THE INTRODUCTION OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM INTO POLAND

by

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ABSTRACT

World-wide expansion of the Soviet system has always been regarded by the Kremlin as a basic condition on which "true" communism can develop towards its final goal: the Marxist Utopia of a "perfect State". Consequently, the first object of sovietization on the path of communist expansion toward the West was Poland.

The purpose of the essay is to trace, step by step, the still-progressing but not yet accomplished process of the sovietization of Poland. It attempts to show how the Soviet system has come to prevail in a country traditionally hostile to Russia and to the communist ideology.

The introductory part deals with the development of Soviet-Polish relationships before and during the Second World War. It shows how, after twenty years of peaceful co-existence, the Soviet system, preceded by military aggression, was forced upon the eastern provinces of Poland, and how these territories were incorporated into the Soviet Union and "purged" of elements regarded as dangerous to the "Soviet way of life". Further, the Introduction describes the short period of Soviet-Polish "co-operation" in the war effort, when, in spite of the fact that the Soviet Union was forced to join the camp of the western democracies, far-sighted plans for the sovietization of the post-war Polish State were maturing in Moscow. This part describes, as well, the birth of the com-
munist Underground in Poland, which united with the Union of Polish "Pat­
riots" and came out into the open after the severance of diplomatic rel­
ations by Moscow with the Polish Government in London.

Part Two, "The Struggle for Power", relates how the Committee
of National Liberation, supported by the Russian Army, assumed the role
of a government in Poland, and gained the recognition of the Western
Powers. It describes the destruction of the Home Army, with the extermin­
ation of the democratic Underground. It also shows communist methods in
the pre-election campaign, the election of a Diet supporting the Govern­
ment of National Unity, and the suppression of the legalized opposition.
Furthermore, it deals with the liquidation of socialist opposition groups
within the Government-sponsored "Bloc", of sham political parties, and
with the purge of "Polish Titoism" within the United Workers' Party.

Part Three, "The Sovietization of Life and Constitution", is
an attempt to sketch roughly the immediate post-war sovietization of the
Polish economy and the main trends in Polish industry and agriculture
during the two National Plans of 1947 and 1950. It also deals with the
sovietization of Courts of Justice, the Army, the schools and universities,
and the youth organizations. Finally there is a brief analysis of the
Constitution of 1952 in the light of its final goal of "putting into
effect the great ideals of socialism", of the Soviet type.

An effort has been made throughout to set out the facts as they
have happened, without bias or emotion. No conclusions of any kind have
been drawn.

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PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

I

Soviet - Polish Relations Before the Second World War

The first attempt to establish a communist system in Poland was made during the Polish-Russian war of 1919-1920. During the summer offensive of 1920, aimed at capturing Warsaw, a group of Polish communists, assembled by the Comintern in Bialystok, proclaimed itself a Polish Revolutionary Government. This group, to which belonged such prominent figures of international communism as Feliks Dzierzynski and Julian Kohn, attempted to create its Red Polish Division, and issued to "the soldiers, workers and peasants of Poland"\(^1\), proclamations calling the Polish proletariat to "the final struggle against the world of exploitation"\(^1\). As later admitted by Trotsky, the Soviet leaders seriously counted on the Polish masses joining the revolution. Soon, however, they were bitterly disappointed. The Polish "proletariat" did not want social reform after the Soviet pattern. The peasantry, workers, and intelligentsia were called out for the defence of their newly regained independence, by acknowledged leaders of all political orientations, and they supported the Coalition Government. The Red Army was stopped at

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the gates of Warsaw and forced to retreat. In October, 1920, the war came to an end, and on March 8th, 1921, the Treaty of Riga was signed. By this treaty, after prolonged negotiations, both sides agreed upon a frontier line, and expressed a wish for "lasting and honorable peace". The Polish Revolutionary Government was quietly dismissed, and its members remained in the Soviet Union.

This Polish experience, as well as later communist defeats in Germany and China, radically changed the Moscow conception of communist expansion. Consequently, Lenin's policy of NEP and the idea of consolidation of power replaced Trotsky's vision of "permanent revolution in the world".1

The Polish-Soviet frontier was recognized by Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, and the United States, in March and April of 1923,2 and this decision was regarded as a supplement to the Treaty of Versailles.3

The Treaty of Riga was never carried out in full. In spite of mutual distrust, however, several minor agreements and conventions signed by the two governments in the early twenties undoubtedly improved relationships. Commercial dealings began in 1925, with the organization of the joint stock companies, POLROS and SOVFOLTOGR, and in 1926 the

1. These changes of tactics were discussed at the 10th Communist Party Congress, held in Moscow from the 8th to the 16th of March, 1921.
3. Ibid, Article 87, Paragraph 3.
Polish-Soviet Chamber of Commerce was established in Warsaw. A special passport convention made it possible for Polish merchants to visit the Soviet Union.

The most important, however, from the Polish point of view, was the so-called LITVINOV PROTOCOL, signed in Moscow on February 9, 1929, by the U.S.S.R., Poland, Latvia, Estonia, and, later, by Lithuania, Turkey, and Persia. It brought into force the Kellogg-Briand Pact of 1929, condemning armed aggression or invasion, and renouncing war as an instrument of national policy. Further improvements came in 1932, when a three-year non-aggression pact was signed by the two countries. In May, 1934, this pact was extended for a period of over ten years. This Non-Aggression Pact, together with the "Definition of Aggression" of the London convention of 1933, again was confirmed on September 10, 1934, in connection with the entry of the Soviet Union into the League of Nations.

The year 1938 brought further improvement still. On November 26, after a series of conversations of Litvinov, with the Polish ambassador, a Joint Communique was issued in Moscow. This communique stressed that

2. Ibid, No. 9, Page 96.
3. Ibid, No. 8, Page 88.
5. Ibid, No. 11, Page 94.
relations between the two countries would continue to be based on the 1932 Non-Aggression Pact and other existing agreements. In the Joint Communiqué, given wide publicity by the Soviet press, the two governments agreed to extend their commercial relations and to check recurring frontier incidents. To these "incidents" belonged the frequent appearance of Soviet planes over Polish territory, clashes of patrols, and petty raids across the border.

Thus, at the beginning of 1939, Polish-Soviet relations were friendly, and in February, 1939, a new commercial treaty was signed. On May 31, speaking before the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., Molotov stated that the communique of November 28, 1938, "confirmed the development of good neighborly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Poland." As late as August 27, 1939, Izviestia published an interview with Marshall Voroshilov, in which he talked about the delivery of war materials and military equipment to Poland.

Even two days after the hostilities had begun, the Soviet ambassador in Warsaw asked Minister Beck why the Polish Government did not secure war supplies from the Soviet Union, "as the Voroshilov interview has opened up the possibility of getting them." It is noteworthy, however, that the Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact was signed four days before Voroshilov's statement, and contained the clause:

1. Pravda, November 26 and 28, 1938
   Izviestia, November 27 and 28, 1938


3. Ibid, Page 22
"In the event of one of the contracting parties becoming the object of warlike action on the part of a third power, the other contracting party shall in no case support this third power."  

What is more, a secret protocol, discovered after the Second World War, was added to the Soviet German pact. Article Two of this protocol provided that:

"In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish State, the spheres of influence of Germany and the U.S.S.R. will be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narew, Vistula, and San. The question, whether the interest of both parties makes desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish State, and how such a state should be bounded, can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments. In any event, both governments will resolve this question by means of a friendly agreement."

The "event of a territorial and political rearrangement" came a week after the pact, and brought the outbreak of the Second World War. On September 10, Molotov informed the German ambassador in Moscow that the Soviet Government, wishing to protect the Ukrainian and White Russian minorities of Poland from the hardships of war, intended to send Soviet troops into eastern Poland. The German Government opposed this, but finally an agreement was reached. Early on September 17, 1939, the Polish ambassador in Moscow was informed by the note of the Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Potemkin, that all agreements concluded between the U.S.S.R. and Poland had ceased to operate, "because of the factual disint-

egration of the Polish State and its government." He added that the Soviet Government had ordered Soviet troops to cross the Polish frontier in order "to protect the life and property of the population of the western Ukraine and western Byelorussia. This note shows how the Soviet authorities attempted to "justify" the invasion by representing the eastern provinces of Poland as a "No-Man's-Land".

In answer, the Polish Government, then in Kuty in south-eastern Poland, issued a communique protesting against the Soviet invasion as "a violation of the Non-Aggression Pact". Next day, a joint German-Soviet communique, concerning military co-operation on Polish territory, stated that the aim of both armies was "to restore peace and order destroyed by the collapse of the Polish State, and to help the Polish population to reconstruct the conditions of their political existence."

Unexpectedly, Soviet troops numbering to thirty divisions of infantry, ten divisions of cavalry, and twelve mechanized brigades, met with disorganized but fierce resistance from Polish Army units stationed in eastern Poland. The Soviet Operational Communiques referred to sharp encounters fought in the cities of Molodeczno, Grodno, and Pinsk, and announced the liquidation of a number of Polish Army units as late as two weeks after the crossing of the border.


As in 1920, the Soviet High Command issued proclamations to the Polish soldiers, calling them "not to shed blood in vain, in defence of the interests of the landlords and capitalists".  

The Soviet invasion was a deadly blow to the Polish cause. Twenty-five Polish divisions were still offering resistance to the Germans, and, though there was no doubt that their annihilation was only a matter of time, the appearance of the Red Army made it impossible to evacuate any part of them via Rumania and Hungary, to France, as was intended. 

Commenting on this, The Times, representing, perhaps, the universal reaction of the Western World, wrote:

"To the Soviet belongs the base and despicable share of accessory before and after the crime, and the contempt which even the thief has for a receiver who shares none of his original risks."  

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II.

Formal Incorporation of Polish Eastern Provinces with the U.S.S.R.

Five days after the Soviet invasion, representatives of the German and Soviet staffs fixed the demarcation line between their Occupation Zones. On September 28, in Moscow, the final partition of Polish territories took place. Germany grabbed 48.4% of the Polish State, and the Soviet Union got 51.6%. The Partition line ran along the rivers Pissa, Bug and San. In the Bug sector, it was identical with the demarcation line suggested by Lord Curzon in 1920.

The Agreement included a warning to all states who might disagree with the partition. It is found in Article Two of the treaty, which says:

"Both countries recognize as final the frontier between their respective state interests,...and will resist any interference with this decision on the part of other powers."¹

On October 6, Hitler reported to the German Reichstag:

"The Poland of the Versailles Treaty will never rise again. This is guaranteed by two of the largest states in the world. Final re-organization of this territory, and the question of re-establishment of the Polish State are problems which will not be solved by a war in the west, but exclusively by Russia and Germany."²


On the 31st of October, Foreign Minister Molotov, in his speech to the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., seconded the Führer:

"One swift blow to Poland, first by the German Army and then by the Red Army, and nothing was left of the ugly offspring of the Versailles Treaty."

Unlike the Germans, who made no attempt to present the annexation as based on the wishes of the population, the Soviet Union insisted on playing the role of "liberator from the Polish yoke."

The Regional Provisional Administrations of the "Western Ukraine" and "Western Byelorussia", appointed in the first days of October by the commanders of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian front, announced in the Lvov press their decision to hold elections of the National Assemblies of the Republics. This statement expressed the hope that the people

"would declare at the National Assembly their deep and unshakeable will...to build a free, happy, and ample existence jointly with the whole Ukrainian nation in the powerful family of the Soviet Union."

Similar hopes were expressed by the press in Białystok. Consequently, two main committees with the task of organization of the elections were set up, the majority of the members being brought from the Soviet Union. For instance, the Lvov Committee for the western Ukraine included seven Red Army officers, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian S.S.R., Grechukha, and a Soviet-Ukrainian writer, Korneychuk, who later became the Foreign Commissar of the Ukrainian S.S.R. Similarly, among the members of the Byelorussian Committee in Białystok were the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Byelorussian S.S.R., two deputies of this Soviet,

1. The Red Standard, October 5, 1939
and three officers of the Red Army and N.K.V.D. Among the candidates to the two assemblies there were also various Soviet dignitaries completely unknown to the population of the projected republics.

The number of constituencies in both republics was 2424. In each of them, only one candidate was put forward by the local party cells, and sometimes "approved" at public meetings organized by specified groups and organizations, such as trade unions. This, of course, made the voting a pure farce. The elections took place on October 29th, in an atmosphere of fear, caused by mass arrests of prominent citizens, who were branded as "enemies of the people". Hundreds of cases of violence, including murders, were recorded by the Polish and Ukrainian "Underground", and are even mentioned by the Soviet press as the "cleaning up of gendarmes, young Jesuits, agents of the Intelligence Service, and Kulaks, in town and country".\(^1\)

The presence of large detachments of the Red Army helped to ensure an atmosphere of acceptance among the people.

The Soviet troops were, as usual, politically active. "Here with us, all Red Army men and their leaders must be agitators," wrote, for instance, a Soviet colonel, in Pravda\(^2\). Similarly, Izvestia, in describing the electoral campaign, commented:

"Thousands of soldiers and officers carried on widespread political work among the population. Agitators - soldiers were everywhere.... Red Army men... helped to create electoral districts... and drew up lists of electors."\(^3\)

\(^1\) Izvestia, September 28, 1939

Dispatches from Volkovysk, September 25, 1939.

\(^2\) Pravda, September 21, 1939.

\(^3\) Izvestia, February 20, 19340.
The Army, also, took active part in canvassing for votes, something highly illegal in the light of international law in western Europe. Besides, the election procedure, published on October 7, by the local press, left only two weeks for preparing lists of voters, in a country full of war refugees a practically impossible task.

Voting was announced as a "social duty" and was practically compulsory. No wonder, therefore, that, according to the Soviet statistics, 92.63% and 96.71% of voters took part in the polls in the western Ukraine and western Byelorussia, respectively, and that nine-tenths of the valid votes were given for "Soviet-sponsored" candidates. There was, of course, no organized opposition, and, though there was no law forcing people to vote, abstention was highly dangerous.

On October 27th and 29th, the elected Assemblies met in Bialystok and Lvov, respectively, and unanimously adopted resolutions confiscating land estates, nationalizing banks and industry, asking for admission into the Soviet Union, and, above all, "paying homage to the great Stalin." On November 1st and 2nd, the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. issued two decrees

"to comply with the petition of the National Assembly of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia for the incorporation of Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia into the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics, and for their union with the Ukrainian

1. According to the rules of the 4th Hague Convention of 1907.

2. Cardwell, Ann S., Poland and Russia; the Last Quarter Century, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1944, Page 67 - 70.

and White Russian Soviet Socialistic Republics."¹

These decrees marked the formal annexation of the parts of Poland east of the September Ribbentrop-Molotov line.

The annexation of the eastern provinces of Poland was not the only triumph of communist expansion. Since the Franco-British appeasement at Munich, the governments of the Baltic countries were urged by the Comintern propaganda to accept unilateral Soviet guarantees of their independence. Though strongly advised by the Soviet Union, the guarantees were rejected, as they would mean the placing of Soviet troops in these republics. The Soviet-German non-aggression pact, however, and the fate of Poland, changed the situation. The Baltic republics were forced to sign agreements for the setting up of Soviet military bases on their territories.¹

The Soviet-Lithuanian treaty of October 10, 1939, transferred to Lithuania 3219 square miles of former Polish area, including Vilna, the ancient capital of Lithuania. This gift was, of course, immediately presented to world opinion as a proof of Soviet generosity and sense of justice because

"there had never been a case in world history of a big country handing over, of its own free will, such a big city to a small state."²

The old Polish-Lithuanian dispute over Vilna was again inflamed. This clash of the Polish population with their new masters gave Moscow an


excellent excuse to attack "Lithuanian Fascists" for maltreating "our brother Poles", during a broadcasted mass meeting in Minsk. Shortly thereafter, on July 15, 1940, Vilna, this time with the addition of the entire Lithuanian republic, was incorporated in the Soviet Union. The same fate was met by Latvia and Estonia.
Purges and Deportations

In the first two months of Soviet rule in eastern Poland, various measures were taken to classify the population. In addition to some 13.2 million prewar population, there were a vast number of refugees from the western part of the country occupied by Germans.

On November 29, 1939, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet issued a decree referring to the Soviet Citizenship Law of 1938, and describing the following as Soviet citizens:

1. Former Polish citizens who were on the territory of the western Ukraine and Byelorussia when these became part of the U.S.S.R. (November 1 and 2, 1932)

2. Persons who arrived in the U.S.S.R. on the basis of the agreement of November 16, 1939 (between the governments of the Soviet Union and Germany), or as a result of the cession by the U.S.S.R. to Lithuania of the city of Vilna in accordance with the agreement of October 10, 1939

This forcing of Soviet citizenship on all residents of the occupied provinces was followed by posters ordering conscription for military service of men from 18 to 50 years of age. The first call-up took place at the beginning of 1940, and by 1941 about 150,000 Polish citizens were conscripted. Women who had completed a nursing or first-aid course were also registered for auxiliary service in the Red Army.

In 1939 there had been in Poland no organized Communist Party. The old Polish Communist Party, P.K.P., accused of "Trotskyism" and dissolved in 1937 by the Comintern, was not recreated before the outbreak of the war. On the other hand, the party activists imported from Russia could hardly fulfil the task of the sovietization of minds in eastern Poland. As well, it was not easy to win for the cause local citizens of some worth and influence. Moreover, the Russian alliance with Germany turned against the Soviet Union even the local Jewish, Polish, Ukrainian or Byelorussian "Marxists", to say nothing of the members of other leftist groups. Reliable candidates, therefore, to whom "effective teaching" of the masses could be entrusted were notoriously rare. The leftist politicians of the annexed provinces were severely purged. For example, out of twenty-seven leaders of the Polish Socialist Party, sixteen were shot or died in prisons. Similarly, the Jewish "Bund" lost four, and the Ukrainian Social-Democratic Party six of their leaders in the first two months of the occupation.¹

Next, writers and reporters were given special attention. To secure the services of radically disposed writers, poets, and journalists, a literary circle was formed in Lvov, and, not without the help of the N.K.V.D., a small group of them decided to accept "the Soviet reality" and co-operate with the Party. In February, 1940, "New Horizons", a literary and political monthly, appeared in Lvov, under the editorship of Helen Ullyevich, daughter of the "Premier-Designate" of 1920, Feliks Kohn.

Co-editor of this lady was Wanda Wasilewska, the future wife of the Soviet writer and politician Korneychuk. Of the old Polish Communists collaborating with the journal, the most prominent "brains" were Jerzy Borejsza (Goldman), and a former member of the 1920 Bialystok government, Alfred Lanpe. These two were regarded as responsible for the arrest and deportation of several writers who refused to co-operate with "New Horizons". The journal could hardly, however, fulfil its prescribed role of "sovietization of minds". Called in its sub-title "the organ of the Soviet writers", and carrying a strong Soviet patriotic note, it was much too Russian to gain popularity among Polish and Ukrainian readers.

Much more attention was paid in this early period to a drastic "purge" of all elements regarded as dangerous or undesirable than to the advocating of Communist ideology. It was easy to eliminate this undesirable element. Materialistic philosophy teaches that "living conditions determine the state of mind". All, therefore, who had been accustomed to better conditions than those faced in eastern Poland, under the Soviet rule, were regarded as hostile to the Soviet system. This did not mean that only the rich were to be distrusted. Incorporation into the Soviet economic system caused a sizeable decline in the already low standard of living, which affected even the poorest class of society. Consequently, even the dwarf-holders belonged to the suspected ones, and were often deported to remote districts of the Soviet Union. The first to suffer, however, were the members of the intelligentsia, well-to-do farmers, landowners, and former civil servants. Removal of these social groups from the areas undergoing a complicated process of sovietization was regarded as a condition of success.
The Soviet deportation policy was, in practice, no different from that of the Germans in western Poland. The principles, however, were different. The mass deportations to Germany and Austria were motivated by the demand for man-power on the German labour-market. Consequently, only people fit for work were seized by the Germans. The Soviet motive was political: to remove and exterminate politically hostile elements. A large number of deportees, therefore, were people unfit for labour, such as old men and women, and even children of the suspects.

Soon after the elections, the Security Police ordered the registration of all persons

"who with regard to their social and political past, their religious convictions, moral or political unreliability, are opponents of the socialist system, and who, therefore, are accessible to exploitation for anti-Soviet purposes...."

A special proclamation labelled as "anti-Soviet" elements persons such as:

"a) members of non-Communist political parties, including Anarchists and Trotskyites.

b) members of student corporations and youth sporting organizations.

c) former gendarmes, policemen, and prison wardens."

d) former officers and volunteers of non-Soviet armies.

e) refugees and political emigrants or re-emigrants.

f) smugglers.

g) representatives of foreign firms, officials of foreign governments.

h) persons maintaining contact abroad or with Consulates of foreign states (including stamp-collectors and esperantists)

i) former civil servants of higher grade.

j) former employees of the Red Cross.
k) clergy and members of religious societies.
l) former nobility, landowners, businessmen, industrialists, bankers and other persons "who profited from the work of hired labour".

Together with the registration came mass deportations of "undesirable elements". In all, four of these took place between 1939 and 1941. The first deportation, in February, 1940, affected chiefly guards, employees (and their families) in public service such as forests, as well as settlers from western Poland, who had received land in consequence of Polish agrarian reforms. Most of these were veterans of the war of 1920. In all, a hundred and ten fully-loaded trains left for the north east, mostly for the region of Archangelsk.

The second mass deportation took place in April, 1940. It affected chiefly the wealthier peasants, with their families, and the families of officers, N.C.O.'s and policemen, as well as those of previously arrested public servants and landowners. This time, a hundred and sixty trains were despatched to northern Kazakhstan and western Siberia.

In the third deportation, in July, 1940, the victims were refugees from western Poland. They were sent to north-European Russia and to the Kazakhstan.

Finally, after the annexation of the Baltic countries in late 1940, and early 1941, the "undesirable elements" were expelled from the Vilna district. This deportation affected Polish refugees in Lithuania

The Polish Underground estimated the number of deported people as follows: 220,000 in February, 1940.
320,000 in April, 1940.
270,000 in June and July, 1940.
200,000 from the Vilna district.¹

The deportations were effected according to the instruction of the Commissariat of Security of the U.S.S.R. (N.K.V.B.), which considered them as "a matter of great political importance". The arrests were to be carried out "without noise or panic", by special executive groups and according to carefully prepared "local executive plans". The deportees, therefore, were usually arrested at night and informed that "the Government had decided to deport them to other regions of the Soviet Union"². The victims were allowed to take luggage not exceeding 100 kilograms per family, which, however, were to include food for "each family for one month". Farmers were allowed to take some of their tools, as were craftsmen. All property such as barns, houses, furniture, etc., left behind by the deportees was taken over by the local authorities. The instructions limited the time given for packing luggage to two hours. Further, the instructions read thus:

"Considering that the majority of the deported men will be arrested and scattered over special camps, while their families will be sent to places assigned them, the separation of families from one another must be carried out without any warning."

All this was carried out brutally by the local N.K.V.D. The people were

² Ibid, Page 73.
loaded on freight cars with barred windows and a hole in the floor for sanitary purposes. Sometimes, though not always, the cars were provided with small stoves. From forty to fifty persons were loaded on each car and then not allowed to leave the car for the time of the journey. No regular food rations were provided for the deportees. Occasionally, often at intervals of two or three days, they were given some bread and soup. In some convoys the deportees did not receive warm food at all. Water, too, was supplied irregularly. The treatment by the guards was brutal and the mortality rate high, especially during the first deportation, when the people were caught completely unprepared. The first victims were, of course, children.

Adult males were often separated from their families at the beginning of the journey and sent to camps of forced labour. Deported Poles were to be found in fifty-six provinces of the Soviet Union, mostly in sparsely populated regions, and far from the railroads. The conditions of their life varied according to climate and geography. Roughly, they were divided into two categories: "free deportees" and "special deportees" (Specpereselentsy). The "free" were not forced to work, but were left to look after themselves. To this group belonged mostly people unfit for work, and women with small children. Although the attitude of the Russian population was often friendly, the deportees could rarely obtain sufficient help. In Central Asia, the natives, continually exploited by the "Frengis" were definitely hostile. In regions where food was rationed, those unable to work were not entitled to food cards, in line with the widely advertised principle: "He who does not work, neither shall he eat." According to

1. Frengis: means a European or a white man in Kazakh. "Frengistan" is Europe.
Polish estimates, the largest fraction of the Poles who died in Russia belonged to this group.

The "special" deportees were placed in special settlements (Specposiolki), situated chiefly in far northern regions of European Russia, in the Urals, and in western Siberia. These settlements were commanded, as a rule, by an N.C.O. of the N.K.V.D., and all inmates, including twelve-year old children, were obliged to work. The amount of food allowed depended on the percentage of the norm of labour fulfilled.

It is impossible to estimate what decided whether a deportee was labelled "free" or "special". To the latter group, however, seemed to belong most of the families with adjuts and growing youths: in short, people fit for work.

The hardest lot fell to the third group: men and women arrested and sent to camps of forced labour. Most of them, especially those accused of political offences committed on the basis of retroactive Article 58 of the Soviet law (or Article 54 in the Ukrainian S.S.R.), were tried in absence by the Special Council of the N.K.V.D. in Moscow (called OSSO), for "crimes committed against the people." The commonest accusation was of belonging to the "historical enemies of the revolution." In this group were all those registered by the N.K.V.D. as "anti-Soviet and socially unadapted". One of the most remarkable examples of Soviet justice was the death penalty, changed later to ten years of hard labour in "Correctional Labour Camps", given to a Polish playwright and literary critic, Waclaw Grubinski, for publishing in the early twenties the play "Dictator."

Based on the revolution of 1917, it presented Lenin in an unfavourable light, and, to make it worse, it was translated into various languages,
and shown in the capitals of western Europe.

The period of detention in the camps of forced labour was, in fact, unlimited. Although, in most cases, the "political" convict died before serving his term, his sentence could always be prolonged at the instance of the camp authorities. The only convicts who could count on being released were the criminals, for whom all privileged jobs in the camp were strictly reserved.

Correctional Labour Camps are situated in every Russian province. The main concentration, however, lies in the far north of the autonomous Komi S.S.R., in the basin of the Pechora River, and the vast territories of the northern Ob, Yenissei and Kolyma Rivers in northern and eastern Siberia.

The arrested Poles were dispersed all over the Soviet Union, at about 2,500 points, far from settled areas and surrounded by palisades with towers (vyshki) for armed sentries. The convicts were employed mainly at felling trees, building railways (the Kotlas-Soswa railroad) and canals (the White Sea canal), or in peat bogs and mines. The conditions of life and work were hardly endurable and the mortality rate extremely high.

The survey made by the Polish authorities in Russia after the amnesty of 1941, estimates that about 1.5 million Polish citizens were deported between the end of September, 1939, and the outbreak of the Soviet-German war. About 250,000 men and women were sent to Correctional Labour Camps. Of these, 52% were Poles, 30% were Jews, 18% were Ukrainians and Byelorussians. Sixty percent of them were workers, tradesmen,
and farmers, 16% soldiers and judges, 5.1% clergymen of all creeds, university professors and teachers, and 6% lawyers and engineers.\(^1\) After the agreement of July, 1941, and the announcement of amnesty for Polish subjects, the Soviet authorities (per Vice-Commissar Vishinsky's declaration of October 14, 1941) estimated the number of Polish prisoners in the camps of forced labour as 71,481. It is certain, however, that the actual number of survivors was much higher. Polish sources estimated it at about 100,000. Even so, the mortality rate in the Soviet camps and prisons would amount to 30% per year. The total number of "special" and "free" deportees alive in 1941, amounted, according to Vice-Commissar Vishinsky's statement, to 291,131. According to the Polish calculations, however, based on the underground reports in Poland, and on the survey made in Russia in 1942, about one million Polish subjects were removed to Russia between 1939 and 1941. About 560,000 of them were women and children, and 150,000 were men. It was impossible, however, to estimate how many of them were still alive in 1942.

Finally, a word should be said about the fate of those who were kept in prisons in eastern Poland at the outbreak of the Soviet-German war. For some reason, which is indeed hardly explainable, the Soviet authorities made a great effort to evacuate them to the east. In several cases, while the Soviet detachments retreated on foot under the German pressure, the prisoners were carried in the trains. In cases, however, where the evacuation was impossible, thousands of detained men and women were shot by the retreating N.K.V.D. Such mass executions were carried on in Vilno, Glembokie and Berezove. The prisoners from Vileyka were driven

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on foot nearly 200 kilometers, and those who fainted were executed on the spot. The marching columns, as well as the trains loaded with prisoners, were, of course, constantly bombed by the German planes.

...
Economic and Social Reforms.

Along with the purge of "undesirable elements", important economic transformation was introduced in the seized territories. The first reform concerned privately-owned industry. For the purpose of control of free enterprise, special Workers' Committees were established in each factory.

Already, in early 1940, the owners were entirely removed from their workshops, and their businesses were transformed into co-operative Trusts, run, in the case of heavy industry, by All-Union Commissariats in Moscow, and, in the case of light industry and retail stores, by proper Commissariats of the White Russian and Ukrainian S.S.R. In the territories incorporated into the Ukrainian S.S.R., nine large plants were put under All-Union supervision, and one hundred and two under the supervision of Kiev. Fifty minor plants were left under the control of the local administration in Lvov. A similar procedure was followed in the territories attached to the Soviet White Russia and Lithuania.

All industrial undertakings in the occupied territories became incorporated in the all-Soviet economic system. Many, however, were completely confiscated, and all equipment and machinery removed to the Soviet Union. In this manner, most of the textile factories in north-eastern Poland (Vilna, Bialystok, and Lida) were deported to Russia. Their stock
of manufactures was confiscated for the Red Army. Resolutions passed by
the National Assemblies in Lvov and Bialystok on October 28 and October
30, 1939, ordered the confiscation of privately-owned landed property, in­
cluding dwellings, administrative buildings, livestock, machinery, forests,
sawmills, flour mills, etc. All these became the property of the Soviet
State. All leather goods, produced in large quantities in these areas,
and particularly lacking in the Soviet Union, were shipped directly to the
east.

The timber resources were systematically devastated. Eighteen
million cubic metres of timber were extracted annually from an area where
the prewar figure was nine million. The big sawmills, forest supply rail­
ways, research stations, and experimental schools were confiscated, and
subordinated to the appropriate Soviet Trusts. The large railway work­
shops in Lvov, Lapy, Wilno and Brest-Litovsk, were stripped of their
modern machinery. About 2500 locomotives and 75,000 freightcars, most of
them evacuated from the west in September, 1939, were confiscated. Part of
this equipment was seen later as far as Tashkent and Stalingrad. The
Polish zloty was equalized with the rouble, the purchasing power of which
was about one-ninth as much. Prices were not allowed, however, to be ad­
justed, and soon the entire stock of goods was bought up by the Soviet
Army. Consequently, privately-owned shops were soon closed.

All banking enterprises were nationalized. Safes and deposits
were opened and their contents confiscated by the local Temporary Admin­
istration.

On December 29, 1939, without warning, the Polish zloty was
deprived of any value, and transactions had to be made in roubles. No prov­
ision, however, was made to secure the exchange of zlotys for roubles. By this measure, all private savings were destroyed, whether of the well-to-do classes, or of the proletariat.

In both republics, Russian, of course, became the official language, equal with Ukrainian and Byelorussian. Most Polish schools were transformed into Russian and Ukrainian. In districts where there was no other population than Polish, however, the Polish language did remain. Inspectors from the Soviet Union revised the entire school system. Talks on materialistic philosophy and Communist ideology replaced the teaching of religion. School chapels were closed and turned into recreation or reading rooms. Anti-religious propaganda was very strong.

"The party cannot be neutral with regard to religion...to reactionary clergy which prisons the self-consciousness of the working masses...we have crushed it. The only misfortune is that it has not yet been completely liquidated."据说

Consequently, a great number of Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches of eastern Poland were looted and destroyed or turned into stores, stables, theatres, meeting halls of the Komsomol, and even into atheist museums. The remaining churches were heavily taxed, special rates were charged for electric light and fuel. The clergy of all faiths were the first to be arrested and liquidated. E. Jaroslavsky, one of the chairmen of the Soviet League of Militant Atheists, declared in February, 1940, that four thousand ministers of various denominations had been deported from Poland. Civil marriages of the Soviet pattern were introduced, and weddings in churches were forbidden, as of January, 1940.

1. Stalin, Problems of Leninism, Moscow, 1938

Page 192.
Individual initiative and production were outlawed. All Polish organizations were dissolved and local unions were formed on the model of the Soviet "Artels". The Polish working week of forty-six hours was abolished, and a forty-eight hour week was introduced.

The peasants were strongly opposed to the idea of collectivization of land. Attempts at establishing collective farms at the beginning of the Soviet rule were weak and mostly unsuccessful. The nationalization of farm machinery production decreased the output of necessary tools. Inflation encouraged the farmers to barter their goods, often at enormous prices, on the black market. Soon, however, special Soviet inspectors visited every farm to estimate a yearly amount of produce which had to be delivered to the state co-operatives. As well, high taxes were laid on individual farmers. Most of the confiscated estates were turned into state-owned collective farms (sovkhoz). This collectivization was not complete before the outbreak of war with Germany. For instance, in Lithuania (and therefore in the Vilna area) privately-owned households amounted to thirty ha. (seventy-five acres).
The Outbreak of the Soviet-German War.

The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact, described by Commissar Molotov on October 31 as "a further growth of Soviet power", assured to the Germans the neutrality of the Soviet Union during the brief Polish campaign. Moreover, Pravda, followed by the communist press all over the world, blamed the western democracies for the outbreak of the war.

Soviet passivity did not last long. By the summer of 1940, Russia, by annexing Finland, the Baltic countries, Bessarabia and northern Bukovina, had enlarged her territory by 16,000 square miles, inhabited by more than twenty-three million people, and had secured an approach to the Baltic Sea. This territorial expansion was observed with alarm by the Germans, who were engaged in war in the west. The capitulation of France, however, changed the situation entirely, granting Germany a dominating position over its Soviet partner. In November, 1940, Germany proposed that Russia participate in an agreement of the Axis powers, which allocated "spheres of influence" on a world scale, and gave the Soviet Union a free hand in expansion toward the Indian Ocean. The whole of Europe remained in the German sphere. Russia, however, was interested in the Dardanelles, the Balkans, Central Europe and Scandinavia, and demanded military bases in Bulgaria, as well as a hand in Finland, Persia, and
northern Sakhalin. This changed the German plans, and on December 18, 1940, Hitler gave orders to prepare an attack on the Soviet Union. Consequently, the Nazi invasion of June 22, 1941, forced the former ally to join, willy-nilly, the anti-German coalition.

By June 27, Finland, Hungary, Rumania and Slovakia had joined the Germans. The Lithuanians, too, rose against the retreating Russian troops. A similar trend was evident among the Ukrainians, and, to a lesser extent, among the Byelorussians.

The Polish Underground, by that time firmly established in eastern Poland, remained neutral. From the Polish point of view, the Soviet-German conflict was highly welcome.

Polish participation in the war effort had not ended with the defeat of 1939. Thousands of Polish soldiers, interned in Hungary and Rumania, had been secretly evacuated to France. Besides, thousands of young men who managed to fly from the occupied country, joined the Polish Army abroad, in which were Poles from all parts of the world. A Polish Army of 78,000 was soon organized, and took part in a brief French campaign of 1940. Some 24,000 fought their way to Great Britain, were reorganized, and were used in the coastal defence of Scotland. The Polish Podhale Brigade fought at Narvik with the Franco-British expeditionary corps. Finally, the Carpathian Brigade, of some 6000 men, organized in Syria, and took part in the defence of Tobruk and the African campaign of 1940-1941. Three Polish destroyers and two submarines joined the Royal Navy, and about 2300 airmen established their reputation during the Battle of Britain.
The Polish Government re-organized in France and evacuated to London, to work under the new Prime Minister, General W. Sikorski. On the second day of the Soviet-German war, the General, speaking on the radio to Occupied Poland, made a proposal to the Soviet Union to restore diplomatic relationships between the two countries. There was, however, no direct answer from the Soviet side, and, only as a result of British intervention, did direct Polish-Soviet talks take place in London, in the second half of July.
At first, the Soviet Government demanded that Poland recognize the annexation of her eastern provinces, and consent to the creation, in Moscow, of the National Committees which would be entrusted with the organization of the Polish Army in Russia. This Committee was intended as one of the many "Slav National Committees" forming a "Slavio bloc". Panslavism of any kind has always been as strange to the Poles, as, for instance, the idea of a Pan-Germanic unity to the Danes or Dutch. As well, acceptance of these conditions would mean a total surrender of Polish independence to the political ambitions of the Communists. Consequently, the Poles rejected the proposal, and only after two weeks of bargaining, and not without British participation, the Soviet-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance was signed in London, on July 31. The problem of the frontiers was not mentioned, but the Russians declared that:

a) the Soviet-German treaties of 1939, relative to territorial changes in Poland, have lost their validity,

b) diplomatic relations will be restored, and followed by an exchange of ambassadors between the two countries,

c) the Soviet Government will release all Polish prisoners-of-war, political prisoners, and other deportees, and will permit the formation, in Russia, of Polish military units. 1

On the same day, the British Government assured General Sikorski, in a note handed to him by Mr. Eden, that "His Majesty's Government does not recognize any territorial changes which have been affected in Poland since August, 1939."

On August 12, 1941, the Presidium of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. granted "amnesty to Polish citizens on Soviet territory at present deprived of their freedom as prisoners-of-war, or on other adequate grounds." In August and September, thousands of Polish citizens were set free. Soon, however, the Polish Embassy in Kuibishev began to receive alarming reports. The arrivals in Kuibishev and the Polish recruiting centres reported that there were still masses of Polish subjects held in the camps. On November 8, 1941, Molotov notified the Poles that "the amnesty operations were completed, all persons eligible having been set free." As an answer, the Embassy presented several lists of names of Polish subjects still held in confinement.

The organization of a Polish Army on Soviet territory was begun with the special Military Agreement signed on August 14, 1941, in Moscow, and with the approval of the Soviet authorities. The Polish Government appointed to the post of Commander-In-Chief of the Polish Army in the U.S.S.R., Lt. General Anders, imprisoned since 1939 in Moscow. The army was to be formed in localities indicated by the High Command of the U.S.S.R.


by conscription of Polish citizens, and by voluntary enlistment. It was to be moved to the front in groups not smaller than an infantry division, trained and equipped for action. Operationally, it was to be subordinated to the Soviet High Command.

The Polish authorities expected to raise an army of about 300,000 men. These expectations were based on the large number of former Polish prisoners, and on men who were enrolled in the Soviet Army between 1939 and 1941.

By the end of October, when 46,000 men were already enlisted, came the first obstacle. The Soviet authorities notified the Commander of the Polish forces that they were not prepared to feed more than 30,000 Polish soldiers.

On December 1, 1941, the Polish Embassy received a note from the Soviet Government, stating that all former Polish citizens of Ukrainian, Byelorussian and Jewish extraction were to be regarded as Soviet subjects, notwithstanding the fact that they were released as Polish citizens on the basis of the amnesty.

"The readiness of the Soviet Government", said the note, "to admit the Polish citizenship of all those who were of genuinely Polish extraction...is proof of the Soviet Government's good will and spirit of compromise; nevertheless, it can, on no account, serve as a pretext for a similar listing of Polish subjects of different national extraction...in view of the fact that the problem of the frontiers...is subject to future consideration."

This decision was a serious blow to Polish plans.

Another problem of the utmost importance was that of missing

officers. The officers and N.C.O.s of the Polish Army, imprisoned in 1939, were located in two large camps: Kozielsk, in the Smolensk district, and Starobielsk, in the eastern Ukraine. In Kozielsk there were about 4300 officers, of whom five were generals, and in Starobielsk about 4000, including eight generals. Besides these, about 6300 prisoners-of-war, members of the police, gendarmerie, frontier corps and customs guards, including about 400 officers, were interned in Ostashkov, in the Kalinin (Tver) district. The families of the imprisoned officers and men had ceased to receive letters from them by the beginning of 1940, and after the agreement of July 30, 1941, only about 400 officers from the three camps reported to the army. The rest, numbering 14,000 officers and men, had disappeared without a trace. According to the testimony of those who were found, the camps had been speedily evacuated in March, April and May of 1940. The destination of the transports was not known. Before this happened, the prisoners had been interrogated by special teams of N.K.V.D. officers, obviously done to learn their political beliefs, and before the liquidation of the camps, a small group of selected officers, led by Lt. Colonel Berling, was taken to Moscow and subjected to an intensive ideological indoctrination. The Soviet authorities insisted that the missing officers had certainly been released, admitting, however, that "on account of great transport difficulties", their arrival might be delayed. On November 14, Premier Stalin assured the Polish ambassador, Professor Kot, that the "Soviet amnesty does not know any exceptions", and, on December 3, while talking to the Polish Prime Minister, General Sikorski, he suggested that the missing officers had probably fled to Manchuria.

The Polish authorities tried to penetrate the mystery on their
own account. The Underground stated that, in Poland, nothing had been heard of the men since the spring of 1940. Unconfirmed rumours suggesting that Polish prisoner-of-war camps had been seen in the extreme north were also carefully checked. Captain Josef Krapski, a former prisoner of Starobielsk, was delegated to see General Reichmz, N.K.V.D., and the chief of Gulag, General Nasiedkin.1 Nothing, however, was learned about the missing officers.

On December 1, 1944, General Sikorski arrived in Moscow. Declining to discuss the question of future Soviet-Polish frontiers, he signed with Premier Stalin a mutual declaration of friendship and assistance between Poland and the U.S.S.R. It was agreed that the Polish Army would consist of six divisions with a reserve total strength of 96,000 men, and that 27,000 were to be evacuated to the Middle East, to reinforce the Carpathian Brigade, and to Great Britain. In addition, Stalin permitted the sending of delegates to some twenty localities in the Soviet Union, in order to organize welfare services for Polish subjects, and to distribute money and shipments of food and clothes offered to the Poles by the welfare organizations of the United States and Canada.

No agreement was reached, however, on the question of Polish citizens of Byelorussian and Ukrainian origin. The Poles maintained that the Soviet note of December 1st was contrary to the July agreement, which renounced territorial changes in Poland. The Soviet Government, however, insisted that the eastern provinces of Poland were simply re-attached to the Soviet Union as a result of "the freely expressed will

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1. The Central Administration of Camps of Forced Labour.
of the population of those districts." In connection with this, a tragic event took place at the end of 1941. Two prominent leaders of the Jewish Socialist Movement, Ehrlich and Alter, were kidnapped by the N.K.V.D. from the Polish Embassy in Kuibishev. Tried as Soviet subjects, they were sentenced to death on the basis of a "conclusive proof that they were working on behalf of the Germans". Ehrlich had been appointed to the Polish National Council in London, and was to be sent to Britain, while Alter intended to go to the United States, on the invitation of the American Federation of Labour. More than a month passed before the Polish authorities were informed of their fate.
Evacuation to the Middle East.

The flow of recruits to the Polish Army was seriously hindered by the attitude of the Soviet authorities. In many places, Polish recruiting centres were closed and released Poles were misinformed about the location of their army. Often they were met with the proposal that they join the Soviet Army "until the Polish troops are formed." In spite of promises given, Poles conscripted into the Red Army in 1940 and 1941, and employed mostly in the auxiliary labour units, were not released. Ukrainians, Jews, and Byelorussians from Poland were persecuted when attempting to volunteer for the Polish forces.

On March 18, 1942, when the Polish Army reached a total of 72,000 men, its Commander-in-Chief, General Anders, was personally informed by Stalin that, due to supply difficulties caused by the American-Japanese war, he was compelled to cut the Polish Army down to 44,000 men. The rest of the men, therefore, were to be sent to the collective farms. After some arguing, however, it was decided to move about 32,000 men to the Middle East, and to continue recruitment. The evacuation, conducted by the N.K.V.D., was speedy and well-organized. About 12,000 members of soldiers families, as well, were permitted to leave the Soviet Union.

1. Personal experience in Khalturin on Viatka, November, 1941.
The Poles now had two fully organized infantry divisions and others in stages of organization. In spite of assurances, however, the Soviet authorities had armed only one of them, and that in part. Arms obtained were, of course, distributed among all units. The army was far from being ready for action. Exhausted by years of imprisonment and starvation, the men still shared their meagre rations with women and children who came in thousands to the military centres. Soon after the evacuation to Central Asia, an epidemic of typhus, dysentry and malaria killed thousands.1 The doctors were helpless because of a complete lack of drugs and hospital equipment.

After the departure of the 30,000 troops to the Middle East, the Polish Government sent several notes to the Soviet authorities, demanding that recruiting be continued. On May 4, 1941, Ambassador Kot handed to Molotov a note which stated that

a) Polish citizens serving in the Red Army and in labour battalions were not, in spite of Marshall Stalin's assurance, being transferred to the Polish Army,

b) further recruiting in the Polish Army had been stopped by the closing of Polish registration centres.

He concluded with a request for the continuation of recruitment. The Soviet reply was crushing. It stated that all the Polish soldiers in excess of 44,000 were already evacuated, but that the Soviet authorities regarded impractical further recruiting or voluntary enlistment of Poles for an army in the British Middle East. Stalin denied that during his conversation with General Anders on March 18 he made a declaration to

1. A thousand and ninety-five soldiers died of typhus alone.

Lis, T., Geneza Tworzenia P.S.Z. w Z.S.R.R. i Umowy Polsko-Sowieckiej, Londyn, Instytut J.P., Page 16
the effect that the recruiting and evacuation of Poles to the Middle East would be continued, and that the Poles from the labour battalions would be released and evacuated. Finally, the reply notified the Polish Government that, in view of the decision of the Soviet Government to stop recruitment to the Polish Army, the resumption of the activity of Polish feeding and registration centres, medical offices, etc. connected with the recruiting, would be purposeless. Finally, it stated that all men who were conscripted for the Red Army or labour battalions in the western Ukraine and western Byelorussia were Soviet citizens.

General Sikorski again appealed to Premier Stalin, to make possible the continued recruiting of Polish citizens. He insisted, too, on the preservation of Polish-Soviet co-operation. The General regarded most of the difficulties faced by the Polish Army in the U.S.S.R. as the result of the situation faced by the Soviet authorities on the front line, and of the excessive bureaucracy of the Soviet system. General Anders, however, had no illusions.

In April, 1942, on the pretext of preventing unnecessary travel, a ban had been placed on the sale of railway tickets to Polish citizens, who were requested to remain in their temporary residences. Consequently, the strength of the Polish armed forces in the U.S.S.R. could not have been increased, or even sustained, when volunteers found it impossible to reach the Polish units.

On June 8th, General Anders sent a telegram to General Sikorski, asking for the evacuation of his troops from the U.S.S.R. On June 12th came the answer: "For higher political reasons, the Army has to remain
in the U.S.S.R. Toward the end of June, the British Ambassador in Moscow, Sir Archibald Clark, was informed by Molotov that the Soviet Government proposed to evacuate the Polish Army to the Middle East. This entirely unexpected decision was warmly welcomed by the soldiers. The Polish Government did not object either. Again, the evacuation was skilfully directed by the N.K.V.D., and by September the last Polish detachment left "the Paradise of the Workers, Soldiers and Peasants". Both evacuations affected over 80,000 soldiers, and 42,000 civilians, including 10,000 children. By November, the Polish troops were concentrated in Irak, in order to be submitted to intensive military training. A year later, as the 2nd Polish Corps of the 8th British Army, they were brought to Europe for eighteen months of the Italian Campaign.
VIII.

Liquidation of Polish Social Institutions: Citizenship.

Out of twenty Polish delegates, agreed upon during General Sikorski's visit, to conduct relief action for Poles in the U.S.S.R., none had diplomatic standing. In a short time, eighteen of these delegates, and many of their staff-members, were accused by the Soviet authorities of unauthorized activity "among Soviet citizens of the western Ukraine and western Byelorussia", and were finally imprisoned on a charge of espionage.\(^1\) Stores of food and clothes continually arriving from North America were confiscated, and about eight hundred relief centres, schools, health centres, invalid homes, and other social institutions, were closed. After the exchange of several diplomatic notes, and not without American and British intervention, most of the arrested persons were released and expelled from the Soviet Union. Sixteen of them, however, disappeared without a trace. Continuation of charitable activity by the Polish Embassy was forbidden.

By the agreement of July, 1941, the Polish Embassy was to have the power to issue passports to Polish citizens. The People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs now demanded lists of persons who were receiving these documents. Persons recognized by the Soviet authorities as Ukrainian

\(^{1}\) The Polish Embassy in Washington (by the Authority of the Government of the Republic of Poland) Polish-Soviet Relations, 1918 - 1943 official Documents, No. 74, Page 109
or Byelorussian were required to adopt Soviet papers. In spite of protests that, according to Polish law, every person entitled to Polish citizenship had a right to demand a passport, the Embassy was finally forced to suspend the issuing of them. Curious as it may seem to the western conception of citizenship, the persons concerned had no individual right; they could neither choose their citizenship, nor could they refuse acceptance of the Soviet passport. They simply were not asked.

Another subject of acute controversy between the Polish Embassy and the Soviet Government was the fate of the Polish children. In November, 1942, the new Polish ambassador in Kuibishev, Mr. Romer, presented to the Soviet Government a plan for the evacuation of 19,000 Polish children. The British Government had offered to organize orphanages in India and Africa, to care for 10,000 of them. New Zealand and Mexico would welcome some of them as well. Instead, the Soviet authorities reduced the number to 600, most to be sent to ten Polish orphanages in Ashabad. With the liquidation of Polish relief centres, more than 5000 Polish orphans were transferred to Soviet orphanages.

The Soviet note of January 16, 1943, dealt a final blow to independent Polish activity. It notified the Polish Embassy that:

"the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs has now been instructed by the Soviet Government to serve notice that the statement made in the Note of December 1, 1941, as to the readiness of the Soviet Union to make an exception with regard to certain

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categories of Polish origin is no longer effective, and that further exemption of such persons from the rules governing Soviet citizenship is to cease.¹

The decree of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R., of November, 1939, was back in force. All protests of the Polish Government were of no avail. Now even Poles were forced to accept Soviet identity documents, and all remaining Polish relief institutions in the U.S.S.R. were sovietized.

At the same time, Soviet propaganda began to attack the Polish Government. Wide publicity was given to a long series of accusations charging the Poles in London with "fascism" and "imperialistic attitudes" toward the Soviet territories. The Polish Government protested against these charges. The Soviet reply² was even more violent, accusing "the Polish ruling circles" of collaboration with Germany against the Soviet Union. This reply was published, together with an official announcement that the Union of Polish Patriots, which reflected "the genuine opinion of the Polish people", had been formed in the Soviet Union. It stated that the Polish Government in London, by refusing to recognize "the historic rights of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian peoples to be united with the national states" (recognized, it said, even by "the well-known British minister, Lord Curzon, in spite of his inimical attitude to the U.S.S.R."),...shows itself as an advocate of a partition of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian lands in favour of the policy of plundering the Ukrainian and Byelorussian peoples".

². Ibid, No. 84, PP 208,209
The Final Break.

In April, 1943, came a final bombshell. The missing Polish officers were found. On April 13, the German radio announced the discovery of several mass graves in Katyn Wood, near Smolensk. All of them were filled with the bodies of officers from the Kozielsk camp. Nothing, of course, could be more valuable for Nazi war propaganda than discoveries of this kind, and the Moscow radio immediately described the charges as "vile fabrications of Goebbels' Fascists".

The Polish Government, to whom the disappearance of these men had never been explained by the Russians, had serious misgivings about the Moscow broadcasts, as well as about the story which appeared in Pravda on April 19. According to Pravda, on the eve of the Soviet-German war, the missing officers were stationed in two camps near Smolensk, and employed at railway construction. Consequently, they were seized by the Germans, who obviously murdered them in order to discredit the Soviet Union in the eyes of the western democracies. In view of the fact that the Soviet authorities had never before mentioned that the officers were ever stationed in the Smolensk area, the Polish Government could hardly accept this explanation, and asked the International Red Cross to examine the case. The Germans, too, asked Geneva to send to Katyn Wood a neutral commission of the Red Cross. The Soviet Government refused...
to grant its consent to any such examination, stating that "the Polish and German requests could be constituted as a proof of contact and understanding between the enemy of the Allies, Hitler, and the Polish Government in London"\(^1\).

Simultaneously, on April 25, the Soviet Union severed all diplomatic relations with the Polish Government. The Soviet note openly accused the Poles in London of "having slid on the path of accord with Hitler's government, and of adopting a hostile attitude toward the Soviet Union".

The Patriots.

With free hands, the Soviet leaders could officially undertake the task of creating a political representation of Poland dependent on the Soviet Union, and ruled according to the principles of the Soviet system.

The ground was already well prepared. Long before the liquidation of Polish national institutions in the U.S.S.R., steps had been taken to form a political body which would perform the task of the previously proposed Slav-Polish National Committee. Already in the spring of 1942, the publication of "New Horizons" was revived. This time, however, it was no longer, as in 1939, an "organ of Soviet writers of the U.S.S.R." but an "independent" Polish paper, formally edited by Madam Wasilewska. The chief aim of this paper was to undermine the authority of the London Government among Poles in Russia. Beginning with January, 1943, "New Horizons" began to accuse the Polish Government and particularly the Polish Army in the Middle East, of "fascist and imperialistic tendencies".

At the beginning of March, a new Polish paper, "Free Poland" (Wolna Polska) appeared in Moscow, and was named "the official organ of

1. when the Polish Government protested against the forcing of Soviet Citizenship upon Polish Nationals.
the Union of Polish Patriots". Soon the by-laws of this organization appeared in "Free Poland". Its proclaimed aims were: to unify all Poles in the U.S.S.R., with the object of "fighting together with the Red Army for Polish independence"; the construction of a democratic parliamentary system "in a liberated Poland": tightening of "the bonds of friendship between the Polish nation and the nations of the Soviet Union". Its primary objective, however, was the formation of Polish military detachments "to fight side by side with the Red Army against the Hitlerite invader". After the severance of Soviet diplomatic relationships with the Polish Government, the Patriots began to act.

On June 23, after local branches of the Union were established, in the localities inhabited by the Polish deportees, an election of a Praesidium was speedily arranged. It was far from being free. Mostly avowed communists were elected. The Chairman of the Praesidium was Wanda Wasilewska, a member of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., a colonel of the Red Army, and a genuinely soviet writer.
XI.

The Polish Workers Party

The Polish Communist Party, dissolved by the Comintern in 1937, for ideological deviation, had been secretly reconstructed in Poland after the outbreak of the Soviet-German war in January, 1942, under the name of the Polish Workers Party. To gain popularity, the word communist had been removed from its name. For that reason, it was originally regarded by many Poles as an independent left wing of socialism, fighting against the Germans, and, consequently, was supported.

Four experienced agents of the Comintern, of Polish origin, named Bierut, Hardy, Kulesza and Kwiatkowska, took the leadership. At the end of 1942, a Political Bureau was established within the party ranks. Since its inception, the party had attempted to penetrate the Polish Underground, which was directed from London. At the same time, its cells were set up all over the country, and a skeleton machinery for seizing power in the future in Poland was laboriously prepared. The Kominform radio station in Moscow, called Kosciuszko, was at first rather diplomatic towards the London Government. In 1942, its broadcasts to Poland were full of enthusiastic reports of the Polish Army in the U.S.S.R., and, of course, ultra patriotic. The religions of the Polish people were, too, well nursed. Never mentioning the re-birth of the Polish Communist Party, it frequently appealed to the people to form an underground of
"worker and peasant committees" in the occupied countries. This was Communist strategy. However, after the severance of diplomatic relations with the Polish Government, the camouflage was no longer necessary. In May, 1943, after the dissolution of the Komintern was entrusted to the Union of Polish Patriots, the Kosciuszko station stated openly that the Polish Workers Party was "a continuation of K.P.P.\textsuperscript{1}, the party of Marxist-Leninists" which "binds the idea of national and social liberation with faith in the victory of the U.S.S.R."\textsuperscript{2} This open ideological warfare, as well as the Katyn Wood affair, drastically reduced the already weak popularity of the Workers Party in Poland.

By 1943, most of the Polish Underground was firmly established, and widely popular. It received its orders from the Polish Government in London. Bierut, however, writing much later about this early period of Communist activity, chose to state that "together with the resistance against the occupation, a violent class struggle took place between the working classes of town and village, and supporters of the pre-September capitalist Poland."\textsuperscript{3}

The Communist Underground, too, established its military units in Poland, and called itself "The People's Guard". These units, however, since their very formation in early 1943, refused to co-operate with the home army. Formed mainly for the members of the Workers Party, the People's Guard was "faithful to the idea of the proletarian international-

\begin{enumerate}
\item Polish Communist Party
\item Rozmarn, S., Polskie Prawo Państwowe, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1951, Page 242.
\item Ibid, Page 243. From B. Bierut, Podstary Ideologique P.Z.P.R. Page 35,
\end{enumerate}
ism and loyalty towards the Fatherland of Socialism, the U.S.S.R."¹

The Polish Red Army.

Immediately after the breaking-off of diplomatic relations with the Polish Government in London, on May 9th, the Tass agency announced that the Soviet Government "agreed to the request of the Union of Polish Patriots", and approved formation of the Kosciuszko Infantry Division\(^1\). The Patriots, as well as the Soviet Government, attached considerable importance to the formation of a sizeable communist Polish Army, both in Poland and in Russia, to be, in the future, the means of enforcing their will on Poland. This task, however, was not easy. "New Horizons" (\# 14, 1943) complained that the Polish deportees joining this army were "disoriented and suspicious individuals". Owing to the extermination of the Polish officers in Katyn Wood, and the departure of the General Anders Army to the Middle East, it was practically impossible to find sufficient Polish officers, and only a few of them were, from the Soviet point of view, "politically reliable". To almost all responsible posts in the Polish Army, therefore, officers of the Red Army were appointed. Some were of Polish descent, others were Russian. Only a few of them could speak Polish. The soldiers were found by releasing the Poles who had been conscripted to the Red Army between 1939 and 1941, in eastern Poland, and

not released to join Anders' Army. In addition, the civilian deportees were drafted by Soviet draft boards (the so-called Voyenkomats: branches of the Commissariat of War).

In August, 1943, the Soviet Government decided, "on request of the Union of Polish Patriots", to expand the Polish Division into a Corps. Colonel Berling, commander of the Kosciuszko Division, one of the former Polish prisoners of war of Camp Kozielsk, and later resident of the Villa of Bliss in Moscow, was promoted to the rank of General of the Red Army\(^1\), and was entrusted with the corps. The Kosciuszko and newly formed Dol-ewsaki Division were commanded by major-generals of the Red Army: Bezviuk, and Swerczewski.\(^2\)

After the Red Army's entry into Poland, by March, 1944, when two infantry divisions and several other formations were created, command of these, too, was entrusted to Soviet officers. The political education of the soldiers became the subject of special attention. To fulfill this task, a Board of Political Education was set up and attached to the High Command. The head of this board, at first General Swerczoski, and later the former colonel of the N.K.V.D, General Zevarzki,\(^3\) became a deputy Commander-in-Chief of the entire Polish Army. As in the Red Army, the political-education officers and N.C.O.s became "deputy-commanders" of their units, controlling and directing the life of the army according to the instructions of the Board. The propaganda line was

\(^1\) by special decree of the Council of People's Commissars of the U.S.S.R. October 10, 1943.

\(^2\) Izvestia, March 14, 1944

\(^3\) at present a Vice-President of the State Council.
The "London" Underground State.

The Polish Underground, directed by the Government in London, embraced all political trends (with the exception, of course, of the Polish Workers' Party) and united them with a common purpose: the liberation of the homeland. This coalition of the five chief political parties, the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.), the Polish Peasant Party (P.S.L.), the Labour Party (S.P.), Christian Democracy (D.Ch.), and National Democracy (S.N.), acted as a supreme legislative body, first under the name of Polish Homeland Political Representation, and, since 1942, as the Council of National Unity.

Representatives of the five parties of the Council entered the Polish Government at London. From 1942 on, the Government was represented in Poland by its Vice Premier, called the Delegate for the Homeland, and two cabinet ministers. The Vice Premier was chairman of the Ministers' Council of the Homeland, an executive body composed of the thirteen chiefs of various departments of the Underground Administration, two of whom were the cabinet ministers. The Delegate and the Council of National Unity co-operated directly with the commander of the Polish Underground Forces, known from 1943 under the name of the "Home Army".

The Underground State embraced the entire pre-war Polish territory, acting through provincial and regional committees established all
over the country. The central authorities maintained communication by radio with the Polish Government in London, for security reasons frequently changing the names of its various organizations.
The Communist Underground.

Having in mind the future sovietization of Poland, the Workers' Party avoided all co-operation with the Underground State. Communist political activities were confined to constructing an organization sufficiently strong to seize the power in Poland at the moment of the anticipated "liberation" by the Red Army. Consequently, a sham party system was created, in order to mislead public opinion, and to gain the support of the masses. By the end of 1943, when the organization of "The Mother Party" had been completed, an underground trade-union movement was sponsored by the communists, together with the formation of various professional groups: e.g. a writers' group, co-operativists' group, a non-manual workers' group, an artisans' group, the Fighting Youth Association, etc.¹

In order to attract supporters of National movements, the communists created a "Committee of National Initiative", later reconstructed as a group of "Non-Party Democrats", and finally established as the "Democratic Party". Similarly, the wide popularity of the Polish Socialist Party led to the creation of the "Polish Workers' Socialist Party", and, in order to gain the support of the peasantry, "the opposition group of the Peasant Party" came into being. All these "parties" were, of course,

¹ Wolna Polska, May 27, 1944, No. 19.
directed by the P.P.R., and were useful in that, by misleading public opinion in the occupied country, they created confusion and hindered the consolidation of the non-communist Underground. One can imagine how difficult, indeed, it was for an average citizen, deprived of radio and press, to distinguish the genuine political group from the sham one.

On January 1, 1944, a few days before the Red Army crossed the pre-war Polish-Soviet frontier, a National Council of the Homeland\textsuperscript{1} was established by Moscow. All the sham parties and organizations were invited to participate together with the delegates of the People's Guard, and the Red Peasants' Battalion.\textsuperscript{2} The Council was presented as "an elected and representative" body. In real fact, it was a "parliament" of the Communist Party. Its structure, accomplished by July, 1944, was extended from above by the creation of provincial, town, district, and communal councils, and based on the already existing territorial organizations of the Workers' Party.

\textsuperscript{1} The name is obviously a copy of the National Council in London, and the Council of National Unity, formerly the Political Representation of the Homeland, in Poland.

\textsuperscript{2} Sponsored by the "Opposition Group of P.S.L.", and attached to the combat organization of P.P.R. (the People's Guard, known also as "The People's Army") For the first time denounced by the underground organ of the Peasant Party (P.S.L.) "Through Struggle Towards Freedom" November 28, 1943.
Eugene Boleslaw Bierut.

It is necessary to devote a little attention to the man chosen as chairman of the National Council. E.B. Bierut was an experienced agent of the Komintern. Trained in Moscow in the early twenties, he was one of the Underground leaders of the Polish Communist Party, and, later, the head of the Polish Section of the Komintern Bureau for South-Eastern Europe. Arrested in 1932 in Poland, on the charge of espionage as a Soviet national, he was included in an exchange of political prisoners with the U.S.S.R. In 1936, after special training, he became head of the Polish Section of the foreign department of the O.G.P.U., and, between 1939 and 1941, was active in occupied Lvov. The Polish Underground accused him of directing the mass deportations to Russia of "unreliable" Poles, Jews, and Ukrainians. After the German invasion he retreated to Moscow, only to be parachuted back into Poland at the beginning of 1942. Here, together with three other Komintern agents of Polish origin, he founded the Polish Workers' Party.

On May 24, when the Soviet troops approached the Curzon, or Ribbentrop-Molotov line, a delegation of the National Council went to Moscow, in order to form "a centre to organize the struggle against the

Germans"\(^1\). Two months later, when the Red Army captured Chelm, west from the Ribbentrop-Molotov line, this centre was brought to Poland. It was called the Polish Committee of National Liberation, and, from the outset, assumed the role of a representative government. Consequently, beginning with its formation, the struggle for the introduction of the Soviet system into Poland came into the open.

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\(^1\) Kuzmierz, B., Stalin and the Poles, London, Hollis and Carter, 1949. Page 173. (Communique of the Council, issued at the time of its arrival to Poland.)
PART TWO

STRUGGLE FOR POWER

I.

The Polish Committee of National Liberation.

The Polish Committee of National Liberation, composed of members delegated by the National Council of the Homeland, and the Union of Polish Patriots in Moscow, was formally established by a decree of the National Council (dated, Warsaw, July 21, 1944), as a "provisional executive authority to lead the nation's struggle for liberation". Head and creator of the Polish Workers' Socialist Party, Edvard Osulika-Morawski became the chairman of the Committee, and Head of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The Chairman of the "Patriots", Madam Wasilewska became the vice-chairman of the Committee. The Committee itself was composed of thirteen administrative departments. The Department of Agriculture was entrusted to a Patriot, Andrzej Witos, a half-brother of the highly-esteemed leader of the Peasant Party, and former Prime Minister, Wincenty Witos. This appointment was obviously meant to gain the support of the peasantry. The Department of National Defence was given to the Commander of the People's Army and member of the Workers' Party, Rola-Zymirski. This former Pilsudski legiorny and General of the Polish Army lost his rank on a charge of malversation of public money in 1926, and spent several years in prison as a criminal.
When the National Council of the Homeland adopted all the legislative prerogatives of the Polish parliament, the Committee of National Liberation was meant to be an executive governmental body. Its composition was very significant: eight communists and five sympathisers, four of whom were Moscow "Patriots". The key departments, National Defence, Security, National Economy and Finance, Propaganda, and Education, were, of course, in the hands of the Party.

On July 22, the Committee issued a manifesto containing its political program. It was the first act of legalized sovietization of Poland.

...
The Liquidation of the Home Army in Eastern Poland.

The July Manifesto calls on the Poles to intensify the struggle against the occupation, "side by side with the Red Army, until the Polish flag flies in Berlin". It promises "to regain Pomerania, Opole-Silesia, East Prussia and a frontier along the Oder", to secure "democratic freedoms" and equal rights without regard to race, religion, or nationality. It assures the distribution of land to the landless peasantry and the intention of "respecting the standard of living of the masses"1. The main part of the Manifesto, however, is a violent attack against "the emigré Government in London and its agency in Poland based...on the illegal Fascist constitution of April, 1935", which "hampered the struggle against the Hitlerite invaders by its policy of political opportunism"2.

The "emigré" Government in London, its Delegate for the Homeland, the Council of National Unity and the Home Army were declared illegal. The Polish Constitution of 1935 became null and void, and the former "bourgeois-democratic" Constitution of 1921, which provided under certain circumstances for the transfer of the presidential power to the Speaker

2. Ibid, Page 76.
of the Diet (or of the National Council of the Homeland, which assumed the position of the Polish Diet), became binding.

The Manifesto announced the creation of a Citizen's Militia, in support of the already-existing People's Militia, the political police of the Party. "Fascist organizations", warned the Manifesto, "will be stamped out with the utmost severity of the law."

One of "the Fascist organizations" was, of course, the Home Army. However, the Home Army, loyal to the exile government, enjoyed the full support of the nation. Already in October, 1943, the Polish Government in London anticipated the entry of the Red Army into the eastern territories, and instructed the Home Army to rise and help the approaching Soviet troops. This action was coded "Tempest". Acting on received instructions, the Vice-Premier, Delegate for the Homeland, issued a proclamation on November 15, 1943, calling on the population of eastern Poland not to "yield to panic", but to remain in their homes and "to adopt a correct and friendly attitude toward the entering Soviet Armies."  

The local commanders of the Home Army were instructed "to conform to the requests of the Soviet commanders", and to make "every possible effort" to give them the help required. The order affirmed, however, that "the attitude of hosts" must be preserved.

Throughout the whole of 1944, Home Army units assisted the

3. repeated in an Open Order of General Bor Komorowski, January 12, 1944.
Russian troops. The Russians, however, after taking full advantage of this assistance on the battlefields, in keeping with their policy, liqui­dated the Home Army units. The latter were usually surrounded and then disarmed. The officers were deported to Russia, and the men were given the choice of joining the Soviet-controlled Berling Army or being sent to concentration camps. The Home Army commanders of the districts of Wilno, Novogrodek, Lvov and Lublin, with about 50,000 men, had thus been arrested. Some of them were executed, others sent to the Soviet Union. The 27th Infantry Division, the first Home Army unit which met the approaching Soviet Army near the pre-war Polish-Soviet border, was put under Soviet operational command, and entrusted with tactical tasks. This commander was even allowed to retain his liaison with his "author­ities in Warsaw and London". As soon, however, as it crossed the Curzon line and entered the Lublin province, the Division was surrounded and disarmed by the Red Army. Some of its detachments managed to escape but were caught later, when attempting to reach the fighting in Warsaw.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army, General Bor-Komorowski, summed up the experience gained by co-operation with the Red Army:

"We have no illusions about the insincerity of their (Soviet) propositions of loyalty and comradeship with the Polish Independent Movement: no good can be expected from them."

This was a message to London, sent as early as April, 1944.

Similar methods to those already detailed were used by the Soviets in Wilno and Lvov. During the battle of Wilno, which lasted from

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the 7th to the 13th of July, 1944, the co-operation between the Polish Home Army units of Colonel "Wilk" (Krzyanowski) and the Soviet Army was later described as "spontaneous". "Sincere admiration" for the good fighting spirit of the Home Army detachments was expressed by the Soviet commanders. Four days after the battle, however, Colonel "Wilk" and the commander of the Novogrodek district, Lt. Colonel "Poleszuk" (Szydlowski) were summoned to appear before the commander of the 3rd Soviet Byelorussian Front, General Gheniakowsky, and arrested.1 About 7000 Home Army officers and men, who refused to join Berling's Army, were deported to the east.

About 3000 Home Army troops took part in the capture of Lvov, acting mostly within the city. After the battle, when the Soviet Army commander sent "a letter of praise" to their commander, General "Janka" Filipowski, the latter decided to accept an invitation to visit the Soviet headquarters. Here he was arrested, and deported to Russia. The same fate met the officers of his division who attended a "conference" with Soviet military authorities in Lvov. A week later, the bulletins of the Red Army called them "criminals and Polish fascists".2 The soldiers of the Home Army units were either arrested, or forced into the Berling Army.

On July 25th, when Lublin was captured by the Red Army, the Committee of National Liberation established a provisional capital of Poland there.


2. Ibid, Page 221.
In the meantime, the London Government was being strongly urged by Churchill to reach an agreement with Russia, even at the price of the eastern provinces. Consequently, two tendencies appeared among its members. Mikolajczyk, head of the Peasant Party, who became Prime Minister after the tragic death of General Sikorski in July, 1943, was "a reasonable Pole". Influenced by Churchill and Roosevelt, he seemed to have maintained an optimistic illusion that they were really "resolved on the creation and maintenance of a strong, integral, independent Poland"\(^1\), and was inclined, therefore, to continue the "Tempest", and, at the same time, to negotiate with Russia on the question of a future frontier. On the other hand, General Sosukowski, the new Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army, argued that there was no point in showing "good-will" toward the Soviet Union, by the continuation of operation "Tempest", unless the Russians would release arrested members of the Home Army, recognize the pre-war frontier, and renew diplomatic relations with the Polish Government.

III.

The Annihilation of Rivals,

At the end of July, when the Soviet Army approached the capital, Warsaw was the heart of the Polish Underground State. According to General Bor, on the eve of the rising, there were 35,000 front-line and 7000 auxiliary Underground troops in the city. Only 20,000 of them, however, were armed with rifles and automatic pistols, in part parachuted from England, and in part seized from the Germans or even produced in secret small-arms plants. The troops had food, medical supplies, and ammunition enough for eight days fighting.

When the Russian-German front approached the Vistula, the Polish Underground was faced with a hard decision: who was going to liberate the capital? General Bor feared most that the Communists might have organized their own uprising, which, based on the anti-German feelings of the population, could create an impression that the capital had willingly accepted the Lublin Committee as its legal authority. "Soviet aims", reported General Bor in his message to London, "may thus succeed, unless we oppose their plan with our own action".¹ On the other hand, the fate of the Home Army units which fought in Wilno and Lwow, as well

as the Anglo-American attitude toward "the Polish question" created some
doubt as to the value of an armed insurrection. Finally, however, General
Bor, and the Council of National Unity, presided over by Vice-Premier
Jankowski, felt that only a determined stand against the Germans could
"demonstrate to the world Poland's right to independence" and decided to
act. The Council was, no doubt, strongly influenced by Mikolajezyk's
plan to negotiate with Stalin, as well as by the Polish broadcasts from
London, which, loyally supporting the prestige of the Western Allies,
suggested that the Anglo-American "trump card" against Russia had not yet
been shown. Moreover, on July 29th, when the Red Army approached the
Vistula, the Kosciuszko radio station in Moscow broadcasted to the people
of Warsaw an appeal to rise immediately. "Poles," said the broadcast,
"the time of liberation is at hand. To arms! There is not a moment to
lose". General Bor did not pay too much attention to this broadcast,
but, learning from the B.B.C. that Mikolajezyk had already arrived in
Moscow, ordered his troops to attack. This, however, is what the general
thought about the Kosciuszko appeal on the eve of insurrection:

"There could be no purpose in initiating the people to an
action which, if unsupported, would surely spell their
slaughter, with no gain to the Russian advance."  

There is no space in this short essay to offer a detailed ac­
count of events in Warsaw. Worth quoting, however, is the statement of an
Underground politician, Stypulkowski, who called it "a folly" which "only

1. Mikolajezyk, St., The Rape of Poland, New York and Toronto, McGraw­
2. Komorowski, T., (Bor) The Secret Army, New York, MacMillan, 1951
Page 212.
the Poles were ready to commit in defence of their freedom and independence.¹

The insurrection lasted sixty-three days, and finally collapsed because of lack of supplies and food. About 250,000 Poles were killed, or wounded, and the city was completely demolished. The Soviet Army halted suddenly, about six miles from Warsaw, and only at the end of the insurrection made a half-hearted attempt to cross the Vistula. British and American demands for the use of Soviet air bases for supplying the fighting Poles from the air were rejected by Soviet headquarters. Only at the end of the sixth week of the insurrection were the Allies allowed to land on Soviet airfields. All requests for help made by General Bor to a Soviet Marshall, Rokossovski, remained unanswered.

The collapse of the insurrection was accompanied by a complete failure of the Mikolajczyk mission to Moscow. Stalin demanded recognition of the Curzon line by the Polish Government, and insisted on reaching an agreement with the Lublin Committee. "I intend", concluded the Soviet leader, "to deal with only one Polish Government, not two."²

The course of the Warsaw rising was carefully watched by Lublin. Started without the blessing of the Committee, the insurrection was met with unanimous support by the Polish people. Various detachments of the Home Army, even those in hiding east of the Curzon line, made an attempt

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to march upon Warsaw. Unfortunately, General Bor's order of August 14, sent by open radiogram from Warsaw, and repeated several times by the B.B.C., became known to the Soviet troops, as well. They had already been instructed to halt and disarm "the Polish Nationalist Army, in the service of the Polish Emigré Government." Consequently, the Polish troops were easily surrounded and liquidated.

At the same time, Tass started vehement attacks discrediting the rising.

"We are in possession of information," ran the broadcast, that the London Polish circles responsible for the Warsaw uprising made no attempt to co-ordinate the revolt with the Soviet High Command. All responsibility for the Warsaw activity lies entirely with the Polish emigré circles in London."

This made the outline of Soviet (and Lublin) policy quite clear. The remains of the Home Army were to be liquidated by the Germans, and the blame for it was to be taken by the emigré government. At the same time, however, the Committee had to demonstrate its "good will", and its anxiety to help Warsaw. Therefore, on September 10th, in the sixth week of the insurrection, when part of the city had already been recaptured by the Germans, the Russians withdrew their objection to the use of their airfields by American bombers.

Immediately after letting their airfields to the Americans, the Red Air Force also began to drop supplies over Warsaw, without, however, using parachutes. Much of the supplies dropped thus was des-


troyed. Nor was the costly American raid of September 18th of much use to the insurrection, since most of the parachuted supplies were intercepted by the Germans.

When the Red Army finally captured the eastern suburb or Warsaw, Praga, one of the Berling battalions, crossed the Vistula and, without many losses, reached the Home Army unit Radoslaw, in Czerniakow. This bridgehead, however, neither enlarged or properly supplied, in spite of two days of German inactivity, was recaptured five days later by the enemy. No large scale action was taken by the Reds to cross the river and support the uprising. Since the end of the war, considerable effort has been made to explain Rokossowski's halt on the Vistula. Admirers of the Soviet Union justify it as an act of strategical necessity. Others, however, prefer a more logical explanation, calling it "a cynical willingness to annihilate organizational rivals".¹

Whatever the truth is, the collapse of the rising in fact annihilated the Polish Underground State. The leaders of the Underground decided, from then on, to adopt the so-called "Czech" policy of making "the maximum of noise on the international scene"² while suffering a minimum of losses. The successor of General Bor, who had been captured by the Germans, was General Okulicki. He summed up the situation and his plans in a circular letter to his subordinates:

"The Western World will try to obtain Russia's help in the struggle for the Far East, and will be inclined to make

² Sikorski Institute, P.S.Z. (A.K.) III, Page 912
further concessions. Later they will see how much Soviet
greed and power will become a menace...The Anglo Saxons
will have to mobilize all their forces in Europe to enable
them to halt the Soviets. We shall then come to the front
in the defence line....

1. Stypulkowski, Z., *Invitation to Moscow*, London, Thames and Hudson,
The Compromise Policy.

Urged by the British Prime Minister, Mikolajezyk went once more to Moscow. Here, however, in the presence of Churchill, Eden, and the American observer, Harriman, he was informed by Molotov that the Western leaders had agreed to the Curzon line as the eastern frontier of Poland when in the conference in Teheran. Churchill confirmed this. This blow was quite unexpected. Although continually and strongly pressed by the British to agree to Russian territorial demands, the Polish Government had never been officially informed that Soviet claims had been approved by Churchill and Roosevelt in Teheran. The Western leaders, who had decided, with Stalin, "that it would be best not to issue any public declaration about an agreement", had not informed the party most concerned, - the Polish Government.¹

The result of the Moscow meeting was Mikolajezyk's decision to accept the Curzon line. He was faced by "a united Anglo-Soviet front, with the United States adopting a passive attitude".² His government, however, supported by the Underground in Poland, decided "rather to be slaughtered in the open than to commit suicide in the dark" and refused

². Ibid, Page 98.
to follow the British advice.\footnote{Levine, D.T., The Fruits of Teheran, Glasgow, John S. Burns and Sons, 1945, Page 11.} It thus became a liability, if not an obstacle, in Anglo-American relations with Russia. Out of the four major parties of the emigré government, and the Council of National Unity in Poland, only the Peasant Party accepted the advice of leader Stalin's conditions. On November 24, Mikolajezyk resigned the premiership of the London Government, which, from then onward, was completely ignored by its western allies.\footnote{General Anders, at this time Acting Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Forces, puts it bluntly: "The departure of Mr. Mikolajezyk had, in fact, opened a way by which Britain and the United States could betray the lawful government of Poland."} \footnote{Before the Yalta Conference, the new London Government of Mr. Arciszewski sent a memorandum to the great Powers, proposing that Polish territorial changes should be discussed only after the war, and expressing the hope that no puppet government would be established in Poland by the Big Three. This memorandum was entirely ignored.}

Mikolajezyk's resignation was followed by the proclamation of the Lublin Committee of National Liberation as "the Provisional Government of liberated, democratic Poland." The proclamation was made after the National Council of the Homeland, increased by that time to 105 deputies, had unanimously passed a resolution calling the Provisional Government into being. Appointment of ministers was made by Mr. Bierut, president (no longer chairman) of the National Council, and, on January 5, 1945, the government was formally recognized by Moscow.
V.

The Trial of Sixteen.

As early as July 26, 1944, the Lublin Committee had authorized the Soviet agents to make arrests in Poland without consulting the Polish authorities. Moreover, the People's Militia was put under the command of the Russian Military Commandant. The first victims were, of course, the members of the "London" Underground administration, and the soldiers of the Home Army who refused to join the Reds. When by February, 1945, most of the pre-war Polish territories were under Soviet control, the number of arrests increased. In the next four months, i.e. by June, 1945, twenty-eight concentration camps were set up by the Security Service of the Provisional Government alone.¹

The Declaration of the Big Three in regard to Liberated Europe, issued on February 12, 1945, from Yalta, expressed, in fact, the agreement of the West to recognize the Provisional Government when "reorganized on a broader democratic basis, with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad."² So created, the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity was to hold in the country "free and unfettered elections on the basis of universal suffrage and the secret ballot".

At the beginning of March, Jankowski, Vice-Premier and Delegate of the London Government, three members of the Home Council of Ministers, (Pajdak, Bien, Jasiukowicz), the ex-commander of the Home Army (General Okulicki), and eleven leaders of the four major political parties, received, through indirect channels, an invitation to attend a conference with Colonel-General Ivanov, a representative of the High Command of the White-Ruthenian front. The invitation was sent by a colonel of the N.K.V. D., Fimenov, who guaranteed the personal safety of the invited leaders. The aim of the proposed meeting was to organize "the clarification of the atmosphere; and the coming into the open of the democratic Polish parties in order that they might take part in the general current of the democratic forces of independent Poland."  

The Delegate and his Council, as well as the executives of the four political parties, decided to accept this invitation. The London Government approved the decision and informed the governments of the United Kingdom and the United States. After unofficial talks at Red Army headquarters, the Soviet authorities agreed to allow eight Polish leaders to fly to London for special consultation with their government. An aircraft was to be provided by the Red Army, for March 29th. On March 27th, the Poles were invited to see Marshall Zhukov, who was authorized to negotiate in the name of the Soviet Government. Upon arrival in Moscow, the whole delegation was arrested and sent to the Lubyanka prison. After ten

1. During the second half of February, after the Yalta decision, the Polish Government in London disclosed to the British and American Governments the whereabouts of Vice-Premier Jankowski and three members of his Home Council of Ministers, for transmission to the Soviet Government. Liberty Publications, The Moscow Trial of the 16 Polish Leaders, London, 1945, Page 1.

2. Ibid, Page 2.
days of waiting for word from the delegation, the Poles in London asked the British ambassador in Moscow for information. The latter officially questioned the Soviet Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and was informed that the Ministry knew nothing about "the alleged confidential negotiations held between the Soviet Government and the adherents of the Polish London Government". Not until May 4 were the British and American Governments officially informed that the Polish leaders had been charged with anti-Soviet activities, and imprisoned. Four days later, Stalin, answering a letter from "The Times" correspondent, stated that "it is untrue that the arrested Poles had ever been invited to negotiate with Soviet representatives".

Soon, the delegates were officially accused of organizing and leading a Polish Underground in the rear of Soviet Armies, conducting sabotage against the Soviet Army, spreading propaganda against the U.S.S.R., and, finally, breaking Soviet military regulations. The trial, labelled "The Trial of Polish Diversionists", was held in Moscow before a Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. It lasted three days only, from June 18 - 21, 1945, and had all the characteristics of a political show. The defendants' witnesses were not admitted, "due to the impossibility of bringing them over either today or tomorrow". Twelve of the accused received sentences ranging from four months to ten years, and three were acquitted. At the same time, the Provisional Government issued a communique that, after the termination of the Moscow trial, the


2. By Molotov, at San Francisco.

sixteen leaders should be brought to a new trial before the Polish courts, for "high treason against the Polish nation".

The trial was obviously, more than anything else, a political show, with definite aims. It took place at the time when Mikolajezyk and Stanczyk, the former members of the London Government, accepted the invitation of the Molotov-Harriman-Kerr Commission to meet in Moscow. The Commission had been set up at Yalta in order "to consult with members of the present Provisional Government and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland, and from abroad."\(^1\) The ex-Premier of the London Government, no doubt again under strong British pressure,\(^2\) agreed to participate in negotiations about his inclusion in the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity. The synchronization of Mikolajezyk's appearance in Moscow and the trial of the "London-sponsored" Underground leaders thus prepared the ground for the formation of a Polish government fully acceptable to the Kremlin. At the same time, however, the trial was aimed at discrediting the Underground, by proving that its collaboration aided the Germans.\(^3\) The fact that most of the leaders "confessed" during the trial could, and to some circles in the West certainly did, reveal in a suspicious light various press reports from Poland which denounced unceasing terror, executions and deportations. Moscow could hope,

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2. According to Mikolajezyk, his decision to join the "Yaltan" government was "prompted by two meetings with Churchill".

3. General Okulicki, in his speech in the Court in Moscow, characterizes the trial: "This trial has a political character. It concerns the punishment of the Polish Underground. You cannot prove that we did not fight the Germans for five years, but, as in all political trials, you want to deprive us of this political asset".
perhaps, that this discrediting of the Underground could compel the British and Americans to withdraw their recognition from the London emigrants without insisting too firmly on personal changes in the Lublin Provisional Government. At the same time, the trial was undoubtedly a conclusive test of western endurance, or, speaking frankly, of the durability of western appeasement. If this was the case, the result was satisfactory. However, Eden and Stettinius expressed in San Francisco "their grave concern" at receiving "this most disquieting information" and Hopkins even asked Stalin to release the sixteen Poles. On the whole, Anglo-American indignation was brief, and only half-hearted.

All this served well to discredit Great Britain and the United States in the eyes of the Poles. Besides warning those Poles who still dreamed about "the Western way of life" that they could no longer count on the support of their western war-allies, the Moscow trial served well the task of the sovietization of Poland.


2. Worth mentioning is the fact that three of the arrested leaders, Baginski, Chacinski, and Urbanski, had been suggested by the British government to the Commission of Three as persons who should have been consulted about the new Polish Government.
VI.

The Provisional Government of National Unity.

The arrest of the Underground leaders was welcomed by the Lublin Government as a prelude to the Moscow meeting with the London Poles who accepted the invitation of The Commission of Three. The meeting took place on June 17 and ended with the formation of the Provisional Government of National Unity. All the cards were in the hands of the Communists. As early as April 22, 1945, Bierut had signed with Stalin a treaty of "friendship, mutual assistance and post-war co-operation" Stalin welcomed the Polish communists, presenting the treaty as a "guarantee of the independence of the new democratic Poland," and the creation of "a united front from the Baltic to the Carpathians, against the common enemy, German imperialism."¹ Mikolajezyk had nothing save empty assurances that he could "count on the support and influence of both the British and the Americans".² He at once demanded that the date be fixed for "the free and unfettered election" ordained by the Yalta agreement, granting all possible guarantees of freedom of speech, press and assembly, as well as the admission of foreign observers and reporters. Further, he asked for

². Ibid, Page 118; Churchill's words at the meeting with Mikolajezyk on June 9, 1945.
an amnesty for arrested soldiers of the Home Army, and the withdrawal of
the Russian troops from Poland. He suggested that Wincenty Witos, veteran
leader of the Peasant Party, be named president "ad interim" of Poland, or
that a three-man Board (including Bierut) should undertake control of the
country until the election. A similar program was suggested by Dr.
Kiernik, the Peasant Party delegate who arrived from Poland.

These proposals, however, were rejected by Bierut, who suggested
the appointment of Osobka-Morowski as the future Prime-Minister, "because
Stalin likes him".1 Finally, a subcommittee was formed and authorized to
draft an internal agreement, outlining the policy of the Government of
National Unity. It assigned one-third of the seats in the government and
in the National Council to the Peasant Party. Six posts in the cabinet,
too, were to be held by its members, as well as the portfolios of Public
Administration, Agriculture and Agrarian Reform, Education, Post and Tele-
graphs, Culture and Arts, and Health. One-third of the Cabinet Under-
secretaries, Ambassadors and Consuls were to be selected from the same
party, to which were also promised controlling positions in the banks,
co-operative unions, and "other State financial, economical and cultural
institutions". On the other hand, the Presidency, the Premiership, the
Ministries of Public Security, National Defence, Foreign Affairs, Foreign
Trade, Industry, Finance, and other key positions in the government were
secured for the Communists. Mikolajezyk got a post of Second Deputy
Premier of the government.

On June 27th, the Provisional Government of National Unity re-

1. Mikolajezyk, St., The Rape of Poland, New York and Toronto, McGraw-
turned to Warsaw, and at the beginning of July it was given the formal blessing of Britain and the United States. With this, the Communist regime in Poland became a fact, formally recognized on the international arena. An ally, and, during the Second World War, "the inspiration of the world", Poland became, in the calculations of the Western leaders, a satellite of the Soviet Union. Time had indeed brought changes!

There was, in fact, no real difference between the Government of National Unity and its predecessor, the Lublin Committee. The Yaltan condition of reorganization of the latter "on a broader democratic basis" had never been fulfilled. The "democratisation" took place in Moscow, under the watchful eyes of Stalin, and, consequently, left all the power in the hands of the communists. Although officially, as in Lublin, it was a coalition of four "independent" parties: the Polish Workers' Party (P.P.R.) the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.), the Peasant Party (S.L.) and the Democratic Party (S.D.), all of them were communist-controlled. The last two were completely artificial creations: the former aimed at absorbing followers of Witos and Mikolajezyk, and the latter meant to "represent" the professional intelligentsia. Only the Polish Socialist Party, though led by men obedient to Moscow, included also some of the pre-war Socialists, who were able to exert a certain influence from below. Mikolajezyk's party was not yet "legal" when the government was pronounced "representative" and recognized by the Big Three.

The Potsdam Declaration, "pending the final determination of Poland's western frontiers" placed "under the administration of the Polish State the former German territories east of the Oder." Thus the frontier of Poland on the map was moved westwards, receiving in exchange for 70,000 square miles of eastern provinces less than 40,000 square miles in German
Silesia, East Germany, and East Prussia. It is no part of this essay to estimate the economical gain or loss of this "exchange". Politically, however, it had first-rate importance, binding Poland to the Soviet Union, which alone recognized and guaranteed the new western border. Consequently, the Soviet Union was represented by communist propaganda as a mighty protector and benefactor of a Poland "exhausted by the war losses and more than five years of Hitlerite occupation." And the losses were heavy indeed. None of the "victorious" powers suffered more than Poland. Eighteen percent of the pre-war population, that is, about six million people, were put to death: on the battlefields or in German and Russian concentration camps. The damage to property has been set at 12.5 billion pounds and included 60% of the buildings of Warsaw, 70% of all Poland's livestock, 90% of her machine-tool industry, and 70% of her textile industry.

1. Of these, 3.2 million were the Polish Jews exterminated by the Germans.

2. By contrast, the joint losses of Britain and the United States are estimated as 600,000.
VII.

The Softening of the Opposition.

According to the Crimean Agreement, the Provisional Government was pledged "to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible". The genuine fulfillment of this condition could only mean the certain defeat of the communist bloc. The ground had, therefore to be prepared carefully before they could be held. The purely Soviet pattern of a one-party parliament was abandoned, mainly in order to leave the impression, both within the country and abroad, that Poland would have a government of democratic structure. The system was officially named the "people's democracy", but within the Party it was considered an intermediary state during which the country would be gradually prepared for the Soviet form of "socialist democracy". 1

The inclusion of the non-Lublin Poles and especially of Mikolajezyk in the Provisional Government created a problem for the communists. All four parties were well infiltrated by the Reds, and Mikolajezyk, too, was undoubtedly admitted to the government in the hope that he would work within the bogus Peasant Party. Soon, however, several members of the government-inspired Peasant Party reached an agreement with Mikolajezyk

1. "We are aiming at building a different democracy to the one in France, or in England, perhaps even more democratic than theirs." Osobka-Morawski, Glos Ludu, No. 159, 1946
that they would be merged with the pre-war Peasant Party, not yet represented in the government. Wincenty Witos was to remain chairman, and Mikolajezyk and Banczyk, who led the Lublin branch, were to be next-in-charge. The Supreme Council of the bogus Peasant Party ejected Banczyk as chairman and refused to merge with the "reactionaries". Therefore, on September, 1945, the old Peasant Party changed its name to "Polish Peasant Party" (P.S.L.) and issued a series of declarations outlining its political program. Particular stress was laid on the preserving of private enterprise, and on friendship with the western powers. The Presidium of the National Council, acting as a temporary parliament, accepted the "new" party, but, at the same time, the communists stepped up their campaign to liquidate the opposition.

During the fall and winter of 1945-1946, drastic police-action was taken against the remnants of the Underground. The latter had been officially disbanded in a July, 1945, declaration\(^1\), which stated, however, that "many people of the Underground Poland will be compelled to continue in hiding..." solely because they feared for their lives. This was quite true. The General Amnesty for the Home Army, proclaimed in August, did not include political leaders of the Underground. Consequently, continuance of those people in hiding provided the Security Police with an excellent excuse for mass arrests of members of and sympathisers with the Peasant Party, on the charge of maintaining contact with the Underground.

During the winter of 1945-1946, tension in the political situation gradually increased. In December the populace in Grojec stormed

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the local prison to free several political prisoners. The attempt was unsuccessful, but the Security Police arrested four prominent citizens, including the local judge, and shot them in the forests outside the town. Two of them were local leaders of the Polish Peasant Party. One of them, however, survived the execution, and reported the incident to the headquarters of his party. At the next cabinet meeting, Mikolajczyk demanded the formation of an investigating commission and the punishment of the guilty officials.¹ This was refused, on the grounds that "it would constitute a vote of non-confidence in the Minister of Security"². Finally, after the Peasant Party members of the cabinet walked out, the commission was created. It never did any work.

In the same fashion, a member of the Peasant Party executive, Władysław Kołder, and a former secretary of the Government-sponsored Peasant Party, Bolesław Sciborek, who remained faithful to the older party of Witos and Mikolajczyk, were shot to death by the U.B.³ Mikolajczyk kept informing the diplomatic representatives of Great Britain and the United States about such acts of violence. In his book "The Rape of Poland", he quotes scores of "liquidations" of Party members and sympathisers. There were cases in which entire families were murdered and whole villages burnt. The district commanders of the Security Police were often directed by the "advisers" from the N.K.V.D. In several cases, Red Army


3. Polish Security Police, organized similarly to the Soviet N.K.V.D.
units supported the U.B.¹ For instance, on November 30 and December 1, two villages in the Bielsk district were surrounded by the police and Soviet detachments, and nine members of the Polish Peasant Party were shot, on the pretext that they had maintained contact with the "reactionary Underground".

Along with this "liquidation" of Mikolajezyk's supporters, the government was pressing the opposition to join the Government Bloc in a single electoral list. The Party was promised 20% of the seats in a future parliament, and 20% of the government ministries. The acceptance of this proposition would mean the annihilation of the Polish Peasant Party as an integral political party: therefore, the leaders decided to have their own list. Acting independently, the Party could easily gain the majority of seats, providing that the elections were truly "free and unfettered". In the spring of 1946, in spite of hardships and persecution, the Polish Peasant Party had already more than 600,000 members and many more sympathisers. Because it was the only recognized party free of communist penetration it was backed by thousands of members of political groups, which, as for example the National Democracy, were not allowed to emerge from "underground".

The National Council of the Homeland limited the number of political parties to six, preventing thus the formation of any independent political representation in the future. In addition to the four parties of the Lublin Government and the Peasants, the pre-war Christian-Democratic Labour Party was admitted to compete in the future election. However,

chairman, Dr. Popiel, was forced to sign a declaration of fusion with a communist-sponsored group of the same name (sometimes called "the Work Party"), led by a communist, Wiely-Wirski. The Polish Socialist, who had acted during the German occupation under the cryptonym W.R.N. (Freedom, Equality, Independence), and were influential among the workers, were forced to fuse with the Government-sponsored Socialist Party. However, a prominent pre-war labour leader, Zygmunt Zulawski, formerly Secretary-General of the Polish T.U.C. and chairman of the Supreme Council of the Socialists, demanded permission to form a new, independent Social-Democratic Party.¹ He based his demand on the provisions of the Yalta agreement. Permission was not granted, and Zulawski's group was declared illegal, together with the "reactionary" N.S.Z. (a semi-military organization of the National Democracy, which fought the Germans during the occupation, but were violently persecuted by the communists, on the charge of "Polish fascism".)

After nearly a year of attempts at co-operation with the Government-sponsored Socialist Party, Zulawski resigned, and, followed by his group, entered into electoral agreement with Mikolajezyk, deciding to run as a Polish Peasant Party candidate in the election. The Government-sponsored Socialist Party was led by Cyrankiewicz², a Minister without portfolio in Osobka's Government. His statement in "Robotnik"³ perhaps best characterizes the attitude of the Government in the electoral campaign:

2. Cyrankiewicz was the real leader, though the official head of the Party was Premier Osobka.
"We shall support the Security organizations and police force by giving them our best manhood.... In order to protect our newly-won positions, we must stand fast and cover the march to final socialist victory." ¹

From the moment of Mikolajezyk's refusal to join the bloc, open warfare was declared on the Polish Peasant Party. During the tenth National Council session, Prime Minister Osobka openly accused the Peasants of "reactionary activity", commenting:

"Standing on guard of the most sacred rights of the nation, we shall wage relentless war on reaction, wherever it may be..." ²

However, the Government needed time. The provisions of the Crimean Agreement, repeated in Potsdam, imposed on the regime the duty of holding free elections with the least possible delay. According to Mr. Byrnes' account of the Yalta Conference, Molotov, chairman of the Moscow Commission, in reply to President Roosevelt's question: "How long will it take you to hold free elections?" said, "No more than a month."

In September, 1945, when receiving the American Congressional Subcommittee, Bierut explained that the elections could not be held until the spring of 1946, because of winter frosts which would prevent peasants from outlying districts from arriving at the polls. This sounded reasonable; besides, millions of people were still on the move. The Poles who had been allowed to leave the territories east of the "Curzon line" which had been ceded to the U.S.S.R., were slowly arriving in the ³


Hundreds of thousands of people deported to Germany during the war were also coming back. There was a serious lack of transportation, too, which would make it difficult to organize a representative election. The ballot, therefore, was expected to be held in May or June, 1946. As it happened, however, the elections were held six months later, in the coldest month of the year: January, 1947. This delay permitted the Security Police to paralyze the activities of the Polish Peasant Party and the Christian Labour group.

In this campaign, firstly, rigid restrictions were put on the freedom of the press of all opposition parties. This was obviously a breaking of the international obligations undertaken at Potsdam. The President, however, answering interrogation by the British ambassador, explained that his statement of August, in Potsdam, that "there would be freedom of the press" was "merely a general expression of policy". Furthermore, he admitted that the press was under control in order to restrict attacks made by "Fascist elements" against the Government. Consequently, the Polish Peasant Party was granted permission (and paper, which was strictly rationed) to publish only one daily newspaper in Warsaw: the Gazeta Ludowa. The number of copies was limited to 70,000 a day. A number of weeklies and monthlies of the same party, covering the whole country, were restricted to 125,000 copies. Such was the decree, though Mikołajczyk's party, according to both Polish and foreign estimation, certainly had the support of a majority of the electorate, which was thought to number about thirteen million.¹ All application for permission

1. as estimated by Mikołajczyk, Arthur Bliss Lane, and several other writers.
to publish other papers or to increase the circulation of "Gazeta Ludowa" were firmly rejected. All contents of the papers were, of course, strictly censored. Especially with the second half of 1946, every reference to mass arrests or criticism of the Government was immediately blue-pencilled. Sometimes as many as three-quarters of the articles were killed. Moreover, the paper was not allowed to appear with any blank spaces which might denote the work of a censor.

Speeches of Mikolajczyk at public meetings, or speeches of the Party representatives in the National Council were regularly suppressed. In the immediate pre-election period, most of the editors of the opposition papers were jailed. Among these were fifteen members of the editorial staff of "Gazeta Ludowa", "Piast", "Polska Ludowa" and "Chlopski Sztandar".

The eight daily papers of the Workers' Party, on the other hand, supplied their readers with more than one million copies a day. The entire Government Bloc published more than thirty dailies and a number of weeklies and monthlies.  

According to the Potsdam obligations, foreign correspondents were to "enjoy full freedom to report to the world upon developments in Poland before and during the elections". Even in 1945, however, the correspondents of the American Associated Press, of the New York Times, and several British correspondents were required to submit their dispatches to the Government for approval before sending them home. The official

1. Poddebski, Karel, Behind the Iron Curtain, London, J. Rolls Book Co, Ltd., 1946, Page 181. In October, 1945, Bierut said that 110 newspapers were published then in Poland.
The official Tass Agency, of course, was sending its material without reference to Polish authorities. Only a sharp protest in July from the American ambassador, Bliss Lane, caused the removal of this restriction.
The Referendum and Its Purpose

In April, the members of the Polish Peasant Party in the National Council of the Homeland passed a resolution demanding an early election. It was already nine months since the Government of National Unity had been formed. The censor, however, forbade the publishing of the resolution. At the same time, the meeting of the National Council decided, in spite of the protests of the opposition, to hold a referendum on three questions:

1. Are you in favour of the abolition of the Senate?

2. Are you for making permanent, through the future Constitution, an economic system based on land-reform and nationalization of the basic industries, with maintenance of the rights of private property?

3. Are you in favour of the Polish Western Frontiers, as fixed on the Baltic coast, and on the Oder and Neisse rivers?

The question arises: what was the purpose of this referendum? The American ambassador in Warsaw, Arthur Bliss Lane, presents it as a rehearsal of the election. The Government did not yet feel itself as having sufficient control through the Security Police and its newly-formed helper, the Volunteer Citizens' Militia Reserve, (O.R.M.O., to risk an election. On the other hand, the referendum might reveal how much real support the Government could command among the people, and at the same time, demonstrate how efficiently it could operate the carefully prepared electoral machine. Mikolajezyk, however, feels that the refer-
endum was an attempt at showing the West how completely unanimous was Polish public opinion, and how strongly it supported the Government's plans. With this demonstration, the communists could have hoped either to convince their western allies (who were only too anxious, indeed, to get rid of the Polish question) of their "popularity" among the Polish people, or, in any case, to test the Western reaction.

By now, there is no doubt that Lane's "rehearsal" theory was true. The referendum displayed to the Government the true picture of Polish public opinion. Its results provided the communists with a warning that the election required careful preparation. Mikolajezyk's suggestion, however, is also true. After the referendum, although supplied with detailed information about communist terror tactics, the British and American governments, who once guaranteed a free and unfettered election in Poland, did nothing, except that Warsaw was informed that (following the British Note of August 19th)

"...His Majesty's Government has been concerned to hear... that it is widely believed in Poland that grave irregularities occurred in connection with the Referendum...."

Little, if any, opposition could be expected on the second and third questions of the referendum. The majority of the Polish people were undoubtedly in favour of land reforms, and the division of the large estates among the landless peasantry. Such a step was necessary from the point of view of economic recovery, and had been already carried out in part before the war. The nationalization of basic industries with the


2. The Land Reform Plan of Minister of Agriculture Pomiatowski, 1960.
maintenance of private enterprise, was also a proposal welcomed by the Poles. The third question of the referendum could be answered only in the affirmative. The people who lost 70,000 square miles of land in the east to the Soviet Union quite naturally desired compensation in the West; the more so as the proposal would weaken considerably the ten-century-old German enemy. The terms of the Potsdam Conference provided that the new western frontier of Poland would be finally settled at the Peace Conference. Nevertheless, the Poles were permitted to expel the German population from the "Recovered Lands". Naturally, therefore, it was assumed that the Big Three had no intention of returning these territories to Germany.

The abolition of the Senate, however, was a different matter. The Senate was generally regarded as a superfluous institution, but its elimination seemed to endanger the Constitution of 1921, which was regarded, at that time, as a valuable legal means to thwart the Communists. The Senate, like the Diet, had the right of electing the President of Poland. Consequently, it was naively believed that a Communist candidate would have to be cleared through two waves of opposition, the Diet and the Senate, which would make it more difficult for him to win the election. There was, however, a more important tactical reason for Mikolajczyk's party, supported by the Labour Party of Dr. Popiel, deciding to vote "No" on the first question. It was "as a protest against political terror, against dissolving local units of the Party, against false arrests and censorship, and against the referendum itself as an illegal change in the Constitution".

IX.

The "Grave Irregularities".

As soon as the Peasant Party announced its decision to vote negatively on the first question, government pressure increased. All over the country there were mass arrests of Party members. (At Poznan alone, 3000 Polish Peasant Party members were arrested to prevent them from voting) The campaign against the elimination of the Senate was hampered by the circulation of the "Gazeta Ludowa", which was cut down, and the restriction of radio space, which was completely controlled by the Government. Posters of the Polish Peasant Party were torn down, while Government signs, reading "3 Razy Tak" (Vote Yes Three Times) were posted in all prominent places, including the walls of the Peasant Party headquarters in Warsaw. The owners of houses where the Government posters were placed were made responsible for their preservation. Mikolajczyk's advice to vote "No" on the first question was not permitted to be published, and his Party meetings were often attacked by armed brigands and detachments of O.R.M.O. Mikolajczyk relates:

"Mass arrests were made and men died for affirming in public that the Big Three had guaranteed at Yalta the right of all Poles to vote as they pleased."¹

The actual voting was quiet, and without police interference. No major disturbances occurred. The American ambassador wrote later:

"The outward peacefulness of a summer Sunday gave no sign that a heated political battle with international implications was being waged."  

Fairly impartial Popular Voting Commissions were entrusted with supervising the voting which amounted to 90% of the electorate. The counting of votes, however, was far from accurate. The very provisions of the referendum law provided that a blank ballot was to be regarded as a "Yes" vote on all three questions. Besides, government organizations, as well as nationalized or government-controlled industries were to vote in bodies. As a group, of course, the workers, under the threat of losing their jobs, if nothing worse, were forced to "Vote Yes Three Times".

There were, too, several cases of the detaining of impartial observers: mostly of the foreign correspondents and members of the Western Embassies.

The law provided for votes to be counted at the polling places, in the presence of representatives of all political parties. The ballot boxes, however, were quickly removed from the polls before the tabulation of votes, and taken to the district commissioner's headquarters. The Members of the Voting Commission who insisted on supervising the counting were, in many cases, arrested by the Security Police. In Krakow, however, the non-Communist members of the electoral commission tabulated the ballots, and reported the results before their commission was instructed to remove the ballot boxes. The government, therefore, was forced to publish these results in official announcements. The voting was 84%

2. Ibid, Page 243.
"No" on question Number One. Also, in 2805 polling stations (out of a total of some 14,000), the non-Communist members of the commissions managed to check their ballot boxes. According to their reports, the answer to question Number One in these districts was "No" in 83.54% of cases. Ten days after the referendum the Government published the official results. The count on the first question was: "No" - 32%, "Yes" - 68%.

The Opposition immediately protested to the Commissioner General for Popular Voting, attaching a long list of infractions of the Franchise Law, which had occurred during the voting. This protest was ignored. Then Mikolajczyk called a press conference of foreign correspondents and revealed the facts, supplying a list of members of his Party who had been arrested by the Security Police during the referendum. This was a serious step to take, and, immediately after records of this conference appeared in the foreign press, he was pronounced a "traitor" by the Government newspapers. The referendum showed clearly where opposition was the strongest. It also made possible the "improving" of the voting procedure in the coming elections, on the basis of experience thus gained. Besides this, it tested the patience or willingness to appease, of the West, assuring the Government that Anglo-Saxon guarantees of "free and unfettered" election could tolerate much more than a referendum.¹

Shortly after the referendum, Bierut, Gomulka, Berman² and a few Socialist leaders went to Moscow where the course of pre-electoral policy was outlined. The Socialists, in return for joining the Government

¹. The British Note to the Provisional Government concerning the referendum was rejected as "interference in (Polish) internal affairs".

². Officially Undersecretary of State for the Council of Ministers; regarded as one of the most influential members in the so-called "secret government" in Poland, viz. the Party leaders.
Bloc, were to be rewarded with 25% of the seats in the future parliament. "The election must be won before the election", Stalin is said to have remarked.¹ Stalin assured the bloc that "there will be no war about the Polish elections. They (the Americans and British) will probably make a protest, but this will only be a paper protest."²

From then onward, it became quite evident that, no matter by what means, the Government bloc would win the election overwhelmingly.

². A Student of Affairs, How Did the Satellites Happen? (Poland), London The Batchworth Press Ltd., 1952, Page 70.
The Massacre in Kielce.

In the meantime a tragic anti-Jewish disturbance took place in Kielce. Anti-Semitism has always existed in Poland, chiefly for economic reasons: the Jewish domination in commerce. However, since the ruthless extermination of the Jewish race by the Germans, there were no longer grounds for jealousy. Out of a pre-war population of nearly four million Polish Jews, no more than three hundred thousands survived the war. Besides, in 1946 many of these were east of the Curzon line, scattered all over the Soviet Union, or in western Germany and Austria. In Kielce there were only about two hundred and fifty Jews, living mostly in one apartment house. Half of them had been repatriated from the U.S.S.R. ¹

The immediate cause of the disturbance in which forty-one Jews were clubbed to death by the mob, and bayoneted by the soldiers, was an idiotic rumour that a ritual murder of Polish children had been committed by the Jews. Moreover, there were reports that the Jews in the building were the first to open fire. Jewish sources, on the other hand, insist that no shots were fired, and that the Jews were massacred when escorted by the militia out of the building. All sources, however, agree that the

¹ Bliss Lane suggests that the underlying cause of the unpopularity of the Jews, and, consequently, of the pogrom, was the fact that many key positions in the Provisional Government and P.P.R. were occupied by Jews: e.g. Mine, Berman, Radkiewicz, Specht, vel Olszewski, Spychalski, Goldberg, vel Borejsza, and others.
militia had been taking part in the massacre as well, and had actually killed some of the victims.

This tragedy was used in attacks against the Opposition. The Government press stated that "certain reactionaries, enraged because they lost the Referendum, have now turned to killing Jews. Gomolka openly accused the Polish Peasant Party of being responsible for the massacre, while Osobka-Morawski blamed Cardinal Hlond and the church. Some of the members of the militia and the Security Police who took part in the massacre were later arrested, but found guilty only of a "neglect of duty". They were never brought to trial, but released. During the trial of twelve civilians who took part in the massacre, the prosecution charged that the "reaction" was responsible for the pogrom.
Attacks on the Opposition Groups.

After the speech of the U.S. Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes; in Stuttgart, in which he informed his German audience that the Oder-western Neisse frontier was not necessarily permanent, Gomolka organized a mass meeting and demonstration in front of the American Embassy. The Polish Peasant Party was attacked for not joining the demonstration, the headquarters of the Party were demolished, and Party records were burned by the "patriotic" communists. But a declaration of Mikolajczyk, protesting against Byrnes' speech, and given two days before the Warsaw demonstration to foreign correspondents in Copenhagen, was suppressed in Poland. Instead, Mikolajczyk was denounced as a "pro-Hitlerite, opposed to the western frontier".

During this time, the authorities tightened their control over the peasantry by introducing the communist-controlled "Self-Help of the Peasants" to act as a "self-governing organization" for agriculture. Consequently, with the aid of special housing commissions, the communists seized various Peasant Party headquarters in town and country, seriously disorganizing Party activity. This "legal" suppression was supported by attacks of armed bands on Party meetings, which often ended with the

1. In many cases, disguised members of the Bezpička were recognized among the attackers.
killings of local leaders. Many farms were burnt by the Security Police, and the chief editor of "Gazeta Luówowa" was arrested with seven members of his staff.

In September the deputies of the P.S.L. to the temporary parliament demanded an action on their "twenty-six protests against Security Police and People's Militia arrests, murders and confiscations". The motion was defeated and several Peasant deputies were threatened with dismissal and deprival of immunity by a special disciplinary committee. At this same meeting came the end of the still independent group, the Christian Labour Party. The Communists introduced a motion demanding the expulsion of seven M.P.'s of Dr. Popiel's group, as not representing the "real interests of the Party". Popiel resigned, and his Independent Labour Party(S.P.) ceased to exist. Two days later, Communist chairman Wiely-Wirski stated that the Party was not dissolved, but that only a few "reactionaries" had resigned.

...
New Electoral Laws and Measures.

At the end of September a new Electoral Law was introduced to the National Council. Initially, the program of elections and electoral procedure was to have been elaborated in agreement between all the parties united in the electoral bloc. When it became clear, however, that the Peasant Party would not join the bloc, the Government worked out a project calculated to assure to the latter a predominant influence, and the winning of the election. The National Council, of course, legalized the proposed law.

At Potsdam Bierut had assured the British Prime Minister that the elections would be held on the basis of the Polish Constitution of 1921: the Electoral Law of 1946 was in open contradiction to this constitution. In consequence, the procedure now provided admitted of wide discretion in the allotment of the number of deputies per constituency. 1 The secret ballot provision (to which the Provisional Government was pledged by the Yalta and Potsdam agreements) was violated by allowing people to vote openly and "en masse". The question of the forfeiture by a citizen of active or passive electoral rights was not subject to a

1. The number of votes required per candidate of a constituency varied from 23,000 to 120,000. Therefore, in districts where the Opposition was strongest, more votes were required to secure a seat in the Diet. British Joint Committee for Polish Affairs, The Polish Elections, 1947 January 19, London, 1947. 105.
decision by the courts, but by political adjudicators. Consequently, the Communists could deprive any Pole of his right to vote; accusing him, for example, of "contact with the Underground", or "collaboration with the enemy". The 1921 Constitution had secured this right to all Polish citizens except those under judicial ban. Further, the law provided that results of the election were not to be made public on termination of the counting of the polls. This measure was obviously introduced to avoid the repetition of the referendum incident in Krakow.

Finally, for the first time in the history of Polish elections, the Army was given the open right of voting individually or "as a body"1. Prime Minister Osobka had stated in April, 1946, that the Army did not serve any of the political parties. However, six months later, on November 13, 1946, a sixteen page instruction booklet entitled "Regulations for the Security-Propaganda Group" signed by the Chief of Staff of the Polish forces, General Korczyz, and the Chief of the Political Education Bureau, Colonel Karzycki-Neugebauer, defined the activities and tasks of propaganda army units. These instructions recommended "effective counteraction of Peasant Party propaganda" by distributing among the voters (especially peasants) political pamphlets, leaflets and a weekly magazine, "Soldier's Word". This last, published by the Chief Political Education Bureau a million copies at a time, contained violent attacks against the Peasants. The instructions also recommended the collecting of data about members of the Peasant Party, their "contacts with forest bands", their activities in local organizations and the state of their financial affairs.

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The commander of each military unit of propaganda was held personally responsible for organizing local political meetings which should end with the resolution "elaborated in accordance with the pattern received", and condemning local members of the Peasant Party. Popular attendance at such meeting "should be ensured". "It is recommended," the document goes on, "to stick posters on the houses of political enemies, members of the Peasant Party".  

Numerous army units were sent to the countryside to put these instructions into effect. In "Armed Poland", the Vice-Minister of National Defence, General Spychalski (an old communist; perhaps the most "successful" soldier in the world, who started the war as an ensign and ended it a Lt. General in Zymierski's army) defined the duties of a soldier as follows:

"In his contact with peasants, each soldier should aid in righting all the lies and forgeries (of P.S.L.) and endeavour to counterpose the living reality of our country."  

The same official army newspaper gives many examples of propaganda activity in reports from commanders of the units. Here is an example:

"...the soldiers patiently explain to the peasants all the complicated problems of the adverse influence of the Peasant Party, and give them advice...."  

Apart from this advice, even stronger measures were used for "convincing" the people that they should vote for the Government Bloc. The most common were, in the country, expropriation, and, in the city, loss of


employment. These two measures, plus deportation from the district, were frequently applied to force the Peasant Party members to leave the Party. Thousands of families of local members and sympathisers were listed by the militia and threatened with expulsion from their farms. Following the example of the Army, workers and employees in many factories were asked to sign a guarantee that they would vote openly and as a body for the bloc. There were cases where eligible voters were stricken from the list and were told that they could be put back only after signing the guarantee.

In spite of all this, in commenting on the coming election during the sixth session of the National Council on the Electoral Law, President Bierut remarked:

"If we should compare our now created Electoral Law with similar laws in western Europe, we can see that we are far ahead of them as far as democratic principles are concerned."

On the Eve of Elections.

The communists made a full use of Byrnes' Stuttgart speech in the pre-electoral campaign against the Peasant Party. The Workers' Party, joined by the Socialists, published an open letter attacking the Peasants for refusing to participate in the Warsaw demonstration against "the American supporters and protectors of Germany. In order to expose it, the Peasant Party was asked to answer four questions:

1. Are you prepared to protect our boundaries in opposition to Byrnes and Churchill?

2. Are you prepared, in the name of our sovereignty, to protest against the meddling of Anglo-Saxon reactionary circles in our affairs?

3. Are you prepared to prosecute reactionary bands and bandits?

4. Do you accept our proposal for an electoral bloc?

The fact that Byrnes' speech was part of a pre-electoral campaign in Germany, and was delivered on purpose to counteract similar suggestions of the return of the "Recovered Lands" to Germany, made by the Communist Press, was not revealed in Poland.

The speech itself, however, made a generally bad impression, even among the members of the Peasant Party. There is no doubt that the popularity of the United States suffered a serious setback. Distrust was creeping in. The Poles could not help disliking British and American attitudes on the question of the eastern provinces. Polish military
circles in the west and members of the disbanded Home Army called it openly "a betrayal". After all, the Teheran decisions regarding the Polish eastern provinces were made behind their backs, and the Polish Government in London was not even officially informed about them.\(^1\)

Consequently, the end of the war brought to the Poles only bitter disappointment and distrust towards the West increased because of western passivity during the trial of the sixteen. Now the Byrnes speech made it even worse. Suspicion crept in that the western powers intended to return the "Recovered Lands" to the Germans. The regime nursed these suspicions carefully. The West was presented "treacherous" and "pro-German", and the situation as dangerous and threatening with the return of "Hitler's hangmen". On the other hand, it was emphasized that only a strong stand of all parties, united in a Bloc, led by the People's Government, which enjoyed the trust and support of the great Soviet Union, could save the "Recovered Lands" for Poland.

At that time the transfer of the Polish population from central and southern Poland as well as from the territories ceded to the Soviet Union had reached a total of more than five million persons. Barely settled and again threatened with the prospect of losing their homes, many of them perhaps became convinced to support the "Red" but at least "Polish" regime. The "Soldier's Word" of late December, 1946, stated:

"The United States and Great Britain want to take these lands from us. Only Russia is backing us in this case. The United States is using Mikolajezyk and the Polish Peasant Party to split our national unity and weaken us from the inside. This

\(^1\) Churchill revealed some of the Teheran decisions concerning Poland in his speech of Feb. 22, 1944, but not until Oct. 1944 did Mikolajezyk learn the details of the Teheran agreement from...Molotov. Mikolajezyk, St., The Rape of Poland, New York and Toronto, McGraw Hill, 1948, Page 96.
"party is working with the criminal underground....... is defending black-marketeers, the nobility, landlords, and pre-war owners of factories.... Do not believe the Polish Peasant Party.... Vote for the bloc."

Once more the Polish Peasant Party was invited to join the Reds. Mikolajezyk reports Bierut as threatening:

"Join the bloc immediately, or you and your entire party will be wiped out."

At that, naive as it was, Mikolajezyk sent another appeal to the Big Three, asking for "guarantees" of free elections. He also revealed that, as a result of the Government's pre-electoral campaign, 670 members of Polish Peasant Party local executive committees, 147 members of district committees, 17 members of provincial executive committees, 22 members of the Supreme Council, and thousands of ordinary party members had been imprisoned. There followed the long record of acts of violence, blackmailing and illegal searches committed by the Security Police. Finally he attached a list of murdered and "missing" members and sympathisers of the Opposition. Each of the 138 pages of Mikolajezyk's appeal was "concluded with a reminder that the Three Powers involved were responsible for the execution of the decisions taken at Yalta." According to Mikolajezyk, he did not expect that the revealed facts of violence would arouse "much sympathy in Britain and America, where certain circles had grown impatient with...(Polish) bullheadedness." Be that as it may, his appeal brought no action for more than four weeks. By that time, the National Council of the Homeland announced that the elections to the Diet would be held on January 19, 1947, "to enact a new constitution, and to choose


2. Ibid, Page 179.
a president of Poland, thereby terminating the provisional character of the Government of National Unity."¹

Two weeks before election day, the U.S. Government delivered identical Notes to the governments of Great Britain and the Soviet Union, sharply accusing the Provisional Government of employing "repressive measures against those democratic elements in Poland which have not aligned themselves with the Bloc parties." The Note made use of Mikolajezyk's appeal and revealed the intention of the U.S. Government in the immediate future again to approach the Polish Government with a reminder of its obligations....² This note was censored in Poland, while replies of the Soviet Government and the Regime were widely published. Moscow's reply stated that "the Soviet Government (had) no intention of intervening in the Polish elections"³, and accused Mikolajezyk's party of "co-operation with the criminal underground". The Regime answered that "the allegations are based on misrepresentation of facts, and on groundless charges raised by anti-democratic elements in Poland".⁴

The Communist Press now openly attacked the western democracies. Re-opening the case of Sciborek's murder, two discharged members of the Security Police were put on trial and "confessed" that they killed the man on orders from the Underground. Further, an employee of the U.S. Embassy,

an American citizen, Mrs. Dmochowska, was accused of an attempt "to smuggle the murderers out of the country," and sentenced to five years in prison. A member of the Peasant Party youth organization, WICI, and a personal friend of the British Ambassador, Cavendish Bentick, were tried for supplying the British Embassy "with secret information". Both were sentenced to death.

Strange as it may seem, the bitterness of the Polish soldiers in Great Britain toward their western allies was also turned to good account by the Regime. At that time, most of the Polish detachments that had fought in Italy, France, and Germany, were brought to England. The majority of the soldiers, though warmly encouraged to return to Poland by the British Prime Minister, decided to stay abroad as a "political emigration". An open letter of the British Prime Minister assured them of political asylum and priority privileges which were granted to the veterans of the Royal Army. However, at that time Britain was definitely pro-Soviet, and did not welcome the Poles. Often they were branded as "restless troublemakers" and accused of "fascist inclinations", even by the non-communist press, not to mention the "Daily Worker". Consequently, several trade unions, some of them penetrated by the Communists, refused to employ "foreigners" in their field of work. The British Government took no action. A proposal to grant British citizenship to all Poles who had

1. An important factor of such an attitude is a traditional dislike of "foreigners" in Great Britain. In 1946 and 1947, for instance, London was full of "Room to Rent" advertisements, many of which, however, had an addition: "Not For Foreigners", or, more plainly, "Not for Poles".

2. It is worth noting, however, that when the Communist-infiltrated Union of Coalminers attempted to bar Poles from jobs in the industry, the government forced the union to withdraw the decision, mostly because of the shortage of British miners. In other less empty fields, however, discrimination was explained as "a respect for the decisions of self-governing Trade Unions."
served more than five years under British command, was overruled by an overwhelming majority in the British Parliament. These measures, as well as a general chaos on the British labour market, caused by the demobilization of millions of soldiers, placed the Poles in a particularly difficult and often humiliating position. Some decided to return, and often the stories related by the embittered repatriates with their anti-British leanings, were skilfully used by the regime propaganda. Consequently, many exaggerated accounts of "British persecution" appeared in the Polish press on the eve of the elections.

As early as September, 1946, the Polish political and military leaders abroad were declared traitors, who, for their private interests, encouraged their soldiers to stay abroad and join "a foreign formation": the Polish Resettlement Corps in Great Britain. The Council of Ministers deprived General Anders, General Bor, and nearly a hundred senior officers and politicians of their Polish citizenship.¹ The anti-Western propaganda, however, little as it was able to change general hostility toward the Soviet Union and communism, created, all the same, an atmosphere of distrust toward the West.

Shortly before the election a new party was created within the Bloc, and, in order to mislead public opinion, was named "The Polish Peasant Party." Its declarations, widely published by the press, were undersigned with the initials P.S.L., used also by Mikolajezyk's party. When Mikolajezyk attempted to sign his pamphlets with his own initials instead of the initials of the party, the Commissioner General of the Election

¹ Later, several lists of persons deprived of their Polish citizenship were published by the Polish Government of National Unity.
strongly objected.

Furthermore, to attract supporters of Popiel's liquidated group of Christian Labour, the Catholic Progressive Party was created by the Regime. This party did not join the Bloc, in order to establish that independent parties were, as well, represented in the election. The chairman of this Party, Piasecki, was leader, before the war, of an extremely rightist youth group, "Falanga". Arrested by the communists in Lublin, and sentenced to death in 1944, this man was pardoned, and instructed to publish a "Catholic" newspaper, which was, however, soon condemned by the Church. However, the "Progressive Catholics" were not trusted by the Bloc, and were allowed to present their candidates in only three out of fifty-two electoral districts.

The Bloc was headed, of course, by the Workers' Party and its leader, Gomolka. The Socialists too, no matter how much their rank-and-file were hostile to the Government, joined the Bloc. Thus, as before the referendum, the only really independent Party was Mikolajezyk's Peasants.

The Peasant Party met with several obstacles when, in fulfilling the requirements of the Electoral Law, it presented lists of its candidates. Only seven days were given to complete this task. Forty-eight of the two hundred candidates who agreed to run were arrested. The more outstanding, such as Baginski or Mierzwa\(^1\), were stricken from the State list. A week before the election, the names of the P.S.L. candidates were also struck out in ten out of fifty-two electoral districts.\(^2\) In

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1. These were two of the sixteen tried in Moscow in 1945, who, after serving short sentences in the U.S.S.R., were rearrested in Poland.

addition, at that time already more than 100 candidates and over 100,000 members of the P.S.L. were in prison. In several places, the purges and torturing of the Peasant Party members and sympathisers was run by the N.K.V.D. In some districts, the Peasants and the genuine socialists of Zulawski stood together in a joint "People's Workers' List". ¹

On the eve of the election, Mikolajezyk handed to the ambassadors of the Big Three his second Note, which included further examples of violence committed in late December and early January, 1947. At that time, 149 Party candidates and 1962 Party executives were in prison. These revelations were not, of course, permitted to be published in "Gazeta Ludowa".

Finally, twenty-four hours before the voting, thousands of telegrams were sent to Peasant Party officers and members with the information that "Mikolajezyk has been killed in a plane accident". ² This was designed to diminish the popularity of P.S.L. without a leader.

On Sunday, January 19, came the elections. Because of the pre-election measures, the atmosphere, as reported by correspondents, was apathetic. The groups of officials and factory workers voting in bodies were instructed to display their voting-slips for inspection, to be sure that they cast the right vote. The only annoyance for the Communists was the presence of the foreign correspondents. But they, of course, were not permitted to witness the tabulating. The Polish Peasant Party was allowed

¹. This was done in four districts: Krakow, Chrzanow, Lodz, and Warsaw.
only 36 observers at the counting in 5200 polling places. Consequently, it gained an officially recognized majority of from 65% to 85% only in these 36 districts. In one of the districts, where Mikolajczyk personally ran for a seat, the Peasant Party gained 96% of the votes.

When the final results of the voting were announced, the Government Bloc got 394 seats out of 444 in the Diet. The Christian Labour Party got 12, the New Liberation (P.S.L) 7, and the Catholic Progressive Party, 3. The Peasant Party entered a protest from all fifty-two districts, and demanded the declaring of the election invalid. This resulted only in another wave of arrests. Once more, Mikolajczyk sent his protest with a detailed account of election tactics to the British and U.S. Governments. The U.S. Government announced that it could not "consider that the provisions of the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements have been fulfilled." The British, too, "assumed that these elections were not a true reflection of the will of the Polish people". This, however, was all that the West had to offer in protest to the election fraud.

The elections assured the Communists that they had mastered the situation. Both the parliamentary and underground oppositions were practically crushed. The West did not count any more. It was now obvious that the democracies would take no action except the sending of diplomatic notes. Even the threat that the U.S. and Great Britain would break off diplomatic relations with the government which they did not consider representative, soon became obsolete. One thing, however, was still to be done before dealing with the generation-long task of complete sovietization.

of the Polish life and mind.
XIV.

The "Short" Constitution.

All opposition groups inside as well as outside the Bloc had to be "wiped out". The Peasant Party, though doubtless facing annihilation, decided to continue their struggle in parliament by opposing new communist legislation. The changes came soon. The first, small, but very significant, was the new form of oath taken by the President. It was a paraphrase of the old Polish oath, but all mention of God was removed. The next step was more serious.

On February 20, 1947, "an interim law" called "the Short Constitution" was adopted by the legislature. This statute was to rule the country until the introduction of the new constitution. It created a Council of the State, obviously shaped on the example of a Soviet Republic in the U.S.S.R. (The Supreme Soviet of a Union Republic also elects a similar body, called the "Presidium of the Supreme Soviet") This council, made up of the President, the Speaker, three deputy speakers and three members chosen by the Parliament, had practically the rights of the parliament. It also controlled the judicial system, and could approve laws de-


2. The Communists explained that the change was introduced at the suggestion of the three Progressive Catholic M.P.s.

clared by the Government when the Parliament was not sitting. It could declare war, or proclaim martial law. Moreover, it could also initiate legislation and declare itself superior even to parliamentary decisions.

The Short Constitution killed the Constitution of 1921 and reduced Parliament to a body obediently approving the decisions of the Council of State. The Council was furiously attacked by Mikolajezyk (who, by now, was no longer a member of the Government, but only the Head of the Opposition). Answering, a Communist M.P., E, Ochab spoke plainly to Mikolajezyk's opposition group:

"You will be wiped out in Poland as the Mensheviks were wiped out."

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The End of the P.S.L.

By the autumn of 1947, the communists had fully consolidated their position. Soon all group activity on the part of the opposition became impossible. Meetings, lectures and demonstrations organized by the Peasant Party were strongly persecuted. The only place where the Peasant Party could still advocate their program and attack the Communists, was, strange to say, the Red Diet. Only from there, through the eyes and ears of the foreign correspondents could the true voice of the oppressed nation reach the outside world.

Although the Lublin July Manifesto and the Moscow agreement of 1945 had guaranteed freedom of publication to newspapers of the opposition, the censorship reduced "Gazeta Ludowa", the paper of the Peasant Party, to nothing. Even the distribution of its copies was sabotaged by the Communists. News-stand keepers and bookstores which sold the "Gazeta" were persecuted. Finally the very manager of the newspaper was blackmailed by the police to sabotage the editions. 1 The radio was barred to the Party entirely. Loudspeakers transmitted only Government programs, full of praise for the Soviet Union and the Regime.

During the second session of the parliament, in Autumn, 1947,

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the Party was openly attacked by Paszkiewicz, a man who, working under a Russian general, directed the operations against the "forest bandits", the remains of the Underground in Central Poland. Mikolajezyk was called "a foreign spy" and his party "an operative of the criminal Underground, com-
of Party men and Germans."

These were new tactics which could bring only a repetition of the Moscow trials. According to Mikolajezyk's story, he had learned that at the third session of the Parliament, he and his three colleagues were to be stripped of immunity, arrested, and tried for treason. Therefore he escaped and returned to England. This was the end of an adventure for the "reasonable Pole". He claims he went to Poland to "test" Soviet Government good will, and to "demonstrate" to his Western sponsors the impossibility of "free and unfettered" election under the communist-dom-
inated regime. In England he was violently attacked by the London Poles, and some extremists even called him "a disappointed traitor". This, of course, was highly unjust. The leader of the Polish Peasant Party, however wrong he might have been in participating in the Provisional Govern-
ment of National Unity, was undoubtedly led by the sincere intention "to share the fate of his own people"\(^1\) and to serve his country. But his ex-
periment in co-operation with the Communist Regime, and his role of "prima donna for one season"\(^2\), as both communists and the London Poles now called him, were brought to an abrupt end as soon as the communists found it safe.

1. Mikolajezyk, St., *The Rape of Poland*, New York and Toronto, McGraw-

He was not the first nor the last "reasonable" politician who, in his dealings with the Reds, attempted to reach a compromise based on good will and mutual trust. And like many before and after him, he failed.

After Mikolajczyk's departure from Poland, the Peasant Party underwent a final purge. A group of little-known communist "stooges" immediately nominated themselves to the Party offices. The old party virtually died, and by the end of 1949, the Polish Peasant Party, New Liberation Group (including its left-wing group - P.S.L.-Lewica) and the "Lublin" Peasant Party were merged into the communist-controlled United Peasant Party. Its task has been to carry on communist activity among the peasants. Similarly, political activity among the bourgeois class of the cities was entrusted to the "Democratic Party", merged at that time with the remains of the Labour Party. Since 1948, activity of these two puppet-parties has been co-ordinated with and supervised by the Workers, by means of territorial "Co-operation Committees of Democratic Parties", created at the district and provincial level all over the country. An important "transmission belt" of ideological education between these committees and "the masses" was established in 1948, under the name of the Union of Polish Youth (Z.M.P.). "The Union of Polish Youth follows the example of Lenin's Komsomol," was the description given to the activity of this organization by the communists under Rozmaryn.

...
The fate of the Polish Socialist Party was, in many aspects, more dramatic than that of the Peasant movement. During the pre-electoral campaign, the socialists were maneuvered into the Government Bloc, to fight against the "anti-Marxists", and, naturally, this "common front" of the united communists and socialists could end only in "organic unity" of the two parties.

At first, however, the more independently-minded socialists had to be removed from the Party and from the Parliament. Like Mikolajezyk, an independent Socialist, Zulawski attacked the creation of the Council of State, "the supergovernment of Poland". In addition, he accused the Government of forcing its way by means of fraud and terror. "I was appalled," said the veteran leader, "when I learned of Premier Osobka-Morawski's declaration... to the effect that the Government must win (the elections) because there had never been a case of anyone holding power losing elections..."

"It is only the totalitarian government that cannot lose at the polls - because they terrorize the electorate.... Your way of organizing trade unions does not differ from the manner in which Mr. Ley, under Hitler, organized German trade unions".1

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Soon it became obvious to the Communists that the Socialist Party needed a "purge" of its "right wing" elements. On May 1, 1947, the Marxist holiday, Gomolka warned the independent socialists that they must give up their political ambitions and merge with the Polish Workers' Party. This plan surprised even the socialists within the Government Bloc. Many protests and demonstrations were organized at joint meetings. As a result, about 30,000 socialists were imprisoned. This was explained by the new Prime Minister, Cyrankiewicz, a socialist of pro-union orientation, as a necessary purging of the party from "too many opportunists and reactionaries who have joined our party in recent months." The purge was successfully accomplished by the end of 1948, leaving the Communists in sole and undisputed control of the country. As early as the beginning of 1948, Premier Cyrankiewicz forecast the fusion of "the two workers' parties", the Socialist and "The Workers", when the matter had been under discussion for a year. The delay was caused by an unexpected "spurt of strength" displayed by the Socialist press, which openly expressed dissatisfaction with communist claims to the "leadership of the working classes". The Socialists gained this feeling of strength after elections to the first post-war trade union. It was, however, entirely misleading. It is true that, in the first stage of the struggle, the independent Socialists won patronage over the workers' movements in many localities. There, the idea of a merger with the communists, preached by the communist-influenced headquarters of the Party, was therefore strongly opposed by the rank and file. Soon, however, the Security Police joined the conflict. The "free" socialists, who wanted to continue their international contacts with the Social-Democratic groups abroad, (which could look like the revival of the Second International) were violently accused by the communist speakers of a lack of class consciousness and betrayal of Marxism, and
fell victims of the radical purge. The "right-wing" of the Party, therefore, was liquidated, and the remainder had to undergo "a thorough indoctrination into the principles of Marxism-Leninism".1

The Socialists then changed their tactics. Since the existence of the independent Party was impossible, they became eager for a quick merger, hoping that, by joining the F.P.R. en masse, they would be able to influence Polish communism with their independent ideology. This was, however, exactly what the Communists had feared. Consequently, the propagated "organic unity" of the two parties had to be preceded by the liquidation of all independent thinking within the Socialist group. To qualify for the merger, therefore, the Socialists had to revise the past of their Party and openly condemn some of its most glorious traditions, especially those of nationalist and anti-Russian character. Tito's break with the Russian-led Comintern added to these demands a taste of actuality.

The first joint meetings of the Socialist and Communist executive took place in April and May. By that time, however, it was already clear that the communists would completely dominate the new Party. Not counting those "liquidated" by the Security Police, thousands of Socialists all over the country lost their offices and even membership on charges of right-wing deviationism. Moreover, the Fusion Congress was finally opened on December 15, 1948, when the purge was already completed. The socialists, therefore, had only 500,000 registered members, as compared with 1,000,000 in the Workers' Party. Consequently, all hopes of "collaborating" with the communists on fairly equal terms had been lost. It was made clear that

its principles would be of the purely "Marxist-Leninist" order, as indicated by all speakers of the new Polish United Workers' Party. Bierut became president of the Central Committee of the United Party, and eight out of eleven members of the Politburo were Communists.
The Polish Titoism.

Somewhat before the fusion, there was something of a revolution within the Polish Workers' Party. The trouble came to a head at a meeting of the Central Committee of the Party on July 6th, 1948. The meeting was called to express the sympathy of the Polish Communists with the Cominform resolution on Tito's betrayal. It began a violent campaign of self-criticism among the Polish Communists. It was, of course, an echo of the condemning of Tito by the Cominform. The Soviet leaders considered it necessary to unmask similar deviations in all satellite countries. In Poland a scapegoat was found in the old communist, wartime leader of the P.P.R., and now Deputy Prime Minister in the Government, Wladyslaw Gomolka, who was accused of being the leader of a "nationalist" faction of Polish Communism, of "self-idolatry", and of having minimized the role of the Soviet Union in the freeing of Poland and the conquering of the Nazis.

A very characteristic communique of the Central Committee of the Party briefly analyses Gomolka's crimes:

"The June plenum of the C.C.-P.P.R.\textsuperscript{1} fully exposed the existence of a right wing ideological deviation which had afflicted a segment of the Party leadership. This deviation was expressed in the report of Comrade Gomolka, which contained a false and anti-Leninist appraisal of the Polish Workers' movement's past. Contrary to the previous battle against opportunism, chauvinism,

\textsuperscript{1} The Central Committee of the United Polish Workers' Party.
and social democracy in the Polish Socialist Party (P.P.S.), Comrade Gomolka's report, delivered without co-ordination with the Politburo of the C.C., constitutes an actual ideological capitulation to the nationalist traditions of the P.P.S."

There was undoubtedly some truth in the accusation of Gomolka of "capitulation to the nationalist traditions". Even as early as May, 1945, at the first open meeting of the Central Committee of the P.P.R., Gomolka, then secretary-general of the Party, blasted "reactionary rumours" about the sovietization of Poland.

"Poland cannot be a Soviet republic. First of all, the Polish People do not want it, second, the Soviet Union does not want it.... Poland is not going the way of "sovietization", but the way of "democratization"...."

At this same meeting he condemned "false rumours" about the collectivization of land, and criticized "leftist sectarianism" for an attempt to "simplify the tempo of the historical process...and overlook (the peculiarities) of the spirit of the Polish people". This was said in the immediate post-liberation period, when an official line of Polish Communism advocated coalition with non-Communist elements, even such as the Peasant Party, and the encouragement of criticism and opposition "as long as it does not endanger the very foundation of the coalition."

At that time, many of the Polish Communists supported the idea of "the Polish way to socialism" because only by speaking in a "national language" to the basically hostile masses, could the Party make its appeal successful. The popularization of communism on pure Marxist-Leninist lines, on the other hand, was wholly impossible. "National" tactics brought some positive results. Various youth groups joined the Party "in the hope of building a Poland that was Red, yet different from the Soviet Union, with the idea of shaping conditions in Poland, no on principles imposed by Moscow, but according to specific Polish possibilities."¹

No doubt Gomolka advocated the tactical advantages of the concept of a separate "Polish way" to socialism. Following this, however, Poland became "increasingly red", while at the same time "increasingly anti-Russia". This anti-Russian attitude, as well as the happenings in Yugoslavia, brought condemnation of Gomolka's policy.² "The Polish way to socialism" became, then, an officially condemned heresy, and the newly emerged United Workers' Party was to be a party of the "higher type", hostile to the "glorification of noxious and false traditions," and "made of ideally pure metal, without any nationalistic-opportunistic admixtures."³

² Another accusation brought in the July session of the Central Committee against Gomolka by Hilary Minc was that he "distrusted the Soviet Union in the matter of the Oder-western Neisse border, fearing the cession of these lands to Communist Germany.
³ Rozmaryn, S., Polskie Prawo Panstwowe, Warszawa, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1951, Page 239.
Condemnation of Gomolka's tactics was an obvious mistake. However dangerous, from the Soviet point of view it was, perhaps, the only efficient way of popularizing Red ideas in Poland. Instead, after Gomolka's defeat, the Party adopted the most curious and most controversial tactics. On the one hand, a great impetus was given to the introduction of Communism on purely Soviet lines. The Soviet Union as a whole and especially Russian achievements, history and culture were praised and glorified with untiring vigor. Consequently, Gomolka was quickly forced to make a public "confession" of his "false and anti-Marxist errors" and "rightist ideological deviation" before (by the end of 1949) he lost his posts of Vice Premier and Minister for the Recovered Lands, and was expelled from Party offices and finally imprisoned.¹

However, the glorification of Polish history, folk-traditions, arts and everything of a pure nationalistic character was continued. As a result, the Party propaganda became the most curious combination of pro-Soviet internationalism and strictly Polish traditionalism, which is in itself strongly anti-Russian. There is no other way of explaining this curiosity than to assume that Polish official propaganda followed strictly the pattern adopted shortly before the second World War in the Soviet Union. Just as Ivan the Terrible in Russia, so Casimir the Great in Poland, was preached as the father of the peasantry. Similarly, the part of Peter the Great, defender of the Russian motherland, was allowed in Poland to Boleslaw the Brave, conqueror of the German invaders.²

¹ According to recent news reports, he was released at the beginning of 1955.

² There is, however, an important difference. For more than ten years following the establishment of Communism in Russia, national (cont.)
history was not taught in the Soviet schools. The past, as a period of dark reaction, was to be forgotten. In the thirties came a change. A new attitude toward history was adopted in the Politburo, and soon the "histories of the proletariat" presented Russian youth with their national heroes of the pre-revolutionary period. Moreover, the past is transfigured to serve the present, and some more fortunate tsars became "defenders of the proletariat", nearly communists.

In Poland, the situation is different. There was not a break in the teaching of history, even during the war. On the contrary, the German occupation caused an increase of patriotism and idealization of the past. Consequently, the history taught even now in the Polish schools is pretty much the same as it was before the war. It is true enough that most of the anti-Russian deeds of the past were officially condemned. For instance, the History of Stupidity in Poland, by Bocheński, attacks violently even Polish insurrections against the tsarist regime. But on the whole, the teaching of history is too much pre-war-like to be matched successfully with the cult of the Soviet Union. In fact, this adopted propaganda line, "Leninist in content, Polish in form", may become in its future effects, even more "Anti-Soviet" than the condemned "Gomolka'ism".
PART THREE

TOWARD THE "SOCIALIST" POLAND

I.

The Coming of Rokossowski.

The events of 1948 gave the communists the undisputed control of Poland. All effective political opposition was liquidated and the country became a true monolithic state after the Soviet pattern. The purge within the Party left enough Polish communists of unquestionable loyalty to "the Centre", to carry on the slow transformation of Poland from "the People's Democracy" into a genuine Socialist State. No chances, however, were to be taken.

In 1949, the Kremlin, traditionally distrustful of foreign communists, placed in supreme command of the Polish Army the Soviet war-hero of Polish origin, Marshall Konstantin Rokossowski. Appointed as Marshall of Poland, Rokossowski became the Minister of National Defence, and, of course, a member of the Presidium of the United Polish Workers' Party. The appointment of a man so widely detested in Poland, because of his failure to help fighting Warsaw in August, 1944, could only mean that the Communist leaders were sure enough of their strength to ignore public opinion. Rokossowski's appointment was accompanied by an intensive
propaganda campaign describing the Marshall as a son of Poland returning to his beloved fatherland. Rokossowski, however, retained his Soviet citizenship.

So, with the coming of Rokossowski, Poland had become a trustworthy satellite, with definite assignments of strategical and economical nature to fulfil.
"The Polish Way Towards Socialism".

No attempt is made in this short essay to trace particular atages of the sovietization of Polish economical and cultural life, which began with the sovietization of the political machine, but which even now has not been completed. A few words, however, must be said about the main economic and social reforms introduced forcibly into Polish life, and, as a rule, presented as the blessed results of "learning from the Soviet Union".

These changes were carried on along lines similar to those of the political system which developed from a semi-democratic coalition of various parties and groups to a monopoly of power concentrated in the hands of the Communist Government. The Polish industrial capacity had increased by the addition of the one-time-German "Recovered Lands" from about 30% to 50% as compared with pre-war times. These territories were quickly emptied of the remaining German population and gradually occupied by some six million Poles, part of whom came from the lost provinces in the east. The newcomers, being freely offered land and work by the Government, and constantly threatened with the German danger, have been much easier to handle than people in the well settled parts of central Poland.

The first innovation was the nationalization of key industries.
This measure, however, did not cause much opposition. In its initial phase it affected only a few individuals, since even before the war, the basic industries of the country were in most cases owned either by foreign capital, or by the government. In addition, the elimination of the Jews by the Germans had left various ownerless properties which were taken over by the government. The law of January 3, 1946, declared as property of the State several key-branches of the national economy, thus creating a convenient legal framework for further nationalization. This law provided for the paying of compensation to former owners of nationalized industry, one year after the nationalization. In practice, no compensation was ever paid.

The special State commissions set up to estimate the value of nationalized property were never called, and, to quote a communist writer: "it is not probable that they ever will be." The decree of 1946 had ordered also the nationalization of all industrial enterprises which employed more than fifty workers per shift. In this early period of the "People's Democracy", private enterprise was greatly encouraged. At that time Official propaganda claimed that the pattern of Polish economic structure had three co-operating sectors:

1. a socialized one which included State-run enterprises and cooperatives,

2. a capitalistic sector of privately-owned trades and small enterprises in the field of light industry (mostly consumer's goods)

3. a sector of "petty production" by individual artisans, often combined with "petty trading".

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According to the Statistical Year Book of 1947, the total labour forces were distributed as follows:

- 23% in the nationalized sector,
- 14% in the capitalist sector,
- 63% in "small production".

This synthesis between capitalism and socialism was often called "a specific Polish way" towards true socialism, and it was stressed, (not without satisfaction) that however Poland "learns" from the Soviet Union, she does not "blindly follow the Soviet pattern."

The year 1948 brought an end to "the unstable transitional regime" of the three-sector economy. Perhaps it was the Marshall Plan, and certainly Tito's revolt which brought speedy political and economic consolidations within the Soviet bloc. Consequently, the "Polish way" toward Socialism and the specific Polish "synthesis" were violently condemned by Bierut. In his speech of December 15, 1948, the president left no illusions about it:

"The People's Democracy is not a synthesis or durable form of the joint existence of two different social systems, but is a form which gradually squeezes out and eliminates capitalistic elements."#1

After this, the policy of the regime became openly identified with the aims and methods of world-communism, and, consequently, of the Polish Workers' Party.

Therefore, the last six years have been marked by a violent expansion of the "socialized" sector of Polish economy. By 1949, 89% of industry and 55% of retail trade had become nationalized. In 1950 the

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figures were respectively 94% and 80%, and it has been planned to raise the nationalization of industry and trade to the figure of 99% by 1955.¹

The Two National Plans.

There were two National Plans executed by the Polish Government after the end of the Second World War. The first three-year National Plan came into being in 1947, after the short post-war period, when private enterprise was allowed the revival of secondary industrial production (consumer goods), trade within the country and the building of homes. It aimed mainly at the reconstruction of industry, the output of which was to exceed by 1949 the pre-war figures. Agriculture was obviously neglected, and the production of agricultural goods was expected to reach only 80% of the output of the present territory of the Polish State before the war. So then, 39% of the total investments were located in mining and heavy machinery, 24% in transportation, 13% in agriculture, 11% in social services, and 9% in housing. At the end of this Three Year Plan, the Polish national income was almost 14% higher than in 1938, and the share of industry in its formation reached the figure of 49%, as compared with 35% before the war. On the other hand, the share of agriculture and forestry decreased by 20%.\(^1\) This increase in industry was, of course, due partly to the territorial changes. Nevertheless, there was a significant attempt at speedy development of the capital goods sector at the cost of

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\(^1\) It was 42% of the total national income in 1938, and 22% in 1949.
the consumer goods. There was no attempt, however, in this period, to produce any kind of war material. Propaganda deliberately stressed that, as a result of friendly relations with the Soviet Union, Poland was able to use all her resources to fulfil the constructive goals of the Plan.

The Six Year Plan outlined in 1948, and accepted with drastic changes in 1950, was different. The development of the armament industry became one of its leading goals. Owing to the new political climate of open "socialization", the Plan was officially called "Six Year Plan of Economic Development and Building of the Foundations of Socialism". Improvement in the standard of living, on the other hand, is listed at the very end of the Plan. The production targets of industry are very high. The Plan envisions an increase of 160% in industrial output, over 1949, and 50% in agricultural output over the same time. The financial means are to be obtained, in part from investment agreements negotiated with the Soviet Union, and in part from national income. According to the Head of the Planning Office, Stefan Jendrychowski,¹ the share of industry in the national income of 1952 reached 52%, the share of agriculture, 25%, and 75% of the whole income of 28.8 billion zlotys (in terms of "constant" 1937 prices) was obtained from the "socialized" sector of the Polish economy.² Hilary Minc, Deputy Premier, Minister for Trade and Commerce, and Chairman of the Economic Committee since the end of the war,


called the plan "the splendid adoption of the Soviet Union's Bolshevik methods of planning." In the field of agriculture, the Plan provides for "a voluntary transformation of small and medium peasant holdings into collective holdings", by the end of 1955.

The adoption of the Six Year Plan was followed by drastic measures of "a dynamic development of norms" and a rigid enforcement of labour discipline. In his speech before the Central Committee of the Workers' Party, on February 22, 1951, Mino stated openly that the rate of productivity must increase much quicker than wages. Consequently, the Central Council of the Trade Unions adopted a measure of using wages as "one of the chief levers in the struggle for efficiency". Just as in the U.S.S.R. privileges were granted to the industrial workers, in the form of insurance against accident and sickness, children's allowances and high-school and university bursaries for the children of workers. A large number of women became employed by the heavy industry. The present plan provides for an increase in the number of female industrial workers by one million in 1955. This increase accounts for almost half of the total increase of industrial man-power provided by the Six Year Plan. The Diet passed a special bill amending the pre-war law which prohibited the employment of women in heavy jobs such as mining, or the steel industry. The bill was presented as a victory for the socialist principle of equality of the different sexes.

Work was announced by the decree of January 8th, 1946, as "an obligatory privilege" for men between 18 and 55, and women between 18 and 45 years of age. At the beginning of the Six Year Plan a new measure was issued, authorizing a call-up for compulsory work of the
mentioned age-classes for a period of two years.¹

The new program of 1949 bore all the characteristics of "War Economy". Increased production "at all costs" brought more compulsory measures towards the workers. The main stress, put on the development of heavy industry, particularly of steel production, showed that military considerations took priority in the economic planning. The Plan, too, revealed a notable increase of Soviet penetration into Polish economic life. Striking evidence of this was the Polish-Soviet Economic Treaty of August, 1950, which provided:

1. An increase by 60% of the commercial turn-over between Soviet Russia and Poland, in a period between 1951 and 1958.

2. A loan of 400 million rubles, granted to Poland by the Soviet Union for mining and heavy industries investments.

3. Formation of a Council of the Mutual Economic Assistance In Moscow, which, according to Mr. Minc: "thanks to a brotherly assistance on the part of the Soviet Union, guaranteed a speedy industrialization of Poland and.... all the young and dynamic countries of the People's Democracies."


The "New Course".

The year 1953 brought a sudden change in the economic policy of all of the Soviet bloc. This "New Course" provided concessions to agricultural and consumer goods production, in order to raise the "material and cultural level of the masses."

In Poland, the new program was much more conservative than in other satellite-countries. Firstly, the change did not bring the customary purge among the Party leaders, which usually accompanies a new political course in the communist countries. Secondly, it did not bring any major departure from the policy of investing the lion's share of the national income in the development of heavy industry. The chief characteristic of the new Polish course was, therefore, the reduction of targets of the remaining two years of the Six Year Plan.

On October 29, 1953, Premier Bierut outlined the Polish New Course to the Plenary Session of the Workers' Party Central Committee, stressing that

"it is more than just an economic problem of one country; it is linked with problems of basic importance; it matures and crystallises in every country the building of socialism."

Further, making severe criticisms of past policy, he made it clear that the new course in Poland remains "dedicated to the necessity of further and persistent industrialization of the country". This will increase the Polish industrial output 4.6 times as compared with 1938. At the same time, however, the Premier admitted that the level of the living standard was unsatisfactory, and proposed concentrating all efforts of the last two years of the Plan on raising it about 15%.

The main targets of the "New Course" were to increase consumer goods production, to raise over-all agricultural production (including agricultural machinery), and to lower to prices of several articles of "mass-consumption" while improving their quality. Furthermore, considerable attention was to be paid to new housing projects, and to the increase in efficiency of public services.

Consequently, investments in heavy industry were to be lowered by about 6%, while those in agriculture were raised by 45%, in the consumer goods industry by 36%, in housing by 26%, and in social services by 34%.1 As compared, therefore, with 1953, expenditures of 1955 would be distributed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1954</th>
<th>1955</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Industry</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>40.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Industry</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing and Public Buildings</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural and Social Services</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Apart from this, the costs of buildings and administration were to be greatly reduced in order to maintain, in spite of decreased investments, heavy industrial output on the level of 1953. It is impossible to estimate whether or not the "New Course" brought visible improvements in the living standard of the Polish people. One thing, however, is certain: although the new course policy has changed the distribution of investments in favour of consumer goods production, nevertheless, its targets (however greatly reduced when compared with those of the original Six Year Plan) are not easy to fulfil. The "New Course" policy has not improved living conditions for the average Polish family. On the contrary, as compared with 1949, there has been a considerable lowering of living standards in Poland.
Soviet Exploitation.

The picture of Polish economic life would not be complete without mentioning enforced contributions to the Soviet Union. Soviet exploitation began with the entering of the Soviet troops. Large numbers of teams of specialists who accompanied the army organized the dismantling and evacuation of industrial equipment. This robbery affected mainly the engineering industry. As a result, stocks of important raw materials, food, and about 50% of the horned cattle of the country, were shipped to Russia. Moreover, especially after entering the formerly German "recovered territories", a great quantity of agricultural machinery was taken away as well. After the "liberation", vast agricultural areas remained under Soviet administration, to feed the Soviet troops stationed in Poland. According to an official statement, 1.8 million hectares of farmland were under Soviet supervision in 1948. As well, the Soviet troops stationed in Poland were supplied as long as till 1949 with Polish currency notes, printed in Moscow, beyond control of the Bank of Poland.

In 1945, about 30% of the total output of Polish coal was taken by the Soviet Union. Half of it was a repayment for coal borrowed by the Lublin Committee, and the other half was bought at the ridiculous price of $4.00 per ton. By the Reparations Agreement of August 16,
1945, Poland was bound to deliver to the Soviet Union 8 million tons of coal in 1946, 13 million tons a year between 1947 and 1950, and 12 million tons a year thereafter, as long as Germany was occupied. What is more, the "special" price was $1.30 a ton when the official export price of Polish coal was $8.00 a ton, and Sweden offered as much as $12.00 a ton. This agreement was explained as a return for the Soviet "war booty": the coal mines and factories found in the formerly German territories which were "given" to Poland. In March, 1947, the amount of "reparation coal" owed by Poland was reduced by 50%, but the agreement of 1948 again raised it to 6.5 million tons a year.¹

In addition, numerous trade agreements were imposed on Poland by her mighty neighbour. As a result, according to available data of 1948, 75% of Polish textile goods, so badly needed by the Poles themselves, were shipped to Russia. In 1947, more than 70% of Polish imports came from the Soviet Union, often at arbitrarily fixed prices, while about 50% of Polish exports went to the east.

Perhaps this so-called "foreign trade" is the most powerful instrument of control and exploitation of the satellites by Moscow. As Mr. Mino stressed in "Pravda", "it leads to a planned linking of economies of all the People's Democracies"² Consequently, Poland for instance being the biggest exporter of coal in Europe, and second only to the U.S.A. on the world market, profits little from this export. Growing


consumption in the countries of the Soviet bloc, most of which are short of coal, too, force Poland to reduce her export to the West,\(^1\) and to sell her surplus of coal at a dictated price within the Soviet bloc.

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1. In 1951, about 33\% of Polish coal export went to western Europe, in 1952, only 20\%. 

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The Collectivization of Land.

The agrarian reform, announced as early as 1944 by the July Manifesto, was an important part of the communist program in the early postwar period. In the "old" districts, some 3.2 million hectares were expropriated without compensation from landowners, but only 53% of this was distributed to landless peasantry and to farm labourers. Moreover, little was done to improve the system by creating healthy farms of medium size and reducing the number of dwarf-holdings so numerous in pre-war Poland. Only 43.7 thousand hectares, i.e., 2% of the distributed land, were split up into farms bigger than 5 ha. Nearly 47% of the expropriated land was seized by the State, and retained under its direct management as State farms and co-operatives. Sixty-eight percent (about 6.25 million hectares) of arable land of the "Recovered Lands" was divided into small holdings, 6% into co-operatives, and 25% into State farms. On the whole, the new farms in ex-German territories were larger than in central Poland. Even there, however, the number of dwarf-holdings was considerable.

The reasons for such imperfect land reform were social and pol-


itical. The peasant class of Polish society was the most numerous in pre-war Poland, and most "conservative" from the communist point of view. Every peasant has always been extremely attached to his own land, and strongly opposed to any form of collective ownership. This fact was recognized even by the Tsarist Government, which made no attempt to introduce into Poland the system of co-operative villages (mirs), so popular in Russia after 1861. Consequently, the creation of a "healthy peasant middle class", as recommended by the F.A.O. Mission to Poland, would seriously hinder the communist program of complete nationalization of the State economy. The government, therefore, though basically agreeing that the maximum production per hectar could be achieved only on middle-sized farms, had no political interest in the establishment of a well-to-do peasant class. Instead, the regime planned to create large holdings by the "voluntary" amalgamation of dwarf-farms into collective farms modelled on the Soviet "Kolkhozes". And the best way of convincing a farmer that he should join the "Kolkhoz" was to give him a farm "too small to live on, but too small to permit him to die immediately."\(^\text{1}\)

As a result of this tendentious land-reform, in 1946 61% of the privately owned holdings were dwarf-farms under 5 hectares, 28% of farms under 10 hectares, and 11% between 10 and 50 hectares.

The year 1947 brought a new tax law directed against the "Kulaks". Raising all land taxes approximately 300%, it introduced confiscatory taxes for larger farms. Besides, after delivering the usual quotas, the richer farms were ordered to pay their taxes in grain.

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The fear of Titoism brought radical changes in Polish agriculture. "Voluntary Collectivization of Land" became an official goal. The peasants were offered a choice of four slightly different types of collectivization. In some of them, the members had to pool all their land and equipment; in others, only part of it. The collectives enjoyed, too, the privilege of specially reduced taxes, and help from the State-owned machinery depots. The "kulaks", on the other hand, became subject to rigid taxation, which often amounted to 27.6% of their income. Yet, in spite of all these measures, the collectivization proceeded slowly.

In 1951, there were 3054 collectives of various types, operated by about 50,000 peasant families. Less than 60% of the farms (about 1600) were of the "highest" type, resembling Soviet "kolkhozes". More than 55% of the collectives, however, were in the ex-German lands where settlers were more dependent on government help than in central Poland.¹

In the second half of 1952, the tempo of collectivization was rapidly increased, and by the spring of 1953, there were over 7000 collectives covering an area of 1.4 million hectares, and including about 145,000 peasant households.² Counting the State farms and co-operatives, and the kolkhozes, about 20% of Polish arable land became socialized. A decree of February 9, 1953, which authorized the State to nationalize "improperly cared for land" provided an instrument for the liquidation


2. Ibid, Page 244 – 248 and:
of larger peasant holdings. There is no data, however, to indicate to what extent this law was utilized.

The "New Course" brought no indication that the collectivization drive would be halted, or that the quota system and land taxes would be revised in favour of the peasants. On the contrary, the Second Congress of the Polish United Workers' Party of 1954 announced "a new movement towards fuller collectivization of Polish farms", to bring Poland up to the level of its sister satellites. Bierut, in his speech, stated that "the Socialist transformation of the countryside is a road to a lasting improvement of the toiling people's welfare."¹

Jakub Berman, a full member of the Politburo, speaking on changes in the Six Year Plan (New Course) announced the continuation of compulsory delivery, of socialization of land, and of measures which "are a bridge to Socialism - a bridge towards the collective economy".²

According to official records, most of the agricultural output per capita was higher in 1950 than the similar output of 1939. For example, the production of wheat had increased by 10%, rye by 25%, sugar-beets by 120%, and so on.³ In fact, only the output of meat has been considerably reduced, owing to war losses. In this same period, Polish population has decreased by about 10,000,000. (from over 35 million in 1939, it was reduced to less than 25 million in 1950). From this, one

could expect that there should be in Poland more bread and sugar per capita in 1950 than ten years before. Yet, since, 1951, the Polish people have been suffering a steadily growing lack of food. There are only two visible reasons for this. As in the case of industry, Polish food has been exported to the Soviet Union and to the Soviet occupation armies in Eastern Germany; as well, it has been traded in the west (mostly in Great Britain) for raw materials and machinery so much needed on the "bridge to Socialism".
VII.

Sovietization of Security Organs, Courts, Army.

Methods of speedy sovietization have been applied to all branches of Polish public life. The pre-war "blue" police controlled by the Ministry of the Interior was replaced by the Citizen's Militia, supervised by the new Ministry of Public Security. To this ministry was entrusted the supervision of "loyalty" in all branches of political and social life. The Minister (till 1954 Stanislaw Radkiewicz, a former officer of the Russian N.K.V.D.), besides controlling security services of political character and the Citizen's Militia, countersigns most of the decrees and regulations issued by the administration.

The purpose of the Security police (Bezpieka) is to prevent offences against "the People's State". For this, a net of security offices has been stretched across Poland, employing a large number of agents and informers, and keeping its own heavily armed detachments. The main task of these offices is to combat "reaction", control legal and trace illegal organizations, and, above all, to "conduct investigations". These "investigations" have often been employed to "conVINce", for instance, the stubborn "Kulaks" that they should voluntarily join the Government-sponsored collectives.

The combat units of the Ministry of Security were instituted as "a guarantee of political order, and a practical safeguard against groups
which introduce chaos into the normal course of public administration, \(^1\) and were often employed to liquidate opposition groups. The security headquarters in Wlochy, near Warsaw, have been directed by the specially trained personnel of the Soviet N.K.V.D.

In the first post-war years, Russians wearing Polish uniforms outnumbered the native Polish officials, even in the provincial offices of the "Bezpieka". Gradually, however, specially trained and tested Poles were provided for most of the junior posts. Several special prisons for political suspects have been placed under the exclusive supervision of the Security authorities, who can make arrests without a court order, and may also impose their own sentences.

In order to fit the administration of justice into the Soviet pattern, the pre-war judiciary system had been drastically re-organized. The judges, selected formerly from a panel submitted by the Bench, have now been appointed by the Minister of Justice. The most important qualification required of a candidate to the Bench is political reliability. Under the new regulations of 1945 and 1947, men without law education and without any training in the lower courts become candidates, even for the High Court of Justice. Various "special courts" from which appeals are quite difficult, or quite impossible, have been established during the first five years of communist administration. Most political offences, even as late as 1954, have been directed to military courts composed of a presiding judge, appointed by the military authorities, and two assessors, soldiers on active service. Before such a court, the defence app-

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ointed is usually "ex officio" and is expected to "co-operate in the administration of justice". It is usually helpless. Proceedings in military courts are mostly secret. The pre-war independence of the Bar came to an end with the establishment of special verification commissions, who are entitled to dismiss any professional lawyer as "a reactionary survival of bourgeois liberalism".

The Polish Army, too, underwent a severe screening from the end of the Second World War. One of the first tasks was the gradual liquidation of the "pre-war" men in the Polish Officers Corps. The rapid training of young cadets, carefully screened by the political officers, refreshed the cadres with people devoted to the regime. The first of the three Under-secretaries of the Ministry of National Defence is the "Deputy-Commander-in-Chief for Political Education". Consequently, following the Soviet pattern, most of the second-in-command officers are political officers. The "Second Bureau" of the General Staff, with the Chief Directorate of Intelligence, is still almost entirely in the hands of Soviet officers. Since the Agreement with the Soviet Union, concluded on March 7, 1947, and especially since the purge of a "Titoist" group of General Spychalski, and the coming of Marshall Rokossowski, the Polish Army has become entirely organized according to the Soviet pattern. Most of the leading posts have been held by ex-officers of the Red Army. Much attention is paid to the political education of soldiers, and many selected officers and N.C.O.s are sent each year for special political training to the Soviet Union. Gradually, therefore, the Polish Army, too, becomes a Soviet institution.
Sovietization of Mind.

The cultural life of the country is entirely supervised by the Government. The traditional autonomy of the universities was practically abolished. At the opening of the new school year in September, 1950, the Minister of Higher Education (Rapacki), outlined the "revised program":

"During the university school year, there will be binding, new, politically revised learning programs, and new textbooks and scripts. The number of political subjects has also been increased, and the examination on these subjects will be vitally decisive for students in obtaining diplomas." ¹

Consequently, two obligatory subjects were introduced in all institutions of higher learning: Problems of Contemporary Poland, and Dialectical and Historical Materialism (sometimes called "The Basis of Marxism-Leninism")

Only members of the Polish Youth Organization (Z.M.P., corresponding to the Soviet Komsomol) can enter the university. The "proper selection of candidates" is performed by the Workers' party Recruiting Commissions and Qualifications Commissions, who direct the social makeup of university students. In spite of all efforts, however, to increase the number of students from the "working class", in 1949 only 25.9% were the children of workers, 26.1% the children of peasants, while 41.6% were

children of the intelligentsia.\(^1\) Compared with the latest pre-war school year, the number of university students in Poland has increased three times as of 1950.\(^2\) Great numbers of scholarships were founded by the State. The distribution of them, however, depends largely on political dependability.

"The old traditions of schools of higher education", said Minister Rapacki, "must yield to the modern, socialistic system of producing the cadres, a system which so brilliantly passed, and is still passing, the test in the Soviet Union."\(^3\)

A lack of reliable teachers is one of the most difficult problems of the new regime. Teachers for elementary and high schools, like judges or prosecutors, are "educated" in six to eight month courses. It is much more difficult, of course, to find a sufficient number of university and institute professors. Most of the older professors who survived the war and remained in the country are still kept by the regime, but in each faculty communist professors like Lange, Grossfeld or Schaff, called "scientific activists" fulfil the role of political supervisors. They, too, form the organizational staff of the Congresses of Polish Science, where the Polish Academy of Science has been re-made after the Soviet pattern. The aim of the Academy is "to adjust Polish higher learning to the needs of the people building the basis of socialism".

The Communists have complete control over all paper production,

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printing, and publications, in the country. The "production" of books and periodicals, regarded as a "social function", is entrusted to politically controlled co-operatives, such as "Czytelnik" ("The Reader"), "Ksiazka" ("The Book") and "Wiedza" (Science). "Czytelnik" and "Ksiazka" are directly controlled by the Party. In addition, there is the State Publishing Institute. The number of daily newspapers is surprisingly low as compared with the pre-war Polish Press. At present, only some sixty newspapers appear in Poland, and at least twenty are edited by the Party.

The weekly magazines are more independent. Two are still published by the Catholics, not counting occasional sheets of a purely religious nature, also edited by the Church. According to available information, "The Catholic Daily" was recently suppressed. The large number of non-political scientific periodicals are also controlled by the Party.

The censorship is run by the Chief Directorate of Control of the Press, Publications and Public Entertainments, an institution which inherited the censorship from the political police in July, 1946. The film industry and radio programs are also overseen by the Government and the Party.

Great effort, too, is made by the present rulers to train the Polish youth in a communist spirit. After the elections of 1947, and as a result of 1946 anti-Government patriotic demonstrations of Polish scouts in Stettin, the Scout Movement was carefully purged. The new Association of Polish Scouts became a politically "loyal" organization. The frequent purges still carried on among the Scouts seem to indicate that the old traditions of the Polish Scouts, derived from the teachings of Baden-Powell, and developed during the Bolshevik War of 1920 and the Second War
Underground movement, are still alive.

The Polish equivalent to the "Komsomol", and certainly the most favoured youth organization is the Association of Polish Youth (Z.M.P.). The newly-revised (1954) statute of this organization was enlarged by an interesting section: IX, entitled "The Party and Z.M.P."

It runs as follows:

"The Polish United Workers' Party directs the activity of the Z.M.P. The Z.M.P. - a mass political and educational organization of town and village youth - is an active assistant of the Party in the construction of Socialism. Party policy is the directive of Z.M.P. organizations in all fields of their activity."

The main task of this organization, besides communist indoctrination, is the selection of able candidates to the Workers' Party.

Although provisions for admission to the Polish Workers' Party are easier than those to corresponding communist parties of the U.S.S.R., and other satellite countries, the Polish Party has, proportionate to the population, the smallest number of members. While for instance in Czechoslovakia 9% of the mature men and women are Party members or candidates, in Poland less than 4% belong to the Party.

The Youth Association, therefore, is expected to invigorate the Communist movement, especially in the "blind spots" where there are no red youth organizations. The weakest sector of the communist youth movement is the Polish village. According to the Secretary of Z.M.P., in 1954 the organization still had no cells in 14,000 villages and 32,000 collective farms, not counting those living on individual farms. Over

two million boys and girls were beyond its reach. At the end of 1953, however, the organization had 1.7 million members and 340,000 candidates.1

The Polish Youth Association is helped in its political work by several other organizations, three of them worth mentioning. First is "Action of Youth" (Walka Młodych), sponsored by the Workers' Party, secondly is the "Wici", an organization of the Peasant Party, and finally the "TUR", affiliated with the Polish Socialist Party before the fusion of the latter with the Workers' Party. All the organizations are amalgamated in a special "Central Committee for Unity", which co-ordinates their activity. Another organization "Service to Poland", formed in 1948, is to assist in the general rebuilding of the country. It consists mostly of youth between 16 and 21 years of age, and is divided into labour brigades, battalions and companies. Its members are conscripted, wear uniforms, and are under military discipline. When this organization was formed, General Zarzycki, the Chairman of the "Fight of Youth" organization, said:

"A task of even greater importance than utilizing the full energies of our youth for the reconstruction of the country is to educate new men for the new order."

Apparently, as yet, there is not much "communist spirit" among Polish youth. The Party press is full of complaints of "the lack of political education" and of "communist consciousness" within the growing generation. In the long run, however, the Party is assured of considerable success.


Elementary and high school teaching has become, also, directly influenced by communist propaganda. The special "Teachers' Cell" of the Polish Workers' Party controls the teaching. All private schools have been gradually liquidated, and all the school books have been carefully revised and made "politically acceptable". Especially worthy of note is the introduction to the elementary textbooks of political aspects: the glorification of the Soviet Union, and condemnation of the capitalistic West.

Finally, after a violent but unsuccessful opposition by the Church and the Parents' Associations, the teaching of religion became non-obligatory. This conflict, however, belongs to the long, not yet complete struggle between the communist regime and the Catholic Church, a topic too complicated to be treated in this short essay.
The Constitution of the Polish "People's Democracy".

On July 22, 1952, the eighth anniversary of the "July Manifesto", the Diet of the Polish People's Republic adopted a new constitution. The most striking characteristic of this document is its similarity to the Soviet Constitution of 1936. It can be said without exaggeration that Poland has a constitution nearly identical with the constitution of a Soviet Republic, though the Polish State does not yet belong to the Union.

Very significant is the preamble to this document. Having nothing in common with the preamble of the Constitution of 1921, which it is supposed to replace, it neither mentions Polish national historical traditions, nor does it contain any reference to God. Instead, it says:

"The historical victory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics over Fascism, liberated the Polish soil, enabled the Polish working people to achieve power, and created proper conditions for the national rebirth of Poland within its new and just frontiers."\(^1\)

Unlike a Soviet republic, Poland is not yet a Socialist State, but a State of People's Democracy, which, however, has been firmly established and provided with the present Constitution in order

"...to put into effect the great ideals of Socialism."

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"to strengthen friendship and co-operation between nations on the basis of brotherhood."1

Consequently, it seems to be highly improbable that Poland will not join the Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics as soon as the "great ideals of Socialism" have been put into effect.

At present, however, the country is not yet ready to be announced "socialistic" because of inequality of the social classes. The preamble makes this clear:

"The basis of the People's power in Poland is the union of the working class with the working peasantry. In this union, the leading role belongs to the working class, which relies on the revolutionary achievements of the Polish and international Worker Movement and on the historical experiences of the victorious development of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., the first state of workers and peasants."2

The peasants, therefore, will not be classified as belonging to the "working class" until the socialization of the Polish village is completed.

It is impossible to predict whether and when the international situation will allow the Soviet Union to incorporate already "socialized" satellites. Such a task, perhaps, could be risky. On the other hand, a continuation of the present fiction of independence contains always the danger of "Titoism".

There are ten chapters in the new Constitution. The first one, dealing with the "political structure", indicates the adjustment of the old Polish political institutions to the Soviet pattern. The "working

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2. Ibid, Page 5.
people" exercise their authority through the Diet, modelled on the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R. or of its Republics. Obviously, having no purpose for the "Soviet of Nationalism", the Polish Diet (Seym) has only one chamber. The Diet is elected for a term of four years, by all citizens over eighteen years of age. The right of putting up candidates belongs to "political and civic organizations". Knowing how far the Polish political and social life is controlled by the Party, it can be safely assumed that no name can appear on the candidates' list without the approval of the communists. The statement that

"The Polish People's Republic...ejects and liquidates those social classes which live on the exploitation of the workers and peasants".¹

again indicates that the present set-up is regarded as a temporary stage on the way towards Socialism. But in this stage the class struggle has not yet been accomplished.

Chapter Two, entitled "Social and Economic Structure", declares that the Polish People's Republic promotes socialization of the economic and cultural life

"in accordance with the national economic plan and, in particular, through the expansion of Socialist State industry which is the decisive factor in the transformation of social and economic relations."²

Here, again, the transitory character of the present "social and economic relation" is obviously stressed. The Constitution assures "special support and all-round aid to the co-operative farms...",³ while individual farms

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2. Ibid, Par. 7, Page 11.
are merely assisted "against capitalist exploitation". Individual property rights, and the right to inherit land, buildings and other means of production belonging to peasants, craftsmen, and persons engaged in domestic handicrafts, are only "recognized and protected on the basis of existing laws" which, of course, can easily be changed by the Diet or by order of the State Council. On the other hand, the "full protection" and inheritance of personal property "is guaranteed by the People's Polish Republic". There is no definition of the difference between "individual" and "personal" property. Similarly to the Soviet Constitution, Article 14 states:

"Work is the right, the duty, and the matter of honour of every citizen," because it "expedites the full realization of the socialist system."

Point Three of this same article repeats word by word the Soviet principle:

"From each according to his ability, to each according to his work".

Chapter Three, "The Supreme Organs of State Authority", invests the supreme power in the elected Diet. But the Diet in turn elects the State Council composed of fifteen members, including the Chairman, his two deputies, and the secretary. This State Council, like the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet in the U.S.S.R., performs the duties of Head of the State, and has full legislative power between the two yearly sessions of the Diet. The post of President of the Republic has been cancelled. The Council convenes sessions of the Diet, appoints ambassadors, ratifies


2. Ibid, # 14, Page 15.

international treaties, awards decorations, exercises right of pardon, and, in short, performs all the duties of the President. In addition, it proclaims martial law, and general mobilization, supervises elections, and can even declare war.

The Government, described in Chapter Four, "The Supreme Organs of State Administration", is reduced to a purely administrative body of the State, executing decisions of the State Council. In the intervals between sessions of the Diet, the ministers, too, are appointed by the State Council. Finally, the State Council, besides issuing decrees with the validity of laws in periods between the sessions of the Diet, has the right of interpretation of any law. The Diet, officially the supreme political body, is, in fact, very weak. Not the Diet but the Government has a right to call up recruits to the Army. Every member of the Diet may be recalled by his electors, that is, in practice, by the local political organization. In addition, in the period between sessions, the immunity of a deputy may be cancelled by the State Council.

Chapter Five of the Constitution deals with the "Local Organs of the State Authority", the so-called People's Councils in rural communities, towns, boroughs and districts. These Councils are elected for a term of three years. Each of them, led by the elected Presidium, its executive and administrative organs, adopts local economic plans, and is bound to obey orders of councils on higher levels, and, of course, of the State Council.

Chapter Six, on the "Courts and Public Prosecutor's Office", describes the organization of Justice. The most interesting article is #48, stating that:
"The Courts are custodians of the political and social system..."\(^1\) and that they

"...safeguard the people's rule of law".

The judges of the Supreme Council are nominated by the State Council for a term of five years only. Judges and people's assessors of District Courts are elected, and of Special Courts, appointed. Similarly as in the Soviet Union, a special guardian of the "people's rules" is the Public Prosecutor-General, whose provincial offices are independent of local National Councils. He is nominated by, and subordinated only to, the State Council.

Chapter Seven, named "Fundamental Rights and Duties of Citizens", enumerates rights of employment and of "rest and leisure" assured through "social ownership of the basic means of production and the application of the eight-hour working day". Article 66 of this Chapter guarantees to women "equal rights with men" to work and pay, according to the principle "equal pay for equal work"\(^2\). The State guarantees its citizens freedom of speech, of meetings and organizations unless they are directed "against the political or social system"\(^3\) of the People's Republic. This, of course, excludes the possibility of organized political opposition. Article 74 gives equal rights of issuing of arrest warrants to a judge and a public prosecutor. Without such a warrant, a person can be detained only for forty-eight hours. A notable item in the list of citizens' duties is:

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2. Ibid, Page 43.
3. Ibid, # 72.
"... to safeguard and strengthen social property which is the unshakeable foundation of the development of the State."\(^1\)

Chapter Eight specifies the "Principles of the Franchise Law". Significant is Article 86, stating that

"Candidates for the Diet and for People's Councils are nominated by political and social organizations in town and country."

Chapter Nine describes the State Coat-of-Arms, and the colours of the National Banner.

Finally, the last chapter (Ten) provides that the Constitution may be amended only by the Diet, on the basis of a two-thirds majority with a quorum at least one half of all membership.

1. **Constitution of the Polish Republic**, Warsaw, Ksiazka i Wiedza, 1953. # 77, 78, 79.
The Summing-Up.

The sovietization of Poland is not yet complete. The greater part of the arable land is still in the hands of the peasants, and even most of the collective farms have not yet been reduced to the level of a Soviet "Kolkhoz", where the members are "labour power", and the farm is managed by the Government. A significant proportion of the consumer goods is produced by petty craftsmen who work individually, or in loose teams. Polish co-operatives seem to be freer than Soviet "Artels". Petty trade is still allowed in private hands. Finally, men of free professions, doctors, dentists, and even lawyers, are still permitted to practice privately.

The Church has not yet been suppressed, as in Russia, and its influence is still considerable. The Polish youth have not yet been wholly indoctrinated, and in spite of all the efforts of schools and propaganda, the Soviet masters are neither "loved" nor "admired". The spirit of resistance is still alive.

In short, Poland has a long way to go from her present stage of a "People's Republic" to the desired pattern of a Soviet Socialist Republic. It is impossible to predict whether and when this level will be reached. One thing, however, can be easily foreseen: the People's Dem-
cracy will not last long. Tolerance of the slightest traces of democratic freedom is always dangerous to dictators. Contrary to all hopes, therefore, which some politicians seem to attach to the New Course, complete sovietization of Polish life has to come, and will come unless something unpredictable crushes the Soviet machine at its very source: in the U.S.S.R. At present there is very little hope of this, but there is still some hope.
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