CONFIDENTIAL

DOCUMENTS

CONCERNING THE 16 POLISH LEADERS ARRESTED AND TRIED IN MOSCOW

REPUBLIC OF POLAND

MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

INTRODUCTION

The present collection of documents covers the period from January 27 to June 21, 1945, and deals with the disclosure of the names of the Polish Underground leaders: their invitation by the Soviet authorities for conversations: the preliminary conversations: the arrest of the leaders and the sentences passed on them by the Military Supreme Court in Moscow. The Moscow trial will be dealt with separately in a new collection of documents.

On the basis of the documents presented below, it is possible to reconstruct the course of events with reasonable accuracy. On January 27, 1945, the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs approached the Polish Ambassador in London and asked him for a list of the more important resistance leaders in Poland in order that they might be protected against possible repressions. The first list which included the names of the Vice Premier and four ministers resident in Poland was submitted on March 9 to the British Government /see Document No. 2/ who transmitted it to the Soviet Government. On April 1, the British and American Governments were notified by the Polish Government that 15 Polish democratic leaders were found to be missing /see Document No. 10/. Both these Governments approached the Soviet Government for information on this subject /see Documents No. 12. and 19/ and were notified six weeks later at San Francisco that the Polish leaders had been arrested by the Soviet authorities inter alia for diversionary activites at the rear of the Red Army. The TASS communique of May 6th, further developed these charges /see Document No. 22/ In connection with this news the two Governments announced that they were suspending conversations with the Soviet Government on the subject of Poland /see Documents Nos. 20 and 21/. The trial of the Polish leaders began in Moscow on June 18 /see Document No. 30/ and ended with 12 of the accused being sentenced /see Document No. 35/ Simultaneously the Commission of Three in Moscow /consisting of the People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the USSR and the British and American Ambassadors in Moscow/ resumed its work and it was under its auspices that the so-called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity was formed, pursuant to the Yalta decisions.

At the same time, events were following their course in Poland, At the end of February, Colonel- General Ivanov, acting in the name of the Commander of the First Byelorussian Front, had sent to Mr. Jan Jankowski, the Vice Premier of the Polish Government and at the same time the Government Delegate to Poland, and also to General Leopold Okulicki, the former commander of the Home Army, which was dissolved on 19th January, 1945, a verbal invitation through intermediaries to a conference.

On the 6th March, the persons mentioned above had received a written invitation, signed by Colonel Pimienov, acting under the order of General Ivanov, to a meeting with this General. The invitation stressed the necessity and importance of such a meeting, which could and should decide matters, a quick solution of which would be hard to reach in any other way. According to

Colonel Pimienov, mutual trust and understanding would allow these important matters to be decided, and would not lead to an increase of tension. At the same time, Colonel Pimienov, as an officer of the Red Army, guaranteed the personal safety of those invited on their journey to General Ivanov /see Documents No. 4 and 5/.

The Vice Premier of the Polish Government accepted the invitation of after previous confirmation by Colonel Pimienov as to the authenticity of the invitation, and on his renewed assurance that General Ivanov attached great importance to the discussions, the subject of which was to be "the clearing of the atmosphere by the emergence of the Polish political parties and their combining in the general stream of democratic forces in independent Poland". A preliminary discussion was held on 17th March, in the course of which the Vice Premier stated that the Polish political parties, as represented in the Council of National Unity, would gladly reveal themselves and undertake work towards the reconstruction of Poland, but that circumstances prevailing in Polish territory had so far not allowed of this. The creating of circumstances which would secure the possibility of some political work, and the freedom of the citizen, depended entirely on the Soviet authorities. Finally, the Vice Premier asked for information on the following points:-

1. whether General Ivanov was acting with the consent of the Commission of Three, appointed by the Crimea Conference, or in the name of Commissar Molotov?

2. why the Commander of the 1st Byelorussian Front, and not that of the Red Army, had communicated with him?

3. what was the sphere of competence of the NKVD, of the so-called Provisional Lublin Government, and of the political administration of the Commander of the 1st Byelorussian Front?

At the same time he requested facilities from General Ivanov to send a delegation to London, in order to consult the Polish Government and the Polish political leaders there, and subsequently for them to return to Poland.

Further conversations with Colonel Pimienov were undertaken, with the approval of the Vice Premier, on 18th March, by representatives of the Peasant Party, and, on 20th March, by those of the National Democratic Party and the Labour Party. It is noted that during conversations with representatives of one of the parties, when concrete questions were put to Colonel Pimienov as to the competence of the so-called Provisional Lublin Government, he stated that the Lublin Government had to submit itself to the decisions of the Commander of the 1st Byelorussian Front, which were binding on the Committee./see Document No. 7/

On 20th March, the Vice Premier received the information that General Ivanov was empowered by the Supreme Command of the Red Army, to which he belonged, to conduct conversations with the Polish political leaders, and

that he had ordered an aeroplane to be put at the disposal of the Vice Premier in order to facilitate the Polish political leaders' visit to England. On 21st March, the Vice Premier expressed his agreement to the holding of the conference with General Ivanov.

On 27th March, the Vice Premier of the Polish Government, the Commander of the former Home Army and the Chairman of the Council of National Unity went to Pruszkow, near Warsaw, for the conversations with General Ivanov. Although they did not return that day as expected to the meeting of the Council of National Unity, on 28th March a further 12 persons went to Pruszkow to meet General Ivanov, that is, three Ministers of the Home Council of Ministers, eight members of the Council of National Unity, representing the chief Polish political parties, and one interpreter /see Document No. 9/

None of these men has returned from Pruszkow, nor has anyone had news of any of them.

It should be added that on 31st March of this year, that is, three days after the disappearance of the above-mentioned political leaders and heads of the Underground Movement in Poland, three men in civilian clothes and one in military uniform arrived by car at the home of Wincenty Witos, formerly three times premier of Poland, in Wierzchoslawice, near Tarnow. After a short conversation with the visitors, Mr. W. Witos was taken off by them in the car to an unknown destination. It appears from information received later that Mr. Witos subsequently returned home. During his discussions with the Soviet authorities, who proposed to him that he should join the Lublin Government, Mr. Witos did not see any of the missing Polish political leaders. /See DocumentsNo. 13/

All the facts given above, and the circumstances connected with the contacting of the Soviet authorities by the Polish political leaders and their disappearance, were constantly communicated to the British and American Governments with the request that they should intervene with the Soviet Government to discover the fate of the missing men.

On 2nd May, Minister R. Law, in answer to numerous questions put by members of Parliament in connection with the missing Polish political leaders, stated: "His Majesty's Government has repeatedly pressed the Soviet Government to find out the whereabouts of the above-mentioned eminent Poles. Nevertheless, His Majesty's Ambassador in Moscow has not received any reply to his numerous enquiries. I much regret that I am unable to give the House any assurance as to the safety of those mentioned in the Questions." /See Document No. 19/

On 12th April, 1945, the Moscow correspondent of the "Daily Worker", John Gibbons, sent a dispatch to his paper in which he stated categorically that it was "absolutely untrue that the Polish political and military leaders were in Moscow".

According to a Reuter dispatch, at a Press Conference held on 24th

April, a representative of the Lublin Committee, on being asked by foreign journalists what had happened to the Polish political leaders who had been invited to a conference by General Ivanov, stated:- "We don't know anything about this so-called missing delegation. This question, which we see has been blown up to immense dimensions in the international field, simply does not exist in our country".

On 13th May, the Paris representative of the Lublin Committee stated that the Lublin security authorities "had been trying to trace them for several months past". /See Document No. 27/

40 days after the disappearance of the Polish political leaders, the Soviet Government admitted the arrest of the Polish political and military chiefs, accusing them of diversive activity against the Red Army and announcing that they would be brought to trial.

The TASS Communique of 6th May gave the number of those arrested as 16: in the course of the trial, it appeared that the 16th was A. Zwierzynski, former member of the Diet and Chairman of the National Party. The documents show that the number of leaders invited was 14, plus an interpreter, so that the inclusion of other persons was quite arbitrary.

Both before and after the invitation for conversations, many arrests took place. Among those arrested was A. Zwierzynski, just referred to, W. Witos, /now a member of the praesidium of the Council/, Dr. Kiernik /now a member of the broadened Lublin Cabinet/, messrs. Biega and Hoppe /members of the Christian Democratic Labour Party, whose fate is entirely unknown/, Z. Zulawski, pre-war Secretary General of the Trade Union Council, who escaped shortly before the arrests and then was found in Moscow as one of the Poles who arrived for consultations, and scores of other politicians from various parties, members of the Polish Red Cross, etc., etc. In view of insufficient information it is impossible for the time being to discover how certain individuals found themselves among those placed on trial or among those consulted by the Moscow Commission.

For those reasons the present collection of documents has been limited solely to the question of the 15 Poles /strictly speaking, the 14 leaders and the interpreter/ who were invited by the Soviet military authorities and subsequently put on trial in Moscow.

The present collection has been prepared for the use of persons specially interested in this subject. Errors resulting from the speed in which the material had to be translated will be corrected in the official edition.

London, 24th June, 1945.

No. 1

Extract from Ambassador E.Raczynski's Minute of his conversation with Sir Orme Sargent.

London, 27th January [illegible]

Sir Orme Sargent of the Foreign Office told me today that Mr. Eden considered it convenient and advantageous to possess the names of leading personalities of the Polish Underground movement. The above information may help him in protecting valued individuals. In addition Mr. Eden expressed the hope that this proposal will be accepted and expressed his readiness in advance to conform to the conditions upon which the Polish Government might possibly wish to make dependent the employment of information obtained from within Poland. Sir Orme Sargent indicated that he considered the matter as urgent.

No. 2

Extract from Ambassador E. Raczynski's Minute.

London, 9th March, [illegible]

I sent today a note addressed to Mr. Eden, British Foreign Secretary, in which I told him that I had now received from the Polish Government instructions to disclose the names and pseudonyms of the representatives of Polish political parties who reside in Poland as ministers, members of the Polish Cabinet in London, as follows:

1. Engineer Stanislaw Jankowski /independent/

2. Antoni Pajdak /Socialist/

3. Stanislaw Jasiukowicz /National Democratic Party/

4. Pseudonym " Walkowicz"/name undisclosed/ /Peasant Party/1/

1/His name is "Bien" and was disclosed some time after.

At the end of the note I said that the Polish Government had done this at the request of the Homeland Council of Ministers /members of the Polish Government residing in Poland/ and would be grateful to His Majesty's Government for communicating these names to the Soviet Government.

No. 3

Excerpt from a report from Vice Premier Jankowski, Delegate of the Polish Government in the Homeland, dated 10th March.

Two weeks ago, the Commander in Chief of the former Home Army and I received through intermediaries[1] an invitation to a conference with representatives of the High Command of the 1st Byelorussian Front.

On 6th March we received a written invitation to discussions with Colonel-General Ivanov, signed by Colonel of the Guards Pimienov of the NKVD in Pruszkow. The letter stressed the necessity and great importance of this meeting, which could and ought to decide that which it would probably be impossible to decide quickly in any other way. Understanding and mutual confidence would enable important matters to be decided and would not allow them to become critical. At the end of his letter, Colonel Pimienov, as an officer of the Red Army, guaranteed our safety from the time we would arrive at their headquarters. I attach the texts of both these letters.

After previously obtaining confirmation of the authenticity of the letter, I decided to go to the meeting.[2]

1/In later reports from Poland it was explained that the role in intermediary in the making of contact between the Soviet military authorities and the authorities of the Polish Underground movement was undertaken, at the request of the Soviet military authorities, by an officer of the Polish People's Army, a minor secret organisation which in the autumn of 1944 became subordinate to the Lublin administration. After the arrest of the 15 Polish leaders this officer fled.

2/On 21st January, 1945, the Polish Government granted the Homeland Council

2/cont.
of Ministers /members of the Polish Government resident in Poland/ with Vice Premier Jankowski at their head, power to undertake conversations with the Soviets in the case when an attempt to hold such conversations would be made by representatives of the Soviet authorities.

No. 4

Letter from Colonel Pimienov to Vice Premier Jankowski, dated 6th March.

To Mr. Jankowski, Government Delegate in the Homeland,

my best intentions and modest endeavours which, I am sure, will doubtless receive your warmest support and attention, consist only in arranging for you to meet Colonel-General Ivanov, the representative of the High Command of the First Belorussian Front, within the next few days. The difficult character of this undertaking is obvious to me: however, in view of its absolute necessity and paramount importance which cannot be dealt with in this brief letter, I think that the aforesaid meeting between you and Colonel-General Ivanov can and definitely ought to solve what could hardly be solved quickly enough in other ways. Mutual understanding and confidence will render possible the solution of very important problems and will prevent them from becoming acute.

At the same time, I should like to ask Mr. Jankowski to excuse me for the difficulties that arise in organising this meeting, which difficulties are due to the fact that the dates formerly fixed for it with Colonel-General Ivanov have long since passed. However, I feel confident that Colonel-General Ivanov will be good enough to take into account my arguments as regards the meeting with you, and that this meeting will take place within the next few days. I myself, as an officer of the Red Army to whom it fell to carry out a mission of such importance, am giving you a full guarantee and pledge my officer's word that after your arrival here, when your fate will depend on me, you will enjoy full security.

Desiring and hoping to meet you soon, I beg to assure you of my respect.

Please let me know your decision without delay.

In accordance with instructions received

Colonel of the Guards Pimienov.

No. 5.

Letter from Colonel Pimienov to General Okulicki, dated 6th March.

To be handed only to Major-General Niedzwiadek-Okulicki himself.

Major-General Niedzwiadek,

my best intentions which, I am sure, will doubtless receive your warmest support and attention, are to arrange for you and your friends to meet Colonel-General Ivanov, the representative of the High Command of the First Byelorussian Front, within the next few days. I fully realise the difficult character of this undertaking: however, in view of its absolute necessity and paramount importance which cannot be dealt with in this brief letter, I think that the aforesaid meeting ought to take place and this as soon as possible. I can only say that the meeting which is to take place between you and Colonel-General Ivanov can and doubtless will solve what could hardly be solved quickly enough in other ways. Mutual understanding and confidence will render possible the solution of very important questions and will prevent them from becoming acute.

For the time being, I should like to ask you, Sir, also to appreciate the difficulties I have in bringing about this meeting owing to the fact that the dates formerly fixed for it with Colonel-General Ivanov have long since passed. However, I feel confident that Colonel-General Ivanov will take my reasons into account, and that the meeting will take place within the next few days. I myself, as an officer of the Red Army to whom it fell to carry out a mission of such importance, am giving you a full guarantee and pledge my officer's word that after your arrival here, when your fate will depend on me, you will enjoy full security

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Hoping for a meeting soon, I beg to assure you of my respect. Please let me know your decision.

Colonel of the Guards Pimienov.

March 6th, 1945.

No. 6

Excerpt from Ambassador E. Raczynski's Minute of a conversation with Mr. Eden, British Foreign Secretary.

London, 15th March.

At his invitation I visited Mr. Eden who informed me that the request of the Polish Government had been granted and that Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, British Ambassador in Moscow, had received instructions to impart this information to the Soviet authorities, stressing that he did so at the request of the Polish Government. From Mr. Eden's words I gathered the impression that if the persons mentioned should come to any harm, the British Government would regard it as a serious matter, contrary to the spirit of the Crimea Agreement.

No. 7

Excerpt from a report from Vice Premier J. Jankowski, Delegate of the Polish Government in the Homeland, dated 19th March.

Colonel Pimienov confirmed to my envoy the authenticity of the letter

of 6th March, and stated that he had acted on the order of Colonel-General Ivanov, representing the 1st Byelorussian Front. He explained that the subjects of our conversations with General Ivanov were to be as follows:- the emergence into the open of the political parties still holding aloof; their joining in the general current of the democratic forces of independent Poland; the clearing of the atmosphere in Poland; the matter of security in the rear of the Red Army. He added that if we decided to discuss these subjects with General Ivanov, he would propose the holding of preliminary conversations.

In this state of affairs I agreed to the conversations, of which the first took place on 17th March. During this conversation, I declared that the Polish political parties would gladly begin open activity, but present circumstances, which I defined very exactly, did not allow of this. I stressed that the creation of conditions assuring the possibility of introducing open political activity and the freedom of all citizens depended on them. I explained to Colonel Pimienov that the diversions taking place at the rear of the Red Army were not the work of the Home Army, which had already been dissolved, nor of the organised Polish Underground movement. For my part I asked General Ivanov to explain the following matters:

1.The sphere of competence of the NKVD /Soviet secret police/, of the so-called Lublin Government, and of the political administration of the Commander of the 1st Byelorussian Front /Politicheskoye Upravleniye Fronta/;

2. Why the Commander in Chief had not approached me;

3. Whether General Ivanov was acting with the knowledge of Commissar Molotov or with that of the Commission of Three in Moscow.

Finally I requested facilities for sending a delegation to London in order to consult the Polish Government, Mikolajczyk and other political leaders. I declared at the same time that I considered that General Ivanov should also have consultations with representatives of the Council of National Unity which had decided to reveal itself.

During the days following, conferences took place with my consent between Colonel Pimienov and representatives of the Peasant Party, the Christian Labour Party and the National Democratic party. I was unable so far to contact the P.P.S. /Polish Socialist Party/ as all Socialists of the required level were at the time in another part. In the course of one of the conversations, Colonel Pimienov, in answer to a concrete question, declared that the Lublin Government had to subordinate itself to the decisions of the High Command of the Front, which were binding on it.

Today I received from Colonel Pimienov an invitation to the next conference with him, and an answer to the questions put to him in the previous conversation: Colonel Pimienov informed me that:

1.General Ivanov would come by air in the very near future to hold conversations with us.

2.General Ivanov was acting on the authority of the High Command of the Red Army to which he was appointed with the approval of Stalin.

3.He was anxious that the matters under discussion should be settled speedily.

4.General Ivanov had decided to put an aeroplane at my disposal so that a delegation could be sent to London.

I came to the conclusion that the Soviet authorities attached great importance to the conversations and considered them as urgent. If they grant facilities for a delegation to travel to London it will be a real proof of good will.

No. 8

Excerpt from a report from General Okulicki dated 25th March.

The Government Delegate and the parties represented in the Council of National Unity have already to some extent given pledges to the Soviet military authorities as to the revelation of their activities and the legalisation of their work. A conversation on this subject is to be held on 27th March between the Government Delegate, the Council of National Unity, the representatives of the political parties and Colonel-General Ivanov.

At the request of the political authorities, I am taking part in this conference.

The Soviets have promised to grant the Government Delegate and two representatives of each of the political parties facilities for consulting you. To this end they are tp provide an aeroplane on 29th March. It is possible that I shall be able to come with them.

No. 9

Excerpt from a report of the deputy of Vice Premier Jankowski, dated 29th March.

I confirm the data contained in the previous reports of the Government Delegate. The course of events was as follows:

1. The first meeting of Vice Premier Jankowski with Colonel Pimienov took place on 17th March. Pimienov urgently requested conversations with the former Commander in Chief of the now dissolved Home Army. In this same conversation he raised the matter of the emergence of the political parties and the necessity for uniting all democratic currents in one common stream. Jankowski requested the transportation of our team by plane to London and back, in order to consult the Government.

2. On 18th March the Peasant Party delegates had a discussion with Pimienov. On 20th March conversations took place between Colonel Pimienov and the National Democratic Party, and, it appears, with the Democratic Party. These conversations were held with the full knowledge of Jankowski, but Colonel Pimienov spoke to each delegate separately, although the subjects were in general the same.

3. On 27th March, Jankowski, General Okulicki and Puzak, the Cahirman of the Council of National Unity, went to an appointed place for conversations with General Ivanov. They did not return that day in the afternoon for the pre-arranged meeting with us.

5. On 28th March the three Ministers and the party delegates went to the place appointed for conversations with General Ivanov, as follows; National Democratic Party, Messrs. Stypulkowski and Kobylanski: Peasant Party, Messrs. Baginski and Mierzwa: Christian Labour Party, Messrs. Chacinski and Urbanski: Democratic Party, Messrs. Czernik and Michalowski. They were accompanied by Stemler as interpreter. In all 15 persons.

During the first conversation, Colonel Pimienov handed the representatives of the political parties detailed forms containing questions on the following points:-

1. Name of Political Party.

2. Outline of the Party's history, and of the class and region covered by its activity.

3. Programme /basic principles/

4. Internal organisation of the party.

5. Press organs, published by the Party in 1939 /dailies, weeklies, etc./ and secret papers published during the German occupation.

6. List of the affiliated trade, sports, educational and cultural and associated organisations, together with names and place of establishment in 1939.

7. Proposed manner of emergence of the party, together with its affiliations and associations.

8. Proposed manner of emergence of the military units organised by the party, formerly part of the Home Army /military registration, incorporation in the party, etc./

9. List of members of the party arrested during the period of the cooupation of Poland by the Red Army.

10. Indication of 2 or 3 representatives of the party for conversations with the Russian High Command.

Forms as above were completed by the parties and handed to Colonel Pimienov on 28th March, 1945, by Vice-Premier Jankowski.

None of the 15 who went to the place appointed for the meetings with General Ivanov on 27th and 28th March has so far returned, and until today no one of them has given any sign of life either to us or to their families. They were probably carried off by car from Pruszkow on 29th March. We think they have gone either to London or to Moscow. We do not exclude the possibility that further discussions are taking place under pressure, or that these men have simply been artfully arrested. Please make immediate representations to Allied Governments.

Please take all possible steps to secure Allied intervention with a view to discovering as quickly as possible whether the 15 leaders and Mr. Witos are having conversations with the Soviets or whether they have been arrested. The affair has become public knowledge, and tension in Poland is growing.

No. 10

Extract from Ambassador E. Raczynski's Minute.

London, 2nd April.

I approached Mr. Eden by letter, indicating that an immediate intervention in Moscow on behalf of the missing Polish Ministers and political leaders is urgently required by the Polish Government. To this letter I attached an excerpt from the report of Vice Premier Jankowski, giving the course of events from the time when the Polish leaders were invited to the conversations up to 28th March. I declared that Vice Premier Jankowski and three Ministers went to the place appointed on 27th March, and, on the following day, 8 representatives of the political parties, that is, Stypulkowski, Kobylanski, Baginski, Mierzwa, Chacinski, Urbanski, Czernik and 8 others whose names have not so far been ascertained, together with an interpretor. I added that up to the present time they had not returned from Colonel Pimienov, and asked for intervention with the Soviet Government with a view to ascertaining their fate.

No. 11

Communique issued by the Polish Government through the Polish Telegraph Agency, dated 6th April.

At the end of February this year the Deputy Prime Minister and delegate of the Polish Government in London, and the last commander of the now disbanded Home Army, received an indirect invitation from Colonel Pimienov, of the Soviet Political Police, to take part in a conference with the representative of the High Command of the 1st White Ruthenian front, General Ivanov. Soon afterwards, on March 10, they received a written invitation signed by Colonel Pimienov, on behalf of General Ivanov, asking them to come to a meeting and laying stress on the necessity and exceptional importance of the meeting.

The note added that Colonel Pimienov, as an officer of the Red Army, guaranteed the safety of the invited persons. Later it was explained by the Soviet authorities that the political aim of this invitation was to discuss the coming into the open of the Polish political parties which have so far not revealed themselves, "in order to include them in the general current of democratic powers in independent Poland".

Colonel Pimienov also at the same time approached the Polish political parties with a similar request.

On March 20, in reply to requests from the Polish side, Colonel Pimenov announced that the Soviet authorities agreed to allow 12 Polish political leaders to fly to London in order to confer with the Polish Government and political leaders here. On March 27, the Deputy Prime Minister, the chairman of the Council of National Unity, and the last commander of the Home Army presented themselves to General Ivanov in accordance with his invitation. They have not so far returned from their visit, and have sent no messages to their families or to anybody else.

On March 28, three Polish Cabinet Ministers then in Poland, eight members of the Polish political parties and an interpreter presented themselves to General Ivanov in accordance with his invitation. They also have not returned from this visit. There has been no further news of the whereabouts of any of these 15 persons.

No. 12.

Parliamentary Debates /Hansard, Vol. 709, NO. 59/ 11th April, 1945.

Polish Representatives /Russia/

23. Miss WARD asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has any information regarding the whereabouts of the Polish representatives who left for the Soviet Union to discuss the formation of the new provisional government of Poland.

Mr. EDEN: While I have no confirmation of the reports that these Polish representatives have gone to the Soviet Union to discuss the formation of the new Provisional Government, I have instructed His Majesty's Ambassador at Moscow to make inquiries concerning their whereabouts. When I learn the result of these inquiries, I will report further to the House.

Miss WARD : Can the right hon. Gentleman say when that telegram was despatched and how long it is likely to take?

Mr. EDEN : I think it was either yesterday or the day before; I am not sure.

No. 13

Communique issued on 12th April by the Polish Telegraph Agency regarding the case of Mr. W. Witos.

On 31st March last, three Soviet agents in civilian clothes, accompanied by one in uniform, arrived at the home of Wincenty Witos in Wierzchoslawice /Cracow Province/ and took him away to an unknown destination.

Since then there has been no news of him. Information of this occurrence has only now reached London.

No. 14.

Communique issued by the Polish Telegraph Agency, dated 17th April.

In connection with the personal declaration made in London on 15th April, 1945, by Mr. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, one of the leaders of the Peasant Party, the Polish Telegraph Agency is authorised to publish the following comment, in order to avoid misunderstanding.

Point 2. The Polish Government received in March last information that the Ministers resident in Poland, leaders of the political parties in Poland and the last Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army, now dissolved, had accepted the invitation of the Soviet military authorities to hold conversations. Before leaving for the conversations on 28th March, 1945, they informed the Polish Government that as a preliminary demand they had applied for facilities to be granted them by the Soviet authorities to travel to London, in order to have direct discussions with the Polish Government and the Polish political leaders there.

They subsequently announced that this request had been granted by the Soviets. The Polish Government would be glad if this request could be given effect as soon as possible, so as to facilitate the establishment of firm principles of conduct in matters of dispute with Russia, and with regard to the restoration of normal conditions inside Poland.

No. 15

Communique issued by the Polish Telegraph Agency on the appointment of a deputy Government Delegate in Poland, dated 20th April.

On the motion of the representatives of the political parties in Poland the Polish Government has confirmed the temporary appointment of the deputy of the Vice Premier and Government Delegate. The previous Government delegate to Poland was deported, together with other eminent Polish political leaders, at the end of last month.

The deputy has already taken over his official duties.

At the same time, the vacant places left by the other deported men have been filled by deputies.

No.16

Excerpts from a Memorandum of the Polish Government dated 21 April.

The Polish Government, after having considered the international situation, desires to state the following:

3. The Vice Premier and the Council of Ministers within Poland, as well as the leaders of the principal political parties in Poland, accepted, with the knowledge of the Polish Government, an invitation of the Soviet authorities to initiate conversations. At the outset of these conversations, the Polish side requested that representatives of the Polish Underground movement might go to London in order to enter into direct contact with their Government. This request was accepted by the Soviet authorities. The Polish Government hopes that this request will be carried into effect, after which it will be in a position to define its attitude regarding the subject of these conversations.

No. 17

Statement made by the leaders of the Lublin Committee. Reuter, 27th April.

Leaders of the Government present at the press conference with M. Boleslaw Bierut, President of the National Council of the Provisional Government, Mr. Edward Osubka Morawski, Prime Minister, and Minister for Foreign Affairs, and General Michael Rola-Zymierski, Minister for National Defence.

They appeared mystified when correspondents asked them about the missing delevation of 15 persons which "disappeared" following a visit to General Ivanov, commander of the 1st Ruthenian Front, in accordance with his invitation.

"Whht is it?" they asked

M. Morawski said: "We don't know anything about this so-called missing delegation. This question, which we see has been blown up to immense dimensions in the international field, simply does not eixst in our country".

No. 18

Mr. A. Tarnowski, Polish Foreign Minister, to Mr. Stettinius and Mr. Eden in San Francisco, telegram of 27th April.

The Polish Ambassador in Washington has already had the opportunity to inform you in detail that on March 27th and 28th, 1945, fourteen leaders of the Underground movement in Poland, headed by the Vice-Premier of the Polish Government and accompanied by an interpreter, met, at the invitation of Colonel Pimienov, Colonel-General Ivanov, representing the Command of the First White Russian Front, in order to conduct the suggested conversations. On March 31st, representatives of either the Soviet or the Lublin authorities arrived at the home of Wincenty Witos, several times Prime Minister of the Polish Government, and took him away.

In the course of the preliminary conversations held by Colonel Pimienov and General Ivanov with the leaders of the Polish Underground Movement, the Soviet authorities promised the Poles to arrange for their travel to London for consultations with the Polish Government which might have greatly contributed towards a satisfactory solution in the difficulties existing in Polish-Russian relations.

For over four weeks all trace of the aforesaid persons has been lost.

The Polish people, both at home and abroad, are most anxious about the fate of these fifteen prominent representatives of the Polish political parties, who for more than five years led the struggle of the Polish people against the German occupant in the Homeland. The anxiety hasdeepened in the last few days, since while the Soviet authorities maintain complete silence in this matter, the Chairman of the so-called Lublin Committee declared at a press conference in Moscow on April 24th that he has no knowledge of the fate of the persons in question and that the whole problem does not exist.

Fully sharing the anxiety of the Polish people and deeply concerned about the fate of the prominent leaders of Polish political life and the Underground movement, I urgently appeal to you, on behalf of the Polish Government, to employ at the earliest possible moment the means at your disposal to ascertain the fate of the missing persons.

The Polish Government, convinced that its appeal will meet with understanding on the part of your Government, would be grateful for all information concerning the result of any steps taken by you in this disturbing case.

No. 19

Parliamentary Debates /Hansard, 2nd May, Vol. 409, No. 71/

11 and 12. Professor Savory asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs /1/ whether he has now received any answer to the inquiries addres-

sed by him to the Soviet Government with regard to M. Witos, the former Polish Prime Minister, who was taken away from his home near Cracow on 31st March.

2/whether he has now received areply to the inquiries which he has made of the Soviet Government as to the whereabouts of M. Jankowski, Vice-Premier of Poland, three Cabinet Ministers and 11 other representatives who were carried away by the Soviet authorities on 28th March.

13. Commander Bower asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has yet any information concerning the whereabouts and condition of the Vice-Premier of the Polish Government in London, the three other Ministers and eight representatives of four Polish political parties who visited the headquarters of the Russian General Ivanov at his invitation on 28th March, 1945.

14. Major Lloyd asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the inquiries which he has made of the Soviet Government reagrding the whereabouts of a number of Polish representatives, including Messrs. Witos and Jankowski, have, as yet, placed him in a position to give any information on the subject.

Mr. LAW: His Majesty's Government have not ceased to press the Soviet Government as to the whereabouts of the prominent Poles referred to. No information has, however, been received by His Majesty's Embassy at Moscow in reply to their repeated inquiries. I regret that I can give the House no assurance as to the safety of the persons mentioned in the Questions.

Professor SAVORY: Does not the right hon. Gentleman realise tha a month has now elapsed since these gentlemen were carried off and that the anguish of their Polish colleagues in the Ministry is intense? Were they not offered a safe conduct by General Ivanov?

Mr. LAW: I certainly fully understand the point which my hon. Friend has made. As I said, we have made repeated inquiries of the Soviet Embassy and in Moscow, and so far have had no reply whatever. That is a matter which His Majesty's Government regret.

Commander BOWER: Does my right hon. Friend realise that not only the Polish authorities are suffering from great anxiety, but public opinion in this country is violently aroused about this?

Captain MCEWEN: In view of this situation in which between Allies we apparently are unable to get a civil reply to a civil question, will not my right hon. Friend take some extra steps to ensure obtaining a reply?

Viscountess ASTOR: Will my right hon. Friend have this brought up at San Francisco?

Commander AGNEW: Will my right hon. Friend telegraph at once to the Foreign Secretary to ask him to talk to Mr. Molotov about this, and ask Mr. Molotov to give personal attention to it?

Mr. LAW: I can assure my hon. and gallant Friend that the Foreign Secretary has done, and is still doing, all he can to obtain information on this point.

No. 20

British Statement on suspension of discussion of Polish Question, issued in San Francisco, 5th May.

The following statement was issued here on May 5 by the press office of the British delegation to the United Nations Conference on International Organisation:

The British and United States Governments have been making persistent enquiries of the Soviet Government about the group of prominent Polish democratic leaders who were reported to have met the Soviet military authorities in Poland for discussions at the end of March. They have now been officially informed by Mr. Molotov, on behalf of his Government, that these leaders have been arrested on the charge of "diversionary activities against the Red Army."

Mr. Eden and Mr. Stettinius immediately expressed their grave concern to Mr. Molotov at receiving this most disquieting information after so long a delay, and asked him to obtain a full explanation concerning the arrest of these Polish leaders, a complete list of their names and news of their present whereabouts.

The Foreign Secretary has reported this most serious developement to His Majesty's Government, and has informed Mr. Molotov that, meanwhile, he cannot continue discussions on the Polish issue.

No. 21

Statement made by Mr. Stettinius on the suspension of discussion of the Polish question: San Francisco, 5th May.

The following is the text of a statement released here on May 5 by Mr. Edward R. Stettinius Jnr., U.S. Secretary of State, and chairman of the U.S. delegation to the United Nations Conference on International Organisation:

For the last month we have been asking the Soviet Government about the report that a number of prominent Polish democratic leaders in Poland had met for discussion with Soviet authorities during the latter part of March. Mr. Molotov has now officially informed Mr. Eden and myself that these leaders were arrested on the charge of "diversionist activities against the Red Army".

We told Mr. Molotov of our great concern on learning, after such a long delay, of this disturbing development, which has a direct bearing on the working-out of the Polish problem. The Crimea agreement on Poland provided for consultations with representatives of Warsaw Provisional Government and with Polish democratic political leaders from within Poland and from abroad. We have asked Mr. Molotov for a complete list of the names of these Polish political leaders who have been arrested and a full explanation of this action. Further discussions must await a reply.

Nr. 22

TASS Communique of 5th May.

Several British newspapers have of late disseminated all sorts of rumours regarding a number of Polish political leaders who are alleged to have disappeared from Poland.

On May 2nd, questions about these Poles were asked in the House of Commons, and 15 names were mentioned. The name of the former Polish Prime Minister, M. Witos, who is alleged to have been arrested, was also mentioned.

At the same session of the Commons, the question was raised regarding rumours about the killings and shootings of Poles in Siedlce.

According to available information received from fully authoritative sources, TASS is able to state that these reports are mendacious. The facts are as follows:

The group of Poles mentioned in the British Press and referred to in the House of Commons is composed of 16 and not of 15 people. It is headed by the well-known Polish General, Okulicki, about the disappearance of whom the British reports intentionally keep silent, in view of the special odiousness of this general.

General Okulicki's group and especially he himself are accused of preparing diversionary acts in the rear of the Red Army, as a result of which more than 100 officers and men of the Red Army lost their lives.

This group of 16 persons did not disappear, but were arrested by the military authorities of the Soviet command and are now in Moscow pending the investigations of the case.

The group is also accused of the installation and maintenance in the rear of Soviet troops of illegal radio transmitters, which constitutes an act punishable by law. All these persons, or some of them, as the investigations may warrant, will be committed for trial.

As regards British reports of murders and shootings of Poles at Siedlce, which matter was raised in the House of Commons, such reports are false from beginning to end and were probably insinuated to the members of Parliament who raised the question by Arciszewski agents. The report of the arrest of Witos is equally false. /Reuter/

No. 23

Polish Government's appeal to Mr. Stettinius, as Chairman of the San Francisco Conference, dated 6th May.

The Declaration made at San Francisco by Mr. Molotov, the Soviet Commissar for Foreitn Affairs to Mr. Eden, the British Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Stettinius, the United States Secretary of State, that a group of Polish democratic leaders have been arrested by the Soviet authorities on the charge

of "diversionary activities" against the Red Army, has confirmed the worst fears of the Polish Government.

The Polish Government has been keeping the British and American Governments informed of the true state of affairs in this connection ever since the second half of February, when the Soviet Government first invited the Vice-Premier of the Polish Government, Mr. J. Jankowski, and the former Commander-in-Chief of the dissolved Home Army, Major-General L. Okulicki, to initiate conversations with them.

In the course of the conversations held between March 17th and 27th with the Vice Premier of the Polish Government, the three Ministers who were in Poland and the leaders of the political parties, the Soviet authorities emphasised the necessity of reaching an understanding "in order to clear the atmosphere, to let the parties which remained underground come into the open and join in the common current of the democratic forces of independent Poland". Anxious to prove their best intentions to reach an understanding with the Soviet Union, and trusting in the guarantee of personal safety accorded them by General Ivanov, together with the promise to provide them with air transport to enable them to go to London for consultations with the Polish Government and Polish political circles and then to return to Poland, the fourteen Polish leaders, accompanied by an interpreter, arrived on March 27th and 28th at Pruszkow near Warsaw, for a meeting with General Ivanov.

In the light of the above facts it is quite evident, that in first inviting the Polish leaders to a conference and then arresting them, the Soviet authorities abused the good faith of the Polish delegates and broke the promise accorded to them. After over a month of silence, to raise unfounded charges against men who for five years had led the struggle of the Polish Nation against the Germans and later, from March 1944 until January 1945, gallantly supported the Red Army in armed combat, cannot convince anyone who is impartial and honest.

The Soviet accusation is directed against the best sons of Poland who fought for the true independence of their country and for real democracy. They are now facing the grave danger of trial without the possibility of defence, and of a verdict in camera.

Therefore, the Polish Government urgently appeals to the Governments of all the United Nations to do all that is in their power to induce the Soviet Government to set free immediately the leaders of the Polish Underground movement and to guarantee personal safety to them and to their families.

No. 24

Mr. A. Tarnowski, Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Mr. Eden, British Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Stettinius, U. S. Secretary of State; telegrams dated 7th May.

On behalf of the Polish Government, I beg to send your Excellency the expression of my gratitude for the efforts which you have made to obtain information regarding the fate of the group of Polish democratic leaders of the Resistance Movement taken from Poland to the USSR by the Soviet authorities. It is the Polish Government's profound conviction that your Government will do everything within its power to obtain the immediate release of the above-mentioned men. May I take this opportunity of stating that mass arrests and deportations are continuing in Poland, chiefly of members of the Polish Resistance Movement organised to oppose the German occupation.

No. 25

Parliamentary Debates,/Hansard, Vol. 409, No. 75/, 9th May,

12. Professor Savory asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to inform the House of the result of his inquiries addressed to the Soviet Government with regard to M. Witos, the former Polish Prime Minister, who was taken away from his house near Cracow on 31st March.

Mr. LAW: His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Moscow has been instructed to ask the Soviet Government for confirmation of the report that M. Witos is now at liberty. He has also been instructed to ask for information regarding the reports which have been brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government that other members of the Peasant Party have recently been arrested.

13. Professor SAVORY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has now received any information concerning the whereabouts of M. Jankowski, Vice-Premier of Poland, three Cabinet Ministers and other Polish representatives who were taken away by the Soviet authorities on 28th March.

14. Major LLOYD asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has now received any information concerning the whereabouts of M. Jankowski, Vice Premier of Poland, three Cabinet Ministers and other Polish representatives who were taken away by the Soviet authorities on 28th March.

17. Mr. EMMOTT asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his Majesty's Government have now received from the Government of the U.S.S.R. an answer to the repeated inquiries they have made about certain Polish personages.

19. Captain GAMMANS asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he will make a statement about the breakdown of negotiations at San Francisco concerning the formation of a National Government in Poland.

23. Mr. KEELING asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can make a statement about the Polish democratic leaders who were arrested by the Soviet military authorities after accepting their invitation to enter into discussions.

Mr. LAW: I have at present nothing to add to the statement issued jointly by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and by Mr. Stettinius on this grave matter.

Professor SAVORY: Does the right hon. Gentleman realise that these gentlemen were invited to a conference and were promised absolute immunity for their personal safety?

Mr. LAW: I can assure my hon. Friend that His Majesty's Government realise the full significance of the facts, in so far as they know them.

Mr. EMMOTT: Will my right hon. Friend confirm or deny the statement made by the Tass Agency on Saturday that these Polish personages constituted a group which was led by General Okulicki, since the introduction of the name of this officer appears to constitute quite a different element?

Mr. LAW: I have, of course, seen the report to which my hon. Friend refers, that of the Tass Agency. In reply to this question I can only say that the information at the disposal of His Majesty's Government certainly does not confirm what is contained in that report.

Captain GAMMANS: In view of the fact that most of the missing gentlemen were members either of the Polish trade union movement or of the Socialist Movement in Poland, had the right hon. Gentleman had any protest from members of the parties of the Left in this country, at their detention?

Mr. LAW: I am not absolutely certain about the premises stated by my hon. Friend, but certainly when these matters have been discussed here, I have not been conscious of any such protest.

Major LLOYD: Can my right hon. Friend inform the House whether there is, in fact, any sound reason for believing that any of these gentlemen are still alive?

Mr. LAW: I regret very much that we have no further information than that with which the House is already familiar.

Mr. SHINWELL: If the Government are disposed to interfere in matters of this sort - /Hon Members: "Oh"/ - will the right hon. Gentleman take note of the fact that General Franco caused a colonel of the French resistance forces to be shot last week?

Captain MCEWEN: Can my right hon. Friend indicate how soon the Foreign Secretary will be able to make a statement in this country?

Mr. George GRIFFITHS: Not before he comes home.

Mr. LAW: I do not think I can better the answer which has just been given by the hon. Member from the other side of the House. As to when the Foreign Secretary will be back, I am aftaid I cannot give the House any information at the present time.

No. 26

Statement made by Mr. Eden, British Foreign Secretary, in San Francisco. /TIMES, 12th May./

At his Press conference at San Francico on Thursday, Mr. Eden said it would now be for the British, United States and Soviet Governments "to take stock of the situation and determine what the next step should be". About the arrested Polish leaders, Mr. Eden said: "Our information about events in Poland is incomplete to-day, but I must emphasize that the list of 16 Poles reported as having disappeared and about whom we inquired of the Soviet Government more than a month ago included nearly all the leading figures of the Polish underground movement. These men maintained an excellent record of resistance against the Germans throughout the war... Most of htese men were just the type who should, in our view, have been consulted about the new National Government in Poland."

Mr. LAW: I am not absolutely certain about the premises stated by my hon. friend, but certainly when these matters have been discussed here, I have not been conscious of my such protest.

Major LLOYD: Can my right hon. friend inform the House whether there is, in fact, any sound reason for believing that any of these gentlemen are still alive?

Mr. LAW: I regret very much that we have no further information than that with which the House is already familiar.

Mr. SHINWELL: If the Government are disposed to interfere in matters of this sort - /Hon Members: "Oh"/ - will the right hon. Gentleman take note of the fact that General Franco caused a contact of the French resistance forces to be shot last week?

Captain MOSLEY: Can my right hon. friend indicate how soon the Foreign Secretary will be able to make a statement in this country?

Mr. George GRIFFITHS: Not before he comes home.

Mr. LAW: I do not think I can better the answer which has just been given by the hon. Member from the other side of the House. As to when the Foreign Secretary will be back, I am afraid I cannot give the House any information at the present time.

No. 56

Statement made by Mr. Eden, British Foreign Secretary, in San Francisco. /TIMES, 12th May./

At his Press conference at San Francisco on the 8th May, Mr. Eden said it would now be for the British, United States and Soviet Governments "to take stock of the situation and determine what the next step should be". About the arrested Polish leaders, Mr. Eden said: "Our information about events in Poland is incomplete to-day. But I must emphasize that the fate of 16 Polish reported as having disappeared and about whom we inquired of the Soviet Government more than a month ago included nearly all the leading figures of the Polish underground movement. These men maintained an excellent record of resistance against the Germans throughout the war. Most of these men were just the type who should, in our view, have been consulted about the new National Government in Poland."

No. 27

Statement made by Mr. Jedrychowski, representative of the Lublin Committee. in Paris. /French Telegraphic Agency Communique of 17th May/

Jedrychowski, representative of the Warsaw Provisional Government, at his first conference in Paris today defined the Polish point of view regarding the arrest of the 16 Poles by the Soviet authorities. He recalled that they were arrested under the terms of the agreement signed in Moscow on 26th July, 1944. The Polish Committee of National Liberation and the Soviet Government then agreed that "the civilian population in Polish territory would be under Polish jurisdiction, even in cases of offenses committed against the Red Army, except for offences committed in the zone of war operations, these coming under the jurisdiction of the Red Army's supreme commander". The charge against the 16 men was of having organised sabotage in the immediate rear of the Red Army, thus causing the death of more than 100 officers and men. "It is for the Soviet judical authorities to substantiate these accusations, which, incidentally, we know to be justified", Jedrychowski said. He then tried to dispel the misunderstanding regarding the circumstances of the arrests. He pointed out that the men are not parliamentarians nor delegates to the conference for the reorganisation of the Polish Government. On the contrary, they had been living for a long time in Poland under false names, and the Polish security authorities had been trying to trace them for several months past for sabotage and the assassination of more than 100 militants of the Popular Democratic Party, of Polish Army officers and Jews. Of the arrested men, the only one to come from London was Gen. Okulicki, who arrived in Poland in 1944 to act as Chief of Staff to Gen. Bor.

No. 28

Letter from Marshal Stalin to Mr. R. Parker, Moscow Correspondent of "The Times", dated 18th May. /TIMES, 21 May./

Saturday's newspapers gave prominence to the text of the letters which have been exchanged between Marshal Stalin and your Correspondent on the Polish question. The Soviet leader was invited to comment on the case of the 16 Poles who, according to some reports, had been invited by the Soviet authorities for negotiations.

In his reply, which was handed to your Correspondent a few hours before it was published in the Russian newspapers , Marshal Stalin said:-

I am somewhat late with my reply, but this is understandable if one bears in mind how busy I am.

1. The arrest of the 16 Poles in Poland, headed by the notorious diversionist, General Okulicki, is in no way connected with the question of the reconstruction of the Polish Provisional Government. These gentlemen were arrested by virtue of a law dealing with the safeguarding of the rear of the Red Army from diversionists, analogous to the British law of the Defence of the Realm. The arrest was made by the Soviet Military authorities in confomity with an agreement made between the Polish Provisional Government and the Soviet military command.

2. It is not true that the arrested Poles had been invited for the purpose of negotiations with the Soviet authorities. The Soviet authorities do not and will not conduct negotiations with breakers of the law relating to the safety of the rear of the Red Army.

3. As regards the question of the reconstruction of the Polish Provisional Government, this can only be settled on the basis of the Crimea resolutions. There can be no deviation from these resolutions.1/

4. I am of ppinion that the Polish question can be solved by agreement among the Allies subject to the fulfilment of the following conditions:-

a/ That when the Polish Provisional Government is reconstituted, the latter is recognized as the kernel of the future Polish Government by analogy with Yugoslavia, where the national council of liberation was recognized as the nucleus of the united Yugoslav Government.

b/ That as a result of reconstruction, such a Government in Poland is formed as will carry out a policy of friendship with the Soviet Union and not a policy of a cordon sanitaire directed against the Soviet Union.

c/ That the question of the reconstruction of the Polish Provisional Government is decided with Poles who have ties at the present time with the Polish people and not without their participation.

With respect,

J. STALIN

No. 29

Communique issued by Polish Telegraphic Agency, dated 22nd May.

In connection with Marshal Stalin's reply on May 18th, 1945, to questions contained in a letter of the TIMES correspondent in Moscow, the Polish Telegraph Agency has learnt the following:-

1. There can be no doubt that the arrested Polish leaders had been invited by the Soviet authorities for negotiations. The Polish Government possesses the text of the letter by which Colonel Pimienov, of the N.K.V.D. /Soviet secret police/ invited Vice Premier Jan Jankowski and Major-General Leopold Okulicki, former Commander-in-Chief of the dissolved Home Army, for political conversations. Before Vice Premier Jankowski left for these conversations, he examined the authenticity of the letter and received confirmation that Colonel Pimienov extended the invitation of behalf of Colonel-General Ivanov, who described himself as a representative of the Command of the 1st White Russian Front.

2. Colonel Pimienov described their object as "the clarification of the atmosphere and the coming into the open of the democratic Polish parties in order that they may take part in the general current of the democratic forces of independent Poland".

On March 27 and 28 the Vice Premier of the Polish Government, three Ministers, the Chairman of the Council of National Unity, the former Commander-in-Chief of the dissolved Home Army, representatives of the principal political parties, and an interpreter arrived at the appointed place to continue the political conversations with General Ivanov. They had assurances of personal safety, and a definite promise that on March 29 representatives of the Polish Resistance Movement numbering 12 persons would be given an aeroplane to go to London for consultations with the Polish Government and Polish political circles. After the consultations, the delegates were to return to Poland for further conversations.

3. In the course of the introductory conversations, which were held between March 17 and 27, Vice Premier Jankowski asked Colonel Pimienov where lay the boundary line between the competence of the Lublin Committee on the one hand and the Red Army on the other. He received the reply that the committee must comply with the directions it received from the Command of the 1st White Russian front, which it must consider as binding. This explains why the Soviet Government attaches so great an importance to the Lublin Committee remaining the main nucleus of the future Polish Government.

The Polish Telegraph Agency also learns that when the parties interested give their consent, there will be published a collection of documents illustrating exhaustively the problem of the disclosure of the Polish leaders, and which will contain reports of the conversations held before their arrest.

No. 30

Tass Communique dated 14th June.

From the USSR Prosecutor's Office: As is known from the statement issued by Tass on 6th May, the military authorities of the Soviet Front arrested a group of Poles, headed by General Okulicki, accused of organising terrorist and diversionary activities and maintaining illegal radio transmitters in the rear of Soviet troops on Polish territory. The investigation of this case by the Chief Military Prosecutor's Office has now been completed. The persons to be tried are Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien, Jasiukowicz and others - in all, 16 persons. The case has been passed on for examination to the Military Tribunal of the Supreme Court of Justice of the USSR. The hearing is expected to take place in a few day's time.

No. 31

Statement issued by the Polish Government, dated 15th June.

In connection with the announcement made on June 15th in London, Washington and Moscow concerning the consultations to be held by the Commission of the Three Powers, envisaged under Par. VI of the Resolutions of the Crimean Conference, the Polish Government consider it their duty to make t the following statement:-

1. Despite the efforts and endeavours made by the Governments of Great Britain and the United States for the liberation of the 4 Ministers of the Government of the Polish Republic, the President of the Council of National Unity /the Underground Parliament/, the leaders of the democratic parties and of the last commander of the now disbanded Home Army who were craftily arrested at the end of March last by the Soviet authorities, these men are still deprived of their freedom and their fate is unknown.

For upwards of five years they have heroically conducted the campaign of the Polish Nation against the German occupant. With the aim of bringing about an improvement in Polish-Soviet relations, they, as being the most characteristically representative of Poland, entered into discussion with the Soviet authorities at the invitation of the Soviet authorities themsleves, and with the knowledge of the Polish Government. In doing so they put their full trust in the solemn word of the representative of the Red

Army who guaranteed to them their complete personal security and promised they should be given every possibility for direct consultations with the Polish Government and political circles in London.

If the intention to commit the arrested Polish leaders for trial should be carried into effect, it would frustrate any attempts at a genuine Polish- Soviet understanding and would hamper the organising of collaboration between the Soviet Union and the United Nations.

The Polish Government believe that the Government of Great Britain and the United States will be able to convince the Soviet Government of the exigency of releasing the imprisoned Polish leaders immediately.

2. The imprisonment of the Polish leaders is one of the facts characteristic of the situation in Poland under the occupation of the Soviet Army. Throughout the country there is a reign of terrorism. Mass arrests and deportations embrace all sections of the community. There is no longer any freedom of speech, freedom of the Press, freedom of assemblage, nor the liberty to form societies. The present system of government is repugnant to the Polish Nation and foreign to its way of thinking. Actual authority is left in non-Polish hands.

3. In the face of these tragic realities the creation of a legal and independent government of national unity, based on the freely expressed will of the people is a practical impossibility so long as the Polish Republic is occupied by the Soviet army and the Soviet political police /NKVD/, and so long as Poland is cut off from her Western Allies and the whole civilised world.

4. The presence of the Soviet army on territory of the Polish Republic after the termination of hostilities against the Germans in Europe is not justified by any considerations of war, and is moreover contrary to Point VI of the Joint Declaration by the Four Powers on October 30, 1943, which lays down that: "... After the termination of hostilities they /the Four Powers/ will not employ their military forces within the territories of other states..."

5. Any action on the part of the great Western Democracies with a view to normalising conditions in Poland should be preceded by:

a/ The immediate withdrawal from Poland of the Soviet Army and political police.

b/ The liberation of all Polish citizens arrested and deported since 1939.

c/ Desistance from imposing upon Poland a political system which is extraneous to her.

No. 32.

Mr. W. Raczkiewicz, President of the Republic of Poland, to Mr. Truman, President of the United States of America: telegram sent on 16th June.

The Vice Premier of the Polish Government Jankowski, three members of the Government, the last Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army and the most distinguished representatives of the 4 main Polish political parties and leaders of the Polish Underground movement who were arrested in Poland by the Soviet authorities at the end of March are according to Press information to be brought for trial before the Supreme Soviet Tribunal within the next few days. You, Mr. President, are well aware that at the head of the Polish Underground movement and the Home Army all those who have now been arrested waged an inexorable struggle against the German invader. Since the moment when the Soviet army in its fight against the German army crossed into Polish territory, these men directed the operations of the Polish military and civilian underground in a way which facilitated the actions of the Soviet army. As advocates of a genuine understanding with Soviet Russia, the went with the knowledge of the Polish Government and at the invitation of Soviet military authorities for political discussions aimed at facilitating such an understanding. They were arrested by the Soviet authorities although they had previously been given a solemn guarantee of personal security. In these conditions the trial of political leaders of one of the United Nations before the Court of another must be regarded as a hostile act against the Polish Nation and contrary to the publicly declared aims of the war and peace of the United Nations. I appeal to you, Mr. President, to use every means at your disposal to prevent such a grievous injustice, which can only intensify the Polish Nation's sense of wrongful treatment and evoke provound indignation throughout the whole civilised world, and that you do all in your power to obtain the release of the arrested persons, and a guarantee of personal security for them and their families.

No. 33

Statement issued by the Polish Government, dated 19th June.

In connection with the Moscow trial of the 16 representatives of the

Polish Underground movement, the Polish Government states:-

1. The 16 men who are now in the dock in Moscow have directed the struggle of the Polish Nation against Germany for over 5 years. Thus the present trial in Moscow is the trial of the whole Polish Underground movement.

2. The four main Polish parties formed the basis and provided the leadership of the Polish Underground movement. This movement was thus not only an instrument of warfare against the Germans, but also the political representation of the whole Polish Nation, in the fullest sense of this term. Thus the four main Polish parties, to wit the Peasant Party, the Socialist Party, the National Party and theChristian Democratic Party, are now in the dock in Moscow.

3. The authorities which had been set up and recognised by the Polish people themselves and which formed an integral part of the lawful Government of the Polish Republic have been tricked into disclosing their identity and are now being tried by a foreign tribunal for their patriotic activities in their own home country. Thus in the dock are the Polish Vice Premier, three Polish Cabinet Ministers, and the last Commander of the now disbanded Polish Home Army which fought against the Germans and formed an integral part of the Polish Armed Forces fighting under orders of the Allied High Command.

4. Combatant rights have been officially granted to the Polish Home Army by the British and American Governments on August 30th, 1944.

5. Ever since the Soviet Union was attacked by Germany, the Polish Home Army effectively assisted the Red Army by unrelenting sabotage and partisan activities. When the Soviet forces entered Polish territory, the Polish Home Army was instructed by the Polish Government and the Polish C-in-C in London to co-operate actively with the Red Army. These orders were strictly and wholeheartedly carried out by the Polish Home Army.

6. The above is fully confirmed not only by events and incidents known to the whole world, but also by numerous trustworthy eye-witnesses' reports of both Poles and foreigners who have arrived from Poland recently.

7. The date of the trial of the leaders of the Polish Resistance Movement was chosen with a view that it should take place concurrently with the Polish political consultations now held in Moscow. This coincidence shows that there is a set purpose to maintain in part the government imposed on Poland from outside by force, through the attempted discrediting of the legal authorities of the Polish Republic and of all Polish democratic groups. This purpose is to be achieved by accusations aiming at both the present and the former Polish Governments.

The Polish Underground movement and the Polish people led by it have done their duty well towards their own country and the common cause of the Allies. The Polish Government and all Poles are in heart and spirit today by the side of the best sons of the Polish nation now being tried in Moscow.

No. 34

Communique issued by the Polish Telegraph Agency, dated 19th June.

According to reports from Moscow from Reuter and other agencies, the indictment against the Polish democratic leaders charged them with leading in Poland an underground movement and a secret military organisation alleged to have committed diversionary activities at the rear of the Soviet Forces, as a result of which 594 officers and other ranks of the Red Army were said to have been killed and 249 wounded between July 28, 1944 and May 31,1945.

In connection with the above charges, the Polish Telegraph Agency has to state the following:

World opinion is fully informed that ever since the autumn of 1939 there has existed in Poland a secret underground civilan organisation and Home Army, which with the moral and material support of the Allied Governments /arms, ammunition, explosives, radio transmitters, etc./ for five years waged a successful armed struggle against the German occupants. In this struggle the Polish Nation sustained tremendous losses and contributed to the victory of the United Nations and facilitated to a very considerable degree the victorious advance of the Red Army. In the course of this struggle the Home Army had to its credit such actions as the occupation of Wilno in July 1944 by the 1st and 20th Divisions of the Home Army. The 5th Division, 5000 men strong, took part in the fighting which resulted in the capture of Lwow. Among the innumerable lesser examples showing the extent of the Home Army's achivements is the liberation by the 27th Division of Turzynek near Kowel, and Sztun near Brzesc, while at the same time units of the 5th Division cooperated with the Soviet Army in the battles for Rzeszow, Staszow, etc. The history of the Warsaw rising is too well known to need repeating. The Home Army was recognised as an army with combatant status by the British and American Governments. The defendants at the Moscow trials have therefore not only the right but also the duty to declare that in accordance with orders received from the Polish Government and in defence of the Polish Nation's right to independence, they led the Polish Resistance Movement against Germany.

The Polish Underground Movement, the civilian authorities and the Home Amry received orders to co-operate with the Soviet Army. These orders they carried out. Furthermore, they received orders to disclose themselves before the Soviet authorities, and these orders too were carried out fully during the first stages of the advance of the Soviet Forces into Poland.

Unfortunately, however, the Soviet military authorities which gladly availed themselves of the help of the Home Army, once the operations carried out together were completed, disarmed the unites which had helped them and arrested the commanders, some of whom they executed on the spot and some they deported to the interior of the USSR. Other ranks were focibly enlisted into the so-called Zymierski Forces, while those who displayed opposition were imprisoned in concentration camps.

In many countries of Europe, in France, Belgium, Holland, etc., there existed underground movements which came into the open immediately after the entry of Allied troops. They would not have done so, in all probability, if the Armies of Liberation were to have come to impose upon them a foreign communist government, and if they were to declare that the members of the underground movements were fascist traitors, as did the so-called Lublin Committee in their first declaration of July 22, 1944. The authorities of the Polish Underground Movement were to have disclosed themselves before the Russians throughout the whole of Polish territory. When, however, the Soviet authorities adopt a hostile attitude towards them, the Polish Government dissolved the Home Army on January 19th, 1945, and ordered the political authorities to remain in concealment and to maintain contact with their legal Government and Allies.

It is impossible to ascertain whether, for what reasons and in what circumstances the soldiers of the Red Army were killed or wounded. It certainly did not happen, as alleged in the indictment, as a result of any action on the part of the Polish Home Army, which until the end remained loyal to itslleaders and Allies. It is necessary to explain, however, that ever since the so-called Lublin Committee took over the administration of Poland , the country has been in a state of complete chaos. The countryside is infested with German deserters and armed bands of various nationalities, the existince of which was publicly conceded by the Soviet Government as well as by the so-called Lublin Committee. The Soviet and Lublin authorities are carrying out requisitions and calling up men for military service, all of which the population is desperately resisting. In recent times, units of the army were also employed, using tanks, artillery and aeroplanes, and scores of villages were burnt down. In the struggle with the population, who are defending their lives and property, there were casualties on both sides, but the responsibility for them must rest with the authorities at present in power in Poland.

World opinion still remembers the great propaganda trials in Moscow in 1936 - 38, when the defendants were members of the Soviet Government and communist leaders, and it will be in the same way that it will treat the present propaganda trial of the democratic leaders of the Polish Underground Movement. The mystery of some of the defendants confessing to actions that they had never committed will possibly never be explained, just as nobody has yet explained the mystery of the self-accusation in the former trials.

No. 35

Verdict of the USSR Supreme Court Military Collegium in the trial of the Polish leaders; 21st June.

...The Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Court recognised as proved the guilt of Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz in committing crimes specified by Articles 58/8/, 58 /9/ and 58/11/ of the RSFSR Criminal Code, and Okulicki in addition by article 58 /6/ of the RSFSR Criminal Code. As for the accused Puzak, Zwierzynski, Baginski, Mierzwa, Stypulkowski, Czarnowski, Chacinski and Urbanski, it has been established that all of them, being aware of the Polish underground leaders' failure to comply with the Soviet Military Command's orders for the surrender of arms, ammunition and radio stations intended for hostile activities against the USSR in the rear of the Red Army in the field, concealed this from the organs of the Soviet Military Command, thus committing the crime specified by article 58 /12/ of the RSFSR Criminal Code. The charge against them for committing crimes as specified by Articles 17, 58 /8/, /9/, and /11/ owing to insufficient evidence, is to be considered as not proven.

The guilt of Michalowski, Kobylanski, and Stamler Dabski, as accomplices of Okulicki and other Polish underground leaders of crimes specified by articles 17, 58 /8/, /9/ and /11/ of the RSFSR Criminal Code was not sufficiently confirmed at the judidial investigation.

In determining the measure of punishment for the accused, the Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Court, taking into account all the circumstances of the present case, also recognises the victorious accomplishment of the Great Fatherland war by the USSR. Remembering that in the conditions of transition to peaceful construction, application of severe punishment including shooting as specified in article of the Criminal Code, is not directed by necessity, the USSR Supreme Court Military Collegium has sentenced;

1. Leopold Blazewicz Okulicki, Jan-Stanislaw Josefowicz Jankowski, Adam Walentewicz Bien and Stanislaw Ignacjewicz Jasiukowicz, on the basis of paragraph 58 /2/ of the RSFSR Criminal Code, to be deprived of freedom: Okulicki for 10 years, Jankowski for eight years, Bien and Jasiukowicz for five years each.

2. Kazimierz Wojciechowicz Puzak, Kazimierz Stanislawowicz Baginski, Alexander Kazimierzowicz Zwierzynski, Eugeniusz Stanislawowicz Czarnowski, Stanislaw Francowicz Mierzwa, Zbigniew Francowicz Stypulkowski, Josef Antonowicz Chacinski and Franciszek Andrejewicz Urbanski: to be acquitted of

crimes specified in paragraphs 17, 58 /8/. 58/9/, and 58 /11/ of the RSFSR Criminal Code, but on the basis of paragraph 58 /12/ of the RSFSR Criminal Code, by applying to Mierzwa, Stypulkowski, Chacinski and Urbanski, paragraph 51 of the same code, to be deprived of freedom as follows: Puzak for 18 months, Baginski for one year, Zwierzynski for eight mohths, Czarnowski for six months, Mierzwa, Stypulkowski, Chacinski and Urbanski for four months each.

The term of deprivation of freedom for all the twelve sentenced, to be counted from the day each was taken into custody in the present case.

3. Stanislaw Francowicz Michalowski, Kazimierz Samuilowicz Kobylanski and Josef Henrykowicz Stemler-Dabski are to be acquitted by the Court.

Exhibits and documents in this case must remain attached to the records while various radio installations are to be confiscated. The sentence is final and not subject to appeal. /Signed/ The Presiding Judge, Chairman of the Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Court, Col. Gen. of Justice Ulrich. Members of the Military Collegium of the USSR Supreme Court, Maj. Gen. of Justice Dmitriev, Col. of Justice Ekistov.

C O N T E N T S

/All documents bear the date 1945/

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19. Parliamentary Debates /Hansard, 2nd May, Vol 409, No. 71/

20. British Statement on suspension of discussion of Polish Question, issued in San Francisco, 5th May.

21. Statement made by Mr. Stettinius on the suspension of discussion of the Polish question: San Francisco, 5th May.

22. Tass Communique of 5th May.

23. Polish Government's appeal to Mr. Stettinius, as Chairman of the San Francisco Conference, dated 6th May.

24. Mr. A. Tarnowski, Polish Minister for Foreign Affairs, to Mr. Eden British Foreign Secretary, and Mr. Stettinius, U.S. Secretary of State: telegrams dated 7th May.

25. Parliamentary Debates, /Hansard, Vol 409, No. 75/, 9th May.

26. Statement made by Mr. Eden, British Foreign Secretary, in San Francisco. /TIMES, 12th May./

27. Statement made by Mr. Jedrychowski, representative of the Lublin Committee in Paris. /French Telegraphic Agency Communique of 13th May/

28. Letter from Marshal Stalin to Mr. R. Parker, Moscow Correspondent of "The Times", dated 18th May. /TIMES, 21 May/

29. Communique issued by Polish Telegraphic Agency, dated 22nd May.

30. Tass Communique dated 14th June.

31. Statement issued by the Polish Government, dated 15th June.

32. Mr. W. Raczkiewicz, President of the Republic of Poland, to Mr. Truman, President of the United States of America: telegram sent on 16th June.

33. Statement issued by the Polish Government dated 19th June.

34. Communique issued by the Polish Telegraph Agency, dated 19th June.

35. Verdict of the USSR Supreme Court Military Collegium in the trial of the Polish leaders: 21st June.