

Such are the facts relating to the question of assistance to Polish families evacuated from areas occupied by the German invaders, and illustrating the activities of some Polish representatives in the U.S.S.R. hostile to the Soviet Union.

The facts I have already cited are the reply to the recent numerous false utterances, hostile to the Soviet Union, on the part of the Polish representatives and the Polish official press. The false nature and anti-Soviet hostility of such utterances cannot serve as an obstacle to really friendly and close Soviet-Polish relations, in which the peoples of the Soviet Union and Poland are interested, especially in face of the common enemy—Hitlerite Germany.

[After making the above statement, A. Y. Vyshinsky told representatives of the British and American Press that he was ready to place at their disposal copies of documents relating to the questions set forth in his statement—Memorandum of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs handed on October 28, 1942, to Sokolnicki, Polish Charge d'Affaires, and the note of the Soviet Government handed on October 31 to Raczynski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Polish Republic.]

Soviet-Polish Relations

1. Preface by I. M. Maisky, Soviet Ambassador to Great Britain.
2. Marshal Stalin's Reply of May 4th to "The Times" Moscow Correspondent.
3. Soviet Government's Note of April 25th.
4. Statement by A. Y. Vyshinsky, Assistant People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, of May 6.

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P R E F A C E

In view of the great importance attached to the recent developments in Soviet-Polish relations, I think it is very necessary for all those who would like to form a correct judgment of the situation to have the full text of three important documents: (1) Marshal Stalin's reply of May 4th to the questions put to him by the Moscow correspondent of "The Times"; (2) M. Molotov's Note to the Polish Ambassador in the U.S.S.R., M. Romer, of the 25th April, 1943, concerning the interruption of relations between the Soviet and Polish Governments; (3) the statement of the Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs, A. Vyshinsky, of the 6th May, 1943, on certain facts preceding the interruption of relations.

This little pamphlet contains the verbatim version of the three above-mentioned documents.

I. MAISKY.

London,
10th May, 1943.

MARSHAL STALIN'S REPLY OF MAY 4th TO THE "TIMES" MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT

The Moscow correspondent of the London "Times" and the "New York Times," Mr. Parker, addressed a letter to the President of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R., Marshal Stalin, in which he asked for answers to two questions of interest to the British and American public. Marshal Stalin replied with the following letter:—

DEAR MR. PARKER,

On May 3rd I received your two questions concerning Polish-Soviet relations. Here are my answers:—

Question 1: Does the Government of the U.S.S.R. desire to see a strong and independent Poland after the defeat of Hitlerite Germany?

Answer: Unquestionably, it does.

Question 2: On what fundamentals is it your opinion that relations between Poland and the U.S.S.R. should be based after the war?

Answer: Upon the fundamentals of solid good neighbourly relations and mutual respect, or, should the Polish people so desire—upon the fundamentals of alliance providing for mutual assistance against the Germans as the chief enemies of the Soviet Union and Poland.

With respect,

May 4, 1943.

(Signed) STALIN.

INTERRUPTION of RELATIONS WITH POLISH GOVERNMENT

Note handed by V. M. Molotov, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the U.S.S.R., to M. Romer, Polish Ambassador in U.S.S.R., on April 25th.

"Mr. Ambassador, on behalf of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics I have the honour to notify the Polish Government of the following:

"The Soviet Government considers the recent behaviour of the Polish Government with regard to the U.S.S.R. as entirely abnormal, and violating all regulations and standards of relations between two Allied States. The slanderous campaign hostile to the Soviet Union launched by the German Fascists in connection with the murder of the Polish officers, which they themselves committed in the Smolensk area on territory occupied by German troops, was at once taken up by the Polish Government, and is being fanned in every way by the Polish official Press.

"Far from offering a rebuff to the vile Fascist slander of the U.S.S.R., the Polish Government did not even find it necessary to address to the Soviet Government any inquiry or request for an explanation on this subject.

"Having committed a monstrous crime against the Polish officers, the Hitlerite authorities are now staging a farcical investigation, and for this they have made use of certain Polish pro-Fascist elements whom they themselves selected in occupied Poland, where everything is under Hitler's heel, and where no honest Pole can openly have his say.

"For the 'investigation,' both the Polish Government and the Hitlerite Government invited the International Red Cross, which is compelled, in conditions of a terroristic regime, with its gallows and mass extermination of the peaceful population, to take part in this investigation farce staged by Hitler. Clearly such an 'investigation,' conducted behind the back of the Soviet Government, cannot evoke the confidence of people possessing any degree of honesty.

"The fact that the hostile campaign against the Soviet Union commenced simultaneously in the German and Polish press, and was conducted along the same lines, leaves no doubt as to the existence of contact and accord in carrying out this hostile campaign between the enemy of the Allies—Hitler—and the Polish Government.

"While the peoples of the Soviet Union, bleeding profusely in a hard struggle against Hitlerite Germany, are straining every effort for the defeat of the common enemy of the Russian and Polish peoples, and of all freedom-loving democratic countries, the Polish Government, to please Hitler's tyranny, has dealt a treacherous blow to the Soviet Union.

"The Soviet Government is aware that this hostile campaign against the Soviet Union is being undertaken by the Polish Government in order to exert pressure upon the Soviet Government by making use of the slanderous Hitlerite fake for the purpose of wresting from it territorial concessions at the expense of the interests of the Soviet Ukraine, Soviet Byelorussia and Soviet Lithuania.

"All these circumstances compel the Soviet Government to recognise that the present Government of Poland, having slid on to the path of accord with Hitler's Government has actually discontinued allied relations with the U.S.S.R., and has adopted a hostile attitude towards the Soviet Union.

"On the strength of the above, the Soviet Government has decided to interrupt relations with the Polish Government.

"Please accept, Mr. Ambassador, the assurance of my very high esteem."

Statement by A. Y. VYSHINSKY, ASSISTANT PEOPLE'S COMMISSAR FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE U.S.S.R.

To representatives of the British and American Press
in Moscow on May 6th, 1943.

IN connection with inquiries made by some representatives of the British and American press concerning Soviet-Polish relations, I think it is necessary on behalf of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs to acquaint you with some facts and circumstances, bearing on this problem.

This is all the more necessary at the present time in view of the fact that the present Polish Government, under the influence of pro-Hitlerite elements within it and in the Polish press, provoked the well-known decision of the Soviet Government to suspend relations with the Polish Government, while Polish officials, Polish press and Polish radio continue to circulate numerous false statements concerning Soviet-Polish relations. In so doing they very often take advantage of the circumstance that wide public circles are not informed of the real facts bearing on these relations.

1. ON THE POLISH ARMY UNITS WHICH WERE FORMED IN THE U.S.S.R.

Following the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet Agreement on July 30, 1941, the formation of a Polish Army was begun on the 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 that as soon as one or another division was ready it should be dispatched immediately to the Soviet-German front.

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

To finance measures connected with the formation and maintenance of the Polish Army, the Soviet Government granted to the Polish Government a loan without interest amounting to 65,000,000 roubles, which later, after January 1, 1942, was raised to 300,000,000 roubles. In addition to these sums allotted by the Soviet Government, more than 15,000,000 roubles were distributed in unrepayable allowances to officers of Polish Army units in process of formation.

It should be noted that, although the strength of the Polish Army had been fixed originally at 30,000 men, on October 25, 1941, the Polish Army already numbered 41,561 men, including 2,630 officers. The Soviet Government received favourably the proposal of the Polish Government, made in December, 1941, by General Sikorski for the further expansion of the contingent of the Polish Army to 96,000 men. As a consequence of this decision, a Polish Army was formed consisting of six divisions, and in addition it was decided to raise to 40,000 the effectives of the officers' school reserve units and army reinforcement units originally fixed at 3,000 men.

In conformity with the desire of the Polish Government, the whole army was transferred to southern districts of the U.S.S.R., a decision dictated chiefly by climatic conditions, and there the construction of camps was commenced and H.Q., military schools and medical institutions, etc., were quartered.

Despite difficult war-time conditions, in February 1942 the planned divisions had already been formed and numbered 73,415 men. Despite the repeated assurances of the Polish Command, however, concerning their determination to put their units into action as soon as possible, the actual date of dispatch of these units to the front kept on being postponed.

When the formation of the Polish Army began, the time limit for its readiness was fixed at October 1, 1941. Moreover, the Polish Command stated that it believed it expedient to dispatch the divisions to the front separately, as their formation was completed.

Although the preparation of some units was delayed, nevertheless there existed ample opportunity to act on this intention, if not on October 1, then somewhat later. It was not fulfilled, however, and the Polish Command never even raised the question of the dispatch of the Polish divisions to the Soviet-German front.

The Soviet Government did not think it possible to press the Polish Command in this matter. However, five months after the commencement of the formation of the Polish units, namely, in February, 1942, the Soviet Government considered that the Polish units could start fighting the Hitlerites, and mentioned the 5th Division as one which had already completed its training. When posing this question the Soviet Government proceeded in the first place from the direct and clear provisions of the Soviet-Polish military agreement of August 14, 1941, the seventh article of which stated:—

"The Polish Army units will be moved to the front on the achievement of all fighting readiness. They will march out as a rule in formations not smaller than a division and will be used in conformity with the plan of operations of the Supreme Command of the U.S.S.R."

In spite of the categorical provisions of the Soviet-Polish 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 were fighting even in brigades, General Anders gave a promise that the whole Polish Army would be ready to take part in war operations against the Germans by June 1, 1942.

Neither on June 1 nor considerably later did the Polish Command and the Polish Government show readiness to send the Polish Army to take part in operations on the Soviet-German front. Moreover, the Polish Government even formally refused to dispatch its troops to the Soviet-German front, stating as the motive that "The use of separate divisions will not yield any result," and that "the military training of one division will not justify our expectations." (Telegram of General Sikorski dated February 7, 1942.)

Meanwhile, deliveries of provisions to the U.S.S.R. fell short of the plan in view of the outbreak of war in the Pacific, and this imposed the necessity of reducing the number of rations issued to army units not engaged in actual fighting, for the sake of assuring supplies 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 to keep them far in the rear, the Soviet Government was naturally compelled to regard these units as troops not engaged in actual fighting and consequently the decision on the reductions of food rations for units not engaged in fighting was extended to them.

In view of this, the Soviet Government adopted the decision, as from April 1, 1942, to reduce the number of food rations to 44,000 and permit, in conformity with the desire expressed by the Polish Government, the evacuation to Iran of Polish troops in excess of 44,000 remaining in the Soviet Union.

This evacuation was effected in March, 1942, when 31,488 men in military service left the U.S.S.R.; 12,455 members of families of Polish soldiers were permitted to leave together with them.

While refusing to dispatch its army to the Soviet-German front, the Polish Government at the same time pressed the Soviet Government for consent to additional recruitment to the Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S.R. Simultaneously with its proposal on additional enrolment, the Polish Government addressed the Soviet Government in a note proposing such employment of Polish Army units as meant nothing but refusal to use them on the Soviet-German front.

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

Then the question was raised of the evacuation of the whole Polish Army from the U.S.S.R. to the Near East, and 44,000 Polish military were additionally evacuated in August, 1942. Thus the question of the 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, contrary to the solemn statements made in the declaration of December 4, 1941, to the effect that "Troops of the Polish Republic stationed on the territory of the Soviet Union will fight the German brigands shoulder-to-shoulder with Soviet troops."

Prior to the second evacuation, the Polish Army Command requested permission for 20,000 to 25,000 members of the families of Polish soldiers to leave together with Polish army units. The Soviet Government granted this request. In fact, by September 1, 1942, 25,301 members of families of Polish military had already been evacuated. Thus, altogether in 1942 there left the U.S.S.R., besides 75,491 Polish military, 37,756 members of their families.

Recently Monsieur Romer, the Polish Ambassador, raised the question of the additional departure from the U.S.S.R. of 110 members of families of Polish military who failed to arrive at the evacuation centres at the moment of evacuation. The Soviet Government agreed. No other proposals for the evacuation of families of Polish military were made to the Soviet Government by the Polish Army Command or the Polish Embassy. All allegations that the Soviet authorities hindered or hinder the departure from the U.S.S.R. of Polish subjects, whose number in fact is not great, and also of the families of Polish military who left the Soviet Union, are false.

All the above proves that the Soviet Government took every measure to ensure the successful formation and expansion of the Polish Army on the territory of the Soviet Union.

The regulations of the agreement of July 30, 1941, and of the declaration dated December 4, 1941, faced the Soviet Government and the Polish Government with a quite definite and clear-cut task: to unite the efforts of the Soviet and Polish peoples in joint struggle against the Hitlerite brigands and occupationists to create a Polish Army inspired by this great idea and to enable it to fight for the independence of its motherland shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army.

The Soviet Government did all that was necessary to accomplish this task. The Polish Government adopted a different path. It did not dispatch its divisions to the Soviet-German front. It refused to use Polish troops against the Germans on this front shoulder to shoulder with Soviet troops, and thus evaded the fulfilment of the obligations it had assumed.

In connection with the question of the formation of the Polish Army on the territory of the Soviet Union, it is necessary to mention the following: after the union, by the will of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian peoples, of the western regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia with the Ukrainian Soviet Republic and the Byelorussian Soviet Republic on November 19, 1939, a decree was issued by the Supreme Soviet by force of which, in accordance with the general union legislation regarding citizenship, the residents of these regions acquired Soviet citizenship.

As I have 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 of August 14, 1941, the Soviet Government carried out a number of measures to ensure the formation of a Polish Army on the territory of the U.S.S.R. In order to facilitate the formation of this army and ensure cadres for it, the Soviet Government expressed its readiness, by exception from the

decree of November 29, 1939, to consider persons of Polish nationality among the residents of the western Ukraine and western Byelorussia to be Polish subjects. Despite this manifestation of goodwill and pliancy on the part of the Soviet Government, the Polish Government adopted a negative attitude towards this act of the Soviet Government and was not satisfied with it, being guided by its unlawful claims to territories of western Ukraine and western Byelorussia.

Meanwhile, as I have already stated, the Polish Government withdrew its army units from the U.S.S.R. as far back as August, 1942, and thus the necessity for further formation of Polish Army units on Soviet territory lapsed. In view of the above mentioned circumstances, there lapsed the need for excepting persons of Polish nationality concerning which the Soviet Government had expressed its readiness in December, 1941.

Therefore, on January 16, 1943, the Soviet Government informed the Polish Government that its previous statement of readiness to permit the exception from the decree of November 29, 1939, of the above-mentioned persons of Polish nationality should be considered as no longer valid and the possibility of their exemption from the provision of Soviet laws on citizenship as no longer existing.

Such are the facts shedding full light on the circumstances of the formation of the Polish Army units on the territory of the U.S.S.R. and the evacuation of those units from the Soviet Union.

2. ON MEASURES FOR RELIEF TO POLISH FAMILIES EVACUATED FROM DISTRICTS OCCUPIED BY THE GERMAN INVADERS.

Since the very moment of the restoration of Soviet-Polish relations, in the summer of 1941, the Soviet Government willingly met the wishes of the Polish Government in the matter of organising relief to Polish citizens on the territory of the U.S.S.R. In this connection the Soviet Government permitted the opening of representations of the Polish Embassy in many towns of the Soviet Union. Such representations were opened in 20 places of the Soviet Union.

The local representatives of the Embassy were charged with rendering material aid to Polish citizens. This aid was rendered in the first place from the loan, amounting to 100,000,000 roubles, granted by the Soviet Government for this purpose, in addition to the loan of 300,000,000 roubles I have already mentioned. This aid was rendered at the expense of the funds of the Polish Embassy and donations put at the disposal of the Embassy from abroad.

The Soviet Government found it possible, along with the organisation of special representations of the Embassy in 20 places in the Soviet Union, to permit also the appointment by the Embassy of so-called delegates. By January 1, 1943, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs gave consent to the appointment of 421 delegates of the Polish Embassy, to whom the local authorities rendered every assistance in their work.

Thus the Polish Embassy was enabled to organise a wide network of its representatives throughout the territory of the Soviet Union, through whose medium it could render regular aid to needy Polish citizens and exercise its influence in the spirit of Soviet-Polish collaboration, using for this purpose also such channels as the newspaper "Polska," published by the Polish Embassy, with the assistance of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs. The representatives of the Embassy, as well as the delegates, were accorded by the Soviet authorities every opportunity for the most successful solution of the tasks before them.

For the same purpose of assistance to Polish citizens, the Soviet Government adopted also a number of large-scale financial and economic measures directed towards increasing material assistance to needy Polish citizens. The Soviet Government set aside special stocks of provisions for Polish charitable institutions and allowed a reduced railway tariff for freight destined for Polish citizens.

With the full assistance of the Soviet authorities, the Embassy organised 589 charitable institutions (dining-rooms, children's homes, creches, homes for invalids, etc.). Thus the Soviet Government took all measures to satisfy the needs of the Polish population, and for the widespread and fruitful development of the activities of Polish institutions which had as their task the rendering of material aid to the Polish population. The local Soviet organs—executive committees of Soviets—on whom fell the main care of settling Polish citizens, supplying them with food, housing, fuel, medical aid, finding them employment, etc., likewise did everything possible to facilitate the development of the activities of the local Polish representations and gave these representations wide help. This entailed quite a few difficulties, in view of the exceptionally complicated war-time conditions.

The Polish representatives were thus afforded the widest possibilities for fruitful work in rendering material assistance to needy Polish citizens. In reality, however, it transpired that the Polish representations in the localities, and a number of their staff members and delegates, instead of honestly performing their duty and their obligations in collaboration with the local Soviet authorities chose the path of espionage activities hostile to the U.S.S.R.

The persons guilty of these offences were arraigned for trial, which established that local representatives of the Embassy had conducted their espionage under cover of alleged "charitable" activities, widely using Polish citizens who needed material aid, and that the principal organiser of these criminal activities hostile to the Soviet Union on the part of a number of Polish citizens were some members of the diplomatic staff of the Embassy, who encouraged, organised and directed these criminal activities.

General Wolikowski, the former chief of the Polish Military Mission, who played one of the most important parts in the promotion and

realisation of espionage in the U.S.S.R., the First Secretaries of the Embassy, Arlet and Zalenski (the latter being also representative of the Embassy for Vladivostok), the Second Secretaries, Gruyar (representative for the Archangel region) and Glogovski, the attaches of the Embassy, Rolya-Janicki, Slovikovsky, Plosski, Litzkendorf, Koscyalkovski, Heiteman and others, the majority of whom simultaneously acted as representatives of the Embassy in various territories and regions, were exposed and deported from the U.S.S.R.

In addition to the above persons, other representatives of the Embassy and staff members of representations participated in criminal activities against the U.S.S.R. and were prosecuted under criminal law. Some of them were deported from the Soviet Union, while others were arraigned for trial and sentenced to various terms of deprivation of freedom. It should be said that the overwhelming majority of the representatives and staff members of the Polish Embassy prosecuted under criminal law, in addition to espionage activities, engaged in systematic circulation of all kinds of slanderous rumours and fabrications hostile to the Soviet Union, intended to discredit the Soviet order and aimed at provoking discontent and hostility of Polish citizens against the Soviet people. Numerous instances of extolling the Hitlerites by the said Polish representatives, of malignant escapades by them against the Red Army and of the circulation of defeatist provocative rumours, were proved to have taken place. In court the overwhelming majority of these persons, as well as others brought to criminal responsibility, pleaded guilty to criminal activities and gave detailed evidence elucidating the essence and methods of these activities.

It is also necessary to mention the "instructions concerning courier mail" issued by the Embassy, which contained practical directives to couriers on the performance of their illegal function, on the use of a special code, agreed code words, agreed passwords, etc.

How discriminating certain representatives of the Embassy were in the means and methods of their criminal activities may be seen from the following document which is an official letter signed by the Attaché of the Embassy, Povezh, dated February 19, 1942, addressed to the delegate Benoek in Alma Ata. This letter stated: "In addition to our previous conversations, I beg to inform you of the decision of the Embassy of the Polish Republic concerning your delegation: (1) You are empowered to conduct in the most cautious and secret manner the purchase of valuables . . ."

On May 31, 1942, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs warned the Polish Embassy concerning facts of espionage work hostile to the U.S.S.R., on the part of some representatives of the Embassy. Despite this warning, espionage and other activities hostile to the Soviet Union by staff members of the Polish Embassy were not discontinued.

Then on July 20, 1942, the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs informed the Embassy that the Polish representations were to be liquidated as they did not justify their existence.