

Womens' British-Soviet Committee

President: Lady Trevelyan.

Vice-President: Dame Louise McIlroy, LL.D., M.D.

Chairman: Mrs. Beatrice King.

Vice-Chairman: Mrs. Cecil Chesterton, O.B.E.

Treasurer: Mrs. Sacher.

The Women's British-Soviet Committee is the women's section of the British-Soviet movement. Its aim is to strengthen and develop the friendship and understanding between British and Soviet women, through greater knowledge of each other. The Committee holds that this friendship will play as vital a part in ensuring a lasting peace as it did in the victorious conclusion of the war. The Committee has direct contact with Soviet women through the Soviet Women's Anti-Fascist Committee in Moscow, by means of which constant communications, exchange of articles, cables, correspondence, and photographs, are maintained. It includes in its service an information and lecture bureau on women's problems, a press service, and pen-friends' department.

For all particulars, apply to:

WOMEN'S BRITISH-SOVIET COMMITTEE,

157-9 Abbey House, Victoria Street,

London, S.W.1.

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POLAND'S CASE



Dr. Stefan Litauer

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POLAND'S CASE

A Report of the speech and answers to questions given by Dr. Stefan Litauer at a meeting held on May 29th, 1945, at the

ROYAL EMPIRE SOCIETY HALL AND ORGANISED
BY THE WOMEN'S BRITISH-SOVIET COMMITTEE

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Poland's Case

LAST week I read in the *Daily Telegraph* an article by J. L. Garvin, in which he discussed the problems facing British-Russian relations. Poland figured prominently among them. and Garvin came to the conclusion that "in the transformed Eastern Europe of today the practical choice between working with Russia or against her—for there is no middle way—means the inexorable alternative of a new Poland, or no Poland, and can mean nothing else."

Garvin is quite right—the choice was between a new Poland or no Poland. But Garvin does not mention the most important fact, that the choice has been made, and made in favour of the new Poland.

It is a pity, more, it is a tragedy that British people know so very little about this new Poland, that they are not aware of her existence, except for the defamations spread around by hostile agents and by those who have chosen the other alternative—no Poland. For this new Poland definitely exists and is going ahead against tremendous odds.

Shaping the New Poland

I saw the new Poland shaping. I spent over four months there—November, December, January, February, until the middle of March, and my stay coincided with the most interesting period of transition, in which I first saw the working of an experimental administration, built up literally from nothing, inside the limited space of the so-called Lublin area. I next saw the Red Army liberate the whole of Poland, and the chaos which inevitably followed the dazzling advance of the Russians. And when I was about to leave I saw the new Poland rising from the abyss into which she was dragged by the Germans.

There were three most urgent problems which had to be tackled when the liberation of Poland by the Red Army started and a Polish administration had been called into existence: they were—the creation of a Polish Army, the carrying out of Agrarian Reform, and the revival of the economic life of the country.

Let us discuss the Army first. The liberation of a country is only complete when it possesses its own armed forces ready to defend it. That was fully understood by the Russians, and no wonder, for in no other country has an army played such

a tremendous role in the liberation of a country from foreign invaders as has the Red Army in the Soviet Union. Marshal Stalin therefore understood that to show friendship to the Poles he must first of all help them to build up their own Polish Army, and he did help them. Today the Polish armed forces in Poland are 400,000 strong, and are growing day by day. By the end of this year Poland will have 600,000 men under arms.

The Poles who call themselves the Polish Government in London maintain that there is no Polish Army in existence in Poland at all—"they are just small groups of Russians put into Polish uniforms," or that "there are just a few Polish regiments squeezed into the Red Army and commanded by Russian officers!" Well, that is one of the great lies which the so-called Polish Government in London is spreading around—maybe the greatest one.

Polish Army in Poland

The Polish Army in Poland is today a formidable and well-equipped force. Two large units of these Polish forces, the 1st Army Corps, and the 2nd Army Corps, took a prominent part in the fighting on the Eastern Front. A Polish division was among the first to enter Berlin. I have visited both these Corps, I have seen the 1st Army Corps three times during my stay in Poland, and the 2nd Army Corps once. I have met the commanders, officers and men, and from my contact with them I can say that they are not only a Polish Army, but that it is an Army inspired so strongly by national feeling that it can bear comparison with any Poles, in Poland or abroad.

There is very often the charge raised against the Polish Army in Poland that all the officers of the Army are Russians. Well, that is obviously untrue, but it is true that there is a proportion of officers who have come from the Russian Army, and quite a considerable proportion. But if it were not for these men whom the Red Army has released to go into the Polish Army, there could not be any Polish Army at all in Poland, because there are no Polish officers today in Poland who are experts in tanks, heavy artillery, signals, etc.

We have today in Poland quite a large number of young officers and they have been trained now in Officers' Training Camps, Cadet Schools, and Military Colleges, and during this year, 1945, it is hoped that no less than 25,000 or 30,000 young Polish officers will come out of these training camps, schools

and colleges. They can be Second Lieutenants, Lieutenants, or even Captains, but for more specialised weapons, and as operational commanders we, of course, need the Red Army officers as instructors.

I have met quite a number of these Russian officers, and I may say that I really gained the best impression one could have from them. They were sincere in their work, they really came to Poland and to the Polish Army to school Polish soldiers and there were no politics in their minds at all. As a matter of fact, from what I know today of the Russian Army, I maintain, especially of the officers' corps of the Red Army, that it does not bother about politics at all—politics are not in their minds, they are good patriots, and all they wanted to do was to save their country. They came to Poland and the Polish Army with one purpose in mind—to instruct the young Polish officers and men to become experts in their different army units.

But there is a much larger number of officers in the Polish forces who also came from the Red Army, but are Poles. We sometimes hear people in London denying that these latter can be good Poles because they have been serving in the Red Army for so many years. Well, I do not think this disqualifies them at all.

Poles from Russia

We know that before the war a large number of Poles for whom, mostly for political reasons, there was no place in Poland, found a home in Russia. This is to the Russian credit, but it does not mean at all that these Poles have lost their Polish national feeling. I have met these men, such as the Chief of Staff of the Polish Army, General Korczyc, who was for 27 years in the Russian Army, one of the finest types of men and a good and patriotic Pole; the Commander of the 1st Army Corps, General Poplawski, another Red Army officer for 25 years, again a good and patriotic Pole; the Commander of the 2nd Army Corps, General Swierczewski—General Walter of the International Brigade during the Spanish Civil War and a Warsaw worker. I wish that every Pole were as good a Pole as he.

These Polish officers, who came from the Russian Army, are today the backbone of the Polish Army, which is being built up in Poland. Now one word about the Commander-in-Chief of this Army, General Zymierski. I have known him for over 20 years—since 1924. He was then the youngest General in

the Polish Army, and Second Under-Secretary of State to the Minister of War when General Sikorski was the Minister. He was at that time Sikorski's right hand man, and had won renown as a great organiser. This man has organised the Polish Army in Poland today and really has built up a marvellously powerful machine.

The equipment is first-class—Russian tanks (light, medium and large), anti-tank artillery mounted on tanks, the best heavy guns and all possible mechanised weapons in large numbers were handed over to them by the Russians.

Agrarian Reform

Let us come to the second point—Agrarian Reform. Was agrarian reform needed in Poland at all? We occasionally hear some of the Poles here in London say, "Well, after all, that was not the most important thing to do in Poland. The Provisional Government could have waited."

The people who say these things must have a very strange conception of democracy, because I think the real basis of democracy, especially in a country like Poland, is not elections—elections may be the outcome later, but the real basis is first to raise the standard of living of the masses. That is the first thing to be done on the road to democracy.

As to the position of the Polish peasantry before the war, the best criterion of the general standard of living is usually the national income of the people. The approximate national income per head in Poland in 1937 was £24 per annum. In Britain it was four times as high at the same time—approximately £88. 65 per cent of the Polish population is employed in agriculture, but the arable land per head of the agricultural population was only 2 acres. On 250 acres of arable land lived 126 people.

Living Conditions

Only one country in Europe had conditions even worse and that was Yugoslavia, where 133 people lived on the same space. But 75 in France, 71 in Germany, and 44 in lucky Denmark.

The true significance of these figures is that Poland had in 1937 an agricultural over-population of five million people, i.e., 23 per cent of the Polish agricultural population was excessive. I think these figures are sufficient to prove that no Government that really wanted to start on the road to democracy in Poland could have delayed agrarian reform for a single moment.

Agrarian reform is now being carried out, but is not yet complete. If affected 8,832 estates, totalling 4,242,949 hectares* (roughly 10½ million acres), which belonged to 6,724 land-owning families and represented 21 per cent of the total agricultural areas. In other words, 6,724 land-owning families drew 21 per cent of the total national income from agriculture. Of the 4,242,949 hectares there were 1,834,771 hectares of forest, now taken over by the State. This left 2,408,178 hectares (or roughly six million acres) of arable land which is being divided amongst land-hungry peasants.

The standard allocation is 12½ acres, but the peasant gets not only land; through the medium of peasant co-operatives, which are being organised in every community, he also becomes a co-proprietor of the agricultural industry. The Co-operative, moreover, supplies all necessary equipment for the cultivation of the land, gives him the technical training, and provides the credits needed for capital investments such as for building houses, sheds for cattle, transports, etc.

The 6 million acres will be divided among about half a million peasant families, and taking the average peasant family in Poland at a minimum of five, at least 2½ million peasant people will benefit from the distribution of land which before belonged to 6,724 land-owning families.

That, of course, is not sufficient to cover all the needs of the Polish peasants, but more land will be divided among the peasants who will be settled in arable areas in those parts of former Germany which will now be Polish owned: in East Prussia, Silesia, Pomerania, etc. Between 7 and 8 million acres are arable land in those districts and owned just as in Poland by a few thousand German land-owners of the notorious Junker class. It is intended to settle on this land at least 600,000 Polish peasant families, representing a population of over 3 millions. Altogether it is expected that the agrarian reform will satisfy 6 million land-hungry Polish peasants.

Economic Revival

Now we come to the third point—economic revival. When the Polish Committee of National Liberation took over control of the Lublin area it had to face an extremely difficult economic situation.

On a territory of less than 100,000 square kms.† there were

* 1 square kilometre = 0.386 square miles. † 1 hectare = 2.471 acres.

over seven million inhabitants—1½ million people more than before the war on the same territory. Most of this surplus were evacuees from the front and escapees from the German terror, people without homes, clothes, food or money, people who had literally nothing. More than that, there was a huge Russian Army based on this area and preparing its advance to liberate more Polish territory.

On the other hand, more than five years of German occupation had laid waste the whole country. The liberated area specially had no minerals of any kind, no coal or means of transport, these having been either destroyed or taken away by the Germans. Very few cattle were left. All essential articles for every-day use were lacking—no matches, no naphtha, no soap, salt, tea, cotton and above all, no clothing and no shoes.

The Polish authorities started their activities at the end of July last year during the harvest. Their first charge had to be the Army. To satisfy the immediate needs of the newly-formed Polish Army, the Polish authorities were forced to maintain the system of collective deliveries, but have considerably lowered the quotas, part of which was set aside to form stocks for the planned food rationing. Besides lowering the quotas the authorities have freed smallholders with farms up to 5 acres from any deliveries at all. Moreover, farmers have been permitted to sell their surplus of grain, potatoes, meat, milk, butter, eggs and vegetables on the free market. In that way an equivalent was formed to compensate the farmers for their losses arising from delivery at the low official prices. To encourage prompt deliveries of the quotas the authorities paid premiums on accurately delivered quotas. The bonus consisted of those essential articles of everyday use of which the peasants were most urgently in need; in particular, sugar, salt, soap, naphtha, tobacco, matches, nails and alcohol. Except for alcohol and sugar which were Polish home produced, all other articles were obtained from Russia which has rendered the new Poland tremendous material assistance. The coal which at that time was at Poland's disposal was also Russian coal.

Food Rationing

Having secured the most vital needs of the Army and safeguarded provisions for the free markets of the towns, the authorities set to work to organise a food rationing system. For

about two months they accumulated stocks of food and in the middle of October they introduced food rationing cards in about 20 towns of the Lublin area. The basic idea of the system was to create an equivalent to compensate the Civil Servants and the workers against their low salaries unavoidably fixed by the State to avoid inflation.

The effect of the food rationing was very pronounced: it has not only averted any danger of famine in the towns, but has brought about a drop in prices on the free market and created an essential incentive for those who volunteered to work. And you have to bear in mind that to refuse to work was patriotic during the German occupation. To bring people back to work you had to impress on them not only that it would now be unpatriotic not to work, but also that work means profits and privileges greater than those of the black market or illegal trading. This became especially serious west of the Vistula when the Red Army liberated the whole of Poland.

Gradually the country got to work, and industrial reconstruction restarted. Today the number of people working in essential industries is 400,000 which is approximately 50 per cent of the average number of people employed in essential industry—it was about 830,000 in 1937. The best example of this revival is the textile centre of Lodz where, on March 1, the number of workers employed was only 10,000 and after the arrival of cotton from the Soviet Union which now supplies the whole of the raw material for the Lodz industry, the figure had risen to 53,000 by April 1, and 75,000 by May 1.

The total breakdown of civilian transport resulting from the dazzling Russian advance and which, in February when I travelled across Poland, was creating a food shortage in the big cities, has now been overcome. The number of freight trains supplying the country's economic needs was only 2,000 in February, but had risen to 13,500 in March and to over 20,000 in April.

The economic system is not a Communist one. The Polish Provisional Government firmly retains the principle of individual property for the peasant—no other system would be acceptable to the Polish peasant. There is no question of introducing any degree of collectivisation. The peasant co-operatives, made necessary by the changed economic structure as a result of the Agrarian Reform, are to satisfy the individual needs of the

farmer and to provide him with tools and possibly tractors in return for payment. As for industries, coalmines, munitions industries, and public utilities have been taken in charge by the State and will be nationalised. They were abandoned when the Germans retreated, and no owners exist in most cases. Private enterprise in other industries and in commerce continues.

This is a short sketch of the road on which Poland is developing. Only when you know these facts can you form your judgment and understand that the Polish Provisional Government which today exists in Poland has the right to stay and to be recognised.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q.: Why is the International Red Cross not allowed to visit Poland?

A.: I think there is some misunderstanding. To my knowledge the International Red Cross has never approached the Polish Provisional Government for any suggested visit, on the other hand the American Red Cross has been in Poland quite recently. Before I left Poland I met two representatives of the American Red Cross, just arrived with quite a large consignment of medicaments.

Q.: Why have Polish soldiers in this country heard no news whatever of their relations? How soon do you think the Russian Government will allow free postal communication between Poland and this country?

A.: When there is official recognition, normal relations and postal communications will be restored. But as long as the British Government does not recognise the Polish Provisional Government and does not maintain any regular communications with Poland, there is no means of getting or sending any letters. Anyhow, it seems that the Polish Provisional Government is more anxious to have communications established than the British: the other day I myself received a private cable from Warsaw, but I could not reply because there is still no service this end.

Q.: Why is Stefan Litauer the only journalist who has been permitted to visit Poland? Who can vouch for the truth of his statements?

A.: Certainly nobody else but myself can vouch for the truth of the statements which I make. You have either to believe me or not. I am not the only journalist to have visited Poland, but I was the only journalist who was in Poland for any considerable time—4½ months. I was not on a conducted tour but could see for myself what I wanted to see. I suppose I was granted this privilege because I am a Pole and to some extent because the Polish Provisional Government took the opportunity of inviting me to come when the present Polish Government in London kicked me out. I do not think that we can blame the Soviet Union for the lack of information. There were other journalists in Poland during my stay there: a group of American, British and French journalists (Moscow correspondents) came to Poland in the beginning of January, 1945, stayed for 12 days and had the opportunity of travelling around

to see quite a lot of the Lublin area. In the middle of February there was another visit by American correspondents from Moscow who saw Warsaw and Lodz, but, so far, except for myself, only correspondents who are permanently in Moscow have shown sufficient interest to go to Poland. I do not know of any other case of direct application to the Polish Provisional Government asking for the admission of correspondents from this country direct. I cannot reply for the Polish Provisional Government, but I feel they would probably be very happy if such an application were made by British editors to them and would welcome journalists from this country to Poland.

Q.: You said that before the war there was a large number of Poles for whom there was no place in Poland. Can you give an approximate figure.

A.: I could not give a figure, but quite a large number of Polish citizens, owing to their political convictions, had to leave the country and live abroad. Since 1926, when the Pilsudski regime came into power, such were conditions in Poland that people who belonged to the Left were put in jail. The Communist Party had no legal status and mere membership of that party was equal to four years' imprisonment. Leaders of democratic parties like the Socialist Party or the Peasant Party were persecuted. The leader of the Polish Peasant Party, Wincenty Witos, had to seek refuge in Czechoslovakia and General Sikorski too had to live for safety reasons in Paris.

Q.: Is the new Polish Army based on conscription as before the war?

A.: Yes. So far only three age groups have been called up and these three age groups together with the Polish volunteers who enlisted in Russia will make up 600,000 men under arms before the end of this year.

Q.: What measures have the Polish Provisional Government taken to deal with anti-semitism?

A.: The Polish Provisional Government has taken no measures at all simply owing to the very tragic fact that there are no Jews left in Poland. Of 3½ million Jews in Poland before the outbreak of war, today in the whole of Poland there are not more than 40,000 left alive—a little over 1 per cent. Over three million Polish Jews have been exterminated by the Germans in special extermination camps by means of gas chambers and crematoriums.

Q.: According to Dr. Sommerstein anti-semitism in present-day Poland has increased; why does the Provisional Government not keep its word given in January promising all Jews the right to emigrate to Palestine.

A.: I had many talks with Dr. Sommerstein who is a very intelligent and brilliant Zionist leader and he never complained about any growth of anti-semitism. His recent comments on the Warsaw Radio referred to the persecution of Jews by members of the underground terrorist organisation called "NATIONAL ARMED FORCES" which formed a part of the Polish "HOME ARMY" directed from London and owing its allegiance to the Polish President, Mr. Racziewicz, residing also in London. These notorious Polish "NATIONAL ARMED FORCES" murder Jews just as they murder Poles who loyally serve the Polish Provisional Government. But their criminal activity can in no circumstances be taken as evidence of a growth of anti-semitism. Certainly the Polish Government, when the time comes, will not stop those Jews who

wish to do so emigrating to Palestine, but at the moment there is no possibility of them being allowed to enter Palestine by the British Government.

Q.: Why are so many Jews in Poland forced to give their co-operation to the Lublin administration and are even forced to assume Polish names? Is it not because of the lack of willing Poles?

A.: In the Polish Provisional Government there is only one Jew—(there are 19 members of the Government)—the Minister of Industry, Hilary Minc, a very brilliant Polish economist from Warsaw. Moreover, of the 40 Under-Secretaries of State, three are Jews. It is absolutely untrue to say that the Lublin administration is staffed with Jews. There are departments with not one Jew employed—such as the Ministry for Agriculture and Agrarian Reform. There is no lack of Poles to serve in the Polish Provisional Government and thousands of Civil servants apply for jobs. As to Polish names, many Jews assumed them to hide their Jewish origin from the Germans with the view of surviving.

Q.: What was the reason for the failure of the Warsaw uprising? Explain the part played by General Bor, and should he not have been handed over as a war criminal?

A.: I do not think I can give you the real facts about the Warsaw uprising because I was not there. I should have to rely on the facts supplied by one side or the other and not on my own findings.

As to the question whether General Bor should be handed over as a war criminal I would like to answer this in the negative. I think that General Bor is personally a honest man, and I am even inclined to believe that he probably was very noble in his intentions. I do not blame General Bor so much as the people around him, and the guilt of General Bor lies in the fact that he tolerated these people round him. We know that it is not so much the Commander-in-Chief as his Chief of Staff who is the real organiser of any military operations.

Who was General Bor's Chief of Staff and the virtual organiser of the Warsaw uprising? This was concealed at the time because his name was too notorious and sinister to be made known. Of course, everyone in Warsaw and Lublin knew, but it was never revealed in this country by the Polish Government in London, and only by chance was his name made known recently in *The Times*. Their diplomatic correspondent, reporting on a press conference in London with General Bor, revealed that present with General Bor was his Chief of Staff, General Pelczynski. This name does not mean anything to the British public, but it is a sinister name all over Poland. Today's General—pre-war a Colonel—Tadeusz Pelczynski was for six years, until the outbreak of war and at the time of the 1939 September campaign, head of the notorious Second Bureau of the Polish General Staff. This department carried out not only military intelligence activities (espionage and counter-espionage), but was also the authority which controlled Poland from the security point of view. Pelczynski's political influence was decisive and his work consisted in fostering the Pilsudski regime by applying ruthless methods against all its opponents but specially against the Socialists and the Communists.

If this man was Chief of Staff of General Bor of the time of the uprising I really cannot blame the Russians for not wanting to have anything to do with an organisation in which he played first fiddle. He is now in London

and very active in organising adherents of the Pilsudski regime for any mischief against Russia.

Q.: Can Dr. Litauer give any information about the thousands of Poles who are being deported to Russia? What is the role in Poland of the Russian Security Police—the N.K.V.D.?

A.: The Russian Security Police whose task it was to guarantee security in the rear of the fighting Red Army, was assisting the Polish authorities whose opponents were at the same time the main advocates of an anti-Soviet Polish policy. The underground resistance has left behind large groups of armed men whose terroristic mentality has become the main impulse of their lives. There are still quite a few thousand of them left in Poland; brave but unscrupulous; hiding by day and attacking at night; risking their own lives as well as the lives of their countrymen for the sake of an imaginary political purpose, but in reality committing common murder.

I could quote a long list of terrorist acts carried out by such men during my stay in Poland. I shall just quote two of the most drastic murders committed: First, at the end of November, 1944, near Zamosc, a lorry transporting 12 militia men was blown up by a mine laid on the road at night by a group of terrorists and former members of the "Home Army." The 12 militia men were instantly killed. Second, end of February, 1945, an assault was carried out on a militia post outside Bialystok at 4 o'clock in the morning, 14 militia men were killed in their sleep and their arms and ammunition carried away by the attackers who escaped.

These terrorist acts have not been subdued, they are going on and only a few days ago the official agricultural delegate for the sowing campaign in the Augustov district, Woitecki, was murdered by terrorists who sabotaged the agrarian reform, Woitecki was a Polish airman and a hero of the Westerplatte siege from which he returned disabled.

All these terrorist activities provoke reprisals for restoring order, and as a result people who are suspects are arrested and sometimes deported. But it would be entirely wrong to construe any kind of mass arrests and wholesale deportations from these reprisals. The general public is in no way involved or connected either with the terrorist activities or with the consequences. I have been in Poland 4½ months, and if there were such mass arrests and wholesale deportations I could not avoid seeing them. I did see sometimes small groups of three or four people who were conducted under escort through the streets of Lublin or other towns. But they were very few and I have never seen anything which would allow me to conclude that there were mass arrests and wholesale deportations.

Q.: What are the relations between the Provisional Government and the Catholic Church?

A.: The position of the Catholic Church in present-day Poland is the most convincing evidence that the Provisional Government does not intend to upset the roots of Poland's culture and life. The Catholic Church enjoys complete freedom and the fullest support of the present Polish authorities, which have returned to the Catholic Church all its property and buildings confiscated by the Germans. The testimony of this is given in the Pastoral Letter which was addressed recently by Bishop Dr. Adamski, one of the most prominent dignitaries of the Catholic Church in Poland.

As Bishop of Polish Silesia he ordered his Pastoral Letter to be read in all Churches from the pulpits through the whole Silesian diocese. Here are the main quotations from this Pastoral Letter:

"After four years of forced exile, the Catholic Bishop welcomes all the Clergy and the faithful of his diocese with the ancient greeting of the Holy Church. For six years the enemy has forbidden me to welcome you in this ancient way. I welcome you Polish soldiers, for whom we have been waiting for a long time, and seeing you today, you and your commanders, kneeling down together with us before God in our churches, our heart is full of gratitude and joy. We welcome you, the representatives of the Provisional Government of Poland, we welcome you on this soil. Our hearts are overflowing with deep gratitude for our liberation. We know that we have been liberated, thanks to the magnificent advance of the Polish and Soviet troops. In your advance you were swift, like lightning, and did not allow the withdrawing German armies to complete the destruction they intended. They intended to drive out the population, to destroy all the houses, fields and orchards and to leave behind them a complete desert. Our hearts will always be full of gratitude for the liberation you brought us.

"The Catholic Church in Poland at present is free. The hostile oppression which fettered its divine activities is over. Religious life is returning to normal. Gradually we shall restore every sphere of our religious activity. The Provisional Government, which already has returned to the church the property the Germans confiscated, will certainly not oppose the free and unlimited reconstruction of Catholic religious life. On the contrary, they support it and members of this Government themselves participate in the religious services. Your hearts will be gladdened by the news that your children will not only go to Polish schools but also with the fact that these schools will have the same measure of Catholic education as they had before.

"The work of the Catholic Church will not only be unhampered, but on the contrary, will enjoy full support and favour from the State and the authorities. We return, therefore, to normal Catholic and religious life. Our services will be held once more at the usual hours and Polish hymns and Polish prayers will be sung freely and openly. Religious processions will march again through our streets and squares. Religious fraternities and associations, after a long interval, will flourish with renewed strength. We are deeply grateful to the Polish Provisional Government, which by its activities and existence, has secured for us free exercise and care for our Catholic faith, which for us Poles is indissolubly linked with the love of our country. We should never have felt completely happy as Poles had our Catholic faith suffered restrictions."

Q.: What can Dr. Litauer say about the 16 arrested Polish leaders? Were they really invited to negotiations and then arrested by the Russians?

A.: At the roots of this "mysterious" affair lies the unreliability of all information supplied by the so-called Polish Government in London and its information services. It was the Polish official communique issued in London which gave the version that the 16 arrested Poles were "invited" to talks on political issues by the N.K.V.D. This version has been repeated all through the crisis not only by the British and American Press but also in official or officially inspired statements of the British and American Governments.

To everybody conversant with the Russian system this version must appear ridiculous and silly. The N.K.V.D.—the Russian Security Police—does not "invite" people to political talks. It investigates cases of sabotage and terrorist activities. The suggestion that N.K.V.D. officials should be authorised to discuss with Polish political leaders their inclusion into a broadened government under the Yalta provision is so absurd that it is amazing how people can believe it.

The only Russian person in Poland who would be authorised to make any such contacts is the Soviet Ambassador in Warsaw, Lebediev. The fact that the 16 Poles were contacted by the N.K.V.D. meant that from the beginning the Russian intention to arrest them was clear. Such trained conspirators as are the arrested politicians, knew perfectly well what the N.K.V.D. "invitation" meant.

Moreover the 16 were not chosen at random. They represented a coherent team, the highest level of the Polish Underground authorities who owed their allegiances to the Polish Government in London. They were: the London Government's Delegate in Poland who had the position of a secret Deputy Premier, three of his assistants with ranks of secret Ministers, the secret Commander-in-Chief of the officially disbanded UNDERGROUND HOME ARMY, and eleven politicians forming a political council representing the parties collaborating in that underground set. The N.K.V.D. was particularly anxious to capture the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army, General Okulicki, who disbanded its ranks in an order of the day of January 19, 1945, which was a veiled declaration of underground war against Russia and after which many acts of terrorism had followed. The fact that General Okulicki was among the 16 proves that an invitation to talks was out of question. He knew too well that a price was set for his capture and was not so naive to walk into a trap.

It is a fact that the Polish underground movement was instructed, supplied and financed from London. The Russians rightly suspect that this could not have been done without the connivance of the British Government. It was well known that General Okulicki had been dropped in Poland by parachute from this country a year ago. It is no revelation to the N.K.V.D. that the secret short-wave transmitters operating from underground Poland supplied by the British for resisting the Germans, were transmitting messages to London or receiving instructions from London. But this was in order as long as there was an underground resistance against the Germans. Any continuation of such activities after the Germans ceased to occupy Poland in January this year became an illegal activity and this in time of war against Germany on the Eastern Front. Obviously this kind of secret underground activity should not have been continued one day longer after the Germans had gone, because it became automatically an anti-Russian conspiracy in the rear of the Red Army front. Today, any continuation of a London sponsored underground organisation inside Poland can only be interpreted as a deliberate British attempt to undermine Russia's position in Eastern Europe, and as an action inconsistent with the British-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance.