



# **THE NEW POLAND**

**by**

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**Stefan Litauer.**



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This book consists of three parts : first an account of a visit to Poland by Anna Louise Strong ; second another reportage by Stefan Litauer and third an abridged report of the proceedings of the Trial of the 16 Polish ' leaders ' at Moscow.

Anna Louise Strong is an American journalist who has lived many years in the Soviet Union, writing about the life and work of the Soviet people for such liberal U. S. journals as the *New Republic*, *Nation*, etc. Her vivid writings on the Soviet—particularly her two major books—*The Lithuanian Way* and *The Russians are People*—have done a great deal to help Americans to understand the Soviet. She visited Poland at the beginning of this year and the first part of this book is an account of that visit.

Stefan Litauer, once doyen of all Polish journalists in London, was a prominent official of the Polish Ministry of Information in the London Government. But owing to his disapproval of the anti-Soviet policy of the *emigres*, he was thrown out of the Ministry of Information. Since then Litauer has been writing for the London liberal daily, the *News Chronicle*. Litauer spent four months in Poland this year and his report here is an account of what is happening in Poland as he saw it.

These two eye-witness accounts of Poland plus the account of the trials are of absorbing interest to any reader who has been told so much about ' Russian terrorism ' in Poland and who wants to learn something of the real truth of what is happening in that country today.

# Part One

## INSIDE LIBERATED POLAND

By

*Anna Louise Strong*

### I. THE REBIRTH OF A NATION

**N**EW YEAR'S EVE in a large round hall with pale yellow marble columns in Lublin, I watched the birth of a new government. The Polish *Krajowa Rada Narodowa* (National Council of Poland) voted unanimously to form a provisional government to hold power until Poland is entirely liberated and new general elections can be held.

I was the only American present when the Rada assembled at ten o'clock in the morning on December 31st. Other foreigners were official Soviet and French representatives and members of the Soviet press. An hour later after many impressive preliminaries—the national anthem, and an oath taken by the newly elected deputies—five other Anglo-American correspondents from Moscow came in.

There were 98 deputies actually in attendance. The total membership of the Rada in the liberated area of Poland at that time was 165, a number which will naturally be increased when all Poland is liberated. Delegates from occupied Poland came

and went secretly before the congress, bringing reports and desires from the occupied areas, but were not exposed to view.

#### HOW THE DEPUTIES WERE ELECTED

Rada deputies were all elected, but not by the usual governmental forms. About half were elected by various political parties and public organizations such as trade unions and cultural societies. The other half were elected by the lower Radas in an ascending scale from the village to the voyevodstvo, (the latter being the Polish administrative division roughly similar to our States).

The deputies sat at three long tables radiating from the head table or Presidium. Surrounding them was a circle of marble columns and potted plants which separated them from the outer circle of visitors and press. The proceedings were formal and solemn. Representatives of four political parties gave the reasons why it was expedient to declare a provisional government, stating that the Rada contains leaders from all sections of the Polish people and has public backing and strength.

My eight weeks of touring liberated Poland enables me to supplement this claim by a few notes on deputies I met. For instance, Sypchalski, chief of city planning in Warsaw before the war, assisted in organizing the Warsaw resistance in 1939, then he went underground. He organized the first group of the partisans who later became the Peoples' Army. He handled the technical organization of the famous secret meeting of the Rada which one year before had launched the organization now constituting the government. Sypchalski, a dynamo of energy, is now Mayor of Warsaw and Praga.

In vivid contrast is Father Borovets, a priest who is also a Chairman of the Rada of the Rzeszov Voyevodstvo—in other words, chief of the legislative government of a fair-sized state. Before the war he was an important organizer of the peasants' movement. During the war he helped the Polish underground. During the organization of the land reform he visited each village personally, helping to infuse order and common sense into the new land distribution.

Another contrast is Helene Jaworska, a twenty-two year old

girl who looks seventeen. She organized a youth underground and was their delegate to the illegal Rada a year ago. She participated in the Warsaw uprising in August and personally brought out the first news of the insurgents' positions to the Red Army enabling them to fly in and help. She travelled through sewers. Today she is chairman of the inter-party committee of all youth organizations and a member of the Presidium of the National Council of Poland.

These are only a few of many examples of types of strong personalities I recognized in the Rada. Other deputies have similar claims to leadership among other sections of Polish citizenry.

#### COMPOSITION OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT

President Boleslaw Bierut was formerly prominent in the cooperative movement and in the Polish Workers' (formerly Communist) Party, but he now prefers to be non-party, since his function is to preside over all parties.

The Executive branch—what Europeans call the "Government"—consists of Premier Edward Osobka-Morawski, a member of the Polish Socialist Party, and a cabinet of eighteen members: five Socialists, five from the Peasant Party, four from the Workers' Party, one Democrat and two non-party. Among the non-party members is General Rola Zymierski, army Commander-in-Chief.

The executive branch or cabinet thus comes under the legislative branch as in Great Britain and France. Bierut and Morawski supplement each other rather effectively. Bierut, though quiet, is a very keen theoretician, reserved in manner and obviously the chief brains. Morawski is accessible, effusive and friendly, especially at home in mass meetings of peasants and workers and easy to get on with.

Holding the Congress on New Year's Eve was a shrewd stroke. This was the anniversary of the famous illegal Rada held a year ago in Warsaw to launch the fight for the liberation of Poland. The choice of this date however, had an additional effect, perhaps unforeseen. All over Poland New Year's Eve parties were held by all organizations—the first time in five years the Poles were permitted to assemble. The Anglo-American



correspondents were thus able in that single day to attend a government banquet, a peasants' celebration, a Polish army dance. Everywhere the people were eating, drinking and hailing the dawn of liberation. The momentum was tremendous. The air was electric with the people's hopes and their bursting energy for the immense job of reconstruction that lay ahead.

#### FROM BIRTH TO GROWTH

When I returned to Moscow and met my fellow Americans—after those weeks entirely surrounded by Poles, I encountered forgotten questions that seemed as if they were from a different world. Does the government maintain order? Is it really independent or is it a Soviet puppet state? These natural legitimate questions raised by citizens from old established governments sound very differently in a country where a government is being born. The problem in Poland is not so much of maintaining order as creating order from the chaos that the Nazis left. The problem is to seek popular leaders and organizers in various fields and incorporate them into the government. The process is that from birth to growth.

At any rate, many facts prove that the newborn government is already an active baby functioning in normal governmental ways. First, the peasants last Autumn gave up the required quotas from their harvest without military compulsion. Second, this enabled the government to feed civil service workers and the army and industrial workers, thus establishing a stable routine of work. Third, the people accepted the government's printed money as payment for food and goods. Fourth, the young men accepted mobilization into its army which already contains many infantry divisions plus tanks and aviation forces. Fifth, the peasants' locally elected committees parcelled out the land to the peasants on the basis of the government title deeds.

The question of how independent the Polish government is will be dealt with later. It must be borne in mind that when it came into being its independence was naturally conditioned by the presence of the German armies in two-thirds of the country facing the Red Army and the Polish army in another third. Normal

standards of independence can hardly be applied to a country that is still a battleground.

There is no question that the present Polish government intends to achieve the fullest independence. The Russians in word and deed have consistently supported this aim.

## II. THE PEOPLE OF POLAND TAKE OVER

**A**S I WRITE these lines the Red Army is liberating the last areas of Poland in the most spectacular blitz of this or any other war. And in all the liberated towns and villages millions of shabby, underfed Poles emerge from cellars or return from concentration camps, and cheer the Red Army and the new Polish Army and begin to rebuild a civilian life.

How do they do it? By what process do they organize a community life from chaos? What part does the provisional government play? The answers are needed not only to understand Poland, but also to understand the future of Europe and the post-war world.

Note first that destruction of all means of ordinary civilian life is part of the Nazi strategy. They still intend to remain the strongest power in ruined Europe, preparing for ultimate victory in the third world war. It should be realized that the Germans still possess factories, engineers, mechanics, economic and political apparatus, and have destroyed these things in all the surrounding lands.

The Red Army of course understands this, and adapts its own strategy accordingly. They make long preparations and then they stage a terrific breakthrough, penetrating swiftly far into the enemy rear and encircling cities which the Germans still are using, and which consequently are not yet destroyed. The partisans also understand this and check Nazi destruction in the final moment of demoralization.

### WHAT THE GERMANS LEFT BEHIND

The extent of destruction differs therefore in different areas. Warsaw, for example, does not exist today as a city. It formerly

had a population of a million and a half and is now probably the greatest single pile of ruins anywhere on earth. There is no water supply, no gas and no electricity. No house has been preserved fully. All churches and historical monuments have been levelled. The direct cause of this utter destruction of one of Europe's great capitals, was the uprising staged last August by General Bor, under the instructions of the Poles from London, without consultation with the Red Army. The Red Army's strategy was to take the city by encirclement, preserving the capital and the population. But this required long preparation and it was impossible to end the summer offensive two and three hundred miles from base.

Bor's uprising was not synchronized with the Red Army's plans. It resulted in the destruction of the Polish capital and probably a quarter of a million Polish lives, mostly civilians who did not participate in the uprising and were caught in a trap. The Nazis thoroughly bombed the city during the uprising and afterwards systematically blew it up block by block, deporting or killing the inhabitants. The few tens of thousands of the population straggling back to the ruins curse the London Poles and General Bor.

By contrast many of the large Polish cities, notably Lodz, Czestochowa and in part Krakow, were captured relatively undestroyed. They were far behind the German lines and the Red Army came so fast that the Nazis hadn't time to destroy them. These therefore can be swiftly organized as a basis of reviving national life.

But how shall the local government be organized? The present war presents a new problem. Past wars overthrew armies and possibly the national governments but left the local governments intact. City and village mayors continued to function under the new rules. In the present war the Nazis poisoned the local administrations and all forms of social life.

#### THE NEED FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT

This is an hour when local governments are painfully needed. They are needed at the very first hour to stop looting, bury corpses, fight epidemics and provide food and housing. Every

hour of delay increases disorder and human misery.

Obviously this needed local government cannot be found in London. It must be found on the spot. It must have close contact with the local people and the ability to cooperate with the liberating army.

These facts seem so self-evident in Poland that I hesitate to mention them. They weren't understood by the Poles in London who thought that the Polish government depended chiefly on relations with foreign powers. At any rate, during the last half of 1944 Mikolajczyk was repeatedly urged by the Poles from Lublin and by the Congress of his own Peasant Party, to return to Poland and be Prime Minister there. He delayed, imposing conditions. Whatever his reasons were, the government had to be organized, the government was organized and he wasn't there.

How was the government organized? How was order introduced? Fortunately there were far-sighted Poles in Poland who understood what was needed. They understood it more than a year ago and began to organize in "conspiracy", in expectation of the Nazi overthrow.

Spychalski, the present Mayor of Warsaw, told me a thrilling story of that first *Rada Narodowa*—National Council of Poland—formed in Warsaw on New Year's Eve at the end of 1943. Spychalski is a handsome dynamic man with black shining hair and deep blue eyes and a roman nose. But he is easier to look at than to interview. Four times an interview scheduled with him in Warsaw was called off by his civil duties. Finally I got him in Lublin where he had time to talk.

#### ORGANIZING THE UNDERGROUND

He told me that when the Polish government fled abroad with Polish gold reserves the Polish political parties, trade unions and cultural organizations didn't die. They went underground and functioned illegally, with many casualties. It is estimated that half the university professors perished or were killed for teaching ordinary university courses. Partisan groups developed, and followed world affairs by secret radio. More and more they

saw in the Red Army's victories hope for Poland's freedom. Here they parted company with the Poles in London.

"The first session of the *Rada Narodowa*" Spychalski told me, "was called in Warsaw, although it was the hardest place, being under the very noses of the Gestapo. Warsaw is Poland's capital. All over Poland the peasants and citizens had spontaneously formed partisan bands to fight the Nazis, but only when the direction came from Warsaw could the movement gain nationwide scope.

"Delegates came to Warsaw from all parts of Poland representing four political parties and many partisan bands. They travelled unarmed lest they be searched and shot. Two were killed before they reached the meeting. I and one other person picked them up one by one and brought them to an apartment whose location was only known by the two of us. This was done between five and seven in the evening since at eight o'clock there was a curfew and only the Gestapo were in the streets. We had arms in the apartment, prepared to sell our lives dearly if discovered. However, all went well and the delegates went out one by one the next morning while it was still dark."

### III. PREPARING FOR LIBERATION DAY

**M**ANY different political views were represented in the first *Rada Narodowa* organized "in conspiracy", but all the delegates agreed on one thing—in which they disagreed with the London Poles—that the Red Army is an ally and the Poles must actively cooperate with it when it entered Poland, and organize for the liberation day. The *Rada Narodowa's* first meeting, therefore, resolved to create a "People's Army" by amalgamating all partisans willing to cooperate with the Red Army equally. They also resolved to organize local Radas—underground governments ready to take local power.

#### UNITING THE PEOPLE'S FORCES

The scene now shifts to the country town of Radzyn, a typical country centre in which underground organization spreads.

Marian Potapczyk, vice chairman of the county Rada—similar to a county commissioner—told me the tale in his kitchen while I wrote with freezing fingers huddled in the big comforter from Potapczyk's feather bed. Surveying the two coldest rooms in the bombed town where the county commissioner functions, I couldn't help thinking it was a lot more comfortable being the Polish government in London rather than being it on the spot.

"I was a leader of fifty-four armed partisans," said Potapczyk. "And last January after that Warsaw Rada session I got orders to organize a county Rada. I asked who it should include. And my colonel in the People's Army told me to include the Home Army (the forces under the London Poles), the People's Army, political parties, every anti-Nazi organization and trusted individuals."

It wasn't easy for Potapczyk to include the Home Army. Forty-five members of that organization had surrounded the house where he was hiding the previous year and had taken him out and beaten him, leaving him for dead. They did this because he organized sabotage against the Nazis. Potapczyk's kidneys are permanently injured by that beating and he won't live long. However, under instructions he sought the leaders of the Home Army in the county, inviting them to cooperate to form underground government.

"Are you still alive!" they said. "Maybe it would be better to finish you now."

"You can do that," replied Potapczyk coolly, "but then you won't live long either for now I have fifty-four armed men in the woods."

The leaders of the Home Army looked with more respect at Potapczyk, and agreed to send delegates.

During February, 1944, Potapczyk held secret meetings in every village in the county, chose secret mayors and a county council of fifty members, whose immediate task was to hide food from the Germans, preserving it for themselves and for the Red Army, which they all expected soon.

This type of organization went on throughout Poland. By March it was sufficiently widespread so that the *Rada Narodowa* sent a delegation to Moscow to contact the Soviet Government

and the Red Army. Soviet arms began parachuting down into the Polish woods. When the Red Army advanced towards Poland last summer the Polish People's Army under General Zymierski sprang into correlated action.

The People's Army struck the Germans in the rear, turning retreat into rout, rescued peasants who were being deported as slaves, policed liberated towns pending organization by the government.

"My commanding officer ordered me to enter Radzyn as *starosta* and take power." We return again to Marian Potapczyk. Potapczyk went into Radzyn with nine armed men. Bombs were falling and there were very few people left. The first week the Rada's existence was still a secret since the Germans might counter-attack. During that week Potapczyk ran the county with nine armed men and with the aid of volunteer citizens' militia, without arms but with arm bands.

"Our job was to clean the streets, bury the corpses, prevent looting and fires, grab Gestapo records. From this we learned the fate of many good comrades and also sometimes who betrayed them."

"What happened to those traitors?" I asked thinking the answer was foregone. But Potapczyk surprised me.

"The big traitors either fled with the Germans or were arrested." I learned that the two men who betrayed Potapczyk to a beating are still at large, not knowing that Potapczyk is aware of their identity.

#### DEMOCRACY UNDER DIFFICULTIES

During that first week Potapczyk organized elections. He invited everyone over 21 to the village meetings which elected their *soltys* (village chief) and the County Rada.

"Were elections open or secret?" I asked Potapczyk.

"Sometimes one way, sometimes the other. Of fifteen village meetings I attended, five voted by acclamation, but ten by ballot. If anyone called for balloting, they passed out paper. One village had seven candidates for the office of *soltys* and naturally voted by ballot."

"Did different political parties put up candidates?" I inquired.

"No political parties were yet organized," replied Potapczyk. "Later they were organized and sent representatives to the County Rada, today the highest government body in the county. It has fifty members of which thirty-two were chosen by sixteen townships, fifteen by political parties or public organizations—the teachers for example have representatives—while three members who are specialists were coopted by Rada itself."

It was not possible to hold elections like they did in Radzyn everywhere. Every county is different. In some places political parties were the first to emerge and form temporary local governments. In Lublin the city factory workers held a meeting and formed a city government, thereafter adding representatives from doctors, merchants, teachers, etc. In Praga Mayor Spsychalski, appointed by the central government, won popular support for the most rapid possible organization of ward committees and house committees to repair dwellings and secure food.

So an underground People's Government was organized even while all Poland was still under the German yoke.

#### THE POLISH COMMITTEE OF NATIONAL LIBERATION

When the Red Army marched into Poland in late June, this underground Rada, while still remaining underground in German held areas, formed an open and legal Polish Committee of National Liberation from leading Poles in various spheres of the government. Hence the Red Army never set up any military government. A civilian government in the hands of these Poles was already in existence, and was recognized by the Soviet Government as the administrative power in the liberated areas.

In every liberated town and village they immediately called together all surviving members of the democratic parties and all leading citizens generally to form a local government. They called all surviving teachers to get together with parents and to open schools—all of this in utter absence of money, books, desks, even buildings. But the teachers who had risked death teaching illegally were glad to teach legally again. The worst difficulty came from the scattered bands of Polish terrorists, who



claimed allegiance to London but possibly were German agents, who assassinated some fifty representatives of the PCNL (Polish Council of National Liberation) and also a certain number of Red Army officers.

The turning point came when the peasants handed over a definite quota of their harvest. The German had needed several army divisions to collect the harvest from these same peasants, but the PCNL collected through local authorities without any military force. The cause of this seeming miracle lay in the nature of their decree.

Whereas all past governments, including the Germans, favoured the landlords and bore down the hardest on the poorest peasants, the PCNL freed the poorest peasants entirely from deliveries, taxed medium peasants only three quarters of what the Germans took, but demanded the entire landlords' harvest. They fixed low prices and also gave the peasants papers entitling them to buy kerosene, soap, salt etc. at similar low prices in government or cooperative stores—a measure most interesting to the poorest and quite uninteresting to the landlords. After this the local peasants helped to collect. Deliveries began early in September and by October the Committee had food reserves and began rationing townsfolk at low prices. Its prestige rapidly grew.

#### IV. BRINGING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS

**I** SAW the work of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, predecessor of the Polish Provisional Government, during eight weeks' tour of the liberated areas in November and December.

The first impression of today's Poland is the incredible chaos left by the Germans—an utterly scrambled ruin of human life and affairs. The second simultaneous impression is the incredible fortitude and organizing capacity of human beings, who, in chaos manage to survive and build.

I came four days by train from Moscow to Lublin, slowly jogging by a partially repaired railroad, past a shifting panorama of wrecked bridges, burned railway stations, gaunt skeletons of

towns and charred villages. Nothing in western Europe resembles this devastation, for in the west the Germans observed more or less the so-called laws of war. In all the Slav countries the Nazis pursued a policy of national extermination.

Not only did they explode and burn buildings. They also drove off transport, autos, horses and cattle and rounded up the inhabitants, driving them to Germany as slaves and often killing out of hand those too old, too young or too feeble to work. I heard the same monotonous, horrible tale of destruction repeated endlessly by refugees.

"I saw them burn my house. I saw them drive off the people—men in one group and women in another. What happened to them I don't know for I escaped and walked for many days through the woods."

But the forces of destruction are not omnipotent. Considerable areas remote from the roads escaped. Even along the German line of march the peasants often managed to hide in the woods with their cattle or were rescued by the timely arrival of local partisans. Even in concentration camps where the Germans lined up helpless prisoners at open graves shooting them in masses, some individuals managed to escape through the arrival of the Red Army.

A well known political satirist, for instance, Stanislaw Letz, confined in the concentration camp at Tarnopol, secured a uniform by bribery and on the final evening of demoralized slaughter, put on this uniform and brought out six comrades as his prisoners, driving them several hours in a march past the German posts to freedom—a more satiric exploit than anything he ever wrote. A couple of hundred workers from a Lublin shoe factory, taken on the last day to the notorious death camp at Maidanek, spent eleven hours digging a trench, feeling sure it was their grave. Instead, at the last minute the guards ran away from Lublin. Here the dramatic breakthrough of the Red Army saved the city comparatively intact, although Lublin also has ruined areas, broken windows, a serious lack of fuel.

## THE RETURN OF THE NATIVES

Poles poured into Lublin from all quarters of the globe. They faced all difficulties of distance, they risked their life to arrive. My railway car brought in several soldiers from the former International Brigade in Spain who had been in concentration camps in France and Algiers since. It also brought Polish professors, mathematician Mazur from Lvov and Jan Dembrowski from Vilno, the latter a world famous specialist on animal psychology and well-known at the Rockefeller foundation, but on the death list of the fascist terrorists because of his democratic principles.

To Lublin come also congresses of peasants and trade unionists reorganizing this liberated third of Poland. A week-end congress of farm co-operatives I attended had twenty-five hundred delegates coming God knows how, for there was no regular transport. The previous congress of trade unionists represented over a hundred thousand members emerging from Nazi suppression, which permitted no unions. In hundreds of villages leaders from all parts of liberated Poland were taking short courses in organizing land reforms and schools.

Half the people one met seemed to be refugees from somewhere. Four approached me in one single morning as an American, begging me to help them contact the outer world. A nice looking Jewish woman wanted me somehow to inform her brother in Tel Aviv, Palestine, that while their mother, father, two sisters and a dozen nieces and nephews had been killed by the Germans, she herself and her children were alive. She was saved by a poor Polish woman hiding her and her four-year old child.

"She sold our belongings in order to buy food. We never dared to go out. But our belongings were all gone and if the Red Army had come a fortnight later both we and our hostess would have been dead."

A lad from Vilno, now in the Polish Army, wanted to contact his mother in Siberia and his father with Anders' army either in Italy or Palestine. A stalwart man from Transylvania begged me somehow to send a postcard to the village wheré he left his five-year old son. The Germans picked him up as a slave in the summer's retreat through Rumania and brought him to Warsaw

en route to Germany. He joined the insurgents and fought the Nazis for two months, then when General Bor capitulated, swam the Vistula to the Red Army which held him several days for investigation then turned him loose. Penniless and still in the clothes he swam in, he had only a single thought—to get his son or at least a report that he is still alive. When I said I had no possible way of communicating with his Transylvanian village he kept repeating reproachfully: “But I have a five-year old son there!”—as if the intensity of his desire could somehow change these devilish conditions. I imagine he intends to walk there. I only fear that his insatiable homing instinct, like a migrant bird’s, may dash him into a border guard’s stray bullet somewhere in the Carpathians.

The fourth case seeking help to contact the world was an American.

Anthony Packiewicz claimed that he was born in New York in 1919 and was caught in Poland in 1939 and has been unable to make an exit since. He contacted the American legation in Kaunas in 1940 which sent his American passport to the American Embassy in Moscow. He believes it is still there.

“I don’t mind being in the Polish Army, I don’t mind taking a good crack at Hitler. My only fear is that I will lose my American citizenship fighting in a foreign army. Tell me, do you think I will? I couldn’t help the delay and the embassy is holding my passport. All my folks are in New York.”

#### STRONGER THAN DEATH

Such was the chaos in which the Polish Committee of National Liberation, as the de facto government in the liberated third of Poland, was achieving new creation. It seemed as miraculous as that first creation from that first chaos of time. The local governments and schools blossoming in all those ruined towns and villages, a new Polish army already at that time well over two hundred thousand, with more tanks, planes and modern weapons that pre-war Poland ever possessed. Land reform—probably the most bloodless land revolution in history—has already distributed over a million acres to a couple of hundred thousand peasant homes and all this had been done without inter-

national recognition, without help from the London Government-in-Exile, whose function seemed chiefly to prevent any outside help from reaching anybody in Poland itself. It was done almost without money.

It was basically done by that extraordinary patriotism residing in the Polish people and called forth by the leaders who are the blood and bone of the people and because something they passionately call democracy releases in these ordinary people those forces of life and human organization which always are stronger than death.

## V. THE LIBERATION COMMITTEE IN ACTION

**A** BIG three-storey building stands on a slight rise in the city of Lublin. Entering you present a pass to the sentry. Once inside you wander informally from room to room through what is surely the most casually friendly "government" in the world.

Since all attempts to combine with the Polish Government-in-Exile in London to set up a provisional government had failed, various organizations in various parts of Poland were beginning to pass resolutions demanding that the Polish Committee of National Liberation assume the actual title of Provisional Government. The Committee, however, seemed to function just as well without the formal name.

Various departments were similarly not called "ministries," but "resorts" implying, as in English, a place where you go for a special purpose. Health resorts where you go for health, school resorts where you go to schools. Similarly you could visit finance, agriculture, press or propaganda resorts all under one capacious hospitable roof.

There were a dozen or two resorts, and more were being added constantly because as Morawski told me, "Many able people have arrived recently and so we can enlarge our cabinet." It was just as informal as that.

The people arriving from all over the world were given posts and work to do. On my train there was a Polish engineer from Afghanistan, a charming white haired man about sixty years old

who seemed to know everything about roads and nothing about managing his personal life. He was chief engineer of roads in all Afghanistan. When he left Afghanistan the Prime Minister wept, saying: "I am your brother—go with God, but what will we do for roads?" He reached the Soviet border with about two tons of baggage and changed his life's savings from dollars into rubles at the official rate.

Four days in an unheated train, jogging through ruined country, he kept saying: "Why don't those Poles in London come back to our beautiful Poland. How can they bear to stay away?"

For a week or two he knocked about Lublin—nobody sent for him and he had to find folks who knew him. Then suddenly he turned up beaming. He was vice commissioner of roads and waterways for all Poland, living with six other people in a hotel room and working hard. "I am so happy that I can work in Poland now at this turning point of our history for a thousand years," he rejoiced. "We always ruined ourselves fighting the Russians, now we are going to be friends."

When any brilliant engineer or famous scientist arrived to offer services, the Committee just expanded in order to take him in. They gave him a bed and a monthly salary, but chiefly they gave him meals.

Food, not money, was the basis of life in this emerging new Poland. Six free dining rooms serving upper officials were the cornerstone of the state. Similar dining rooms attached to the municipal services and important factories assured that workers and civil servants would survive—nobody asked more.

One day at lunch I asked the chief of one of the government departments what they would offer Mikolajczyk if he came from London.

Smiling, he said: "A seat in this dining room and as much work as he can handle. What more can any Polish patriot ask?" Which is one way of looking at it, but not London's way.

Seriously, these free dining rooms were a great stroke whereby the Committee cut through the chaos by establishing a real basis for power. The only real value left in Poland when the Germans retreated was the harvest still standing unripe in the peasants' fields. When the Committee succeeded in getting enough of this

harvest to feed its needy workers till the next harvest, it proved itself fit to rule.

#### NOT A PUPPET GOVERNMENT

But let's start from the beginning. London propaganda claims that the Committee was formed by Moscow. This is untrue. Its origin was in the Polish underground, developing for five bitter years.

Since its enemies charge the Liberation Committee is a puppet government, I asked Boleslaw Bierut, Chairman of the underground Rada, exactly what financial help the Soviet Union gave. He answered very frankly.

"The chief help was that they armed and equipped our army. Besides this the Soviet Union gives some lesser but important aid in restoring our industry—not in money but materials and machines. Coal and cotton for textile mills, and salt for the peasant stores. These are given as short term credits repayable in goods."

"But didn't you need cash to start your government? Didn't they give you a loan?"

"We didn't even ask them," smiled Bierut. "We were very modest in our demands. We expect to live from the taxes and from food collections. It's true before the taxes began coming we needed some small amount of currency, but," here his smile grew whimsical—"we just printed that."

I am still a bit dazed by the informal realism of this de facto government which, while Polish governments-in-exile arise and fall in London, in a vacuum without territory, without constituents, without people, grows so calmly and confidently from these solid realities; arms, food and people organizing community needs.

## VI. POLAND'S NEW LEADERS

**T**HE two leading figures in the PCNL were Edward Osobka-Morawski, its Chairman—a post similar to Premier—and Boleslaw Bierut, Chairman of the semi-underground Rada (Council) operating in both liberated and occupied Poland. Bierut

became President when the Provisional Government was formed, while Osobka-Morawski retained the post of Premier, becoming also the Foreign Minister. I learned something about both these leaders both by watching them in action, and through personal interviews.

#### THE PREMIER—OSOBKA-MORAWSKI

Morawski has no sense of personal prestige or importance or that thing sometimes called "dignity of office". In my first talk with him he made a highly characteristic remark: "Don't stick around Lublin talking to the leaders. Go see the villages, and how the land reform is working out, go to the co-operative and trade union congresses. Go see the Polish people."

In pre-war life Morawski's name was Osobka. He was a lawyer economist and district organizer of the Polish Socialist Party which had nothing in common with the Communists. His first big job of the war was helping to organize the workers of Warsaw in the defence of their capital. Thereafter he was sought by the Germans and went underground, taking the name of Morawski. Today, he uses the hyphenated name.

When the underground Rada was organized, Morawski became its vice-chairman. Later he was sent as head of a delegation to contact Moscow, a mission which had notable success. When the Liberation Committee was organized last summer Morawski became Chairman.

"Why were you picked?" I asked him, pressing for biographical details. He looked positively embarrassed. "They needed somebody and I was there."

I gave him my opinion. "Perhaps it was because you're so easy to get on with, so pleasant to approach and work with, and this—after all of Poland's conflicts and quarrels—is what is most needed now." Morawski looked interested. I don't think he analyzes the technique of leadership. I think he really believes in something called the will of the people. Perhaps he over-idealizes the people. Not a bad fault.

It is impossible for me, perhaps for anyone, to judge the future as a statesman of this utterly unassuming man. The Committee under his chairmanship certainly performed miracles and



he is fully aware of this as a collective victory. "We've done more in two months than that London crowd—all tied up in legalism and red tape—could do in two years," he told me.

#### THE PRESIDENT—BOLESŁAW BIERUT

Morawski's figure was most seen by the public. Bolesław Bierut was less seen at that time, as his work was still partly in underground Poland. When I told Morawski I wanted to meet Bierut he picked up the telephone and after a brief query, announced: "He will see you in five minutes." Five minutes later he opened the door leading into a large, light, corner room and Bierut was there.

Bierut is solid, a trifle phlegmatic, with no sudden flash of a welcoming smile such as Osobka-Morawski gives you. But as he answered my questions frankly and clearly and always patiently, I gradually felt free to ask everything that bothered me. I soon realized I was in the presence of the leading theoretician of the Liberation Committee, a man who in every act, knows what he is doing and why he does it.

I realized also that Bierut loves the Polish people not in an idealized way, but as human beings whose collective will must still be created. He loves them as a good peasant loves his earth, studying its fertile spots and its barren ones, always learning more completely how deep to plough and what to sow for the maximum harvest.

Perhaps it was in the way he said: "Our greatest lack is not money, not harvest, not machines, but people. Our best were killed. Every one of us has lost our nearest and dearest. Two of my best friends who first proposed our Rada were murdered by the Gestapo in November a year ago."

#### DIFFERENCES WITH LONDON EXILES

Bierut outlined for me most clearly the differences between the Liberation Committee and the Polish Government-in-Exile.

"The policy of the London government has been based on a false premise. First they believed that if the Germans and Russians wore each other out, Poland, remaining passive, could become great. When the Red Army began beating the Germans, they next

counted on a conflict between the Soviet Union and the Anglo-Saxon powers.

"On this they based their policy. They sent large sums of money into Poland, paying high salaries to officers and former civil servants whose only task was to wait and remain loyal to the London government. They were ordered to take no action against the Germans but to conserve their strength for taking power later.

"We considered this wrong. We considered that every Pole must fight for his land. We organized for this. And agents of the London government began killing us. Their armed bands killed many more of our partisans than the total killed by the Germans. When we saw we could get no help from London we organized our Rada.

"Our second difference with the London government was friendship for Russia. Before the war Poland had a foreign policy of friendship with distant powers—England, France, America—but antagonized her neighbours. She grabbed lands from the Czechs and Lithuanians and from the Russians. She was hostile at first to the Germans but when Hitler came began to admire his system of government where the rule was in the hands of a small group, with ordinary citizens doing as they're told. Even now they are not as hostile to the Nazis as to Russia.

"We, on the contrary, think a small country like Poland should be friendly with her neighbours, especially with a great anti-Nazi power like the Soviet Union. We believe Russian friendship is sincere. On this and on the desire for the unity of all the United Nations we base our foreign policy.

"Our third difference is in our ideas of a government. We oppose the idea of a government telling the citizens what to do. We think a country is strong where every citizen uses his initiative in work and politics. We are for a democratic Poland."

After a moment Bierut continued.

"We have nothing to get from the London government. They only hinder Poland now by preventing our contact with our Western Allies. They have squandered in exile Poland's gold reserve, built up in twenty years. They have not experienced the

sufferings of Poland from which they have been absent for five years.

#### UNITY OF ALL POLISH PEOPLE VITAL

“Nevertheless, we have spared no effort to come to an agreement with them, because the land is so ruined that we need the complete unity of all Polish people.”

Bierut related with the utmost frankness the content of his talks with Mikolajczyk on his return from Moscow. Bierut made it plain that the Liberation Committee was ready to accept Mikolajczyk as Premier if he accepted these four principles: the democratic constitution of 1921, the land reform voted by Parliament in 1919, the end of the murderous civil strife, and a foreign policy of friendship with the Soviet Union. Mikolajczyk himself professed personal agreement with these policies but had not convinced the London government.

I left Bierut feeling that the National Liberation Committee was strongly based on solid earth. When you meet the Poles of London—I met them in Moscow—you feel that upper class Poland produced diplomats whom nobody can outmanoeuvre except another Pole. But when you meet Morawski and Bierut you feel that these people have never learned to be diplomatic manoeuvrers, having nothing in their intentions to hide.

These were the first Poles who made me love Poland, feeling that humanity is forever richer because the Polish people exist. In their presence one became warmed by the honest friendliness of plain Polish people and humbled by their fortitude through centuries of division and pain.

Another of the leaders of the new government who should be mentioned is General Michal Rola-Zymierski, commander-in-chief of the new Polish Army, and minister of war in the Provisional Government. Like Bierut and Osobka-Morawski, he was active in the underground movement against the German invaders, and with them he helped to form the illegal Rada a year ago.

General Rola-Zymierski was an officer in the Polish legion in the Austrian army during the first World War. He was vice minister of war under the late General Sikorski in 1924. He wears the highest military orders of Poland.

In 1926 Rola Zymierski opposed the Pilsudski *coup d'etat*, and for that he was jailed, thrown out of the army, and later exiled. He lived abroad in France, but returned to Poland in her hour of need after Hitler's attack, when others fled to safety. Living underground, separated from his wife and family, he organized and trained the nationwide network of partisan forces, which, with the Polish troops trained on Soviet soil, make up the new Polish army he commands today.

## VII. LAND REFORMS IN RADZYN

I TOOK Osubka-Morawski's advice, and went out to see the Polish people. He made arrangements for me to go to the little country town of Radzyn with Bienick, vice minister of agriculture from Lublin, who was to preside at the formal ceremony of land distribution.

We walked across the park to the little assembly hall where the celebration of the land reform was to be held. To our left several blocks of jagged walls and rubble outlined the market place once fringed by rows of shops. To our right where three highways met—to Warsaw, to Brest, to Lublin—charred grey walls from what had been a gracious county building stood roofless and windowless against the winter sky.

All this ruin was Hitler's going away present, done not in war but in retreat. There had been little fighting in Radzyn. There had been only this wanton destruction to remind the Poles of the German masters and to make life difficult to rebuild.

A crowd of men and women were pouring into a plain oblong building without benefit of architecture, like an early Pilgrim-Father's meeting house. Two Polish soldier boys, complete with automatics, stood like two pillars on either side of the entrance. They snapped to attention as we approached, for my companion was the representative of their government. As he crossed the threshold, strains of the Polish national anthem rose to greet him from the band somewhere inside.

Then, like a miracle, the crowd parted and the aisle led straight to a stage where stood a long table draped in the Polish

colours, red and white. All the walls of the stage were green with Christmas trees, and the backdrop showed a peasant cottage in a snowstorm apparently awaiting St. Nicholas. Probably the only scenery in the country, but it was reasonably appropriate. St. Nicholas, in the person of Bienick, was about to bestow on the assembled peasants some thirty thousand acres of land.

#### THE PEASANTS GET THEIR LAND

This was the climax of several months' labours. All the estates over 125 acres—under Polish conditions a farm that size is a regular manor worked by hired help—had first been listed and taken in charge by the government. Then the peasants and farmhands needing land were similarly listed, checked and counterchecked by the local committees of peasants. Then lands were assigned. Now came the final act—bestowal of the formal title deeds.

The hall was bitterly cold. Many windows were broken and the building was unheated. The peasants sat in sheepskins, the women in heavy shawls. The faces, some grinning, some rapt, some wistful, were all toilworn and very patient with long endurance.

The local county agent for land reform first reported "nearly five thousand families with twenty thousand individuals receiving land." Of these, 2,162 families of farmhands, formerly completely landless, got an average of nine acres each. Some 2,700 peasants who formerly had less than five acres got about four additional acres each.

"Generations of peasants have awaited this day," said Vice-Minister Bienick. He outlined the history of the long peasant struggle since the days of the first dynasty, nearly a thousand years ago.

Worn peasant faces under shawls, under sheepskin caps, stared at him with interest. Then peasant heads nodded, accepting the fact that their nine acres received today were somehow part of history.

The loudest applause came for the representative of the Polish army, a fiery young spellbinder in uniform, with the Polish eagle on his cap.

"Some people told you it was dangerous to take this land. They said the Poles from London would come and take it away again and punish you. But you have an army now and I tell you we are a new kind of army. The old army suppressed peasants, shooting down all peasants' strikes. The new army supports the peasants and protects their rights. In our democratic army peasants' sons rise to be officers. The title deeds you get today are underwritten by bayonets from our new Polish army."

Then Vice Minister Bienick took up a pile of title deeds and read out the first name. A stocky, middle-aged peasant stepped forward and Bienick handed him the paper, with the words: "In the name of *Krajowa Rada Narodowa*—the People's Council of Poland—and in conformity with the decisions of the Peasants' Committee on this county, I give you this title deed to land." There was a scattering of applause but most of the peasants were as still and solemn as if in church.

Only a dozen or so title deeds were thus formally given. Then the meeting ended and the local county land agent took charge of handing out the rest.

#### WHAT BECAME OF THE LANDLORDS

For me as a journalist, the transaction was not over. There was still a question I must ask. It might be a delicate question, even an unpleasant one, but it was needed for America. So I said, "What's become of the landlords?" I didn't really suppose they had been kept track of, but I wanted a general idea.

I got much more than I expected. To my amazement they said, "Better ask Jan Zaorski. He's one of them. Working now in the County Department of Agriculture. He will tell about the rest."

Strictly speaking, it was all quite irregular that Jan Zaorski—former landowner of 400 acres—should remain in the county at all. The landowners had all been ordered to leave lest they interfere with the land reform. But every law has its exceptions and Zaorski was one—an honest guy who knew so much about agriculture that the county wouldn't let him go.

"They wanted me at first to be chief agricultural representative," he smiled. "But that's the man who runs the land re-

form. I told them it wasn't proper for a man to hang himself. So somebody else was put in to confiscate my estate, while I handle questions of production and supply."

I watched Zaorski engage in a hot argument with officers of the Polish army regarding the question of who should furnish transport for army grain. They bullied each other, called each other names and then slapped each other on the back and shook hands. Zaorski knew his stuff and was clearly a good administrator. Obviously he was also a good progressive or he wouldn't have been permitted to stay. He had a reputation for knowing how to help the Polish partisans during the hardest days.

Zaorski knew every farm and landowner in the county. Confiscated lands, he said, were listed at fifty-eight estates but there were actually only twenty-eight separate ownerships. Eight of these, comprising fourteen of the largest and best farms, had been taken over by the Germans who naturally vacated when the Red Army came. The problem with these was simple.

Twenty estates were in the hands of Polish owners but only six owners were actually in possession. "That's including me," said Jan Zaorski.

The fate of the three largest Polish-owned estates shows what happened. The Milanov estate of 4,300 acres was the largest. The owner was killed in a German concentration camp, leaving his wife and minor children. These went away last May to a daughter's home west of the Vistula. Nobody was home except the overseer when the new law was issued.

The owner of the Rudmets estates of 4,100 acres lived in Warsaw, which means he is either dead now or in the hands of the Germans. The Borky estate of 2,000 acres belonged to a young fellow recently married, who, as war approached, fled somewhere westward with his wife.

Of the remaining seventeen Polish landowners are in German jails or concentration camps—I asked Zaorski what for, and he said because they were Poles. Five others fled as the Red Army approached and only six remained on their places. Two of these were later jailed for their opposition to the land reform, while the remaining four are living and working in Poland, one in the Polish

army, two in Lublin and one—Zaorski—in his own home county town.

Five years of Nazi occupation winnowed out the Polish landowners and all conspicuous Poles. Those who opposed the Nazis landed in concentration camps. Those who compromised with the Nazis were naturally suspected as enemies by the Polish patriots. Zaorski thus explained his fellow landowners: "Many fled in a moment of panic when the front approached with its casualties and turmoil. It is hard in such a moment to decide what to do." The fact remains that in this moment of panic some people stayed, and others fled. The choice was made for them not by that moment but by their actions during five years.

In any event, land reform in Poland was greatly simplified by the absence of most of the landowners, and there was no doubt that it was clearly approved by the majority of the people of war-torn Radzyn.

After the land reform, Radzyn put on one more celebration. An evening Christmas party at the high school, open again after five years. The singing and dancing were amateurish but full of vigour. The teacher apologetically explained to me. "It takes some time to learn proper dancing and singing. These are our first steps of freedom in five years."

## VIII. POLISH TRADE UNIONS REVIVED

**S**TILL following Osubka-Morawski's advice, I went to see what was happening among the Polish workers.

I visited some factories and city central organizations, and interviewed three leading officials of the Polish trade union movement: Witaszewski, general secretary of the Central Trade Union Council, Kuszyk (pronounced Kushik), secretary of the Trade Union Federation of the Lublin Voyevodstvo—similar to our State Federations of Labour—and Cherwinski, chairman of the Lublin Voyevodstvo Federation and second secretary of the Central Council for all the liberated area of Poland.

No labour reporter could talk with these men ten minutes without recognizing that they are men with stable experience in



executive trade union work. They gave me, in fact, their personal histories showing that they had held pre-war executive posts in the labour movement. However, they asked me not to publish the details for the present, lest their families and friends still in areas under German occupation be identified and killed.

All were upstanding, energetic men in their thirties, elected last November by the trade union conference meeting in Lublin and representing the five voyevodstvo already freed, including 120,000 organized workers, which number was rapidly growing.

Pre-war Polish trade unions were of many kinds, divided by political views. There were radical unions, Catholic unions, even fascist so-called unions. Sometimes all these varieties existed in the same factory. When the Germans came they abolished all Polish trade unions, whether Catholic or Socialist.

#### UNDER THE GERMAN YOKE

Many trade unions did not really disband. They went underground. These three leaders whom I interviewed, all continued working "in conspiracy." The two younger of them also organized partisan fighters in the woods. They kept in constant contact with the struggles of the Polish working class.

Industrial workers under the Germans were literally slaves. Girls in the Lublin tannery and shoe factory told me how the bosses beat them. "They beat till the blood came. One girl was sick and wanted to go home but was not permitted to. She died in three days."

The workers were unable to escape by leaving the factory. The Germans rounded up all the able-bodied in their homes and took them as slaves to Germany. The only way to escape this deportation was by showing a paper from the German owner of a factory, saying this was a necessary worker for his establishment.

The final threat of the Maidanek death camp hung over all workers. Anyone who failed to produce to the limit fixed by the German bosses, was simply sent to the gas chambers for execution. Under such conditions the industrial workers were especially eager for the coming of the Red Army.

The German masters, however, resolved that the Polish slaves should not benefit by the Red Army victories. Whenever they

had time they destroyed the factories and deported the entire working population.

When unable to deport workers, the Germans often killed them. Girls in the Lublin shoe factory told me how the Germans took them the last day to Maidanek and forced them to dig a deep grave. "We wept all day at the digging, because the Red Army was coming and we wouldn't live to see it. But at the last moment the guards ran away because the Red Army came faster than expected. We couldn't believe that we were still to live."

Even under such terror large numbers of Polish workers survived, sometimes by chance, oftentimes by flight to the woods, sometimes by last minute organization. Wherever workers survived they also contrived in part to outwit the German masters and save precious bits of Polish industry.

#### THE WORKERS SAVE THE MACHINES

The Zamoscie power plant today functions because the workers hid the most valuable equipment, so the Germans could not take it away. The large Stalowa Wola steel and munitions works has begun operating because the workers dropped all the finest precision machinery into barrels of oil which they buried deep underground, both saving and protecting it against rust. In the Lublin shoe factory all the sewing machines were apparently looted on the final day of disorganization. But when the trade union started inquiries, practically all turned up in the homes of workers who merely had taken them to prepare for any future eventualities.

Under the chaotic conditions of German retreat, the industrial workers were usually the first to organize.

For instance, Kuszyk and Cherwinski entered Lublin as partisan fighters a fortnight before the Polish government, and even before the Red Army arrived. They immediately collected all the active workers and sent them into the factories to save the machinery and raw materials from the final chaos of retreat. During the actual hours when the Germans were leaving, these trade union leaders were already assembling workers in the small iron and steel works, in the tannery and shoe factory and the sugar refinery, and electing emergency factory committees.

These factory committees were not yet trade unions. They were elected by a meeting of all the workers in the plant to prevent looting and destruction, and to take charge of the factory till a new manager was appointed, since the old masters were practically all Germans. Simultaneously, however, the trade union organization began enrolling members, on a strictly voluntary basis.

"Ninety per cent of the workers joined," Kuszyk told me, and this corresponds with what I myself saw in various places. "The workers are especially pleased that now every plant has only one trade union without distinctions of politics or religion, to protect all workers irrespective of creed or party, unlike the pre-war unions which separated Catholics and Socialists."

#### ELECTIONS IN THE FACTORIES

I have before me the typed report of the first meeting which the Lublin tobacco factory workers held on August 2. The factory employs one thousand workers. Of these, 800 attended the meeting. They elected a nominating committee which reported forty names. Of these the meeting elected nineteen as the factory committee. These nineteen met and chose a chairman, vice chairman and secretary, and three "candidates" to the Lublin City Central Council of Trade Unions. These were only "candidates" because the City Central Council was not yet formed, and it was not yet known how many delegates each union was entitled to have.

This meeting was held ten days before the government came to Lublin. There was no city government yet, so this same factory committee of tobacco workers also elected three "candidates" to the Lublin City Council and to the Lublin Vovoyedstvo Council.

The first municipal authority in liberated Lublin was thus set up by factory workers from their meetings and elections. However, they had no intention to hog the government. The City Council kept adding members chosen by various political parties and cultural organizations, pending the final freeing of all Poland.

Within three months enough trade unions were formed on the basis of individual voluntary membership so that elections for city trade union councils and vovoyedstvo federations could be held. After this the central body was formed.

Delegates to voyevodstvo congresses were directly elected by the factory trade unions on the basis of one delegate for the first 200 members, two delegates for a union of over 200 but under 500, and one additional delegate for every additional 500 members. The central body was formed by a coalition of voyevodstvo representatives, five from each, making twenty-five as of today. These were elected to a conference held on November 20 and 21.

This form made it possible to add new representatives to the central body as fast as new areas are freed. Each new district forms its state federations and elects five members to the central body. When all Poland has been freed, there will then be a general congress of Polish trade unions re-electing a central body, presumably on a new basis combining large central unions instead of areas.

At the time of my visit there were already about thirty central trade unions. The largest by far was that of the railway workers, comprising 45,000 members and constituting forty per cent of the entire trade union membership. The reason for this disproportion is that the railways were rapidly repaired by the Red Army which needs them for the front, but Polish industry has been badly destroyed and hence does not yet employ many workers. Polish industry is being reconstructed by the help of the trade unions and the number of industrial members is rapidly rising, while the number of railway workers remains stationary.

The second largest trade union till recently was that of agricultural labourers, totalling 29,000. This number suddenly diminished, probably was cut in half, since large numbers of farmhands have now become peasant proprietors through land reform. Food workers came next, then metal workers.

I checked these facts also with Henry Altman, chief of the Department of Labour in the new Lublin government. Altman was a pre-war member of the General Council of all the Polish trade unions. "I'm the only one left in Poland. All the others were either killed or went away to London." When I asked Altman whether I might use his name and former post, since other trade unionists did not wish this lest it endanger their families, Altman replied, "I have no objection to using my name. Unfortunately, all my family and relatives are already killed."

Such is the grim background from which Polish workers organize to rebuild their land, their industry, their lives.

## IX. WHAT HAPPENED IN LODZ

“**W**E KISSED not only the feet of the Red Army men but even the hoofs of their horses.” In these words Doctor Albert Mazur, Jewish doctor in Lodz and one of 800 survivors of the Jewish population that once reached a quarter of a million, expressed the feeling he had when this great industrial city of Poland was liberated.

Mazur was preserved till the end as he was needed as a physician in the ghetto, but he was aware that his last hours would come unless he could choose accurately a moment to hide and wait for the Red Army. His hiding place was in a cave built in the ghetto and covered with debris. He heard shots as Jews less fortunate in hiding were dragged out and killed before the Germans fled. Mazur knew that if the Germans had time to get police dogs to trail the hidden Jews, he was finished. However, the Germans did not have time.

The Red Army took Lodz in an amazing surprise manoeuvre, entering from the direction of Berlin. The city was almost intact except for what the Germans took away during the five and a half years, which was considerable. Hotels were open and factories operating. However there was a serious food shortage, complicated by the fact that almost no money existed.

The German marks, in which workers got their last pay cheques had not yet been officially outlawed, but nobody would take them any more. Lublin zloty had not arrived in quantities and must be put in circulation in planned fashion as wages and payments. Imagine a city in which everybody's money suddenly becomes valueless, and you have Lodz.

Imagine also, a city in which all owners of stores fled overnight, not even troubling to lock their premises. Lodz, unlike Warsaw and Lublin, was incorporated in Germany proper and only Germans were permitted to own property, all Poles being there “temporarily” as slaves. The Poles of course were the vast

majority of the inhabitants, but without rights. Even the smallest shop was taken from its former Polish owners long ago.

The new German owners naturally fled when the Red Army entered. The inhabitants simply helped themselves to things in the stores. Rapidly a citizens' militia was organized to stop this looting, but the store hadn't reopened when I was there. When the Polish owners reappear they will get their property back, but many Polish former owners are now dead.

The worst sight I ever saw in my long life as a correspondent, was the jail outside Lodz which the Germans burned down with several thousands of prisoners. There were bodies lying around in distorted poses, some bloody, some charred by the flames. Throngs of weeping onlookers were trying to find their loved ones in the great heap of bodies.

One man, Frank Zarenski, escaped by a series of miracles combined with personal daring. He told us how the prison warden spent all night killing prisoners, bringing them downstairs in batches of twenty-five and shooting them. He was thus shot but had a light flesh wound, and feigned death when the Gestapo looked with a flash-light. When the wardens couldn't make prisoners come downstairs any more since the prisoners heard the shots, they set fire to the jail.

After the wardens left the burning building, Frank went upstairs and hid in the largest water tank, which had a concrete base. The water got very hot but he survived this, since the building burned fast, leaving only the brick walls and concrete stairs. Frank went downstairs then and hid in a big box of blankets in the basement. Three times the wardens searched the ruins but Frank held the lid down and the searchers thought the box was nailed shut. Only when Frank heard Polish voices did he emerge.

Lodz has historic reasons for wishing close contact with the Soviet Union. The city grew up on Russian cotton from Central Asia and worked for Russian markets fifty years ago. It suffered many economic crises when this market was cut off. Meanwhile as the Red Army still drives westward, long lines of German prisoners appear in Lodz streets. I saw large groups driven along by a single Pole. The Pole seemed to me very careless with his

rifle. I couldn't help thinking that any daring prisoner could grab it and shoot his way out. But apparently the Germans knew they were beaten. Five hundred shuffled meekly along under guard of this single Pole who merely wore a red and white armband and twirled his rifle carelessly.

## X. IN WARSAW WITH THE POLISH ARMY

**N**O ONE can know the Polish people today, without knowing the Polish army.

I was the first American to crawl into dugouts and crouch in trenches and behind parapets directly facing the German fire on the Eastern front. Not long before the final liberation of Warsaw, I spent three thrilling days with the Polish Army in possession of the part east of the Vistula bank known as Praga, which constitutes one-fifth of Warsaw, connecting across the river by many fine bridges, all of them blown up now. The inhabitants claim that they live in Warsaw just as dwellers of the Bronx and Queens rightly claim they live in New York.

And in truth in that battered hulk of city one felt the undying spirit of Poland, one felt pride in the national capital more than in Lublin, which after all is a provincial town. One felt it in the non-chalance with which both soldiers and civilians accepted the constant enemy shelling, going about their business under the daily threat of death. One saw it in those two red and white Polish flags which since November 11th fluttered over Vistula from the highest girders of the broken Poniatowski bridge.

### IN FULL SIGHT OF THE ENEMY

Our little jeep dashed in and out along Washington Alley—a fine boulevard leading straight to the bridge. “We don't stay on this street any longer than we can help it”, explained a Polish officer. “Since it's in the direct line of fire from the German and the Polish. The enemy is not very lively now but there is no need to provoke them by an unduly long appearance.”

Zigzagging through side streets and behind houses, we finally parked the jeep not very far from the river. All along this part

of Warsaw were fine riverside villas where people of wealth and culture had dwelt—professors, actors and artists. Now the beautiful yellow tiles blasted from the walls were scattered on the pavements in the midst of neglected, frost-killed gardens. From some of the bombed houses, the insides had fallen into the streets. In one place we circled around the remains of a grand piano.

All civilians were ordered to evacuate last September, but some still remained. Occasionally we met an old woman in these streets. "Orders were to clear all out," said the Polish officer. "But we aren't Germans. We made all the young folks leave with their families but these old ones would rather risk death in their home than try their fortune elsewhere. When the shelling was very bad they hid in cellars."

Keeping close to buildings we made our way to the river. Once when we had to walk a block in the open, the officer threw a chalk coloured raincoat over my dark blue overcoat. "Here we are under enemy observation. They aren't wasting shots on scattered soldiers but if they see your coat they would pot you for sure as an officer." A couple of stray carbine shots ricocheted down the street just as we left it, but in a very desultory way.

I climbed to the room of a battered riverside villa now used as an artillery observation post. We had to bend low lest the enemy spot us over the parapet. Looking through binoculars directly across the river to that other part of Warsaw in enemy hands, it was hard to detect the slightest sign of life. There were only ruins from which the smoke of destroying fires still arose.

"See that stuff sticking up between the first two piers of the bridge to the other side of the river?" said the officer. The bridge of course was wrecked in the middle but the piers on both sides remain. "That's a double machine gun nest. What do you say? Shall we send them one?"

"Sure," I said, and I handed back the binoculars to the officer. So we sent not one but four. Each time I heard the low growl of the mine-thrower two or three miles in our rear and then a faint pshpsh in the air high above us and then I plainly saw the explosion across the river where the mine hit.



The fourth shot was square on the target, raising a great cloud of dust and fragments between two piers.

Then we ran hastily downstairs because the enemy also opened fire. But the artillery officer remained in his room on the upper floor because he doesn't like cellar air. His doors and windows have been repaired in a dozen places where bullets went through, but so far he himself had remained intact.

While mortar bombs rained and rifle shots popped along the river, I visited dugouts and tunnels made in the bank.

#### POLISH SOLDIERS

The Polish soldier boys holding the Eastern bank of the Vistula waiting for the final smash that would "set their banners in Berlin" were a gay lot, always amusing themselves with pranks against the enemy. Some serious ones, some only funny, but all asserting the disdain that these proud Polish people feel for the slower-witted "master race."

They recounted some of these exploits in the ruined villa to which we returned from the front line positions, dodging back from dugouts and tunnels and observation posts to comparative security in the detachment's headquarters, where we chatted and had tea.

These were Poles from the First Polish Army which was formed in the Soviet Union. Many of them had travelled all over the earth. The Battalion Commander had read all my books on China. He talked well about Sinclair Lewis, Upton Sinclair, Theodore Dreiser and Agnes Smedley.

The Colonel accompanying me said: "I have been a soldier for twenty-five years. I have fought in five major wars, the first World War, the war in China, the Spanish war, the Finnish war and now this one. This is the first time that I, a Pole, can fight for my own Poland."

"Too bad you weren't here last night," they told me. "A bunch of us went over the river and brought back a 'tongue'" —that is the word describing a German seized to extract information.

To my inexperience, the broad Vistula river seemed a complete barrier. I couldn't imagine how men could cross to the

enemy side when the searchlights played to the slightest sound. They explained that they went by night with an old fisherman who knew every curve of the Vistula and had a life-long experience of noiseless boating without disturbing the fish.

They crossed the river without any accident and went stealthily along the bank till they reached the enemy sentry. Without waiting for the sentry's challenge, the officer spoke firmly in German: "Who goes there?" The sentry supposed it was a superior officer who spoke. This gave them the chance to seize the sentry and gag him with a first aid package whose soft bulk admirably fits in the mouth. When they returned to the boat they encountered two more Germans and had to shoot their way out, arousing the entire bank while searchlights played on the sky and the river. Despite this they got back with the prisoner. "And did he talk?" I asked them.

The Polish boys laughed: "He talked not only to us but also to the whole German army. We easily got him to make a speech over the radio megaphone which is audible across the river. He said, 'Marshal Paulus from Stalingrad is now on this side and he knows much more than you. Paulus says finish the war and finish Hitler. But you folks are stupid and you are fighting to sure defeat.'"

This Germans had an iron medal from Moscow and Stalingrad battles. I wanted to take this to America, but the captor wouldn't give it up. "I have a big collection of these iron medals. I am saving them to make a spittoon." If any American thinks that such use of the iron medals is unchivalrous he doesn't know what the Germans have done to win them in all of this part of Europe where the murders of millions of women and children in death camps are only part of the long balance sheet all Poles intend to avenge.

"The Germans are much worried about the coming offensive," the Pole told me. "They are always expecting us to cross the river. So one night we made lots of barges from straw and set them floating. The Germans sank them with a terrific barrage. They didn't know till morning that they had been sinking straw."

## XI. THE ILL-FATED WARSAW RISING

**H**ow the first Polish Army came into Praga and what efforts they made to contact the insurgents in the ill-fated Warsaw uprising then still in progress on the other bank, was told to me by Lieutenant General Korczys in army headquarters not far from Praga.

No signposts led to the general's headquarters. That's the first thing you learn at the front. I hadn't exactly expected signposts but I had assumed that the commanding general would be somewhere obviously central where anyone could tell the way. It was a naive thought, for nobody was allowed to know the way to reach the general except those whose business it was to know.

Colonel Spsychalski, Mayor of Warsaw, phoned General Korczys and our chauffeur turned off the highway at a certain place and wandered through woods and fields until we met a Polish officer who got into our car and directed us. Finally we arrived at a scattered bunch of small houses that looked like something the cat dragged in. Near one of these houses was a fine auto, shoved between two sheds under a tree, and there we knew we would find the commanding general.

The inside of the house was efficient and comfortable with plenty of maps, big desks and a good couch. We had a remarkably good dinner. After sharing it I knew why all generals are well set-up, portly men.

### THE FIRST POLISH ARMY

The First Polish army which came into Praga last September and which General Korczys now commands, is not of course the only Polish army. The present Polish army consists of three elements: the First Army, organized in the Soviet Union which entered Poland last July a hundred thousand strong; the partisans, already on Polish territory who immediately joined this army; and a new mobilization carried out since then on Polish territory.

The exact size and total of the Polish army is a military secret. It is known to have an artillery school training fifteen

hundred officers for artillery alone—I saw this myself in Chelm. It is known to have a tank corps—I saw this in training—aviation, and every other branch that goes with a modern army.

“In fact,” said General Korczys, “I have served in armies for thirty-two years now, and I have never seen an army better equipped.”

“Are you better equipped than the Red Army?” I asked with surprise.

“Not exactly”, admitted Korczys, “But we are equipped as well as the best Red Army division.”

The First Polish Army, while today only a part of the entire army, is a proud part that has seen action. It grew out of the first Kosciuszko Division which took part in its first battle near Smolensk on October 19, 1943. The division was then withdrawn to the rear for expansion. Last July, the First Polish Army, a complete unit, with tanks, planes and everything, forced the river Bug, entered Polish territory with the Red Army, and drove the Germans from the Bug and Vistula—a total distance of some two hundred miles. They made the first Vistula crossing at Pulawa, south of Warsaw, establishing bridgeheads. Then in September they took part in the breaking of the German lines in Praga for which they were mentioned in Stalin's Order of the Day.

General Korczys gave me the first complete account of relations with the tragic Warsaw uprising which began August 1st under orders of General Bor, military representative in Poland for the London Polish Government.

#### GENERAL BOR AVOIDS CONTACT

“When the uprising broke out we were forty-five miles south of Warsaw, while the Red Army was also ten miles to the east, separated by the heaviest enemy fortifications and also by the Vistula. The insurgents made no attempt to inform us. We didn't even know where they were.

“Only on September 12th two women messengers finally reached us, coming by sewers and over rivers. These were not from Bor's army, which from the first to the last never tried to contact us. The women were messengers from the People's

Army (under the London Government-in-Exile) which also joined in the uprising, which sent us word from the northern part of the Warsaw region, Zoliborz. The largest area held by the insurgents was in central Warsaw, contacting Zoliborz only by sewers.

“The following night more than two hundred Red Army planes dropped munitions and arms to the insurgents in both Zoliborz and Central Warsaw. This continued thereafter nightly from dark until dawn for more than two weeks until capitulation. Thus as soon as we knew where the insurgents were, dozens of tons of munitions, food, rifles, automatics, even machine guns were dropped directly to the insurgents without parachutes, from planes flying only a few feet over the roof. They fell directly into their hands.

“Also we immediately dropped a radio man, with full equipment, in Zoliborz with orders to contact all insurgent forces in Warsaw and communicate their needs. They sent requests and we fulfilled them. They said to send artillery to such and such a spot and we sent it. They said, good, send more and we sent more.

“But all this time they never gave us any information. We never knew with whom we spoke. We never knew who was commanding the insurgents. We never knew whether Bor himself was in Warsaw until the Germans announced he was their prisoner.”

“How then did you know that the requests came from the insurgents and not from the enemy?” I asked General Korczys, and he smiled.

“Easily. The requests reached our radio man from officers in the army who were in Zoliborz and who were connected with the centre by the sewer route. They told us what they wanted but they never told us what they were doing or intending. After they surrendered we lost our radio man and never heard from him again.”

To my question whether any attempts were made to force Vistula, Korczys replied in the affirmative.

## TRAGIC WASTE OF LIFE

“The First Polish Army sent several expeditions across the Vistula at heavy cost. From the military standpoint this was foolish. The conditions were incredibly bad, but we couldn't leave the Poles fighting the Germans alone. All these crossings ended disastrously because General Bor's officers avoided contact with us. For instance, in the Cherniakow district, south of the Poniatowski bridge, we landed and connected with a hundred and fifty men under Colonel Radoslaw from the Home Army. They were hungry, without ammunition, and we gave them food and supplies. A couple of nights later without telling us, Radoslaw withdrew his men into the centre of the city by the sewer route. This was unimportant militarily, but showed their general attitude.

“At several other points along the Vistula we landed and tried to break through to the insurgents, but they made no attempt to break through to us. In one place part of our army actually reached the centre of the city and joined the Home Army. We never heard from them again.”

“Could joint action have affected the outcome?” I asked.

“Certainly”, he said, “with joint action we might at least have held areas that the insurgents had already, even though the action was militarily a bad mistake.

“At the end of September we made an agreement through our radio man at Zoliborz to evacuate all insurgents to our side of the river—a couple of thousand men from the Home Army were there. We arranged an artillery barrage, smashing the path to the river where the boats awaited. One hour before the crossing should have started, General Bor ordered them to surrender to the Germans instead of crossing to us. Only the survivors of the People's Army tried to reach us and the greater part of these arrived.

“What waste of life there was in Warsaw,” the general continued, “pistols against tanks! The young boys gave their lives and were only wasted when they might have been beating Germans with us.”

## XII. THE PEOPLE OF PRAGA

**B**EHIND the death-defying gaiety of the Polish soldiers in Warsaw, lay civilian reality, incredibly grim. I gained my first insight into this reality in a women's meeting in the famous Wedel candy factory which before the war sold confections even in Paris and had an exhibition at the World's Fair in New York.

Most of its buildings were of course exploded by the Germans before retreating, but two small shops were overlooked and in these the director collected a couple of hundred women and began making candies and cookies again. Everything was very primitive, making in a month what formerly was made in two days. There was no candy yet on sale since it was all bought up by the government and social organizations for celebrations and children's treats.

When I arrived the factory was closing to organize the first trade union in the last light of day—after dark Praga goes dead. A simple brief meeting went on during the shelling, to which the women paid not the slightest heed. Then I said: "In America we think war is bombardment but shelling, it seems, doesn't matter in Praga. What is the worst thing the war means here?"

I thought they would say cold or hunger for both of these were bad in Praga. But they answered: "The worst thing is that the Germans took away our husbands and we don't know whether they are dead or slaves in Germany."

How many had thus lost husbands? Some ninety per cent raised their hands. Then I feared lest a storm of weeping might shake the meeting so I changed the subject and everyone began to breathe again. Later everywhere in Praga I asked the same question but more tactfully—if such questions can ever be tactfully asked. And it was true that ninety per cent of the men from Praga were simply taken away.

In the six weeks before the Germans retreated they systematically surrounded block after block in Praga, searched all houses and took all able-bodied men and many women. Some were shot out of hand to terrorize the others but most of them were taken to a concentration camp where many died from hunger while

awaiting shipment to Germany. Nobody now knows who is alive or dead.

This is the great burden under which Praga laboured. The Nazis had a deliberate purpose in destroying Warsaw's whole future. In that four-fifths of Warsaw across the Vistula they were still blowing up and burning blocks of houses, driving out all the people either to death camps or as slaves. In Praga they had removed the basis of Warsaw's great industry—the entire Praga working class.

Heroic women and old men and children were organizing citizens' committees, opening schools in ruined buildings and sending expeditions to the peasants to secure the winter supply of potatoes. But when I spoke hopefully of how life was returning to Praga, I was told: "Every factory is a heap of ruins. All machines and equipment have been taken. All of this might be rebuilt or bought again. But a skilled working class takes decades to reproduce and that is what the Germans destroyed."

#### THE UNDYING SPIRIT THAT IS POLAND

While in Lublin I had met many Poles who considered that Warsaw couldn't serve as a capital for possibly ten years, in Praga one felt the authentic spirit of the great capital, one felt it was still the spiritual centre of the nation. From the ruined candy factory I went to the City Hall—housed in the former high school—to hear the first concert staged by the "New Warsaw Symphony Orchestra", in honour of Rzymowski, Minister of Culture visiting from Lublin.

Forty musicians sat on the stage in what was the former high school graduation hall. Four rough gray telephone poles crisscrossed above them which prevented the bomb-weakened walls from collapsing on the stage. The musicians were middle-aged men or women who sat in their overcoats or sheepskins for it was penetratingly cold. The light was fading, for in Praga electricity works only occasionally.

I never heard Chopin's *Polonaise* played as I heard it there—in fact I never knew the meaning of that word before. And never will I forget how as dark came on and we couldn't see the faces any more, but only blurred forms against the pale



window panes, that old Polish greeting "*sto lat, sto lat*"—may you live a hundred years and again and again a hundred years—thundered out to Rzymowski, who for the moment, symbolized Polish national culture.

Only afterwards did I know that the notes were written from the memory of the conductor—"There is no sheet music anywhere in Poland. I did my best but I can't remember everything, so some of this music is probably my own composition." Only afterwards did I learn that the programme was changed five minutes before the concert because one of the most important instruments was buried in a bombed house.

Still later I learned that the Mayor of Warsaw left the concert in the beginning. I hadn't even missed him in the dark. A nearby house had been shelled and Mayor Spsychalski went personally to organize and rescue the inmates buried under the ruins. After helping lift the ruins off the victims—it was only a small house and there was only one dead and four women in shock and one baby quite untouched—Spsychalski appeared an hour later in a well brushed uniform at a festive party where we all drank at least fifty toasts.

The party was given by the Democratic Party in honour of Rzymowski, who is a member of that political organization. It was just across the street from that recently ruined dwelling, whose uncleared debris we stepped on as we arrived. It was held in tastefully appointed rooms whose walls were covered by beautiful paintings—the home of a well-to-do Democrat who put it at the disposal of his party. It was the most exquisitely served banquet I have tasted this year.

Nobody mentioned the shelled house opposite except once to ask Spsychalski how many were saved. Nobody seemed to consider that our house and banquet might have been ruined by a slight deflection in a shell one hour before. But they toasted everybody in Poland and in the United Nations and gave them "*sto lat, sto lat*"—a hundred, hundred years.

With special warmth they toasted America and the Americans and Roosevelt—three different toasts. They toasted me as the first American who came to them.

It was not only in Lublin that I felt the undying spirit that

is Poland. But there at the free front in that battered fifth of Warsaw whose factories were in ruins, whose men were dead or slaves, whose houses fell daily under shelling, whose women and old men organized citizens committees to maintain order, cleared the streets of debris, hauled water from wells, brought in potatoes from the countryside, sent their children to school—it was there in that broken piece of city that I knew Poland could never die.

# Part Two

## FACTS ABOUT NEW POLAND

By

*Stefan Litauer*

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

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

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

## SHAPING THE NEW POLAND

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

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

Let us discuss the Army first. The liberation of a country is only complete when it possesses its own armed forces ready to defend it. That was fully understood by the Russians, and no wonder, for in no other country, has an army played such a tremendous role in the liberation of a country from foreign invaders as has the Red Army in the Soviet Union. Marshal Stalin therefore understood that to show friendship to the Poles he must first of all help them to build up their own Polish Army, and he did help them. Today the Polish armed forces in Poland are 400,000 strong, and are growing day by day. By the end of this year Poland will have 600,000 men under arms.

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

**POLISH ARMY IN POLAND**

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

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

We have today in Poland quite a large number of young officers and they have been trained now in Officers' Training Camps, Cadet Schools, and Military Colleges, and during this year, 1945, it is hoped that no less than 25,000 or 30,000 young Polish officers will come out of these training camps, schools and colleges. They can be Second Lieutenants, Lieutenants, or even Captains, but for more specialised weapons, and as operational commanders we, of course, need the Red Army officers as instructors.

I have met quite a number of these Russian officers, and I may say that I really gained the best impression one could have from them. They were sincere in their work, they really came to Poland and to the Polish Army to school Polish soldiers and there were no politics in their minds at all. As a matter of fact, from what I know today of the Russian Army, I maintain, especially of the officers' corps of the Red Army, that it does not bother about politics at all—politics are not in their minds, they

are good patriots, and all they wanted to do was to save their country. They came to Poland and the Polish Army with one purpose in mind—to instruct the young Polish officers and men to become experts in their different army units.

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

#### POLES FROM RUSSIA

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

These Polish officers, who came from the Russian Army, are today the backbone of the Polish Army, which is being built up in Poland. Now one word about the Commander-in-Chief of this Army, General Zymierski. I have known him for over 20 years—since 1924. He was then the youngest General in the Polish Army, and Second Under-Secretary of State to the Minister of War when General Sikorski was the Minister. He was at that time Sikorski's right hand man, and had won renown as a great organiser. This man has organised the Polish Army in Poland today and really has built up a marvellously powerful machine.

The equipment is first-class—Russian tanks (light, medium and large) anti-tank artillery mounted on tanks the best heavy

guns and all possible mechanised weapons in large numbers were handed over to them by the Russians.

#### AGRARIAN REFORM

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

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

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

#### LIVING CONDITIONS

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

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

Agrarian reform is now being carried out, but is not yet complete. It affected 8,832 estates, totalling 4,242,949 hectares\* (roughly 10½ million acres), which belonged to 6,724 land-owning

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\*1 hectare is equal to 2.471 acres.

families and represented 21 per cent of the total agricultural areas. In other words, 6,724 land-owning families drew 21 per cent of the total national income from agriculture. Of the 4,242,949 hectares there were 1,834,771 hectares of forest, now taken over by the State. This left 2,408,178 hectares (or roughly six million acres) of arable land which is being divided amongst land-hungry peasants.

The standard allocation is  $12\frac{1}{2}$  acres, but the peasant gets not only land; through the medium of peasant co-operatives, which are being organised in every community, he also becomes a co-proprietor of the agricultural industry. The co-operative, moreover, supplies all necessary equipment for the cultivation of the land, gives him the technical training, and provides the credits needed for capital investments such as for building houses, sheds for cattle, transports, etc.

The 6 million acres will be divided among about half a million peasant families, and taking the average peasant family in Poland at a minimum of five, at least  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million peasant people will benefit from the distribution of land which before belonged to 6,724 land-owning families.

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

#### ECONOMIC REVIVAL

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



On a territory of less than 100,000 square kms.\* there were over seven million inhabitants—1½ million people more than before the war on the same territory. Most of this surplus were evacuees from the front and escapees from the German terror, people without homes, clothes, food or money, people who had literally nothing. More than that, there was a huge Russian Army based on this area and preparing its advance to liberate more Polish territory.

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

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

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\*1 square kilometre is equal to 0.386 squares miles.

assistance. The coal which at that time was at Poland's disposal was also Russian coal.

#### FOOD RATIONING

Having secured the most vital needs of the Army and safeguarded provisions for the free markets of the towns, the authorities set to work to organise a food rationing system. For about two months they accumulated stocks of food and in the middle of October they introduced food rationing cards in about 20 towns of the Lublin area. The basic idea of the system was to create an equivalent to compensate the Civil Servants and the workers against their low salaries unavoidably fixed by the State to avoid inflation.

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

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

The total breakdown of civilian transport resulting from the dazzling Russian advance and which, in February when I travelled across Poland, was creating a food shortage in the big cities, has now been overcome. The number of freight trains

supplying the country's economic needs was only 2,000 in February, but had risen to 13,500 in March and to over 20,000 in April.

The economic system is not a Communist one. The Polish Provisional Government firmly retains the principle of individual property for the peasant—no other system would be acceptable to the Polish peasant. There is no question of introducing any degree of collectivisation. The peasant co-operatives, made necessary by the changed economic structure as a result of the Agrarian Reform, are to satisfy the individual needs of the farmer and to provide him with tools and possibly tractors in return for payment. As for industries, coalmines, munitions industries, and public utilities have been taken in charge by the State and will be nationalised. They were abandoned when the Germans retreated, and no owners exist in most cases. Private enterprise in other industries and in commerce continues.

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

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

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

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

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

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

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

A.: Certainly nobody else but myself can vouch for the truth of the statements which I make. You have either to believe me or not. I am not the only journalist to have visited Poland, but I was the only journalist who was in Poland for any considerable time—4½ months. I was not on a conducted tour but could see for myself what I wanted to see. I suppose I was granted this privilege because I am a Pole and to some extent because the Polish Provisional Government took the opportunity of inviting me to come when the present Polish Government in London kicked me out. I do not think that we can blame the Soviet Union for the lack of information. There were other journalists in Poland during my stay there : a group of American, British and French journalists (Moscow correspondents) came to Poland in the beginning of January, 1945, stayed for 12 days and had the opportunity of travelling around to see quite a lot of the Lublin area. In the middle of February there was another visit by American correspondents from Moscow who saw Warsaw and Lodz. but, so far, except for myself, only correspondents who are permanently in Moscow have shown sufficient interest to go to Poland. I do not know of any other case of direct application to the Polish Provisional Government asking for the admission of correspondents from this country direct. I cannot reply for the Polish Provisional Government, but I feel they would probably be very happy if such an application were made by British editors to them and would welcome journalists from this country to Poland.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

A.: I had many talks with Dr. Sommerstein who is a very intelligent and brilliant Zionist leader and he never complained about any growth of anti-Semitism. His recent comments on the Warsaw Radio referred to the persecution of Jews by members

of the underground terrorist organisation called "NATIONAL ARMED FORCES" which formed a part of the Polish "HOME ARMY" directed from London and owing its allegiance to the Polish President, Mr. Racziewicz, residing also in London. These notorious Polish "NATIONAL ARMED FORCES" murder Jews just as they murder Poles who loyally serve the Polish Provisional Government. But their criminal activity can in no circumstances be taken as evidence of a growth of anti-Semitism. Certainly the Polish Government, when the time comes, will not stop those Jews who wish to do so from emigrating to Palestine, but at the moment there is no possibility of their being allowed to enter Palestine by the British Government.

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

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

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

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

As to the question whether General Bor should be handed over as a war criminal I would like to answer this in the negative. I think that General Bor is personally an honest man, and I am

even inclined to believe that he probably was very noble in his intentions. I do not blame General Bor so much as the people around him, and the guilt of General Bor lies in the fact that he tolerated these people round him. We know that it is not so much the Commander-in-Chief as this Chief of Staff who is the real organiser of any military operations.

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

If this man was Chief of Staff of General Bor at the time of the uprising I really cannot blame the Russians for not wanting to have anything to do with an organisation in which he played first fiddle. He is now in London and very active in organising adherents of the Pilsudski regime for any mischief against Russia.

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

A.: The Russian Security Police whose task it was to guarantee security in the rear of the fighting Red Army, was assisting the Polish authorities whose opponents were at the same

time the main advocates of an anti-Soviet Polish policy. The underground resistance has left behind large groups of armed men whose terroristic mentality has become the main impulse of their lives. There are still quite a few thousand of them left in Poland ; brave but unscrupulous ; hiding by day and attacking at night ; risking their own lives as well as the lives of their countrymen for the sake of an imaginary political purpose, but in reality committing common murder.

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

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

All these terrorist activities provoke reprisals for restoring order, and as a result people who are suspects are arrested and sometimes deported. But it would be entirely wrong to construe any kind of mass arrests and wholesale deportations from these reprisals. The general public is in no way involved or connected either with the terrorist activities or with the consequences. I have been in Poland  $4\frac{1}{2}$  months, and if there were such mass arrests and wholesale deportations I could not avoid seeing them. I did see sometimes small groups of three or four people who were conducted under escort through the streets of Lublin or other towns. But they were very few and I have never seen anything which would allow me to conclude that there were mass arrests and wholesale deportations.



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

*A.:* The position of the Catholic Church in present-day Poland is the most convincing evidence that the Provisional Government does not intend to upset the roots of Poland's culture and life. The Catholic Church enjoys complete freedom and the fullest support of the present Polish authorities, which have returned to the Catholic Church all its property and buildings confiscated by the Germans. The testimony of this is given in the Pastoral Letter which was addressed recently by Bishop Dr. Adamski, one of the most prominent dignitaries of the Catholic Church in Poland. As Bishop of Polish Silesia he ordered his Pastoral Letter to be read in all Churches from the pulpits through the whole Silesian diocese. Here are the main quotations from this Pastoral Letter :

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

“The Catholic Church in Poland at present is free. The hostile oppression which fettered its divine activities is over. Religious life is returning to normal. Gradually we shall restore every sphere of our religious activity. The Provisional Government, which already has returned to the Church the property the

Germans confiscated, will certainly not oppose the free and unlimited reconstruction of Catholic religious life. On the contrary, they support it and members of this Government themselves participate in the religious services. Your hearts will be gladdened by the news that your children will not only go to Polish schools but also with the fact that these schools will have the same measure of Catholic education as they had before.

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

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

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

To everybody conversant with the Russian system this version must appear ridiculous and silly. The N.K.V.D.—the Russian Security Police—does not “invite” people to political talks. It investigates cases of sabotage and terrorist activities. The suggestion that N.K.V.D. officials should be authorised to discuss with

Polish political leaders their inclusion into a broadened government under the Yalta provision is so absurd that it is amazing how people can believe it.

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

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

It is a fact that the Polish underground movement was instructed, supplied and financed from London. The Russians rightly suspect that this could not have been done without the connivance of the British Government. It was well known that General Okulicki had been dropped in Poland by parachute from this country a year ago. It is no revelation to the N.K.V.D. that the secret short-wave transmitters operating from underground Poland supplied by the British for resisting the Germans, were transmitting messages to London or receiving instructions from London. But this was in order as long as there was an underground resistance against the Germans. Any continuation of such

activities after the Germans ceased to occupy Poland in January this year became an illegal activity and this in time of war against Germany on the Eastern Front. Obviously this kind of secret underground activity should not have been continued one day longer after the Germans had gone, because it became automatically an anti-Russian conspiracy in the rear of the Red Army front. Today, any continuation of a London sponsored underground organisation inside Poland can only be interpreted as a deliberate British attempt to undermine Russia's position in Eastern Europe, and as an action inconsistent with the British-Soviet Treaty of Friendship and Alliance.\*

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\*This article is a report of the speech and answers to questions given by Dr. Stefan Litauer at a meeting held on May 29th, 1945 organised by the Women's British-Soviet Committee. It was published as a pamphlet in June 1945 by the Russia Today Society.

## Part Three

# THE MOSCOW TRIAL OF POLISH DIVERSIONISTS

ON JUNE 18, at 11-10 hours, in the October Hall of the House of the Unions in Moscow, in an open Court session, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. began the trial in the case of Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien, Jasiukowicz and others, 16 in all, accused of being organisers, leaders and participants in subversive underground activity in the rear of the Red Army on the territory of the Western Regions of Byelorussia and the Ukraine, Lithuania and Poland, where they acted against Soviet troops on instructions from the so-called Polish emigre "Government" in London.

All the accused were present with the exception of Anton Pajdak who, owing to illness, was unable to appear in Court. The Court recognised as valid the reason for his absence.

The presiding judge was Col.-Gen. of Justice Ulrich, Chairman of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.

He announced that the accusation against Okulicki and the others was supported by the Chief Procurator of the Red Army, Maj-Gen. of Justice Afanassyev, and State Councillor of Justice Rudenko.

The accused were defended by the prominent lawyers Braude, Mihalski, Milovidov, Kaznacheyev, Markewicz, Ocep and Plevako.

The Court trying the case of Okulicki and the others was composed of : President of the Court—President of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. Col.-Gen. of Justice Ulrich ; and Members of the Court—members of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. Maj.-Gen. of Justice Dmitriyev, Colonel of Justice Detistov and Reserve Member of the Court Colonel of Justice Syuldin.

Accused Okulicki requested the summoning of additional witnesses. The Court ruled that this question be decided in the course of the Court proceedings. Then the Indictment was read, accusing Leopold Blazewicz Okulicki, Jan Stanislaw Josifowicz Jankowski, Adam Valentiewicz Bien, Stanislaw Ignatiewicz Jasiukowicz.

with being the organisers and leaders of the Polish underground in the rear of the Red Army on the territory of the Western Regions of Byelorussia, the Ukraine, in Lithuania and Poland ;

with carrying out, according to the instructions of the so-called Polish emigre "Government" in London, direct subversive work against the Red Army and the Soviet Union ;

with carrying out terrorist acts against officers and men of the Red Army ;

with organising diversions and attacks by underground armed detachments ;

with carrying on propaganda inimical to the Soviet Union and the Red Army ;

defendant Okulicki being also accused of carrying out intelligence and espionage work in the rear of the Red Army ;

and Anton Juzefowicz Pajdak, Kazimierz Woicchowicz Puzak, Alexander Kazimierowicz Zwerzinski, Kazimierz Stanislawowicz Baginski, Stanislaw Francewicz Mierzwa, Zbignew Francewicz Stypulkowski, Ewgeni Stanislawicz Czarnowski, Josif Antonowicz Hacinski, Franc Andrejewicz Urbanski, Stanislaw Francewicz Mihalowski, Kazimierz Samuilowicz Kobylanski and Josif Henrichowicz Stemler-Dombski with participating in subversive work of the Polish underground organisations on the territory of Poland in the rear of the Red Army, and being cognisant of non-fulfilment by the leaders of the underground of the orders of the

Soviet Military Command concerning surrender of wireless transmitters, typographies, arms and ammunition, and of their use for criminal purposes.

## THE EXAMINATION

**A**FTER the reading of the indictment, the Presiding Judge asked each of the accused whether he pleaded guilty of the charges brought against him. The accused Bien, Jasiukowicz, Jankowski, Zwerzinski, Mierzwa, Kobylanski and Stemler-Dombiski pleaded guilty to all charges. The accused Czarnowski, Okulicki, Puzak, Urbanski, Baginski, Hacinski and Mihalowski pleaded guilty in part. The accused Stypulkowski pleaded not guilty.

The Court proceeded to the examination of the accused. The examination was conducted by the Chief Military Prosecutor of the Red Army, Maj.-Gen. of Justice Afanassyev.

### THE ACCUSED JASIUKOWICZ

The accused Jasiukowicz was examined first. In reply to the Prosecutor's question as to who sanctioned, and when was sanctioned, the armed struggle of the "AK" against the Red Army, the accused Jasiukowicz testified that armed struggle against the Red Army was sanctioned by the Command of the "Armia Krajowa," the so-called underground "government," in the spring of 1944, when the question arose that detachments of the "Armia Krajowa" which were in the Eastern part of Poland might be disarmed by the Soviet forces.

Immediately, these detachments were instructed not to lay down arms but to fight their way to the West. Jasiukowicz testified that he received information on this subject in conformity with instructions from London, sent to Poland by General "Bor" Komarowski.

**PROSECUTOR:** When did the necessity of disbanding the "Armia Krajowa" arise?

**JASIUKOWICZ:** In December, 1944.

**PROSECUTOR:** In connection with the demands of the Soviet Military Command?

JASIUKOWICZ : No, in connection with instructions from London.

Jasiukowicz then testified that Okulicki informed them about instructions received from London which demanded that the "Armia Krajowa" should be formally dissolved, but that a new strictly conspiratorial military-political organisation should be created on its basis, for which purpose they were to preserve the H.Q., arms, transport and ammunition of the "Armia Krajowa."

PROSECUTOR : What for ?

JASIUKOWICZ : For struggle against the Soviet Union, against the Red Army.

According to the accused Jasiukowicz's testimony, at a meeting of the Polish "government" early in January, 1945, General Okulicki stated that he intended to create a new underground organisation. In principle the underground "government" agreed to the creation of a political leading centre. Political leadership was in the hands of Jankowski.

The underground organisation "Niepodleglosc" ("NIE"), Jasiukowicz said, was to exercise political and critical "supervision," as the accused put it, over the new Government which was to be formed on the basis of the decisions of the Crimea Conference, and counteract the latter in pursuing a policy undesirable to the underground.

The accused further stated that at that time he did not know anything about active subversive work of "NIE" against the Red Army.

PROSECUTOR : And yet were you interested to know what the "Armia Krajowa" was doing, being illegal and hiding in the woods with arms ?

JASIUKOWICZ : At first I was certain that it was really being disbanded.

PROSECUTOR : Where and when was it decided to deceive the Soviet Military Command by a statement about disbandment of the "Armia Krajowa" ?

JASIUKOWICZ : This was an official decision of the London Polish Government.

The accused Jasiukowicz admitted, as he had done at the preliminary investigation, that the information of the Polish under-



ground was slanderous and tendentious. The Prosecutor quoted one of the slanderous radiograms sent by Jasiukowicz from Cracow to London on January 27, 1945, and asked: For what purpose was this done?

JASIUKOWICZ: So that the London Polish "government" should mis-inform the British Government concerning the situation in Poland.

PROSECUTOR: Why was it necessary?

JASIUKOWICZ: We believed that the intervention of the British Government in Polish affairs required an impetus. Our slanderous information which we supplied to the London Polish "government" served as such an impetus.

Further the accused confirmed that on coming from Cracow he handed over to Jankowski copies of radiograms which he had sent to London. According to Jasiukowicz, Jankowski accepted copies of these reports but did not express his opinion concerning them.

Jasiukowicz pleaded fully guilty of having been one of the leaders of the Polish underground in the rear of the Red Army, but he denied that the organisation "NIE" was created for the purpose of preparing military action in a bloc with Germany against the Soviet Union. However, in reply to the Prosecutor's further question, Jasiukowicz had to admit that the organisation "NIE" was formed for a diversionist and terrorist fight against the Red Army, and that he knew from Okulicki that the "NIE" organisation had set itself the aim of establishing connections with Germany for struggle against the Red Army.

Replying to a question whether Okulicki was closely connected with the underground "government," Jasiukowicz testified that Okulicki appeared in Poland in 1944 and, at the end of the same year, took up a leading position. He took part in meetings of the underground "government" as Commander-in-Chief of the "Armia Krajowa".

Further, the accused gave evidence about his conversation with "Bor"-Komarowski concerning the latter's negotiations with S. S. Obergruppenfuehrer von den Bach during the German occupation. Von den Bach received the first delegation sent by "Bor"-Komarowski to negotiate the surrender, and said that

the common enemy of Germany and Poland was the Soviet Union.

Jasiukowicz then went on to give evidence concerning the relations between the underground "government" and the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi." The "government" was accountable to it. Jankowski, as chief delegate of the London Polish "government," delivered reports at meetings of the "Rada," and informed it of the most important instructions sent from London by the Polish emigre "government."

The accused Jasiukowicz testified that he learned of his appointment as a Minister of the underground "government" from a radiogram received from the London "government."

"I will express my final conviction," said Jasiukowicz, "at which I began to arrive before the arrest and at which I have finally arrived now in detention, when I have had the opportunity to think and study certain documents, namely that the policy which we pursued until recently in regard to the U.S.S.R. was erroneous, that members of the underground Polish government took the wrong path and in some respects a criminal path. I believe that everything must be done to abandon this wrong path as quickly as possible and to achieve Poland's participation in the life of renovated Europe as early as possible."

#### THE ACCUSED BIEN

Next to be examined was the accused Bien, Vice-President of the underground "Council of Ministers." After confirming his testimony at the preliminary investigation, Bien testified that the "Armia Krajowa," was directly subordinated to the London emigre "government," and that the new underground organisation "NIE" was created by "Bor"-Komarowski as far back as July, 1944. In February, 1945, the underground Polish "government" took note of Okulicki's statement that "NIE" existed, preserved the "AK" H.Q. and arms and maintained radio communication with the London "government."

The purpose of the organisation of "NIE" was struggle against the U.S.S.R. "I admit," the accused Bien said, "that as a Minister of the underground Polish 'government' I bear full moral and political responsibility for all the activities of that government."

The Prosecutor reminded the accused of his testimony of May 12 : that the "Armia Krajowa" acted on the territory of Poland upon directives of the Polish "government" in London, with which the Commanders "Bor"-Komarowski and, later, Okulicki maintained radio communication over their wireless transmitters.

"I know that the Command of the 'Armia Krajowa' conducted political and terrorist activities."

Secret courts which existed in connection with the "Armia Krajowa" passed death sentences, and, under the guise of struggle against alleged traitors, took reprisals against Polish patriots. Bien admitted that he knew that the underground organisation widely used the method of political assassinations.

Dealing with the uprising in Warsaw, Bien declared that this uprising was described in "Stronnictwo Ludowe" political circles as a political gamble. The accused confirmed that after the suppression of the Warsaw uprising by the Germans, when "Bor"-Komarowski surrendered, his successor Okulicki began to organise subversive work in the Red Army's rear.

In reply to a question of Counsel for the Defence Braude as to the accused Bien's present estimation of the activities of the underground "government" in which he participated, the accused Bien stated that he believed it to be a mistake that members of the underground Polish "government" followed the instructions of Arciszewski's "government" and remained underground to fight against the Red Army.

#### THE ACCUSED JANKOWSKI .

The Court proceeded to the examination of the President of the underground "Council of Ministers," Jankowski, who confirmed in the main the charges against him. The accused took an active part in negotiations with the German General von den Bach, during which it was suggested that Poland together with Germany should come out against the U.S.S.R.

PROSECUTOR : While admitting your criminal activities in accordance with the charges preferred against you, tell the Court on whose instructions you conducted these activities.

JANKOWSKI: Chiefly on the instructions of the London emigre "government."

Replying to the Prosecutor's further questions, Jankowski spoke of his relations with the "Armia Krajowa," admitting that his instructions to the command of this army concerning general policy were binding. Jankowski asserted that in other respects the "Armia Krajowa" was directly subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief in London.

In reply to a question of the Presiding Judge as to the disposal of the arms of the "AK" units which took part in the Warsaw gamble, the accused said that all arms were surrendered to the Germans in accordance with the capitulation agreement.

The examination of the accused Jankowski closed the morning session of the Court. At the evening session the Court examined the witnesses Herman, Janson, Kuzminski, Swieczkowski (Klewenhagen), Grolinska and Stankiewicz. The witnesses' testimony convicts the organisers, leaders and participants in the Polish underground of having conducted subversive work in the Red Army rear, and of having committed terrorist and diversionary acts against the Red Army. The witnesses' testimony also confirms that the leaders of the underground sabotaged the orders of the Soviet Military Command concerning surrender of radio stations, print-shops, arms and ammunition, and preserved them for an armed fight against the Red Army.

A recess was announced until 11 a.m., June 19.

#### THE WITNESS HERMAN

At the evening session on June 18 the Court commenced interrogation of witnesses. The first to give evidence was Herman, Major of the Polish Army and Professor of Lvov Polytechnical and Veterinary Institute.

Giving evidence in the case of Okulicki and the others, Herman said that since February, 1943, he had been Commandant, i.e., Commander of the Stanislaw Military District of the "AK." At the moment of the liberation of Lvov by the Red Army he was in the town of Stryj, which was in the Stanislaw District of the "AK".

In June, 1944, said witness Herman, he participated in the

conference convened by the Commandant of the Lvov District of the "AK," General Fillipowski, which took place at a secret rendezvous in the Lvov District of the "AK" in Konoplicki Street, Lvov. At this conference General Fillipowski expounded the tasks of the "AK" in the event of the Red Army reaching the district.

"AK" had to sham active struggle against the Germans in order subsequently, after the Red Army's arrival and during possible negotiations with the Soviet Military Command, to act as master of the situation in the district and to pose as a military force which waged active struggle against the German troops. Fillipowski also gave an order to avoid losses if possible, to preserve man-power, arms and underground equipment.

To the Prosecutor's question on what considerations had Fillipowski given such instructions, the witness Herman said that cadres, arms and equipment were preserved for preparing an armed uprising or war against the Soviet Union.

PROSECUTOR: Who laid down such a policy?

HERMAN: This was the general policy of the Chief Command of the "AK" which General Fillipowski conveyed to us at the conference.

PROSECUTOR: Did you receive an order about disbandment of the "Armia Krajowa"?

HERMAN: The order was issued by General Fillipowski towards the end of July or in early August, 1944. At the time I was not in Lvov, and I personally did not receive this order, but learned of it somewhat later, from Lt.-Col. Janson, General Fillipowski's successor as District Commandant. Janson told me that a new underground organisation "NIE" would be set up instead of the "AK," its task being the organisation of an armed uprising in the Red Army's rear.

PROSECUTOR: Was this Janson's policy?

HERMAN: No, Janson showed me the statutes of the new organisation "NIE," which he had already received in Warsaw in May, 1944, during the visit of the Chief Command of the "Armia Krajowa."

Herman added that, in conformity with the statutes of "NIE," this organisation was to engage in organisational work

for the creation of cadres for the future insurgent army, to penetrate all sections of the Soviet organs in the Stainslaw District.

PROSECUTOR : Did you conduct subversive work ?

HERMAN : Yes, I did. It was required by the statutes of "NIE." The subversive and terrorist work was aimed against members of the Military Command of the Red Army, Soviet leaders and, in general, against persons especially dangerous to the "AK." On Janson's instructions we had to disguise carefully diversionist and terrorist activities, to avoid exposure, to make it appear that on certain occasions assassinations were committed not by members of the "AK" but by other anti-Soviet non-Polish organisations, for instance "OUN."

Replying to the Prosecutor's question, Herman gave specific instances of terror. Thus, in January, 1945, in the town of Stryj, the Commandant of the Stryj Inspectorate of the "AK" organised the assassination of two Soviet officers. As revealed by Herman's subsequent testimony, on territory of the Stanislaw Military District of the "AK," which included the Stanislaw and Drohobycze Regions, there were some 3,000 members of the "AK" who possessed arms and ammunition. The diversionists prepared to blow up a bridge across the Dniester and planned to commit more diversionary acts on the railways. Herman testified that members of the "AK" circulated leaflets urging the Ukraine population to struggle against the Soviet Union and to commit terrorist acts against the leaders of the Communist Party and the Soviet Government.

PRESIDING JUDGE : In December, 1944, as you previously testified, you received special instructions concerning intensification of the terrorist activities of your organisation ?

HERMAN : Yes, I did.

PRESIDING JUDGE : From whom ?

HERMAN : From Janson, Commander of the Lvov District of the "AK." Those instructions authorised the Commandants of Districts, areas and inspectorates to pass decisions concerning terrorist and diversionary acts.

Replying to questions put by members of the Court, Herman stated that during the German occupation of Poland members of the "AK," including Herman himself, conducted negotiations

with representatives of the military command of Germany's ally, Hungary. The Hungarian Command asked the "AK" to assign people to conduct intelligence in the Red Army's rear in Hungary's interests.

PRESIDING JUDGE : Thus the situation can be summed up as follows :—In February, 1945, a Polish underground military organisation numbering some 3,000 members functioned on the territory of the Stanislaw and Drohobycze Regions of the Ukrainian Republic ?

HERMAN : Yes.

PRESIDING JUDGE : This organisation set itself the task of preparing an armed uprising against the Red Army ?

HERMAN : Yes, it did.

PRESIDING JUDGE : And was your organisation connected with the superior organisations ?

HERMAN : Yes, it was. My organisation was subordinated to the Commandant of the Lvov District, Janson, and the latter was subordinated to the Chief Command of the "AK" which was in Warsaw.

PRESIDING JUDGE : And to whom was subordinated the Chief Command of the "AK" in Warsaw ?

HERMAN : To the Polish emigre "government" in London.

#### THE WITNESS JANSON

The Court then proceeded to the interrogation of witness Janson, who served in the Polish Army from 1929 in the rank of Major and then as Colonel. Lately he was Commandant of the Lvov District of the "AK."

Janson stated that in May or June, 1944, he visited the Chief Command of the "AK" in Warsaw, from whom he received oral directives and written statutes of the organisation "NIE."

PROSECUTOR : Whom did you meet in Warsaw ?

JANSON : On the first day I met the Commander-in-Chief of the "AK," General "Bor"-Komarowski, his Deputy known as "Nedzwjadek" or, as I have learnt here Mr. Okulicki, and the Chief of Staff of the "AK," Pedczinski.

PROSECUTOR : Tell the Court specifically—what tasks faced the "NIE" organisation ?

JANSON : Those tasks were as follows : to preserve the H.Q. and their departments, to preserve and train cadres so that in case of necessity they could start an uprising.

PROSECUTOR : Thus the final aim was organisation of an armed uprising ?

JANSON : Yes, an armed uprising.

PROSECUTOR : Against whom ?

JANSON : An armed uprising against the Soviet Union.

PROSECUTOR : Did you receive directives concerning organisation of armed combat detachments ?

JANSON : There was such a directive : it was necessary to have independent combat detachments and liquidation groups to commit terrorist acts against the enemies of the "AK," representatives of the Soviet Military Command.

Then Janson testified that the order on disbandment of the "AK" was issued formally, whereas in reality the "AK" went into hiding, preserving its H.Q., arms and ammunition. Members of the "AK," acting in secrecy, conducted intelligence and sent espionage information to the Chief Command of the "AK."

Answering the Prosecutor's question, Janson stated that the Commander of the "AK" who replaced "Bor"-Komarowski was "Nedzwjadek" (Okulicki).

PROSECUTOR : Did you address information to him personally ?

JANSON : This information could not fall in anyone's hands and escape "Nedzwjadek."

Janson added that he had sent a trusted person to London to report to the War Ministry of the Polish emigre "government" on the situation in the Lvov District.

Janson's testimony reveals that the whole subversive work against the Red Army was financed by the Chief Command of the "AK."

During the interrogation of witness Janson he was brought face to face with the previously examined witness Herman. As a result of the confrontation of witnesses, it was ascertained that members of the "AK," guided by directives of the Chief Command of the "AK," regarded war between Poland and the U.S.S.R. as inevitable. Witness Herman stated that when Janson and he met and discussed the future war between Poland and



the U.S.S.R., they mentioned Germany as a possible ally of Poland in the struggle against the U.S.S.R.

PROSECUTOR (addressing Herman) : Did Janson tell you from whom he had received these directives ?

HERMAN : He told me that he had received them from the Chief Command of the "AK."

#### THE WITNESS KUZMINSKI

The Court then proceeded to interrogate the witness Kuzminski, who gave his evidence in the Polish language. Replying to the Prosecutor's question, Kuzminski testified that he joined the "AK" in 1943, at first as Commandant of an area and later as inspector of the Stryj Inspectorate, and had 1,200 men under him, 300 of them being armed.

PROSECUTOR : What were your orders and directives, and what was the substance of your subversive work in the Red Army's rear ?

KUZMINSKI : The first thing was to transfer the "AK" underground, then, to conceal and hide arms and, besides, to form armed detachments and terrorist groups.

PROSECUTOR : For what purpose ?

KUZMINSKI : To come out at an opportune moment against the Red Army.

PROSECUTOR : Was intelligence work planned ?

KUZMINSKI : Intelligence work was conducted, too.

The Prosecutor then asked Kuzminski what acts of diversion were committed by the people at his disposal.

KUZMINSKI : They actually had no time to develop their activities, except for the assassination of two Red Army officers in the town of Stryj, which was committed at the close of December, 1944, or early in January, 1945.

Kuzminski's subsequent testimony revealed that he had also engaged in espionage : from September, 1944, till January, 1945. Kuzminski regularly supplied the Commandant of the Stanislaw "AK" District, Herman, with information as to the location of Red Army troops, their strength and armaments, and the work of military Commissariats.

**THE WITNESS SWIECZKOWSKI**

Then the witness Swieczkowski faced the Court. He stated that his real name was Klewenhawen. Swieczkowski said that he had served in the Polish Army as an airman with the rank of Junior Lieutenant. Swieczkowski testified that his immediate superior was a Major known as "Riszar," who headed the intelligence service in the eastern part of Poland. Subsequently, Swieczkowski was connected with an officer of the intelligence Service of the "AK" known as "Boleslaw," for whom he systematically gathered intelligence about the Red Army through his chain of 20 or 30 informers.

PROSECUTOR: Did you receive remuneration for your work?

SWIECZKOWSKI: I did.

**THE WITNESS GROLINSKA**

The Court proceeded to the interrogation of witness Grolinska, who testified that she had been a member of the "Armia Krajowa" from the spring of 1942 as a wireless operator working at radio station No. 36.

Grolinska testified that after the liberation of Lvov by Soviet troops she worked at radio station No. 36 and regularly maintained two-way radio communication with the Polish emigre "government" in London. Grolinska had five secret rendezvous equipped with wireless transmitters through which she transmitted 20 radiograms to London, to radio stations Nos. 35 and 94, and received 13 radiograms from London.

Further, Grolinska testified that in September, 1944, she was arrested, together with a number of other members of the "AK," by the Soviet military authorities, and set free after she had promised to cease subversive work. Grolinska admitted that she failed to keep her promise and resumed her subversive work in the "AK" against the Red Army. She stated that for her work she received monthly 2,500 roubles from the "AK."

**THE WITNESS STANKIEWICZ**

The next witness to be interrogated was Stankiewicz. Stankiewicz, known as "Komar," Commander of an armed "AK" detachment, testified that he had formed his detachment, number-

ing one hundred armed members of the "AK," on the instructions of an "AK" Major known as "Krys," and that, on the latter's oral or written orders, he committed terrorist acts in the rear of the Red Army.

Answering the Prosecutor's question, Stankiewicz stated that on the order of Major "Krys" he organised the assassination of the President of Malya Soleshnia Rural Soviet, Vassilevsky, and his wife and daughter, of the President of the Bolshaya Soleshnia Rural Soviet, Novak, and Secretary Loik.

Stankiewicz also testified that on January 6, 1945, in Puszcza Rudinska, his detachment attacked a group of Soviet servicemen, killing 50 Red Army men and officers.

Further testimony of Stankiewicz revealed that in the village of Boczi his detachment shot seven Soviet servicemen and assassinated the Secretary of the Rural Soviet in the village of Kalitantsy.

PROSECUTOR : You committed all these things and terrorist acts without orders, on your own initiative ?

STANKIEWICZ : No, I did everything on orders from my superiors, from the Commander of the northern group of detachments of the Vilnius area of the "AK."

PROSECUTOR : Does this mean that all the terrorist activity was directed by orders from the "AK" area ?

STANKIEWICZ : Yes.

PROSECUTOR : Consequently these were not unauthorised acts by your detachment ?

STANKIEWICZ : No, these were actions of the "Armia Krajowa."

The evening session ended with the interrogation of witness Stankiewicz.

#### THE WITNESS DZIALYNSKI

At the morning session on June 19 the Court continued interrogation of witnesses, who gave specific facts of diversionist and terrorist activity by the "Armia Krajowa" detachments, which acted on direct assignments of the London Polish "government" and of the Chief Command of the "Armia Krajowa" in Warsaw.

Agents of the Polish emigre "government" and of the Polish underground "government" in the Red Army's rear, published provocational handbills in which they incited the population against the Red Army and Soviet officials.

Witness Stanislaw Dzialynski (alias Dziarmaga), Commandant of the 2nd Area of the "AK" in Vilnius, who was simultaneously in charge of the department of propaganda and information under the delegate of Rzondu, of the Vilnius area, stated :

"In our work we were at first guided by the instructions of the Rzondu delegate, and during the last period by instructions received directly from the Polish underground 'government' in Warsaw. We were advised to sham a good and friendly attitude towards the Soviet troops while in reality organising hostile acts. Such instructions also emanated from the 'Rada Jednosci Narodowoi'."

"We were in permanent contact," the witness said, "with the Rzondu delegate in Vilnius."

PROSECUTOR (addressing the accused Jankowski) : Who was the Rzondu delegate in Vilnius ?

JANKOWSKI : Fedorowicz.

Further, by cross-examining Jankowski and another of the accused Ministers of the underground "government," Jasiukowicz, the Prosecutor established that this "government" continuously maintained communication with its representatives in the provinces.

The witness Dzialynski stated in conclusion : "In conducting subversive work in the Red Army's rear we were executing the orders of the Polish emigre 'government' in London and of the underground 'government' in Warsaw."

**THE WITNESSES LOTARIEWICZ, KOLENDO, URBANOWICZ,  
NIEWEROWSKI**

After Dzialynski, the Court interrogated the participants in diversionary and terrorist acts Lotariewicz, Kolendo, Urbanowicz and Niewerowski, summoned as witnesses in the case. Being members of the "Armia Krajowa," they acted, arms in hand, on rear communications of the Red Army, which at that time was heroically fighting the Germans.

Before starting his terrorist career in the Red Army's rear,

Lotariewicz served in a special "AK" training squad which trained saboteurs. Lotariewicz testified that his detachment had shot at a Soviet army truck loaded with arms. The driver was killed and the cargo carried away by the detachment. On another occasion they stalked, ambushed and killed four Soviet officials and seriously wounded a fifth.

"Before enlisting in the 'Armia Krajowa,'" witness Kolendo testified, "I worked as a salesman in a Nowogrodek store. In May, 1944. I was handed a summons to report at the H.Q. of an 'AK' element stationed in a neighbouring village. The summons said that failure to report would be punished by shooting. I reported to the H.Q. and was sent to a school which trained saboteurs in the Red Army's rear. For 20 days we were taught methods of mining and blowing up the railway track, roads and bridges."

PROSECUTOR: What were you supposed to do?

KOLENDO: Our programme included organising explosions and wrecking trains in the Red Army rear. I took part in one such act. That was on the night of September 17 to 18, 1944. The date was fixed by special order.

PROSECUTOR: Why that date?

KOLENDO: That was a kind of demonstration of protest against the Red Army's entry on that date in 1939 into the territory of Poland.

On the Prosecutor's request the Court made public a secret order to the Polish underground, contained in the Court files, to organise on September 17 explosions of military trains and trucks, sabotage acts on the railways, and the firing of stores in the Red Army rear.

PROSECUTOR: Did this harm the Red Army, which was fighting the Germans?

KOLENDO: Yes, it harmed the cause of the United Nations.

Witness Urbanowicz, interrogated after Kolendo, belonged to one of "Ragner's" detachments which committed numerous terrorist and diversionary acts against the Red Army, plundered the local population, engaged in arson, etc.

PROSECUTOR: What did your detachment do during the German occupation?

URBANOWICZ : We fought against the Soviet partisans who at that time were repulsing the onslaught of German troops. On one occasion gendarmes of "Ragner's" detachment arrested 12 or 15 persons suspected of connections with the Soviet partisans. The day following their arrest they were all shot. When the Germans were thrown back by the Red Army, "Ragner's" detachment started subversive work in the rear of the Soviet troops. This was accompanied by plunder of the local population.

"On November 27, 1944, while staying in a certain village, we learned that a Red Army lieutenant had put up there for the night. We took him in bed, brought him to our H.Q. and shot him there" said Urbanowicz.

"Early in November, 1944," Urbanowicz testified further, "a Soviet citizen whom I did not know was brought to 'Ragner's' H.Q. I myself saw him shot near the H.Q. by a platoon commander known as 'Djewica.' I also know about the hanging by our detachment of another Soviet civilian. In November, 1944, an 'AK' squad under 'Browko' and headed by platoon commander 'Kjewica' made a foraging sortie to a village, during which a Soviet civilian was seized and hanged. Together with two 'AK' men I guarded to the execution site."

"Thus," the Prosecutor summed up, "during the German occupation your detachment fought together with the Germans against Soviet troops, and when the Red Army came, the detachment conducted subversive work in its rear and murdered Soviet civilians?"

"Yes." Urbanowicz admitted.

The Court proceeded to interrogation of witness Niewerowski. The "AK" detachment to which he belonged was commanded by Witold Gladkin.

PROSECUTOR : Did you kill the Soviet partisan Kostiuszin ?

NIEWEROWSKI : Yes. He was seized in a village. I killed him with two bullets through the head. Kostiuszin's body was buried right there, on the spot.

In another instance, the detachment to which Niewerowski belonged shot a certain Urbanowicz, resident in the village of Kotlowa in September, 1944.

PROSECUTOR : Was he also a Soviet citizen ?

NIEWEROWSKI : Yes.

PROSECUTOR : From whom did your detachment take its orders ?

NIEWEROWSKI : From the underground Polish "government."  
This ended the interrogation of witnesses.

#### THE ACCUSED OKULICKI

The Court proceeded to the interrogation of the accused Okulicki. The accused confirmed his testimony given at the preliminary interrogation concerning subversive activities in organisation "NIE" for armed struggle against the Red Army, and also that he, Okulicki, together with the underground "Council of Ministers," conducted propaganda hostile to the U.S.S.R.

The Presiding Judge read the following excerpt from Okulicki's testimony :

"I also do not deny the fact that subversive work in the rear of the Red Army in the field was directed to the detriment of the struggle of the United Nations against Hitlerite Germany."

PRESIDING JUDGE : Is it true ?

OKULICKI : Yes, it is.

Further, Okulicki testified in what circumstances and for what purpose he arrived in Poland. He stated to the Court that on May 25, 1944, he was dropped by parachute from a British Liberator plane over the territory of Poland. Okulicki was brought from Italy, where before this he had commanded the 7th Infantry Division of General Anders' troops.

Okulicki arrived in Poland as Assistant Commander of the "Armia Krajowa," of General "Bor"-Komarowski.

PROSECUTOR : When and by whom were you appointed to this post ?

OKULICKI : I was appointed by General Sosnkowski in March, 1944, in London.

PROSECUTOR : Were you called to London ?

OKULICKI : I was summoned to London by General Sosnkowski.

The accused testified that on October 1, 1944, after "Bor"-Komarowski had decided to surrender to the Germans, he appoint-

ed Okulicki as his successor to the command of the "Armia Krajowa."

PROSECUTOR: What kind of instructions were given to you before you went to Poland?

OKULICKI: Before I went to Poland General Sosnkowski told me that an offensive operation of the Red Army might result in the rout of the German army and seizure by the Red Army of the entire territory of Poland, that this would threaten Poland's independence and that proper measures should be taken against this.

Sosnkowski then instructed Okulicki to create an underground, essentially conspiratorial, military organisation.

On arrival in Poland Okulicki informed "Bor"-Komarowski of the directive he had received from the Polish emigre "government" in London. "Bor"-Komarowski stated that he had had similar instructions and that a new underground organisation called "NIE" was being formed.

Several days before the Warsaw uprising, Okulicki was appointed leader of the underground organisation "NIE."

The accused confirms that the organisation he headed subsequently also acted on the directives of the Polish emigre "government."

The Prosecutor, reminding accused Okulicki that in the period when he was commander of the "Armia Krajowa" his subordinates committed assassinations of the Soviet servicemen, asked: Who answers for these assassinations?

OKULICKI: I do.

Okulicki admitted that the terror against Soviet servicemen was conducted on an especially wide scale in the western Regions of Byelorussia, the Ukraine and the Lithuanian Republic. Okulicki knew of this from a report of Colonel Pildorf, head of the diversion department of the staff of the Chief Command of the "Armia Krajowa." Pildorf reported on instructions he gave to leaders of underground organisations in these districts:

1. To create in the military areas armed detachments of 50 to 60 men;
2. To hide arms and ammunition;
3. To supply arms for self-defence, meaning offering armed



resistance to the Soviet authorities in the event of exposure of the organisation "NIE," and for committing terrorist acts against representatives of the Soviet military authorities on the territory of the U.S.S.R. as well as against officers and men of the Red Army.

Okulicki admitted that he did not annul these instructions, but explained that this was allegedly due to "lack of communications" with the Eastern areas of the "Armia Krajowa." He also admitted that in December, 1944, he learned of Fildorf's directive to conduct terror, but alleges that cases of terror were isolated ones. Okulicki stated that his orders spoke of the necessity of self-defence.

The Presiding Judge asked Okulicki to decipher what "self-defence" meant in his language. Okulicki defined more precisely that this meant "to destroy the enemies of the 'Armia Krajowa.'"

The Prosecutor recalled to the accused that at his interrogation the latter testified as follows: "Self-defence must consist of organisation of intelligence work and of armed resistance to the organs of Soviet power, the Provisional Government and the Soviet armed forces, in the event of exposure of various links of the organisation 'NIE.'"

The Prosecutor asked the accused whether the Command of "Armia Krajowa" engaged in intelligence work.

OKULICKI: Yes, it did.

Next at the Court Session there was read aloud the text of cipher radiogram received by Okulicki from London, from the central staff of the Polish emigre "government." This radiogram, instructing that extensive work be developed in gathering intelligence about the Red Army, was addressed to the Commandants of five areas of the "Armia Krajowa" in addition to Okulicki. This document contains a detailed list of data which were to be regularly gathered through the intelligence network of the Chief Command of the "Armia Krajowa" and through the Commandants of areas of the "Armia Krajowa."

PROSECUTOR: Were all these areas subordinated to you?

OKULICKI: Yes.

PROSECUTOR : In that case there was also intelligence work carried on under your direction ?

OKULICKI : I do not deny that.

PROSECUTOR : You say that you did not fulfil the order of the Soviet Military Command on disbandment of the "Armia Krajowa" ? You preserved the "Armia Krajowa" underground ? You have hidden ammunition, arms, and radio stations which should have been surrendered, and you have kept all these in the underground ?

OKULICKI : Yes.

PROSECUTOR : How do you qualify this ?

OKULICKI : I qualify this as non-fulfilment of the order of the Red Army Command.

PROSECUTOR : Only as non-fulfilment ? For what purpose then ?

OKULICKI : For the purpose of preserving them for the future.

PROSECUTOR : Against whom ?

OKULICKI : Against those who would have threatened us.

PROSECUTOR : Name the state which you believed would have threatened.

OKULICKI : The Soviet Union.

In this connection, Prosecutor Rudenko, citing an extract from the testimony of the accused given at the preliminary investigation asked : Towards whom were you orientating ?

OKULICKI : Towards a block of States against the U.S.S.R.

PROSECUTOR : Of what States was this bloc to consist, in your opinion—Poland and what other States ?

OKULICKI : England . . .

PROSECUTOR : Who else ?

OKULICKI : And the Germans.

PROSECUTOR : Consequently, a bloc with the Germans, the enemies of all the freedom-loving nations, the Germans who are universally hated for their brutality, their barbarism and extermination of peaceful populations ?

To general laughter in the Court, Okulicki stated : Not with the Germans, but with Europe.

Answering the Prosecutor's further questions, Okulicki told

of his relations with the underground "Council of Ministers." The accused worked in contact with Jankowski. They were both informed of each others activities. Close relations also existed between Okulicki and the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi."

PROSECUTOR : And so, you preserved arms in the underground, organised terrorist and diversionary acts against the Red Army at a time when it was fighting against the Germans. Did this help or hinder the struggle against the Germans ?

OKULICKI : It hindered.

PROSECUTOR : Whom did this activity help ?

OKULICKI : Certainly the Germans.

Okulicki was arrested on March 27, 1945.

PRESIDING JUDGE : And did your subversive actions against the U.S.S.R. end with this ?

OKULICKI : Exactly.

#### THE ACCUSED ZWERZINSKI

The Court proceeded to the interrogation of the accused Zwerzinski, President of the "Stronnictwo Narodowe" Party and Vice-President of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi."

PROSECUTOR : What do you know about instructions issued by the Polish emigre "government" in London ?

ZWERZINSKI : One of the instructions which came to my knowledge at the end of January, 1945, was an instruction on preserving the conspiracy.

PROSECUTOR : How were these instructions carried out in practice in your underground ?

ZWERZINSKI : These instructions were carried out in the sense that all the underground remained with a conspiratorial status.

Zwerzinski further declared : "Jasiukowicz informed me that the possibility of establishing a new body of four as a substitute organ for the underground 'Council of Ministers' was discussed with Jankowski in Cracow. This organ was to consist of representatives of the four main parties, namely the 'Stronnictwo Ludowe,' 'Stronnictwo Narodowe,' 'Partia Pracy' and the 'PPS.'"

Speaking of these four, Zwerzinski stated that they were

supposed to present a list of members of the underground "government" to Britain, America and the U.S.S.R., pretending thus that this "government" allegedly had legal status, but at the same time it was decided to preserve the four as a so-called political centre for further conspiratorial work.

PROSECUTOR: Tell us, did you hear a report or information by Okulicki at a meeting of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowej"?

ZWERZINSKI: Yes, we did. That was in the middle of February.

PROSECUTOR: What did Okulicki report?

ZWERZINSKI: He read an appeal to soldiers and officers, reported on the formal disbandment of the "Armia Krajowa," and informed us that H.Q. remained with an underground status.

PROSECUTOR: What do you know about the practical subversive activities in the Red Army rear?

ZWERZINSKI: I know of the fact of concentration of "AK" forces in the Lublin District, and about their struggle. I also know about the explosion near Lublin, and activity of the detachment which acted in the Bialystok area. Then again, about the destruction of a bridge on the Tarnow—Lvov railway, of the struggle carried on by two or three detachments which acted in the Lublin District . . .

After the interrogation of Zwerzinski, the Court proceeded to interrogate the accused Urbanski who was a member of the Presidium and Secretary of the underground "Partia Pracy." Urbanski confirmed the testimony he had given at the preliminary investigations.

The morning session ended with interrogation of Urbanski.

#### THE ACCUSED CZARNOWSKI AND BAGINSKI

On June 19, at the evening session, the Court continued the examination of the leaders of the Polish underground who engaged in criminal subversive activities.

Czarnowski was President of the so-called "Union of Democrats." Okulicki suggested that he join the newly-formed underground leading political centre, and explained that this new underground centre would direct the struggle against the Red

Army including terrorist activities. Czarnowski agreed to join this new underground political centre.

The 'second conspiracy' was the name Okulicki and Jankowski gave to their criminal underground activities directed against the interests of the Red Army and the Allied Nations. The atmosphere was thick with slander, Czarnowski said: it bred terrorist acts and hostile actions against the Red Army: it was Czarnowski himself and the rest of the leaders and participants in the criminal underground work who created this atmosphere.

"In the long run the subversive activities of the Polish underground harmed the common cause of the United Nations"—this is how Czarnowski himself described the significance of his crimes.

The Court proceeded to the interrogation of the accused Baginski, who was Vice-President of the "Stronnictwo Ludowe."

"Did your party fulfil the order of the Command of the Red Army on disbandment of armed forces and on surrender of arms?"—the Prosecutor asked.

Baginski evaded a direct answer. "We did not consider it necessary to issue such instructions," he said. "It did not occur to us that this was necessary."

"But did the members of your armed detachments surrender arms?"

"I do not know about this. We did not issue such an order."

"So you did not fulfil the order of the Red Army Command on disbandment of armed detachments and surrender of arms?" the Prosecutor insisted. Baginski agreed.

He told the court about the negotiations he conducted with Jankowski and Okulicki on the "Stronnictwo Ludowe" Party joining the "NIE" underground organisation. The command of the "AK" Baginski testified, largely consisted of former Sanacja elements. Before 1939 these elements, which belonged to the old Polish political leadership, conducted an emphatic anti-Soviet policy.

Baginski also spoke about pro-German circles in the leadership of the "AK" and the Polish underground. However, Baginski and other leaders of the "Stronnictwo Ludowe" underground organisation worked shoulder to shoulder with the "AK," participated in the underground "government" and in the so-

called parliament "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi," and in all the criminal activities of the Polish underground.

Baginski was unable to refute this. He tried to absolve himself of responsibility by declaring: "I wanted to quit the underground organisation, but had no chance." However, he could not explain what had prevented him and his organisation from breaking with the criminal underground.

"Until at last the Red Army helped you to withdraw from the underground organisation by arresting you?" the Presiding Judge asked.

"Exactly so," confirmed Baginski.

The accused Mierzwa, member of the Central Committee of the underground "Stronnictwo Ludowe" organisation, supplemented Baginski's evidence. He confirmed the facts of the participation of this organisation in underground subversive activities. The "Stronnictwo Ludowe" organisation collaborated with elements of the "Sanacja," "National Democrats" and all other groups of the reactionary Polish underground.

The accused Hacinski, President of the "Stronnictwo Pracy" (Party of Labour), testified that at a conference held in Cracow in February, 1945, the Secretary of the "Stronnictwo Pracy," the accused Urbanski, announced Okulicki's statement that the "AK" actually had not been disbanded and that its cadres and arms had been preserved for underground struggle against the Red Army.

Interrogation of the accused Kobylianski, Stemler-Dombski, Mihalowski, Stypulkowski and Puzak supplied additional material describing the criminal activity of the Polish underground in the Red Army's rear. The accused Stemler-Dombski published a clandestine bulletin filled with provocative and slanderous fabrications about the Soviet Union and the Red Army. The accused Mihalowski—one of the leaders of the so-called "Union of Democrats"—distributed slanderous information about the Red Army to district delegates of his "Union."

"For what purpose was this done?" the Prosecutor asked the accused.

Mihalowski answered: "Slander was one of the forms of our struggle against the Red Army."

The accused Stypulkowski persistently denied his guilt. However, he could not deny the fact that, while being political adviser and member of the Presidium of the "Stronnictwo Narodowe," he actively participated in subversive activities of the Polish underground.

The Court proceeded to interrogation of Puzak, one of the leaders of the Polish underground organisation. From 1921 Puzak had held the post of General Secretary of the P.P.S. From 1944 to the day of his arrest he had been President of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowej," the so-called parliament for the underground "Council of Ministers."

Puzak tried in every way to whitewash himself, denying his participation in the struggle against the Red Army. He tried to conceal the fact that he had received instructions from the Polish emigre "government" in London on the formal disbandment of the "Armia Krajowa" and on the preservation of its cadres and arms for the organisation of subversive activities against the Red Army. In the course of interrogation the accused Puzak became entangled in his own testimony.

Interrogation of the accused then came to an end. Chief Military Prosecutor Afanassyev announced on behalf of the State Prosecution that, the case being clear, the Prosecution waived the interrogation of the previously summoned eleven witnesses. The Counsel for the Defence stated that the case was clear for the defence as well, and that there was no need to interrogate the rest of the witnesses. The Court ruled that the rest of the witnesses were not to be examined.

The Presiding Judge announced further the ruling of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. on the accused Okulicki's request for the summoning of a number of additional witnesses. According to this ruling, three witnesses named by the accused Okulicki would be summoned. The Court refused to summon the rest of the witnesses since two of those named by Okulicki had not been located on the territory of the Soviet Union, and the third was on his way to a camp and could not be summoned.

This was the end of the evening session of the Court.

## SPEECH OF CHIEF PROSECUTOR

**A**T the morning session of June 20 the Court hear the pleading. First to speak was the representative of the State Prosecution, Chief Military Prosecutor of the Red Army, Maj-Gen. of Justice Afanassyev.

“With the full thoroughness and impartiality which have always distinguished the Soviet Court, you comrades Judges, have studied the evidence and proofs produced by the State Prosecution against the men sitting here who are charged with the gravest crimes against the Red Army and the Soviet Union,” said Afanassyev beginning his speech for the prosecution.

“The present trial,” he continued, “is held at a time of the epoch-making victory scored by the Soviet Union and its Allies over Hitlerite Germany. This is the first distinguishing feature of this trial.

“The criminal activities of the accused were directed against the Red Army, which liberated the Polish people from the German yoke and, at the cost of supreme sacrifices, saved all the peoples of Europe from Hitlerite tyranny. Such is the second distinguishing feature of the trial.

“It sums up the criminal activities of the Polish reactionaries who fought for many years against the U.S.S.R. to the detriment of the interests of Poland and all freedom-loving nations as well. This is the third distinguishing feature of the trial.

“The Soviet State played a decisive role in liberating the world from Hitlerite tyranny. It was on the Soviet-German Front that the main armed forces of Germany were destroyed. It was here that she suffered grave defeats which, with the help of the armed forces of our Allies, the United States and Great Britain, brought about the final rout of Germany. It was against the heroic Red Army, liberator of Poland and of the peoples of Europe, that the criminals sitting here directed their villainous actions and designs.

“These puppets from the underground who styled themselves ‘ministers’ and ‘political leaders’ raised their dirty hands to stab the Red Army in the back. The blind moles from the Polish underground mistook our generosity for weakness, and



believed that they would be able to get away with their foul crimes unpunished. But they miscalculated.

“As, revealed by all the materials of the preliminary and Court investigations, these men were united in their hatred of the Soviet Union, of the great Soviet people, of the heroic Red Army. The activities of all the accused were co-ordinated and directed by the Polish emigre ‘government’ in London. It pushed the accused on to a path of crimes against the Red Army and the Soviet Union.

#### “SANACJA” CLIQUE’S PLOT

“As far back as 1940, Okulicki was sent by Sosnkowski to the Lvov area to organise subversive work against the Soviet Union. The Polish emigre ‘government’ in London invariably played into the hands of Fascist Germany, sought to bring about a split among the United Nations, and did everything to prejudice the cause of the struggle of the United Nations against Germany.

“A leading part in this criminal emigre clique has been played by Fascist ‘Sanacja’ elements, who bore the brunt of the responsibility for the disaster which befell Poland in 1939. In their policy they have been guided only by the interests of a handful of feudal magnates and war-lords of old Poland.

“This reactionary clique did everything possible to drive a wedge between Poland and her historic Ally the great Soviet Union. By their intrigues this criminal emigre clique in London seek to achieve one single aim : to make the new post-war Poland a second edition of the old pre-war Poland. Therefore the criminal Polish emigre clique in London urged the Polish people not to fight the Germans, because that would help the Soviet Union.”

Quoting documents which emanated from the Polish emigre clique in London, the Prosecutor demonstrated how Sosnkowski, Raczkiewicz, Arciszewski and company persistently tried to hinder the liberation struggle of the Red Army against Hitlerite Germany. “But the Red Army dealt the Germans blow after blow and, as it kept approaching Poland, the reactionary Polish clique launched new manœuvres. Hypocritically calling for co-operation with the Red Army, the Raczkiewicz, Sosnkowski and company issued

instructions urging intensification of subversive work against the Soviet Union and the Red Army.”

Afanassyev quoted articles from various publications of Sosnkowski and Arciszewski, in particular their statement that the main task of the Polish underground should be an anti-Russian and not an anti-German uprising.

“Contrary to all criminal intrigues of the emigre clique in London, the Polish people heroically fought its age-old enemies, the Germans. The Soviet people extended to the Polish people a fraternal helping hand. The Red Army, jointly with Polish troops, routed the German-Fascist hordes—these sworn enemies of the Slavs—and liberated Poland. The flags of the Polish Republic again rose over Warsaw, Cracow, and other Polish cities. The Polish people breathed freely.

“And Arciszewski’s criminal clique tried to shake this fraternity and friendship cemented with the blood of the Polish and Soviet peoples. The accused pursued their criminal activities on directives and instructions of this ‘government.’

“On these directives was based the organisation of the entire subversive work of Okulicki, Jankowski and the other accused, against the Red Army and the Soviet Union. On the basis of these directives the accused pretended to have disbanded the ‘AK,’ but actually preserved all its cadres and arms, and set up a **new** underground terrorist organisation and engaged in terrorism and sabotage. And on the strength of radiogram No. 7201, received from the emigre ‘government’ in London, the accused engaged in espionage in the rear of the Red Army.

“All underground activities were aimed at the preparation and conduct of armed struggle against the Soviet Union. All that the Polish emigre clique in London demanded of the accused, all that they were doing was directed at the creation of a bloc with Germany against the U.S.S.R. Documents and evidence presented in Court have definitely established this most important fact.

“The exposure of the criminal activities of the reactionary emigre Polish clique in London and the Polish underground is of tremendous use to the cause of the creation of the new Poland. The Soviet Court helps the Polish people in its struggle for the

creation of an independent, democratic, free Poland. Thus Poland has firmly taken the path of friendship with her great Eastern neighbour, of alliance and mutual aid between Poland and the U.S.S.R. and no machinations of the emigre reactionary clique can shake the will of the peoples of Poland and the Soviet Union, or weaken the friendship of the two States that grows stronger with every day."

#### OKULICKI'S ROLE

The Prosecutor proceeded to concrete analysis of the crimes committed by the accused. He dwelt on the part played by the accused Okulicki as organiser and leader of underground subversive activities.

"Having been brought to Poland in May, 1944, in a British plane from the British naval base in Brindisi, Okulicki was at first Deputy to 'Bor'-Komarowski, in command of the 'AK'; then, after Komarowski surrendered to the Germans, he became commander of the underground 'Armia Krajowa.' Along with Okulicki, direction of underground activities was effected by Jankowski, chief delegate of the emigre 'government' in London and President of the so-called underground 'Council of Ministers.' With them acted Jankowski's 'ministers,' Bien and Jasiukowicz.

"On direct instructions of the Polish emigre 'government' in London, they conducted vigorous subversive work, organised sabotage on the Red Army's communication lines and terrorist acts, disseminated propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union, and transmitted deliberately slanderous information abroad. And to cover up their crimes, they made public false, hypocritical orders on the pretended disbandment of the 'AK.'"

Afanassyev dwelt on the hypocritical and perfidious order issued by Okulicki on January 19, 1945. "This order," he said, "was issued by Okulicki two days after the liberation of Warsaw. This order was issued on the very day that the gallant troops of Marshal Koniev liberated the ancient capital of Poland, Cracow. And on that day Okulicki, under cover of the nickname 'Nedzwiedek,' issued a directive—to preserve the H.Q. and cadres, of the underground army, to preserve arms and stores of ammunition, and to intensify the struggle against the Red Army.

“On the basis of all materials that have passed before the Court, the Prosecutor regards it as proved that in Okulicki’s person the Polish reactionaries found a worthy successor to ‘Bor’-Komarowski—they are birds of a feather.”

Afanassyev then analysed in detail the activities of the new underground organisation and the part played by Okulicki and Jankowski as founders and leaders of this organisation. Its aim was to prepare an uprising against the U.S.S.R., to form groups for terrorist acts, and to engage in sabotage, espionage and propaganda against the U.S.S.R.

“This has been positively proved in Court, just as was another very important fact: the terrorist organisation was meant to exist also after the formation of a Provisional Polish Government in conformity with the decisions of the Crimea Conference. Okulicki, Jankowski and the rest of the accused, while hypocritically professing their agreement with the decisions of the Crimea Conference, actually sabotaged them and prepared to frustrate them.

#### MILITARY DICTATORSHIP PLANNED

“By their activities they paved the way for eventual establishment of a military dictatorship—they concentrated thousands of cut-throats armed with tommy-guns, machine-guns and even artillery. This is irrefutable also because the fuehrer of the Polish Fascists, Sosnkowski, was directly connected with the formation of the new terrorist organisation.”

Afanassyev then proceeded to analyse in detail the terrorist activities of the accused. From July, 1944, to May 25, 1945, 95 Red Army officers, 134 sergeants and 364 Red Army men were killed by Okulicki’s and Jankowski’s terrorists in the Red Army rear, and 219 military personnel were wounded.

“Okulicki’s terrorists killed Red Army soldiers following brutal torture. Bandits from the ‘AK’ differ but little from the Hitlerite fiends.

“The accused Okulicki, Jankowski, Jasiukowicz and Bien are guilty in that this terrorism was organised and conducted upon their directives and instructions. Janson, Herman, Kuzminski, Stankiewicz, Okulicki, Jankowski—all are links in one infernal

chain which connects the band of Polish political gangsters in London, through the leadership of the 'AK' and the whole Polish underground, with the direct executors of terrorist acts."

Analysing the material of the preliminary and Court investigations, Afanassyev said he regarded it as proved that Okulicki engaged in espionage on instructions of the emigre Polish "government" in London, as well as in propaganda hostile to the Soviet Union and the gathering and transmission abroad of malicious, slanderous information about the situation in Poland.

Afanassyev regarded it as definitely established that the accused, as leaders of the Polish underground, followed a plan of preparation for action jointly with Germany against the Soviet Union, acting thus on instructions of the Polish emigre "government" in London. "This has been confirmed by Okulicki's directive to the Commandant of the Western District of the 'AK,' Col. Slavgor, dated March 25, 1945, which was made public in Court, the negotiations in 1943-1944 with the Hungarian and German Command concerning joint actions against the Red Army, and also by the joint struggle with the Germans against Soviet partisans."

#### GUILT PROVED

On the basis of all materials that have passed before the Court, Afanassyev regarded it as proved that the band of criminals who camouflaged themselves with the titles of political leaders and ministers committed the gravest crimes against the Red Army and the Soviet Union. Afanassyev believed that all five paragraphs of the definition of the charge against the accused Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz, as formulated in the Indictment, had been proved.

"All four accused, headed by Okulicki, are guilty of the gravest crimes, crimes which cost the lives of many Soviet people. They poisoned world public opinion with slander against the Soviet Union. They directed terrorist acts and sabotage, they committed crimes punishable under Soviet Law by the supreme penalty—death by shooting.

"Nevertheless, I believe it possible," the Prosecutor said, "not to insist on the supreme penalty for the accused Okulicki,

Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz. I believe it possible not because now, though belatedly, they repent of their crimes, and not only because they acted on directives issued by the criminal emigre clique in London. I believe it possible to confine the penalty for these accused to deprivation of freedom chiefly because our country and our people now live in joyful days of the major, historic victory of the Red Army and the armies of our Allies over the worst enemy of mankind—Fascist Germany.

“Now that the most righteous of all righteous wars, the war against a deadly enemy who has been thrown into the dust, has ended in victory, these people no longer represent that danger as would require such a penalty as shooting.”

## Speeches For The Defence

**A**FANASSYEV'S SPEECH was followed by that of the second representative of the State Prosecution, State Counsellor of Justice of the Second Class, Rudenko.

Rudenko believed that the charges against the accused Puzak, Baginski and Zwerzinski, as accomplices in the criminal activities of the Polish underground, had been fully proved. Rudenko also supported the prosecution in regard to the accused Mierzwa, Czarnowski, Stypulkowski, Urbanski and Hacinski, who were aware of the crimes of the leaders of the Polish underground and who themselves took part in these crimes.

“As regards the accused Mihalowski, Kobylianski and Stemler-Dorabski, the prosecution does not insist on their conviction in view of insufficiency of collected proofs.”

In conclusion Rudenko said: “With the exception of the last three accused, the other eight accused must answer in accordance with Articles 17, 58—8, 58—9 and 58—11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. For the same reasons as cited by Prosecutor Afanassyev, I raise the question of the possibility of restricting the punishment of these accused to deprivation of freedom for short terms.”

**THE ACCUSED OKULICKI**

The Court proceeded to hear speakers for the Defence.

The accused Okulicki spoke in his own defence. He said in his speech that this trial meant condemnation of the activities of the Polish underground which were directed against the Red Army and menaced the interests of the Soviet Union and the cause of the United Nations in the struggle against Germany. "However," the accused asserted, "the Polish underground has much to its credit in its struggle against Germany."

Admitting his moral and political responsibility for the facts of subversive activities against the Red Army, Okulicki disputed the accusation of organised terror and sabotage against the Red Army. He asserted that, as Commander-in-Chief of the "Armia Krajowa," he lost all communication with the eastern districts in which terrorist and sabotage activities of the "AK" took place. In the western districts, in which he exercised leadership, Okulicki maintained that there were no sabotage and terrorist activities against the Red Army.

Okulicki acknowledged that the accusation had shed a revealing light on the facts of the terrorism of the "Armia Krajowa." He said that these were "shocking facts presenting a most ghastly picture of the activities of the 'Armia Krajowa.'" Okulicki asserted that the tension and many misunderstandings in the relations between Poland and the Soviet Union were rooted in history, since for many decades Poland was under the oppression of Tsarist Russia.

"We did not know," Okulicki stated, "what changes had taken place in your national policy, what kind of internal change and reconstruction of the State had taken place with you."

Objecting to the Prosecutor's speech, Okulicki said that if from the political viewpoint the Warsaw uprising could be appraised as a gamble, from the soldier's viewpoint such an estimation was wrong. Okulicki pleaded guilty of disobeying the orders of the Soviet Command. He considered himself guilty of the fact that the "Armia Krajowa" did not surrender arms and ammunition and that, on the contrary, he had ordered arms and ammunition to be hidden. He considered himself

guilty of the fact that on his order underground H.Q. and radio stations had been preserved, that through them clandestine radio communication was maintained with London, that he had created the new secret organisation "NIE" and conducted hostile propaganda against the Red Army and the Soviet Union.

"Mistrust of the Soviet Union is my greatest mistake. And this mistake determined everything, including confidence in my Government," Okulicki stated.

Okulicki said further that he was deeply convinced of the necessity of Polish-Soviet friendship, and that only by the existence of such friendship and the independence of Poland could Poland make progress.

#### COUNSEL FOR DEFENCE BRAUDE

Next to speak was the lawyer Braude, who defended the accused "ministers" of the underground "Government", Bien and Jasiukowicz. While pleading guilty, he said, Bien and Jasiukowicz objected to the accusation that they intended to wage war against the U.S.S.R. in a bloc with Germany. They both emphatically denied every suggestion of their having been aware of the concrete facts of sabotage and subversive activities.

Fully acknowledging other charges presented against them, Bien and Jasiukowicz assumed moral and political responsibility for all activities of the underground "Government." At the same time, in Court they resolutely and firmly condemned all their past activities, condemned the activities of their underground "Government" and the activities of the London emigre "Government" which actually directed them.

Both Bien and Jasiukowicz had proved by their statements that they did not share General Okulicki's viewpoint and would not share it. Both the accused stated that they sincerely repented, that they were wrong, that they regarded their past as a political error as well as an error of those who directed their activities from London. Braude asked the Court to come to a mild, lenient verdict in their case.

The morning session ended with the lawyer Braude's speech.

At the evening session the Court continued the hearing of speeches for the Defence. The lawyer Plevako, who defended



Stemler-Dombski, stated that he agreed with the Prosecutor, who refused to support the accusation against Stemler-Dombski.

Next to speak was the lawyer Milovidov, who defended the accused Kobylianski, member of the Party of National Democrats "Stronnictwo Narodowe," and Czarnowski, ex-member of the underground parliament "Rada Jednosci Narodowej." Speaking in defence of Kobylianski, Milovidov said: "The testimony and materials of the preliminary investigation indicate that Kobylianski did not hold any official position and had not yet taken part in the so-called underground 'parliament.' He was a reserve member of this 'parliament' in case another dropped out of it." Milovidov asked for acquittal of the accused Kobylianski.

Speaking of his other client, Milovidov asked the Court to take into consideration the fact that Czarnowski admitted the charges levelled against him. He had told the Court: "Now I fully realise not only that I acted in a criminal and wrong way, but that such actions harmed the cause of the United Nations and Poland." Counsel for the Defence asked the Court to come to a lenient verdict in the case of accused Czarnowski.

The lawyer Markevich defended the accused Baginski and Mierzwa. Pointing out that his client Mierzwa did not take part in terrorist activities against the Red Army, Counsel for the Defence asked the Court to waive the accusation against Mierzwa.

Speaking of the accused Baginski, Vice-President of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowej," the lawyer recalled the Prosecutor's expression, "a high-sounding name but little substance," and asked for maximum leniency for the accused Baginski.

#### LAWYER MIKHALSKI

The lawyer Mikhalski defended the accused Urbanski and Mihalowski. "I fully share," he said, "the viewpoint of the State Prosecutor, who has asked the Military Collegium, in considering Mihalowski's fate, to take into account the insufficiency of proof available in his case. I ask the Court to acquit this client of mine."

Going on to defend the accused Urbanski, Mikhalski said: "Urbanski pleaded guilty. His role and significance in the present case are secondary. He was under the great and strong

influence of other persons. He has admitted the error of his actions and views. I ask the Court to take account of all these circumstances in regard to Urbanski and to show maximum leniency in coming to its verdict."

The lawyer Otsep, who defended the accused Zwerzinski, described his client as one of those people who failed to understand the international political situation, failed to understand the policy of the Soviet Union which strove to have a strong, democratic and independent Poland as its neighbour.

"All the criminal activities of Zwerzinski," Otsep went on, "are not those of an instigator or accomplice but those of a conniver." Holding that the accused had admitted his errors and crimes, had thought over and understood many things, the lawyer addressed the Court with a request to apply in this case Article 8 of the criminal code of the R.S.F.S.R., permeated with a humane legal conception.

Next to speak was the lawyer Kaznachyev, who defended the accused Hacinski and Puzak. He asked the Court to acquit Hacinski and, as regards Puzak, taking into consideration his confession, to apply a penalty which did not call for a long term of deprivation of freedom.

The Presiding Judge then gave hearing to the accused Jankowski, who desired to speak in his own defence. He admitted that he bore political responsibility for the organisation "NIE," as he was informed of its activities. The accused Jankowski also admitted that instructions sent to Delegaturas resulted in the exacerbation of relations with the Soviet Union. He stated that he had not known previously about the terrorism and sabotage by members of the "AK" in the Red Army's rear, and that he considered those acts erroneous.

Next to speak was the accused Stypulkowski, who also desired to speak in his own defence. Stypulkowski said that, although he was legal and political adviser of the "Stronnictwo Narodowe" Party until March, 1945, he was not informed about the terrorist and sabotage activities against the Red Army.

Stypulkowski said: "I would have condemned active work against the Red Army during its struggle with the Germans as folly and a crime against Polish interests." In conclusion, the

accused stated that he fought against the Germans, and hoped that in coming to its verdict the Court would take into consideration his desire to serve the cause of strengthening Polish-Soviet relations. Stypulkowski asked the Court to acquit him.

After a recess, the Court heard the final pleas of the accused. First to speak was the accused Okulicki.

"I admit," he said, "that we attempted to cause great harm to the Soviet Union, that we committed grave errors. They resulted from our mistrust of the Soviet Union. And this mistrust was the result of propaganda which emanated from the Polish 'government' in London, regarded by us as our lawful government.

"The reaction of the Soviet authorities to our activities and our presence here in the dock are quite understandable—there are sufficient grounds for this. I wish to emphasise the kind attitude of the Soviet authorities to me as a criminal, as one in detention.

"I will accept your verdict, gentlemen Judges, calmly and in the assurance that your decision will be correct. I think that I am guilty, but I acted as a soldier."

#### THE ACCUSED STEMLER-DOMBSKI

The accused Stemler-Dombski said: "In my last plea I wanted to speak of my convictions and hopes, but I shall restrict myself to a few words: I ask you to acquit me."

The accused Jankowski said: "I will call this trial a tragic trial. I will call it so because it takes place in Moscow, in the capital of the Soviet Union, in the capital of the country whose Army ejected the Germans from Poland and liberated her. I will call this process tragic because it takes place in the capital of the Soviet Union, where a Treaty of Friendship between the U.S.S.R. and Poland was recently signed.

"We were apprehensive that the Soviet Union would threaten Poland's independence. Fortunately, such apprehension has proved unjustified.

"Of great importance in the abnormal relations which arose between the U.S.S.R. and Poland was the erroneous policy pursued by the Polish 'government' in London. It did not recognise the

decisions of the Crimea Conference, and asserted that the Soviet Union menaced Poland's independence. And this brought us to an impasse.

"As chief delegate in Poland of the London Polish 'government,' I am responsible for everything that took place on the territory of Poland, and I do not intend to shirk this responsibility. I maintain that between Poland and the Soviet Union there should exist friendly relations based on the recognition of Poland's independence and mutual trust."

The accused Kobylanski stated that he regarded his final plea as unnecessary, and asked the Court to acquit him.

"It is with full confidence," said the accused Bien, "that I have placed my personal fate in the hands of the exalted Court. We committed grave blunders in our policy. As a lawyer; I recognise that our activities were criminal.

"What was the source of our mistakes? Their source was the wrong policy of the London Polish 'government' which we, being in the underground, received without criticism. Mr. Prosecutor said here today that Poland has only two roads open to her: either towards the Soviet Union or towards the Germans. This is perfectly correct.

"No co-operation is possible with the Germans. Therefore, the only road is that of close, friendly co-operation with the Soviet Union. And Polish policy should be taken into the hands of leaders who have not pursued an erroneous policy like that which is pursued to this day by the Polish 'government' in London.

"These people are to be replaced by people with a democratic outlook, who will be able to ensure good relations with the Soviet Union. And then the friendship between the U.S.S.R. and Poland will assert itself, not for 20 years, as laid down in the Treaty, but for ever."

The accused Mihalowski asked the Court not to punish him and thus enable him the sooner to return to Poland in order to commence honest work for the good of the Polish people in the interests of strengthening Soviet-Polish friendship.

## THE ACCUSED JASIUKOWICZ

"I understand," the accused Jasiukowicz said in his final plea, "that the underground Polish 'government,' including myself, took a wrong political course. The switch was in the wrong way; we did not put on the brakes in time and ran up a blind alley. I permit myself to welcome the Prosecutor's statement to the effect that there is no force in the world which could disrupt the Soviet-Polish Treaty of Friendship.

"I should like to take part in work for the good of my country. I do not know whether I shall have the chance, but that is a matter of secondary importance."

The accused Puzak stated that as President of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi," he was ready to bear responsibility for all its activities. He admitted his responsibility for the use of clandestine wireless transmitters, and called the attention of the Supreme Court to the fact that in February, 1945, the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi" passed a resolution approving the decisions of the Crimea Conference.

The accused Hacinski admitted his responsibility for knowing about the existence of clandestine wireless transmitters and about sabotage acts committed by detachments of the "Armia Krajowa." "The Law is the Law," he said. "I am guilty of its violation and I calmly await the verdict of the exalted Court."

"I do not intend to take up the time of the Supreme Court," said the accused Zwerzinski. "I only request that in deciding the verdict all my statements and the arguments presented here by my honourable Counsel for the Defence be taken into consideration. I trust that every condition will be created for good-neighbourly and friendly relations between the U.S.S.R. and Poland."

The accused Czarnowski said finally that he pleaded guilty of participation in underground activities. "The Polish underground," he stated, "in which I took an active part, made many mistakes in regard to the U.S.S.R. These mistakes were the result of wrong interpretation of the situation."

The accused Baginski stated that he did not bear responsibility for terrorist and sabotage activities of the "Armia Krajowa."

He spoke in detail of differences and conflicts in the Polish underground.

The accused Urbanski, Mierzwa and Stypulkowski requested the Supreme Court to acquit them.

After the final pleas of the accused, the Court left for the Conference Room to consider its verdict.

## The Verdict

**A**T 4-30 A.M. on June 21 the Chairman of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., Col.-Gen. of Justice Ulrich, announced the verdict of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. in the trial of 16 Polish diversionists :—

In the name of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., consisting of : Presiding Judge—Col.-Gen. of Justice Ulrich. President of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.; Members of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R.—Maj.-Gen. of Justice Dmitriyev, Col. of Justice Delistov ; Secretaries—Col. of Justice Batner and Lt.-Col. of Justice Kudriavtsev ; with participation of representatives of the State Prosecution—Chief Military Prosecutor of the Red Army, Maj.-Gen. of Justice Afanassyev, and State Councillor of Justice of the Second Class, Rudenko, and representatives of the Moscow Collegium of Advocates, Braude, Mikhalsky, Milovidov, Kaznacheyev, Markevich, Otsep and Plevako ;

in open Court session in the City of Moscow on June 18 to 21, heard the case against :

1. OKULICKI—Leopold Blazewicz, born 1898, in Cracow Province, Pole, Polish citizen, Brigadier-Gen. of the Polish Army, graduate of the Military Academy of the Polish General Staff, on a charge of having committed crimes covered by Articles 58-6, 58-8, 58-9 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. ;

2. JANKOWSKI—Jan Stanislaw Josifowicz, born 1882. in Wysokomazoweck District, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, Deputy Prime Minister of the Polish London “government”

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and leader of the underground Polish "government," who stayed in Poland.

3. BIEN—Adam Walentiewicz, born 1899, in Sandomierz District, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, member of the Presidium of the "Stronnictwo Ludowe," minister of the underground Polish "government,"

4. JASIUKOWICZ—Stanislaw Ignatiewicz, born 1882, in the City of Leningrad, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, member of the Presidium of the "Stronnictwo Narodowe," minister of the Polish underground "government,"

all three charged with having committed crimes covered by articles 58-8, 58-9 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R.;

5. PUZAK—Kazimierz Woicchowicz, born 1883, in the town of Tarnopol, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, General Secretary of the Polish Socialist Party, President of the underground "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi,"

6. ZWERZINSKI—Alexander Kazimierzowicz, born 1880, in Lodz Province, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, President of the "Stronnictwo Narodowe" and Vice-President of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi,"

7. BAGINSKI—Kazimierz Stanislawowicz, born 1890, in the city of Warsaw, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, Vice-President of the Presidium of the "Stronnictwo Ludowe," Vice-President of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi,"

8. MIERZWA—Stanislaw Francewicz, born 1905, in Cracow Province, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, member of the Central Committee and Secretary of the Cracow organisation of the "Stronnictwo Ludowe,"

9. STYPULKOWSKI—Zbignew Francewicz, born 1904, in the city of Warsaw, Pole, Polish citizen, member of the Presidium of the "Stronnictwo Narodowe,"

10. CZARNOWSKI—Ewgeni Stanislawowicz, born 1904, in the city of Lodz, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, President of the Board of the Association of Democratic Organisations "Union of Democrats," member of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi,"

11. HACINSKI—Josif Antonowicz, born 1889, in the city of

Warsaw, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, President of the "Stronnictwo Pracy,"

12. URBANSKI—Franc Andrejewicz, born 1891, in Warsaw Province, Pole, Polish citizen, responsible Secretary of the "Stronnictwo Pracy," Secretary of the Chief Commission of the "Rada Jednosci Narodowoi,"

13. MIHALOWSKI—Stanislaw Francewicz, born 1903, in Poznan Province, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, Vice-President of the Board of the Association of Democratic Organisations "Union of Democrats,"

14. KOBYLIANSKI—Kazimierz Samuilowicz, born 1892, in the city of Warsaw, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, member of the "Stronnictwo Narodowe,"

15. STEMLER-DOMBSKI—Josif Henrichowicz, born 1888, in Lvov Region, Pole, Polish citizen, university education, Vice-Director of the Department of Information of the Polish underground "government" and Director of the Book-publishing Section of this Department,

all eleven charged with having committed crimes covered by Articles 17-58-8, 58-9 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R.

The preliminary and court investigations have established :

The Polish emigre "government" set up on the territory of Poland, the Lithuanian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Western Regions of the Ukrainian and Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republics temporarily occupied by the German-Fascist invaders, a clandestine military organisation, "Armia Krajowa" ("AK").

Up to September, 1944, it was headed by General of the Polish Army "Bor" Komarowski, and from October, 1944, after his surrender to the Germans, by his assistant, Brig.-Gen. Leopold Okulicki. The activities of the "Armia Krajowa" were also directed by the President of the underground Polish "Council of Ministers" Jan Stanislaw Jankowski, and his closest assistants Stanislaw Jasiukowicz and Adam Bien.

After the liberation of the Western Regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia, also of Lithuania and Poland, by Soviet troops, the accused Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz became organisers and leaders of the Polish underground, which engaged



in active hostile work in the rear of the Soviet Union's troops in the field. The commander of the "Armia Krajowa," Brig.-Gen. Okulicki, received ciphered radiograms from the emigre "government" in London demanding that the armed forces of the "AK" be preserved. In a radiogram of December 8, 1944, Okulicki was given the full text of the decision of the emigre "government," with instructions to place the "Armia Krajowa" and its manpower and material resources on a conspiratorial footing.

Fulfilling these instructions, General Okulicki, in order to deceive the command of the Soviet armies in the field, issued an order in December, 1944, for fictitious disbandment of the "Armia Krajowa," but preserved and put on a conspiratorial footing the main cadres of the "AK," and carefully concealed arms, ammunition and operating radio stations. Having carried out this "manoeuvre" of lies and deception, Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz used armed detachments and the organisation of the "Armia Krajowa," which were transferred to a clandestine status, for active hostile acts against the Soviet Union in the rear of the Red Army in the field, which had liberated Poland from the German invaders.

#### TERRORIST GROUPS

In February, 1945, at a meeting of the underground "Council of Ministers" in Poland, the accused Okulicki suggested that a "political centre" consisting of representatives of the "Stronnictwo Ludowe," "Stronnictwo Narodowe," PPS, and "Union of Democrats," be formed for direction of the underground military-political organisation "Niepodleglosc" ("Independence," abbreviated as "NIE"), which they had created out of the main cadres of the "Armia Krajowa."

The "Council of Ministers" in the person of the accused Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz approved Okulicki's suggestion and instructed Jankowski to begin negotiations on this question with representatives of the above parties.

The main tasks of the "Niepodleglosc" organisation consisted of mustering cadres and preserving arms and material means for preparation of an uprising against the Soviet Union, the formation of combat detachments and terrorist groups for

assassination of opponents of the "AK" and of Soviet servicemen, committing acts of diversion and the gathering of intelligence in the Red Army's rear, and also of conducting hostile propaganda against the Soviet Union.

Systematically in 1944 and early in 1945 terrorist and diversionist groups of the "Armia Krajowa" committed terrorist acts against Red Army officers and men in the rear of the Soviet armies in the field on the territory of the Western Regions of the Ukraine and Byelorussia, in Lithuania and Poland, and diversionary acts on communications of the Red Army in the field. "AK" detachments also made armed raids on military and civil institutions.

According to incomplete data, in the period between July 28 and December 31, 1944, alone, "AK" detachments assassinated 277 Red Army officers and men and wounded 94. Along with terrorist and diversionist activities, local "AK" organisations, under the direct leadership of Okulicki, fulfilling directives of the Polish emigre "government" in London, collected intelligence in the rear of the Soviet armies in the field and transmitted this information in ciphered radio messages.

The underground "government" in Poland and the organisation of the "Armia Krajowa," possessing a ramified network of radio transmitting stations which were concealed from the Soviet Army Command, used these to transmit to the Polish "government" in London and to the Chief Command of the "AK" information about the execution by them of orders and directives, intelligence about Soviet troops, openly provocative inventions about acts of servicemen of the Soviet armies on the territory of Poland liberated from the German invaders, and tendentious and slanderous information about the political situation in liberated Poland.

By disseminating their provocative inventions, the leaders of the underground in Poland, the accused Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz, tried to thwart measures of the Soviet Military Command. They systematically "supplied" the Polish emigre "government" with false, tendentious, slanderous information for the purpose of giving this "government" the opportunity to misinform the British Government, by means of such "information"

about the actual situation in Poland liberated from the German invaders by troops of the Soviet Union.

Conducting their activities, hostile to the Soviet Union, the leadership of the underground "government" in Poland and of the "Armia Krajowa" intended, after the termination of the war in Europe, to form a Polish-German military bloc directed against the Soviet Union. Early in 1945, Okuliński in his "directives" instructed local "AK" organisations to prepare hostilities in a bloc with Germany against the Soviet Union, believing that Germany would strive for revenge against the U.S.S.R. which would be desirable for the Polish emigre "government."

On the basis of the aforesaid, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. has established the guilt of Okulicki, Jankowski, Bien and Jasiukowicz of crimes covered by Articles 58-8, 58-9 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R., and of Okulicki, in addition, of crimes covered by Article 58-6 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R.

Concerning the accused Kazimierz Puzak, Alexander Zwerzinski, Kazimierz Baginski, Stanislaw Mierzwa, Zbigniew Stypulkowski, Ewgeni Czarnowski, Josif Hacinski and Franc Urbanski, it has been established that all of them, knowing about the non-fulfilment by the leaders of the Polish underground of the orders of the Soviet Military Command concerning surrender of arms, ammunition and radio stations destined for hostile activities against the Soviet Union in the rear of the Red Army in the field, concealed this fact from the organs of the Soviet Military Command, thus committing crimes covered by Article 58-12 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. The charge against them of having committed crimes covered by Articles 17-58-8, 58-9 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. are dismissed in view of insufficient evidence.

The guilt of Stanislaw Mihailowski, Kazimierz Kobylanski and Josif Stemler-Dombski, accessories of Okulicki and other leaders of the Polish underground, of crimes covered by Articles 17-58-8, 58-9 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. was not sufficiently confirmed at the Court investigation.

## THE SENTENCES

In determining the penalty for the accused the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., taking into consideration all the circumstances of the present case, also proceeds from the fact of the victorious termination of the great Patriotic War by the Soviet Union. Considering that under the conditions of transition to peaceful construction the application of stern penalties up to shooting provided for in the Articles of the Criminal Code preferred against the accused is not necessary, the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R. sentences :

(1) *Okulicki*—Leopold *Blazewicz* ; *Jankowski*—Jan *Stanislaw Josifowicz* ; *Bien*—Adam *Walentiewicz* ; and *Jasiukowicz*—*Stanislaw Ignatiewicz* ; on the basis of the provisions of Article 58-2 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R., to imprisonment : *Okulicki* for a term of ten years, *Jankowski* for a term of eight years, *Bien* and *Jasiukowicz* for a term of five years each.

(2) *Puzak*—*Kazimierz Woicechowicz* ; *Baginski*—*Kazimierz Stanislawowicz* ; *Zwerzinski*—*Alexander Kazimierzowicz* ; *Czarnowski*—*Ewgeni Stanislawowicz* ; *Mierzwa*—*Stanislaw Francewicz* ; *Stypulkowski*—*Zbignew Francewicz* ; *Hacinski*—*Josif Antonowicz* ; and *Urbanski*—*Franc Andrejewicz*, are acquitted by the Court of charges covered by Articles 17-58-8, 58-9 and 58-11 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R. ; while on the basis of the provision of Article 58-12 of the Criminal Code of the R.S.F.S.R., *Hacinski* and *Urbanski*, to imprisonment : *Puzak* for a term of 18 months, *Baginski* for a term of one year, *Zwerzinski* for a term of eight months, *Czarnowski* for a term of six months, and *Mierzwa*, *Stypulkowski*, *Hacinski* and *Urbanski* for a term of four months imprisonment each. The terms of imprisonment for all 12 of the convicted men shall be counted from the day of arrest of each in the present case.

(3) *Mihalowski*—*Stanislaw Francewicz* ; *Kobylianski*—*Kazimierz Samuilowicz* ; and *Stemler-Dombski*—*Josif Henrichowicz*, are acquitted by the Court.

All material evidence in the present case—documents—shall be kept in files, and the various radio equipment shall be confiscated.

This verdict is final and not subject to appeal in order of cessation.

Presiding Judge—President of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., Col.-Gen. of Justice ULRICH.

Members of the Court—Members of the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the U.S.S.R., Maj.-Gen. of Justice DMITRI-YEV, Colonel of Justice DETISTOV\*

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\* This summarised account of the trial is reproduced here from Soviet Weekly, Nos. 180-181, June-July, 1945.

