next month. While these were going on, Poland did not deem it timely that Poland and the U.S.S.R. should undertake bilateral negotiations. (34)

Scrutiny of the Soviet conditions given the British makes it clear that the Soviets were continuing with their policy laid down at the beginning of Soviet existence—that is, of keeping their smaller neighbors under their own control. In this instance, it meant separation of Poland from Rumania, control of Poland by the Soviets, and a bilateral treaty with Poland with reference to Britain and France.

Negotiations between the delegates of the three powers conferring in Moscow were first halted by Soviet demands regarding the Baltic States, and after that, first one obstacle then another appeared. On August 22 Marshal Voroshilov, Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army, made a strong appeal to the assembled delegates of Britain and France for their confidence in the Soviet Union, asserting that the Soviets desired peace and would oppose any attempt at aggression. The next day, August 23, 1939, the signing of a Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was announced.

At the time Marshal Voroshilov made his plea he could hardly have been ignorant of the existence of the then prepared but unannounced German-Soviet Pact. For the German representative at Bucharest, instructed by Berlin, informed Rumanian circles that German-Soviet conversations regarding that pact had been in progress for some two months and a half before it was signed and that all details had been arranged long before. (35)

Marshal Voroshilov gave as a reason for the failure of nego-

tiations with the British and French that Poland had assumed a negative attitude toward the Staff conversations between the Soviets, Great Britain and France. (36). In view of the German official's statements in Bucharest, it is clear that the real reason for the negotiations' failure was not that alleged by Marshal Voroshilov.

Added evidence that agreement between Germany and the U.S.S.R. was on the way and that partition of Poland was contemplated is furnished by the reports of M. Coulondre, French Ambassador to Berlin, to his government, beginning with the report of May 7, 1939. (37) Still more evidence to that effect comes from the Finnish Blue Book, where it is reported (Doc. 123) that in May, 1939, von Ribbentrop, then German Minister of Foreign Affairs, declared, "The Fuehrer will come to an understanding with Russia, it may be that we shall witness a fourth partition of Poland."

Our own Ambassador to France, William Bullitt, in a report (August 22, 1939) of an interview with M. Daladier, wrote: "Daladier said that the action of the Soviet Union in signing a non-aggression pact with Germany, containing many unknown secret clauses, placed France in a most tragic and terrible situation. He could not understand how the French diplomats and negotiators had been so deceived by the Russians. He reminded me that six times since January 1st I had warned him of the most serious negotiations under way between the Germans and the Russians . . . " (38)

To the uninitiated, Soviet foreign policy may thus appear wholly unpredictable and hypocritical. That attitude may be questioned. The Soviet leaders are far-sighted; they do not act on impulse. They are extraordinarily well-informed of what is happening in other countries. They have one ultimate goal, are bound by no ethical codes; nothing and nobody is permitted to stand between them and anything advantageous to the attain-

ment of their goal. Given certain conditions, then, Soviet action can in general be forecast, provided the forecaster can look at things from the Soviet leaders' point of view.

What happened in Moscow between June 1st and August 22nd, 1939, is a case in point. If the German in Bucharest spoke the truth, and there seems no reason to question it, German-Soviet conversations about the pact began just about the time of the arrival in Moscow of Mr. Strang, of the British Foreign Office. The Soviets, realizing that they would encounter opposition from the British and French to the demand of a free hand for the Soviet Union in the Baltic States and East Poland, at the same time began talks with the Germans, with whom they might hope to make better terms, especially with the threat hanging over the Germans of a powerful British-French-Soviet anti-German coalition. The Soviets, unhampered by our moral and ethical standards and guided by only one consideration—the cause they represent—could drive a bargain with whichever would offer them the better terms. The Soviet Union itself wished to keep out of war, but it hoped, by playing one of the "capitalist" states against the others, to create a situation from which it could reap advantages.

To lessen the shock of the apparently sudden turn of affairs, when the German-Soviet pact was signed that August, Marshal Voroshilov stated that this pact had nothing to do with the negotiations going on with the British and French and that these would continue. But with war already on the horizon, it was needful only to read Article IV of the pact to understand the immediate departure of the British and French delegates.

"Neither of the two Contracting Parties," ran this article, "shall participate in any grouping of Powers which is directed directly or indirectly against the other Party."

6. *War*

The reader will remember that in his appeal (August 22, 1939) to the delegates from Britain and France endeavoring to reach an agreement with the Soviet Union, Marshal Voroshilov asserted that the Soviets would oppose any attempt at aggression. On the 3rd of September the Polish Ambassador in Moscow called upon Foreign Commissar Molotov to notify him formally of the German attack on, and advance into, Poland. "He [Molotov] did not question the statement that it was a case of unprovoked aggression committed without previous declaration of war . . . He was agreed in recognizing Germany as the aggressor . . . He asked whether we counted on the intervention of Great Britain and France and whether we expected any time limit. I told him . . . I anticipated their declaration of war to follow a day later, on the 4th. Mr. Molotov smiled sceptically. 'Well, we shall see, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur . . .' " (39)

Now a question of immense importance to the Poles arose. They had finally, in February 1939, got a Commercial Treaty with the Soviets, and in June the latter had several times proposed to supply the Poles with armaments, although each offer was made under conditions they knew the Poles could not accept. All this time, too, Soviet propaganda continually urged the Poles to resist the German demands. I recall that a little later that summer friends of mine in Warsaw reported hearing a message over the Soviet radio addressed to Marshal Smigly-Rydz, then Commander-in-Chief of the Polish troops. "Go on, Rydz," it said. "Twenty million Russian bayonets are behind you."

Understandably, with war a certainty, Poland wanted materials from the Soviets. At the time of the announcement of the German-Soviet Pact the question arose as to the value thereafter of the Polish-Soviet Commercial Treaty. The question was osten-

sibly answered by an interview with Marshal Voroshilov in "Izviestia" August 29, 1939, in which he explained that help in the form of both raw and war materials was a commercial matter and cited the instance of the United States' and other states' commerce with Japan while that country was at war with China. No new conventions, the Marshal asserted, were necessary for such commerce as the Polish-Soviet Treaty provided for. (40)

On September 2nd the Soviet Ambassador in Warsaw called upon Minister Beck and wanted to know why the Poles were not negotiating with his government in Moscow for supplies, saying the "Voroshilov interview" had opened the way for such negotiations. (41) But when, on September 8, the Polish Ambassador in Moscow, acting upon instructions, called upon Mr. Molotov with regard to such negotiations, he was informed that the situation had completely changed since Marshal Voroshilov made his pronouncement, that the Marshal then did not know Great Britain and France would intervene and hence could not take that circumstance into consideration. "For us, Poland," said Mr. Molotov, "is now synonymous with England." The interview ended with the Poles having the promise of receiving the quota of raw materials provided for in the quotas of that year. To all other suggestions or requests, as for instance that of transit, the reply was either that the request might call upon the Soviets to do something contrary to their pact with Germany or that the situation had changed. (42)

Yet this emphasis on a changed situation appears a little strained. The Anglo-Polish Pact was signed August 25 (1939) and published. It is not to be supposed that when Marshal Voroshilov gave his "interview" four days later he did not know of this important event tying Britain and Poland together. No great political change had taken place since the "interview."

So ended Polish-Soviet attempts at co-operation in the summer of 1939.

7. *The Red Army Moves*

Throughout the spring and summer of 1939 the Soviet Union had been urging the Poles to resist Germany, continually assuring them that the Soviet Union would sell them armament, raw materials, and other needed supplies, although never coming to any agreement whereby such supplies were obtainable. This matter of supplies and equipment was indeed a serious problem for the Poles, but they were not to be long concerned with it. On the morning of the sixteenth day after German troops, without declaration of war, crossed Poland's western border, the Red Army, with no more warning, went rolling in its trucks and tanks across the Polish-Soviet frontier (Sept. 17, 1939).

After all the encouragement the Soviet radio programs directed to Poland had given that country in resisting, there was confusion among some of the Polish border population as to the intentions of the U.S.S.R., and the rumor spread at first that the Red Army was coming to the aid of Poland against the Germans.

There was no uncertainty, however, in the minds of Polish officials in Moscow. At 2:15 of the morning of September 17th the Polish Ambassador in Moscow was called over the telephone by the Soviet Commissariat of Foreign Affairs and asked if he could be at that office at 3 o'clock, as Vice-Commissar Potemkin had an important statement for him. The Polish Ambassador replied that he could. Though expecting bad news, he was not prepared for the contents of the document Potemkin read him on his arrival. This was what he heard:

"The Polish-German war has revealed the internal bankruptcy of the Polish State. During the course of ten days' hostilities Poland has lost all her industrial areas and cultural centres. Warsaw no longer exists as the capital of Poland. The Polish Government has disintegrated, and no longer shows any sign of

life. This means that the Polish State and its Government have, in fact, ceased to exist. Therefore the Agreements concluded between the U.S.S.R. and Poland have ceased to operate. Left to her own devices and bereft of leadership, Poland has become a suitable field for all manner of hazards and surprises, which may constitute a threat to the U.S.S.R. For these reasons the Soviet Government, which hitherto has preserved neutrality, cannot any longer observe a neutral attitude towards these facts.

"The Soviet Government further cannot view with indifference the fact that the kindred Ukrainian and White Russian people, who live on Polish territory and who are at the mercy of fate, are left defenseless.

"In these circumstances, the Soviet Government has directed the High Command of the Red Army to order the troops to cross the frontier and to take under their protection the life and property of the population of Western Ukraine and Western White Russia.

"At the same time the Soviet Government proposes to take all measures to extricate the Polish people from the unfortunate war into which they were dragged by their unwise leaders, and to enable them to live a peaceful life." (43)

The Polish Ambassador immediately protested against unilateral abrogation of the agreements made by the two states, recognized none of the reasons given for such action, stated that to the best of his information the Polish State was still in existence and the Polish Government was still on territory of the Republic of Poland although obviously governmental functions were restricted by the war. Polish troops were fighting, and this alone was proof of national existence.

When Belgian and Serbian lands were occupied during the war of 1914-1918, went on the Polish Ambassador, no voice proclaimed that these states no longer existed. When Napoleon's armies occupied Moscow and Russian territory west of that city,

there was no declaration that Russia ceased to exist. Moreover, Warsaw at that time was still in Polish hands and fighting and, as stated above, the Polish Government was in Poland and functioning.

As for the "Slavonic unity" mentioned in the note, fighting alongside the Poles against the Germans were Ukrainians, White Ruthenians, Czechs, and Slovaks.

At the end of the interview, notwithstanding argument from Potemkin, the Polish Ambassador refused to receive the note or to transmit it to his Government, asserting that to do so would be proof that he "not only had no respect for his Government, but it would also be a proof that he had lost all respect for the Soviet Government." He stood firm on doing only what he was in duty bound to do, that is, he would inform his Government "of the aggression probably already committed." (44)

The telegram with this information was sent, not in code, at a few minutes past five o'clock that morning, the 17th of September. But the news of what had happened in Moscow did not reach the Polish Government until eleven o'clock, seven hours after the invasion began. All the above is based on the detailed report of the Polish Ambassador to Moscow, after his arrival in Paris in the autumn of 1939. The document is so full of interest that long excerpts from it are included in the appendix to this book.

The actual crossing of the border was going on while the Polish Ambassador was at the Soviet Foreign Office. Engaged in this invasion were thirty divisions of Soviet infantry, ten divisions of cavalry, and twelve mechanized brigades, with each unit at full strength. A few hours later Premier Molotov made a speech over the Moscow radio in which he stated: "The Polish State and its Government have virtually ceased to exist . . . The Soviet Government deems it its sacred duty to extend a helping hand to its brother Ukrainians and brother White Russians inhabiting

Poland." This speech ended with expressions of the hope "of glorious new victories of the Red Army at the battle front." (45)

There was no mention by Mr. Molotov of any provocation of the U.S.S.R. on the part of Poland which would justify the sending of the Red Army into Polish territory. And although he declared that the Polish Government had "virtually ceased to exist," yet on July 30, 1941, without taking any new action to recognize the Polish Government in London, the Soviet Government signed a pact with that Government, thus recognizing its legal status.

The reason given for the Soviet invasion of Poland was the necessity of giving "a helping hand to its brother Ukrainians and brother White Russians inhabiting Poland." There is no evidence, in the first place, that these minorities in Poland desired help from the U.S.S.R. The fact that they were hostile in their attitude to the entering Red troops is evidence that they did not wish assistance from that direction. Moreover, when the Germans and Soviets met September 22nd and agreed on a demarcation line, that line ran far to the West of that agreed upon six days later (Sept. 28). It went so far west that while Warsaw was to be German, Praga—administratively a part of Warsaw—on the opposite bank of the Vistula River was to be Soviet. The entire line from north to south ran west of that drawn later and so took in a long belt of territory where there were neither White Ruthenians nor Ukrainians. Here attention should be called to the fact that the line as agreed upon and which the U.S.S.R. now claims as its western border gave areas purely Polish to the U.S.S.R. To say, then, that the Soviets went into Poland to help their White Ruthenian and Ukrainian kindred does not suffice.

Repeatedly throughout four long years the Poles had refused Hitler's tempting offers to join Germany in an attack on and dismemberment of the Soviet Union. They would not unite with

one neighbor against the other. Call to mind Commissar Potemkin's statement to Minister Beck on May 10, about the Soviets understanding Poland's refusal to enter into an agreement with either of her great neighbors and the advantages to those neighbors of that attitude. But when Poland was standing alone, feeling the impact of German might thrown upon her from the west, north and south, the Soviet Union, that had urged Poles to resist and promised to preserve a benevolent attitude, now acted in a manner that amazed a world that did not understand the Soviet policy. The Soviet Union had accepted Hitler's proposal to join him in the invasion and partition of Poland.

The Red Army's invasion of Poland was not the result of a suddenly taken decision. It was but the next step in the fulfillment of an agreement and plan of action concluded in its fundamentals months before. The thunderclap suddenness with which it came was the result of the secrecy characteristic of Soviet procedure. The universal reaction, outside nations and groups either definitely communist or Nazi, to the Soviet move was well expressed by the *London Times:* "To the Soviet belongs the base and despicable share of accessory before and after the crime and the contempt which even the thief has for a receiver who shares none of his original risks." (46)

At the time of the Soviet invasion of Poland, the Poles were getting to their feet after the first terrific onslaught of the Germans. In some places Poles were successfully counter-attacking. General Kazimierz Sosnkowski was actually beating the Germans in the vicinity of Lvov. General Piskor's army was preparing to attack Tomaszow. The Poles were fighting desperately for time to mobilize the tens of thousands of men assembling in the eastern provinces and draw up their defense along a line marked by the rivers Bug and Stryj.

On the night of September 16, 1939, for the first time since the Germans struck, the Polish Supreme Command had reports

that justified optimism. If they could succeed in mobilizing and stabilizing a line of defense, there was a chance of holding long enough to give Britain and France time to do something. The Germans had by no means won the war, they were losing heavily, and they were beginning to feel the exhaustion that follows the first onset.

I was in south-eastern Poland at this time, in the midst of those tens of thousands of young men anxious to get into the Polish army. I knew the Polish fears and the Polish hopes. And I saw, when the news of Soviet invasion came, how utterly hopeless that action had made the Polish cause. The Soviets had given Poland the death-blow.

8. *Polish Officials Leave the U.S.S.R.*

It was necessary for Polish officials to leave the Soviet Union as quickly as possible. Molotov set as one of the conditions of their departure the return first of the staff of the Soviet Embassy, which had voluntarily remained in Warsaw. On September 25, much to the relief of the Poles, sixty-two members of that staff arrived in Moscow, their return facilitated by the intervention of the German Ambassador to the U.S.S.R.

The next day, September 26, the Polish Consulate staff in Minsk was permitted to leave, although with only half their baggage, as the Soviet authorities said that room could not be found on the trains for more. Certain members of the staff arrived in Moscow with no luggage whatever. None of this lost baggage was ever recovered. There were other troubles. At two o'clock the morning of September 30, Mr. Matusinski, the Counselor of the Polish Embassy and Acting Consul General at Kiev, was called to the representative of the Soviet Foreign Office there, the reason given being the necessity of completing details of departure arrangements. Taking two of his own men with him and accompanied by two Soviet police cars Mr. Matusinski left

the Consulate immediately. Since that hour no trace of him has been found.

At the request of the Polish Ambassador investigation of this unaccountable disappearance was undertaken by Mr. Rosso, the Italian Ambassador to Moscow, who, during the whole of the difficult period between the Soviet invasion and the departure of the Polish officials, rendered the latter all the assistance in his power. When he inquired of Molotov about the Kiev mystery, he was told first that the Polish Consul General had lost his diplomatic privileges, and if it appeared to Soviet authorities that he had committed an offense against the Soviet Union, there was nothing to be done about it. When Ambassador Rosso pointed out that the Consul General had enjoyed diplomatic privileges until September 18 and after that had been interned, therefore he could not be guilty of any such offense, there still was no satisfaction. Later investigation only brought the assurance from Molotov that the Polish official sought "is not in our hands," and his refusal to allow the Polish Ambassador to delay his departure longer on account of the missing man. (47)

After the signing of the July 30, 1941 Polish-Soviet Pact the Polish Embassy in the U.S.S.R. at once took steps which they hoped might lead to finding Mr. Matusinski, but such efforts were in vain. No trace of him could be discovered.

CHAPTER V

The Soviet Union Takes Over

1. The Polish Government Is Out; Comrades Fix a Frontier

When the Polish Government was informed of the Soviet invasion, two courses of action were open to it: it could remain in south-east Poland, whither the different ministries had gone from the capital, or it could cross the frontier into Rumania or Hungary. Should the first alternative be chosen, the Soviets would certainly take the members of the Polish government prisoners. But if the government went to Rumania, with which state Poland had an alliance of mutual defence, there was hope of continued existence as a Polish Government and, with Rumania, of continued resistance to the invaders.

The second course was decided upon. But Polish hopes were quickly dashed. The Germans already had a stout hold on Rumania, thanks largely to economic penetration. Germany and the Soviet Union were now ostensibly close friends; Germany saw to it that Rumania should not make trouble for Russia. The members of the Polish Government were neither welcomed as allies by Rumania, nor given transit permits to France, who was a Polish ally, but were speedily interned.

Thus the Soviet Union saw the Polish Government out of the way so far as the Soviet Union was concerned. The succeeding Polish Government, located in Paris, was not able to interfere with Soviet plans. The eastern provinces of Poland were now at the disposal of Soviet authorities, except for final settlement of the line that would divide the Soviet conquests from those of the Germans.

Representatives of the German and Soviet staffs held joint conferences (September 22) five days after the Soviet invasion and fixed the demarcation line along the rivers San, Vistula and Pisa. (48)

But this agreement proved temporary. Six days later (September 28) in Moscow the final partitioning of Polish territory took place. This put the line considerably to the east of Warsaw, gave the Germans 72,850 square miles with a population of 22,140,000 and to the Soviet Union 77,620 square miles and 13,190,000 Polish citizens. Thus did von Ribbentrop and Molotov complete the partition of Poland.

2. *A New Administration for Eastern Poland*

Persons who were in that part of Poland occupied by the Red Army and who lived for many months under the Soviet regime, have brought to the outside world the authentic record of what happened in the eastern provinces from the time the Soviets took over until they were driven out by the Germans in June 1941.

The invasion had in many districts been heralded by Soviet radio announcements explaining that the Red Army was coming not as an enemy but to protect the property and lives of the people. Loud speakers put up in the town and village squares immediately after Soviet troops' entrance announced to the local population that the Red Army had come as their "liberator". There were enthusiastic speeches from the Soviet Union describing the paradise the "liberated" would from now on share. There was no reference to conqueror and conquered.

During the first three or four weeks of occupation, administration was in the hands of the Soviet military authorities. Provided there was no opposition to the Soviets, certain organizations of a cultural nature were not forbidden to exist. State and municipal administration methods were not much changed, but local administration underwent radical change. In each village

a peasant-and-workers' council was appointed to which administration in its respective area was entrusted. The Polish police were replaced by what was termed workers' militia. Communists brought in from the U.S.S.R. were installed in all positions of importance and local communists were placed in secondary positions. Chaos reigned. Polish officials who worked as the subordinates of the new appointees actually were responsible for whatever good was accomplished.

Sovietization of the occupied territory began without delay. The banks, factories, stores, artisans' shops, estates, enterprises of all sorts were subject to nationalization. By fixing taxes at an astronomical figure, individual and private enterprises of every description could be forced in time to yield.

The rouble rate was set at parity with the Polish currency unit, the zloty, and this worked great hardships, for the real value of the rouble was only a fraction of that of the zloty. Moreover, during the first days of the occupation, Soviet officers and soldiers and later civil officials and employees and their families bought up everything in sight. These newcomers had plenty of money, for from the Polish banks the authorities had taken over, Polish zlotys had poured into the pockets of the Soviet soldiers and employees.

Everything in this "capitalist" land charmed the new arrivals. Here seemed to be all the things they had heard of but never owned. So they bought every watch, every fountain pen, all the clothing, the perfume, the jewelry, the shoes, the knick-knacks and everything else on the merchants' shelves. A Red soldier bought fly paper—though he did not know for what use it was intended—when the shopkeeper told him that this was the only article remaining unsold in the shop. Soldiers wore watches on each wrist. Eastern Poland was soon as bare of merchandise as a field is of grain after a locust visitation, or the stores which I have seen in the cities of the Soviet Union. The accounts given me

in Bucharest and Budapest in the late autumn and winter of 1939-40 by eye-witnesses of this orgy of buying contained much that was pure comedy.

Of one thing this buying furnished positive proof to the local populations of East Poland. That was, that if things which were looked upon as absolute necessities by the average citizen of Poland were hailed as unhoped-for finds by the citizens of the U.S.S.R., that country evidently was not the paradise its broadcasters advertised it to be. Supporting this opinion, too, was the wretched appearance of Soviet officials and their families.

All stocks of raw materials, all warehouses with their contents were taken over by the Soviet authorities immediately after the occupation of each area. Metals, textiles, lumber, sugar, tobacco, agricultural machinery, vodka from the state distilleries, everything was confiscated. Railway rolling-stock was taken, and an attempt made to adapt it to the Soviet broad gauge. All fuel stocks, whether oil, coal or wood, were confiscated. Furniture and office equipment from certain banks and government buildings were removed, loaded into cars and sent to the U.S.S.R. Private homes were entered and treated in the same fashion. Installation of power houses, technical equipment from railway and other shops, machinery from sugar refineries, and radio factories—all over the occupied territory things of this sort were taken, packed up, and shipped east. Not even padlocks and tin roofs escaped.

So much for the first phase of the occupation. Anybody who had anything to sell had a market. But of what use was the money he got for it? and how long would it be recognized currency? All factory production was at a standstill, for raw materials were not to be had. Confusion and chaos were everywhere. There was much rail and truck traffic, but it was all concerned with the movement of confiscated stocks and stores to the Soviet Union.

3. The Soviets and International Law

The Hague Convention of 1907 makes a distinction between military occupation of territory belonging to another State and annexation. The *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia,* under the head "Military occupation," has this paragraph: "Military occupation is the temporary occupation of all or part of one State's territory by the armed forces of another State. Since the middle of the 19th Century International Law has distinguished between military occupation, as temporary occupation, and annexation, or final taking over of foreign territory. The Hague Convention of 1907 . . . Art. 42-56, confirmed this distinction and established regulations concerning occupied territory. The Convention states that the occupying authority is under obligation to preserve peace and order in the occupied regions, to respect the existing laws of the country, to maintain permanent local administrative and judiciary organs. Occupying authorities have not the right to force the population to any acts directed against its fatherland, they must respect the honor, laws, life, religious faiths and private property of the people of the occupied lands. In many cases occupation has ended in the annexation of the occupied territories. Thus Japan in 1904 occupied Korea and in 1910 annexed the whole of it. In 1938 the German Nazis occupied Austria and incorporation followed immediately."

Looking ahead of the time of the Soviet occupation of Poland, we find that in his "notes on German Atrocities" (49), Mr. Molotov cites this Hague Convention in support of his charges against the Germans in their conduct in German-occupied Soviet areas.

Soviet opinion on this question was also expressed in the *History of the Communist Party* (p. 317), where it says, ". . . fascist Germans by unilateral action broke the Versailles Treaty and through the use of violence set about revising European

frontiers. The German fascists have made no secret of the fact that they intend to bring neighboring states under subjection to them." . . . "As for the theft of Austria, that has nothing to do with the fight against the Versailles Treaty . . . Austria was not a part of Germany before the war (1914-18) or after it. German annexation of Austria by force was simply an imperialistic grab of the territory of another . . ."

Such were the 1938 pronouncements of the Soviets in regard to the occupation and annexation of foreign territory. But when they themselves without provocation and without regard for treaties to which they had solemnly set their seal, became an invading and occupying power, they conveniently forgot their earlier declarations. From the moment of the Red Army's entry into Poland the country was treated as though occupation meant annexation.

4. *"Elections"*

Following the brief military administration of the occupied territory came the civilian, actually the N.K.V.D., occupation. The Narodniy Kommissariat Vnutrennyh Del (National Commissariat of Internal Affairs) is the most widely known and greatly feared institution in all the U.S.S.R. Belonging to this, as we would say, Department of the Interior, are the Soviet secret police, earlier known as the G.P.U. So important a role do they play in Russian life that they are spoken of by the population as the N.K.V.D., as if these secret police were the whole department. "The four-letter men" is another common term used in referring to them. Officials and even lesser employees were sent to Poland from the U.S.S.R., for, as will be explained in a later section, the Soviets had their reasons for not trusting the local people, communists least of all.

Arrests and executions had been going on from the beginning of the occupation. A reign of terror conducted by local malcon-

tents who now had their chance, and by the invaders, who labelled all educated people and property-owners "enemies of the people," held sway. With the taking over of the administration by communist civilian authorities, a veritable purge of the population was carried out, the arrested being executed without trial, deported, or held in prison.

After this combing out of elements suspected of being hostile to the Soviets was completed, elections were announced, to take place October 22, 1939, to the People's Assemblies of "the Western Ukraine" and "Western White Ruthenia." For, along with other violations of the Hague Convention, the Soviets had divided the Polish territory they had occupied into two distinct regions, "Western White Ruthenia" and "Western Ukraine," after having first violated international law by giving the city of Vilno and a small surrounding area to Lithuania. This last was rather by way of loan than gift, for some months later all Lithuania was to be taken into the U.S.S.R.

The "Western Ukraine" comprised 34,641 square miles. This area had never belonged to Tsarist Russia, having become part of Austria at the time of the 18th century Polish partitions. It had never been known as "the Western Ukraine". In fact it had never been called the Ukraine at all, as the term Polish Ukraine referred only to lands bordering the Dnieper which were a part of the Republic of Poland until the first partition (1772). In history most of the area dubbed Western Ukraine by the Soviets was known as Czerwona Rus—Red Ruthenia.

The provinces united by the Soviets into "Western White Ruthenia," also a new designation, had a combined area of 39,760 square miles. They had fallen to the Tsar's share at the second partition of Poland, in 1793. Hence from 1793 to 1915 they were a part of the Russian Empire. But before that time there had been no association of these provinces with the Muscovite lands. Before their conquest by the Lithuanian princes in the thirteenth

and fourteenth centuries and incorporation with Lithuania into the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, they had belonged to the princes of the south, who were politically hostile to the Muscovite princes.

The announcement of the election date was made just 23 days after the Red Army entered Poland, and the voters were to have just 16 days (Oct. 6-22) to study the unfamiliar elections laws and choose delegates to execute their will. Since the names of the delegates had to be in 5 days before the 22nd, in reality the time was cut down to 11 days. Thus, in respect of time allowed, this "plebiscite" differed radically from those conducted after World War I, imperfect though they were.

The Soviet Government, however, had manifestly made extensive preparations for the dissemination of propaganda in the occupied territories. An almost incredible number of canvassers and agitators took part. It was noted that the officers and soldiers of the Red Army were active in all phases of propaganda work. "Pravda" (Oct. 22) reports, "During the period of preparation for the election of delegates to the People's Assembly of the Western Ukraine, thousands of 'fighting men' and officers carried on an immense political work among the population. The soldier-political worker was ever present and everywhere." In the Sarny district, as an illustration, Soviet soldiers took an active part in pre-election activity, among other things, riding through the villages in trucks with election slogans and transparencies. No less important figures were the Soviet officials, artists and such who were sent from the U.S.S.R. to help. For example, "Pravda" (Oct. 15) reports that at a meeting in Novogrodek, the President of the Supreme Council of the White Ruthenian Soviet Republic, Natalewicz, and the well-known artist Cherkasov, of Leningrad, made speeches. Comrade Ponomarenko, another important official in the White Ruthenian Republic, was in Bialystok the whole time preceding the elections. "Pravda" (Oct. 23) states

that he reported the situation extraordinarily good and the elections going well.

Political commissars, members of the N.K.V.D., and the militia devoted a large part of their time to election propaganda. "Pravda" (Oct. 16), through its Kiev correspondent, reports, "Yesterday the first trainload of campaigners from the South Western Railroad Union, the organized political section of the Railroad Union, left for the Western Ukraine. The train consisted of 10 cars . . ." Men and women had been sent in throngs from the U.S.S.R. for propaganda purposes, to accomplish which they had the radio, loud speakers, posters, newspapers, halls for meetings which groups were compelled to attend, and the factories at their disposal. In the cities there was house-to-house canvassing, when the occupants were often forced to listen to long reading of the election laws which had been printed in pamphlet form, under the title "Election Laws for the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine" and similarly for "Western White Ruthenia."

There were tens of thousands of Soviet citizens preparing the people of the occupied lands for the approaching election of delegates who would decide for them the fate of Eastern Poland. "Pravda" (Oct. 22) states that in "Western White Ruthenia" alone there were some one hundred thousand "agitators" and persons preparing for the elections, and that this number did not include the soldiers, which means that there was one election worker from the U.S.S.R. for every twenty-seven or twenty-eight persons qualified to vote.

The propaganda everywhere followed the same line. It extolled the Soviet regime and told of the remarkable things it had done for the people of Russia. It continually reminded people of the obligation resting upon them to vote, and behind the reminder there was more than a hint that compulsion would be used if persuasion failed. No argument was presented as to

why people should vote as they were being urged. All the talks and printed material were strongly communistic in character. In fact, although the reason given for the Soviets sending their armies into Poland was the protection of kindred people, that is, for national reasons, nationality ceased to play any part whatever, being replaced by communistic ideology and the evils of "capitalism" in Poland.

The election laws were put in circulation October 6. Candidates had to be registered by October 17. Actually, then, as already noted, the people had just eleven days in which to familiarize themselves with the new regulations and choose their delegates. While in many respects Soviet election laws appear to resemble those of such countries as the United States and Great Britain, in the nomination of candidates there is a radical difference. The Soviets have a one party system. No names can go on the ballots except those proposed by local peasant or workers' committees, which are of course controlled. This means that no other group can nominate a candidate, that only one name is presented the voter.

The electoral law for this "plebiscite" provided that only certain specified groups in each newly-defined electoral district could nominate candidates. These local bodies in each district were to meet together and decide on a candidate. What they did actually was to send a representative to a conference at a given place; and this committee was supposed to name the candidate for that district. But the candidates for delegates to the People's Assemblies were actually named by the Soviet authorities. The committee supposed to name them had only to take formal action at meetings called for this purpose, to which a certain number of persons from approved groups were admitted. Soviet citizens or representatives of the Soviet authorities were always present as speakers at these meetings, no discussion was permitted, and acceptance of candidates was by acclamation.

Before me as I write lies a long list of towns and villages from which Polish citizens escaped to Britain or America after those elections took place. There is ample testimony to what happened there. Everywhere it was much the same. The pre-election propaganda, the organization of the elections, the naming of the candidates was the work of Soviet officials and the Soviet army. Account tallies with account, for from each place comes more than one. From the district of Tarnopol, Sarny, Lomza, Chelm, Luck, Brzesc and scores of others, they are the same. The candidates for delegates to the People's Assemblies of "Western White Ruthenia" and the "Western Ukraine" were not named by the people.

In the instances where the opposition was bold enough and strong enough to prevail and succeeded in naming its candidate, the next morning found that candidate under arrest. In the Polish-Ukrainian village of Perechinsk in the Carpathians a number of persons were executed and scores deported to the U.S.S.R. That is one instance among many.

Some of the candidates were Soviet citizens, newly arrived of course in Poland. But since there is no residence clause in the Soviet election laws, this was no obstacle. Naturally there was no citizenship restriction. To cite two such cases, "Pravda" (Oct. 15) reports that Ponomarenko, an official of the White Ruthenian Soviet Republic, and the Commander of the White Ruthenian Front, Kovalev, were named candidates. In another issue (Oct. 19) it announces that Premier Molotov and Marshal Voroshilov had been named candidates in the Krzemieniec district.

The election laws stated (Art. 1) that "all citizens . . . who have completed their eighteenth year, without regard to race, nationality, religious faith, education, place of residence, social class, financial condition or former activities, have the right to

take part in the election of delegates and to be themselves elected."

There was no stipulation as to residence; hence hundreds of thousands of the more than a million Polish citizens who, it is estimated, had fled to Eastern Poland before the advancing Germans in the first two weeks of September 1939 were not only considered eligible to vote but were informed that they were expected to vote. From Bialystok and Lvov, from Tarnopol and Sarny, from Lomza and Zolkiew—from place after place word has been brought of compulsion employed to get these people to vote. In addition to these refugees from the west, there were hundreds of thousands of persons from the U.S.S.R.—all those who had taken part in the election campaigning, the families of officials and army officers, teachers, political agents, anybody eighteen years of age. Soldiers of the Red Army voted, as will be shown farther on.

Registration of voters was carried on during the time of preparation, but when election day came there was notable leniency in checking identification cards or passports, and numerous instances were noted where no documents were demanded. There was nothing, therefore, to prevent persons who desired to do so from going to different polling places and thus voting several times. In a report from Tarnopol, "Pravda" (Oct. 24) says, ". . . to various voting places there came persons . . . who said, 'We are Polish soldiers who have just got back home. They thought we had been killed, so our names are not on the lists; but we want to vote.' Their names were added to the supplementary list. Refugees also asked to have their names added."

5. *October Twenty-Second*

While the regulations printed in the leaflets made the elections seem fair enough, in reality the district committees could control everything; and these were communist agents. But the

significance of the elections can be gauged from speeches made by Soviet agents at pre-election meetings, which took place in even the smallest communities.

According to the account of one narrator: "The election will be held next Sunday," said one speaker. "Immediately after the election Soviet authorities will start to distribute passports, which will be given to those on the list of voters. Without a passport nobody will be able to obtain either work or food rations. I know that all of you will vote, as anybody who refuses to fulfill that duty will show that he is a K.R. (counter-revolutionary). And you know that with such, Soviet authorities do not waste time. Long live Stalin! Long live the Soviet Union!"

When an opportunity was given for questions, a voice asked, "What about those who are sick?"

"Wagons and cars will be sent for them," was the reply.

When October 22, election day, came the Soviet authorities commandeered trucks and horse-drawn wagons for this purpose. Cripples, invalids, the aged, the ill were gathered up and taken to the voting places. It was a busy day for the so-called "people's militia," which supplanted the Polish police, for Red Army men, and the N.K.V.D. For their business it was to see that everybody of voting age and on the lists, whether sick or well, went to the polls. Those who did not go were arrested as "enemies of the people."

On entering the voting place, the voter was asked to show his passport or card of identification, whereupon a mark was put opposite his name in the register. He was given a sheet of paper bearing the official list of candidates, told to drop the paper in the ballot box or retire behind a screen and make whatever changes he desired. If he did retire behind the screen, he was thereby confessing himself in opposition to the Soviet Government, and an "enemy of the people." In some places voters were told quite frankly that supporters of the regime would place

their ballot in the box, those hostile to the regime would use the screen.

That the voting was not secret is evident from the above. But there was also another frequent violation of regulations through the removal of the ballot box from the polls and carrying it into private homes. "Pravda" (Oct. 24) carried this paragraph in a report on the election in the village of Koszelewo in the Nowogrodek district. "At 12 o'clock only one person, Olga Ulasiewicz, who was ill, had not voted. Ostrowski, a member of the electoral committee, went to her home with a ballot. About 2 o'clock the polls were closed, with one hundred per cent of the voters having voted." Here it should be noted that in a large number of places those who had not voted by 12 o'clock were called upon and escorted to the polls. There were many similar instances and there are also accounts of the ballot box having been carried from house to house for the collection of votes. In Brzesc the ballot box was taken to the hospitals.

Accounts of individuals and groups being compelled to vote have come from every district, but one of the most unusual is that from Postawa where the crew of a train that was making its scheduled stop was taken from it and forced to go to the polls. Persons who did not obey the order to go to the polls were imprisoned or even summarily shot, as in the case of two young men in the town of Luck.

Red Army men voted along with local people, as at Wysiecz, near Rawa Ruska. At Bialystok and Lvov the polls for the Red Army were in the barracks. There was no attempt to keep the fact of the Soviet soldiers' participation in the voting a secret.

Election commissions, always with representatives of the Soviet authorities, Red Army officers, N.K.V.D. men, or some such trustworthy Soviet citizens, the controlling members, were in charge of the voting and checked the ballots before they were dropped into the box. This meant that anyone who wrote an

anti-Soviet sentiment on the ballot or who crossed out the name of the candidate was liable to immediate arrest.

The atmosphere at the polls was very different from that usually associated with such occasions. Red Army men provided "little concerts", playing and singing the melodies the people are known to love, according to "Pravda" (Oct. 24). The impression was rather of a peasant merry-making than of an election concerning a matter of vital import.

No neutral observers, no foreign correspondents were allowed in East Poland during the elections. The ballots were counted by persons appointed by the Soviet authorities and the results were sent to the Central Election Committee. There was no control of the counting by representatives of the local population. The election returns were never published. All that was made known was the number in each of the two areas—"Western White Ruthenia" and "the Western Ukraine" entitled to vote, the number and percentage voting, the number and percentages for and against the candidate. According to these Soviet statistics, 92.83 per cent of those entitled to vote in "Western Ukraine" and 96.71 per cent of those in "Western White Ruthenia" exercised that right, and of that number 90.93 per cent in the former area and 90.67 per cent in the latter voted for the candidate. In the two areas together, 90,858 votes were declared invalid.

However, the turnout at the polls was not satisfactory to the Soviet authorities, despite the herculean efforts made to get people there and the exultation feigned when the count was made. It has been established that in many districts less than 50 per cent of the number that was reported voted. In the towns control was not very difficult and compulsion could be successfully employed. Not so, however, in the country districts. For example, in the village of Kolnic in the Augustow district, where roughly one thousand should have voted, only twenty went to the polls. Despite this situation the election board declared the candidate

unanimously chosen, although the law stated that a majority of the voters in a district must cast their votes for a candidate if he were to be declared elected.

6. The People's Assemblies

In "Western Ukraine" 1,495 electoral districts were declared to have elected delegates, in "Western White Ruthenia," 927. This left eleven districts in the former and two in the latter unaccounted for; that is, they failed to elect. These were passed over in silence; no new elections were called. The plans for the People's Assemblies were not affected by this irregularity and that of the "West Ukraine" was called for Oct. 26, to take place in Lvov, and that of "West White Ruthemia" for Oct. 28 in Bialystok.

Both groups were manifestly communistic in character. The halls in which they convened were decorated with the communist emblems. The speeches were openly communist, as were the motions made and approved unanimously. From this it is evident that these bodies did not represent the people of Eastern Poland, among whom the communists, according to pre-war statistics, did not form more than one per cent of the population. The atmosphere of these Assemblies was similar to that surrounding the elections. Voting was a formality. High Soviet officials from the U.S.S.R. had been elected delegates—names of some were mentioned in the discussion of candidates—and these had no difficulty in steering the course desired. Each Assembly passed the following motions:

1. Henceforth all authority in the "Western Ukraine" (or "Western White Ruthenia") belongs to the workers in the towns and in the country, as represented by soviets or delegates of the workers.
2. A request for "admission" into the U.S.S.R.
3. Confiscation of landed estates.

4. Nationalization of banks and large industries.

5. Homage for the "great Stalin."

The "plebiscite" had been taken. The "delegates" had voted for incorporation of the areas they were supposed to represent into the U.S.S.R., not as a new Soviet republic but by uniting with two existing Soviet republics.

Apart from the fact that the Soviet Union was acting contrary to international law in holding elections in occupied territory, all those compelled to take part in them recognized that they were a farce. Very different was the actual attitude of the inhabitants of the occupied regions from that expressed in the Proclamation of the People's Assembly of Western Ukraine, in which occur these paragraphs:

"On the basis of the experience of all revolutions, on the basis of the experience of the fraternal peoples of the Soviet Union, it is proved that only the Soviet Power gives real expression to and is the defender of the interests of the working people. All the many centuries of the history of mankind go to prove that any other power represents naked domination and the unbridled license of a handful of exploiters . . .

". . . Only the Soviets are the most democratic state power; only through the Soviets does the entire laboring people participate in the administration of the state, in the building of a free and happy life for itself . . .

"Only the Soviet Power creates conditions for the flourishing of the talents of the people, for promotion from among the people of leaders and organizers of various branches of state economic and public life . . .... (50)

The so-called People's Assembly was, as we have seen, composed largely of communist agents.

7. Premier Molotov's Report

To the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., assembled October 31, 1939, Foreign Commissar and Premier Molotov made a lengthy and significantly worded report. He considers first the changes that have taken place during the past months in German-Soviet relations. "Instead of the enmity that was fostered in every way by certain European powers, we now have a rapprochement and the establishment of friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Germany. Further improvement of these new relations, good relations, found its reflection in the German-Soviet treaty on amity and frontier signed in Moscow September 28." (51)

Then he turns to Poland, saying, ". . . one swift blow to Poland, first by the German Army and then by the Red Army, and nothing was left of this ugly offspring of the Versailles Treaty which had existed by oppressing non-Polish nationalities."

He reports on the general international situation: "It is nevertheless clear that a war like this was bound to cause radical changes in the situation in Europe, and not only in Europe. In connection with these important changes in the international situation, certain old formulas, which we employed but recently and to which many people are so accustomed, are now obviously out of date and inapplicable . . . We know, for example, that in the last few months such concepts as 'aggression' and 'aggressor' have acquired a new concrete connotation, a new meaning."

He refers to the pacts made with the Baltic states. "These pacts are based on mutual respect for the political, social and economic structure of the contracting parties, and are designed to strengthen the basis for peaceful, neighborly cooperation between our peoples. We stand for the scrupulous and punctilious observance of pacts on a basis of complete reciprocity, and we declare that all nonsense about sovietizing the Baltic countries

is only to the interest of our common enemies and of all anti-Soviet provocateurs . . ."

In conjunction with Premier Molotov's remarks on the treaties with the Baltic States, it is worth while to note the comment made on these pacts by the official daily, "Izviestia." (52)

"The Soviet-Latvian mutual assistance pact is the outcome of friendly relations based on mutual trust in which the Soviet Union's respect for the independence of other states was a model. The Soviet Union has never exploited the position of being a great and strong power confronting small countries."

And farther on, "All peoples will greet the treaty as a new guarantee of peace. The U.S.S.R. has not overlooked a single chance of supporting peace and avoiding war . . . The pact ends all machinations of certain great powers who until now entertained hopes of attracting States bordering on the U.S.S.R. into the orbit of their imperialist policy as a force that might be used in a struggle against the Soviet Union . . . The Soviet-Estonian and Soviet-Latvian negotiations again show how carefully the Soviet Government respects the rights of small nations and how sharply the policy of the great Socialist power differs from those of imperialist States."

Returning to the interrupted consideration of the Molotov report, we find that he defends Germany as a state striving for peace, condemns England and France, asserts it is absurd to fight for the "restoration of the former Polish state." "Is it not clear," he asks, "that the aim of the present war in Europe is not what it is proclaimed to be in the official statements intended for the public in France and England? That is, it is not a fight for democracy, but something else of which these gentlemen do not speak openly."

In this tenor the Soviet Commissar continues, leading always to justification of German-Soviet Union accord and co-operation. Near the end of this exposition he states, "We have always held

that a strong Germany is an indispensable condition for a durable peace in Europe." The whole report of this astonishing man, still Foreign Commissar of the U.S.S.R., will be found in the appendix.

The new alignment was thus explained to the people of the Soviet Union. Henceforth their future was bound up with that of Germany, and one of the first steps into that future was the reception into their Union, November 1, of the Soviet-occupied parts of Poland, which in the preceding month had elected delegates who voted for incorporation into that Union. Molotov could not, so soon after the election date, announce the results, but in his March 10, 1940 report to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. he declared that "the masses in Eastern Poland welcomed their liberation and the new victory of the Soviets with indescribable enthusiasm and that nine-tenths of the population took part in their first opportunity to exercise universal, direct and equal rights, showing their eager anticipation of joining the U.S.S.R." (53)

CHAPTER VI

The New Situation

1. Administration

After the incorporation of the Polish lands into the Republi of White Ruthenia and the Ukraine, new administrative center were established, but the authority was still in the hands of th N.K.V.D. or secret police, whose network covers the entir U.S.S.R. and whose power is in every sphere supreme. Al Soviet officials, whoever they may be or whatever their positio must bow to N.K.V.D. orders. The N.K.V.D. working in Polan was composed of men from the Soviet Union. In each admin istrative center it had its own special police or militia whos chief also was from the U.S.S.R.

Poles were removed from all higher government offices, thei places taken by persons brought in, or again by local peopl whose enthusiasm for communism and the Soviet Union wa considered genuine. Ukrainian nationalists were no more ac ceptable than Poles, perhaps less so.

Russian was the official language in the White Ruthenia area, Russian and Ukrainian in the southeast. Signs in Polis began to disappear. Polish schools were transformed int Ukrainian or Russian, even though teachers in those language were lacking and the children to be taught could understan neither tongue. Inspectors and directors from the Soviet Unio revised the entire school system to correspond to communis ideology. In fact these persons were political commissars as signed to their duties by the N.K.V.D.

Nationalization of private estates, all industries, and all Polish state-owned property was completed. Co-operatives, or state-owned stores, had been instituted on the Soviet plan. These received their quotas of supplies from the branches of the wholesale base of each line of production.

All the social gains made by the Polish working class in twenty years were wiped out. The Polish forty-six-hour week was abolished. Workers arriving five or ten minutes late got two years of hard labor, those wilfully leaving their place of work, up to ten years in prison. All working men's organizations were dissolved, and all union organizers were listed as "enemies of the revolution."

All working people, craftsmen, professional folk and government employees had to form local unions, which passed on all work to be done, allotted it to individuals, bought tools and materials. This was collectivization applied to trades and professions, including even artists who were kept busy during the first months painting portraits of Soviet leaders to be put in public buildings in the newly added territory. Individual initiative and production was thus outlawed; those persisting in private ownership were taxed out of existence.

The courts had undergone a complete change. Both judge and prosecutor were from the Soviet Union. Charges were made by N.K.V.D. agents, most of them for speculation or on the ground that the arrested was a "class enemy". Every Pole brought before a court was considered a counter-revolutionary. Sentences were out of all proportion to the charges, and arrest was practically synonymous with conviction.

The vast majority of Polish citizens arrested were charged with offences committed before the Soviet occupation, that is, during the years of free and independent Poland. Under Polish law, what these persons were charged with was not only not a crime but a duty which they were fulfilling as citizens of the

Polish State. It could not be a crime under Polish law to be a Polish policeman or frontier guard or to belong to the political party of one's choice. It is understandable, of course, that on the territories of the U.S.S.R. such things could not be, but it is not understandable that the Soviets should make their authority in the occupied territory retroactive. Yet that is what they did. Contrary to all interpretation of law and justice the Soviets, on their occupation of Eastern Poland, in effect proceeded as if these territories had always been under Soviet jurisdiction. Thus it is clear that the Soviet penal code was applied to offenses committed before Soviet occupation.

Authority of the many officials overlapped and none respected the decision or request of another. The following will illustrate. A woman postal employee in Lvov was informed that through some mistake in her passport she would not be permitted to reside in that area. Soviet law forbids an employee to leave his place of employment at will. The clerk in question then asked the postal chief for permission to give up the work, explaining the situation. He refused. She explained her predicament to the N.K.V.D., who informed her that the refusal was no concern of theirs. She must leave Lvov. She was arrested and sentenced to four months' imprisonment.

Religious services and the observance of Sunday were at first tolerated where the people stubbornly held out, but the Soviet authorities announced that reforms would soon be effected in that sphere also. The "reforms" were already being put into operation. Taxes amounting to sums of 20,000 to 40,000 roubles a year were levied on churches, sums which no parish could hope to raise. The authorities thus took over the church and converted it into a Young Communists' Club, an atheist museum, or a movie house. (Movie houses showed only Soviet films.)

The clergy had no electoral rights and were not permitted to carry on any of their pastoral or teaching duties. They could

not conduct funeral services. No religious instruction could be given children, even inside a church. Anti-religious teaching was carried on in the schools.

2. The Economic Situation

On December 21, 1939, without any warning whatsoever, the Polish unit of currency was withdrawn from circulation, and the Soviet rouble designated in its stead. All the cash possessed by the inhabitants of the occupied area was at this time in zlotys, since everything purchased by the newcomers had been paid for in Polish money and the small amount—300 zlotys—which depositors had been allowed to withdraw when the banks were nationalized had also been in Polish currency.

Yet when the zloty was now demonetized, contrary to all international custom the Soviet regulation made no provision whatever for the exchange of zlotys for roubles. With one order the Soviet authorities had left the people of the occupied area without, as Americans would say, a penny.

However, in practice, exchange did take place, the zloty serving as a sort of auxiliary currency. Confidence in the Polish money was so great in some places that for a time it still had a rouble's value. In others it dropped to five per cent. Illegal transactions abounded.

Confiscation of estates and modest farmsteads, and the attempts to establish collectives had brought chaos into rural life. The peasants were firmly opposed to collectives and did what they could to avoid being drawn into them. The nationalization of farm machinery production brought confusion into that industry and it was difficult to find even the simplest tool in what remained of the open market.

In the autumn of 1939 Soviet inspectors visited every farm, regardless of size, and after a survey informed the owner or workers how much grain, fruit and vegetables must be turned

over to the local co-operatives. Hemp and flax for textiles were also thus listed. Livestock and poultry came under government control. When time came for delivery the government agents on the spot chose the best of each product and paid for it at the very low official rates.

The process of forcing collectivization went on rapidly, through the imposition of taxes the peasants could not possibly pay.

Country people fared better than townsfolk despite their difficulties and the extent to which they were robbed of the fruits of their labor. Salaries and wages were extremely low, much lower than they had been in free Poland. With everything being shipped to the U.S.S.R., there was little left for local people. Yet even for this little, people bartered clothing, furniture, objects of art—whatever they had that was desirable. As for anything sold in the stores, standing in line became a regular part of daily life.

It will be remembered that the Soviets declared they had come into Poland to free the population and raise the economic level, claiming that the Polish governments had always neglected these areas. Through collectivization and industrialization, the Soviets asserted, they would solve the Polish rural problem. Instead, Soviet policies not only ruined the dispossessed property owners but deprived all others of means of production and the opportunity of disposing of their produce at an advantage.

The Soviet spokesmen asserted nothing had been done in the way of industrializing this area. It is outstandingly an agricultural region, as statistics show. Yet the Soviet charge of no Polish industrialization there can be disproved. Poland's lumber and timber products industry occupied a leading place in Polish commercial life, and it was based on the great forests of these provinces. Immediately after the Soviet occupation, all wood stocks were shipped to the U.S.S.R.; then newly formed lumber trusts set about felling timber. Daily trainloads of planed lum-

ber, matchwood and fuel wood went east. This was not industry so much as exploitation and wasteful usage. Soviet troops are known to have burned planed lumber for fuel and firemen on railroad locomotives, being short of coal, made use of wood.

In free Poland 73 per cent of the oil industry was located in the area occupied by the Red Army. During the first half of 1939 it produced an average of 30,500 tons of crude oil monthly. During the first year of Soviet administration the monthly average was little more than 22,000 tons.

Independent Poland had great cotton and woolen mills, and textiles ranked high among exports. The Soviets, instead of increasing an already flourishing and expanding industry, stripped the mills of much of their machinery and sent it to their own textile factories, which have long been known to be in need of equipment. In consequence, the Bialystok mills of Poland worked only three or four days a week and shifts were four hours long instead of eight. What was produced was shipped directly to the U.S.S.R.

The leather industry, also of importance in these Polish areas, suffered a similar fate. Leather goods were particularly in demand in the Soviet Union, where only the privileged, as the soldiers, officials, government employees and N.K.V.D., could be supplied with leather footwear.

Cottage industries and the trades disappeared from the Polish scene, forced into unions or *artiels* which eliminated individual production. This collectivization of craftsmen spelt the death of such production as came from the skilled workman in the small shop or the rug weaver and lacemaker in the cottage. In the union they got their orders from the Soviet Government and they did not get either sufficient materials or tools with which to work.

Such, in sum, is a brief account of what the Soviet regime did for the economic life of the eastern provinces of Poland.

It not only stopped economic progress; it set the clock decades back. The practice of the Soviet theories brought depredation, pillage, disorganization, and impoverishment.

3. Arrests, Imprisonment, Executions

A mass of information has been assembled concerning the happenings in Eastern Poland during the Soviet occupation. This is based upon interviews with persons who escaped from that area while the Soviets were still in control or even after they had been pushed back; on letters got out secretly and on reports made by the underground; on letters from Polish citizens deported to the U.S.S.R. and, after the signing of the Polish-Soviet pact July 30, 1941, upon depositions made by certain of those who were released. It is on such evidence that the following brief summary regarding arrests, imprisonment, and executions is made.

Almost the first groups of Polish citizens to suffer the displeasure of the Soviets were the land owners. Accompanied by much talk of "the Polish lords," who according to the Soviets owned all eastern Poland and held the rest of the population as serfs, the Red Army as "liberators" occupied Poland. The facts are that as early as 1931, on the average only some fifteen per cent of the arable land of the Polish eastern provinces consisted of holdings of 125 acres or more. In Volhynia it was just over ten per cent. This percentage was greatly lowered through rural reform which by 1938 had parcelled out 3,370,188 acres in the area later occupied by the Soviet Union. And over half the acreage of all Poland that was helped with improvement (66,-517,000 acres) was situated in the eastern provinces. This figure does not include the south-eastern provinces occupied by the Soviets.

The Polish "lords" were practically non-existent but this label was applied to any person heir to a name known in Polish

history, who possessed even a modest estate, and to Poles sufficiently prosperous to own what in America would be called a little farm. If a land owner, he was a "lord" and an enemy of the people. Those numbered among the few remaining aristocrats were fortunate if they and their families were not shot offhand. There is a Pole now in New York who thus lost fourteen members of his family. On the 20th of September, 1939, near Lisowka, Michael Krasinski, with his estate manager, the steward and several other estate employees, was shot. On the estate Brzostowica Mala, the owner Antoni Wolkowicki was shot and his wife buried alive. There is a whole list of such cases, which were not confined to owners of land but included tenants. It was during this early period that most executions took place.

Land owners on the lower social rungs might be stood in the market place for judgment, where all day long the people were urged by Soviet agitators to pelt the unlucky man with whatever was convenient. At the close of the day sentence was pronounced. If guilty, execution or deportation followed. If he were so fortunate as to be judged innocent, he was probably permitted to remain as a worker, even as a manager for the time being on what had been his land.

A second group that got immediate attention from the Soviet authorities was the Polish officials. Mayors, city councilmen and State officials were the first to be arrested and along with them members of the police force, the frontier guards, the higher government employees, judges, prosecuting attorneys and leaders of the various political parties. To list the places where such arrests occurred would be to name all the towns under Soviet occupation.

Regarding the political party leaders, it is notable that no party exceptions were made. Even more severity was shown toward the Peasant and Socialist parties than toward the others, for these were accused of being "traitors". All members of the

last Polish parliament and all preceding parliaments who chanced to find themselves under Soviet occupation were arrested.

A third group put under arrest at the same time consisted of officials and employees of the State forest reserves. From the Chief of the State Forestry Department, Adam Loret, who was in Lvov, and the Chief of the Lvov Forestry area, the purge went down the line through inspectors, ranging to the humblest employees.

Simultaneously with the taking over of authority in Poland by the Red Army came an order for all Polish army officers in the area, regular and reserve, to register. Retired officers were likewise included, as for example, the eighty-year-old General Jedrzejewski. A few days after registration, there were wholesale arrests, without regard to age, health, or service of the individual.

The same held true with regard to refugees from western Poland, who had also been obliged to register. They had arrived in Eastern Poland before the day the Red Army crossed the frontier, but many of them were arrested on the charge of having crossed the then non-existent Soviet-German line illegally.

On the ground that they were "oppressors of the people" industrialists, bank officers, the more prosperous merchants, house owners, and even small tradesmen and craftsmen were arrested. In each instance the property was confiscated and declared the property of the State.

In the early months of 1940 there were mass arrests occurring throughout the entire area at the same time of members of one profession or trade—doctors, lawyers, teachers, social workers, railroad men, priests. Among the last-named the Roman Catholics suffered most. The Orthodox fared a little better, for there had been some expectation that they would collaborate with the Soviet authorities. With the Greek Catholics or Uniates the Soviets are said to have been a bit more lenient. Members of

religious orders were declared unemployed and put to forced labor, the monasteries and convents declared state property.

School children and students who showed any feeling for Poland were arrested. On November 11, 1939—Polish Independence Day—there were a number of such cases. Thereafter individual and group arrests occurred continually. Informers were placed among the student groups for purposes of denunciation. The children in the elementary and secondary schools were in a particularly difficult position, for they were taught history and politics according to the Soviet view and anti-religious activity was carried on. The least opposition to any of this teaching or disagreement with it brought arrest of the pupil, whether boy or girl, and instances of twelve-year-olds being taken were not uncommon. At least one was noted of a victim only eight.

The largest number of such happenings occurred between March 17-23, 1940, when there were mass arrests in the schools of Lvov, Brzesc, Stryj and various other towns. From the little town of Stryj about three hundred school children were taken. All of these groups were deported to the U.S.S.R.

So one could go on compiling the list of persons subject to arrest in Eastern Poland under Soviet domination. It is lengthy, for it included all who offered opposition or conceivably might offer opposition in the future to Soviet ideology and authority. For that reason the Ukrainian nationalists were undesirable, the land-holding peasant who was already termed a "kulak," the Ruthenians, who were Polish in sympathy, the White Ruthenians who were also pro-Polish, and any Polish citizen, whatever his nationality, who in Bolshevik parlance could be labelled capitalistic in tendency.

Arrests, which continued throughout the whole period of Soviet domination, were made on political charges or even none at all. Polish prisons were by no means numerous or large

enough to house the arrested even though twenty-five or thirty persons were put in a cell meant to accommodate two or three. So public buildings, schools and court houses chiefly, were turned into jails. In the town of Luck, with a pre-war population of some 37,000, fourteen such buildings were taken for this purpose. In Lvov, during October and November 1939, each day saw the arrest of between four and five hundred people.

Sanitary conditions were indescribable and epidemics throve. Lack of exercise, foul odors, wretched food—and that below the human organism's demand—produced their natural effect. Frequently prisoners had to be carried to and from the examiner's office. Persons who entered prisons in health and decently clothed, came out emaciated and in rags at best, physically utterly broken. Death took a heavy toll and all too many of those awaiting trial never lived to hear the sentence or the acquittal.

During imprisonment the arrested were put through a regular process of interrogation in an effort to make them disclose information of anti-Soviet activity. Since as a rule the victim had no knowledge of such activity, or if he did his will could not be broken, questioning was of no avail. Hence the use of slow starvation; of gradual suffocation; of keeping persons days and nights, as many as six days in known cases, in a chair in the investigator's office, with lights shining into the eyes of the prisoner, and guards to prod him when he drowsed, or beat him back to consciousness if he collapsed. Weakening of bodily strength meant, in the opinion of Soviet authorities, weakening of the will.

Brutality was the rule during questionings. Kicking, blows with truncheons, spitting in the face were part of investigation procedure. In some instances women received such treatment. According to regulations, while waiting trial and sentence the arrested could receive articles of clothing and food packages.

In practice, every hindrance was put in the way of such deliveries.

If brought to trial the prisoner was almost invariably convicted and sentenced to a term of five to eight years, in a "disciplinary labor camp" in the U.S.S.R. Or the prisoner might be in one of those lots that was shipped out of a Polish jail without trial to the U.S.S.R. in order to make room for new crowds of arrested.

4. *Deportations*

In February 1940 another phase of Soviet policy was put into operation—the policy of mass deportation. A list made in December of all former Polish officers in Lvov served as the basis of selection for the first mass action there Several days after the completion of the registration, thousands of these men along with Polish government employees and teachers were arrested. Arrests took place at night, often at 3 a.m.; women and children, families of the men were arrested with them. Two or three hours were allowed for packing a few things before the arrested were loaded into farm wagons or trucks that appeared at the doors to take them to the railway station.

It is worth noting that practically no family of Polish soldiers who were prisoners of war in Germany escaped deportation. This was so astonishingly thorough that while Poles had no direct evidence to support such a supposition, they were convinced the Soviet officials had lists of the Polish prisoners of war in German camps.

In Hitler's speech before the Reichstag on October 6, 1939, there is repeated reference to German-Russian collaboration with regard to Poland. Certain of his statements suggest inferences that the pact itself did not justify. For example he says:

"Germany and Russia together will relieve one of the most acute danger spots in Europe of its threatening character and will, each in her own sphere, contribute to the welfare of the peoples living there . . . Germany and the Soviet Union have

therefore clearly defined the boundaries of their own spheres of interest with the intention of being singly responsible for law and order and preventing everything which might cause injury to the other partner."

In regard to resettlement of peoples, we find this:

"It is therefore essential for a far-sighted ordering of the life of Europe that a resettlement should be undertaken here so as to remove at least part of the material for European conflict. Germany and the Union of Soviet Republics have come to an agreement to support each other in this matter.

"The German Government will, therefore, never allow the residual Polish State of the future to become in any sense a disturbing factor for the Reich itself and still less a source of disturbance between the German Reich and Soviet Russia."

In this speech Hitler stated definitely that Poland "is now swept from the earth. One of the most senseless deeds perpetrated at Versailles is thus a thing of the past." It will be remembered that Molotov said practically the same thing in his report to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. on October 31, 1939.

Hitler continues: "Poland of the Versailles Treaty will never rise again. This is guaranteed by two of the largest States in the world. Final reorganization of this territory and the questions of re-establishment of the Polish State are problems which will not be solved by a war in the West but exclusively by Russia on the one hand and Germany on the other. (54)

These sentences from this Hitler speech indicate that something more had been arranged between the Germans and the Soviets than was made known to the public. There must have been agreement concerning exchange of populations which quickly followed the military conquests, and also concerning the disposition of subject people.

When husbands, fathers or brothers were at home and the

Polish family was taken as a unit, at the station the men were most often separated from the women and children, put in separate cars and sent to quite different parts of the U.S.S.R.

A photographic copy of the deportation instructions, marked "absolutely secret", for the use of Soviet officials in Lithuania is in my possession. The following paragraphs are taken from it. They are, of course, translated from the Russian.

"4. The order for carrying through the deportation . . .

"The operation will begin with the breaking of dawn. Entering into the house of those to be deported the leader of the operative group gathers together the whole family of the deported into one room, taking the necessary measures of caution against any possible excess . . .

"The deported are permitted to take with them articles of household need of a weight not exceeding a hundred kilograms. (1) Clothing; (2) footwear; (3) underclothing; (4) bed clothes; (5) table dishes; (6) tea dishes; (7) kitchen dishes; (8) food—on the basis of one month's provision for a family; (9) money in their possession; (10) trunk or box for the packing of goods . . .

"5. The procedure for separating the deported family from its head.

"In view of the fact that a large number of the deported must be arrested and distributed into special camps, and the families follow to places of special settlement in distant regions, it is essential to carry out the operation of deportation, both as regards the deported members of the family and their head, without informing them of their forthcoming separation. After the search has been carried through and the corresponding documents for the personal record have been made out, in the quarters of the deported, the operative agent will fill out the documents for the head of the family, placing them in a separate file, and the documents filled out for the members of the family

will be placed in the personal file for the deported family.

"The entire family will be conducted in a single conveyance to the (railway) loading station, and only at the loading station will the head of the family be placed separate from the family in a specially indicated railway car for the heads of families.

"During the gathering of the deported together in their quarters the head of the family should be advised of the fact that his personal masculine things should be packed in a separate bag for the reason that there will be a sanitary checking of the deported men separate from women and children. At the loading station, load the heads of families under arrest into railway cars specially set aside for them, which will be indicated for this purpose by the operative agent."

The deportation process was the same in Poland as in Lithuania, as testimony of the deported shows. But Soviet officials interpreted the clause about what persons could take with them in different ways. Many of those deported were not given time to collect belongings and sometimes people were separated from their baggage and the latter was never restored to its owner.

During the first three months of 1940 the families of all settlers in Volhynia who had been soldiers in the Polish fight for independence in the First World War were deported. They were given two hours to get ready and permitted to take only a little bundle of clothing and food. At the same time Ukrainian families, forty here, seven there, from village after village were deported.

The January and February weather was bitter cold that year and the suffering of the deported was indescribable. Thousands of children in these transports froze to death.

The thermometer registered sixteen degrees (Fahrenheit) below zero when the first transports of these people left their homes in the dark of that winter morning. The scene was Dantesque but worse was in store. At the railroad station, the loads of human

beings were transferred to freight cars. The Russian cars are much smaller than the American but thirty-five or forty persons, men, women and children—without regard for the frail or ill—were pushed into each car. There was no attempt to keep families together. It was apparent, rather, that separation was part of the plan.

While these removals were in process, other groups in all the provinces were rounded up. Prosperous peasants, which meant those who owned a little homestead, had a horse and a cow and farm tools; forest rangers; former owners of real estate, city or country, who thus far had been permitted to remain unmolested; doctors; engineers—all were deported on the charge of being smugglers, speculators or members of anti-Soviet political or social organizations. From all the provinces mass removals took people who had been active in commercial life and social welfare, more teachers, and persons who had fled before the German advance in September 1939. One deportation followed another, trains going east with their unwilling travellers from every corner of Soviet-occupied Poland. The greatest movement occurred in the months of February, April, June and July 1940.

From Zabie, that Carpathian district famous for its colorful peasant costumes, 560 border guards and their families were deported. The Soviets feared these people were aiding too many to escape into Rumania. From Horodenka, 80 families were taken, as were all the inhabitants of a number of villages lying along the Polish-Rumanian frontier. From the little village of Janowska Sloneczna, all the inhabitants were loaded into some 150 peasant wagons and sent to the railway station.

In the Halicz railway station some 400 cars were assembled, at Stanislawow 900, in Chryplin 600. Here is an account translated from the Polish of one who witnessed such preparations and what followed:

"For some time the people of southeastern Poland and Volhynia had been disturbed by the arrival of long trains of freight cars at small stations, and by the order to the different communities to provide vehicles. The stove-pipes coming through the roofs of the cars and the little stoves installed were sure signs that the cars were to be used for human transport. It was generally expected that the young men would be called into the army or that there were to be movements of Red Army troops.

"Suddenly on the night of Friday, March 8, 1940, groups of GPU men arrived in several score villages with orders to move out the inhabitants. These men went into 2 or 3 cottages in each place, roused the family, ordered them to stand against the wall while they searched the place for weapons, after which the order was given to prepare for departure. (In some instances arms were found, but nothing more happened to these persons than to others . . . The search for arms was only a pretext.) No exceptions were made. A sick old man was taken in the wagon along with the rest; the same fate befell the well-to-do farmer and his poor neighbor. In one village the people were permitted to take as much as half their household goods, the rest they had to leave. In another they were allowed to take a sack of grain and a few household things. In other places they were forced to go without anything. . . .

"Anybody who viewed this sight will remember it to the end of his days . . . Each train was made up of roughly 55 cars, 30-40 persons to a car, and that night as many as 50 such trains left southeast Poland. An equal number left Volhynia the next day. That meant 165-200,000 persons being taken into exile. Four railroad lines were filled with this movement to Sarny, Zdolbunow, Podwoloczyska and Husiatyn . . ."

In April the number of deportations greatly increased, and people everywhere lived in constant fear. At an alarm, villagers fled to the forests or, where there was no place in which to hide,

sometimes tried to defend themselves. In the village of Dolhopol, across from Rumania, peasants, and even Rumanian soldiers, helped fugitives get across the Cheremosh River that forms the boundary line. Thus 26 escaped the GPU. Opposition took various forms. At Lida, for example, some 200 people lay down on the track in front of a train loaded with persons being deported. But nothing ever availed. These mass movements kept up through May, June and July of that year (1940), until certain areas were practically depopulated. From southeastern Poland alone approximately 500,000 persons were removed.

The last deportations took place just before the German attack on the Soviet Union. The obviously false reason given by the Russians for this was the Soviet desire to clear out all who might be a hostile element to themselves when they made their promised re-entry into these areas.

It was estimated that ninety per cent of those taken in certain transports were women and children. If children were at home alone when the N.K.V.D. came, the children were taken, with nothing except what they had on. Poles, Ukrainians, White Ruthenians, Jews—all were loaded into the waiting freight cars.

While the thousands for a transport were being rounded up, those first delivered and loaded waited, sometimes many days. There were instances when corpses had to be taken from the cars before the train left the station. En route trains frequently stood for days in the open fields, the occupants of the freight cars utterly neglected. In the cold weather frail and poorly clad persons froze to death. In the hot months, in the crowded cars standing in the sun, infants, permitted to have neither milk nor water, could not endure the hardships.

The train journeys lasted from two to four weeks, depending upon the destination. The cars had been adapted only in the most primitive way to their present use. There were small, high, iron-barred windows, a little iron stove with enough fuel for three

days, and an opening cut in the floor to serve as a toilet. Fuel supplies were never replenished. Locked in each freight car for days and nights on end were 35 or 40 men, women and little children, old and young, sick and well, some with a few possessions and a little food, and others with nothing but the clothes they wore.

While this was going on, Soviet propaganda was informing the people of Eastern Poland that these re-settlement movements were splendidly organized, that a supply or "store" car and a hospital car were a part of each train.

In the case of certain transports, the cars were not opened for days at a time and then only to give the occupants water and the cup of thin, unpalatable gruel which was the only food provided, and that beginning with the sixth day of the journey. On such occasions the bodies of those who had died since the car was last opened were thrown out, often left unburied beside the tracks. One man, whose description of such a journey was written in a letter to a relative in this country after the writer had left the Soviet Union, wrote that he saw three of his children die and saw them interred in the snow, not the earth, of Siberia. Out of the 3,000 and more comprising the transport of which he was a member, not one child lived to see the journey's end, and hundreds of adults had died and scores of others had gone mad. That long letter was one of the most harrowing accounts I have ever read; and many a sad letter has come my way these years.

There was no effort to keep knowledge of what was going on from the people of the occupied lands, who in thousands gathered to stare silently and sorrowfully at the long lines of trains with the prisoners they could not help. Nowhere were they permitted near enough to give the deported food. In one station Polish railway men broke open four cars. Each of the 150 occupants had to be assisted or carried out. Everywhere along the routes of these trains Poles found and buried corpses. In one

cemetery near Lvov some 400 frozen bodies were buried. There are pages and pages of testimony given by eye-witnesses to what happened during deportations.

How many Polish citizens were deported by the Soviet authorities will never be determined. The records were kept by the Soviet officials but they have never been revealed. It is possible, now that contact has been made with hundreds of thousands of the deported, to make an estimate of the whole number, based on what is learned from these. The total compiled from statistics gathered in the various areas appears to have been in the neighborhood of 1,500,000 not including in that number some 200,000 Polish army men held as prisoners of war.

The deported met their fate heroically, usually singing their national anthem and hymns as the trains left the stations. This spirit was characteristic. The population was determined to hold out whatever the cost, never shaken in its conviction that the invaders would be driven out.

5. *Popular Reaction*

All classes of the population of Eastern Poland looked with contempt on the newcomers from the U.S.S.R. The glaring difference between promises and fulfillment, between announced principles and practice, the manifestly lower cultural level of the citizens of the U.S.S.R. worked for the creation of this attitude. And this feeling was strengthened by the statements continually made by the new authorities, for example, that there was a lack of culture in Poland, offering as evidence the fact that there were no delousing places. In the Soviet Union, they said, there was one at every railroad station.

Polish peasants and working people as a whole stood aloof from the invaders from the start. Whenever possible they helped the more persecuted and endangered Polish citizens to escape. Posing as enthusiastic supporters of the new regime, peasants

often cleverly outwitted the Soviet authorities, saved themselves from being robbed, and in secret provided for less fortunate families.

.The Ukrainian population was divided in its stand. As already noted, the outstanding nationalists among them disappeared. Among those remaining, a part were pro-German, a part—and a growing part—were of the belief that the Ukrainians should be a group within the Polish state. Ukrainians in Poland were bitterly opposed to incorporation into the Soviet Union.

The White Ruthenians opposed the invaders from the start, having no desire to be included in the U.S.S.R. Their attitude was comparable to that of the Polish peasants. When called upon by Soviet authorities to declare their nationality the majority of the White Ruthenians said they were Poles.

There were a few local communists, drawn from the various national groups. Among these were certain Poles, the most notable among them Wanda Wasilewska, of whom more later. Naturally all this group greeted the invaders with enthusiasm, which, however, was shortlived in the case of most. The new authorities had come with their own policy and, as briefly reviewed on preceding pages, it was one of Russification.

CHAPTER VII

Disposition of The Deported

1. Political Offenders

The citizens of Poland deported by the U.S.S.R. fell into four classes. First were the political offenders. These consisted of all Polish government officials and employees, including the police. Since they had been working with a capitalist government they were thereby politically at variance with the U.S.S.R. and working against it. Anybody who had been connected with the Polish regime had sentenced himself.

These persons were either placed in Soviet prisons or prison camps. Trials in the Soviet manner were held in certain cases and sentences of death carried out. The widely advertised cases of the Jewish Socialists, Alter and Erlich, were just two of many and these came to public knowledge only through the changed relations between the U.S.S.R. and Poland following Hitler's attack on Russia. How many Poles, White Ruthenians, Ukrainians, and Jews suffered the same fate without the outside world even knowing of their imprisonment will never be revealed.

2. "Colonists"

The second group, and by far the largest of the deported, consisted of those the Soviets termed colonists. These were the people who had been part of the mass deportations, for example that series that took place February 1-10, 1940, when from the number of trains and the number of cars in each train that went through railway centers east, it was possible to say that

approximately 250,000 people were taken in that brief time.

The transports of February 1940 and part of those of June, estimated at 180,000-200,000 persons, were sent to European north Russia, that is to regions lying between 40^0 and 60^0 E. longitude and 60^0 and 65^0 N. latitude. A glance at the accompanying map will give a better idea than listing of regional names. For orientation, note that Leningrad is $59^0 57^1$ N. latitude.

The southernmost part of these regions, beautifully wooded with pine and birch, changes to swampy lowland with scant forest growth as one proceeds north, the trees growing scrubbier and fewer and finally disappearing altogether. Then begins the famous tundra, an endless, barren expanse of marsh grass which in its turn gives way in the far north to a moss which is the only vegetation that endures such severe climatic conditions.

When the deported from Poland arrived at their rail journey's end here in the north they were loaded into trucks and distributed as colonists along the Dvina River and its tributaries—the Suchona, Vaga, Vichegda, Susola—and in the valleys of the Pechora and Kama Rivers.

In these areas the winter cold is bitterly severe, the summers short and extremely humid. Human habitation is found only along the rivers, and is sparse at that. Apropos of this, we recall that Sir Halford Mackinder (55) states that North Russia, by which he here means that part within a line running from Leningrad to Kazan, and from the latter city north, has a population of roughly 2,000,000, or less than three persons to the square mile. And the line drawn by Mackinder drops far below latitude 60^0, thus taking in more populous districts.

The Komi and Samoyed tribes, the former in the south the latter in the north, are native to the areas in which the deported Poles were located. Fishing and cattle raising are their means of livelihood. Potatoes, oats and rye are grown in the hilly sections, but not enough to supply local needs, and fish is the

staple diet. Meat, bread and vegetables are either unknown or very hard to obtain.

In the southern areas, where are the forests already referred to, lumbering has become a considerable industry. The timber is felled by lumberjacks, who live in isolated shack settlements, and is then sent out down the rivers, which are the only roads of communication; and these are iceblocked from September to the end of May, leaving only three months for navigation.

For the deported Poles life in this inhospitable land was doubly severe. They were housed in roughly constructed barracks, which the deported themselves often had to build, far from native and more or less settled communities, where for a fabulous sum of money or an old garment, more valued in this land of want than money, a few potatoes or a little oatmeal or fish could be obtained.

All of the deportees fourteen years old and over were used as forced labor in the forests. Their work consisted of felling of trees, moving logs to the river banks, of raft building and floating logs down the rivers. It was work requiring skill, and many of the deported, wholly unacquainted with such labor and many of them physically unequal to it, lost their lives. On one occasion over 100 men were drowned in the Susola River when a raft carrying them to new work fell apart because it had been built and was being poled by inexpert workers.

Most of this work on which the deported were employed required that they be in the water up to their knees, for these regions are marshy, and in addition the deported were much used at the river's edge. No clothing or footwear adapted to such labor was provided. The shifts were ten hours long, from 4 a.m. to 2 p.m. and from 2 p.m. to midnight. Wages were from four to eight roubles a day.

In the early autumn of 1940, in Ust-Vymi, which is the market town of one region, one quart of milk cost 8 roubles, one

cucumber 2, and a cup of berries 3. Each worker among the deported was allowed to buy one kilogram (2.2 pounds) of bread—and no more—daily for his family, and for it had to pay the official price of 66 kopecks. The deported could not supplement their food supply by fishing or berry picking in season without special permit. If they did so, they had to spend several days in the nearest jail. This applied to all the deported ten years of age and above.

During the first months of their life as "colonists" the deported eked out their food supplies by bartering their clothing. But having no adequate knowledge of the great scarcity of textiles and footwear in the Soviet Union, they discovered later that they had, in the eyes of the natives, almost given away their treasures. In the fall of 1940, the wives of the N.K.V.D. and government officials in Syktyvkar, the capital of the Komi Republic, were proudly parading in dresses and shoes obtained from the Poles.

By that September 1940, just eight months after deportation, there were many families in which not one member was able to work, so weakened were they by exposure to cold, the insect plagues of summer and by lack of food and proper shelter and clothing. Diseases like scurvy, tuberculosis, malaria, and rheumatism had taken a frightening hold. Skin troubles, due to lack of soap as well as undernourishment, afflicted everybody.

An estimated 300,000-350,000 deported Polish citizens were located in Siberia. On the whole its climate is less hostile to human life than that of North Russia, its soil is fertile, it has forests and not wooded marshes. But Siberia is a vast region, where conditions vary. It includes the industrial area beyond the Urals as well as steppe and forest. Hence conditions of life for the deported varied, depending upon whether they were sent to the forests to fell and float timber or to the industrial region of "Kuzbas", north of Altai.

The majority of the deported to Siberia were in scattered groups along rivers in the area from the Urals to Lake Baikal. The largest groups were on the Tobol, Irtish, and Ob, on the Yenisi and Angara in the "oblasts" of Chelyabinsk, Omsk, Novosibirsk and Irkutsk; and in the Krasnoyarsk country.

The third and last area to which Polish citizens were deported as colonists was the Republic of Kazakstan, extending from the Ural Mountains and the Ural River to the Altai Mountains and the Chinese frontier. Much of Kazakstan is commonly confused in Western thinking with Siberia. Roughly speaking, Siberia does not include much territory south of the Trans-Siberian railroad line. Kazakstan is 4/5 the size of all Europe, without European Russia, plus the British Isles, Ireland and the islands of the Mediterranean.

It is steppe country. In winter 3/4 of its area is covered with heavy snow and the cold is 16^0-32^0 below zero. In summer it is hot and dry. Along the rivers and in the north the country is fertile. Farther south the grass turns from green to gray and the steppe becomes a desert. Everywhere, except in the extreme north, the landscape is treeless.

Thousands of lakes dot Kazakstan; but they are salt, which means that they are remnants of another age. There are little streams that mysteriously emerge from the sand and as mysteriously disappear in sand. There is high wind in Kazakstan—the steppe wind—that seems never to rest, gathering up the sand in summer and filling the air with it, to the intense discomfort of man and beast, and driving the snow in winter so that its myriad particles cut like steel.

Migrations passed over this land for pleasanter climes. Its small settled populations are Kazaks, a people akin to the Chinese, while the steppe is roamed by the nomadic Kirghiz, once rulers of the country, little as compared with Kazakstan, on the Chinese border known as the Kirghiz Republic.

The centuries have not changed the way of life of the Kirghiz. Several years ago I read an account of a journey among them recorded by a sixteenth century Polish traveller. A few weeks later The National Geographic Magazine carried an illustrated story of a modern's stay and travel among them. The dates of the accounts might have been exchanged and no harm done to the accurate descriptive quality of the records. The yurt or round tent is still the Kirghiz's habitation, camels and sheep are still his wealth. The Kirghiz likes the Soviet brand of civilization no better than he liked any that preceded it.

The above characterization applies to the steppe. Under the tsars, colonization of the river valleys had got well under way, the colonists being emancipated serfs. These flourishing homesteads were turned into collectives by the Soviets, and Kazakstan became the province to which people from other provinces were forced to emigrate. The slogan, "Kazakstan—granary of the U.S.S.R." supplanted that so much better known, "Ukraine—Russia's bread basket." However much may have been done toward making facts fit the new slogan, according to the word of a Soviet agriculturalist, who is a Party member, the rural production of Kazakstan had not by 1941 reached the 1913 level.

Nature, much more than any effort of man, controls crop production in sandy Kazakstan. The life-giving rain brings success; the scorching sun brings failure. If a steppe fire starts, everything that lives flees before it. For only a stream or a strip of sand can halt it.

Given such a situation it is understandable that every new member added to a collective is unwelcome, as he is one more mouth to be fed. Yet, to realize what that means, one should know how dismal and poverty-stricken are the poor communities that go by the name of collectives. Not by any stretch of the imagination could the group of hovels and the land sur-

U.S.S.R. Communities of Polish Citizens Deported 1939-1941

3249

rounding them be looked upon as a farm by any Western European or American.

It was, however, to such collectives that the Polish colonists were taken, on which—to quote them—they were dumped. An overwhelming percentage of this group were women and children, almost all of them were educated, accustomed for the most part to intellectual but not hard physical labor, and to life in a civilized, progressive country. In addition to the dismaying environment and material conditions, the Kirghiz people were not friendly, the result as was later learned of deliberate talk by the N.K.V.D.

Letters written by the deported tell part of the story of these exiles. The following is from the wife of a well-known Lvov professor:

". . . We have here a few mud-hovels in the steppe. We live in one of them which is very damp. We sleep on the hard floor. Misery is terrible. No vegetables, no potatoes. One may get a few eggs by barter. But we have nothing to exchange . . . Anything I could write you would seem pale when compared with the ghastly reality. When it rains our hovel is inundated. No chair, no table. It is very far to the nearest city from here and besides we are not permitted to go there. One drudges all day long and comes home at night utterly exhausted. But fleas and bedbugs do not let one sleep. Mrs. X went to work at gathering manure. She has to carry it in her own hands for eight hours. No wages. Every ten days one kilogram of a very dark and bitter flour. I cook the meals for five people, do the washing and scrubbing. We have no linen, no summer clothes and the summer heat is approaching. Since we came here we have not seen bread, sugar, tea, fats, candles, cereals, soap. We can't get anything here. Should you succeed in sending us a food parcel, then, perhaps you could send some linen, some

summer clothes, some old slippers. I have no shoes and my feet are swollen and bleeding . . ."

And from a young Polish Jewess:

". . . On April 18 about 20,000 people from Lvov were deported to the borders of Mongolia; we were taken with others in June . . . There were 36 people in our car . . . with no fresh air whatsoever and no permission to leave the car. We were constantly hungry and thirsty, and several times I saw people go stark mad, especially when there was no water. We were put in sheds . . . The sheds swarm with bedbugs so that any spots spared by mosquitoes are bitten at night by bedbugs . . . In the morning, at noon and in the evening we get soup, sour and horrible barley bread, and tea . . . in spite of hunger we can hardly swallow it and to get it we often have to wait in line for more than one hour . . ."

A Polish lady who with her six-year-old daughter and four-year-old son made the three-weeks journey to Kazakstan has written something of her experiences on arrival along with her fellow travellers—wives and children of three former Polish government employees and seven poor Ukrainian peasant families—in a Kazakstan village about seven o'clock of April 26, 1940. An excerpt from her letter reads:

"A handful of the local children, clothed in rags, immediately increased by arrival of their elders, surrounded us in a close circle and stared in amazement at these newcomers from 'bourgeois' Poland, splendidly dressed in the opinion of the villagers, and strangest of all, clean (but only in sight of the villagers, since we had not had opportunity to wash ourselves decently during the whole of the journey). Characteristic of this picture was the complete silence. Despair and depression filled the deported; indifference marked the attitude of the villagers, for so many of them had themselves been deported by Soviet au-

thorities during the last ten years . . . A few more or a few less—what did it matter?

"Night was coming on and quarters had to be found. Leaving my two children with the baggage, I set out to find a place that would take us in. I should explain that like others I had been able to bring a small supply of clothing, bed linen, and blankets. The representatives of the N.K.V.D. who deported us from Lvov had tried to separate me from my baggage but I had resisted, convinced that if I let go of it I would not see it again. And it was thanks to these things, bartered for flour, potatoes, and milk, that we were able to live through the year and a half.

"I found a Kirghiz cottage where they would take us in. It was built of mixed clay and manure, a one-room place with one little window. There was only the earth floor, no furniture at all except a sort of dais made of boards, on which all the family life centered. There they ate, slept, and performed any work that was done. A few hooks were driven in the damp and smoke-grimed walls and on these hung the family clothing not in use.

"The elderly Kirghiz woman, with whom I had to converse by gestures, since she understood no Russian, invited me to have some tea. I confess that I accepted the invitation with pleasure. Neither the children nor I had had anything warm to eat since the preceding evening. In the gloomy little room, lighted only by a little lamp that smoked frightfully, squatted in Eastern fashion four oriental figures. Two men, slant-eyed and with extraordinarily high cheek bones, dressed in coarse working-men's garb, and two women in bright-colored jackets and extremely wide skirts, and with their heads wound in high turban fashion which likewise covered part of the face. The sound of the water boiling in the smoking samovar was a comforting note in this strange and—for me at least—almost ominous atmosphere . . . My two children were too weary, hungry and sleepy to be afraid, and I think I had entered a state of semi-

consciousness. Otherwise I think I would have feared lest we never leave this den alive or that we would be robbed of everything we had. But the tea, though unsweetened, was real tea, hot, and good. We wrapped ourselves in blankets and coats and lay down to sleep. Such was the first of our 525 evenings in Kazakstan."

August 20, 1940 from Kazakstan, a Polish woman of the middle class wrote a letter from which the following is taken. This letter tells much, considering it was passed by the censor. In many places it is evident that the writer has taken pains to phrase her sentences so that the reader will read between the lines.

"Living conditions are very difficult, ten of us in one hut. We worked very hard during the summer drawing water from a well with a rope and buckets, 300 to 500 buckets a day; when that was done we mixed clay and dung. And not with my feet. Well, an order is an order. S——, dear child, has to work too. He goes out on the steppe and breaks a sort of reed that grows to a man's height, gathers up the sheep and camel dung in bags, for that burns like wood. I am grieved about the children, they are such poor little things. And all their schooling is being forgotten . . .

"We never see meat, prices are terrible, people will not accept money. They want things in exchange which we haven't for we were not allowed to bring them. There is no work . . . Well, somehow we live, but many have died, among them children. And now there is typhus and cholera. Here everybody stands in line, and then gets nothing. There is no soap and where there are lice—oh that's worst of all.

"What we have lived through these four months here and the nine weeks on the roads . . . I can only say that were it not for S—— I would have killed myself . . . I know nothing of my parents, not even if they are alive or dead and there is abso-

lutely no way here of making inquiries. Perhaps you can do something. So many children are dying of hunger and cold. Well, what can man do where there is no harvest God has blessed . . . If you would be so good as to try to send me even two candles for there is no means of lighting here whatever . . ."

One more letter from the many before me that have come from Kazakstan must be included. It is from a young Polish woman to her husband. The letter was mailed June 1, 1940.

"I am writing to bid you farewell. My life here is hell, but I lacked the courage to commit suicide. I was sent to . . . practically out of the world. One day shepherds, more than ten, raped me. One of them asked me to stay with him as his wife. I am with child. I beg you to forget me. Start your life anew."

The only building material and the only fuel on the treeless steppes of Kazakstan is dung. Polish women were required by the builders to use their hands in the preparation of the mixture of dung, water, and chopped weeds or reeds. Letters written by those women to their husbands in the Polish army in Britain told of working at this task for as long as fourteen hours a day. I have read many of those letters, sent on by these men to my husband or myself, imploring us to get help to their deported families.

Since dung is also fuel and sheep and camel are few, much ground must be walked over in order to secure fuel to heat the hut through the long cold winter, even though the domicile consists of only two tiny rooms, the whole measuring roughly 22 feet by 13 feet with a ceiling a fraction over 6 feet high.

It was into such hovels as these that the deported from Poland had to be crowded, despite the fact that the huts were already more than full. As an example, the case of a Polish major's wife, her two children and three teachers may be cited. They paid 15 roubles a month each for "accommodation" in a hut

where seven adults and eight children slept side by side on the floor.

While in the Archangel, or North Russian area, and Siberia there was too much work and all who were able to drag about were driven to it, in northern and central Kazakstan the lack of work was tragic. The collectives, as explained above, wanted no more members with whom they would have to share. The only work left for the newcomers was the gathering of dung, employment for two, three or at most four persons on each collective, not for fifty adults with a hundred children. In the oblast of Aktiubinsk, Kustany, Petropavlosk, and Karaganda many of the deported died of starvation when they no longer had anything to barter for food.

In the eastern parts of Kazakstan and in Semipalatynsk province where agriculture and industry are both more developed, housing conditions for the deported were better and there was greater opportunity for work, on large farms, in meat-packing plants, or in the ceramic industry.

While conditions of life for the deported depended upon the region to which they were sent, certain things were true of each locality. For one, the deported had no freedom of movement, and working conditions, wages, and housing were always bad. For another, invariably the authorities practised chicanery and deception and were harsh and brutal in dealing with the deported.

Wherever they were, the "colonists" from Poland were asked questions, and one question was asked everywhere. "'Why did you leave your country and come here if you had such things as these?' and the questioner would point with wonderment at the few poor things we possessed. 'We didn't know there were such things in the world any more. We have been told there were not. Why did you leave such a land?'

"'We did not leave,' we answered. 'We were deported, as enemies of the people.' 'They told us,' replied the U.S.S.R.

citizens, 'that you were leaving because your country was starving and you were seeking a place where you could live.' " (56)

Also, no matter where the locality, the deported were constantly spied upon. The N.K.V.D. was tireless in its efforts to find priests or officers in disguise among them.

It did not take the deported long to understand what had begun to dawn upon the minds of those left alive in Poland. That was, to quote these people, that the Soviet policy toward the Poles could be expressed in one word—extermination. In no other way could the inhuman treatment of the citizens of the Polish provinces occupied by the Soviets be explained, said the Poles. The deliberate breaking up of families, the sending of women and children as "colonists" to regions where the authorities knew these folk could not survive, the relentless search for former leaders in national, political and cultural life,—all these and many more things pointed to but one goal—extermination of so large a proportion of the Polish people that as a nation they would be doomed.

All the statements in this chapter and that preceding are based on letters written by the deported, of which I have quoted samples, on statements made by deported who are now outside the U.S.S.R., and, with regard to occupied Poland, by reports got out by the underground, as well as conversations with individuals who were there during the invasion and occupation.

3. *Conscripted Youth*

A third group of deported Polish citizens consisted of youth in the occupied Polish territories conscripted into the Soviet army. The first indication of such conscription was given by the call for all young men born in the years 1918, 1919, 1921 and 1922 to register. Conscription began September 15, 1940.

How many young Polish citizens were thus forced into the Soviet army there is no means, at least to date, of making a rea-

sonably definite estimate. But after a careful study of that element's place in population statistics, after taking into consideration the number of youths who escaped to make their way to other lands in an effort to reach the Polish army under General Sikorski's command, and after allowing for the number who were arrested because of refusal to enter the Red Army, the minimum number compelled to serve under the banner of the government which had despoiled their country is judged to have been 150,000.

4. Camps

In addition to the groups of deported mentioned, there was yet another—that of the Polish officers and soldiers. Since they were prisoners of war, I have not listed them along with the civilian deported. These men were placed in prisoner-of-war camps, from which many were taken out in labor gangs, or sent directly to the notorious forced labor camps. The Soviet Union was not one of the 47 states signing the Geneva Convention of 1929 relating to treatment of prisoners of war, by which officers not only may not be used for labor but must be paid the salaries of their rank. There were Polish officers and a large number of privates and non-commissioned men in the labor camps of the Soviet Union.

The word "prison," or rather its Russian equivalent, is no part of Soviet vocabulary, as in this Soviet theories hold to Socialist doctrine. "Corrective camp" takes the prison's place, just as there are no first, second and third class railroad cars in the Soviet Union but only "hard" and "soft", and no capital punishment or death penalty but "the highest measure of social self-defense." They do use the term "to be shot," I am informed, when sentence is given.

The correction or reformatory camps are designed, according to Soviet pronouncements, to educate people out of wrong ways

and attitudes into useful citizens. As part of Soviet propaganda, a drama, *The Aristocrats*, was written about the inmates of one of these camps, showing the wisdom, patience and sacrificial spirit of the superintendent and guards, who were not prison guards but psychologists, teachers and missionaries, changing "parasites" into enthusiastic adherents of the Soviet regime. We saw a performance of that play in Moscow, having been advised to do so by Intourist employees who told us that thus we would learn how the Soviets handled offenders. Indirectly we came in contact a day later with an individual who had been through a period in one of these camps. When taken there he had been a man in normal health; when he came out he was a physical wreck, doomed to beggary. We were, therefore, not greatly impressed by the high idealism set forth in the drama.

You may remember, too, that our former Ambassador to the Soviet Union, Joseph Davies, in his *Mission to Moscow* mentioned pleas made to him for help in getting persons out of such camps and of the impossibility of doing anything for them.

To begin with here is a description of these camps as given by persons who have lived in them. But it should be said that these persons never talk of their experiences in such camps while they are still in the U.S.S.R., except foreigners applying to their government representatives in the U.S.S.R. for assistance. Released prisoners who talk are re-arrested and sent back or disappear.

The standard forced-labor camp is, in form, approximately a square, the sides of which are six hundred seventy-five feet. Surrounding it is a thirteen- or fourteen-foot wall topped with iron spikes, while barbed-wire entanglement runs around the wall both inside and out. Following the outside entanglement is a path paced by guards in some cases accompanied by trained dogs. At each corner of the wall is a tower equipped with searchlights,

and in the more rigorous camps guards armed with machine guns. In one wall of the camp is a diligently guarded gate.

Inside the enclosure is a row of one-storey clapboard barracks. Entering the barracks, one sees a three-tier row of bunks running along each side. Each bunk is provided with a straw-filled bag to serve as mattress, a pillow of straw or hay, and a blanket. In the middle of the aisle dividing the bunks is a small iron stove, whose heat can be felt at a distance of only six to ten feet. This means that during the winter in three-quarters of the barrack space water freezes. Inside the camp enclosure there is also a well with wooden troughs where the prisoners wash; an administration building; a barrack used as a prison; guards' quarters—which are enclosed by another wall; and an open latrine.

Prisoners' heads are shaved. Prison garb consists of trousers tied at the ankles and a quilted sleeved vest or "telogreika," closed with three frogs, Chinese fashion, instead of buttons; visorless caps and wooden shoes complete the costume. Prison food is a soup of cabbage or grits and low grade stewed dried fish. This is the one meal. Twice a day the prisoners get hot water, sometimes a coffee substitute and bread.

Labor in Soviet reformatory camps is paid for in bread; and bread is doled out according to work done each day and not in regular amounts. One kilogram (2.2 pounds) is the pay for the performance of the daily work quota. But only the physically strongest of the prisoners are able to do enough work to earn them more than half that bread-pay. For prisoners in the U.S.S.R. have been used for the hardest labor and under the worst climatic conditions. All the greatest construction achievements of the U.S.S.R. have been the work of prisoners. It is the prisoners who dig the canals—that connecting the White Sea with the Baltic, for example—regulate rivers, build railroads, strategic highways, and fortifications.

The slightest delinquency brings punishment, such as reduction of bread rations, removal of the mattress from the offender's bunk, flogging, or time in the "isolator," which is a cold, windowless room, half below ground, comparable to an animal's den. Beating of prisoners, though contrary to regulations, is common, and is not due to outbursts of anger on the part of the guards. Brutality is characteristic of the whole Soviet Government setup and attitude.

Malnutrition, hard labor, trickery, insanitary housing conditions and a death-dealing climate result in a mortality rate of 20 per cent per annum among those sent to Soviet labor camps, though the majority of these prisoners are young or middle-aged persons. Nobody is influential enough to help a person condemned to one of these camps. Nobody can go to a prisoner or hear anything from him. Escape is almost impossible for if the prisoner should elude the guards, the swamps or endless distances would swallow him in summer and hunger and cold would finish him in winter. Prisoners serve their full time unless death releases them.

The area where these prison camps are situated is equivalent to the whole of continental Europe. On these vast spaces, except for the native tribes, which follow their primitive ways, there are no free men aside from the Soviet police and government employees. Apart from the small territories, the great prison camp regions include: the Republic of Komi in the Pechora basin; the northern part of the New Siberian Oblast, called Narim Land; Northern Yakutsk Land, on the middle and lower reaches of the Lena; Northeastern Siberia in the Kolima basin.

Mr. Willkie in his book *One World* wrote enthusiastically of Yakutsk land, but his visit was brief. He was the guest of the highest Soviet officials, and his travel was by plane. His impressions obviously must differ from those of men who for two years were prisoners in Yakutsk's forced labor camps, and

whose journey across this vastness by foot and slow train brought them into contact both with the land and the people.

Each of these territories named constitutes a state within a state, as it were, each with its own administration. They are as a whole under the exclusive control of a department of the N.K.V.D. Their population is a huge pool of slave labor, divided into the camps already described. Untold millions of Soviet citizens who have fallen under the displeasure of the Soviet Government have been sentenced to these forced labor camps. After Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland in 1939, tens of thousands of Poles, Jews, Ukrainians, and Ruthenians still further augmented this huge forgotten group. A few of those men are now free and their estimate of the permanent number of prisoners runs from 10,000,000-15,000,000, that is, from six to nine per cent of the entire population of the Soviet Union.

With that, however, we have no concern in this book, except as it shows the Soviet attitude to the use of such labor, and how drastic the penalty for opposition, expressed or suspected, to the Soviet regime. We are, however, concerned with the treatment of Polish citizens by the U.S.S.R. The following extracts from accounts given by two Polish army officers of their experiences in labor camps are enlightening:

"On June 15, 1941, I was sent with a group of Polish prisoners to the Far East. The journey lasted 28 days. Absolutely exhausted we arrived at the port of Nachodka, north of Vladivostok. On July 22, we reached the port of Magadan. There, after being fleeced of everything we had, we were given prisoners' garb and in groups sent to different labor camps. Along with 600 other Polish citizens I was assigned to the construction of an airfield. In the camp: no room, hunger, work from sunrise till night. Climate and fatigue took their toll. Practically 100 per cent developed scurvy.

"Kolima is a land of human tears. In 1935 there was nothing

there but primeval forests. Today, prisoners have built 980 klm of highway to Yakutsk, across mountains and taiga. In a number of gold, iron ore and coal mines only prisoners work. A few towns have been built for government officials and N.K.V.D. police.

"The first Polish transport arrived at Kolima early in June 1940 and was followed by many others. During the winter of 1940-41 due to cold weather, hunger and inadequate clothing 30 per cent of them died."

A Pole who came from a camp in Nova Zemla reports:

"In the first days of our stay in Nova Zemla, we were supposed to turn out 40 per cent, then 60, and after one week 95 per cent of the daily 'standard' output. Weak ones weeded out at a fast pace, they were automatically 'done for'; a smaller output of work meant less food and this in turn a still smaller output. After a few months, the number of prisoners who could keep up with the standard output did not exceed 30 per cent. The weaker ones were dying out."

This chapter cannot be concluded without more specific reference to the work of the N.K.V.D. Reports gathered from the citizens and officials of the Soviet Union put the number of this organization at over 4,000,000. "These special corps," writes a Polish journalist ". . . are the unfailing instrument of [Soviet] authority . . . Each week they receive detailed instructions, identical for all the U.S.S.R., as to how they are to reply to questions that are sure to be put them, how to handle certain problems, how and to what degree they are to react to certain foreseen events. Every possibility in general and detail is provided for." (57)

This journalist has written what many others who have come out of the Soviet Union have affirmed.

The N.K.V.D. has the detailed personal history of every individual within Soviet borders. It watches every move of for-

eigners. From the description of a modest May Third (Polish Constitution Day) celebration at the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev in 1942 by one who was there I take these paragraphs: "Above the Embassy merrily fluttered the great red and white flag with the White Eagle of Poland. Passers-by looked at the standard out of a corner of the eye, read the sign—Embassy of the Republic of Poland—on the building and hurried to get out of the dangerous neighborhood. You never know but somebody working with the N.K.V.D.—for such are everywhere—may denounce you as one having contact with a foreign agency. A denunciation like this is enough to send one to a labor camp for ten years.

" 'If you passed such an embassy,' argues the prosecutor, 'you had some reason for so doing. Who is interested in approaching foreigners from capitalist states? Only a spy, of course, or an enemy of the Soviet Union. You deserve not ten years in a forced labor camp but to be shot. Which do you prefer—the shot or the camp?' . . . Profiting from hundreds of thousands of such cases, people give foreign embassies and legations a wide berth." (58)

One afternoon in the summer of 1936 my husband and I were taken for an automobile ride outside Kiev. It was not decided where we would go when we started. There was no definite plan. After we had been out some two hours, we stopped in a village and got out to walk around a bit. In a few minutes a man came out of a building and asked if Mr.—— were in the party. Our host replied that he answered to that name. "You are wanted at the phone," was the reply. How were our whereabouts known? A car had been following us all the way. I would never have noticed it had our host and his chauffeur not called attention to it soon after we started, saying that they were always thus accompanied.

Informers serving the N.K.V.D. are everywhere. Recently a

Pole had occasion to see a Russian school friend of years ago, who now is in a Soviet Government office. In conversation when the two men were alone, the Russian was frank and outspoken in his opinions. But every time a member of his family entered the room, he shifted the talk to inconsequential topics. The Pole could not understand this behavior and remarked on his friend's lack of trust, even in a wife with whom he had lived 19 years.

"Trust?", the Russian said, "there is none in our country. To trust means death or a labor camp. Once Descartes said, 'I think, therefore I am.' Now we in Russia amend that to say, 'I am silent, therefore I am.' "

One further instance illustrating the part fear of espionage plays in Soviet Union life. During the great famine of 1920-1923 in Russia, the American Relief Administration (ARA), in which organization the Quakers took part, sent delegates to conduct relief work. The first delegate, who arrived in August 1920, was arrested on a charge of spying. The Soviet Official Encyclopaedia, reprinted in 1937, referring to this incident says that the delegate was in the U.S.S.R., "in order to engage in political and military espionage and to strengthen the influence of the U.S.A. in connection with the schemes of American imperialism, under cover of aid to countries devastated by the war." (59).

CHAPTER VIII

The Polish Government Offers To Forget

1. General Sikorski Acts

Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union June 22, 1941 made Hitlerite Germany the common enemy of Poland, the despoiled, and the Soviet Union, one of the despoilers. The phrase "Hitlerite Germany" is deliberately used here, for so it is that Premier Stalin invariably refers to the Germans his armies are fighting.

This paradoxical situation created by the attack was immediately taken advantage of by the Polish Premier, General Wladyslaw Sikorski, who, on June 23, the next day after the German attack, indicated his readiness to confer with the Soviets regarding the resumption of friendly relations. (60). This step taken by the Polish Government was by no means an easy one. Only a faint conception of what the Poles were offering to leave to the past can be got from the picture given in the preceding chapters. It was, as a Pole has phrased it, an act demonstrating Poland's good will toward the U.S.S.R., a subordination of Polish resentment against the U.S.S.R. to the strategic needs of the United Nations, and an attempt to base future relations with the U.S.S.R. on the principles of a gentlemen's agreement.

The Polish move was not unfavorably looked upon by Premier Stalin and through British intermediaries negotiations between the Polish and Soviet governments were begun, ending with the signing of the July 30, 1941 Pact in London.

Below is the text of that pact. It is given here in full, for

knowledge of that agreement is necessary to the understanding of succeeding events.

"ONE. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recognises the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 as to territorial changes in Poland as having lost their validity. The Polish Government declares that Poland is not bound by any Agreement with any third Power which is directed against the U.S.S.R.

"TWO. Diplomatic relations will be restored between the two Governments upon the signing of this Agreement and an immediate exchange of ambassadors will be arranged.

"THREE. The two Governments mutually agree to render one another aid and support of all kinds in the present war against Hitlerite Germany.

"FOUR. The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics expresses its consent to the formation on the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of a Polish army under a commander appointed by the Polish Government, in agreement with the Soviet Government, the Polish army on the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics being subordinated—in an operational sense—to the Supreme Command of the U.S.S.R. in which the Polish army will be represented. All details as to command, organization and employment of this force will be settled in a subsequent Agreement.

"FIVE. This Agreement will come into force immediately upon its signature and without ratification. The present Agreement is drawn up in two copies, each of them in the Russian and Polish languages. Both texts have equal force.

"The following protocol is attached to the Agreement:

"The Soviet Government grants an amnesty to all Polish citizens now detained on Soviet territory either as prisoners of war or on other sufficient grounds as from the resumption of diplomatic relations."

Looking back from 1943, two incidents of that July 1941 are seen to have forecast the future of Soviet-Polish relations. A Polish historian in London sent to the printer, while the negotiations were going on, a manuscript entitled "Poland and the U.S.S.R. 1921-1941." It was a presentation of bare facts, without any personal interpretation. Even so it would be highly unwelcome to the U.S.S.R. and the author at the request of the Polish Government, which acted without outside pressure, was asked to stop publication. The book, already in galley proof—a copy of which lies on my desk—was never published.

During the same month Soviet authorities in Lvov ordered the transfer to Moscow of the local communist paper published in Polish. From Moscow it was to continue its fight against the "bourgeois" Polish Government in London.

These acts, insignificant in themselves, were indications marking the paths the respective governments were to take.

2. *Ambassador Stanislaw Kot*

As provided in the Polish-Soviet agreement, diplomatic representatives were at once named, and the new Polish Ambassador to the Soviet Union, a former professor in the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, at the time of appointment Polish Minister of Interior, was soon on his way to Moscow. Accompanying him was an Embassy staff. It was well understood that the task they would undertake would be largely relief work, concerned with locating the deported Polish citizens and Polish prisoners of war, giving temporary help, and getting the civilian deported out of the Soviet Union, where living conditions are hard, to countries where they could remain until the time of repatriation. Appeals for funds to purchase medical supplies, food and clothing were at once sent out and in both America and Britain stores for shipment began to collect.

The protocol to the July 30 pact was interpreted by the Polish

Government as meaning that all Polish citizens, soldiers and civilians in the Soviet Union, would at once be liberated and free to move about. This impression was soon to be dispelled. The day Ambassador Kot arrived in Moscow, September 4, he met there some 30 Poles who, held in the famous Lubianka prison in Moscow, had been released during August and early September. Among them was General Wladyslaw Anders, now in command of the Polish Army of the Middle East. The little group of former prisoners was now shown every courtesy, given good clothes, housed in good hotels, treated as distinguished guests. The Soviet press and radio played up this matter to the full, without, however, giving the number of Polish prisoners involved. Since announcement had been widely made (August 12) over the Soviet radio that all Poles in the U.S.S.R. were henceforth free, people could draw the conclusion that no Poles were now held in prison or camp in the U.S.S.R.

The news of the signing of the Polish-Soviet pact was slow in reaching the vast majority of deported Poles. Scattered as they were in the remote areas, news took long to find them. Those of the "colonists", that is, not in concentration or forced labor camps, who were so fortunate as to learn about the radio announcement (August 12) of the freedom of all Poles, set out at once for cities in which they judged the Polish Government would have representatives. In August and September the gates of prisoner-of-war camps began to open, and Polish soldiers streamed out, inquiring of all and sundry the location of Polish army headquarters.

3. Kuibyshev

From Moscow foreign diplomats and their staffs, President Kalinin and Foreign Commissar Molotov and his staff removed in mid-October to Kuibyshev, as the German armies were now seriously menacing the Red capital. Kuibyshev, in Tsarist days

Samara, and the life of the Poles working in the Embassy there, have been described by one of the Polish Embassy personnel. (61)

The train journey from Moscow to Kuibyshev, a distance of approximately 1000 miles, consumed five days. The new arrivals' first view was encouraging. The Poles considered themselves most fortunate to find that a clean, fairly spacious little plastered dwelling had been assigned to the Polish Embassy. Its furniture, however, was limited to a few iron cots, piles of thin straw mattresses, and a number of plain straight chairs. For some weeks most of the Embassy staff slept on the floor, each person with two or three of the inadequate straw mattresses under him. Gradually, and with much difficulty, furniture that would answer both for bedroom and office service was found. Even then there were twenty beds in the largest room. The Ambassador's office—a room roughly twelve by fourteen feet—was also his bedroom, reception room, and private dining room. It was furnished with an iron cot, a side-board that served a multitude of uses, a dilapidated little desk, and several common chairs. In the adjoining room a radio was kept going, sometimes until one o'clock at night, beside it an employee who got the daily communiques and prepared the news bulletins for the Embassy personnel. In the radio room slept the Ambassador's personal servant who often shared his mattress on the floor with company.

Since there was no space for personal belongings in these rooms, chests of drawers shared by groups crowded the little corridors. Nails driven in the wall at the head of the bed were the only hooks available. One bath and two toilets had to serve "several tens" of people. That either bath or toilet should get out of order was part of the days' routine. Worse was the fact that during the summer the water pressure was good only during the night.

For Embassy office work even a second bathroom where the plumbing would not function and the big passage used as a dining room were fitted up and called into service. Later on when the military situation around Moscow improved, furniture and equipment were moved to Kuibyshev from the Polish Embassy in Moscow and life was considerably easier.

When the first house became crowded beyond endurance, and General Sikorski was expected, the Soviet authorities put another building at the Poles' disposal. Housing—one of the most crying problems in the U.S.S.R.—is owned and hence controlled by the government. This additional house had to be thoroughly cleaned and repaired, after which it accommodated many of the personnel and a little "hospital".

To the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev a rapidly swelling stream of human wreckage, freed by the Soviet radio announcement, began to flow. By train and on foot it poured in, a flood of ragged, emaciated, ill, even dying people. The number of toothless, because of scurvy, was appalling. Skin diseases and terrible boils were the common lot. It is definitely stated that not one of the deported was free from lice. On arrival of one train passing through Kuibyshev, sixteen corpses were taken from it. Members of each group of arrivals told of dead seen on the platforms of stations through which they passed, of the days of waiting for trains, of the despairing crowds and confusion at each station.

Ambassador Kot had appealed to all of those who had a roof over their heads and opportunity to earn even a minimum wage to remain where they were for the time being. However, the exiles entertained but one thought—to reach a place where they would be under the protection and get the assistance of their own government.

The Soviet Government provided railway fare only for those released from prisoner-of-war camps and prisons, and then a

trifling amount. The mass of the deported got no help at all. Hence, those who had managed to hang on to anything of any value—one soldier tells of a cherished knife, his one remaining possession—anyone who had a spare garment, sold it now to get money for the long journey. Piece by piece people bartered clothing off their backs for food along the way. Those so fortunate as to have footwear, sold it and went on barefoot. But these were few. Too many had for months or more been binding rags about their feet instead of putting on shoes.

A school building was obtained in Kuibyshev for housing these arrivals during their halt here on the way to the southeast or to Buzuluk in the Orenburg province, the site of the Polish army camp. Quarantine was established, for disease and death were everywhere. In the school yard carpenters were kept busy making coffins, among which the children carried on their play.

Into the overflowing Embassy houses crowded these people for registration and formalities, their garments saturated with the odors of prison, labor camp and collective hovel. For a time there was almost nothing with which to replace these foul rags except the extra clothing of the Embassy personnel.

As for buying in Kuibyshev, when the foreign diplomats went there in October, in the one big store sheets, tablecloths, handkerchiefs, underwear of sorts, wooden pitchers and garment hangers, women's bags, colored pencils, painted trays, rugs and imitation jewelry were obtainable; sometimes material by the yard, but to get a place in line early enough to reach such a rarity was almost impossible. In a few months, however, a special store for foreign diplomats was opened where everything really necessary, although of poor quality, was obtainable on presentation of the purchaser's strictly personal book of coupons.

The "gypsy market," in a muddy square of that name outside the town, was popular. Here men's boots that appeared new were sold for 4,000 roubles, worn pants, boys' size for 400, an

old aluminum saucepan, 250, a cake of common soap, 120. These and similar articles were displayed on old newspapers, laid on the mud, or simply held in the merchant's hands.

There was little in Kuibyshev for the deported. Later, supplies from America and Britain arrived and great was the change wrought in the appearance of these unfortunates.

CHAPTER IX

Autumn 1941

1. Real Troubles Begin

All told, according to its own figures, the Soviet Government had, by late September 1941, released some 348,000 Polish citizens. But already the Polish officials were encountering snags. Men in certain of the prisoner-of-war camps had not been liberated, and there were tales of revolt, escape, capture, and summary executions. Men who had been freed were being compelled to join labor gangs. Wrong directions were given persons asking the road, as they had continually to do; often they were sent by officials in just the opposite direction of that in which they wished to go. Every obstacle was put in the path of Poles trying to reach Polish army headquarters.

These notes that follow are from the diary of one of these men:

"August 3.—There are rumors that the Polish Government has signed a treaty with the Soviet Government . . .

"August 16.—The reports are true. I read it in a newspaper. They report that a Polish military mission is in Moscow. The Russians say we shall soon be free and will enter the army, for Polish regiments are forming.

"September 3.—A great day—we have been given our freedom as Polish citizens . . .

"September 7.—We have been told we are free, but there is no change in our situation, except that they do not demand as much of us as before.

"September 20.—We have determined to take steps to get information about the Polish army . . .

"October 4.—A whole week and no news about the army.

"November 9.—They continue to send us to work in the forest and give us nothing except 80 deka of bread.

"December 22.—During the last four days it has been 60° below zero (Fahr.)

"January 18.—. . . They sent us 3,000 roubles to cover cost of travel.

"January 31.—Good-bye Siberian forests.

"February 25.—At last we are near the end of our journey.

"March 13.—For almost two weeks now I have been in the army."

Seven months from the day the Polish-Soviet pact, which was to go into effect immediately, was signed, he was "in the army."

A great number of letters and telegrams sent to the Embassy from communities of the deported were never delivered. All efforts to help the civilian deported were blocked by Soviet authorities by delay, by pretended discovery of some technical error in the agreement, by disapproval of some member of the Polish personnel—always something. A few Polish officers were sent out to direct military groups to the Polish headquarters and to care for them at railroad junctions. The diary quoted here spoke of such an officer. But these men had a difficult time, the local Soviet authorities often forbidding them to do anything at all.

No provision had been made in the July 30, 1941 Pact for consular representation and the Soviet Government demanded that the Ambassador be held responsible for everything done. As a provisional solution, in the autumn of 1941 he was permitted to appoint nine delegates who would visit each area as his representatives and on the spot name "trusted men" in each community who would in turn supply the delegate with accurate

information as to the number and needs of the deported in their group, and would attend to distribution of aid upon its arrival. The Ambassador named his delegates. With the exception of two they were not approved, and the activities of one of these were limited to watching over the unloading of transports of arriving relief supplies. He was permitted no contact with the people.

It was the Soviets who had uprooted all these people and made beggars of those who survived. The Polish Government, therefore, asked the Soviet Government for help in caring for them now. The reply was that since they were Polish citizens, the Polish Government was responsible for their welfare. Pressure of the Poles resulted in Commissar Vishinsky's promise of a loan to be used in providing relief for the mass of aged, ill, and children in the fall of 1941. But his next declaration was, that the war needs of the Soviet Union made such a loan impossible, and he suggested the Poles look for money from "social sources," that is, gifts from Britain and America. In the end, however, thanks to General Sikorski's conversations with Stalin, Polish persistence did secure a Soviet loan, 100,000,000 roubles, a sum equivalent to $40,000,000 at the official rate, to $4,000,000 on the black market at that time. The loan is to be paid back in dollars, the first payment in ten years from the date it was made (Dec. 31, 1941).

The Soviet proclamation that all Polish citizens were free did not find expression in Soviet acts. The Polish Government did not know how many were in the U.S.S.R. and it was prevented from finding out. However, it did have reliable reports obtained from persons released from custody, which gave valuable information in regard to location and numbers of the deported. With these reports and information given by released Poles, a good deal could be pieced together.

For one thing, the Polish Embassy knew that at the time of

the German attack on the U.S.S.R. a great effort had been made by the Soviets to transfer large numbers of Polish prisoners from the jails of Vilno and other cities of eastern Poland to remote eastern regions of the Soviet Union. The same applies to the persons of western Soviet territory. There was ample evidence of this transfer from Poles who were part of it. The Soviet authorities, it was inferred, did not wish the number of the deported known. Hence they did not want the prisoners to fall into the hands of the Germans who would publicize the number as well as play on the resentment of Poles to the Soviets in the hope—vain though it was—of enlisting the Poles to fight with them against the Soviet Union.

2. *The Lost Polish Officers*

The now well-aired mystery of the Polish prisoners of war in the camps of Starobielsk, Kozielsk, and Ostashkov was a matter on which the Polish Embassy in Moscow spent much effort. Officers who had been at Kozielsk and were among the few who found their way to Polish army headquarters after the signing of the Polish-Soviet pact, gave information concerning what had gone on in the camps up to the time of their own transfer, and implored the Polish Government to discover what had happened to their comrades.

The statement made by General Marian Kukiel, Polish Minister of National Defence, April 16, 1943 gives a straightforward account of this incident and the part taken in it by the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev. I cannot do better than quote from that declaration:

"On the 17th of September, 1940 the official paper of the Red Army, 'Red Star,' stated that on September 17, 1939 Soviet Russia had taken 181,000 Polish prisoners of war, among this number 10,000 officers from the regular army and the reserve. According to information in the possession of the Polish Gov-

ernment in October 1939, there were three great prisoner-of-war camps on Soviet territory—at Kozielsk, to the east of Smolensk; at Starobielsk, near Kharkov; Ostashkov, near Kalinin. In the last named were Polish police officials and members of the border guard.

"Early in 1940 Soviet authorities began to inform the prisoners that the camps would be liquidated and the prisoners would be permitted to return to their homes and families. They had lists of the prisoners made, indicating where each man wished to go after liberation. At this time there were about 5,000 prisoners in the Kozielsk camp, of whom 4,500 were officers; 3,920, of whom 100 were civilians, in the Starobielsk camp, the rest being officers and 400 of the army doctors; and 6,570 at Ostashkov—as said above, police officials and border guards.

"Soviet authorities began emptying the camps April 5, 1940, and continued until the middle of May, every few days taking out groups of from 60 to 300 men. It is known that the groups from Kozielsk were taken in the direction of Smolensk. Out of all these camps together only some 400 men remained to be taken in June 1940 to the neighborhood of Griazovetz in the Vologda district.

"After the signing of the Polish-Soviet pact July 30, 1941 and of the military agreement of August 1941, the Polish Government began the formation of a Polish army in the U.S.S.R., expecting that the officers of this army would come chiefly from among the prisoners who had been in these three camps. However, in the group of officers arriving in August 1941 at Buzuluk where the Polish army was being formed, there was not one officer among them from the men who had been removed from Kozielsk, Starobielsk, or Ostashkov.

In sum, approximately, 8,300 officers were missing, not counting 7,000 other prisoners who included non-commissioned officers, privates, and civilians who were in the above mentioned

camps at the time of their liquidation. Uneasy over this state of affairs, Professor Kot, then Polish Ambassador to Soviet Russia, and General Wladyslaw Anders, Commander of the Polish troops in Russia, turned to the proper Soviet authorities for light on the fate of the Polish officers who had been in the three camps.

"Beginning with October 5, 1941 Ambassador Kot brought up the matter several times in conversation with Premier Stalin, Molotov, and Vishinsky and demanded that they furnish the lists of the war prisoners that had been made and kept by Soviet authorities. On December 3, 1941, General Sikorski, during his Moscow visit, also brought up in his conversations with Stalin the matter of the liberation of all Polish prisoners of war, and in view of the fact that lists of these had not been supplied by the Soviet authorities, gave Stalin an incomplete list, consisting of the names of 3,843 officers furnished by men who had been their colleagues. Stalin assured General Sikorski that the decision to liberate the Poles was general in character and applied to soldiers as well as to civilians and that the Soviet Government had freed all Polish officers.

"A second list containing the names of 800 officers was given to Stalin on March 18, 1942 by General Anders. But not one of the officers mentioned in either list ever appeared to join the Polish army.

"In addition to the action taken in Moscow and Kuibyshev, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs made it the subject of conversation on several occasions with Ambassador Bogomolov in London. On the 28th of January a note from the Polish Government calling his attention to the painful fact that many thousands of Polish officers had not yet been found, was handed to Ambassador Bogomolov. This he replied to on the 13th of March, 1942 in a note, saying that in accordance with a decree of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. of August 12, 1941 and

with the declaration of the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of November 8 and 19, 1941, the liberation of the Poles had been carried out in full, and that this liberation included military as well as civilian prisoners.

"May 19, 1942 Ambassador Kot sent a memorandum to the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, in which memorandum he expressed his concern over the Soviet refusal to furnish a list of the prisoners of war (military prisoners) and made manifest his anxiety over their fate. At the same time he emphasized the value of these officers in future military operations against the Germans. Not once did the Polish Government or the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev ever receive a reply as to where the officers or other prisoners taken from Kozielsk, Starobielsk, and Ostashkov had been taken."

The loss of 8,300 experienced officers and 7,000 others, among whom were thousands of non-commissioned officers, was a heavy blow to the Polish army, quite apart from the moral and humanitarian side. One woman was among the number, a member of the Polish Army Air Corps. (62)

2. *Buzuluk*

A Polish military mission arrived in the U.S.S.R. in August 1941 and on the 14th of that month a military agreement between the two governments was signed. The Poles were to be permitted by means of draft and voluntary enlistment to form an army of all able-bodied Poles. The agreement also provided that maintenance, equipment, armament, uniforms and transport would be furnished by the Soviet Union in so far as was possible from its own resources. All such expenditures on the part of the U.S.S.R. were to be repaid by Poland at the close of the war. (63)

At once the size of the Polish army in the U.S.S.R. became a matter of debate. Conversations continued while men were pour-

ing into the Polish camp near Buzuluk, some 125 miles east and south of Kuibyshev. In August roughly 14,000 arrived, by the middle of October there were 45,000.

From earliest times a camp had existed on this spot, where legend has it the Tatar Khans encamped. At any rate armies of the tsars were regularly here in summer, never in winter, and the Red armies have continued the tradition. On a plain several square kilometers in extent successive armies pitched their tents. The only buildings were flimsy wooden structures, since they were for summer occupancy only.

Such was the place where the Polish soldiers assembled and were to be trained and equipped. Starved, in tatters, barefoot or with their feet and legs wrapped in rags, these men arrived. In September the weather was already cold. The first duty of some was to fell and haul, with their own strength, trees from a wood some distance away, and with these logs construct semi-dugout shelters or reinforce the tents.

Many of the men in this army-to-be had walked 600 or 700 miles to join it. The great majority, however, came by train. When train transports arrived corpses had to be removed, sometimes so many as a score. Hundreds of men had to be taken from the station to the hastily prepared hospital. Isolation camps had to be set up for typhus cases, of which there were thousands.

With this flood of recruits, General Wladyslaw Anders, Commander of Polish forces in the U.S.S.R., in early October requested more camps, as the quarters were overcrowded. The reply of the Soviet authorities was that they expected to feed and equip a Polish army of no more than 30,000, asserting that in a protocol signed by Poland August 19 that was to be the number of Polish troops in the U.S.S.R. There was a protocol—a summary of the conversations carried on by the joint military commissions—but there was no agreement between the two govern-

ments. This protocol referred only to the formation of the first two divisions of the Polish army. At the same time, all requests of the Poles for the equipment the Soviet Union was to supply went unheeded. Nor were tens of thousands of Poles, still held prisoner in camps or jails, released.

As for clothing, Great Britain, out of good will and not through obligation, as early as the first week of September sent 40,000 British uniforms to the Poles—a feat accomplished in remarkably quick time. Later at different times they sent 60,000 more, thus supplying enough for 100,000 men.

In December 1941, 90 per cent of the Polish troops at Buzuluk were still quartered in tents, with the temperature as low as Canada's most bitter weather. This was the time of General Sikorski's visit (December 1941) and the Polish press attaché who was with him thus describes the review of the new troops:

"The review is something that in truth will always be remembered. In fours, section after section, marched these soldiers, such as are known to no other army in the world. Only a Goya's brush could have caught the scene. The soldiers of Napoleon's Old Guard, when from the snows of Russia they made their way back to the corners of Montmartre, were not comparable to this army rising from the dead.

"The motley collection of 'uniforms'—ragged and faded—had by some miracle of inconceivable darnings, patchings, and endless mending become passable in appearance. Men whose feet had been frozen during two years of servitude in the far north and could scarcely move one foot after the other, were in line. There were men old before their time, their backs bent, their faces furrowed. But in their eyes burned the light of such happiness as is rarely seen in the eyes of the most victorious army . . . Men in uniforms and men in prison jackets, seldom a man with a rifle, the vast majority had no weapon of any sort . . . It was 40° below then. The evening brought a blizzard and snow, the

'purga' or 'buran', which frightens the children of this Orienburg steppe, and in which the traveller is blinded and not one thing is visible.

"That day the food rations were increased for the army, and each soldier found in his bowl of watery soup an authentic bit of meat. In truth that was a red letter day. Rumor was spreading good news from tent to tent—the army would probably be sent south, on the Asiatic steppe, where there would be no cold; probably new Polish divisions would be formed; probably transports with uniforms from England were coming; probably . . .

"And the greatest hope was whispered as the finest and most wonderful news; probably they would now be getting arms." (64)

3. General Sikorski's Visit

General Sikorski's visit to Russia in December 1941 was announced to the world as a definite success. Judging from newspaper reports, improvement in Polish-Soviet relations was certain. General Sikorski had been able to secure Stalin's consent to the organization of an army of 96,000 in the U.S.S.R. As a result of this visit, on January 23, 1942 an agreement was signed in which the Soviet Union obligated itself to feed and equip 96,000 Polish troops. In addition 25,000 Polish soldiers were to be sent to the Middle East as well as 2,000 aviators and sailors to England where they could be used in the particular service for which they were prepared.

A disturbing matter connected with the army had arisen before General Sikorski's arrival. The Military Commissar of the Kazakstan Republic had issued an order calling into the Red Army all Polish citizens among the deported who were listed as Ukrainians, White Ruthenians or Jews by the Soviet authorities and whose age and physical condition met draft requirements. But

not a great deal of attention was paid to this at the time, as so much was hoped for from General Sikorski's visit.

However, the Polish Embassy continued to protest the order. In reply to this intervention, on December 1, 1941 a note from Narkomindel—the Soviet Foreign Office—declared that the Commissar of Kazakstan was not drafting into the Red Army Polish citizens of Ukrainian, White Ruthenian or Jewish nationality, but had only ordered their enlistment for labor in the rear of the army. Farther on the note stated such action was not contrary to the July 30, 1941 Pact or to the August 14, 1941 military agreement, since according to a decree of the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. (November 29, 1939) all citizens of Western Ukraine and West White Ruthenia who were in those territories on November 1 and 2, 1939 automatically became citizens of the U.S.S.R. The law by which they acquired this citizenship was a Soviet decree of August 19, 1938.

Narkomindel, in its December 1, 1941 note, continued:

"The readiness of the Soviet Government to recognize as Polish citizens those persons of Polish nationality who on November 1-2, 1939 were living on the above specified territory, proves only the goodwill and lenience of the Soviet Government but cannot serve in any case as a basis for an analogous recognition as Polish citizens of persons of other nationalities, particularly those of Ukrainian, White Ruthenian and Jewish nationality, as the problem of boundaries between the U.S.S.R. and Poland is not settled yet and will be taken up in the future."

This was more than disturbing for the Poles. In a few sentences a part of Soviet policy that the Poles had feared was shaping up, was openly declared. Both the Polish territory occupied and all the minority populations on that territory were now claimed by the Soviets. The Polish Government could not, had it so wished, have made any territorial concessions, for it has no authority to make territorial changes. Any such action

would be both unconstitutional and contrary to the will of the people. The Polish Government, it should be remembered, is a legal government, its legality based on the Polish Constitution. In the second place, the Polish Government is under obligation to serve and protect all Polish citizens, not just those adjudged by the authorities of another state to be of Polish blood. It has no more constitutional right to hand over population than it has to hand over territory. In view of the Soviet attitude the situation was grave.

December, however, brought what appeared a heartening event. General Sikorski and Premier Stalin signed what was known as the Sikorski-Stalin Friendship and Mutual Assistance Declaration of December 4, 1941, concerning mutual aid and post-war cooperation. Stalin was extremely cordial. There was banqueting and speech making and the Soviet Premier proposed a toast to "a strong and independent Poland." The declaration reads as follows:

"The Governments of the Republic of Poland and of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, imbued with the spirit of friendly concord and fighting collaboration, declare:

"1. German Hitlerite imperialism is the worst enemy of mankind,—no compromise with it is possible. Both States, jointly with Great Britain and other Allies, and with the support of the United States of America, will wage war until complete victory and final destruction of the German invaders is achieved.

"2. Implementing the Treaty concluded on July 30th, 1941, both Governments will render each other during the war full military assistance, and troops of the Polish Republic located on the territory of the Soviet Union will wage war against the German bandits hand in hand with Soviet troops. In peace-time their relations will be based on good neighborly collaboration, friendship and mutual honest observance of the undertakings they have assumed.

"3. After a victorious war and the appropriate punishment of the Hitlerite criminals, it will be the task of the Allied States to ensure a durable and just peace. This can be achieved only through a new organization of international relations on the basis of unification of the democratic countries in a durable alliance. Respect for international law backed by the collective armed force of all the Allied States must form the decisive factor in the creation of such an organization. Only under this condition can a Europe destroyed by German barbarism be restored and a guarantee be created that the disaster caused by the Hitlerites will never be repeated."

Signed: By authorization of the Government of the Soviet Union.

STALIN

For the Government of the Polish Republic.

SIKORSKI

It promised a great deal, and gave reason to hope that the ambiguity and insincerity, which, as one of the Poles put it, had been the chief characteristics of Soviet talk, agreements, and action, would disappear. In this new affirmation of friendship for and will to co-operate with Poland, the Poles had further backing. If Narkomindel continued its announced policy it would be acting in direct contradiction to articles to which the Soviet Premier had put his name.

There was yet a third major achievement of the Sikorski visit. The number of Polish delegates permitted the Embassy for work among the deported was increased to twenty. Eighteen of these actually reached their assigned areas.

Another question, by far the most important of all, was raised by Stalin himself in his talks with Sikorski. That concerned the Soviet-Polish frontiers. This could not have been a surprise. With the signing of the July 30, 1941 Pact, the Polish Government took the position that since the Soviets had abrogated their

treaty of September 1939 with the Germans, the former Polish boundary was thereby restored. That the Kremlin did not so interpret it was immediately made manifest. On August 4th "Izviestia", the official Soviet daily, came out with an article making it very clear that the U.S.S.R. would never give up the territory it had incorporated into the Republics of the Ukraine and White Ruthenia. The delicate international situation and unwillingness of the Poles to advertise friction with a recently acquired United Nations ally and so jeopardize the fate of the United Nations, had kept the Polish Government from bringing this plain warning to public notice. But now the territorial question was brought up in the communications of the Soviet Foreign Office to the Polish Embassy and at a time coinciding with the Polish Premier's visit, and, as said above, broached in conversation by the Soviet Premier.

What Premier Stalin meant by coming out for "a strong and independent Poland," as reported by General Sikorski, can more properly be discussed in connection with later events.

4. Erlich and Alter

The day before General Sikorski's departure from Moscow, December 3, 1941, the Poles in Kuibyshev learned of the arrest of two prominent Polish-Jewish Socialists, Henry Erlich and Victor Alter. These men were from Warsaw, but like tens of thousands of others had been in the Eastern provinces when the Red Army invaded that area. There they had been arrested and taken to the U.S.S.R. where they spent almost two years in prison. In July 1941, weeks after the German attack on the Soviet Union, they were sentenced to death, but released after the signing of the Polish-Soviet Pact, and told their arrest had been "a terrible mistake." "We were released with great honors and given residence in the best hotel in Moscow; we received new clothes and were placed under a doctor's care." (65)

It was proposed to them by Soviet authorities that they organize a Jewish committee in the U.S.S.R. to fight fascism. Erlich and Alter accepted, submitting their plan to Stalin, as asked. While awaiting reply, they did all they could to get Polish Jews among the deported to join the Polish army, on November 29, 1941 issuing a signed proclamation, approved by Soviet authorities, to that purpose. One week later they were called by telephone at 12:30 a.m. and asked to go to the Commissariat of the Interior. They left their friends, saying they would be back soon. They never returned to their hotel.

Upon receipt of the news of these men's re-arrest, the Polish Ambassador at once intervened in their behalf. It was only one of hundreds of similar cases in which Polish citizens were involved and whom the Polish Government was endeavoring to save. But because this case attracted world wide attention it is cited here.

The Alter-Erlich case was so much written about in the American press that details need not be recalled, but it cannot be dismissed without recalling certain pertinent facts. The execution of these men is understood to have taken place while General Sikorski was still in the U.S.S.R. The Soviets continued to receive innumerable protests and appeals for the release of the two prisoners for many weeks after their execution, and to these appeals no answer was made. Labor leaders in America and Britain, well-known government officials and persons outstanding in the fight for democracy and justice joined in the appeals. On January 27, 1943, William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, cabled an appeal. According to the New York Post of March 4, 1943, "Wendell Willkie personally asked Joseph Stalin in Moscow to release from a Soviet prison Victor Alter and Henryk Erlich..." Appeals continued to cross the Atlantic in a growing number until on Feb. 23rd Maxim Litvinov, Soviet Ambassador in Washington, announced that Erlich

and Alter had been executed. Why the Soviet Government found it convenient to treat American Labor leaders and American citizens in this manner is for the Soviets to explain.

Alter and Erlich were both men commanding the highest respect. They had both rendered service to Poland, as party leaders and as officials. Their loyalty was unquestioned. They had refused to become Soviet instruments. When, after the July 30, 1941 pact was signed, they were asked by the Soviet officials to organize an Anti-fascist Jewish Committee, they agreed readily and their work was officially approved. They were re-arrested while so engaged, and executed, although they were not residents of territory occupied by the U.S.S.R., having gone into that area from Warsaw after the German invasion of Poland.

CHAPTER X

On The Road To The Break

1. The Polish Army in the U.S.S.R.

On May 7, 1943, Soviet Vice Commissar for Foreign Affairs Andrey Y. Vishinsky made a long declaration containing serious charges against the Polish army that had been in the U.S.S.R. and its commander. That these may be fresh in the reader's mind, pertinent excerpts from the declaration are here given:

"Following conclusion of the Polish-Soviet agreement on July 30, 1941, formation of a Polish Army was commenced on territory of the Soviet Union in accordance with the military agreement concluded by the Soviet and Polish commands on August 14 of the same year.

"At the same time, by agreement between the Soviet and Polish Commands, the total strength of the Polish Army was fixed at 30,000 men, while in conformity with the suggestion of General Anders it was also found expedient, as soon as one or another division was ready, to dispatch it immediately to the Soviet-German front.

"Soviet military authorities, which, on instructions of the Soviet Government, assisted the Polish Command by every means in speediest settlement of all problems connected with the accelerated formation of Polish units, established full equality of supplies for the Polish Army and for Red Army units in process of formation.

"... It should be noted that, although the strength of the Polish Army had been originally fixed at 30,000 men, on October 25,

1941, the Polish Army already numbered 41,561, including 2,630 officers. The Soviet Government favorably received the proposal of the Polish Government made in December, 1941, by General Sikorski regarding expansion of this Polish Army to 96,000 men.

"...Despite difficult wartime conditions, in February, 1942 the Polish Army was already formed and its planned divisions numbered 73,415 men. However, despite repeated assurances of the Polish Command of their determination to put their units into action as soon as possible, the actual date of dispatch of these units to the front kept being postponed.

"At the beginning of the formation of the Polish Army the time limit for its readiness was set at October 1, 1941. Moreover, the Polish Command stated that it considered it expedient to dispatch their divisions to the front separately as the formation of each was completed. Though preparation of some units was still delayed, there existed ample possibility of acting upon this intention, if not on October 1, then somewhat later.

"However, it was not fulfilled and the Polish Command never raised the question of sending the organized Polish divisions to the Soviet-German front. The Soviet Government did not think it proper to press the Polish Command in this matter. However, five months after the formation of Polish units was undertaken, namely, in February, 1942, the Soviet Government inquired as to when Polish units would start fighting the Hitlerites and mentioned the Fifth Division as one which already had completed training.

"In asking this question the Soviet Government proceeded, in the first place, from direct and clear provisions of the Soviet-Polish military agreement of Aug. 14, 1941, the Seventh Article of which stated:

"'The Polish Army units will be moved to the front upon achievement of full fighting readiness. They will take part as

a rule in formation not smaller than a division and will be used in conformity with plans of operations of the Supreme Command of the U.S.S.R.' "

"Despite so categoric a provision of military agreement, General Anders, on behalf of the Polish Government, subsequently stated that he thought it undesirable to send the divisions into action separately, although on other fronts Poles fought even in brigades. General Anders gave promise that the whole Polish Army would be ready to take part in war operations against the Germans by June 1, 1942.

"It is known that neither on June 1 nor considerably later did the Polish Command and the Polish Government show readiness to send the Polish Army for operations on the Soviet German front. Moreover, the Polish Government even formally refused to dispatch its troops to the Soviet-German front, stating as its motive that 'use of separate divisions will not yield any result' and that 'possible military training of one division will not justify our expectations.' (Telegram of General Sikorski of Feb. 7, 1942.)

"Meanwhile deliveries of provisions to the U.S.S.R. fell short of plan in view of the outbreak of war in the Pacific and this entailed a necessity to reduce the number of rations issued to army units not engaged in actual fighting for the sake of assuring a supply for troops in the field. Inasmuch as the Polish command displayed no desire to dispatch any of the Polish Army units to the Soviet-German front and continued keeping them far in the rear, the Soviet Government naturally was compelled to regard these units as troops not engaged in actual fighting and consequently the decision on a reduction of food rations for units not engaged in fighting was extended to include them.

"In view of this, the Soviet Government adopted a decision as from April, 1942 to reduce the number of food rations to 44,000 and permit, in conformity with the desire expressed by

the Polish Government, evacuation to Iran of Polish troops in excess of 40,000 remaining in the Soviet Union. This evacuation was effected in March, 1942, when 31,480 men in military service left the U.S.S.R. and 12,455 members of families of the Polish military were permitted to leave together with them.

"Refusing to dispatch its army to the Soviet-German front, the Polish Government at the same time pressed the Soviet Government to consent to additional enrollment in the Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S.R. Simultaneously with the proposal of additional enrollment, the Polish Government addressed the Soviet Government with a note proposing such employment of Polish Army units that it meant nothing but the refusal to use them on the Soviet-German front.

"In reply to this note (of June 10, 1942) the Soviet Government informed the Polish Government that since, contrary to the agreement between the U.S.S.R. and Poland, the Polish Government does not find it possible to use Polish units formed in U.S.S.R. on the Soviet-German front, the Soviet Government cannot permit further formation of Polish units in the U.S.S.R.

"Then the question was raised of evacuation of the whole Polish Army from the U.S.S.R. to the Near East and 44,000 Polish soldiers were additionally evacuated in August, 1942. Thus the question of participation of Polish troops in common with Soviet troops in the struggle against Hitlerite Germany was removed from the order of the day by the Polish Government. The Polish Government decided this question in the negative, contrary to its original assurances and contrary to the solemn statement made in the declaration of Dec. 4, 1941, to the effect that 'troops of the Polish Republic stationed on the territory of the Soviet Union will fight German brigands shoulder to shoulder with Soviet troops.'

". . . In connection with the question of formation of a Polish

Army on the territory of the U.S.S.R. it is also necessary to note the following:

"After the reunion by the will of Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian peoples of the western regions of the Ukraine and Byelo-Russia with the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and Byelo-Russian Soviet Republic, on Nov. 29, 1939, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet issued a decree in virtue of which, in conformity with U.S.S.R. laws of citizenship, residents of the above regions acquired Soviet citizenship.

"As already pointed out, after the restoration of relations between the Soviet Government and the Polish Government and the conclusion of the Soviet-Polish military agreement on Aug. 14, 1941, the Soviet Government took a number of measures to facilitate formation of a Polish Army on territory of the U.S.S.R. To assist in formation of this army and supply it with cadres the Soviet Government expressed readiness by way of exception from the decree of Nov. 29, 1939, to regard persons of Polish nationality residing in the Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia as Polish subjects.

"Despite this manifestation of good-will and pliancy of the Soviet Government, the Polish Government adopted a negative attitude toward this act of the Soviet Government and was not satisfied with it, being guided by its unlawful claims to the territories of the Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia. Meanwhile, as already stated, the Polish Government withdrew its army units from the U.S.S.R. as far back as August 1942, and thus the formation of Polish Army units on Soviet territory was no longer necessary.

"In view of the above circumstances, exception for persons of Polish nationality to which the Soviet Government expressed its readiness in December, 1941, was no longer necessary. Therefore, on Jan. 16, 1943, the Soviet Government informed the Polish Government that its previous statement of readiness to

permit exception from the decree of Nov. 29, 1939, with regard to afore-stated persons of Polish nationality should be considered as no longer valid and the possibility of their exemption from provisions of Soviet laws on citizenship as no longer existing. Such are the facts shedding full light on the circumstances of the formation of Polish Army units on territory of the U.S.S.R. and evacuation of these units from the Soviet Union."

Here is what actually happened.

During General Sikorski's December 1941 visit in the U.S.S.R., new accords concerning the Polish army in that country were agreed upon. The formal agreement signed on January 22, 1942 was never carried out, as the signatures were hardly on the paper before new difficulties loomed.

According to the August 14, 1941 military agreement the recruiting commissions were to consist of Poles with Soviet representatives participating. In the spring of 1942, Poles were not allowed to be members of these commissions, and these Soviet commissions would not admit Ukrainians, Jews or White Ruthenians, notwithstanding their Polish citizenship, into the Polish army.

In March 1942 a Soviet order was issued forbidding any Polish citizen to leave the place where he then was. The Polish military authorities had established aid units in various railway stations en route to Polish army headquarters. The Soviets abolished these, and all groups of soldiers who were on their way to the army were without means of obtaining food or travel money. However, by spring 73,000 Polish soldiers, having overcome indescribable difficulties, were in camp, but this was far from the 123,000 all told that Stalin had agreed to with General Sikorski.

On March 17, Stalin had an interview with General Wladyslaw Anders, Commander of the Polish Army in the U.S.S.R., whom he had summoned from Tashkent, far away to the south-

east, whither Polish troops had been transferred. Stalin informed General Anders that because of food shortage, resulting from the United States' failure to send the grain which it had obligated itself to send—according to Stalin the United States had supplied only 100,000 tons instead of the promised 1,000,000—the Soviet Government was obliged to reduce the size of the Polish army to 44,000 men. The food supply, beginning with April 1, would be for that number.

There was no changing this decision, but when Stalin proposed that the number of Polish soldiers in excess of 44,000 be sent to collective farms, General Anders explained the impossibility of doing this and Stalin agreed to the evacuation to Persia. In the meantime, General Anders was doing all he could to get more Poles into the Polish camp, as he had authority to do so by the military agreement of August 14, 1941 and further agreement of January 22, 1942.

The special group of 25,000 soldiers to be taken out of the U.S.S.R. for use elsewhere, as agreed upon by General Sikorski and Stalin—in addition to the 96,000 that were to remain in the Soviet Union—was never assembled and very few of the men who would have been in this group got out. After the agreement was made the British and Poles immediately prepared reception bases for them in Persia. The British gave assurance of trucks for their transport across Persia to the ports. But the Soviets discussed for months under which authority the matter of assembling and arranging for the departure of this 25,000 lay, and could never reach a decision. However, when on March 17, 1942 Stalin wished to be rid of the Polish troops that had been designated as the Polish army to fight alongside the Red Army, there was no discussion of formalities, and roughly 30,000 Polish soldiers were quickly evacuated, and along with them 12,000 civilians. Neither was this an obstacle in August of the same year, when Stalin ordered the rest of the Polish

army, some 44,000, out of the U.S.S.R. Approximately 30,000 civilian deported were evacuated at this time.

As for the use of the Polish troops on the Russian front, it was stipulated in the military agreement of August 14, 1941 (Article 7) that Polish troops should not be sent to the front "before attaining full combat training" and then "in units no smaller than a division." The Poles were taking care to see that they were not scattered as companies, regiments or battalions and lost utterly in the Red Army mass.

The Soviets had promised fully to equip two divisions by October 1, 1941. They did not do so, and without equipment, training could not be given. One division got small arms, but almost no artillery of any description with the exception of a few batteries for training purposes. Transportation and horses supplied them were inadequate. The second division got no equipment. The Polish command had the equipment furnished the first division divided so it could be shared with the second division for training. Soldiers who had gone through what these men had experienced to enlist in the Polish army and who were living under such heart-breaking conditions could not be left with only promises which were never kept.

With even so brief a résumé of the Polish army history in the U.S.S.R. as given in this and a preceding chapter, it must be plain to all who have read the charges made by Mr. Vishinsky against the Polish troops and General Anders that such charges are absolutely without foundation in fact. The Soviets broke the agreement Stalin had made with General Sikorski concerning the number of men to be recruited. The Soviet Government supplied only one division with equipment, and that inadequate, although it obligated itself to equip 96,000 men. The 25,000 special group was never assembled. The Polish army did not desert but was ordered out by Stalin himself.

The bravery of Polish soldiers needs no defence. Rare is the

record of a fight for freedom since this war began—on land, on sea, in the sky—that does not contain Polish names. The wanderings and vicissitudes of many of these men and boys before they reached a Polish army headquarters make an odyssey in comparison with which the original *Odyssey* is but a tame tale. No Polish troops have endured more for the sake of an opportunity to fight for the liberation of their homeland than have the members of General Anders' Polish Army of the Middle East. Their British and American Allies have done for them what the U.S.S.R. did not do—provided conditions under which they could be trained in the most modern warfare and supplied them with necessary equipment and arms. When the day arrives on which they enter battle they will make their reply to Vice-Commissar Vishinsky.

2. *Relief Work for the Deported Stopped*

After the Polish-Soviet pact was signed July 30, 1941, in which it was declared that all Poles held in the U.S.S.R. would immediately be set free, those who were liberated—whether from prisoner-of-war camp, labor camp, or community group—were given certificates showing that they were Polish citizens. These were valid for three months, at the end of which period it was expected that the Polish Embassy would be in a position to grant passports. As it happened, passports could not be issued to all in the specified three months, scattered and remote as the deported were, and the time during which the certificates would be recognized was extended.

At the time of their liberation, Poles were permitted to choose the place where they would like to go. This meant inside the U.S.S.R., as no permits to leave the Soviet Union could be given until these people had received Polish passports. All Polish men and youth eligible for military service were wanted for the Polish army forming in the U.S.S.R. but though the Polish

Embassy urged all others who had means of maintenance to remain temporarily where they were, the advice was unheeded. The situation in each place was so bad that Poles were sure some other place was better—any place rather than the one where they then were. Some one of them would announce that he was going to such and such a place, and immediately a great party would decide that this was a desirable locality.

In other cases the Soviet authorities marked a destination on their documents, and sent these travellers on long journeys to the south, where they would find on their arrival that nothing was as it had been represented to them.

Altogether, according to Vishinsky, about 400,000 of the deported were involved in this mass movement. From what the Polish authorities learned, it is apparent that this is far below the actual number.

The twenty delegates of the Polish Government agreed upon during General Sikorski's visit for relief work among the Polish citizens deported from Poland to the U.S.S.R. were confirmed in an agreement of Jan. 10, 1942. Nine of them had diplomatic standing; but among the twenty there was no member of the Polish Red Cross, and the Soviets would not agree to Polish consular representation nor to the formation of a Citizens' Committee.

Between the middle of January and the first of February, eighteen of the twenty delegates had left Kuibyshev. Some of them experienced difficulties, for Narkomindel—the Soviet Foreign Office—was interfering. For a very brief period after arrival at their destinations things appeared to move normally, although the Soviet authorities recognized only 131 of the 251 "trusted men", Polish collaborators who were necessary to the delegates if they were to accomplish with any degree of satisfaction what they were sent to do.

Shortly it was discovered that N.K.V.D. agents were trying

to get in as "trusted men", using the same terroristic methods on trusted men in the organizations as they use in jails and camps. At the same time Soviet authorities began reporting that the delegates were concerning themselves with Soviet citizens as well as Polish. This was the matter brought up before General Sikorski's visit and during his visit about Jews, Ukrainians, and White Ruthenians. The Soviet Government having proclaimed the deported of these nationalities Soviet citizens, charged the Polish officials with interfering in internal Soviet affairs when efforts were made to assist Polish citizens of these nationalities with relief or to have them released from prison.

The first food, clothing and medical supplies for the deported arrived for distribution late in the spring of 1942. The moral effect of the presence of the Polish delegates, however, before that time was of considerable importance. The physical suffering during the winter, say those who had a part in it, passes all description. The deported had left the cold North in throngs, had been shunted south to Uzbekistan and Kazakstan and arrived there to find nothing for them and no hope of leaving the U.S.S.R.

Arriving at a center in Kazakstan a Polish relief worker found the entire space around the station and all the open space in the vicinity—roughly 50 hectares (125 acres)—occupied by deported Poles camping in the open. At all the stations the situation was the same. The task confronting the delegates and their helpers, with only a few thousand roubles at their disposal and the terrible scarcity of everything in the U.S.S.R., was, to quote one of the workers, "unnerving" at best. "Ragged, without underwear, emaciated, vermin-covered" crowds expecting help surrounded the relief workers from early morning until late at night. Many thousands of these travellers had been told that a Polish army was forming "in the south, in Uzbekistan," many of them had been given documents when they were liberated from labor camps, directing them to go to such and such

a place. All they wanted to know was the way thither. Bitter was their disappointment when they learned that no Polish troops were at the place indicated.

Terrible scenes took place wherever in the U.S.S.R. there were Polish deported. The greatest number of deaths during the whole period of the deportation—and between the first deportations and June 1943 a third of all the deported are estimated to have perished—occurred during the autumn and winter of 1941-1942.

The delegates had strict instructions to give out relief only as it was needed. Transportation was so uncertain, climatic conditions so bad, that every pound of relief had to be used to the best advantage. Hence store rooms were arranged for supplies to be given out as required. It is understandable that warm clothing and footwear, for example, unnecessary in April, would not be distributed then, when the possessor might yield to the temptation to barter them for food with the local population, so eager to lay hands on such unheard-of articles.

In March the Soviet authorities were already protesting the right of the delegates to take information about men and women not yet released, saying that was a matter for the Embassy and not the delegates. But the Embassy had no way of collecting this information except through its delegates, and through such information, it intervened in the first six months of 1942 in 4,514 individual cases, very few requests being received toward the last, since the Soviet authorities were closing the relief centers. The Soviets ignored many of the Polish notes, in 609 cases replied that the persons referred to were already free, which was not in keeping with the information the delegates had; said 196 could not be found; liberated 417; and held 325, of whom they declared 286 were not Polish citizens. They were Polish citizens but Jewish, Ukrainian or White Ruthenian in nationality.

On May 25, 1942, the Soviet authorities found a pretext to request that one of the delegates leave the U.S.S.R.

On June 9, 1942 Narkomindel sent to the Polish Embassy detailed instructions concerning the determination of Polish citizenship and the granting of Polish passports. Nationality and religion were given a prominent place. "Competent Soviet authorities" were to examine the lists submitted by the Polish Government. All persons to whom "competent authorities" had no objections to the granting of Polish passports, would receive certificates that they were foreign residents in the U.S.S.R. upon presentation of their Polish passports. The same note informed the Polish Government that all persons who had already received Polish passports must submit to the same examination, that is, that no Polish passport was valid until the holder of it had been certified by Soviet authorities as Polish in nationality.

Such procedure was incompatible with both international law and Polish-Soviet agreement, and according to the Polish constitution neither nationality nor religion in any way influenced citizenship in Poland. Polish agreement to the Soviet declaration that all Polish citizens not of Polish nationality were Soviet citizens and Polish agreement to the evacuation of Polish citizens of Polish nationality would have been equivalent to recognizing the Soviet claim to all of Eastern Poland. It would have meant that the Polish Government agreed with the Soviets that the natives of those areas were Soviet citizens and that the Poles were foreigners, who were now being permitted to leave the U.S.S.R.

The Polish Government protested the Soviet stand but Soviet authorities paid no attention to this declaration, accepting as Polish citizens only those whose names, physical appearance and manners were judged by the "competent" examiners to prove the applicant of Polish nationality.

Between June 29-July 20, 1942 all the delegates and all

the more important members of the personnel connected with the relief, all told 170 persons, were arrested. The nine delegates of diplomatic rank were arrested along with the others. Arrests were made in homes at night or on the street. The Polish Government was not informed of what was happening, but later it succeeded in getting the nine delegates with diplomatic rank released. All the other arrested were held until the end of October 1942, and some thirty were never released.

This action meant that all the shelters where children, the aged, and the ill were being taken care of, all store houses, all records, all hospitals, in addition to the shelters, were taken over by the N.K.V.D. In the storerooms were large quantities of relief supplies held in readiness for cold weather.

The delegates had succeeded in listing the names, with some information, of a few more than 400,000 deported Polish citizens before their work was abruptly closed. This was less than a third of the number estimated deported and even these were not all located.

One of the most important features of this shutting down of all relief work was that it left hundreds of thousands of persons en route to new locations or recently arrived and yet unsettled, helpless. Those en route were ordered to get off the trains at whatever point they happened to be caught and told to shift for themselves. For many this was little short of a death sentence.

When the deported Poles saw what treatment the Soviets accorded the Polish Government representatives, in whose help the Poles had such confidence, the effect was bad indeed. Everything had been confiscated, many persons had been re-arrested and sent away or executed. The survivors were beggars, cut off from their government, forbidden to leave the locality except by special police permission, hence actually interned in the U.S.S.R. Personal papers or documents of the deported—they had been given certificates and in some instances documents

stating where they were to go when they were liberated—were taken up.

The only Polish citizens who could profit even from the restricted help possible were those near the Polish army camps, families of officers and men. Some of those, not all, were passed as Poles by Soviets and were evacuated with the last of the Polish troops. None have been evacuated since that time.

On January 16, 1943 the Soviet Government sent a note to the Polish Embassy in Kuibyshev to the effect that all of the deported from Eastern Poland, regardless of the Soviet Government's attitude or action with reference to these individuals in the past, were now recognized as citizens of the Soviet Union.

The Polish Government refused to accept such an interpretation and insisted that it be allowed to give relief to deported Polish citizens. To the Polish reply the Soviets declared that there were no longer any Polish citizens in the U.S.S.R. and that the Soviet Government could not, therefore, permit any talk of relief by the Poles since that would be interference in Soviet internal affairs.

In his charges of May, 1943, Vishinsky accused members of the Polish Government and their representatives of espionage, and it was on the charge of being enemies of the Soviet Union that the various Polish delegates and their assistants in relief work for the deported were arrested. The charges were baseless, for the persons arrested were taking particular care to do nothing that would not be in accord with the Soviet-Polish agreement and which might jeopardize the relief work. But, say the Poles, for 25 years the Soviet Government has continually drilled into the people of the U.S.S.R. that all foreigners who go to Russia are spies. Soviet school-books contain stories praising children who denounce "spies, subversive agents and enemies of the U.S.S.R." Polish soldiers in British uniforms on the streets of Soviet cities have heard Russian children point them out as

"English spies." It will be recalled that it was the British who supplied the Poles with uniforms when the U.S.S.R. was unable to do so. The Polish White Eagle was on the caps of the Poles, but otherwise there was no way of distinguishing these soldiers from members of the British army. The people of the U.S.S.R. were convinced that the "capitalist" nations were still active enemies of the Soviets.

3. A Strong and Independent Poland

In his conversation with General Sikorski in December 1941 Stalin declared himself to be for "a strong and independent Poland." He reiterated that statement in a letter to an American newspaper correspondent, and the letter was printed in the New York Times, May 6, 1943. It was a statement given great publicity, cited on each occasion that the good faith of the Soviet Union in the matter of the Polish-Soviet boundary was in question. Taking more than half of Poland's territory would be a weakening of Poland; hence, argued such people, Stalin's statement was a guarantee that he would recognize the pre-war frontier.

Such persons apparently did not know the facts presented in the preceding sections of this chapter, nor did they thoughtfully read Stalin's few speeches, which surely are most carefully prepared. In the May Day 1942 order of the day to the Red Army, he declares that "We are fighting the war for our country! For justice and freedom! We have no aim of seizing foreign territory or conquering foreign peoples. Our aim is clear and honorable. We want to free our Soviet land from the German Fascist beast. We want to free our brother Ukrainians, Moldavians, White Russians, Lithuanians, Latvians, Estonians and Karelians . . ." In his February 22, 1943 order of the day, "We have begun the liberation," he says, "of the Soviet Ukraine from German possession, but millions of Ukrainians still are

languishing under the yoke of German enslavement. In Byelo-Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, in Moldavia, in Crimea, in Karelia German invaders hold sway."

It must be remembered that the Ukraine and Byelo-Russia according to the Soviets include incorporated Eastern Poland. These lands are not in Soviet reasoning "foreign" or their populations "conquered peoples."

Immediately after Stalin's pronouncement concerning "a strong and independent Poland" the Comintern agents in Poland explained it as having been made in all sincerity, but that Stalin was not thinking of it as generally interpreted. Stalin knew, said his interpreters, that the only way there could be "a strong and independent Poland" was as a member state of the U.S.S.R.

4. The Break

The Soviet Union had in 1939 pledged itself to carry on trade with Poland and to assume an "attitude of benevolence" in case of war. In the same summer in which those promises were given it agreed with Germany and invaded and occupied over half of Poland. In July 1941 the Kremlin took Poland's proffered hand and signed agreements obligating itself to fulfill certain conditions. But when the time arrived for the execution of those conditions, Soviet authorities not only did not carry them out but adopted a policy and course of action quite to the contrary. Soviet moves were not haphazard. Premier Stalin had and has a well-defined foreign policy. The moves recently made with regard to Poland were deliberate and on the road toward a definite goal.

The Soviet Union in 1941 needed Allied help, which it would have been difficult to obtain without a semblance of setting right the wrong done Poland, one of the Allies. Lease-lend aid was desired from America, and negotiations for a second pact with Britain were not concluded. But when these ends were attained and the situation on the Russian front began to look brighter

for the U.S.S.R., the time had come for the Soviets to cast off even the semblance of co-operation with the Poles, since a restored Poland was not in accord with Soviet aims. The Foreign Commissar, Molotov, had made that quite clear in his May 31, 1940 report quoted earlier. As the Soviet military position improved, when the new Soviet-British pact was signed, when food and equipment were flowing from Britain and America to Soviet ports, when sympathy and admiration for the Russians had become general in both Britain and the United States, and the Soviet Union was hailed as a powerful and indispensable ally, the way was open for the next Soviet move. That was the break with Poland, April 26, 1943.

The Polish Government's request that the International Red Cross investigate the German reports concerning the mass murder of Polish soldiers near Smolensk gave the Soviet Government the pretext it required. The Polish Government realized the danger to the United Nations' cause if it did not call for the investigation. The Poles in Poland know all about the Soviet treatment of Polish citizens in Soviet-occupied Poland. They are bitterly opposed to the Soviet regime. If they believed that Great Britain and the United States were going to leave settlement of Eastern European affairs to the U.S.S.R. or even favor the U.S.S.R. in the settlement, to the detriment of Poland, the effect upon them might be disastrous for the United Nations. Had the Polish Government kept silent in face of the German reports, the Germans would have charged the United Nations with desertion of the Poles, with willingness to see Poland bolshevized. Hence it made its request to the International Red Cross, a Swiss organization whose field of activities justifies the name International.

There is still another aspect of this matter—that is, the purely human. During the whole time the Polish government had its representatives in the Soviet Union, these officials never ceased

in their efforts to locate the missing thousands. All they could learn was obtained from some of the few Poles who had been transferred to another small camp. All the Soviet officials would say was that they had never heard of such prisoners, or that they had been released with the rest of the Polish soldiers and it was not known what had become of them. One of the Poles wrote in an article in "Polska Walczaca" (No. 20) that when some of the Soviet officials were questioned about the missing men they murmured that a "great mistake" had been made.

Therefore it is understandable that the Poles, unsuccessful in their investigations through the Russians, should at once take up a trail opened up by another source. Fifteen thousand men, eight thousand three hundred of them officers, is no inconsiderable number to mark off the books. Had that many Soviet soldiers disappeared while they were in British hands, it can hardly be supposed that the Soviet Government would not have demanded a satisfactory explanation and received it. Or suppose that a comparable number of American officers and men had disappeared while on Soviet territory. Would Americans consider the question closed if the Soviet Government replied that it had no knowledge of their whereabouts? Because Poland is at present powerless, except from the moral point of view, is it to accept treatment the larger Allies would not?

Through the Soviet refusal to agree to the investigation, its own government and not that of Poland was put in a bad position. For the former, as the editor of "The Nineteenth Century and After" (May 1943) has written, "is accountable" for the prisoners in question. "It is inconceivable," he writes, "that 8,300 officers, prisoners of war in Russian custody, could have been captured by the Germans without the knowledge of the Russian authorities . . . It would have been easy for the Soviet Government, had they even suspected, at the time, that the Polish

officers had disappeared in this way, to say so when the Polish-Russian agreement was signed in 1941, instead of saying they had all been released from Russian internment camps . . ."

To date the Soviet Union has not accounted for these men. Instead—again quoting "The Nineteenth Century and After" editorial—"The Polish Government became the object of a verbal campaign that was conducted with extreme violence by the Russian Government and by the Russian official and officially inspired press, both in Russia and in England [we may also add in the Americas]. 'The ministerial circles of General Sikorski' and in particular the Polish Minister of Defence were declared the accomplices of the 'cannibal Hitler!' . . . and of dealing 'a treacherous blow to the common cause.' No evidence in support of those accusations was produced." The phrases quoted by the British editor occurred in "Soviet War News", April 30, 1943, a publication of the Press Department of the Soviet Embassy in London.

It is not necessary to go into the well-known details of that affair. This controversy is of importance here only because it gave the Soviet Union the opportunity for which it was ready. It was not the real cause of the break. That lay much deeper and goes back to the first Soviet statements after the July 30, 1941 Pact was signed.

CHAPTER XI

The Disputed Provinces

1. Area and Population

The Soviets incorporated 77,620 square miles, seven Polish provinces, into the Republic of White Ruthenia and the Ukraine. Vilno is the largest city in the northern, Lvov in the southern, part. The northern districts are sandy and poor. Great forests, however, made for a thriving lumber industry, and both climate and soil in part of this area favor flax and hemp growing. Vilno in 1939, with a population of 263,000 (1931 census), was the center of many new industrial and commercial developments. It was rapidly becoming a meeting place for sellers and buyers from the whole north-east area, including the Baltic States and the U.S.S.R. I spent part of the summer of 1938 in Vilno and consider it literally one of the most Polish of all Polish cities. Its population, which has throughout history been overwhelmingly Polish, has all the patriotic fervor characteristic of people living near their own frontier.

In the central and southern parts of Soviet-occupied Poland the land is much better, all kinds of crops do well. In the province of Volhynia beautiful rolling country predominates. In the more southerly provinces the Carpathian foothills begin and there are the oil wells of Poland and its natural gas.

The population of these seven provinces contains many ele-

ments. According to Polish government statistics (66) the distribution was as follows:

Poles	5,274,000
Ukrainians and Ruthenians	4,529,000
White Ruthenians	1,123,000
Jews	1,109,000
Russians	134,000
Germans	89,000
Lithuanians	84,000
Czechs	35,000

In addition to these, there were a few who belong to none of these groups.

Note that the Poles numbered almost as many as Ukrainians, Ruthenians and White Ruthenians combined. Note also the emphasis the Soviet authorities place on their "brother Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians." (67) In his October 31, 1939 report to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. Molotov, speaking of the population added to the U.S.S.R. by the occupation of East Poland, stated that it was "a population of some 13,000,000, of whom more than 7,000,000 are Ukrainians and more than 3,000,000 Byelo-Russians, more than 1,000,000 Poles and more than 1,000,000 Jews." (68)

Molotov made no mention of Ruthenians, yet there were a very considerable number who refused to become Ukrainians. Perhaps it should here be said that the latter term in old Poland had only a geographical significance. No part of modern Poland was called Ukraine. The "Polish Ukraine", lands bordering the Dnieper River, belonged to the days before the first eighteenth-century partitions. The word Ukraine means "on the border"; hence Ukrainian means a frontiersman, and in its origin has nothing to do with nationality. It took on a political significance in the 19th century, when certain leaders began the strug-

gle for independence, and since that time the Ukrainians have been recognized as a distinct and separate nationality.

From Tsarist Russia to southeastern Poland, then and later under Austrian domination, fled Ukrainians fired with the determination to create an independent Ukrainian state; and encouraged by the Germans, beginning with Bismarck, the Ukrainian nationalist movement flourished among the native Ruthenian population. But to say that a person was a Ukrainian had little reference to race. Poles and Ruthenians had been intermarrying for centuries. There could not possibly be a drawing of national lines. It often happened that in these mixed families one brother would choose to call himself Ukrainian, the other a Pole. On a trip my husband and son once made over southeast Poland, they talked with men who could readily recall the days when there was no "Ukrainian" in Poland, but only Ruthenians, more properly, Red Ruthenians. For much of the region Molotov calls "Western Ukraine" was throughout history known as Czerwona Rus—Red Ruthenia.

With this bit of background in mind, it is comprehensible that there were Ruthenians, and many of them, in Poland in 1939, who as one of an older generation said were "gente Ruteni, natione Poloni," Ruthenians in race, Poles in citizenship, and were not seeking citizenship in an independent Ukraine.

The Latin may serve the upper classes, but the common folk are not outdone. An incident in a Lvov prison several months after the Soviet invasion shows Polish spirit.

"Your name is Parania?" a woman was asked.

"Yes," she replied.

"Then you are Ukrainian?"

". . . I am a Lvovian, do you hear? A Pole. The fact that I'm named Parania—that's nothing. Stalin is Joseph but he doesn't appear in the Christmas nativity plays." (69)

Even if Molotov were justified in lumping Ukrainians and

Ruthenians together as Ukranians, the total he gives, as is seen by comparison with figures based on the census, is too large by more than 2,000,000. As for the White Ruthenians, Byelo-Russians he calls them, he multiplies the real figure by almost three. His estimate for the Jewish population is sufficiently accurate. The Polish population was reduced by four-fifths, from 5,274,000 to "more than 1,000,000."

Since Mr. Molotov does not mention the other minorities in this area and since these were inconsiderable in comparison with the ones under consideration, no reason is seen for bringing them into the discussion.

2. Minorities and Minority Problems

The White Ruthenians, though a minority, were never a problem from that point of view. There were not a great many of them, and they were quite generally recognized as having no national consciousness. Efforts to develop a national consciousness among them have proved fruitless. White Ruthenian language schools opened by the Polish Government had to be closed for lack of use. Polish schools were preferred and the trend was everywhere toward Polish culture and assimilation with the Poles.

White Ruthenian lands are the poorest part of Poland, and for that reason the Polish Government fixed the tax rate for that area much below that of the rest of the country. The inhabitants were not ambitious, and their cultural as well as their economic level of life was very low. The Polish Government had accomplished much toward bettering the condition in which the long Tsarist domination had kept these people. When the Red Armies invaded Poland in 1939 White Ruthenian peasants opposed them with guerrilla warfare.

The Ukrainians, however, were another matter. They formed the largest single element of the population of southeastern

Poland. Nowhere, however, was there any district that was wholly Ukrainian, although in some places they were decidedly in the majority. But no lines could be drawn to show that this area was Polish, that Ukrainian. To quote a Polish authority on this question: "An extensive and thorough intermingling of the principal races and religions is the prominent feature of the mixed character of Red Ruthenia, which makes the delineation of an ethnographical borderline utterly impossible. There are very few localities with a homogeneous Polish or Ukrainian population, not to mention larger territorial units." (70)

There was constant ferment among the Ukrainians, led by nationalists, certain of them paid and directed by Berlin. Some of these leaders were local, others from outside Poland.

There were various factors in the situation that kept trouble brewing and the Ukrainians in Poland discontented and calling for independence. The Polish Government made mistakes in policy and administration in its efforts to curb the continual Ukrainian provocations. Interference by "commissions" from Geneva, Britain and the United States did not make the Polish task easier. But the one all important factor was the German money and German agents that kept the fires flaring. Had there been no Ukrainian section in the Berlin Foreign Office to keep Ukrainian nationalist groups well supplied with funds and advice, Ukrainian troubles would never have risen to such aggravated dimensions. Poles and Ukrainians, close kin, intermarried and with fates inextricably tied together, would, there is reason to suppose, have found amicable settlement of difficulties.

As for the Ukrainians of Poland being desirous of uniting with the Soviet Republic of the Ukraine, nothing appealed to them less. During the first ten years of my residence in Poland, that is between 1922-1932, fugitives from the Soviet Ukraine were continually attempting to cross the border into Poland. They tried to swim the Zbrucz in summer and to cross on the

ice in winter. Red patrols watched that border and guards with machine guns stationed in hidden positions were on the alert. Searchlight beams moved over the river and along the paths at night. Hundreds of luckless folk in flight from the Soviet side lost their lives in the attempt. But a great many succeeded and the news they brought of life in the U.S.S.R., and their own miserable appearance was not of the sort to encourage longings among the Polish Ukrainians to live under the banner of the hammer and the sickle.

The Jews of East Poland were a part of a national not regional Polish problem. As elsewhere, they were found wherever there was any hope of buying and selling. They were the middlemen of Poland. Seventy per cent of them in the Eastern provinces lived in towns.

As Polish citizens all the minorities had their rights and exercised them. They had their political parties and elected their leaders to the Polish Seym or Parliament.

As for the Ukrainian minority of whose political activities so much has been written, on September 2, 1939 the chairman of the Ukrainian parliamentary group declared Ukrainians ready to fight in defence of Poland. Ukrainians had 461 Ukrainian-language schools and 3,064 bilingual schools. I have seen many of these, and I have seen the government notices in these areas posted in Ukrainian. Ruthenians and Ukrainians wore their national costumes, celebrated their special holidays, built and attended their own churches, had their own religious processions. I saw one of these very elaborate processions in Lvov in the early 1930's. The Ukrainian co-operatives were flourishing, prosperous societies, steadily growing in size and influence. They were of enormous significance both from the economic and cultural points of view.

3. A Glance into the Past

Rights issue from service, someone has said. Service rendered the eastern Polish provinces can be reckoned. Through the centuries, beginning with the thirteenth, these peoples have been protected from Muscovite, Mongol, Tatar and Turk by the Poles or through Polish leadership. They have been tied with Occidental instead of Oriental civilization. Though their faith may be Greek Catholic or Orthodox, their connections and associations have been with the West rather than the East.

After a long period of internal strife and Tatar terror in the area known as Red Ruthenia—Czerwona Rus—in 1340 these lands were joined with the Republic of Poland by the latter's King, Kazimierz the Great, to whom through his wife the inheritance of princely authority had come. Order and security were established and for the first time in centuries there was peace. After 1340, then, with the exception of the period of Austrian domination, until 1939 these regions were part of Poland. They were never before 1939 a part of Russia.

As for the districts north and northeast, claimed by the Soviets as West White Russia, they were part of Lithuanian territory when that state voluntarily united with the Republic of Poland under one King but with separate parliaments and chancellors in 1386, and they remained in that Republic until the time of the eighteenth century partitions, when Russia took them.

The armed gentry class of the Poles, driving back invasions and incursions during those early days, established castles or rather strongholds that were centers of refuge for the colonists and native people who could settle and in security build their homes and till their fields. In the fifteen and sixteen hundreds the peasants' homes contained rich loot for the hordes of slant-eyed little men who rode up over the Black Trail to stage, if they could, one of the Tatar dances, as their whirlwind raids

were called. The princes of Moscow and Kiev were for centuries subject to the Great Khan. The Poles never were and in saving themselves they saved the Red Ruthenian area also.

When they built strongholds and maintained garrisons, they also built churches and introduced western methods of life. Queen Bona Sforza, wife of Zygmunt I of Poland (sixteenth century), held large grants of land in what is now the Soviet Ukraine, naming the community Bar, from her native Bari, much bombed today, in Italy. Thither she sent agricultural experts. In Italy and Germany her agents bought the newest farm tools. She imported all sorts of trees, grains, fruits, vegetable seeds. Her managers had not the least difficulty in finding settlers for homesteads under their supervision and protection. I speak of Bona because her life and work were for some years a subject of special study with me. But there were scores of Poles who pioneered in these paths of civilization. For along with cultivation of the land and economic stability went a higher cultural level generally. Polish rights in these areas are not based on armed conquest but on pioneering, settlement and development.

Out of this commendable movement came also the great Polish landowners of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries and the resultant characteristic abuses when vast areas of land come into the possession of one man; an abuse, it should be remembered, by no means limited to Poland, but found in all the great European nations of the same period—in England, France, Germany, Italy and Austria. But the fact of the appearance of this abuse in no wise nullifies the service rendered by the Poles in the frontier territories.

What the Soviets have demonstrated they can do for the people, the land and the industries of the Poland they occupied, has already been related. They have established no ties that bind the Soviets and the inhabitants of what they choose to

call West Ukraine and West White Ruthenia together. Their actions during their administration of the occupied territory could produce only contempt, disgust and hatred.

4. *Religion*

The inhabitants of the provinces of East Poland are a believing people. Christian or Jew they are men and women of faith. The numerous houses of worship were always crowded during hours of services. Christmas and Easter are days of immense significance in Polish life. They are not just holidays; they are holy-days. For a nation that has in the course of its history lived through martyrdom, death and resurrection, Easter has a poignancy, a promise and a reality unknown to people who have never been nailed to the cross. National tragedy and the suffering this has implied have never destroyed Polish faith in God. Therefore communist doctrine, Soviet doctrine in regard to religion and the negation of God not only win few followers among Poles but are repellant to them. They want no authority over them that would eliminate religious faith and its practice. They are a people noted throughout their history for their tolerance. They have permitted persons of all faiths to live among them and practice those faiths. They demand religious liberty.

That this liberty was rapidly being lost in the Polish eastern provinces under Soviet administration has been noted in an earlier chapter. Among Polish citizens deported to the U.S.S.R. all religious activities of every kind were forbidden and a close watch was kept in the effort to prevent them.

Yet there were many instances of outwitting the guards. In prisoner-of-war and labor camps there were a comparatively large number of priests in the garb of civilians or common soldiers, and these men whispered rather than said the mass at night in a corner of a barrack for a little handful

of men while others stood guard, past whom none could get without having given the pass word, the old Christian pass word of the catacombs, Ichthus. If such services were discovered, those taking part spent days in the dark cell, while priests were removed and disappeared altogether.

An equally close watch was kept on the "colonists." If two women joined their prayers they were immediately objects of suspicion. The hunt to uncover priests was tireless, and anti-religious propaganda was talked to all Polish groups by political commissars sent out for that purpose.

After the signing of the July 30, 1941 Polish-Soviet Pact there was considerable talk about the degree of religious liberty possible in the U.S.S.R. There is no occasion to discuss that matter here except as it bears on Polish-Soviet relations. The Soviet authorities did permit the Polish army to have chaplains and celebrate mass. They did not permit priests among the civilian deported. For instance, just after a Sunday service in the Polish army camp, several N.K.V.D. agents got into a car and went to a nearby community where Polish civilians were being temporarily cared for to look into a reported breach of Soviet law. A priest, it was rumored, had baptized a child and if so he was exceeding his authority, for no permission had been granted to exercise such functions among the civilian refugees.

CHAPTER XII

Is The Comintern Dead?

1. *Parachutists and Their Duties*

The German-Soviet Pact of September 1939 specified that neither state was to interfere in the internal affairs of the other. To make the meaning of this clearer, one has only to read further stipulations, in what are asserted to have been the secret clauses, that the Soviet Union may bolshevize the Polish territory it occupies.

A word about the existence of these secret clauses. There is no concrete evidence to prove that there were such clauses, since it has been to the advantage of neither the Soviet Union nor Germany to make information concerning them public. It was, however, from the outset taken for granted that such clauses were not only a part but an important part of the agreement. Take, for instance, this sentence from Ambassador Bullitt's August 22, 1939 report: "Daladier said that the action of the Soviet Union in signing a non-aggression pact with Germany, containing many unknown secret clauses. . . ." (71)

However, the manifest collaboration of the Germans and the Soviets in the occupied territories was to the Poles proof positive that secret agreements had been made. The very thorough and methodical rounding up and deporting by the Soviets of the families of Polish prisoners of war in German camps, could be accounted for in no other way than that the Soviet officials had lists of these prisoners and the location of their families.

German precautions against possible bolshevization of German-occupied territory were for nothing. The Comintern was on

the ground from the beginning. Agents were in the German-held territory, more got across the frontier, and others in considerable number were dropped from planes at night to gather in groups in the wooded districts of central Poland. Added to these later were Soviet prisoners of war escaped from German camps on Polish territory. Then the area included in the activities of these emissaries was considerably enlarged. The whole story can be learned from articles in the Polish underground press and reports made by the underground organizations.

Two kinds of activities were and are carried on by these agents, military and political. Under the guise of organizing to resist the Germans with arms, Soviet officers and soldiers, encamped in Polish forests, endeavored to enlist Poles as members of these Red Army units—they are part of the Red Army—which bear the name of a defense organization. The announced purpose of this organization is to prepare and train for the day when Poles can rise against the Germans and drive them out. The real purpose is to bring on premature risings, when such risings will mean mass slaughter, before the British and Americans can get help to the Poles. -These Soviet army agents lead or instigate raids which can bring the Poles no advantages, but only work them injury.

To the second category of Comintern agents in Poland belong the political organizers and propagandists. All their work is carried on under the semblance of Polish organizations. The Polish Socialist Party, one of the strongest and most popular in Poland, was always referred to as P.P.S. The Soviet agents were instructed by Moscow to organize a P.P.R. (Polska Partia Robotnicza), Polish Workers' Party. Through this and communist cells established everywhere the agents attempt to enter and control every sphere of Polish life.

Among the underground papers, at least three are published by these Soviet propagandists. One is "Biuletyn Radiowy,"

which gives the Soviet radio news reports. A second is "Trybuna Wolnosci"—directed to townspeople. The third is "Trybuna Chlopska" for the peasants, as its name implies. In addition to these there are numerous dodgers and pamphlets. Abundant funds are evidently at the disposal of these agents, as they offer tempting wages for the distribution of their literature.

All Polish secret patriotic and relief organizations have to be most strict in guarding against the entrance into their membership of these Soviet workers, whose instructions are to do everything through approved Polish channels, attempting to appear as bona fide Polish patriots and to hide the Soviet hand.

The radio is an instrument that works day and night for the Soviets. One station, called the Kosciuszko, has almost from the beginning of the occupation been broadcasting several times daily to Poland. It announces itself as a Polish station, but that it is located in the U.S.S.R. is an established fact. It is accustomed to broadcast at the same hour as that used for the official Polish broadcasts over B.B.C. from London. The versions of the news and the information and advice that come from the masked Soviet station are exactly the opposite of what is heard from London.

The Kosciuszko radio, the Soviet underground papers in Poland, and all political propaganda agents have continually told the Poles that their only hope lies in the U.S.S.R., that Britain and America are capitalist countries, really responsible for the war, and that they will not come to Poland's assistance. The propagandists urge co-operation with the Soviets, sabotage, and immediate uprising.

During July 1941, when negotiations for the July 30, 1941 Polish-Soviet Pact were in progress, the Comintern had orders to leave off its agitation among the Poles, both in Poland and abroad. As soon as the Pact was signed, orders were given the Comintern agents to resume.

In December 1942, the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs sent a note of protest to the Soviet Government, expressing the conviction that radio programs directed to the occupied territories were of value only when they were in line with the policy of all the United Nations. The note also stated that radio propaganda of one of the Allies, if it tends to concern itself with the internal affairs of another ally, may lead to the disturbance of unity among the United Nations.

The Polish underground press carried articles explaining what was going on and warning the Polish people to beware of being drawn into the Soviet net. It also called attention to the fact that here was a state calling itself Poland's ally, yet interfering in Polish affairs, condemning a legal Polish government and endeavoring to make Poles defy that government's instructions.

2. *Wanda Wasilewska and Her Group*

On entering Poland in September 1939 the Soviets turned to Wanda Wasilewska, a woman with literary talent but a recognized communist, and invited her to become their go-between with Poland. She accepted. She was given one of the annual Soviet literary awards, and made an honorary colonel in the Red Army—the only instance of such an occurrence in the U.S.S.R.—was given all sorts of extraordinary privileges and generally made much of. At this time, too, she married Alexander Korneichuk, a Ukrainian from the U.S.S.R. and now (winter 1943) Vice-Commissar of Foreign Affairs.

Through Wasilewska the Soviets work. She was the editor of "New Horizons" (Nowe Widnokregi), a paper which so far has taken a more moderate stand on Polish-Soviet relations than has the later-established "Free Poland" (Wolna Polska) edited by Dr. Drobner, Wasilewska's adjutant, a Polish citizen of Jewish race who during the twenty years of Polish

independence mixed in every sort of extremist activity. Although not a communist, he was deported to the North, and later freed and called to his present post. But "New Horizons" also urges all Poles to work with the Soviet Union.

Wasilewska is the leading figure in an organization calling itself "Union of Polish Patriots" in the Soviet Union. This Union of Polish Patriots the Polish Government, in a statement of June 22, 1943, has declared a "fiction" and its existence "an obstacle in the renewal of Polish-Russian relations." This organization came into being, at least into active existence, only in the early winter of 1942-1943, during the months when the Soviet-Polish relations were growing more and more difficult. In June 1943 there was a convention of its "delegates" in Moscow, with Wasilewska in the leading role. A warm and friendly message was given them by Stalin.

The "Union of Polish Patriots" consists for the most part of Polish writers, some of them women, of almost no reputation except for ill-balance, and the already mentioned Dr. Drobner. The number is very small. It is significant that there are no working people in the group, nor any Polish communists who ranged themselves with the Bolsheviks in 1920 or who went there in after years. All of these persons have disappeared. As a consequence of this lack of Poles with sufficient name to head a government in opposition to the legal Polish Government in London the Soviets have not considered it desirable to set up a "free" Polish government in Moscow.

3. The Kosciuszko Division

When Premier Stalin refused to permit a Polish Army in the U.S.S.R., yet insisted that he wanted Polish troops fighting beside the Red Army, the Poles understood that Stalin wanted a token Polish Army like the single so-called Czech unit which enrolled between 400-500 Czechs. A Polish army fighting its way

back to a Polish homeland was not in the Soviet plan. Polish patriots were not the sort of stuff of which such a token army could be made. But with the liberated Polish soldiers out of the Soviet Union, with all remaining Polish citizens declared Soviet citizens and the "Union of Polish Patriots" to carry on a show of recruiting, the creation of a Polish division was easy.

In September 1939, on the Polish territory occupied by the Soviets, some 150,000 young Polish citizens were conscripted into the Red Army. There were still Poles in the Soviet Union, families that had never been able to get out after the 1917 Revolution. There were, then, tens of thousands of Poles already in the Soviet armies. Some of them had made contact with the Polish officers looking after the formation of the new army and were eagerly hoping for transfer to the Polish colors—something which never occurred.

It was not difficult, then, for the Soviet military authorities to create a Polish division. No Pole has a finer record as a patriot than Thaddeus Kosciuszko; hence the division's name. The fact that he led an insurrection against Russia was no deterrent in using the name, for the Bolsheviks, too, fought Tsarist Russians.

Among Polish officers and soldiers in prisoner-of-war camps an intensive propaganda had been actively and persistently carried on during the years of imprisonment. Few of the prisoners were susceptible to Bolshevik blandishment and argument but there were certain men who thought collaboration with the Soviets offered them their chance for personal advancement. They were men of no prominence in Poland, their names unknown. One of these men was a certain Lieutenant Colonel Zygmunt Berling. The family name is, as you see, not Polish. He was removed from the prison camp, housed in a villa, and given many privileges.

After the signing of the July 30, 1941 Pact, he came forward as one of the most active in the formation of a Polish Army in the U.S.S.R. and against the recommendations of other Poles was advanced to the rank of colonel. Insistence upon his advancement did not come from Polish quarters.

It is this Colonel Berling who is commander of the Kosciuszko Division.

Alexander Werth, in a wireless dispatch to the New York Times (July 18, 1943) gives a lengthy account of a review of this Polish unit in the Red Army. Mr. Werth's dispatch, however, gives a great deal more than a description of the division and the review.

"This was the famous Thaddeus Kosciuszko Division," he says, "which is being constituted as a reply to General Wladyslaw Anders' army withdrawal from the Russo-German front. When, a few days after the rupture of Russo-Polish relations, it was announced that a Polish division would be formed to fight side by side with the Red Army with the slogan, 'There is no return to Poland except across the battlefield'. . ." The reasons for the withdrawal of General Anders' troops have been stated in an earlier chapter of this writing.

"The ceremony was to coincide with the anniversary of the Battle of Grunwald in the 14th century when combined forces of Poles, Czechs, Russians and Lithuanians routed the Teutonic Knights. The Grunwald victory is used as a symbol of the Slavic nations' unity." The famous victory over the Teutonic Knights was not in the 14th century but 1410. At that time there was no "Russia" or "Russians," as we understand these terms today. Russia of that day was the area of which Kiev was the capital. What we think of as the heart of modern Russia was Muscovy and its people were known as Muscovites. None of these were part of the victorious army at Grunwald. The records of the

battle are easily accessible and they give full details of the fighting forces on either side.

"Emphasis on the unity of interests of Russia and Poland was emphasized in everything—in slogans, in the wording of the Polish soldiers' oath and in the division's cultural activities . . ." and farther on ". . . it is only natural that the Russians should treat as deserters the Poles who 'left a sinking ship' (referring to General Anders and his troops) at the height of the battle of Stalingrad. The Russians also contend that 'it is no use arguing with the Poles in London. We shall show them instead what can be done in practice.' What is more, there is a deep-seated conviction here that the Poles in the Middle East are becoming demoralized, losing the soldierly virtues they potentially had. . . ."

"The two persons, who, as it were, run the show, are . . . Wanda Wasilewska, president of the Union of Polish Patriots . . . and Col. Berling, formerly of Gen. Anders' army. . . . No secret is made of the fact that the Polish division is being intensively trained by Russian officers. There were not only Russians and Poles present. Representatives of all nations fighting on the Russo-German front had been invited. British and American military representatives had not been invited. . . ." The only one of the United Nations "fighting on the Russo-German front" at that time was Czech. I do not say Czechoslovakian, for the unit is always referred to as Czech and apparently contains no Slovaks.

Some of Mr. Werth's article is but a repetition of what has appeared in "Wolna Polska" (Free Poland), the charges against General Anders, for example. "Wolna Polska" is a Soviet propaganda organ. Mr. Werth's dispatch was sent from Moscow, which could only have been done with Kremlin approval, and is therefore informative of Kremlin attitudes and actions. While the U.S.S.R. has not officially recognized a Polish government

of the "Polish Patriots," that organization has its own setup through which it works to discredit the Polish Government in London, with the ultimate goal of bringing all Poland into the Soviet Union as its seventeenth republic. From all reports, the efforts of Wasilewska and Berling are meeting with no response among the deported Polish citizens, who need no propaganda to tell them about the Soviet Union.

Regarding the opinion held of Wasilewska, Berling, and any other Poles who collaborate with the Soviets, among the Polish people, one cannot do better than quote a passage from *Inter Arma* (1920), by Stefan Zeromski, of all modern Polish writers the most popular and most loved by Polish youth. Americans know Zeromski through the English translation of his novel of Napoleonic days, *Ashes*. In the passage from the collection *Inter Arma* which follows, Zeromski is writing with special reference to a few Poles who fought with the Bolsheviks in 1919-1920: "Whoever has led the eternal enemy into the fatherland—even though his country is sinful and bad—whoever has trampled it, ruined it, pillaged it, burned it, looted it with the foreign soldier's hand, that one has cut himself off from his country. It can never again be his home, his resting place. On Polish soil there is no room either for the feet of such a man during his lifetime nor for his grave when he is dead."

4. Dissolution of the Comintern

On May 22, 1943, the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International announced its proposal to constituent parties that they agree to the dissolution of the Comintern. Thus it was tacitly admitted that the Soviet Government was the nerve center of an organization with which heretofore association had been denied. The reason given for the dissolution was that its "processes were now outmoded."

From a symposium on that dissolution in a New York paper

(72) I quote three typical expressions of opinion. Matthew Woll, Vice-President, American Federation of Labor: "The dissolution of the Comintern is useful to World Communism and of no value to world democracy. The motive is to impose another gigantic deception upon world democracy and upon world labor. The Communist will continue to speak with the voice of Jacob, but the hand will be and remain, as always, the hand of Esau."

Eugene Lyons, editor of American Mercury: "Only the politically illiterate, which is to say the majority of our press and radio commentators, will accept the 'dissolution' of the Communist International at face value. Those familiar with the Kremlin's tactics will recognize it as one more 'maneuver' intended to achieve some specific immediate results in Russia's Foreign relations."

Algernon Lee, President of the Rand School of Social Sciences: "The so-called dissolution of the Communist International is a clever move on the part of the Stalin regime. It is safe, because it will not fool the Communists in this or other countries, nor will it fool their stooges or their intimate fellow-travellers. . . . The Comintern is no more dead today than it was a week ago, or a year ago, or five or ten years ago. . . . It has been nothing but an agency for the dictatorship . . . to say and do the things which the dictatorship wishes to have said and done but did not wish to say and do in its own name."

Preceding, accompanying, and succeeding events seem to bear out those opinions. For many months the Soviets had been promoting All-Slav committees in countries all over the world. The beginning of this movement dates with Hitler's attack on the U.S.S.R. Americans who did not understand the driving power behind it praised it highly, but the rank and file of people of Slavic blood in the Americas recognized the hand in the glove, and All-Slav associations did not flourish as expected.

The mother chapter of these organizations is in Moscow and just two weeks before the announcement of the Comintern's dissolution, "the Moscow controlled All-Slav Committees met in the high-columned Trade Union Hall of the Soviet capital, to the accompaniment of all the publicity, pomp and fanfare of which only the Bolsheviks are capable.

"At this meeting Wanda Wasilewska, self-styled leader of the Polish Communists and the Kremlin-controlled Patriotic Polish Union, announced the formation on Russian soil of the new Polish Kosciuszko Division that would march under the traditional Polish Flag." (73)

"The Slavic Monthly" (April 1943) printed a letter from the Congress of American Slavs addressed to Secretary Cordell Hull in which this sentence occurs: "We helped to bring into being the Congress of American Slavs in the hope that you would let yourself be advised by that representative assembly."

It is not only among the Poles that Comintern activities under another name continue to go on. On July 21, 1943, the New York Times carried a dispatch from Moscow beginning thus: "An anti-Nazi German national committee, dedicated to the overthrow of Adolf Hitler and the establishment of a democratic regime in Germany, has been formed in Moscow, the Communist Party organ, Pravda, announced today. Indicating official Soviet approval of the new committee, Pravda published a manifesto by that body calling upon German soldiers to mutiny, turn their backs on their leaders, and blast their way back home. It called upon German workers to lay down their tools, sabotage industry, and demand immediate peace."

The new German regime would be, says the manifesto, one favored by the Soviets, "consistent with Premier Joseph Stalin's declaration of Nov. 7, 1942, in which he said that Nazi state and army must be destroyed, but that the German people and state are indestructible." ". . . Pravda said the national committee,

representing German war prisoners, political refugees, labor leaders and intellectuals, held its first meeting in Moscow on July 12 and 13. It elected as its president Erich Weinert, famous anti-Nazi poet. Major Karl Hetz was named vice-president and Lieutenant Count Heinrich von Einsiedel second vice-president.

"The manifesto, occupying a full page in Pravda, was signed by eleven officers and non-commissioned officers, four privates, four writers, and five former deputies of the Reichstag, including Wilhelm Pieck, former leader of the Communist bloc and secretary of the recently-dissolved Comintern." Farther on in the dispatch, "It may be assumed that the Red Army already has taken advantage of the manifesto by showering millions of leaflets on the German lines and with broadcasts to Germany."

The first broadcast to Germany began, "Germans! Events demand from us an immediate decision." The committee broadcasts three times daily to the German soldiers and the Reich.

This Kremlin-created German national committee has its own publication—"Free Germany," as the Union of Polish Patriots has "Free Poland." The Soviets have for some time been training Germans who are to administer Germany, after it throws off the Nazi yoke, according to Soviet plans.

Yugoslavia is another country where the Soviet Government follows its own policy without regard for other members of the United Nations. There are still others. The Moscow statement that the Comintern's processes were outmoded may be accepted. There was no statement to the effect that those processes would not be replaced by others—such as work through fictitious national organizations and the All-Slav Congress, processes which are infinitely more subtle, hide the directing hand, and deceive "the politically illiterate."

In addition to working through the means so far discussed, the Soviets carry on active propaganda among the Poles, at any rate, in Britain and the United States through agents who

make personal contacts, through the press, and over the radio. There are, I am informed by a highly respected labor leader, some twenty agents in Detroit alone, not all of these, of course, assigned for work with Poles. There are Soviet-directed Polish language papers, and there are others in English that cater to all and sundry. In this list Soviet official publications are not included.

Press and radio commentators and public speakers are among the most useful of Soviet tools. Those who follow the Soviet technique of roundly condemning many things in the Soviet regime, declare themselves good friends of Poland, but in the end find Soviet policies commendable and express their conviction that to the U.S.S.R. belong the territories it occupied in 1939, are considered most effective. Probably very few of these speakers and writers have actually been approached by the Soviets. Unfamiliar with Eastern European history, these people accept Soviet propaganda, whether it be in the form of literature, clever advertising, or news reports that emanate from Soviet sources and cannot be checked, since no foreigners are permitted at the Russo-German front, nor anywhere else in the U.S.S.R. except as the authorities wish. Such speakers and writers may have had a brief trip to the U.S.S.R. where they were constantly in the care of Intourist agents. They heard the regulation talk these agents have been carefully trained to give, and reading and speaking no Russian did not venture out without Intourist guides. They succeeded on such visits in strengthening the image of the Soviet Union of their wishful thinking. They did not touch reality. These persons on their return to the United States have become ardent defenders of the Soviet regime.

The Soviet Government is violating none of its principles in conducting this propaganda within the borders of its allies or in definitely working against those allies. On this subject

David J. Dallin in his *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy 1939-1942* speaks without ambiguity. "Dr. Dallin," says the note about him on the book's jacket, "was an exile from Russia from 1911 to 1917. He returned there ten days after the Revolution, and was a member of the Moscow Soviet as an opposition deputy, until 1921." In the first chapters of his book the author gives an unprejudiced picture. The later part appears to have been written without trustworthy information at hand. From the valuable sections is taken this passage explaining the Soviet attitude toward this war: "According to this concept [the Soviet concept of the nature of the war] two separate conflicts are now being waged within the framework of a single world war: the aggressive antagonism of Germany and Japan against the rich 'owners of the world' and the 'combined antagonism of the entire world against the Socialist state.' These two separate wars . . . brought about the coalition of 1941 [in which the Soviet Union participated side by side with the two greatest capitalist powers]. The first test of this alliance . . . would come . . . when the German threat had been removed and when there remained only one strong military power on the European Continent—the Soviet Union. . . . In as much as the 'capitalist states,' while desirous of victory over Hitler, also fear a victorious Russia, this theory foresees a time when the Allies will once again, after Germany has been considerably weakened, seek an anti-Soviet understanding with their recent enemy against the Soviet Union.

"The conclusions to be drawn from this in Moscow are quite clear: despite all agreements, there is absolutely no assurance that the alliance with the 'United Nations' will be a lasting one. . . . While the concept of a national war of defense serves as the basis for an Anglo-Soviet coalition, the Communist theory of the 'two wars' justifies the policy of waging a separate war within the framework of a world military coalition." (74)

CHAPTER XIII

Further Developments

1. The Soviet Position

At this writing, the middle of January 1944, there have been no fundamental changes in Polish-Soviet relations since the diplomatic rupture made by the Soviet Government, April 26, 1943. Certain factors in the situation, however, have assumed greater or lesser importance. The ostensible cause of the break —the Polish Government's request to the International Red Cross to investigate the sensational claims made by the Germans concerning the missing Polish officers—moved into the background through the Polish Government's formal withdrawal of its request to the Red Cross. But that did not bring about the renewal of diplomatic relations with the Soviets.

The reason is that the source of Polish-Soviet friction lies not in the question of the missing officers, but in the difficulties facing the Soviet Government and the Polish nation on the question of the Polish frontier. Mutual recognition of that dividing line would quickly lead to the solution of other problems which, in fact, are corollary and not independent matters—for example, that of the hundreds of thousands of deported Polish citizens who were not permitted to leave the U.S.S.R. after the signing of the July 30, 1941, Polish-Soviet Pact.

The position is taken by the Soviet spokesmen that the territories incorporated into the U.S.S.R. by the "plebiscite" of October 1939 are not a topic for discussion. To quote "Pravda" (Oct. 13): "It should be known to everyone that the borders

of the Soviet Union could no more serve as a subject of discussion (during the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers) than, for instance, the borders of the United States or the status of California." This statement was called out by articles in the British and American press and reports over the radio that the Soviet-Polish boundary question was certain to have a place on the agenda of that conference.

If further evidence as to what the Soviet Government considers Soviet territory is needed, Premier Stalin supplied it in his speech of November 6, 1943, to the Moscow workers on the eve of the anniversary of the revolution. "The day is not far off," he said, "when we will liberate from the enemy completely the Ukraine and White Russia, the Leningrad and Kalinin regions, when we will liberate from the invaders the people of Crimea and Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Moldavia and Karelia, the Finnish republic." (75)

The world knows that Premier Stalin's government incorporated Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia into the U.S.S.R. as new Soviet Republics, and that Eastern Poland was recognized as having become parts of already existing Soviet states.

As for the Moscow Conference (October 18-30, 1943) there was nothing resulting from it to better Polish-Soviet relations. The declarations, couched in general terms, can be and are interpreted as the interpreter wishes. The American Secretary of State made statements shortly after that Conference, which were immediately followed by apparently innocent remarks of the Soviet Ambassador to Mexico, Oumansky, that set the press and radio going. For while Secretary Hull had led people to infer that inhabitants of all occupied states would have the opportunity of determining their fate, Mr. Oumansky remarked that the Soviet armies were still 280 miles from the Soviet western frontier.

2. The Polish Position

Neither the Polish Government nor the Polish people accept this position. The Polish Government has stated repeatedly that it recognizes no other Polish-Soviet boundary than that established by the Riga Treaty of March, 1921. This was formally approved by the Bolshevik delegates. You recall from discussion of this treaty in a previous chapter, that the Bolsheviks had offered an armistice line many miles to the east of the frontier as fixed. I have not only gone through the records of this conference but had several conversations about it with one of the leading Polish delegates. The Soviets did not make the treaty under pressure, although it is understandable that there was much discussion.

The Soviet Government does not regard the obligations of the Riga Treaty, entered into of its own accord, as binding. It disregards this in favor of a pact made, contrary to international law, with the German Government which has since sent its armies into Russia and with which for more than two years the Soviet armies have been fighting a life and death battle.

The Poles had a non-aggression pact with the Soviets which was not to expire until Dec. 31, 1945. This was swept into the discard. On Dec. 4, 1941, General Sikorski, as Polish Premier, signed a Declaration of Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union. The obligations assumed in this have not been honored by the Soviets. Would the Soviet signature on another agreement with the Poles be of any more value than on those of the past?

In the second place Poland is one of the United Nations, the first to stand against German aggression. Poles see no reason why they should be penalized for resisting with what strength they had an aggressor that meant to bring not only Poland but the world to acknowledge it the master state. On October 19, 1943, the London "Dziennik Zolnierza" (The Soldier's Daily)

carried an article from which the following paragraphs are translated:

"A land boundary is always a boundary between two states. The 'boundary' of 1941 was not a boundary between Russia and Poland but a demarcation line between Russia and Germany. Anyone recognizing that line arising out of joint aggression thereby recognizes the partitioning of Poland. Anyone recognizing lines resulting from German aggression as boundaries, should likewise recognize other 'boundaries' established by Hitler. In 1941, when the Russian 'frontier' was the Bug River, the German 'frontier' included the Channel Islands. . . .

"Does the [London] 'Times' take this into account? Or the logical consequences of the theory that Russia has a right to the lands of the United Nations because it has 'suffered' so much the last two years? A theory altogether new; hitherto the argument has been on ethnographic or strategic grounds, already recognized as false. But the new reason is merely grotesque.

"Nobody in Britain says that because the British people have endured through two years (not four!) of war, Britain should demand half of France. . . . Although Poland has suffered so terribly during four years of war we are not demanding that we be rewarded with lands of one of the United Nations. But we will never agree that Russia be 'rewarded' at our expense.

"There could be no greater offense to all the principles of morality and justice than there would be if the Allies were to show their appreciation of Poland's unexampled sacrifice and suffering by taking half her territory from her! The very suggestion is a mockery of the ideals of the United Nations."

General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed forces, made an address before the Polish Army in the Middle East on Nov. 23, 1943, which reflects the atti-

tude not only of the Polish troops in that area but wherever they may be.

"It should be emphasized again," said General Sosnkowski during his speech, "that the Polish Army organized on the snow-covered Volga steppes is yet another proof that we Poles have no evil intentions toward Russia, as uninformed persons would have people believe. In the summer of 1941 the readiness of all Poles to establish relations with Soviet Russia was not only evidence of loyalty to the United Nations' front against Germany. The decision was at the same time an expression of national attitude for the future, a decision to consign to the past not only the unpleasant issues of other centuries but likewise those of recent years. But on this modest consideration—that those rights which we possessed at the beginning of our war with Germany be recognized.

"Up to the September campaign, for nearly 20 years our neighborly relations with Russia had been normal and correct. Those who accuse Poland of always being ill-disposed toward Russia forget that it was Poland that maintained diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with Russia at a time when the great nations of the West would have nothing to do with her. We took no part whatever in any plot against the Soviet Union. We rejected the offer to join in an attack on Russia. It would be difficult to find better proof that we entertain no unfriendly intentions toward Russia. . . .

"The border regions of our country are not only a part of the territory of the Polish Republic. They are also a part of our history, and that of the times when Poland stood high in the realm of thought, when it was an outpost of culture, liberty, tolerance, and freedom. From those border lands came the great figures of our history, to recall only one, Thaddeus Kosciuszko, whose name is so frequently mentioned today."

So much for what the Polish soldiers think of the boundary question.

The underground press in Poland represents both Government and opposition opinions. On the matter of Polish-Soviet relations, however, there is complete unanimity. From a long editorial on post-war relations in the July "Ziemie Wschodnie Rzeczypospolitej," comes this brief passage:

"The position of Russia is more complicated (than that of Germany). It has a double account; one that is binding today, justified by the logic of war, the other that of Russia as it is and the role it plays in world history. The first account will be closed with the ending of the war. Then Russia will cease to be thought of only in terms of military power, and we shall think of Russia's part in the post-war world. . . . For military reasons the Russian question has had to be let alone. . . . However, we cannot deny the conviction that there is a Russian as well as a German problem hanging over the world and that it demands a definite solution. We cannot refuse to look at Russia objectively—to recognize that the physical and moral degradation of man, the unbridling of the instincts of barbarism in government, the menace and disgrace of the Bolshevik regime now threaten the world. . . . We must be prepared for anything. The Russian attack on us is going on now, goes on unceasingly. We can only speak of phases and methods of attack. The culmination will be reached when the Soviet troops again appear on our eastern frontier on their march into Poland."

White Ruthenian opinions on the question of allegiance are expressed in a declaration made by some 60 White Ruthenian members of the Polish Army of the Middle East, April 23, 1943. It reads in part:

"Although only a handful of us were able to get on Iranian soil and these few thanks to the efforts of the Polish Embassy

in Russia and the Commander of the Polish troops there, yet because we know perfectly the attitudes and desires of thousands of our brothers whose voices cannot today reach the world, since they would pay for expression with fresh imprisonment, we make this declaration and sign it in the name of all our people who are still within the borders of the U.S.S.R.

"We White Ruthenians have been historically tied with Poland, its fate and its development from the time of the union of Lithuanian-Ruthenian territories with Poland. In life and death our lots have been united. . . . Even the fact that the Poles are Roman Catholic in faith and we Orthodox has not prevented our becoming brothers of the Poles or forming with them the most cordial bonds. So today it does not in any way keep us from turning to Poland. . . . Our geographical position and the menace of Russian imperialism makes us draw still closer to Poland. . . .

"Therefore we declare to the world that we desire our lives, our fates, our families, our property, our land to be joined with Poland and her fate. Only if we live and work in co-operation with Poland can we live secure, attain prosperity and happiness, and develop our own national culture.

"At the same time we declare to the people of Europe and America, of the East and of the West, that we categorically protest against any aggression against Poland, on the part of any of her neighbors. We desire, together with the Polish nation, to make the decisions that concern ourselves and to become a part of the Republic of Poland." (Here are listed the names of a number of White Ruthenians who played a prominent role fighting beside the Poles from the Battle of Grunwald (1410) to the present day.)

"We strongly protest against Soviet violation of international law through holding us White Ruthenians in the U.S.S.R. Despite the fact that we are Polish citizens, the Soviet Government

deprives our fellow-countrymen against their will of their rights, declaring that we have become Soviet citizens and must remain in the U.S.S.R.

"With all our strength and with full consciousness of the responsibility we are assuming before history, we declare that we never did want and never shall want to belong to Russia. Through trickery and terror the Soviet Government compelled the White Ruthenians to join the Soviet Union. That was violence used on us. It was and it is the will of White Ruthenians to be joined with Poland, and not to the Soviets. Now on neutral ground we declare with all our strength that the plebiscite taken in Eastern Poland in October 1939, imposed and compelled by the Red Army of occupation and the N.K.V.D., the actual government authority, was an election at a time when we could not exercise our own free will. . . .

"The almost two years of occupation of Polish White Ruthenia resulted in the destruction of White Ruthenian national life which had developed during the Polish period, complete economic ruin through collectivization, the abolition of the Polish Orthodox Church and worship, imprisonment and deportation to the remote regions of the U.S.S.R. not only of the foremost citizens but even of the poorest as 'kulaks.' This was all done as part of a russification policy for these lands. . . .

"And therefore today, since we can speak sincerely, we declare:

"Our goal is not Russia, not Germany, but Poland. We want to belong to Poland. The Polish Government is our Government."

3. Continued Soviet Activities among Poles

Soviet propaganda activity among the Poles everywhere has greatly increased since the Soviet break with the Polish Government. Among the better-known agencies is the newspaper "Wolna Polska," published in Moscow and already referred to

in this writing. It is distributed in many Polish communities in the United States, from Massachusetts to California, as anybody acquainted with Americans of Polish descent can discover for himself if he will take the trouble, as I did, to make inquiries.

One correspondent replied in answer to my letter, that "these Americans of Polish descent are intelligent, politically wise and not subject to efforts of biased and perverted propaganda. They have a strong sense of justice and a loyalty that is hard to divert."

As far as I have been able to learn, efforts spent here to discredit the legal Polish government and make friends for the "Union of Polish Patriots" in the U.S.S.R. and through them for the U.S.S.R. are energy and money wasted. With the exception of a very few well-known communists, the recipients of these papers throw them into their wastebaskets.

The All-Slav Congress—also mentioned earlier in this writing—is another instrument the Soviets are attempting to use to win the Poles of the various countries. With the exception of the "Patriots" in Moscow that, too, has failed. Poles and citizens of Polish descent in other lands remain shoulder to shoulder behind the Polish Government in London in its stand for the restoration of a Poland with its territory intact.

The Russo-Czech Mutual Assistance Pact signed Dec. 12, 1943, has a clause in it that is taken to have reference to Poland. An addendum to the treaty reads: ". . . if any third country desires to join this pact and is the object of German aggression in this war, it will be given the opportunity to do so by mutual agreement of the USSR and Czechoslovakia." It may be that President Benes has been assigned the task of bringing the Poles into a federation where the Soviet Union would be the dominant member. But it seems unlikely that Poland will join any federation which includes the Soviet Union unless the latter complies

with the Polish demand and recognizes the Polish-Soviet boundary to be that established by the 1921 Riga Treaty. From the present attitude and actions of the Soviets there seems small probability of that recognition being given unless something extraordinary should occur that would affect the Soviet attitude.

In regard to the boundary it is well to keep in mind a fact already mentioned. That is, that no Polish Government has the right to cede Polish territory to another state without the consent of the people. Judging from the temper of the nation, as expressed by spokesmen for various elements, there is no inclination on the people's part to vote for transfer of half their lands and millions of their citizens to the U.S.S.R.

The Soviet Government has made no secret of its backing of Wanda Wasilewska and the "Polish Patriots" in Moscow. The Nov. 23rd issue of the Information Bulletin sent out by the Embassy of the U.S.S.R. in Washington has several pages devoted to the Polish divisions formed in the U.S.S.R. and an article by Wasilewska on her organization which contains this sentence: "We must stress the fact that we receive enormous support and help from every organ of the Soviet power, beginning with the most outstanding leaders of the country and ending with the local authorities, who are helping us most willingly." "Wolna Polska," the press organ of the "Patriots" is full of accusations and absurd charges against the Polish Government in London and the Polish Commander-in-Chief, General Sosnkowski. "War and the Working Class" periodically carries editorials that are only slightly milder in general tone. Since this is the official mouthpiece of the Soviet Foreign Ministry such attacks are both unquestionably inspired and timed to appear when the Soviet Government deems it advantageous.

During the Polish-Bolshevik war, when the Red troops were advancing rapidly on Warsaw, the Bolsheviks had a puppet Polish government, headed by Julian Marchlewski, travelling in

company with the troops. Everything was set up for it to take over immediately after Warsaw fell. But Warsaw did not fall and the communist Poles turned back with the Red Army.

Readers of Stalin's Nov. 6, 1943, speech in Moscow referred to a few pages earlier, must have been struck by the important place given in that speech to the communist party and what Stalin chooses to term the "Socialist State." Such mention turns one to consideration of communism and what idea Premier Stalin intends to convey when, after a long silence, he again stresses communism. Such references do not tend to reassure Soviet neighbors. Why are the "Polish Patriots" being supported, ask those neighbors. The Soviets have declared that the Soviet frontier is that line of demarcation they agreed upon with the Germans. Do the Soviets expect to "liberate" the half of Poland they did not occupy and install their Polish protégés?

The Soviet spokesmen are not yet replying to that question, but it is common knowledge that they are active on the political front and that Soviet underground activities have not only continued in Poland since the beginning of the war but have greatly increased. These have been enumerated and described in an earlier chapter.

4. The Curzon Line; the Polish Government; the Katyn Massacre

At the present time there are three outstanding obstacles to the establishment of satisfactory Polish-Soviet relations: the boundary dispute; the question of the legality of the Polish Government; the circumstances surrounding the Katyn Massacre investigation.

In a Soviet statement issued January 11, 1944, willingness to discuss the Soviet-Polish boundary on the basis of the Curzon Line was indicated. The Polish Government replied by suggesting a conference in which representatives of the Amer-

ican, British, Soviet, and Polish governments would participate. This proposal, along with an offer by the United States Government of its services, was rejected by the Soviets.

We have seen in a previous chapter that the so-called Curzon Line was drawn as a temporary administrative expedient and originated from Russian émigrés in Paris. In demanding all the Polish territory to the Curzon Line, the Soviets are asking not only for that part of Poland seized by the Russian Empire in the three partitions of the eighteenth century—recognized as among the most infamous acts of history—but also for the major part of Austria's share of the loot on those occasions. As for the argument that the Riga Treaty was made under pressure, the records of those years, some of which I have quoted, bear evidence to the contrary.

The Soviets insist that the Polish Government does not represent the Polish people. Now according to international law, no government has the right to interfere in the internal affairs of another state. The question, then, of what kind of government Poland has does not concern the Soviet Government; what does concern it is the legality of any Polish Government.

Poland's status as a free and independent state was recognized by all governments, including the Soviet. As such a state, it was entitled to make its own laws. Its Constitution, Article XXIV, section 2, states that the prerogatives of the President of the Polish Republic include, among others, the right "to appoint his successor in time of war." The Polish Government in London exists by virtue of that provision. The present President of Poland was appointed by former President Moscicki as his legal successor.

In 1939 the Soviet and German governments declared the Polish State non-existent; but in 1941, after the German attack on Russia, the Soviet Government signed treaties and agree-

ments with the Polish Government in London, thereby recognizing that Government as legal.

The Polish Government is recognized by the people of Poland. The opposition as well as the Government parties assert in the strongest terms that the Polish Government in London is their one and only legal representative. I have seen copies of the secret papers published by the opposition groups in Poland; therefore I am not speaking without knowledge of the situation.

The fact of the Katyn Massacre has been established. Evidence of the removal by the Russians in April, 1940, of some 15,000 Polish prisoners of war from three great camps, where they had been interned since the autumn of 1939, is in the hands of the Poles.

After the signing of the Polish-Soviet Pact of July 30, 1941, Polish Embassy officials and members of the Polish Army staff in the U.S.S.R. made every effort to trace the "lost" men. They could learn nothing about them from the Soviet authorities. Yet it is clear that so many thousands of men could not have disappeared without the knowledge of those who had guarded them.

In April, 1943, the Germans made a sensational announcement concerning the discovery in the Katyn forests of the mass graves of thousands of Polish soldiers. Germany then charged the Soviets with having carried out mass executions in the spring of 1940. The Polish Government requested the International Red Cross, a purely Swiss organization, to conduct an investigation. Germany was willing, but the Soviet Government refused to agree, using the request as an excuse to break off diplomatic relations with the Polish Government.

In January, 1944, Soviet authorities "discovered" the mass graves and proceeded to conduct an investigation to which foreign correspondents and the daughter of the American Ambassador to the U.S.S.R. were invited. No representatives of the

International Red Cross were present, no medical experts from Britain or America. When the process of examining the gruesome finds was completed, the guilt of Germany in the mass execution had been ascertained. The Soviets had handled this matter—as they handle all others—in their own way.

5. *"After You, Sir!"*

It is the irony of fate that as the war which was begun when Poland stood in defense of her western frontier draws to a victorious ending for the United Nations, her eastern frontier should be in jeopardy. When the Poles had the moral courage to face the might of Germany alone, the rest of the world applauded. Now when in Polish eyes the question is similar to that which faced them in 1939 there are many who urge them to yield to the demands of the Soviet Union.

At a meeting of the Fabian Society in London two years ago, Dr. Adam Ciolkosz, a leading Polish statesman, was moved by remarks of one of the speakers to take the floor and speak briefly on this matter of being "realistic." He recited the tempestuous and often tragic history of Poland and told of how time and again the Poles had been advised to be "sensible."

"You may call us what you like," he went on, "madmen or romantics. And yet experience has shown that it was we who were right and not those who warned us to use common sense. What is it that we now want? We are fighting for the full restoration of our independence and our pre-war territory. I hear you say that geography is against us. I confess that it is our lot to live in a very difficult part of Europe. For a thousand years we have been invaded. Every twenty or thirty years we have had to rise and go into battle! But despite that if I had not been born a Pole, I would have wished that I had been. I love my country, I cling to it. That is the kind of people we are. . . .

"I know, I have heard, that geography is against us. Perhaps someone outside this hall says: 'You are in a difficult position, join the Soviet Union. There you will have national independence and social liberties and what you please.'

"My answer to that is very short and very straight: After you, sir.

"Geography protects you and geography is against us. Very well, we shall fight against the German aggressors, against fascism and against geography."

Dr. Ciolkosz's position is unassailable. When the western nations are ready to join the Soviet Union, they will have a moral right to advise Poland, all or in part, to join it.

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(74) David J. Dallin, *Soviet Russia's Foreign Policy, 1939-1942*, p. 384

(75) New York Times, November 7, 1943

Appendix I

EXCERPTS from the Final Report, presented by M. Grzybowski, former Polish Ambassador in Moscow, to the Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs

Paris, November 6, 1939.

I

I began my mission in Moscow on July 1, 1936. In the absence of M. Litvinov, who was in Geneva, I was received by M. Krestinski. Our talk was brief, but not without import. M. Krestinski informed me in plain terms that my mission had begun at a most unfortunate time.

"The political relations between us could not be worse. We are working," said M. Krestinski, "to increase the prestige of the League of Nations, and for collective security; we are combating all forms of aggression and all forms of fascism. At the present time we are pursuing an anti-German, anti-Italian, and anti-Japanese policy. Poland is pursuing a diametrically contrary policy, tending to weaken the League of Nations, combating attempts to realize collective security, supporting Italy and sympathizing with Japan. Poland is within the orbit of German policy."

I replied that to define our position as being within the German orbit was an erroneous interpretation, unsupported by any facts whatever. I declared that Poland was pursuing a policy based above all on bilateral agreements, and was working first and foremost for correct and good relations with her neighbours. Not all conceptions of international co-operation carried convic-

tion to our minds. I considered that the differences between our views in this regard should not influence the ordering of our neighbourly relations. The tendency which existed on our side towards good relations with the U.S.S.R. was the best proof that our policy was independent of Germany.

It was in this talk with M. Krestinski that I first noted the fact which afterwards I was continually to come up against: irrespective of Polish policy, the Soviets constantly interpreted it so as to contrapose it to their own policy.

II

I presented my credentials to M. Kalinin on July 4, 1936. On this occasion I had a long conversation with him, M. Krestinski taking part.

M. Kalinin's remarks were in no way aggressive. He talked of the important role which Polish engineers had played in Russian industry in responsible positions. He himself had been a foreman in a factory run by Polish specialists, and admitted that on their departure the enterprise had suffered considerably. He inquired as to my intentions. I told him that I attached major importance to the development of economic relations. In many spheres our industrial and agricultural production could mutually complement each other. M. Kalinin readily took up this theme. He held the view that the tendency to autarchy was absurd, and that the U.S.S.R. possessed a sufficiently large production of gold and a sufficient reserve of gold to develop imports satisfying the population's consumption needs. Poland would be a natural source of such imports, for Polish production had long adapted itself to the needs of the Russian market. M. Krestinski remarked that Polish-Soviet political relations were not propitious to the development of economic relations, but M. Kalinin warmly objected, declaring that it was necessary to *begin* with economic relations. He argued that Germany, which was

effecting its political expansion primarily by economic means, set an example to be followed. Yet, apparently making some concession to M. Krestinski's opinion, he complained that Poland isolated herself from cultural co-operation with the Soviets, and that despite their high level, the Soviet theatre, music and literature were not made sufficiently accessible to the Polish masses.

I answered that the revival of cultural relations was possible only as a final stage, after the achievement of a lasting improvement in the economic and political spheres. I report this conversation at length, since the head of the Soviet State expounded the basic prerequisites of a political programme expressing the Soviets' tendency towards expansion and treating Poland as an object of that expansion.

Events in Europe, however, turned Soviet efforts in another direction. A few months later M. Krestinski returned to this conversation, and felt obliged to tell me that when M. Kalinin was talking of the intention to abandon autarchy, and to improve supplies in the Soviets by resorting to increased exports, he was revealing the actual plans of the Government. However, European events and Germany's policy forced the U.S.S.R. to abandon these plans and to apply all resources to the swiftest possible increase in armaments. More or less about this time Marshal Tukhachevski told me of the progress achieved in the sphere of mechanizing the army.

In my report to Count Szembek on November 4, 1936, I made the following remarks:

". . . Owing to the progress achieved by the Soviets in the development of production and a relative internal stabilization, signs of a growing dynamism are observable. This dynamism will probably take the form not only of expansion but also of aggression. It can be described by the term: doctrinal imperialism, but the choice of the moment at which that aggression will be applied is solely and simply a tactical question.

". . . It is an error to apply the term 'evolution' to the presen
stage of development of the situation in the Soviets. What i
being achieved in the U.S.S.R. to-day is nothing but a revolutio
from above, and a revolution which is continually advancing
The entire economic and industrial activity of the Soviets is no
the result of natural development nor of the needs of the popula
tion. It is a realization of doctrinaire plans enforced fron
above. Soviet industry is wholly directed towards the futur
war, and is concentrating its efforts on the up-to-date equipmen
and motorization of the Red Army. The intensive constructio
of strategic roads is also characteristic. In the direction of th
Latvian frontier three parallel roads have been built, of whicl
only one is given over to normal exploitation. In the directio
of Poland two motor roads, one from Moscow to Minsk, and
second from Kiev towards Polish Volhynia, are being con
structed.

". . . Russian imperialism is still laying down a road for itsel
by means of the 'Emancipation of the proletariat.' The metho
by which it works towards this end is by supporting all an
every conflict in Europe.

". . . So far as we are concerned, despite their ostensible desir
to establish good neighbourly relations, the Soviets are doing
their best to arouse hatred for Poland with the help of propa
ganda. By its very nature Soviet expansion is directed agains
us, for we constitute a natural barrier to the realization of thei
designs."

. . . .

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. . . .

V

. . . in its persistent striving for correct neighbourly relations

in its respect for basic agreements and the Riga Peace Treaty which had been concluded, Polish policy remained invariably faithful to three principles:

1. Abstention from any form of intervention in the internal affairs of the U.S.S.R.

2. The persistent attempts to regulate bilateral relations in a spirit of goodwill to the U.S.S.R.

3. Non-participation in any action or in international understandings directed against the U.S.S.R. Most important of all, Poland resolutely rejected numerous German proposals directed against the Soviets.

The course of diplomatic negotiations during the last year of my mission in Moscow was as follows:

(a) A turning point rendering possible greater diplomatic activity in our relations with the Soviets, arrived only with the series of international agreements concluded at Munich. Without consulting the U.S.S.R. and without her participation, the four Western Powers regulated among themselves the question of the Sudeten Germans and Czechoslovakia.

Poland also took no part in these agreements.

Local Polish-Soviet relations were in a state of some exacerbation. M. Potemkin's declaration on September 23, 1938, to our Chargé d'Affairs, and our Government's sharp reply were accompanied by a certain amount of ill-will and hardly friendly demonstrations on the part of the Soviet Government. When the European and local atmosphere had undergone a certain appeasement, I decided during the first ten days of October that the time had come to take the initiative in lessening the political tension, acting on the outline instructions I possessed. I called on M. Potemkin, and by virtue of the custom established between us of from time to time having talks which were not binding (having the character of a personal exchange of views, "thinking

aloud" as M. Potemkin put it), I had a long conversation with him on the general situation.

I for my part expressed the opinion that, in the European situation now created, in the interests of both parties an improvement in the existing Polish-Soviet relations was desirable.

M. Potemkin did not express any opinion, but told me that he would like to return to this talk.

Some days later M. Litvinov invited me to call on him. He told me that he had before him a note of my talk with M. Potemkin. The conversation had greatly interested him, and he desired to ask me a few questions. Most of all he wished to know whether my initiative was of a personal character, or whether it originated from my Government. I told him: "I think that that depends entirely on your answer. If your answer is positive I have no doubt that the initiative will originate from my Government. But if your answer is negative, then don't you think it would probably be better that we should have to deal with the personal initiative of M. Grzybowski?" M. Litvinov agreed, and wished to know what was the political premiss on which I based my proposal. I answered that it was a very simple premiss. I thought, namely, that good neighbourly Polish-Soviet relations were an adequate factor to ensure peace in this part of Europe.

M. Litvinov's next question was: "What conditions do you regard as most important to achieve this end?" I answered that the reply to this question would probably be better indicated when I knew his Government's attitude.

Two days later M. Litvinov sent for me again, and informed me that his Government willingly took up the initiative of. . . . I said: "The Polish Government." He asked that we should present our views.

I answered that in foreign policy I did not trust to improvizations, and I counted on a permanent lessening of tension and

improvement in relations only after the realization of a series of conditions which in my view were fundamental. I regarded the strict observation of existing agreements as a fundamental condition. The Soviet Government had a tendency towards their one-sided modification, as in the case of the cancellation of the train running between the Polish frontier and Kiev, the endless procrastination over our admitted claims to property, and finally the frontier regulations, which were slowly becoming a dead letter, while incidents and violations of the regulations were multiplying endlessly.

The second condition, in my view, was an increase in trade turnover, which had fallen to a few millions, and I proposed as a basis of discussion that it should be raised to the sum of a hundred million zlotys on each side.

M. Litvinov answered with some animation that what I called the foundation was, in his view, the roof. In order to make it possible to realize the desiderata I had postulated, it was necessary, first and foremost, to create a corresponding atmosphere by some political step. He would regard a corresponding joint declaration as the most modest form of such a step.

I told him that I personally did not reject the idea of such a declaration, but I could recommend it to my Government only when I knew the Soviet Government's positive attitude to the conditions I had put forward.

Again after some days (about October 25, 1938) M. Litvinov informed me that his Government did take a positive attitude to the realization of the conditions I had put forward, and handed me a draft declaration he had ready. I read it through, and at once made a certain number of reservations and changes which I regarded as indispensable. But I accepted the matter *ad referendum.*

In the last days of October occurred the unfortunate incident

of the Soviet Government's destruction of the Polish military cemetery in Kiev.

This affair, together with the necessity to agree to certain details of our conditions with the departments of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, had a braking effect on the course of negotiations. Only on November 24, 1938, did M. Litvinov finally accept the text of the declaration we had proposed and a memorandum containing the agreed conditions of the understanding. To the list of matters "pending and not settled" was added also the restitution *ad integrum* of the cemetery at Kiev. We agreed that the declaration was to be published on November 26, 1938.

This declaration possesses undoubted political significance for, made as the result of Polish initiative, it is a precise summary of our fundamental position in regard to the Soviets. To our eastern neighbour we guaranteed the complete loyalty of our policy, its sincere striving for improvement in neighbourly relations, and the development of economic relations. In return we required respect for existing agreements and that the Soviet authorities should adapt their conduct to these agreements. At the same time we fully realized that our partner's intentions were rather more complex, that his ambitions went considerably further, and that his aim was not only to worsen relations between Poland and Germany, but also to win us over to his own political system. But we had the right to expect that we would be able to protect ourselves against that.

(b) The most important of the agreed practical conditions of the declaration concerned trade turnover.

The peculiar economic system of the Soviets had resulted in our never having a full trade treaty with them. Exchange was effected only on the basis of quotas established from year to year.

Only the introduction of foreign exchange regulations in Poland created an equal opportunity for both partners, giving

the governmental factors of both States the same possibility of regulating turnover.

In view of the importance of the question we set to work on its realization as early as the middle of December 1938. On the Soviet side the negotiations were conducted by the Vice-Premier M. Mikoyan, and the *pactum de contrahendo* signed by him opened hopeful prospects.

Truly, once more it transpired that, as M. Mikoyan put it, "the Soviets have everything to buy, but really nothing to sell"; but simultaneously with the commercial Treaty we were to have a settlement of the, for us, very important transit agreement; exchange was to be based on the clearing system, assuming equilibrium in the goods balances; and the quotas on the Soviet side were to consist of raw materials of value to us and amounting to a sum of not less than sixty million zlotys. The atmosphere in which the negotiations were conducted could not have been more friendly. The Soviets desired to extend them to the sphere of war industry also, which, however, proved to be impracticable, owing to the fact that their requirements in this direction exceeded our export possibilities.

It must also be noted that immediately after the publication of the declaration the Soviet Government dealt with a number of the desiderata I had advanced. Steps were taken to restore the cemetery in Kiev, an express train began to run regularly between the Polish frontier and Kiev, a certain number of frontier incidents were adjusted. But all the other minor postulates were in practice subjected to the tactic of endless procrastination.

But the definite improvement in the atmosphere of relations with Poland did not last long on the Soviet side. The traditional New Year reception for the diplomatic corps in Berlin brought an unexpected incident. Chancellor Hitler talked with the Soviet Ambassador longer than with anyone else. In Moscow this fact was given quite considerable publicity. M. Potemkin told me

about it in detail and with some delight. He also declared that the conversation touched purely on the Ambassador's personal and family affairs. On the other hand, M. Litvinov, in our conversation on January 8, advised me to hasten the trade negotiations, in order "to forestall German intrigues." Soon afterward, information was spread through Moscow of the impending arrival of a German economic delegation with M. Schnurre at its head.

I note as a characteristic fact that this delegation did indeed arrive—at Warsaw about January 25, ostensibly en route to Moscow, but then it chose the road to the west and returned straight to Berlin.

So one must assume that in this period of contacts there was quite a considerable vacillation in Berlin as well as in Moscow.

Our trade negotiations were opened on January 19, 1939. After only a couple of meetings between our delegations it was possible to deduce that since the time of the conclusion of the *pactum de contrahendo* a change had occurred in the attitude of the Soviet delegation. Not only did they manifest a disposition to chaffer very ardently over every point of the agreement, but such an important issue for us as the transit question was subjected to postponement.

I must state that our economic representatives attached great importance to the achievement of a trade Treaty with the Soviets, and so, naturally, our attitude was compliant. I can state definitely that after a month of tedious negotiations we achieved a trade Treaty primarily owing to the concessions we made to the Soviets as against the *pactum de contrahendo*. Except for the postponement of the transit question (which the Soviets said was indispensable because of other negotiations on the same issue) these concessions were not considerable, but they expressively emphasized that every signature of the Soviet Government would have only a relative value.

We signed the first Polish-Soviet Trade Treaty on February

19, 1939. So-called branch discussions on the fulfilment of quotas were to begin without delay. In fact they began in March, but they came up against such considerable difficulties on the Soviet side that they were never concluded. In a letter to Count Szembek dated May 23,1939, I wrote: "At times I have the impression that in our persistent striving for practical things we are overlooking the possibilities of this country. It looks also as if, when making any kind of agreement with this State, we have to consider only the actual fact that it is made, and not the gain which may result from its conclusion."

(c) At the beginning of May, M. Litvinov himself vanished from the political scene. To-day we realize that the Soviets' imperialistic plans must have been already sufficiently formulated for them to retain a final and decisive understanding with Chancellor Hitler as a trump card in their policy of instigation of war. It is obvious that such an understanding could not be negotiated by M. Litvinov.

For the time being the Soviets' external activity seemed to be turned in another direction. In face of England's and France's widespread diplomatic activity they regarded it as sound to extend their own activities also. Vice-Commissar Potemkin was delegated to Ankara with the object of assuring that the U.S.S.R. would have the strict solidarity of Turkish policy. On this journey M. Potemkin halted at Bucharest and Sofia. On his return journey he made his way to Warsaw and, after previous agreement with M. Beck, halted there to carry on conversations. Both M. Beck and M. Arciszewski received favourable impressions from these conversations. M. Potemkin seemed to understand the reservations which restrained us from direct participation in the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations. In the name of his government he assured M. Beck of the Soviet Government's decision to adopt a benevolent attitude to Poland. Recapitulating these conversations to me in Moscow, he stressed with satisfaction M.

Beck's declaration that in the event of such a conflict we would rely inevitably on the Soviets. In my private letter of May 25 to Count Szembek I stressed that in conversations with the diplomatic corps M. Potemkin laid great emphasis on M. Beck's words.

M. Molotov took over the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs on May 5th. On Sunday, the 7th, he invited me to call on him. He began with warm compliments on M. Beck's speech of two days previously, and especially emphasized how much he had been impressed by his words on national honour.

He then talked about the conversations between the Soviet Union and Great Britain and France. I answered that I could not precisely state our views on this subject until I had received instructions. But I could already state, I added, that we adopted a pacific and loyal attitude to all our neighbours and that only clearly aggressive acts committed by any one of them could modify this attitude. As to the proposed collaboration between the U.S.S.R. and the Western Powers, we regarded it sympathetically. I also observed that we intended to maintain our alliance with Rumania.

Some days later (more or less at the time of M. Potemkin's stay in Warsaw) I gave M. Molotov a résumé of our attitude.

We could not accept a one-sided Soviet guarantee. Nor could we accept a mutual guarantee, because in the event of a conflict with Germany our forces would be completely engaged, and so we would not be in any position to give help to the Soviets. Also we could not accept collective negotiations, and made our adoption of a definite attitude conditional on the result of the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations. We rejected all discussion of matters affecting us other than by the bilateral method. Our alliance with Rumania, being purely defensive, could not in any way be regarded as directed against the U.S.S.R.

In addition I indicated our favourable attitude to the Anglo-

Franco-Soviet negotiations, and once more emphasized our entire loyalty in relation to the Soviets. In the event of conflict we by no means rejected specified forms of Soviet aid, but considered it premature to determine them definitely. We considered it premature to open bilateral negotiations with the Soviets before the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations had achieved a result. M. Molotov made no objection whatever.

(d) In June there was a series of offers on the part of the Soviets to supply us with armaments materials. It has to be admitted that they were always accompanied by unacceptable conditions. The Soviet propaganda never ceased to urge us to resist the German demands.

It is true that when we raised the question of accelerating the transit negotiations we met with a refusal, but M. Potemkin assured me that obviously everything would change in the event of a conflict, and that in that case we could count on transit. It has to be borne in mind that so long as the Anglo-French-Soviet negotiations lasted it was almost impossible for us to go beyond a waiting attitude. We felt no optimism whatever in regard to the result of those negotiations. It was difficult to expect that the Soviets would do anything in the direction of preventing a conflict or even rendering its outbreak difficult. We observed rather that their tactics aimed at the exact opposite.

The German-Soviet Pact of Non-aggression justly made a deep impression.

The fact that two mutually contradictory sets of negotiations had been carried on simultaneously was a true measure of the cynicism of Soviet policy. The conclusion of the pact was beyond all doubt an encouragement to Germany to make war. The scope of the obligations undertaken, the extent of the understanding between the Soviets and Germany remained vague.

The Soviets endeavoured to give it the appearance of a pact assuring them peace, but not effecting any fundamental change

in their policy. In this regard M. Molotov even appealed to Poland's example.

The undefined character of the obligations resulting from the pact was emphasized by M. Voroshilov's interview given a few days later. Evidently influenced by news emanating from Berlin and London of the conversations between the British ambassador and Chancellor Hitler, Marshal Voroshilov gave the Soviet Press an interview, in which he stated that the Anglo-Franco-Soviet negotiations were only suspended, and that their renewal would not be in contradiction with the Soviet-German pact.

Moreover, Marshal Voroshilov simultaneously stated that the supply of raw material and war material to Poland in the event of a conflict was a "commercial matter," equally not in contradiction with the pact.

The warning was understood in Berlin.

(e) On Saturday, September 2, I received instructions to give official notification of the German aggression and the ensuing state of war between Poland and Germany. On the 3rd I was received by M. Molotov. He did not question our statement that it was a case of unprovoked aggression committed without previous declaration of war, by a surprise attack during negotiations. He agreed in recognizing Germany as the aggressor. He asked whether we counted on the intervention of Great Britain and France, and whether we expected any time-limit. I told him I had no official information, but I anticipated their declaration of war to follow a day later, on the 4th. M. Molotov smiled sceptically. "Well, we shall see, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur. . . ."

In the meantime the Soviet ambassador in Warsaw had stressed the importance of Marshal Voroshilov's interview, and had inquired at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs whether steps had already been taken in Moscow with the object of utilizing Marshal Voroshilov's promises in regard to us. As the result of these suggestions, on the 6th I received instructions to investigate

the practical possibilities in this direction. Simultaneously I received a list of required materials, which I was to put forward in the event of M. Molotov's adopting a favourable attitude. I was not afforded the opportunity to negotiate on this list. M. Molotov was difficult to get hold of, and received me only on the 8th. Referring to previous official statements and Marshal Voroshilov's interview, I put to him the question of buying the additional raw materials we needed and the eventual supply of war material.

M. Molotov answered that Marshal Voroshilov's interview had been made public in totally different circumstances. Marshal Voroshilov did not and could not know that Britain and France's intervention would follow. The situation had now radically changed. "Poland," said M. Molotov, "is now synonymous with England, so far as we are concerned." The Soviet Union was ompelled to safeguard first and foremost its own interests, and o remain outside the conflict.

On the practical question of supplies, which I had raised, the oviet Government maintained the position of a strict observance f the existing agreements. The fulfilment of our trade agreeent had not been satisfactory, but for their part the Soviet overnment were prepared to do all that was necessary for that greement to function normally. Nevertheless, M. Molotov did ot think that the Soviet Government could go beyond the quotas stablished for the current year, either in regard to quantities or n regard to the categories of goods. To this I replied that iven good will the difficulties were not so great after all, beause, in the first place, the clearing quotas could always be omplemented by quotas of purchases for cash, while, secondly, e could even establish supplementary clearing quotas, for the urth quarter or for the following year, and anticipate with eir supply.

M. Molotov said again that he did not anticipate that his

Government could introduce any changes whatever in the exist
ing agreements.

I then passed to the transit question and, referring to forme
Soviet declarations, I asked what facilities could be granted u
in this sphere. M. Molotov answered that he was afraid th
transit of military materials would be in contradiction with th
Pact of Non-aggression concluded with Germany.

So there was nothing else to be done than to inform him tha
I would communicate his attitude to my Government. At th
end of the conversation M. Molotov stated that all he had sai
had been said in present conditions, but that circumstances migh
change. The phrase "in present conditions" was several time
repeated in his answers.

Almost simultaneously (September 11) M. Szaronov took
friendly leave of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, "in view of hi
departure for a few days to have contact with his Government.
He communicated to Count Szembek that he had just grante
visas to our specialists to travel to Moscow to purchase medica
supplies, and he did not doubt that the supplies would be swiftl
forthcoming.

Next day *Pravda* published a leading article violently attac
ing the condition of our minorities in the eastern areas.
stressed that the fate of these minorities could not be a matte
of indifference to the Soviet public.

I drew the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' attention to th
article, stating that it might be in preparation for eventual dec
sions.

September 16 was already ended when the telephone rang.
looked at my watch: it was 2.15 a.m. M. Potemkin's secretari
notifed me that the Commissar wished to inform me of a
important statement by his Government, and asked whether
could come to him at three o'clock. I answered that I woul
I ordered a car, and warned Councillor Jankowski that I shou

need him and Colonel Brzeszczynski as well as the cypher officer for four o'clock. As I drove out of the Embassy the militia-man on duty at the gate saluted with obvious surprise and rushed to the wall-telephone. For the first time in all my term as Ambassador I drove through Moscow without a police escort.

As I went I was prepared for bad news. I thought that under one pretext or another the denunciation of our Pact of Non-aggression was about to follow. That which awaited me was far worse.

M. Potemkin slowly read to me the text of a note signed by M. Molotov. When he had finished I told him at once that I refused to take the contents of the note into cognizance. I refused to communicate it to my Government, and expressed the most categorical protest against its content and form.

I protested against the unilateral abrogation of existing and binding agreements. None of the arguments intended to justify the transformation of those agreements into "scraps of paper" would withstand criticism. According to my information the head of the Polish State and the Government were within the territory of the Republic. The functioning of the Government was by the nature of things restricted by the state of war. "You will not demand that at such a time the Minister of Agriculture should carry out agricultural reforms?" For that matter the question of the Government was not so essential at that moment. The sovereignty of the State existed so long as a single regular soldier was still fighting. "You will not maintain that the Polish soldiers are no longer fighting!"

That which the note said about the position of the minorities within our borders was nonsense. All the minorities, including the Jews, had not only given expression to their loyalty, but were actively proving it by their complete solidarity with Poland in her struggle against Germanism. "More than once in our conversations," I told him, "you have appealed to Slavonic

solidarity. At our side at this moment not only Ukrainians and White Russians, but also Czech and Slovak legions are fighting the Germans. Where is your Slavonic solidarity?

"So many times has the U.S.S.R. indignantly condemned and stigmatized the Germans' perfidy. The note which you have read to me would signify that you had taken the same road.

"During the Great War the territories of Serbia and Belgium were occupied, but it entered no one's head to regard their obligations to these States as non-existent on that account. Napoleon was once in Moscow, but so long as Kutuzov's army existed it was considered that Russia existed."

M. Potemkin tried to explain that my historic responsibility would be very great if I refused to accept a document of such importance. Besides, the Soviet Government no longer possessed any representative in Poland, and were not in a position to communicate their decision to the Polish Government by any other way.

I said: "Monsieur le Commissaire, if I agreed to communicate the contents of the note to my Government it would be not only a proof that I had no respect for my Government, but it would also be a proof that I had lost all respect for the Soviet Government. I understand that I am in duty bound to inform my Government of the aggression probably already committed, but I will do no more than that. But I still hope that your Government will restrain the Red Army from invasion, and will not stab us in the back at the moment of our struggle against the Germans."

M. Potemkin said that evidently I did not take into account the impossibility of our resisting the German onslaught. On the basis of the reports of their military attaché the Soviet Government considered that the German army would inevitably march to the frontiers of the Union.

I told him: "The most pessimistic reports of military attachés

have not the power to release from international agreements. The German troops' advance into the heart of Poland may be the source of great difficulties for them. A similar situation occurred in 1812."

M. Potemkin replied that in face of the attitude I had taken up he must discuss the matter with his Government. It was four o'clock. I waited for further developments for half an hour.

Finally, M. Potemkin informed me that he had communicated with the utmost precision all that I had said, but his Government could not alter the decisions taken.

I declared that I also could not change my decision, and would inform my Government only of the fact of the aggression.

I sent my telegram *en claire* at a few minutes past five. It did not reach the Ministry for Foreign Affairs until 11 a. m. The Soviet troops invaded Poland at 6 a.m.

(f) On September 18 I received approval of the attitude I had adopted and instructions to demand my passports. At my request the Ambassador of one of the Powers had already obtained the agreement of his Government to take over charge of the Embassy building.

On the 19th I called on M. Potemkin and told him that I regarded my mission as ended. I had only to regulate the transference of the charge of the Embassy to a third Power, and to carry out the evacuation of the outlying posts. I asked that it might be made possible for the personnel of the Consulates to arrive at a definite date, and also for the appointment of a special official to carry out the details of the evacuation in agreement with the Embassy. M. Potemkin answered that, as they did not recognize the existence of the Polish State, they would not be able to agree to a third State taking over the protection of our property. He also warned me that they would not be able to recognize the diplomatic privileges of my personnel. The rest he promised to settle without delay.

In fact, after some days the Director of "Biurobin" (Bureau for Relations with Foreigners), M. Nazarov, was appointed "plenipotentiary for evacuation," and he opened negotiations with the railway authorities. (For understandable reasons, railway communications at this period were unusually difficult.)

The question of our safety and departure became a subject of lively interest to the entire diplomatic corps. The situation was complicated a little by the fact that the doyen of the corps was the German Ambassador, Count von der Schulenburg, while I was the vice-doyen. Owing to events my functions passed to the Italian Ambassador, M. Rosso, and to him, more than anyone else, we owe the handling of our affairs through diplomatic channels. I must stress that although my position prohibited my communicating with the doyen, Count von der Schulenburg effectively intervened on our behalf several times with the Government. In reply to his intervention M. Molotov stated that *les usages diplomatiques* would be observed at our departure, and he also communicated to him that that departure would not take place so long as the staff of the Soviet Embassy, who had voluntarily remained in Warsaw and who, owing to the bombardment of the building, were spending their time in the cellars, did not return from the besieged city safe and sound. Realizing that I for my part was utterly helpless, Count von der Schulenburg caused communication on the question to be opened between the German Command and the Warsaw Command, and on September 25 the staff of the Soviet Embassy, to the unexpected number of sixty-two persons, arrived in Koenigsberg.

On September 26 the Consulate staff in Minsk were allowed to depart, being deprived of half their cases on the pretext of lack of room in the train. Certain officials arrived in Moscow without anything whatever. Despite our protests we did not recover this baggage.

A more dramatic incident occurred in Kiev. At two in the

morning of September 30 the Councillor of the Embassy, and acting consul-general, Matusinski, was summoned to the plenipotentiary of the Soviet Foreign Office, ostensibly to agree to the final details of his departure. He went at once, with two chauffeurs and accompanied by two police cars. From that moment Councillor Matusinski, the two chauffeurs and the car vanished without trace.

Ambassador Rosso intervened with M. Potemkin in this affair. M. Potemkin stated that he had no information so far from the local authorities, but he must point out that as M. Matusinski had already lost his diplomatic privileges, he could be called to account by the Soviet authorities if it appeared that he had committed some crime against the Soviet Union.

Ambassador Rosso justly replied that he saw no possibility of that, for down to September 18 M. Matusinski had enjoyed full diplomatic privileges, while from that day he had been in fact interned and could commit no crime whatever.

In view of the above-stated position of the affair I asked Ambassador Rosso to communicate to the Soviet Government that I would not leave Moscow so long as M. Matusinski was not set free, and that I demanded formulation of the charge against him.

The intervention with M. Molotov gave a result completely different. M. Molotov informed the doyen of the corps most categorically that the Soviet authorities had no information whatever as to the place of residence and the fate of M. Matusinski. "I assure you," said M. Molotov, "that he is not in our hands. I am myself personally making investigations in order to clear up this affair. To hold up the Ambassador's departure on this account is pointless, and I cannot agree to it."

In view of the Soviet Government's obvious intention to avoid formulating any charge against M. Matusinski there was really

nothing to wait for, since one could no longer expect him to be found.

Thanks to the kindness of the Finnish Legation and authorities, the railway difficulties were overcome and our departure took place on the evening of October 10.

The train placed at our disposition by the Soviet authorities had one special feature. It was a sealed train. No one was allowed to alight from it at the stops. The following evening we crossed the Finnish frontier.

I cannot but note that from the Diplomatic Corps and from very numerous colleagues we received a great amount of sympathy and assistance. The cordiality of the leavetaking at the station went far beyond anything known on normal occasions. In addition to Ambassador Rosso special thanks are due to the Ambassador of Great Britain, Sir William Seeds, and the entire personnel of his Embassy.

In conclusion one remark prompts itself. A diplomat accredited to Moscow, cut off from all contacts and all sources of information, can get an orientation on the course of general processes, but knows only facts which come to the surface. Any estimate of the Soviets' foreign policy relies upon very inadequate sources. But there can be no doubt that, equally with their internal policy, it is subversive. Is it at the same time a bad policy? Life would be simpler if the directors of foreign policy would be divided into two definite categories: those who commit only errors and those who render only services. Certain features of Stalin's policy have been marked by great ability. But it must be stated that his policy of invasion of Poland, his entente with Nazi Germany and his tactic of keeping us deceived until the last moment, will bring effects of the most negative kind to Stalin and the U.S.S.R.

One may repeat with Talleyrand: *"C'est pire qu'un crime, c'est une faute."*

Appendix II

MOLOTOV'S REPORT TO SUPREME SOVIET*

"Our country, as a neutral country that is not interested in the spread of war, will take every measure to render the war less devastating, to weaken it and hasten its termination in the interests of peace"

Following is the full text of the report on the international situation and the peace policy of the Soviet Union delivered on October 31, 1939, in Moscow to the Fifth Extraordinary Session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, by Viacheslav Molotov, Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars and People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR.

Comrade Deputies:

There have been important changes in the international situation during the past two months. This applies above all to Europe, but also to countries far beyond the confines of Europe. In this connection mention must be made of three principal circumstances which are of decisive importance.

First, mention should be made of the changes that have taken place in the relations between the Soviet Union and Germany. Since the conclusion of the Soviet-German non-aggression pact on August 23, an end has been put to the abnormal relations that

* Translation from Soviet Russia Today, November 1939.

have existed between the Soviet Union and Germany for a number of years.

Instead of the enmity that was fostered in every way by certain European powers, we now have a rapprochement and the establishment of friendly relations between the USSR and Germany. Further improvement of these new relations, good relations, found its reflection in the German-Soviet treaty on amity and frontier signed in Moscow September 28.

This radical change in relations between the Soviet Union and Germany, the two biggest states in Europe, was bound to have its effect on the entire international situation. Furthermore, events have entirely confirmed the estimate of the political significance of the Soviet-German rapprochement given at the last session of the Supreme Soviet.

Second, mention must be made of such a fact as the defeat of Poland in war and the collapse of the Polish State. The ruling circles of Poland boasted quite a lot about the "stability" of their State and the "might" of their army. However, one swift blow to Poland, first by the German Army and then by the Red Army, and nothing was left of this ugly offspring of the Versailles treaty which had existed by oppressing non-Polish nationalities.

The "traditional policy" of unprincipled manoeuvering between Germany and the USSR, and the playing of one against the other has proved unsound and has suffered complete bankruptcy.

Third, it must be admitted that the big war that has flared up in Europe has caused radical changes in the entire international situation. It is a war begun as a war between Germany and Poland and turned into a war between Germany on the one hand and Britain and France on the other.

The war between Germany and Poland ended quickly owing to the utter bankruptcy of the Polish leaders. As we know,

neither the British nor the French guarantees were of help to Poland. To this day, in fact, nobody knows what these "guarantees" were.

The Nature of the War

The war between Germany and the Anglo-French bloc is only in its first stage and has not yet been really developed. It is nevertheless clear that a war like this was bound to cause radical changes in the situation in Europe, and not only in Europe. In connection with these important changes in the international situation, certain old formulas, which we employed but recently and to which many people are so accustomed, are now obviously out of date and inapplicable.

We must be quite clear on this point so as to avoid making gross errors in judging the new political situation that has developed in Europe.

We know, for example, that in the past few months such concepts as "aggression" and "aggressor" have acquired a new concrete connotation, a new meaning. It is not hard to understand that we can no longer employ these concepts in the sense we did, say, three or four months ago.

Today, as far as the European great powers are concerned, Germany is in the position of a State that is striving for the earliest termination of the war and for peace, while Britain and France, which but yesterday were declaiming against aggression, are in favor of continuing the war and are opposed to the conclusion of peace. The roles, as you see, are changing.

Efforts of the British and French Governments to justify their new position on the grounds of their undertakings to Poland are, of course, obviously unsound. Everybody realizes that there can be no question of restoring the old Poland.

It is, therefore, absurd to continue the present war under the flag of the restoration of the former Polish State. Although the

governments of Britain and France understand this they do not want the war stopped and peace restored but are seeking new excuses for continuing the war with Germany.

The ruling circles of Britain and France have been lately attempting to depict themselves as champions of the democratic rights of nations against Hitlerism and the British Government has announced that its aim in the war with Germany is nothing more nor less than "the destruction of Hitlerism." It amounts to this, that the British, and with them the French supporters of the war, have declared something in the nature of an "ideological" war on Germany, reminiscent of the religious wars of olden times.

In fact, religious wars against heretics and religious dissenters were once the fashion. As we know, they led to the direst results for the masses, to economic ruin and the cultural deterioration of nations.

These wars could have no other outcome. But they were wars of the Middle Ages. Is it back to the Middle Ages, to the days of religious wars, superstition and cultural deterioration that the ruling classes of Britain and France want to drag us?

In any case under an "ideological" flag has now been started a war of even greater dimensions and fraught with even greater danger for the peoples of Europe and the whole world. But there is absolutely no justification for a war of this kind. One may accept or reject the ideology of Hitlerism as well as any other ideological system; that is a matter of political views.

But everybody would understand that an ideology cannot be destroyed by force, that it cannot be eliminated by war. It is, therefore, not only senseless but criminal to wage such a war as the war for "the destruction of Hitlerism," camouflaged as a fight for "democracy." And, indeed, you cannot give the name of a fight for democracy to such action as the banning of the Communist party in France, arrests of the Communist Deputies

in the French Parliament, or the curtailing of political liberties in England or the unremitting national oppression in India, etc.

Is it not clear that the aim of the present war in Europe is not what it is proclaimed to be in the official statements intended for the public in France and England? That is, it is not a fight for democracy but something else of which these gentlemen do not speak openly.

The real cause of the Anglo-French war with Germany was not that Britain and France had vowed to restore old Poland and not, of course, that they decided to undertake a fight for democracy. The ruling circles of Britain and France have, of course, other and more actual motives for going to war with Germany. These motives do not lie in any ideology but in their profoundly material interests as mighty colonial powers.

Great Britain, with a population of 47,000,000, possesses colonies with a population of 480,000,000. The colonial empire of France, whose population does not exceed 42,000,000, embraces a population of 72,000,000 in the French colonies. The possession of these colonies, which makes possible the exploitation of hundreds of millions of people, is the foundation of the world supremacy of Great Britain and France. It is the fear of Germany's claim to these colonial possessions that is at the bottom of the present war of England and France with Germany, who has grown substantially stronger lately as the result of the collapse of the Versailles treaty. It is the fear of losing world supremacy that dictates to the ruling circles of Great Britain and France the policy of fomenting war with Germany. Thus the imperialist character of this war is obvious to anyone who wants to face realities and does not close his eyes to facts.

One can see from all this who is interested in this war which is being waged for world supremacy. Certainly not the working class. This war promises nothing to the working class but bloody sacrifice and hardships.

always held that a strong Germany is an indispensable condition for a durable peace in Europe.

It would be ridiculous to think that Germany could be "simply put out of commission" and struck off the books. The powers that cherish this foolish and dangerous dream ignore the deplorable experience of Versailles, do not realize Germany's increased might, and fail to see that any attempt at repetition of Versailles in the present state of international affairs, which radically differs from that of 1914, may end in disaster for them.

We have consistently striven to improve our relations with Germany and have wholeheartedly welcomed similar strivings in Germany. Today our relations with the German State are based on our friendly relations, on our readiness to support Germany's efforts for peace and at the same time on desire to contribute in every way to the development of Soviet-German economic relations to the mutual benefit of both States.

Special mention should be made of the fact that the change that has taken place in Soviet-German political relations created favorable conditions for the development of Soviet-German relations. Recent economic negotiations carried on by the German delegation in Moscow and the present negotiations carried on by the Soviet economic delegation in Germany are preparing a broad basis for the development of trade between the Soviet Union and Germany.

Liberation of Western Ukraine and Byelo-Russia

Permit me, now, to dwell on events directly connected with the entry of our troops into the territory of the former Polish State. There is no need for me to describe the course of these events. They have been reported in detail in our press and you, Comrade Deputies, are well acquainted with the facts.

I shall only dwell on what is most essential. There is no need to prove, that at the moment when the Polish State was in a state

of complete collapse our government was obliged to extend a helping hand to our brother Ukrainians and Byelo-Russians inhabiting the territory of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia.

That is what it did. When the Red Army marched into these regions it was greeted with the general sympathy of the Ukrainian and Byelo-Russian population who welcomed our troops as liberators from the yoke of the gentry, from the yoke of the Polish landlords and capitalists.

As the Red Army advanced through these districts there were serious encounters in some places between our troops and Polish troops and consequently there were casualties. These casualties were as follows:

On the Byelo-Russian front, counting both commanders and rank and file of the Red Army, there were 246 killed and 503 wounded, or a total of 749.

On the Ukrainian front there were 491 commanders and rank and file killed and 1,359 wounded or a total of 1,850.

Thus the total casualties of the Red Army on the territory of Western Byelo-Russia and Western Ukraine were 737 killed and 1,862 wounded, or a total of 2,599.

As for our trophies in Poland, they consisted of more than 900 guns, more than 10,000 machine-guns, more than 300,000 rifles, more than 150,000,000 rifle cartridges, more than 1,000,000 artillery shells, about 300 airplanes, etc.

The territory that has passed to the USSR is equal in area to a large European state. Thus the area of Western Byelo-Russia is 108,000 square kilometers and its population is 4,800,000. The area of Western Ukraine is 88,000 square kilometers and its population 8,000,000. Hence, together the territory of Western Ukraine and Western Byelo-Russia that has passed to us has an area of 196,000 square kilometers and a population of about 13,000,000 of whom more than 7,000,000 are Ukrainians, and

preserve peace and safeguard the security of our peoples who are engaged in peaceful labor.

It was all this that insured a successful completion of the negotiations and the conclusion of the pacts of mutual assistance which are of great historical importance.

The special character of these mutual assistance pacts in no way implies any interference by the Soviet Union in the affairs of Esthonia, Latvia, or Lithuania, as some foreign newspapers are trying to make out. On the contrary, all these pacts of mutual assistance strictly stipulate the inviolability of the sovereignty of the signatory States and the principle of non-interference in each other's affairs.

These pacts are based on mutual respect for the political, social and economic structure of the contracting parties, and are designed to strengthen the basis for peaceful, neighborly cooperation between our peoples. We stand for the scrupulous and punctilious observance of pacts on a basis of complete reciprocity, and we declare that all nonsense about sovietizing the Baltic countries is only to the interest of our common enemies and of all anti-Soviet provocateurs. In view of the improvement in our political relations with Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania, the Soviet Union has gone a long way to meet the economic needs of these States and has accordingly concluded trade agreements with them.

Thanks to these economic agreements, trade with the Baltic countries will increase several fold, and there are favorable prospects for its further growth. At a time when European countries, including neutral States, are experiencing tremendous trade difficulties, these economic agreements between the USSR and Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are of great and positive importance to them.

Thus the rapprochement between the USSR, on the one hand, and Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania on the other, will contribute

to more rapid progress of agriculture, industry and transport and in general to the national wellbeing of our Baltic neighbors.

The principles of Soviet policy toward small countries have been demonstrated with particular force by the treaty providing for the transfer of the city of Vilna and the Vilna region to the Lithuanian Republic. Thereby the Lithuanian State, with its population of 2,500,000, considerably extends its territory, increases its population by 550,000 and receives the city of Vilna, whose population is almost double that of the present Lithuanian capital.

The Soviet Union agreed to transfer the city of Vilna to the Lithuanian Republic not because Vilna has a predominantly Lithuanian population. No, the majority of the inhabitants of Vilna are non-Lithuanian. But the Soviet Government took into consideration the fact that the city of Vilna, which was forcibly wrested from Lithuania by Poland, ought to belong to Lithuania as a city with which are associated on the one hand the historical past of the Lithuanian State and on the other hand the national aspirations of the Lithuanian people.

It has been pointed out in the foreign press that there has never been a case in world history of a big country's handing over such a big city to a small State of its own free will. All the more strikingly, therefore, does this act of the Soviet State demonstrate its good-will.

The Negotiations with Finland

Our relations with Finland are of a special character. This is to be explained chiefly by the fact that in Finland there is a greater amount of outside influence on the part of third powers. An impartial person must admit, however, that the same problems concerning the security of the Soviet Union and particularly of Leningrad, which figured in the negotiations with Esthonia, also figure in the negotiations with Finland. In a certain sense

the conclusion of such a pact would contradict its position of absolute neutrality we did not insist on our proposal.

We then proposed that we proceed to discuss concrete questions in which we are interested from the standpoint of safeguarding the security of the USSR and especially of Leningrad, both from the sea—in the Gulf of Finland—and from the land, in view of the extreme proximity of the border to Leningrad.

We have proposed that an agreement be reached to shift the Soviet-Finnish border on the Isthmus of Karelia several dozen kilometers further to the north of Leningrad. In exchange for this we have proposed to transfer to Finland part of Soviet Karelia, double the size of the territory which Finland is to transfer to the Soviet Union.

We have further proposed that an agreement be reached for Finland to lease to us for a definite term a small section of her territory near the entrance to the Gulf of Finland, where we might establish a naval base. With a Soviet base at the southern entrance to the Gulf of Finland, namely at Baltic Port, as provided for by the Soviet-Esthonian pact of mutual assistance, the establishment of a naval base at the northern entrance to the Gulf of Finland would fully safeguard the Gulf of Finland against hostile attempts on the part of other states.

We have no doubt that the establishment of such a base would not only be in the interests of the Soviet Union but also of the security of Finland herself.

Our other proposals, in particular our proposal as regards the exchange of certain islands in the Gulf of Finland as well as parts of the Rybachi and Sredni peninsulas for territory twice as large in Soviet Karelia, evidently do not meet with any objections on the part of the Finnish Government. Differences with regard to certain of our proposals have not yet been overcome, and concessions made by Finland in this respect, as for instance

the cession of part of the territory of the Isthmus of Karelia, obviously do not meet the purpose.

We have further made a number of new steps to meet Finland half way. We declared that if our main proposals are accepted we shall be prepared to drop our objections to the fortification of the Aland Islands, on which the Finnish Government has been insisting for a long time. We only made one stipulation. We said that we would drop our objection to fortification of the Aland Islands on condition that the fortification is done by Finland's own national forces without the participation of any third country, inasmuch as the USSR will take no part in it.

We have also proposed to Finland to disarm the fortified zones along the entire Soviet-Finnish border on the Isthmus of Karelia, which should fully accord with the interests of Finland. We have further expressed our desire to reinforce the Soviet-Finnish pact of non-aggression with additional mutual guarantees.

Lastly, consolidation of Soviet-Finnish political relations would undoubtedly form a splendid basis for the rapid development of economic relations between the two countries. Thus we are ready to meet Finland in matters in which she is particularly interested.

In view of all this we do not think that Finland will seek a pretext to frustrate the proposed agreement. This would not be in line with the policy of friendly Soviet-Finnish relations and would, of course, work to the serious detriment of Finland. We are certain that Finnish leading circles will properly understand the importance of consolidating friendly Soviet-Finnish relations and that Finnish public men will not yield to anti-Soviet influence or instigation from any quarter.

I must, however, inform you that even the President of the United States of America considered it proper to intervene in these matters, which one finds it hard to reconcile with the American policy of neutrality. In a message to Comrade Kalinin, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, dated October

definite group of European powers, belligerents in the present war. It has concluded a pact of mutual assistance with Great Britain and France, who for the past two months have been waging war on Germany.

Turkey has thereby definitely discarded her cautious policy of neutrality and has entered the orbit of the developing European war. This is highly pleasing to both Great Britain and France, who are bent on drawing as many neutral countries as possible into their sphere of war.

Whether Turkey will not come to regret it we shall not try to guess. It is only incumbent on us to take note of these new factors in the foreign policy of our neighbor and to keep a watchful eye on the development of events.

If Turkey has now to some extent tied her hands and has taken to the hazardous line of supporting one group of belligerents, the Turkish Government evidently realizes the responsibility it has thereby assumed. But that is not the foreign policy the Soviet Union is pursuing, thanks to which it has secured not a few successes in the sphere of foreign policy.

The Soviet Union prefers to keep its hands free in the future as well, to go on consistently pursuing its policy of neutrality and not only not to help the spread of war but to help strengthen whatever strivings there are for the restoration of peace.

We are confident that the policy of peace the USSR has been consistently pursuing holds out the best prospects for the future as well. And this policy we will pursue in the region of the Black Sea, too, confident that we shall fully insure its proper application as the interests of the Soviet Union and of the States friendly to the Soviet Union demand.

Soviet-Japanese Relations

Now, as regards our relations with Japan. There has recently been certain improvement in Soviet-Japanese relations. The

symptoms of this improvement have been observable since the recent conclusion of the Moscow agreement, as the result of which the well-known conflict on the Mongolian-Manchurian border was liquidated.

For several months, or, to be more precise, in May, June, July and August and up to the middle of September, hostilities took place in the Nomannan district in the vicinity of the Mongolian-Manchurian border between Japanese-Manchurian and Soviet-Mongolian troops.

During this period all arms, including airplanes and heavy artillery, were engaged in action and the battles were sometimes of a very sanguinary character. This absolutely unnecessary conflict exacted rather heavy casualties on our side and casualties several times heavier on the Japanese-Manchurian side.

Finally, Japan made proposals to terminate the conflict and we willingly met the Japanese Government's wishes.

As you know, the conflict arose owing to Japan's endeavor to appropriate part of the territory of the Mongolian People's Republic and thus forcibly change the Mongolian-Manchurian border in her own favor. Such a unilateral method of action has to meet a resolute rebuff and it has once again demonstrated its utter unsoundness when applied to the Soviet Union or its allies.

While the example of luckless Poland has recently demonstrated how little pacts of mutual assistance signed by some of the European great powers are sometimes worth, what happened on the Mongolian-Manchurian border has demonstrated something quite different. It has demonstrated the value of pacts of mutual assistance to which is appended the signature of the Soviet Union.

As for the conflict in question, it was liquidated by the Soviet-Japanese agreement concluded in Moscow on September 15 and peace has been fully restored on the Mongolian-Man-

Index

Agreements, Poland and smaller states, 33
Agreements, Polish-Soviet concerning
consulates, 31
Jampol Convention, 31
1941 military agreement, 134, 145, 149, 150, 151
post and telegraph, 30
sanitary accord, 30
transit, 30
travel, 30, 31, 32
Allies, intervention in Russia in 1918, 7
All-Slav,
committees, 183
congress, 184 ff., 196
Altai, 103
Alter and Erlich, 97, 141 ff.
America, 6, 66, 122, 127, 142
United States of, 150, 185
American, 152, 159, 160, 161
American Labor, 142, 143
American Relief Administration, 119
Anders, General Wladyslaw, 123, 133, 135, 146, 149-52, 180, 181
Angara, 103
Archangel, 110
Arrests,
of Polish delegates in U.S.S.R., 157
under Soviet occupation, 83 ff., 87
Augustow, 70
Authority,
Polish Government in London, 138, 139, 197
of Polish President, 199

Balkans, 40
Baltic
sea, 114
states, 40, 44, 46, 73, 74, 164
Bar, 171
Beck, Foreign Minister, 35, 39, 42, 43, 48, 53
Benes, President, 196
Berling, Col. Zygmunt, 179-182
Bialowieza, 35
Bialystok, 67, 69, 81
Bismarck, 166
Bogomolov, Ambassador, 133
Bona Sforza, Queen, 171
Boundary, Polish-Russian, 14 ff.
administration line fixed by Supreme Council, 14
"Borysov line", 15
British proposal at Spa, 16
in Narkomindel decree, 138, 159, 188 ff., 190 ff., 197
in 1941 Polish-Soviet Pact, 121
Brest-Litovsk Treaty, 7

Brzesc, 66, 85
Britain, 6, 32, 33, 37, 38, 41, 43 ff., 66, 74, 122, 127, 136, 142, 150, 152, 159 ff., 185
Bucharest, 44, 45, 46
Bug River, 16, 53
Bullitt, Ambassador, 45, 174
Buzuluk, 126, 134 ff.

Capitalism, 25, 28, 32, 38, 46, 65, 159
Carpathians, 16, 66, 164
Chamberlain, Neville, 41, 42
Chelm, 66
Chelyabinsk, 103
Chicherin, 15
Ciolkosz, Adam, 201
Comintern, 25, 26, 28, 40, 160, 174 ff., 182 ff.
Commercial relations
- beginnings, 31
- in Warsaw, 32
- Polros and Sovpoltorg, 31
- treaty, 32, 39, 47 ff.

Communism, 10, 25, 26 ff., 40, 77, 182
Communists, 25, 58, 67, 71, 96, 122, 183, 198
Coulondre, Ambassador, 45
Cultural level of Soviet citizens, 59, 95
Curzon Line, 14 ff., 17, 198 ff.
Curzon, Lord, 16 ff.
Czechoslovakia, 9, 37, 39, 181, 196
Czechs in USSR, 178, 181

D'Abernon, Lord, 10
Dabski, Jan, 21, 24
Daladier, 45
Dallin, David J., 186
Danzig, 9, 42
Davies, Ambassador Joseph, 112
Declaration, of People's Commissars, 15, 19
- Sikorski-Stalin, 139 ff., 149

Deniken, 8
Deportation,
- conditions of travel, 93, 94
- methods, 89 ff.
- number deported, 95
- process, 89 ff.
- victims, 89 ff.

Deported Poles
- in Kazakstan, 103 ff.
- in Northern Russia, 100 ff.
- in Siberia, 102 ff.

Diplomatic relations
- Polish-Soviet broken, 158, 161

Divina River, 100

Erlich, see Alter, 99, 141
Émigrés, Russian in France, 14, 15, 17, 18
Espionage in USSR, 118 ff., 158. See also NKVD
Estonia, 32, 159 ff., 189

Federation
- in Eastern Europe, 8
- nature of in USSR, 7

Finland, 32, 40, 189
Forced labor in USSR, 113 ff., 116
Foreign policy
- Polish, 35 ff.
- Soviet, 40, 44, 46, 160 ff.

France, 6, 32 ff., 37 ff., 41, 43 ff., 74
Frederick the Great, 1

Galicia, 15, 16, 20

German committee in USSR, 184 ff.
Germany, 4, 5, 7, 25, 26, 28, 38, 42, 49, 56, 60, 74 ff., 87, 168, 184 ff.
German-Soviet collaboration, 87 ff.
Gibson, Hugh, 22
Goering, 35
Grabski, Wl., 15
Griazovetz, 132
Grzybowski,
Polish Ambassador to USSR, 39

Hitler, 35, 43, 87 ff., 99, 120, 163, 191
Hull, Cordell, 184
Hungary, 54

Intourist, 185
Iran or Persia, 147, 150
Irkutsk, 103
Irtish, 103
Italy, 6

Jews, 99, 116, 137 ff., 149, 154, 165, 167, 169
Joffe, Abram, 19 ff.

Kalinin, President, 123
Kama River, 100
Kamenev, 17
Karelia and Karelians, 159, 160, 189
Katyn massacre, 200 ff. See also Prisoners of War
Kazakstan, 103, 154
Kazan, 100
Kazimierz the Great, 170
Kellogg Pact, 33
Kharkov, 4
Kiev, 8, 22, 53, 118, 171
Kirghiz, 103
Kolima, 114, 115
Komi, 4, 102
Korneichuk, 177
Kosciuszko
division, 179 ff.
patriot, 184, 192
radio station, 176 ff.
Kot, Ambassador, 122 ff., 133 ff.
Kovalev, 66
Kovno, 4
Kozielsk, 131 ff.
Krakow, 122
Krasnoyarsk, 103
Kuibyshev, 123 ff., 133 ff., 141, 153
Kukiel, General M., 131

Lake Baikal, 103
Latvia, 32, 159, 160, 189
Lee, Algernon, 183
Lenin, 4, 7, 19
Leningrad, 100
Lithuania, 32, 62, 89, 159, 160, 165, 189
Litvinov, 32, 33, 39, 41, 142
Lloyd George, 16
Lomza, 66, 67
London, 42, 122
Luck, 66, 69, 86
Lvov, 53, 66, 67, 69, 84 ff., 95, 122, 164
Lyons, Eugene, 183

Mackinder, Sir Halford, 100
Maniulski, 28
Maria Theresa, 1
Masaryk, President, 9

Matusinski, Consul, 54 ff.
Minsk, 9, 18, 19, 54
Moldavia, 159, 160, 189
Molotov, 40, 41, 43, 47 ff., 54, 55, 57, 60, 66, 73 ff., 123, 161, 165, 166
Morrison, Herbert, 27
Moscicki, President, 199
Moscow, 4, 16, 25, 26, 33, 38, 39, 41, 44, 46, 51, 54, 122, 133, 141, 171, 178, 183
Moscow Conference, 189
Munich Pact, 37, 39, 41

Narkomindel, 138, 140, 153, 156
NKVD, secret police, 61, 76, 105, 116, 117 ff., 153, 157, 173. See Espionage in USSR
Nova Zemla, 117
Novosibirsk, 103

Ob River, 103
Occupation and annexation, Soviet opinion of, 60, 61
Occupation, Soviet, of Poland, character of, 58 ff.
Omsk, 103
Ostashkov, 131, 132, 134
Oumansky, Ambassador, 189

Pact
  Anglo-Polish, 41 ff., 48
  German-Soviet, 44, 45, 46, 73, 174
  Polish-Soviet of 1941, 120 ff., 128, 132, 140, 152, 162, 176
    renouncing war, non-aggression, 32 ff.
  Russo-Czech of mutual assistance, 196
Partitions of Poland, 1, 6, 14 ff., 20, 45, 52, 57, 62
Pechora River, 100
Petlura, 8
Plebiscite in Eastern Poland, 62 ff., 71
Poland
  area, 5
  characteristics of civilization, 5 ff., 24
Polish army
  in Britain, 137
  in Middle East, 123, 137, 152, 191
  in USSR, 111, 121, 132 ff., 137, 142, 144 ff., 149, 150, 152, 178 ff.
Polish-Bolshevik War, 7 ff., 17, 29, 197
Polish landowners
  under Soviet occupation, 82 ff.
Ponomarenko, 66
Post-war Russia, 193
Potemkin, 38, 40, 49, 53
Poznan, 5
Prisoners of war
  Soviet treatment of, 112, 116 ff., 123, 128, 131 ff., 160 ff.
Prisons, Soviet, 86 ff., 112 ff.
Propaganda, Soviet, 57, 63 ff., 186 ff., 195 ff.
Przemsyl, 16

Relief work among deported, 122, 125 ff., 129 ff.
  activities, 153 ff.
  arrests, 153 ff.

delegates, 153 ff.
difficulties encountered, 130 ff., 155 ff.
number evacuated, 147, 150 ff., 152
Religion in Poland, 172
Revolution in Russia, 7
Ribbentrop, 35, 45, 57
Riga
peace negotiations, 18 ff.
treaty of 1921, 16, 21, 22, 29, 32, 190, 199
Rosso, Ambassador, 55
Rumania, 32, 43, 44, 54, 56, 159
Rural reform
in Poland, 82
Ruthenia and Ruthenians, 165, 166, 168, 170, 171

Sarny, 66, 67
Semipalatynsk, 110
Sikorski, General, 27, 112, 120, 124, 130, 133, 136 ff., 145, 146, 149, 151, 153, 154, 159, 163, 190
Smigly-Rydz, 35, 47
Smolensk, 9, 22, 132, 161
Sosnkowski, General, 53, 191 ff., 197
Soviet invasion of Poland, 49 ff., 56, 57
Soviet proposals to Poland, 43 ff.
Soviet Union
area, 5
characteristics of land and people, 5
origin, 4
Spa, 15
Stalin, 38, 68, 120, 130, 133, 139, 141, 142, 149, 150, 151, 159, 160, 166, 174, 189, 198
Starobielsk, 131, 132, 134
Stryj, 53, 85
Switzerland, 6

Tarnopol, 66, 67
Tashkent, 149
Tatars and Mongols, 5, 6, 170
Teutonic Knights, 180
Tobol River, 103
Trotsky, 4, 15
Tukachevsky, 9, 18

Ukraine, 7, 8, 9, 21, 22, 35, 50, 52, 77, 141, 164, 165
Polish, 62, 165
Western, 62 ff., 66, 70, 71, 96, 137, 148, 172
Ukrainians, 96, 99, 116, 137, 138, 148, 149, 154, 155, 159, 165, 167 ff.
Ukrainian nationalism, 76, 85
Union of Polish Patriots, 178 ff., 181, 184, 196 ff.
Urals, 103
Uzbedistan, 154

Vilno, 9, 62, 164
Vishinsky, 130, 144 ff., 151 ff., 158
Voroshilov, 44 ff., 66

Warsaw, 9, 10, 18, 22, 36, 40, 51, 52, 141, 197
Wasilewska, Wanda, 96, 177 ff., 181, 182, 184, 197
Werth, Alexander, 180
Weygand, General, 9

White Russians, 8
White Ruthenia, 21, 50, 52, 62, 76, 141 (Byelo-Russia) 160, 164
  West White Ruthenia, 62, 63, 64, 66, 70, 71, 137, 148, 172
White Ruthenians, 85, 96, 99, 116, 137, 138, 148, 149, 154, 155, 159, 166, 167, 194 ff.
White Sea, 114
Willkie, Wendell, 115, 142
Woll, Matthew, 183
Wrangel, 8

Yakutsk, 4, 115, 117
Yenisei River, 103
Yugoslavia, 184

Zeromski, Stefan, 182
Zinoviev, 9, 25
Zolkiew, 67
Zygmunt I, King of Poland, 171

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