

"The Foreign Policy of the Polish Government-in-Exile, 1939-1945: Political and Military Realities versus Polish Psychological Reality"

Anna M. Cienciala

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Preface

This article is based on a paper presented at the Conference "Reflections on Polish Foreign Policy" sponsored by the East Central European Center, Columbia University, New York, and the Józef Piłsudski Institute for Research in the Modern History of Poland, New York, held at the Center on November 17, 2005. The proceedings were published jointly by the Institute and Center in 2007.

Please note the author's corrections.

p. 89, par. 2, end of line 2, after Baltic States add: Bessarabia (now Moldova) and Northern Bukovina (now part of Ukraine).

p. 92, end of par. from p. 91, should read: ...in an offensive which began on 6 December, the day before Japan attacked Pearl Harbor...

p. 92, par. 2, line 11, should read: covered the families of Polish Army officers...and various others, whose men folk were arrested and sent to jails or special camps,...

p. 92, line 15, omit: as well as the families of all the above.

p. 97, line 7 from bottom should read: ...estimated that ~~seven to ten million~~ 3,940,000 Ukrainians died...

p. 101, line 2, after April 1942, add: – when the Germans had clearly lost the Battle of Moscow –

p. 105, par. 1, end of line 4 should read: ...he visited the Polish (Anders) Army then stationed in...

p. 116, line 2 from bottom after with, add: Jan S.

p. 125, end of note 1, add after: *ibid*; on the Polish-Soviet negotiations at Riga, see Jerzy Borzęcki, *The Soviet-Polish Peace of 1921 and the Creation of Interwar Europe* (New Haven and London, 2008).

p. 125, Note 3, line 6, after special camps add: and NKVD prisons

p. 125, Note 3, last 2 lines should read: (New Haven and London, 2007, reprint 2009).

p. 125, Note 4, bottom line should read: Ianuaria...Augusta

p. 126, Note 7, after doc. 672, add: Jane Degras, ed., *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, Vol. III, 1933-1941 (Oxford, London, New York, Toronto, 1953), pp. 380-382.

p. 127, Note 10, end, add: expanded edition, 2002.

p. 128, Note 16, line 4, after doc. 15 add: see also Cieniala, "General Sikorski."

p. 131, Note 26, end, add: see also Robert Szymczak, "General Władysław Sikorski and the Allies: Analysis and Prescription for Victory, 1942" in *Poland and Europe: Historical Dimensions*, Vol. 1: *Selected Essays from the Fiftieth Anniversary International Congress of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences of America*, M. B. Biskupski and James S. Pula, eds., East European Monographs, No. CCCXC, Columbia University Press, 1993.

p. 133, Note 40, line 1 should read: t. V,...

p. 133, Note 41, line 2, at end add: Orville H. Bullitt, ed., *For the President: Personal and Secret Correspondence Between Franklin D. Roosevelt and William C. Bullitt* (Boston, 1972), pp. 576-599, and...

p. 133, Note 43, at end add: The general's remains were reburied in Wawel Castle Cathedral, Kraków, in 1993. Due to renewed controversy over the cause of death, an examination of the remains in 2008 found that no bomb explosion took place in the plane before it crashed into the sea, and death resulted from mortal injury sustained in the crash.

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The Foreign Policy of the Polish Government-in-Exile, 1939-1945: Political and Military Realities versus Polish Psychological Reality.

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The Polish government-in-exile, the legal successor of the prewar government, was established in France on 30 September 1939 (in Paris, then Angers) with Władysław Raczkiewicz as president and General Władysław Sikorski as premier, and soon commander-in-chief of Polish armed forces. There was also a "Rada Narodowa" (National Council), a surrogate parliament with an advisory role, made up of the four main prewar opposition parties: the Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL-Polish Peasant Party), the Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (PPS-Polish Socialist Party), the Stronnictwo Narodowe, (ND-National Democratic Party) the Stronnictwo Pracy (Labor Party), and non-party representatives of Silesian Poles, Polish Jews, and others. The government and National Council moved to London after the fall of France in June 1940. Their main goal was, of course, the restoration of Poland as an independent state within its prewar boundaries, but also with some gains at German expense in the north and west (Gdańsk-Danzig, plus hopefully East Prussia and Opole-Opeln Silesia). The insurmountable difficulty proved to be the restoration of the prewar Polish-Soviet frontier as established by the Treaty of Riga, which followed the Polish-Soviet War, won by the Poles in August 1920; it was signed by Polish and Soviet diplomats in the Latvian capital on 18 March 1921 and recognized by the great powers on 15 March 1923.¹

After the Soviet attack on Poland in mid-September 1939, eastern Poland was incorporated in the Soviet Union, as were the Baltic States in summer 1940. Following the German attack on the USSR on 22 June 1941, the Soviet dictator, Joseph Stalin, insisted on British and American recognition of the Soviet Union's western frontier as it was in 1939-1941, so the Polish government tried to secure British and American support for

its goal of restoring the prewar frontier of 1921. This paper will discuss the efforts of the Polish government to this end; to safeguard Polish independence within the context of Soviet territorial and political demands; also British and American policies on these issues, and the opposition of the majority of Poles to the Soviet demands.

Some background is necessary for those unfamiliar with Polish and Soviet history. It is general knowledge that the Germans attacked Poland on 1 September 1939, and that this led Poland's allies, Britain and France, to enter into a state of war with Germany on 3 September – though without giving military aid to Poland. But it is not widely known that the USSR joined the Germans in attacking Poland when the Red Army entered Polish eastern territories on 17 September 1939, thus breaking all Soviet treaties concluded with the Polish government. The official Soviet note, handed to the Polish Ambassador in Moscow Waław Grzybowski at 3 a.m. that day, proclaimed that Poland had lost all her industrial regions and Warsaw was no longer the capital of Poland (although it did not surrender to the Germans until 27 September). The Soviet note also claimed that the Polish government had collapsed and gave no sign of life (although it was still in Poland, stationed on the Polish-Romanian frontier). This, stated the note, signified that the Polish state no longer existed; hence the treaties concluded by the USSR and Poland were no longer valid. The note continued that since Poland was now subject to all kinds of underhand deals and surprises which could threaten the USSR, the latter could no longer remain neutral. In particular, it could not be indifferent to the fate of its blood brothers, the Ukrainians and Belorussians of Poland, who were defenseless. Therefore, the Soviet government had instructed the High Command of the Red Army to order its troops to cross the frontier to protect the lives and property of the population of Ukraine and Belarus. At the same time, the Soviet government intended to help liberate the Poles from the unfortunate war into which they had been thrown by their insane leaders, and give them a chance for a peaceful, better life. This note, along with the assurance that the Soviet Union would continue its policy of neutrality toward their countries, was sent to all foreign diplomatic representatives in Moscow.²

The Red Army met only with some instances of strong resistance since most Polish troops had been moved west to fight the Germans.

Furthermore, many Polish military surrendered either because they had learned of the order issued by the Polish Commander-in-Chief, Marshal Edward Rydz-Śmigły, not to fight the Soviets except in self defense and to make their way to Romania or Hungary, or because they were misled by the friendly declarations of the incoming Soviet troops. Thus, the Red Army took three to four hundred thousand prisoners, including about 10,000 officers. Most of the rank and file soldiers were allowed to go home if they lived in eastern Poland, while some were exchanged for soldiers of Belorussian and Ukrainian nationality taken prisoner by the Germans. However, Polish officers and policemen were sent to three special NKVD camps: Kozelsk near Smolensk; Starobelsk near Kharkov (Kharkiv); and Ostashkov near Kalinin (Tver). The first two were officer camps, while the third held police, gendarmes, some legal personnel, and a few army officers.³

Contrary to the hypocritical statements of the Soviet note of 17 September, the Red Army's attack on Poland implemented the Secret Protocol of the Nazi-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact signed in Moscow by German Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop and Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Vyacheslav M. Molotov on the night of 23-24 August 1939. The Secret Protocol divided Polish territory down the middle between Germany and the USSR; it also recognized dominant Soviet influence in the Baltic States. The deal was illustrated a month later in a map published the Soviet newspaper, *Izvestia* showing the demarcation line between German and Soviet armies in Poland.⁴ (This was the first Ribbentrop-Molotov Line; the second, which is generally referred to by that name, was established on 28 September, see below.) Of course, the Soviet newspaper made no reference to the Secret Protocol, whose existence all Soviet governments denied until late December 1989, when it was stated that verified copies had been found in the archives. It was condemned by a vote of the freely elected Soviet Congress of People's Deputies.⁵

The first German-Soviet division of Poland was replaced by a second in the "German-Soviet Boundary and Friendship Treaty" signed in Moscow on 28 September 1939. Stalin then gave up some of his Polish territory in return for dominant influence in almost all of Lithuania – and later agreed to pay \$7,500,000 dollars for an additional district.⁶ On 29

September 1939, *Pravda* published a map showing this second line, calling it "the Frontier between Mutual German and Soviet State Interests on the Territory of the Former Polish State." This was the second Ribbentrop-Molotov Line, which always appears on historical maps, while the first is generally omitted. This second line, resembling the old eastern border of Russian Poland (except for Białystok which had been in Russia), plus former East Galicia, remained the Soviet-German border until the German attack on Soviet Union on 22 June 1941. Furthermore, a Soviet-Lithuanian treaty signed on 10 October 1939, awarded the city and region of Wilno (Vilnius) to Lithuania.⁷ The Germans were now that much nearer to Moscow. Indeed, in June-July 1941 it took them ten days to overrun former eastern Poland and Lithuania, with Latvia and Estonia following fast behind. They drove deep into the USSR, only halting in the suburbs of the Soviet capital. They were stopped in their tracks by severe winter weather and then pushed back by General, later Marshal, Georgii K. Zhukov, in an offensive which began on 7 December 1941 – the day on which Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, bringing the United States into the war.

Meanwhile, German and Soviet terror reigned in Poland, where each occupant arrested, jailed, and murdered Poles. The Germans sought out and murdered members of the Polish intelligentsia. As is well known, they persecuted the Jews. They also expelled about one and half million Poles from western Poland, annexed to the Reich, deporting them to central Poland which they named the "General Gouvernement."⁸ By war's end, they also deported about two million Poles for forced labor in the Reich. The Soviets, for their part, deported to the "Gulag" (Labor Camps), or to "Special Settlements" in the Soviet interior, people they classified as a "Sotsialno Opasny Element" (Socially Dangerous Element). This term covered Polish army officers, policemen, politicians, lawyers, administrators, government officials, landowners, military settlers, foresters, business owners, teachers, priests, clerks and various others, including so-called wealthy peasants called "kulaks" who owned not only land but also a horse or a cow, as well as the families of all the above. The number of people deported in three large waves in 1940-1941 varies from the NKVD figure of 320,000, which is too low, to the Polish government-in-exile figure of about 1,500,000, which is too high, but probably included people arrested and then jailed in the Soviet interior, army

conscripts, voluntary workers, and refugees who fled ahead of the Germans in summer 1941.⁹ Though most of the deportees were ethnic Poles, they also included Ukrainians and Belorussians, mostly politicians, priests and teachers. There were also many Jewish deportees from eastern Poland. These numbered about one third of the total Jewish population of prewar Poland, which was 3,136,000 according to the Polish 1931 census, and one third of the estimated total of 3,351,000 in August 1939. (For the Jews of eastern Poland, see below).

In late October 1939, Soviet authorities held "elections" to national assemblies in western Ukraine and western Belarussia, in which people could vote only for officially listed candidates; Vyacheslav M. Molotov, was a candidate in more than one district, as was Komandarm (General) Semyon K. Timoshenko, commander of the Ukrainian Front in September 1939.¹⁰ The national assemblies then requested the inclusion of their territories in the Soviet Ukrainian and Soviet Belorussian Republics. Their requests were "granted" by the Supreme Soviet (Council of Deputies) in early November 1939, which also "granted" Soviet citizenship to all their inhabitants at the end of the month. The Polish government protested both the Soviet aggression and the Soviet measures that followed.¹¹ At the same time, it authorized Polish officers in the underground in German-occupied Poland to organize an underground movement in eastern Poland, where they were ordered to organize resistance but prevent any untimely armed protests and uprisings. Unlike the underground in German-occupied Poland, however, the one in the Soviet Poland was quickly penetrated by the NKVD, which arrested its leaders and most of its members.¹²

With the German attack on the USSR on 22 June 1941, the Soviet Union automatically became a member of the anti-German alliance, signing agreements with the British, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav governments-in-exile. The British government pressed for a Polish-Soviet agreement, which was also desired by General Sikorski and his supporters even at the cost of shelving the demand for Soviet recognition of the prewar frontier. For this very reason, the agreement was strongly opposed by the Polish president and some ministers. Sikorski, however, took it on himself to proceed. Thus, on 30 July 1941, after negotiations with the Soviet Ambassador to Britain, Ivan Maisky, mediated by British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, Sikorski and Maisky signed an agreement re-

establishing Polish-Soviet relations. The Soviet government recognized that the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 on territorial changes in Poland had lost their validity. This formula was credited by Eden to Sikorski, although the agreement was actually worked out by the British Ambassador to the USSR, Sir Stafford Cripps, and Molotov in Moscow. It was a compromise between the original Polish demand for Soviet recognition of the interwar Polish-Soviet frontier and the original Soviet stance on an independent Polish state "within the limits of Polish nationality," i.e. without its prewar eastern territories. Moreover, Moscow had proposed setting up a Polish "National Committee" and army in the USSR.

In the final agreement, signed in the Foreign Office in the presence of British Prime Minister Winston S. Churchill and Anthony Eden, the Soviet government also agreed to the raising of a Polish army on its territory under a Polish commander, but subordinated operationally to the Soviet supreme command. Left unsaid was the fact that this army would be raised from Polish prisoners of war and deportees. But how was Stalin to agree to their release without admitting they had been illegally held by Soviet authorities? The solution was spelled out in the Protocol to the agreement in which the Soviet government granted an "amnesty" to Polish citizens in the USSR who were deprived of their freedom. In fact, the word amnesty was suggested to Józef Retinger, Sikorski's chief adviser at that time and briefly Polish chargé d'affaires in Moscow, by General Marian Kukiel, then commander of the Polish Corps in Scotland, who informed him of the amnesty clause in the Polish-Soviet Riga Treaty of 18 March 1921.¹³ Retinger passed this on to Ambassador Cripps, and thus the word "Amnesty" opened the way to the release of thousands of Poles to join the Polish Army in the USSR, led by General Władysław Anders.¹⁴

The Sikorski-Maisky agreement met with strong opposition within the Polish government. Three ministers resigned in protest against the lack of specific Soviet recognition of the Soviet-Polish prewar frontier: the National Democrat Marian Scyda, Minister of Congressional (postwar) Affairs, General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, then in charge of the armed resistance in Poland, and Foreign Minister August Zaleski (Polish foreign minister in 1926-1932). President Raczkiewicz shared their point of view; he tried and failed to prevent the signing of the agreement but decided to

stay on as president.¹⁵ Sikorski accepted the lack of Soviet recognition of the former Polish-Soviet frontier because he knew the compromise formula was the best he could get. Also, and above all, he wanted to raise a Polish army in the USSR, believing it would play an important role in restoring Poland within its prewar boundaries, though with some additions in the north and west. Indeed, he envisaged the Polish western frontier on the Oder-Neisse river line, and proposed it to the British in 1940 within the framework of a Polish-Czechoslovak confederation, which was to be the core of an East Central European federation designed to prevent future German or Soviet/Russian domination of the region. In 1939-1940, he had also indicated to the British that if the Polish prewar eastern frontier could not be restored, Poland might, within the context of such a federation, be compensated with German territory. Unfortunately, neither the smaller Polish-Czechoslovak nor the larger federation had any chance of being formed. The Poles and Czechs could not agree on the future of the western part of the Cieszyn-Těšín-Teschén region, which the Poles call Zaolzie (This was preponderantly Polish-speaking territory beyond the Olza river; the Czechs seized it in early 1919, and the Poles annexed it after the Czech acceptance of the Munich agreement of 29 September 1938). Furthermore, the Czechs would not sign any confederation or federation agreements with Poland unless the latter pursued a policy friendly to the USSR, that is, if it agreed to give up its eastern territories to the Soviet Union.¹⁶ The British government supported projects for East Central and South-Eastern European federations, but could not secure Soviet agreement without U.S. support, which was lacking. Indeed, when Stalin opposed these projects, neither Great Britain nor the United States was willing to risk losing the Soviet Union's major input into the war with Germany, and later with Japan, the latter being of primary importance to President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

It did not take Stalin long to make his views known to the British government, for he put them to Eden in mid-December 1941 (see below). He formulated Soviet territorial demands as a return to the "Curzon Line," which is often presented in western history books as the most reasonable Polish-Soviet frontier, both from the ethnic point of view and as necessary for Soviet security against further attacks from the West. Hence, it is necessary to give a brief outline of the history and course of the Curzon Line. It is also important to know what populations lived east of the line in

what was prewar Poland, because the general wartime view in Britain and the U.S. was that they were either preponderantly Russian, or at least had a vast majority of non-Poles who wanted union with the USSR. Russian and western historians generally agree with the above views today.

The "Curzon Line" was named for Lord George Nathaniel Curzon, British Foreign Secretary in 1919-1924, who signed the note proposing it to the Soviet government as an armistice line between Polish and Soviet armies. It was proposed by the British – but not supported by the French – at an Allied meeting in Spa, Belgium, on 10 July 1920. The "Curzon Line" was not new; it was based on a demarcation line between Polish and Russian administrations proposed by experts during the Paris Peace Conference and then by the great powers' representatives in the Supreme Council on 8 December 1919. The Curzon line separated preponderantly Polish territory in the West from preponderantly non-Polish territory in the East. In the central part, it more or less followed the old eastern frontier of Russian Poland, but then put most of East Galicia, which had never belonged to Russia, on the Soviet side. This part of the Curzon Line was drawn up in the Foreign Office, and was quite different from that accepted the day before by the Polish government delegation at Spa. Here, the Poles had agreed to an armistice along the current Polish-Soviet frontline in East Galicia, which would have left Lwów (now Lviv) and the oil fields southwest of the city on the Polish side. In any case, the Soviet government rejected the Curzon Line, sent on 11 July because, as Lenin admitted at a closed session of the party conference in September 1920, the Soviet leadership then planned to make Poland a Soviet republic and thus overthrow the whole "Versailles system." He also thought of setting up Soviet republics throughout East Central Europe, and of carrying the revolution into Germany and perhaps Italy as well.¹⁷ As it happened, Józef Piłsudski's victory over the Red Army in August-September 1920 – aided by Polish cryptographers breaking Red Army codes – led to the Riga Treaty and the Polish-Soviet border established there.¹⁸

As mentioned above, the often cited justification of the Curzon Line is that the population of prewar eastern Poland was preponderantly non-Polish, i.e. Ukrainian and Belorussian. Since, however, most western historians know very little about the demographic make-up of these territories, a few figures might be useful. According to the Polish census

of 1931, the total population of the country was 32,248,000, of whom 22,281,000 gave Polish as their mother-tongue; those speaking primarily Ukrainian and Ruthenian (Ukrainians of Volhynia) numbered 4,468,000; Belorussian, 966,000; and German, 765,000. According to 1941 figures produced by Polish experts for the Polish government in London, the total population of Poland according to mother tongue as of 31 August 1939 was estimated at 35,339,000 (according to religion the numbers were slightly different). Of this figure, those speaking Polish were estimated at 24,388,000; those speaking Ukrainian and Ruthenian (also Ukrainian) at 4,890,000; White Ruthenian (Belorussian) at 1,127,000; German at 803,000; and those speaking Yiddish and Hebrew at 2,916,000. (The figure for those professing the Mosaic religion was, however, estimated at 3,351,000). Out of the estimated 13,199,000 population in Soviet-occupied eastern Poland as of 31 August 1939, the breakdown by mother-tongue was: Polish, 5,274,000 (perhaps on the high side); 1,109,000 Yiddish and Hebrew (but 1,309,000 by Mosaic religion); 4,529,000 Ukrainians and Ruthenians (the figure was probably too low); 1,123,000 White Russians (Belorussians), plus other small minorities.¹⁹ Thus, while most of the population living east of the Curzon Line was not Polish, the region contained a significant Polish population with majority Polish districts in the north-east and south-east. In particular, the cities of Wilno (now Vilnius) and Lwów (now Lviv) then had predominantly Polish populations and were important centers of Polish culture.²⁰ If genuine self-determination had been applied in 1921, Poland's eastern territories would have been divided between the Polish state on one side, and Ukrainian and Belorussian states on the other. But such a solution was impossible in the circumstances of the time, so the territory was divided between Poland and the USSR. We should also keep in mind that while the west Ukrainians and west Belorussians suffered discrimination in interwar Poland, the fate of their brethren was much worse in the USSR. It is estimated that seven to ten million Ukrainians died in Stalin's man-made famine of 1932-33, which he used to break peasant resistance to forced collectivization. Furthermore, millions of Soviet citizens of various nationalities perished in the Stalin Terror years of 1935-1938, as well as in the Stalinist repressions following World War II.

As mentioned earlier, Stalin first put his demands to British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden in their talks on an Anglo-Soviet alliance

held in Moscow between 15-22 December 1941. He then stated his key condition for signing an alliance with Great Britain: British recognition of the Soviet western borders of 1941, that is, eastern Poland, the Baltic States, territory taken from Finland after the Winter War of 1939-1940, plus Bukovina and Bessarabia, then part of Romania. As for Poland, he said he would accept the Curzon Line with some small modifications in Poland's favor. One variant of the new frontier would leave Białystok and Wilno in Poland, while the other would leave it Białystok and Lwów. He also spoke of compensating the Poles with the western part of East Prussia, but the USSR would get the eastern part, with Königsberg (later Kaliningrad). He even suggested that Poland's western frontier should be on the Oder River. However, he indicated that the Polish-Soviet frontier could be settled by the Soviet and Polish governments, while insisting on British recognition of other Soviet gains, especially the Baltic States, which Eden personally found acceptable, but not possible to include in the treaty. It should also be noted that Stalin proposed a division of postwar Europe into British and Soviet spheres of influence. Churchill rejected these proposals at the time, noting they were contrary to the Atlantic Charter. He then stated that frontier questions must be settled at the peace conference after allied victory in the war. He would soon, however, start pressing the Polish government to consider accepting Soviet demands, while reserving territorial changes until the war was over.²¹

General Sikorski, who had met with Stalin in Moscow on 3-4 December 1941 to discuss the Polish Army then being raised in the USSR, learned of Stalin's demands for the Baltic States and for the Curzon Line as the Soviet-Polish frontier from Sir Stafford Cripps, who – then back in London – urged him on 26 January 1942 to accept them. Sikorski – who had already sanctioned Ambassador Edward Raczynski's statements published in the *Sunday Times* of 11 January 1942, on postwar East European federations, one of which would include Poland, Czechoslovakia and Lithuania – told Cripps that Lithuania was in the Polish sphere of influence and Poland could not abandon Polish Wilno. As for the Curzon Line, he said it meant pushing Poland from East to West “and this cannot be done without Polish consent.” He warned Churchill a few days later against Soviet aims to dominate eastern and northern Europe. He also mentioned that, in a private talk, Stalin had suggested the Oder River to him as Poland's western boundary.²² Stalin may well have

done so, although this is not mentioned in the record of this talk, held at a Kremlin banquet on 4 December 1941 and recorded by General Anders, who acted as translator. Anders did, however, note Stalin as saying that Poles and Russians should settle their border themselves before the Peace Conference, which he also mentioned in his talks with Eden. On 4 December, Sikorski and Stalin signed a Declaration of Friendship and Mutual Assistance, after which the Soviet authorities made arrangements to arm and feed a Polish army of 96,000.²³ (Food and equipment shortages, however, along with Soviet pressure for sending the troops to the front as each division was ready – while Anders and Sikorski insisted on sending the whole army when ready – led to the evacuation of the Polish Army from the USSR to Iran in spring-summer 1942.)

Eden did not have the power to agree to Stalin's territorial demands, though he believed they should be accepted. As noted above, Churchill at first angrily refused to consider them. He changed his mind, however, after British defeats in North Africa in early 1942, were followed by the fall of Singapore. In the negotiations for a British-Soviet alliance with Molotov in London in May 1942, the Soviet commissar pressed hard for the inclusion of the Baltic States and Soviet gains in Finland, plus Bukovina and Bessarabia, in the alliance treaty. As for the Polish-Soviet border, Molotov said it could be settled later, but demanded a commitment by the British government that it would not support the Polish stance on the issue. When the British government turned for advice to Washington, Roosevelt was reported as thinking that the Baltic States could be conceded to Russia, but deciding to hew to the Atlantic Charter provisions of no frontier changes in wartime and none without the consent of the inhabitants.²⁴ Sikorski energetically lobbied the British government against agreement to Soviet demands. He told Churchill on 11 March that Poland would not accept any territorial losses to the USSR, and that the cession of the Baltic States to the Soviets would mean the encirclement of Poland.²⁵ Sikorski also warned President Roosevelt on 24 March that year – during his second visit to the United States – that the British were ready to agree to Soviet demands for the Baltic States, as well as Romanian provinces neighboring Poland (Bukovina and Bessarabia), though Polish territory was excluded. He stated that the Polish government opposed these demands, and that in this matter it had the support of the whole country. He said that if such negotiations did take place, Poland would

demand the right to participate. The general had the great satisfaction of hearing the President say that he completely agreed. Roosevelt said that he kept the Atlantic Declaration (Charter) in mind, and that after Germany was defeated, it would be disarmed, so there would be no German threat to Russia. Territorial questions would be tackled after the war.²⁶

Sikorski's opposition to Soviet demands was shared by the majority of Poles who insisted on the restoration of the prewar eastern territories and identified them with Polish independence. For example, the founding meeting of the Association of the North-Eastern Lands of the Polish Republic on 31 October 1942 proclaimed: "Standing guard over Wilno, Grodno, Nowogródek, or Pińsk – we are by the same token defending the freedom of our countrymen in all parts of Poland; we are defending the independence of all of Poland from the Baltic to the Carpathians, and from Polesie to Silesia." In German-occupied Poland, the Armia Krajowa (AK-Home Army) High Command's *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Information Bulletin) of 26 November that year stated that Poland was destined to stem the German tide eastwards and to the whole world – as well as stem the pressure of the "Powers of the East" and eastern culture westward.²⁷ As it happened, Stalin shelved the frontier problem for the time being by instructing Molotov to give up the demand for the recognition of the 1941 Soviet western border in the Anglo-Soviet alliance treaty. On 24 May, Stalin cabled him to desist, saying that security matters (frontiers) would be settled by force. Thus, the alliance treaty was signed the next day without any territorial clauses. It is possible that Stalin's instruction to Molotov resulted not only from official U.S. opposition to agreements on territorial changes during the war, but also because he wanted an allied invasion of Western Europe to take place in 1942 and wished to avoid any obstacles to this end. Indeed, when Molotov visited Washington, President Roosevelt instructed General George C. Marshall to tell him that the Allies expected to open a second front in Europe that year, a promise that Churchill had refused to give.²⁸

Sikorski believed that the signing of the British-Soviet alliance without the recognition of the Soviet western frontiers of 1941 was a victory for his government. He also took Roosevelt's assurances at face value, not realizing that the President's effusive declarations of support for Poland and the Atlantic Charter were made with an eye to Polish-

American voters, while his own thoughts proceeded in quite another direction. Indeed, in late April 1942, Roosevelt confided to Assistant Secretary of State Adolf Berle that he would not mind if Stalin got eastern Poland, the Baltics and Bessarabia, but he could not say so openly for fear of alienating Polish-American and Baltic-American voters.²⁹ As for Churchill, we should bear in mind that all post-1920 British governments had always considered the Curzon Line as the best possible Polish-Soviet frontier, justifying it on the grounds of Soviet security and the ethnic makeup of the population, while outside informed government circles most people believed that eastern Poland was populated with Russians. Indeed, the British government had been very careful to guarantee Polish independence but not Polish frontiers in 1939, and saw eastern Poland as a bargaining counter with the Soviets to bring them over to the British side. In a speech made on 1 October 1939, Churchill – then First Lord of the Admiralty in Neville Chamberlain's government – justified the Soviet invasion of eastern Poland as setting up a second front against Germany. Lord Halifax, then Foreign Secretary, made a "historical" reference to the Curzon Line in the House of Lords on 26 October that year. Furthermore, the British Ambassador in Moscow, Sir Stafford Cripps managed to persuade his government to offer the Soviets "de facto" recognition of their conquests in the fall of 1940 to detach the USSR from Germany, but Stalin did not take the bait.³⁰ Thus, Churchill's rejection of Stalin's demands in January 1942 was an aberration, while two factors prevented him from publicizing his ensuing support of Soviet demands: (a) to avoid a mutiny in the Polish armed units in the Middle East, (which, led by General Anders, moved from the USSR to Iran in summer 1942, and thence to Iraq and Palestine, where they were reorganized into the Polish 2nd Corps in the British 8th Army), and (b) the well known support for the independence of the Baltic States and Finland by a group of members of parliament (MPs), also the support of the Roman Catholic Church and press, as well as a vocal group of MPs, for the restoration of an independent Poland within its prewar frontiers.

British pressure on the Polish government to recognize the Curzon Line as the postwar Polish-Soviet frontier began in earnest after the Soviet victory at Stalingrad in early February 1943, although pro-Soviet sentiments had been dominant in Britain for some time.³¹ It increased exponentially after Stalin broke off or "suspended" relations with Polish

government in late April that year. (The Russian word: *prevrats*, like its Polish equivalent, *przerwać*, can be interpreted either way.) The root cause was the Polish government's refusal to accept the Soviet charge of German guilt for the massacre of Polish officers in Katyn Forest, near Smolensk, in spring 1940, and the Polish request for an investigation by the International Red Cross, which the Soviet government treated as collaboration with the enemy. The remains of some four thousand officers taken prisoner by the Soviets in September 1939 – who, along with about eleven thousand other prisoners known to have been in three special camps, all trace of whom had disappeared in spring 1940 – were discovered by the Germans in March 1943. Berlin radio publicized the gruesome find on 13 April, charging the Soviets with the crime, to which the Soviets replied two days later by accusing the Germans. The Polish government, under great pressure from Polish opinion at home and abroad, especially the army, replied in a communiqué by the Minister of Defense, General Kukiel on 16 April, though Churchill had advised against it. Kukiel detailed the numbers of Polish prisoners of war held in three camps, Kozelsk, near Smolensk, Starobelsk, near Kharkov, and Ostashkov, near Kalinin (Tver), and the existing information about their departure from these camps in April-May 1940. (The information was based on survivor accounts). Kukiel also listed Polish inquiries to Soviet authorities about the missing prisoners from these camps, and the stock answer received that they had all been released, but without any information as to their whereabouts. Furthermore, the Polish government requested an International Red Cross (IRC) investigation of the massacre.³²

As it happened, the German Red Cross made the same request to the IRC at almost same time (both made on 15 April), and the requests were repeated formally by the Polish and German governments two days later. Despite a conciliatory Polish government statement denying the Germans the right to use the Katyn crime for their own defense, there was a full scale Soviet attack on the Polish government in a *Pravda* article on 19 April, titled "Hitler's Polish Collaborators." Stalin wrote Churchill two days later that the Polish government's attitude had led the Soviet government to "interrupt" relations with the Poles. Eden proceeded to tell Sikorski on 24 April that Stalin was willing not to break off relations if the Polish government retracted its request for an IRC investigation, blamed

the Germans for the Katyn massacre, and dropped "anti-Soviet" ministers. Eden advised acceptance of these demands for the good of the Allied cause, also to secure Stalin's consent to the departure of tens of thousands of Poles, including children, from the USSR. Sikorski said that he could not accept these demands.³³ On 25 April, Molotov summoned Tadeusz Romer, the Polish Ambassador in Moscow, and read him a note breaking off relations. The Soviet government accused the Polish government of collusion with the "fascist slander" over Katyn, as well as making use of the German charges of Soviet guilt in a "hostile campaign" to pressure the Soviet government into making territorial concessions at the expense of Soviet Ukraine, Belarus and Lithuania – a reference to the Polish stand on the inviolability of the interwar Polish-Soviet frontier.³⁴

Here we should note that the vast majority of the Polish troops who had left the USSR with General Anders for Iran and were then stationed in Iraq and Palestine, came from eastern Poland. They were particularly outraged by the news of the Katyn massacre, where many of their comrades-in-arms had perished. Like most Poles, they believed in Soviet guilt for the Katyn crime. This belief was expressed in the Polish press both at home and abroad, so the Polish government had to take some action.³⁵ We also know that Stalin had prepared the ground for breaking off relations with the Polish government two months earlier with the Soviet note on 16 January 1943, stating that all persons living in western Ukraine and western Belorussia in November 1939 were Soviet citizens. This was not only an open Soviet claim to these territories; it also meant that no more Poles could leave the USSR to join the Polish army in the Middle East, thus allowing the conscription of those still in the Soviet Union into a new, communist-led army. Moreover, unbeknownst to the British and Polish governments, Stalin discussed breaking off relations with the Polish government well before the Katyn massacre became known. In early February 1943, as the Germans were surrendering in Stalingrad, he told Wanda Wasilewska – the leader of a group of Polish communists and left-wing socialists in the USSR and secretly a member of Ukrainian Communist Party – that a new Polish center in the Soviet Union was needed (i.e. to replace the Polish Embassy). They "agreed" to form the *Związek Patriotów w ZSSR* (ZPP – The Union of Polish Patriots in the USSR), which would publish a new Polish newspaper, *Wolna Polska* (Free Poland). Thus the Polish government's reactions to the Katyn

massacre simply provided Stalin with the pretext to break off relations and openly acknowledge the ZPP, soon followed by the formation of a new Polish army raised from former Polish POWs and deportees who had not managed to join the Anders army. Thus, the "Kościuszko Division," was formed in May 1943, led by former Colonel, now General, Zygmunt Berling, who, along with some sixty other Starobelsk officers had escaped death by declaring willingness to cooperate with the Soviet Union.³⁶

Churchill now bent his efforts to restore Polish-Soviet relations and pinned his hopes on Sikorski. He greatly valued the general for signing the Soviet-Polish agreement of 30 July 1941, and knew that he sincerely desired the renewal of Polish-Soviet relations. It is unlikely, however, that the British prime minister knew of Sikorski's instruction of 23 November 1941 to General Stefan Rowecki, the commander of Polish underground forces in Poland, united in the Armia Krajowa in 1942, to prepare for taking over the Polish eastern territories as the Red Army came in, and to fight it if necessary.³⁷ This was modified in early March 1942 by orders for the AK to cooperate with the Red Army against the Germans – but also to dispatch significant Polish forces to Wilno and Lwów. The AK, however, was ordered not to be the first to take up arms against the Russians, for this would be seen as Polish collaboration with the Germans. These were followed by further orders in early February and late on 23 March 1943. In February, Sikorski wrote that he hoped to secure western support for the Polish interwar eastern frontier, but in the worst case scenario, the AK was to carry out an uprising in the east, taking over military and political power with priority given to Wilno and Lwów. In March, however, Sikorski wrote Rowecki, that in case of open Soviet hostility, only the civilian administration should come out from the underground, while the AK was to retreat into the Polish interior to protect itself from destruction.³⁸ It is worth noting that this order followed the Polish government's declaration of 25 February 1943, rejecting Soviet accusations that it wanted the Polish eastern boundaries to stand on the Dnepr [Dnieper] and the Black Sea, but also declaring that it stood by the inviolability of the Polish prewar eastern frontier.³⁹

Sikorski once again sought support from President Roosevelt. He made a third trip to the United States in December 1942-January 1943 and received declarations of support for an independent Poland from the

President. Indeed, Roosevelt wrote him a letter, dated 5 January 1943, assuring him that the U.S. government was determined that Poland should be restored, as implied in article 3 of the Atlantic Charter and the Declaration of the United Nations, both of which excluded territorial changes in wartime and changes without the agreement of the inhabitants.⁴⁰ Sikorski did not know that the President rejected the advice of William C. Bullitt, former U.S. ambassador to Moscow (1933-1936), who warned Roosevelt in January 1943 of Stalin's aims to dominate Eastern Europe and proposed an allied invasion of the Black Sea and Balkans region rather than France, before the Red Army arrived there. Bullitt also suggested granting or withholding reconstruction aid to the USSR in order to ensure the establishment of postwar democratic governments in the region. The President, however, told Bullitt that Stalin "was not an imperialist but a friend and ally" who would work with him "for a world of democracy and peace." Thus, it is not surprising that Roosevelt agreed with Eden, who visited Washington in March 1943, that Stalin should get eastern Poland up to the Curzon Line, while Poland would be compensated with East Prussia. When Eden said that Poland would want to have her original boundaries, Roosevelt replied that "the big powers would have to decide what Poland should have, and that he, the President, did not intend to go to the Peace Conference and bargain with Poland or the other small states; as far as Poland is concerned, the important thing is to set it up in a way that will help maintain the peace of the world."⁴¹

Sikorski wanted to travel to Moscow to talk with Stalin, although we do not know what he planned to offer the Soviet dictator. It is most unlikely, however, that he would have agreed to make any territorial concessions to the USSR. In May-June 1943 he visited the Polish Army in Iraq because of significant unrest in its ranks. Discontent and anger were voiced at Sikorski's allegedly conciliatory policy towards Moscow, and General Anders had even demanded that the government resign. Sikorski managed to quell the unrest by making patriotic speeches and granting promotions in rank. Now, however, disturbing information arrived from in Poland. The views of the AK High Command were expressed by General Rowecki in a cable he sent to Sikorski in three parts on 19 June 1943; it was read by the Polish General Staff's Dept. VI (Dept. for Underground Affairs) on 19 and 22 June, and must have reached Sikorski when he was

still in the Middle East. Rowecki wrote that he planned partisan warfare against both the Germans and the Soviets, who were equally mortal enemies of Poland. AK conflict with the Soviets as they came in, wrote Rowecki, could only be averted by the Western Powers' guarantees of Polish independence, territorial integrity, and the recognition of Polish civilian and military authorities on the whole territory of operations. He proposed diversionary action in the east, that is, delaying the march of Russian armies by destroying communications up to and including the Vistula and San rivers; fighting the Soviets where there were even minimal chances of doing so; and where there was no such chance, leaving AK armed forces hidden, ready to act against Russia (sic) at the appropriate moment on the orders of the commander-in-chief.⁴²

We do not know Sikorski's reaction to this cable; perhaps he discussed it with General Tadeusz Klimecki, chief of the Polish General Staff, traveling with him. Whatever the case may be, Sikorski, his daughter Zofia Leśniewska, General Klimecki, Major Victor Cazalet, M.P., the British liaison officer to Sikorski, a courier just arrived at Gibraltar from Poland and others in the party, all died in a plane crash off Gibraltar on 4 July 1943; only the Czech pilot, Edward Max Prchal, survived. The cause of the crash remains unresolved to this day; contrary to the British investigation's report, it may have been the result of sabotage.⁴³ Sikorski's body was transported to Great Britain and given a state funeral in Westminster Cathedral. Churchill wept when told of his death and spoke highly of him. In a radio speech to the Polish people on 6 July, he praised Sikorski and appealed for unity in the war effort. In a speech in the House of Commons on 16 July, the British Prime Minister stated: "He was a man of remarkable pre-eminence, both as a statesman and a soldier." On hearing of the general's death, Alexander Cadogan, the British Undersecretary of State for Foreign Affairs, wrote "This is a great blow: there's *no-one* to take his place." William Strang, the Assistant Secretary of State, told General Kukiel that the British government considered Sikorski to be a great statesman, the most outstanding of all those whom the war had driven off the European continent.⁴⁴ Their opinion of General Sikorski would surely have been different if they had known of his orders to Rowecki.

Sikorski was succeeded as Premier by Stanisław Mikołajczyk, the émigré leader of the largest Polish political party, the Polish Peasant Party. Also, despite Eden's objections, General Kazimierz Sosnkowski became commander-in-chief of the Polish Armed Forces in the West, as well as of the AK in Poland. Sosnkowski opposed any negotiations with the USSR and was thus a critic of the new Polish Prime Minister who believed that negotiations must take place, though he continued to hew to previous Polish policy. Thus, Mikołajczyk stated at a press conference in London on 16 July 1943 that his government would continue Sikorski's policy of establishing a Central-European federation, together with preparations for a South-Eastern European Federation. He also stressed his government's desire for good neighborly relations with Soviet Russia, and for peaceful cooperation among the nations of postwar Europe, with all benefiting from President Roosevelt's Four Freedoms.⁴⁵ At the same time, like Sikorski, he looked for support from the U. S. president.

Mikołajczyk seemed to have good grounds for hope. Officially, the U.S. government continued to follow the line that no territorial changes were to be made during the war, and none without the consent of the populations involved. This was the official policy which aimed not only to maintain support for the war by the general American public, but also to secure Polish-American and Baltic-American votes for the Democratic Party. Privately, however, Roosevelt made it known in spring and summer 1943 to Soviet ambassador Maxim Litvinov and his successor Andrei Gromyko, that he would not object if the Soviet Union took over the eastern territories of Poland and the Baltic states by a "fait accompli," though he could not say so publicly in view of Polish-American and Baltic-American voters.⁴⁶ This covert U.S. policy was also reflected in military planning. At the first Anglo-American Quebec Conference, code-named "Quadrant" and held on 17-24 August 1943, it was decided that Eastern Europe was to be a Soviet war theater, signifying that it might be written off as a Soviet sphere of influence. The underlying American – though not British – assumption for this policy was that the U.S. primary goal should be to secure Soviet aid in the war with Japan; therefore, Soviet demands concerning Central and Eastern Europe must be met. Indeed, the President seemed to agree with the view expressed by Major General J. H. Burns that much of Europe would come under Soviet domination at the end of the war, which was also the view of the Joint Strategic Survey

Committee and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.⁴⁷ Indeed, in September 1943, Roosevelt told the Archbishop of New York, later Cardinal Francis Spellman – his favorite Roman Catholic bishop – that most of Eastern Europe as well as Austria would probably have communist governments, while the French communists might accept a “Popular Front” or socialist government (which existed in 1936-37).⁴⁸ Also in September 1943, Colonel Leon Mitkiewicz, the deputy chief of the Polish General Staff and its representative to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington, reported advice from high British and American officers that any Polish uprising against the Germans must be coordinated with the Soviets.⁴⁹

Thus, it is not surprising that at the first “Big Three” Conference, held in Tehran between 28 November-2 December 1943, where plans were discussed for an allied invasion of France coordinated with a Soviet offensive in the east, Churchill proposed to Stalin that Poland be moved west, “like a soldier taking three steps left close,” and illustrated this with matches. (He was, in fact, reproducing Stalin’s proposal to Eden of December 1941). Roosevelt told Stalin that he generally agreed with moving Poland west, also with including the Baltic States in the USSR, but could not say this openly because of the presidential election coming up in November 1944. He hoped there would be some sort of referendum by the inhabitants of the Baltic States. Stalin understood the President’s problem, but said there could be no international supervision of the referendum. He also said that while Poland could have East Prussia, he wanted the port of Königsberg (which he had also demanded in talks with Eden in December 1941). At the end of the conference, it was understood that Poland would be compensated with German territory in East Prussia, as well as unspecified German lands in the West, and – what was most important for Roosevelt – Stalin declared his willingness to enter the war against Japan after the end of the war in Europe.⁵⁰ It is worth noting that the map of Poland studied at Tehran to review the course of the Curzon Line, was drawn up in the Office of the Geographer of the Department of State in conjunction with the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy. On this map, Stalin drew red pencil lines showing what he wanted for the USSR apart from former eastern Poland, i.e. the northern part of East Prussia, and what he was ready to give up to Poland east of the Curzon Line, i.e. Białystok province, plus a bulge of territory between

Brest-Litovsk and Chełm, and a fragment of East Galicia including the city of Przemyśl.⁵¹

After his return to London, Churchill told Mikołajczyk on 20 January 1944 what he thought was reasonable for the Poles to accept, i.e. the Curzon Line – but not that it had been agreed as the Polish-Soviet frontier at Tehran. He told the Polish Premier of Stalin’s proposal that Poland receive East Prussia – but did not mention that it would be minus Königsberg and the northern part of the province – as well as a Polish western frontier on the Oder river. Mikołajczyk replied that Polish frontiers could not be settled without negotiations and the consent of the Polish people. He also said that his position would be impossible unless he could tell his people that Poland would emerge from the war undiminished. On 6 February 1944, he told the British Prime Minister that he could not publicly announce his acceptance of the Curzon Line. He said that what he and his government were defending was Polish independence. Churchill questioned Poland’s right to Wilna (Wilno) – whose seizure in October 1920 was condemned by the British government, but not to Lwów, though he said it lay in predominantly Ukrainian territory, and he insisted that he was fighting for Poland’s very life. After several more meetings with Mikołajczyk, Foreign Minister Tadeusz Romer and Ambassador Edward Raczyński, the Polish Premier told Churchill on 16 February that the Polish Cabinet accepted the text of a message that Churchill would send to Stalin. The Polish Cabinet agreed to a demarcation line running east of Wilno and Lwów, with a Polish administration west of the line and with representatives of the United [western] Powers assisting Soviet military authorities east of the line. The Polish Cabinet opposed the attribution of Königsberg to Soviet Russia. Churchill, however, wrote the Soviet leader on 21 February that the Polish government was ready to declare that the Riga line (1921) “no longer corresponded to realities” – which was not in the text approved by the Poles – and that it was ready to discuss a new frontier with the Soviet government as part of a general settlement. However, since any public statement to this effect would be repudiated by the Polish people, such a settlement could only be agreed at the conclusion of an armistice or peace, so the Polish government proposed a demarcation line between Polish and Soviet administrations. Churchill wrote that the Polish government was anxious that the districts under their administration would

include Vilna and Lvov (Russian spelling), though he knew that Stalin would not agree. He also informed Stalin of the Polish government orders for Polish military and civil authorities to cooperate with Soviet commanders.⁵² On the next day, Churchill made a speech in the House of Commons proposing the Curzon Line as the Polish-Soviet frontier and compensating the Poles with German territory as the best solution for Poland. He also said, however, that all territorial settlements should await the end of the war, when the victorious powers would reach agreements regarding Europe as a whole.⁵³ Stalin sent an angry telegram to Churchill on 28 February, insisting on the immediate recognition of the Curzon Line by the London Poles as well as changes in the Polish government. He also suggested that a reconstructed Polish government might include Polish Americans, naming Professor [Oskar] Lange and [Father Stanisław] Orlemanski, a suggestion he also made to President Roosevelt.⁵⁴ Lange, a recently naturalized American citizen, was a left-wing Polish economist who publicly supported Soviet demands on Poland. Orlemanski was a Catholic priest with a parish in Springfield, Mass; he supported the communist-led "Kościuszko League" which propagandized the Kościuszko division in the USSR. President Roosevelt allowed both of them to fly to the USSR in May, as "private citizens," via Alaska. Lange spoke with Stalin and Molotov, also with soldiers of the Kościuszko Division, and interviewed Polish communist leaders, including those who had just arrived from German-occupied Poland.⁵⁵

It should be noted that before Churchill's speech of 22 February, his proposals were communicated by the Polish government to the underground authorities in German-occupied Poland: the Rada Jedności Narodowej (RJN - Council of National Unity), formed in January 1944, and the Delegate of the Polish government. Both objected strongly. They wrote on 15 February that they agreed to the proposed western boundaries and the removal of the German inhabitants from those territories, but strongly objected to any discussion with the Soviets on the revision of the eastern boundaries. They stated: "No one in Poland would understand why Poland is to pay the Soviets the costs of war with her territories and her independence . . . Even now, the Polish people are decided to fight against the new Soviet aggression in defense of their own independence and for the freedom of Europe. The Polish nation trusts that the Allies and the peoples of the world will understand their attitude and will support it

actively."⁵⁶ It is not surprising, therefore, that Churchill's speech, recommending the Curzon Line as the Polish-Soviet frontier, provoked vigorous reactions by Polish public opinion. A prominent underground newspaper *Wiadomości Polskie*, in its issue of 8 March 1944 called it a "Russian Munich" and stated: "The issue of our frontiers is the fundamental issue of our real independence, the issue of the future freedom of Europe, of the security of many states and peoples, not excluding England." The *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, which spoke for the AK High Command, stated on 16 March: "We have no desire to facilitate Russian rapacity by participating in a new partition of Poland and making our Fatherland a small vassal state under Russian protection." These views were widely shared by Poles who were not members of the government or the underground authorities. In New York, the Polish poet Kazimierz Wierzyński published a long poem in *Tygodnik Polski* on 12 March 1944, protesting the sacrifice of half of Poland as per the Churchill speech.⁵⁷ Even the communist Polska Partia Robotnicza (PPR – Polish Workers' Party), which supported Soviet demands, did not come out publicly in favor of revising the eastern frontier. On 7 March 1944, its leader, Władysław Gomułka, wrote to Georgii Dimitrov (Secretary General of the former Comintern, who, after its official dissolution in May 1943, carried on his work within Central Committee of the Soviet Communist party): "If St. Anthony's Brotherhood came out in favor of revising the eastern frontier, it would immediately be denounced as a Soviet front organization receiving Soviet money to get the Polish nation under the boot of Stalin." Indeed, members of PPR- dominated Krajowa Rada Narodowa (KRN – Home National Council), formed in Warsaw on the night of 31 December 1943-1 January 1944, who managed to reach Moscow in May that year, lobbied Molotov to leave Lwów and the oil fields in Poland, but were told to desist.⁵⁸ The KRN was a front organization for the PPR; its first chairman was Edward Osóbka-Morawski, followed by the Polish communist and NKVD agent, Bolesław Bierut, later president of Poland.

In March 1944, Churchill tried once more to secure Stalin's assent to settling the Polish-Soviet frontier after the war. However, his telegram, sent on 21 March, informing Stalin that he would make a speech the House of Commons affirming British recognition of the Polish government and stating that all territorial changes must await the peace

conference, met with an angry reaction. The Soviet leader wrote that the Curzon Line had been approved at Tehran and he would treat the proposed declaration by Churchill as an unjust and unfriendly act toward the Soviet Union, so Churchill did not include the offending passage in his speech.⁵⁹ A month later, the British government informed its Polish ally that its mediation effort had failed.

In late May 1944, there were informal and secret Polish-Soviet talks in London, at the request of the Soviet ambassador to the Allied governments, Viktor Lebedev. His request was transmitted to the Poles by the Czechs, and the talks took place between the ambassador and Stanisław Grabski, chair of the Polish National Council. It so happened that this was also the time of the Lange-Orlemanski visit to the USSR, mentioned above. The Lebedev-Grabski talks were desultory until 31 May, when Grabski proposed that Mikołajczyk travel to Moscow to reach agreements on the administration of Polish territories, cooperation between the AK and the Red Army, and discuss the principles of an agreement on territorial questions. Lebedev seemed to welcome these proposals and said he wished to meet with Mikołajczyk. On 2 June, the president of the Czechoslovak government-in-exile, Eduard Beneš – who had previously presented Soviet demands to Mikołajczyk in early January 1944 – communicated additional Soviet terms to Mikołajczyk: Moscow had “reservations” about [the inclusion in the new government of] Sosnkowski, Kukiel, [Stanisław] Kot and President Raczkiewicz; an agreement could be concluded on the administration of liberated Poland and cooperation between Polish and Soviet forces, while the frontier question could be dealt with later. Lebedev also said that “The Union of Polish Patriots and the Polish Communists would present no obstacle.”⁶⁰ He asked for a meeting with Mikołajczyk, but the Polish premier declined because he was about to leave for the United States. It is most likely that Stalin wanted Mikołajczyk to join the new Polish government then being discussed in Moscow – in which the communists would have the majority along with key ministries. If the Polish premier agreed, the Peasant Party would not only provide majority support for that government in Poland, but the new government would also be welcomed with open arms by Roosevelt and Churchill.

Mikołajczyk received a red carpet welcome in the United States, presumably because the President wanted to counteract the condemnation of the Lange-Orlemanski trip to Moscow by the Polish American Congress, established in Boston at the end of May. The Polish premier met with President Roosevelt on 7 June – the day after Allied troops had landed in Normandy – and again on the 12th. The day before the second meeting, he met with Oskar Lange – after being pressured to do so by the State Department – and heard Stalin’s views once again, with emphasis on the German territories that Poland was to obtain in the west – if it gave up the prewar territories in the east. On 12 June, the President advised Mikołajczyk to travel to Moscow and reach an agreement with Stalin, advising him to make changes in his government. He also told him that Poland would receive East Prussia and [Upper] Silesia. Furthermore, the President said he did not expect Stalin to insist on the Curzon Line, saying that he himself did not agree to the frontier being based on that line (sic). According to the Polish record of the conversation, Roosevelt promised his support “at the appropriate time” for the award of Lwów, Drohobycz [oil fields] and Tarnopol to Poland. Afterwards, however, Roosevelt assured Stalin that his talks with Mikołajczyk did not result in any decisions on Polish-Soviet relations that were contrary to the agreements reached at Tehran.⁶¹

After his return from the United States, Mikołajczyk had several meetings with Soviet Ambassador Lebedev in London. The latter proposed that the Polish premier go to Moscow, but also reiterated, although he did not press them, the Soviet demands for Cabinet changes and Polish agreement to the Curzon Line. The Polish premier said he could not agree to the removal of cabinet members, except perhaps Sosnkowski. He proposed reaching agreements on political and administrative matters before he left for Moscow, and said the frontier should be settled after the war. In the meanwhile, he proposed a demarcation line between Soviet and Polish administrations, which should leave territories with large numbers of Poles on the Polish side of the line. On 23 June, Lebedev suddenly presented Mikołajczyk with an ultimatum: recognize the Curzon Line as the Polish-Soviet frontier; include Poles from London, the USSR, the United States and the KRN in the new government, while dropping Sosnkowski, Kukiel, Kot and Raczkiewicz. This new government should condemn its predecessor for the “mistake” it

made on the Katyn question. Mikołajczyk answered that he had nothing to say and the talks broke off.⁶²

The Lebedev ultimatum was most likely timed to coincide with the massive Soviet offensive which began that day from Belarus and crossed the Curzon Line by the end of June. Stalin needed to know if Mikołajczyk might join the new Polish government or some kind of national committee controlled by Moscow to take over the administration in Polish lands west of the line, but he made it clear that he would not recognize the Polish underground's, and thus the Polish government's authority east of the line. In early July, the Red Army accepted the help of AK units in liberating Wilno and Lwów from the Germans, but then proceeded to arrest the officers and men. The officers who refused to join the Berling-led First Polish Army were deported to labor camps in the Soviet interior. The rank-and-file soldiers and NCOs were forced to join that army, but many deserted in short order. Polish civilian authorities who came out to greet the Soviets as hosts and take over the administration, were also arrested. This procedure also continued west of the Curzon Line, indicating that Stalin would not tolerate any rivals to the PKWN (Polish Committee of National Liberation).

Mikołajczyk now came under great pressure from both the British and U.S. governments to see Stalin, who issued the invitation on Churchill's request. The Polish premier set off for Moscow on 26 July, but the PKWN, formed in the Soviet capital on 20 July, announced its existence in Chełm two days later. Here it published its manifesto – actually drawn up and published in Moscow – which spoke of a “return” to Poland of old Polish Pomerania, Opole/Oppeln Silesia, East Prussia, and of a frontier on the Oder river. As for the eastern frontier, it was to be settled by mutual agreement based on awarding Polish lands to Poland, while Ukrainian, Belorussian and Lithuanian lands would join the respective Soviet republics. There was to be a permanent Polish alliance with the USSR and Czechoslovakia. Justice would be meted out to German criminals and national traitors; there would be an agricultural reform on the basis of 5 hectares for every peasant household (1 hectare = 2.47 acres), and the needs of the workers would be satisfied. There was no mention, of course, of collectivization, nationalization, or of the fact that the PKWN had already signed a treaty with the USSR establishing

Poland's eastern frontier according to Soviet demands, as well as recognizing the primacy of Soviet military authority in liberated Poland. The PKWN, which soon moved to Lublin – and hence is often referred to as the Lublin Committee – consisted of Polish communists and left-wing socialists from the KRN delegation sent to Moscow and the ZPP, and claimed to represent the Polish people.⁶³ In reality, the majority of Poles recognized the underground authorities at home, who were loyal to the Polish government in London.

On 25 July, just before Mikołajczyk left London for Moscow, the Polish government instructed General Bór-Komorowski (the successor of General Rowecki), who had informed them four days earlier of the AK High Command's decision for an uprising in Warsaw, that he should decide when to start it. This was a new factor in Polish resistance, for Warsaw and other cities had been excluded from the “Burza” (Storm) plans for a phased, general uprising as the Germans retreated, to prevent destruction and loss of life. It should be noted that the Polish government did not instruct the AK High Command to carry out an uprising in Warsaw, but accepted its decision to do so. In fact, Mikołajczyk and his supporters in the government viewed such an uprising as an asset in the forthcoming Moscow negotiations, assuming that it would help the Red Army in taking the city, which was the road and rail communications hub between Moscow and Berlin. General Sosnkowski, for his part, expressed complete distrust of the USSR, opposed the plan for a *general* uprising in Poland, and had earlier advised the AK High Command to evacuate its forces from the city and make their way west, though it is not at all clear how they could have reached western lines. He was, however, with the Polish Army in Italy at the time of the AK High Command decision and its acceptance by the government, so he was unaware of these developments, but when the uprising broke out he gave it his full support.

To understand the AK High Command decision, one must look at the situation in and around the Polish capital at this time. In late July, Warsaw was like a pressure cooker. Although Colonel Claus Schenk von Stauffenberg's 20 July attempt to assassinate Hitler had failed, it indicated the likelihood of more military opposition to him and the possible emergence of a new German government which would seek peace with the Allies. At this time, exhausted German troops were flowing west

through the Polish capital for the Red Army's First Belorussian Front, the strongest of all the Soviet fronts, had shattered the German *Armee Mitte* (Central Army) Group and was expected to reach Warsaw in a few days. It was unthinkable both to the AK High Command and the underground civilian authorities that they should do nothing but wait for the Red Army to come in, thus confirming Soviet propaganda that they were passively standing by, arms in hand, instead of fighting the Germans (subtext: they were waiting to fight the Soviets). In fact, they had fought the Germans for almost six years and believed not only that they had to liberate the capital themselves from the hated Germans and, by the same token, document Poland's right to independence from the USSR. In these circumstances, the AK High Command decided on 21 July, with the agreement of the Government Delegate and the Council of National Unity, that an uprising should take place in Warsaw. Bór-Komorowski gave orders to stand by on 25 July, but revoked them as German troops began to return to Warsaw. Two days later, the city's German governor, Ludwig Fischer, ordered 100,000 people to report the next day for digging trenches, and Bór-Komorowski again issued an order to stand by. However, the German order was ignored by the people of Warsaw, so the AK stood down. On 29 July, gunfire was heard near the eastern part of Warsaw, Praga. On the next day, the Polish-language Kościuszko radio station in Moscow called on the people of Warsaw to rise up against the Germans and help the Red Army enter the city. It is known now that while the key PPR leaders were in Lublin with the PKWN, a PPR committee meeting in Warsaw decided that as soon as the Germans left and the Red Army and the Polish [Berling] Army came in, the PPR would take over the municipal administration.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, Mikołajczyk who had left London by air on 26 July, stopped over in Cairo to consult Churchill. He asked whether he should proceed in view of the PKWN agreement with the Soviet government to take over administration of liberated Polish territories. Encouraged by Churchill, he decided to go on to Moscow. On the same day, President Raczkiewicz appointed three members of the underground Council of National Unity, Adam Bień (Polish Peasant Party), Antoni Pajdak (Socialist), and Stanisław Jasiukowicz (National Democrat) as ministers in the Polish government, with Jankowski as Deputy Premier. (The appointment was retroactive to 29 March 1944). They were to make

themselves known to Soviet authorities when these arrived in Warsaw. On July 29, Mikołajczyk arrived in Moscow, accompanied by the National Council Chair, Stanisław Grabski, Foreign Minister Tadeusz Romer, Councilor Józef M. Zarański and Councilor Aleksander Mniszek – who was to act as translator – as well as General Stanisław Tatar, pseudonym "Tabor." The latter was Deputy Chief of Staff for contact with the AK and advocated acceptance of Soviet demands.

To the AK High Command, the Council of National Unity and public opinion in Warsaw, it looked as if Mikołajczyk was about to reach an agreement with Stalin. Taking all the military and political circumstances into consideration and, in particular, the news that Soviet tanks were reported as approaching Praga, the AK High Command decided on 31 July that the uprising begin on 1 August at 5 p. m. It did not expect the fighting to last more than a few days, after which the Red Army would come in, welcomed by Polish military and civilian authorities. Warsaw was, after all, the main communications hub between Moscow and Berlin, so it was logical to assume that the Red Army would take it as soon as it could. Opinions were divided on what would happen next, but it is clear that the AK High Command and civilian authorities did not expect the Soviets to stop outside Warsaw and wait for the Germans to put down the rising.

Just as the Red Army was approaching Praga, however, a new German army group, made up of three Panzer Corps, launched a counter-attack and threw back the Soviet 2nd Guards Tank Army.⁶⁵ Marshals Zhukov and Konstantin K. Rokossovskii, the commanders of the 1st Belorussian Front, who had been ordered to take Praga by 8 August, were now ordered to take up defensive positions. In Moscow, Stalin promised Mikołajczyk to help the insurgents, but in saying so he probably intended to encourage the Polish premier to accept Soviet demands. Indeed, Stalin rejected Mikołajczyk's proposals – approved by the Polish Cabinet – to treat the Curzon Line as a demarcation line, and that the final frontier, to be fixed after the war, must leave all large and significant centers of Polish population in Poland. Furthermore, Mikołajczyk's talks with members of the PKWN showed the latter wanted three quarters of the seats in the government, which was unacceptable to the leader of the largest political party in Poland. He decided that further talks were useless. In any case, he

had told his Cabinet before leaving that he would make no commitments. Thus, he and his delegation left Moscow on 9 August with the task of informing their colleagues of Stalin's demands.⁶⁶

Whatever Stalin's plans may have been, a vicious Soviet press campaign against the London Poles ensued. Moscow blamed them for the outbreak of the uprising in Warsaw and denied any responsibility, while the Red Army paused and did not take Praga until 14 September. All the AK High Command's efforts to establish direct or indirect contact – by radio and through the Soviet Embassy in London – with the Red Army failed. Churchill tried mightily to secure Stalin's military aid for the insurgents, but the Red Air Force did not drop supplies until after the capture of Praga, and they were of little help since they were dropped without parachutes. Meanwhile, in order to support Mikołajczyk, the British Prime Minister mobilized public opinion in support of the insurgents, and asked Stalin to give landing rights to Allied planes, but he refused. The arms drops by low flying allied planes with Polish and allied crews flying from southern Italy and back, were sparse and their losses heavy, while the drops by the lone U.S. Air Force flight, approved by Stalin and made on 18 September, came from a height of 30,000 feet, so most landed on German-held sites in the city.⁶⁷

Meanwhile, after much discussion on the frontier question, the Polish Council of Ministers (Cabinet) approved a resolution, proposed by Mikołajczyk, on 22 August 1944; it was cabled to the Polish authorities Warsaw for consideration, along with an opposing resolution agreed by the leaders of the Polish Socialist Party. The government resolution, proposed by Mikołajczyk and voted by his supporters as text A, stated that "Poland would retain in the east the main centers of cultural life and raw materials absolutely necessary for economic life" – which meant giving up most of eastern Poland except for Wilno, Lwów, and the oilfields – but that the final settlement of the Polish-Soviet frontier would be made by the Constitutional Diet (parliament elected to draw up the constitution). The PPS leaders in London rejected this formula and produced text B stating that Polish frontiers would be considered after the war on the basis of friendly understanding between allied states. President Raczkiewicz and General Sosnkowski also sent their objections to text A.

The reaction of the political leadership in Warsaw to the Mikołajczyk text was negative, even though they were surrounded by burning and collapsing buildings. The Krajowa Rada Ministrów (Home Council of Ministers, executive of the RJN, the Council of National Unity) judged the Premier's interpretation and motivation of the government resolution as absolutely inadequate, and said they had not been informed of the attitude of Britain and the United States to Stalin's demands. They objected to the equal treatment of the AK and the communist-led Polish Army in the proposal for military cooperation. They demanded that the government appeal to world opinion on behalf of Poland, which had been the first to fight the Germans, had been fighting them for five years, and now, when its adversary was falling in defeat, was expected to pay [for it] with its territory, its independence, and its honor. Text A was also rejected by the AK Commander. In his dispatch to Mikołajczyk and to the Polish C-in-C, General Sosnkowski, General Bór-Komorowski called the proposal "a complete surrender" and said that the Poles had not fought the Germans for five years "for the sake of an eventual surrender to Russia." Bór-Komorowski expressed the feelings of the majority of Poles, which explains why the Polish government-in-exile could go no further than its resolution of 22 August 1944, finalized in its memorandum of 29 August, which was also rejected by Stalin.⁶⁸

During all these deliberations, the Warsaw insurgents fought on, supported by the population, although the people's enthusiasm ebbed as the rising dragged on and supplies became scarce. The Germans often killed prisoners and civilians, though this was more common at the outset of the rising. After waiting for Soviet assent, which did not come, the British and American governments finally recognized the AK soldiers as combatants, thus giving them protection if taken prisoner. As noted earlier, the Red Army took Praga on 14 September, but then stood by and watched. The attempt by a battalion of the Polish First People's Army to land in west-bank Warsaw failed for lack of Soviet artillery cover, though it was clearly available. After sixty-three days of fighting, Bór-Komorowski signed a surrender to the Germans on 2 October. Hitler then ordered the destruction of the city, so most buildings still standing in the west bank part of the city center were blown up. The estimated losses by the German military and AK forces were about even, but the total loss of Polish lives, mostly civilians, is estimated at about 250,000 and most of

the west bank part of Warsaw was destroyed. It is unlikely, however, that the capital would have been saved from destruction if there had been no rising, for Hitler had ordered it to be defended to the last man. The earlier destruction of Minsk, and later of Wrocław (Breslau), showed what Hitler's orders meant for German-defended cities.

Mikołajczyk again traveled to Moscow in mid-October, summoned by Churchill who had flown there to discuss the Polish question and the Balkans with Stalin. Mikołajczyk was subjected to violent tirades by the British prime minister, who desperately wanted the Polish premier to accept the Curzon Line as the Polish-Soviet frontier, the precondition for his joining a new Polish government acceptable to Stalin. For Churchill, as for Roosevelt, Mikołajczyk's inclusion as premier in such a government was to prove to their countries' public opinion that the Poles themselves had accepted the Soviet demands, so the British and U.S. governments could not be accused of betraying them. It was only now that Mikołajczyk finally learned of the Roosevelt-Churchill-Stalin agreement on the Curzon Line at Tehran, as well as the award of Königsberg and the northern part of East Prussia to the Soviet Union.⁶⁹ After much discussion, the Polish government in London resolved on 6 November to reject the Soviet demands, citing the lack of a final delimitation of Poland's western frontiers and the lack of guarantees for Poland's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. The British government was informed on the same day.⁷⁰ Indeed, the outlook for compensating Poland with German territory, except for Gdańsk and part of East Prussia, and for a British guarantee was more than dim. In a conversation on that day between Mikołajczyk and Foreign Minister Romer on the one hand and Eden and Alexander Cadogan on the other, Eden called the Polish claim to German lands up to the Oder river "sheer madness." He also stood by the offer of a joint British-Soviet guarantee of Poland's independence and frontiers, not a British guarantee as the Poles requested.⁷¹

Mikołajczyk, however, still held out for a reply from President Roosevelt to his appeal for support, in particular, for leaving Lwów and the oilfields as well as Wilno in Poland, and for a guarantee of Polish independence. Roosevelt answered in a letter to the Polish Premier that the U.S. government stood for a strong, independent Poland with the right of the people to order their affairs as they saw fit, but explained that the U.S.

government could not guarantee any specific frontiers. Informally, through Ambassador Harriman, he promised to intervene for Lwów, but not Wilno.⁷² In view of the above, the Polish government decided not to accept Roosevelt's informal offer, and Mikołajczyk decided to resign. He believed that an agreement with Moscow must be made, conceding Soviet demands, as this was Poland's only chance for territorial compensation in the west in exchange for losses in the east. He also thought that some members of the Polish government in London could prevent the communization of Poland, provided they returned there soon.⁷³ He believed that the western powers would ensure Polish independence and democratic government in Poland. Free elections were, indeed promised in the Yalta Conference report on Poland (where the Polish-Soviet frontier was fixed according to Soviet wishes, with territorial gains at German expense in the West to be decided later) as they were for all liberated countries in the Declaration on Liberated Europe, also signed at Yalta. The members of the new provisional Polish government were, however, to be chosen from candidates approved by a committee made up of Molotov, British Ambassador Clark-Kerr and U.S. Ambassador Harriman.⁷⁴ As it turned out later, Molotov vetoed almost all of the candidates favored by the two ambassadors.

In April 1945, Mikołajczyk accepted the Yalta agreements on Poland. He traveled to Moscow in June, where he negotiated his access to the new government, in which his party, the largest in Poland, received only twenty-five percent of the seats. At the same time, a rigged trial of sixteen Polish underground leaders, kidnapped by the NKVD, took place in the Soviet capital.⁷⁵ He could not, however, do anything about this. He joined the communist-dominated Polish government in late June 1945, as the second deputy premier and minister of Agriculture. This government was recognized by most states in early July. Poland obtained a frontier on the Oder and Western Neisse line at the Potsdam Conference of 17 July - 2 August 1945. Mikołajczyk played a significant role in this decision, made by the great powers in exchange for the Polish provisional government's solemn promise to hold free elections as soon as possible.⁷⁶ The elections held in January 1947 were not free, however, for the communist victory was rigged and Mikołajczyk had to flee for his life as Stalinist terror descended on Poland. Nevertheless, the Polish western frontier, viewed as provisional in 1945, to be finally delimited at a peace settlement signed

with Germany, soon obtained de facto recognition and was officially recognized in the treaties on the unification of Germany signed on 3 October 1990.

Most western historians criticize and often condemn the wartime Polish governments for insisting on the restoration of the prewar Polish eastern frontier, calling this policy “romantic” or “unrealistic.” This view can still be found in many university textbooks on modern European history. For example, the American historian Robert O. Paxton, states: “The London Poles (like many Poles at home) were determined not to relinquish an inch of their swollen 1921 frontier. Indeed, some of the London Poles had dreams of an even greater Poland.”⁷⁷ A British historian of Polish descent, Anita J. Prażmowska, states that by 1943 the Polish government “had ended up in the wrong place and had committed all its resources to the wrong ally.”⁷⁸ She implies that the right ally would have been the USSR; therefore, the Polish government should have consented to a new eastern frontier on the Curzon Line and dropped some ministers as dictated by Moscow. This was the theme of officially-sanctioned histories of Poland in World War II published in Poland until the collapse of communism there in 1989. It is a view also shared by some historians of Poland today, notably Jan M. Ciechanowski, who fought as a young boy in the Warsaw Uprising of 1 August 1-2 October 1944, and settled in Britain after the war. He has consistently claimed that the leaders of the Warsaw Rising – the AK High Command – should have coordinated their plans with the Soviet High Command; by deciding not to do so “they assumed heavy responsibility for the fate of Warsaw and greatly contributed to the ensuing tragedy of this city and its people.” They should, he claims, have come to terms with Stalin. “Such a rapprochement,” writes Ciechanowski, “would have been very costly to Poland, but, in the second half of 1944, it was the only realistic course to adopt.” The most damning recent Polish condemnation of the Warsaw Rising is a polemical study by Tomasz Łubieński, published on its sixtieth anniversary in 2004.⁷⁹

What all these critics fail to note is that not only the Polish government-in-exile and the underground military and civilian leadership in German-occupied Poland, but also the vast majority of Poles at home and abroad, were adamant on Poland regaining the “Kresy” – the lands

east of the Curzon Line, which had been in Poland for centuries. They saw this region not only as an integral part of Poland, but also as necessary for Polish security versus the USSR and thus identified it with Polish independence. They were particularly attached to the former Polish cities of Wilno (Vilnius, now capital of Lithuania) and Lwów (now L’viv, the capital city of western Ukraine), which had majority Polish populations before the war. Finally, they firmly believed that their demand for an undiminished postwar Poland was justified by their fight against the Germans at home and abroad, as well as guaranteed by the principles of the Atlantic Charter, signed by Churchill and Roosevelt in August 1941. In the Charter, the two leaders rejected territorial aggrandizement and territorial changes made without the consent of the inhabitants. They also proclaimed the right of all peoples to freely choose their form of government.⁸⁰ These principles were repeated by both the U.S. and British governments during the war and at the Yalta Conference, where the Polish-Soviet frontier was fixed on the Curzon Line – with a few minor changes in Poland’s favor – and where the British and U.S. leaders implicitly recognized Soviet predominance in Eastern Europe.

In the light of Polish documents and press of the time, it is clear that if any Polish government accepted Soviet territorial and political demands during the war, it would have lost the support of most Poles at home and abroad. Since Polish public opinion refused to accept them, the government could not accept them either. Could it have persuaded the AK High Command, the Polish underground authorities, and public opinion in spring or summer 1944 to agree to the loss of eastern Poland and to a government reconstructed according to Soviet wishes, by supplying detailed information on allied support of Soviet policy aims? This is unlikely. First of all, the Polish government was never told outright that the British and U.S. governments agreed with Stalin; they did not do so for fear of a negative reaction by their own peoples. Roosevelt – who was keenly aware of the Democrats’ need for Polish-American votes to win the presidential election of November 1944 – kept Polish hopes alive by various statements of support. He even denied supporting the Curzon Line, as he told the Mikołajczyk in June 1944, so the Polish government could not tell the underground authorities in Poland that American support against Soviet demands was not to be expected. Secondly, even when British preferences were made clear by Churchill in February 1944, the

Poles could not believe his speech presaged acceptance of Stalin's proposals. Thus, it is clear that any Polish government which accepted the Soviet demands before war's end would be committing political suicide as far as its own people were concerned. At the same time, rejection of these demands condemned them to losing power as far as Stalin and the Western Allies were concerned.

There was no way out of this tragic dilemma. Is the Polish government to be condemned as romantic, and unrealistic – or as being in tune with majority Polish opinion which distrusted the Soviet Union, and therefore opposed agreement to its demands? It was only natural for Polish leaders, both at home and abroad, as well as the majority of Poles, to view the acceptance of Soviet territorial and political demands as synonymous with the loss of Polish independence. It was also natural for them to put their trust in the Western Democracies, which constantly repeated their adherence to the Atlantic Charter. As for the “realist” Mikołajczyk, his belief that the Western Powers would ensure the emergence of a democratic Poland proved to be an illusion. The powers condemned, but would not fight the imposition of communism in Central and Eastern Europe. Not surprisingly, they chose peace and stability over war while looking to their own security. The communist system in Eastern Europe underwent some changes but lasted for almost fifty years until it finally collapsed in 1989, beginning with Poland, while the USSR disintegrated two years later.

Today, however, Russian imperial policies are reviving while the European Union's (EU), economic links with Russia – particularly Germany's – are growing increasingly stronger, with a growing dependence on Russian oil and gas. The near future will tell whether the EU will support its Polish, Baltic, and other eastern members in a crunch against Moscow, and whether the United States and other NATO members will honor their military obligations to their eastern allies if the need arises. Let us hope that history will not repeat itself once more, this time in the shape of a Russian domination over Central and Eastern Europe achieved by economic instead of military means.

NOTES

¹ For the English text of the Riga Treaty of March 18, 1921, see *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations 1939-1945, vol. I. 1939-1945 (DPSR)*, edited by Stanisław Biegański et al, London, 1961, doc. 3; for recognition by the great powers: the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan, see “Decision of the Conference of Ambassadors on the Subject of the Frontiers between Poland and Soviet Russia and Lithuania,” 15 March 1923, *ibid.*, doc. 4. The United States acknowledged the decision on 5 April 1923, note, *ibid.*

² Text of the Soviet note in French, *DPSR* I doc. 43; English translation, *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, selected and edited by Jane Degras, vol. III, 1933-1942, Oxford 1953, 374; Russian text in *Dokumenty Vneshnei Politiki. (DVP), Tom XXII. 1939 God.* (Book 2). 1 Sentiabria – 31 Dekabria 1939 g., Moscow 1992, doc. 597. Soviet-Polish treaties broken by the Soviet Union were: the Treaty of Riga; the Pact of Paris (Kellogg-Briand Pact) of 27 August 1928, renouncing war as an instrument of national policy, signed by forty-five nations including Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Romania and the USSR on 9 February 1932; the Convention on the Definition of Aggression, 3 July 1933, signed, among others, by Poland and the USSR; and the Polish-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 25 July 1932, extended for ten years on 5 May 1934; for texts see *DPSR* I, docs 3,5,6,7,10.

³ For English language works on the Red Army's march into Poland and the Polish-Soviet war in September 1939, see John Erickson and Richard Szawłowski, in Keith Sword, ed., *The Soviet Takeover of the Polish Eastern Provinces, 1939-41*, New York 1991, ch. 1, 2. For NKVD documents on the placing of Polish officers and policemen in special camps, see Wojciech Materski, Natalia S. Lebediewa eds., *Katyn. Dokumenty Zbrodni. Tom 1. Jeńcy nie wypowiedzianej wojny, sierpień 1939 – marzec 1940*, Warsaw, 1995, docs. 38 ff; Russian edition, Materski and Lebedeva, eds., *Katyn. Plenniki neobiavlennoi voiny*, Moscow, 1997, docs. 38 ff. Vols. 2-4 of the Polish series, published in Warsaw, 1995-2006, deal with the murder of Polish officers, police, and civilians taken from the three special camps (vol.2), the Survivors (vol.3), and echoes of Katyn, 1943-2005 (vol.4). Vol. 2 of the Russian series covers the Katyn question from spring 1940 to the fall of 2000 (Mocow, 2001). For a selection of these documents in English translation, see Anna M. Cienciala, Natalia S. Lebedeva and Wojciech Materski eds., *Katyn. A Crime Without Punishment*, New Haven Ct, forthcoming in 2007.

⁴ For an English translation of the German text of the Secret Additional Protocol to the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Treaty of 23 August 1939, see *Documents on German Foreign Policy, (DGFP)*, ser. D, vol. VII, London, Washington, 1956, doc. 229; Russian text, *DVP. Tom XXI, (Book 1) 1 Ian'varia – 1 avgusta*

1939, Moscow 1992, doc. 485. For a recent English language study of the German-Soviet negotiations, and the policies of France, Great Britain, and Poland, see Anna M. Cienciala, "The Nazi-Soviet Pact of August 23, 1939: When did Stalin Decide to Align with Hitler, and Was Poland the Culprit?" in *Ideology, Politics and Diplomacy in East Central Europe*, edited by M.B.B. Biskupski, Rochester NY 2003, 147-226. The book was published in honor of Professor Piotr S. Wandycz, a prominent historian of Poland and East Central Europe, Bradford Durfee Professor of History Emeritus, Yale University. The map published in *Izvestia*, Moscow, 23 September 1939 included the river Pisu, which had been added by the contracting parties to the frontier running along the rivers Narw, Vistula and San on 28 August, see *DVP. Tom XXII*, (Book 1), doc. 507.

⁵ For the Congress of People's Deputies and its condemnation of the Additional Secret Protocol, see *Izvestia*, 25 December 1989; excerpts in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, 1990, no.42, #09, 11.1. The moving spirit behind the discovery of the Russian copies of the document in the Soviet archives and its condemnation was Aleksandr N. Yakovlev (1924-2005), then a member of the Politburo, advisor to President Mikhail S. Gorbachev, and chair of the Commission to Rehabilitate the Victims of Stalinist Terror. His "Demokratia" foundation financed the publication of the first volume of the Russian edition of the Katyn documents (see note 3 above). Yakovlev and Lebedeva were each awarded the Commander's Cross of the Polish Order of Merit by President Aleksander Kwaśniewski at Warsaw's Royal Castle on 18 April 2005. Yakovlev died in October 2005.

⁶ For the English translations of the German language text of the German-Soviet Boundary and Friendship Treaty of 28 September 1939, and its Secret Protocols, see *DGFP* ser. D, vol. VIII., docs. 157-160, reprinted in *DPSR* I, docs. 52-55; for Russian texts, see *DVP Tom XXII*, (Book 2), docs. 640-643. The agreement on the dollar payment was a separate provision signed on January 10, 1940 whereby the Germans gave up the Marijampole district in Lithuania to the USSR in exchange for \$7,500,000 in gold, see V.P. Naumov and L.E. Reshyn eds., *1941 god. Dokumenty*, (Book 1), Moscow, 1998, doc. 234 (this is not part of the *DVP* series); see also *DGFP*, D, vol. XI, doc. 638.

⁷ For a map showing both Ribbentrop-Molotov lines, see "Poland under German and Soviet occupation, 1939-1941," in Tadeusz Piotrowski, *Poland's Holocaust. Ethnic Strife, Collaboration with Occupying Forces and Genocide in the Second Republic*, Jefferson NC-London 1998, 8. For the second line only, generally named the Ribbentrop-Molotov line, see Paul Robert Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of Central Europe*, Revised and Expanded Edition, Seattle, 2002, map 50, World War II, 1939-1942, 178. For the Soviet-Lithuanian treaty of 10 October 1939, see *DVP 1939*. (Book 2), doc. 672.

⁸ For a recent book on German occupation policies in Poland from 1 September 1939 to 22 June 1941, see Alexander B. Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland. Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity*, Lawrence KS 2002; A. M. Cienciala review essay, *Polish Review*, vol. XLIX, (2004), no. 2, 825-837.

⁹ According to estimates based on NKVD records, the total number of Polish citizens deported from eastern Poland in 1940-1941 was 320,000, of whom about 147,000 could be verified by name, see table in Stanisław Ciesielski, Wojciech Materski, and Andrzej Paczkowski, *Represje sowieckie wobec Polaków i obywateli polskich* (Soviet Repressions of Polish Citizens, Warsaw 2000, 26; the report is online: http://www.indeks.karta.org.pl/represje_sowieckie_1.html). See also N.S. Lebedeva, "The Deportation of the Polish Population to the USSR, 1939-1941," *Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics*, vol. 16, March/June 2000, no.1/2, 28-45. For Polish government figures, see Zbigniew Siemiaszko, "The Mass Deportations of the Polish Population to the USSR, 1940-1941," in Keith Sword, ed., *The Soviet Takeover*, 217-23; see also Marek Tuszyński (Dale F. Denda, editor), "Soviet War Crimes against Poland during the Second World War and its Aftermath: A Review of the Factual Record and Outstanding Questions," *Polish Review*, (1999), vol. XL, no. 2, 183-216.

¹⁰ For these "elections," see Jan T. Gross, *Revolution from Abroad. The Soviet Conquest of Poland's Western Ukraine and Western Belorussia*, Princeton NJ 1988, chapter two, 71-113.

¹¹ For Polish government protests against Soviet aggression, the Soviet-German and Soviet-Lithuanian treaties, and Soviet actions in eastern Poland in 1939-1941, see *DPSR* I, docs. 45, 57, 63, 64, 65, 73, 74, 77, 83.

¹² On the Polish underground in eastern Poland (western Ukraine and western Belarus), see Tomasz Strzembosz and Jerzy Węgiński in Sword, ed., *The Soviet Takeover*, 149-200, ch. 9, 10. For NKVD records of the interrogations of arrested Polish underground leaders and activists, see the bilingual Polish-Russian documentary series on the Polish underground: *Polskie Podziemie na terenach Zachodniej Ukrainy i Zachodniej Białorusi w latach 1939-1941/ Pol'skoe Podpol'e na territorii Zapadnoi Ukrainy i Zapadnoi Belorussii 1939-1941 gg.*, especially volumes 1, 2, edited by Viktor Komogorov, Antoni Podolski, et al., Warsaw-Moscow 2001; also the bilingual Polish-Ukrainian series, *Polskie Podziemie 1939-1941/Pol'sk'e Pidpillia 1939-1941*, 3 vols. edited by Zuzanna Gajowniczek, Petro Kulakovskii et al., Warsaw-Kiev 1998-2004. See also the biography of the first underground commander in Soviet-occupied eastern Poland, Daniel Bargiełowski, *Po trzykroć pierwszy. Gen. Michał Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz*, tom 2, Warsaw 2001, ch. XV, 365-474.

¹³ For an English language study of the negotiations, see Anna M. Cienciala, "General Sikorski and the Conclusion of the Polish-Soviet Agreement of July 30, 1941: A Reassessment," *Polish Review*, (1996), vol. XLI, no. 4, 401-434. For the

English translation of documents on the negotiations, see *DPSR*, docs. 88 ff; for Polish language documents, see Eugeniusz Duraczynski ed, *Układ Sikorski-Majski. Wybór dokumentów*, Warsaw, 1990. On the "amnesty," see Marian Kukiel, *General Sikorski. Żołnierz i mąż stanu*, London 1970, 172-173; on the role of Sir Stafford Cripps, see Gabriel Gorodetsky, *Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow 1940-42*, Cambridge UK 1984, 191-192.

¹⁴ General Anders had been wounded and captured by Soviet troops in September 1939. He was first imprisoned in Lwów, where he rejected offers to join a new Polish government in a Soviet eastern Poland, or accept a high rank in the Red Army. He was very badly treated after these refusals and transferred to the Lubianka prison in Moscow, see his memoirs, *An Army in Exile. The Story of the Second Polish Corps*, Nashville TN 1980, ch. I-III. This is an English translation of the original: *Bez ostatniego rozdziału. Wspomnienia z lat 1939-1946*, Newton, Wales 1949, London, 1959, and later editions.

¹⁵ On the opposition to the Sikorski-Majski agreement because it lacked Soviet recognition of the prewar Polish-Soviet frontier, and how it was overcome see Kukiel, *General Sikorski*, ch. VII, 175-182; Cienciała, "General Sikorski," and the excellent study by Piotr S. Wandycz based on extensive sources, especially the August Zaleski papers: *Z Piłsudskim i Sikorskim. August Zaleski minister spraw zagranicznych w latach 1926-1932 i 1939-1941*, Warsaw 1999, 228-247.

¹⁶ On Sikorski's views and proposals regarding Poland's postwar western frontiers, see Sarah Meiklejohn Terry, "Sikorski and Poland's western borders," in Keith Sword, ed., *Sikorski: Soldier and Statesman. A Collection of Essays*, London 1990, 138-147; this is a summary of her detailed study, *Poland's Place in Europe. General Sikorski and the Origin of the Oder-Neisse Line, 1939-1943*, Princeton, NJ 1983. On Polish plans and bilateral negotiations for a Polish-Czechoslovak and Central European federation, see Waldemar Michowicz, ed., *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, tom V, 1939-1945, Warsaw 1999, sections by Michowicz and Wojciech Materski, 194-210, 278-293; see also Piotr S. Wandycz's pioneering study, *Czechoslovak-Polish Confederation and the Great Powers 1940-1943*, Westport CT 1979, and his later remarks, "Próby stworzenia konfederacji polsko-czechosłowackiej podczas II wojny światowej," *Znaki Czasu*, 20 (Oct.-Dec. 1990), 130-149. On Sikorski's statements of 3 July 1940 to the British Secretary of State for Labour, Aneurin Bevin, that Poland's eastern frontiers "might be a matter for discussion" and that Poland would be willing to accept some compromise on the Soviet-Polish frontier with compensation in the west at Germany's expense, see Antony Polonsky, ed., *The Great Powers and the Polish Question 1941-1945*, London 1976, doc. 15. On Sikorski's statements regarding possible changes in the Polish-Soviet frontier to Stefan Litauer in November 1939, to Bevin as above, also his mention to Lord Halifax on 19 June 1940 of the possibility of a "free discussion" of the Polish-Soviet frontier and

raising a Polish army in Soviet-occupied Poland, see Cienciała, "The Question of the Polish-Soviet Frontier in 1939-1940: The Litauer Memorandum and Sikorski's Proposals for Re-Establishing Polish-Soviet Relations," *Polish Review* (1988), vol. XXXIII, no. 3, 295-323. On the crisis within the Polish government over the leakage of Sikorski's proposals in July 1940, see Wandycz, *Z Piłsudskim i Sikorskim*, 194-209. On Czechoslovak policy toward the Polish government in 1939-1943, see Marek Kazimierz Kamiński, *Edvard Beneš kontra gen. Władysław Sikorski. Polityka władz czechosłowackich na emigracji wobec rządu polskiego na uchodźstwie 1939-1943*, Warsaw 2005.

¹⁷ On the Curzon Line as agreed at Spa on 10 July 1920 and extended to East Galicia in the Foreign Office the next day, when the note was sent, see "East Galicia and the Question of Poland's Eastern Frontier, November 1918 to December 1921," in Anna M. Cienciała and Titus Komarnicki, *From Versailles to Locarno. Keys to Polish Foreign Policy, 1919-1925*, Lawrence, KS 1984, ch. 6. For a map showing the frontline in East Galicia in August 1920 as running just east of Lwów, and the two versions of the Curzon Line, of which line A, inserted in the Foreign Office most likely according to a directive by British Prime Minister David Lloyd George, left Lwów and the oil fields on the Soviet side, while line B would have left it to the Poles, see Magocsi, *Historical Atlas of Central Europe*, map no. 38. For Lenin's statement on the Soviet rejection of the Curzon Line and on Soviet plans for Poland, see Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime*, New York 1993, ch. 4, 181-182; on plans to sovietize East Central Europe, and on revolution in Germany and Italy, see the documents cited in that chapter.

¹⁸ For an excellent but somewhat dated English language study of the Polish-Soviet War see Norman Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star. The Polish-Soviet War 1919-1920 and the 'Miracle on the Vistula'*, London 1972, and reprints. It was known for some time that Polish cryptographers had broken Red Army codes, and even blocked Soviet commander Mikhail N. Tukhachevsky's radio orders to his commanders. It was only recently, however, that a Polish historian read decoded Red Army messages in the Polish Central Military Archives. Bags of them had been taken by the Germans, then by the Soviets, as part of the Polish Military Intelligence archives and returned, apparently unread, to a Polish archive in the late 1950s, where they gathered dust for another fifty years. Grzegorz Nowik, "Szyfrolamacze," *Polityka* nr.32 (2516), Warsaw, 13 August 2005, 68-70; this is a summary of his book, *Zanim złamano ENIGMĘ. Polski radiowywiad podczas wojny z bolszewicką Rosją 1918-1920*, Warsaw 2002.

¹⁹ See *Concise Statistical Year-Book of Poland, September 1939 - June 1941*, edited by Dr. Ewa Estreicher-Grodzicka and Dr. Ludwik Grodzicki, published by the Polish Ministry of Information, London, December 1941, Section I, Tables 16, 17, 9-10. Polish historian Jerzy Tomaszewski proposed adjusted figures for

the major nationalities in 1931, as follows: Poles 21,993,000; Ukrainians, 4,442,000; Belorussians, 990,000; Germans, 741,000, see Jerzy Tomaszewski, *Rzeczpospolita Wielu Narodów*, Warsaw 1985, 35, reprinted in Tadeusz Piotrowski, *Poland's Holocaust*, Jefferson NC and London 1998, Table 16, 294.

²⁰ According to the 1931 census, the total population of Lwów was, 312,200 of whom 198,200 spoke Polish, 75,000 spoke Yiddish and Hebrew, and 35,110 spoke Ukrainian and Ruthenian, plus smaller minorities. Out of a total Wilno population of 195,100 Polish speakers numbered 128,600 Yiddish-Hebrew speakers, 45,800 plus small numbers of others, see *Concise Statistical Year-Book...1939-1941*, I, Tables 25, 26.

²¹ See the Russian record of the first meeting between Stalin, Molotov, and Maitsky on the Soviet side, and Eden and Cripps on the British side, 16 December 1941, 7 m., also the Additional Protocols, marked "Confidential," in *War and Diplomacy. The Making of the Grand Alliance. Documents from Stalin's Archives*, edited with a commentary by Oleg A. Rzheshevsky. Translated from the Russian by T. Sorokina, Amsterdam 1996, docs. 4, 5, 6, also docs. 7-14 on further meetings, draft agreements and letters. For extensive quotations from the British record and analysis, see Steven Merritt Miner, *Between Churchill and Stalin. The Soviet Union, Great Britain, and the Origins of the Grand Alliance*, Chapel Hill and London 1988, Chapter Six, "A Dismal Tale of Clumsy Diplomacy. December 1941- April 1943;" on Eden in Moscow, his report on the talks, also his and Churchill's doctoring of same, see *ibid.*, 184-200. Merritt Miner is one of the few western historians who condemn British wartime policy toward the USSR.

²² For the Sikorski-Cripps conversation of 26 January 1942, see *DPSR I*, doc. 176; for the Sikorski-Churchill conversation of 31 January 1942 see Marek Kazimierz Kamiński and Jacek Tebinka, eds., *Na najwyższym szczeblu. Spotkania premierów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej i Wielkiej Brytanii podczas II wojny światowej*, Warsaw 1999, doc. 10 and *DPSR I* doc. 179. For an excellent study of British policy on the Polish-Soviet Frontier in World War II, see Jacek Tebinka, *Polityka brytyjska wobec problemu granicy polsko-radzieckiej 1939-1945*, Warsaw 1998. For the English translation of General Anders' note on the Sikorski-Stalin conversation of December 4, 1941 – where the Oder frontier is not mentioned – see *DPSR I*, doc. 160.

²³ For the Polish record of the Sikorski-Stalin conversation of 3 December 1941, as dictated by Ambassador Stanisław Kot on the basis of the Anders notes, see Anders, *Bez ostatniego rozdziału*, 87-101; for the English translation of the Polish record, see *DPSR I*, doc. 159; for the Russian record, see Lebedeva and Materski eds., *Katyn. Mart 1940 – Sentiabr 2000 g. Rasstrel, Sud'by Zhiv'ykh. Ekho Kat'yni. Dokumenty*, Moscow 2001, doc. 176; Polish translation from the

Russian in Materski and Lebediewa et al., eds., *Katyn. Dokumenty Zbrodni Tom 3. Losy Ocalałych, lipiec 1940 – marzec 1943*, Warsaw 2001, doc. no.221.

²⁴ On British Cabinet discussions, consultations with Washington, and U.S. reactions, see Merrit Minor, *Between Churchill and Stalin*, Chapter Seven, "Triumph of Accommodation?: April-June 1942."

²⁵ Sikorski to Churchill on 11 March 1942. Churchill assured Sikorski on 26 April, that the British-Soviet alliance treaty would safeguard Polish interests and, if not Poland's unconditional territorial integrity, then in any case, its integrity as a strong and independent state, see Kamiński and Tebinka, *Na najwyższym szczeblu*, docs. 11, 12; *DPSR I*, docs. 191, 211.

²⁶ Sikorski's first visit to the United States was in March 1941, when he also visited Canada. For the Polish record of Sikorski's conversations with President Roosevelt in the presence of the then Polish Foreign Minister Edward Raczynski and the Polish Ambassador to the United States, Jan Ciechanowski, on 24 and 26 March 1942, see *Protokoły Posiedzeń Rady Ministrów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej, Tom IV. Grudzień 1941 – Sierpień 1942* (henceforth *R.M. R.P.*), Marian Zgórniak series editor, Wojciech Rojek volume editor, with the cooperation of Andrzej Suchcitz, Kraków 1998, annex 115 D, 227-229, 235-237; English version of the 24 March conversation, *DPSR I*, doc.194; see also Jan Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory*, Garden City NY 1947, 98-99.

²⁷ "Uchwała zjazdu założycielskiego Związku Ziemi Północno-Wschodnich," Edinburgh, 31 October 1942, *Dziennik Żołnierza*, Glasgow, no. 154, 3 November 1942; „Za co umieramy, o co walczymy, dla czego żyjemy?” *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, Rok IV, no. 46 (150), Warsaw, 26 November 1942, both reprinted in Dariusz Baliszewski [and] Krzysztof Kunert eds., *Prawdziwa Historia Polaków. Ilustrowane wypisy źródłowe 1939-1945, vol. 1, 1939-1942*, Warsaw 1999, docs.724 and 752; translation by A. M. Cienciała.

²⁸ On the Anglo-Soviet negotiations in London, 20-24 May 1942, and the signing of the alliance, see Merrit Minor, *Between Churchill and Stalin*, 236-251; extracts from the treaty, Polonsky, *The Great Powers and the Polish Question 1941-45. A Documentary Study in Cold War Origins*, London 1976, doc. 37. For Stalin's cable to Molotov of 24 May 1942, see Rzheshevsky, *War and Diplomacy*, doc. 38, 122. On Molotov's visit to Washington and American assurances on launching a second front in 1942, see Robert Dallek, *Franklin Delano Roosevelt and American Foreign Policy 1932-1945*, New York 1979, 341-344.

²⁹ On Roosevelt to Adolf Berle on his approval of territorial cessions to the USSR, see *Navigating the Rapids, 1918-1971; from the Papers of Adolf A. Berle*, edited by Beatrice Bishop Berle and Travis Beal Jacobs, New York 1973, entry for 30 April 1942, 401.

³⁰ For the text of Churchill's radio speech of 1 October 1939, see Waclaw Jędrzejewicz ed., with the assistance of Pauline Ramsey, *Poland in the British Parliament 1939-1945, vol. I. British Guarantees to Poland to the Atlantic Charter*, New York 1946, 299-300. For Halifax's speech of 26 October see *ibid.*, 356. On the British offer to Stalin of de facto recognition of the Soviet western frontier of 1939-1941 and his rejection of it, see Gorodetsky, *Stafford Cripps' Mission to Moscow*, 76 ff., and Merrit Minor, *Between Churchill and Stalin*, chapter 3. The Education of Sir Stafford: August-November 1940.

³¹ For pro-Soviet public opinion in Britain, see "The Height of Russomania, 1941 - early 1943," in P.M.H. Bell, *John Bull and the Bear. British Public Opinion, Foreign Policy and the Soviet Union 1941-1945*, London 1990, 88-96.

³² For Churchill's advice to Sikorski against a public statement, see Kamiński, Tebinka, *Na najwyższym szczeblu*, doc. 16 A. For Kukiel's communiqué of 16 April 1943, see *DPSR I*, doc. 307. The best pre-1990 account of the Katyn massacre is still J[anusz] K[azimierz] Zawodny, *Death in the Forest. The Story of the Katyn Forest Massacre*, Notre Dame IN and New York 1962, and reprints; also the expanded Polish version, *Katyn*, Lublin, Paris 1989. For Russian documents published after 1990, see note 3 above. For an excellent English language study based on these documents, see George Sanford, *Katyn and the Soviet Massacre of 1940. Truth, justice and memory*, London, New York 2005. For British policy on Katyn at the time, see Bell, *John Bull & the Bear*, 109-127; for a selection of documents illustrating British policy on Katyn over sixty years, see *Katyn. British Reactions to the Katyn Massacre, 1943-2003*, The Foreign & Commonwealth Office, London, 2003.

³³ For Stalin's letter to Churchill of April 21, 1943, in which he condemned the Polish government for its request to the IRC and accused the Poles of collaborating with the Germans – but did not list the conditions mentioned by Eden to Sikorski, see *DPSR I*, doc. 310, also Antony Polonsky, ed. *The Great Powers*, doc. 51. For Sikorski's report on his conversation with Eden on 24 April 1943, see *Protokoły R.M. R.P.* Tom V, Kraków 2001, doc. 107 A, English translation, *DPSR II*, Supplement 15, 696-702; see also Churchill to Stalin 25 April, 1943, in Antony Polonsky, ed., *The Great Powers*, doc. 52.

³⁴ For the English translation of the Soviet note handed to Polish Ambassador Tadeusz Romer in Moscow at midnight, 25 April 1943, see *DPSR I*, doc. 313, also Polonsky, *Great Powers*, doc. 53. For the account of the Molotov-Romer midnight meeting by the Polish Embassy Councilor, the Russian-speaking Aleksander Mniszek, see Baliszewski and Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia, tom II, 1942-1944*, Warsaw 1999, doc. 971.

³⁵ For samples of Polish press reactions, see Baliszewski & Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia*, II, nos. 943, 944.

³⁶ For the Soviet note of 16 January 1943, see *DPSR I*, doc. 285; Polish reply, *ibid.*, doc. 286. On Wanda Wasilewska and her conversations with Stalin in early February 1943, see "Wspomnienia Wandy Wasilewskiej (1939-1944)," reproduced from interviews recorded on tape before her death in Feliks Tych, ed., *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, tom VII, Warsaw 1982, 383. On General Zygmunt Berling, the Kościuszko Division, and the Polish First People's Army, see Stanisław Jaczyński, *Zygmunt Berling. Między sławą a potępieniem*, Warsaw 1993.

³⁷ Sikorski to Rowecki, 23 November 1941, extracts in Baliszewski and Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia*, I, no. 468, reprint from *Armia Krajowa w Dokumentach (AKD)*, Tadeusz Pełczyński et al., eds., London 1973, vol. II, no. 287, note 2, 200-201.

³⁸ Sikorski to Rowecki, 3 March 1942, *AKD II*, doc. 287. Sikorski to Rowecki, 6 February and 25 March 1943, *ibid.*, docs. 386, 408. The order for AK units not to surface when the Soviets came in was confirmed in a later order of October 1943, but this order was, in turn, countermanded by the AK High Command.

³⁹ Polish government declaration of February 25, 1943, Baliszewski and Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia*, II, doc. 856; *DPSR I*, doc. 294.

⁴⁰ For the Polish text of Roosevelt's letter, see *Protokoły R.M. R.P. t. IV*, annex 155L, (211-2)2.

⁴¹ For William Bullitt's proposals in his report of 29 January 1943 to the President, also his meeting with Roosevelt and the latter's view of Stalin, see Dennis J. Dunn, *Caught Between Roosevelt & Stalin. America's Ambassadors to Moscow*, Lexington KY 1998, 176-177. For the Eden-Roosevelt dinner conversation, Washington, 15 March 1943, see Memorandum by Mr. Harry Hopkins, *Foreign Relations of the United States, (FRUS) 1943*, vol. III, Washington 1963, 13-18. Harry Hopkins, Roosevelt's closest confidant at the time, believed that everything should be done to satisfy Soviet demands.

⁴² Rowecki cable to Sikorski, 19 June 1943, *AKD III*, London 1976, doc. 453.

⁴³ For the report of the British investigation on the crash of Sikorski's plane just off the runway at Gibraltar airport, see Sword, *Sikorski*, Appendix 2, 167-209. For a detailed study of the catastrophe, see David C. Irving, *Accident. The Death of General Sikorski*, London 1967.

⁴⁴ For Churchill on Sikorski, 6 and 16 July 1943, see Jędrzejewicz, *Poland in the British Parliament*, vol. II, New York 1959, 235-237. For Cadogan's note of 5 July 1943, see David Dilks, ed., *The Diaries of Sir Alexander Cadogan O.M. 1938-1945*, London 1971, 540, italics, *ibid.*; for Strang on Sikorski, see Kukiel, *General Sikorski*, 242. The general's remains were buried in the Polish Air Force cemetery at Newark, near Nottingham. They were moved to Poland and re-buried among Poland's kings and heroes in the Wawel Castle Cathedral, Kraków, on 17 September 1993.

⁴⁵ For Mikołajczyk's statement on Polish foreign policy, 16 July 1943, see *DPSR II*, doc. 21.

⁴⁶ For Litvinov's report of 2 June 1943, see Amos Perlmutter, *FDR and Stalin. A Not so Grand Alliance, 1943-1945*, Columbia MS and London 1993, 243, 252. For Gromyko's report of 22 July 1943, see Georgii A. Arbatov, ed., *Sovetsko-Amerikanskiie Otnosheniia vo Vremia Otechestvennoi Voiny*, vol. I., doc. 206, Moscow 1984, 338-339.

⁴⁷ See the memorandum of 10 August 1943 to Harry Hopkins by Major General J.H. Burns, the Executive of the President's Soviet Protocol Committee, which Hopkins brought to the Quadrant Conference, see *The Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943*, *FRUS*, Washington 1970, 624-627. On the pro-Soviet views of the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, which subordinated all other objectives to securing Soviet armed aid against Japan, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff perception of the USSR as a potential enemy only in the fall of 1945, see Mark A. Stoler, "Allies or Adversaries? The Joint Chiefs of Staff and Soviet-American Relations, Spring 1945," in Arnold A. Offner and Theodore A. Wilson, eds., *Victory in Europe 1945. From World War to Cold War*, Lawrence, KS 2000, 145-166. For A.M. Cienciała's contribution to this volume, see "The View from Poland," *ibid.*, 47-102.

⁴⁸ For Roosevelt's views in September 1943 as recorded by Cardinal Spellman, see Robert I. Gannon, *The Cardinal Spellman Story*, Garden City NY 1962, 222-224, 246.

⁴⁹ See Leon Mitkiewicz, *W najwyższym sztabie zachodnich aliantów 1943-1945*, London 1981, note of 20 September 1943, 76. On Col. Mitkiewicz's service on the U.S. Combined Chiefs of Staff, and his reports to General Sosnkowski, see: Ewa Pankiewicz, *Pułkownik Leon Mitkiewicz-Żółtek. Działalność wojskowa i dyplomatyczna*, Białystok 1999, chap.V. The book is based on the Mitkiewicz papers, left to the author's father, the colonel's adopted son.

⁵⁰ For a summary of the Tehran Conference talks and decisions on Poland, based on published sources, see Jan Karski, "The Tehran Conference: Roosevelt's Secret Diplomacy, November 28-December 1, 1943," ch. XXIX in his book, *The Great Powers & Poland, 1919-1945. From Versailles to Yalta*, Lanham MD 1985. For British policy toward Poland before and at Tehran, see Martin Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill, The Road to Victory*, Boston 1986, ch. 33-36; Tebinka, *Polityka brytyjska*, ch. IV; also A.M.Cienciała, "Great Britain and Poland Before and After Yalta," *Polish Review*, vol. XL, 1995, no. 3, 281-314.

⁵¹ Map of Poland with Stalin's red pencil lines, *The Conferences of Cairo and Tehran, 1943*, *FRUS*, Washington 1961, between 600 and 601, with an explanatory note by Charles Bohlen.

⁵² For the Anglo-Polish talks and other relevant documents for the period 5 January-16 February 1944, see Polish records in Kamiński and Tebinka, *Na*

najwyższym szczeblu, docs. 20B-22, and *DPSR II*, docs. 69-106, also Tebinka, *Polityka brytyjska*, ch. IV. For extracts from the British records on the Churchill-Mikołajczyk conversations, see Martin Gilbert, *Churchill, Road to Victory, 1941-1945*, 657 ff; see also *DPSR II*, docs. 83 ff; Polish Cabinet resolution of 2 February 1944, doc. 100; English translation of the Polish record for 16 February, doc. 103, For Churchill's message to Stalin, 20 February 1944 (sent 21 February), see *ibid.*, doc. 107, also Polonsky, *Great Powers*, doc. 87, and *FRUS 1943*, vol. III, 1259-1262.

⁵³ For Churchill's speech in the House of Commons and discussion, 22 February 1944, see Jędrzejewicz, *Poland in the British Parliament*, vol. II, 336 ff; extracts from the speech, *DPSR II*, doc. 109.

⁵⁴ Stalin to Churchill, 28 February 1944, *DPSR II*, doc. 111; for Ambassador Clark-Kerr's report on his conversation with Stalin, 28 February, see Polonsky, *Great Powers*, doc. 88.

⁵⁵ On the Lange-Orlemanski trip to the USSR in May 1944, and Lange's role as Roosevelt's unofficial envoy to sound out Stalin on the future Polish government, see a study based mainly on Russian archival sources: Anna M. Cienciała, "New Light on Oskar Lange as an Intermediary between Roosevelt and Stalin in Attempts to Create a New Polish Government (January-November 1944)," *Acta Poloniae Historica*, Warsaw 1996, vol. LXXIII, 89-134. For a study based mainly on American archival sources, see Robert Szymczak, "Oskar Lange, American Polonia, and the Polish-Soviet Dilemma in World War II," part I, *Polish Review*, vol. XL, no. 1, 1995, 3-27; part II, *Polish Review*, vol. XL, and no. 2, 138-158.

⁵⁶ Cable sent from Warsaw to the Polish government in London with the Resolution of the Council of National Unity and the Delegate of the Government in Poland, 15 February 1944, printed in the *Rzeczpospolita Polska*, Warsaw, 10 March 1944, see Baliszewski and Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia*, II, doc. 1360; *AKD*, III, doc. 531; English version, *DPSR II*, doc. 102.

⁵⁷ All three newspapers are cited Baliszewski and Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia*, t. II, docs. 1392, 1393, 1402; translations by A. M. Cienciała.

⁵⁸ The KRN was established without previous permission from Moscow and was not recognized until its members reached the Soviet capital in May 1944. For Gomulka's letter to Dimitrov, see Antony Polonsky and Boleslaw Drukier, eds., *The Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland. December 1943-June 1945*, London 1980, doc. 3, 206; for the KRN members lobbying for Lwów and the oil fields in Moscow, see *ibid.*, 25 July 1944, Frontier Problems, doc. 21, 252; see also Edward Osóbka-Morawski's account, as edited by Edward Puacz, of the KRN-PKWN deliberations and talks with Molotov in Moscow, concluded with a secret agreement on the Polish-Soviet frontier, "Sprawa Granic Polski w Układach między P.K.W.N. i ZSSR," *Zeszyty Historyczne*, Paris 1969, nr.15, 201

ff. In a conversation with the author of this article in Warsaw, June 1980, Osóbka-Morawski (first KRN chair, later chair of the Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego, PKWN, Polish Committee of National Liberation), indicated that he did not approve Puacz's editing of his account. During the war, Puacz (1905-1985) was a left-wing Polish socialist in London who advocated agreement to Soviet demands. After the war, he settled in Chicago, where he established the Polonia Bookstore.

⁵⁹ For Stalin to Churchill, 23 March 1944, see Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill, Road to Victory*, 704, 718; *DPSR II*, docs. 118, 119; Polonsky, *Great Powers*, doc. 91.

⁶⁰ See Roman Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, Tom I, Toronto 1996, 476-481. For St. Grabski's record of the talks on 23 and 31 May 1944, see Stanisław Kirkor, "Rozmowy polsko-sowieckie w 1944 Roku," *Zeszyty Historyczne*, no. 22, Paris 1972, 41-56.

⁶¹ For the best account of Mikołajczyk's talks in Washington, see the memoirs of the Polish Ambassador in Washington, Jan Ciechanowski, *Defeat in Victory*, ch. XXII, XXIII. For Roosevelt's statement of support for awarding the three eastern cities to Poland, see Mikołajczyk memorandum on the conversation for the State Department, 12 June 1944, *DPSR II*, doc. 141, 252, see also Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, I, 483-495. For the official U.S. record of the conversations during Mikołajczyk's visit, see *FRUS 1944*, vol. 3, 1272-78, 1280-82, and summary, 1285-89; for a hint of Roosevelt's promise on the three cities, see *ibid.*, 1288, pt. 6, par. 2. For his assurances to Stalin of 17 June 1944, see *ibid.*, 1283.

⁶² For the Mikołajczyk-Lebedev talks, London, 2-23 June 1944, see Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, t.I, 500-503; Kirkor, "Rozmowy," 56 ff; see also summary of the May Grabski-Lebedev and the June Mikołajczyk-Lebedev talks in Anthony Eden to Sir Archibald Clark-Kerr (British Ambassador, Moscow), telegram, (extracts), London, 8 July 1944, Polonsky, *Great Powers*, doc. 99, and *FRUS*, vol. 3, 1944, 1292-1296.

⁶³ On the PPR, the formation of KRN, the PKWN and its members, and Soviet policy, see Krystyna Kersten, *The Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland, 1943-1948*, translated and annotated by John Micgiel & Michael H. Bernard. Foreword by Jan T. Gross, Berkeley, CA 1991, Part I; documents in Polonsky and Drukier, *The Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland*, Part I; for the Polish text of the PKWN manifesto, see Włodzimierz Kowalski and I. A. Khrenov, eds., *Dokumenty i Materiały do Historii Stosunków Polsko-Radzieckich*, t. VIII, Warsaw 1974, doc.70; English summary, Polonsky and Drukier, *Beginnings of Communist Rule*, doc. 20, note 2, 249-250.

⁶⁴ For the most detailed English language description of the Polish AK High Command, the Government Delegate and National Council members' deliberations in Warsaw, and the military situation on the eastern bank of the

Vistula, see Norman Davies, *The Rising '44. The Battle for Warsaw*, London 2003, New York 2004, ch. V; see also the expanded Polish version, *Powstanie '44*, translated by Elżbieta Tabakowska, Kraków 1994. For the Kościuszko Radio broadcast of 30 July, see Baliszewski and Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia*, t. 3, Warsaw 2000, doc. 1596. For the Warsaw PPR committee plans, see Antoni Przygoński, *Powstanie Warszawskie w sierpniu 1944 r.*, vol. I, Warsaw 1988, 145-146.

⁶⁵ See sketch map "The Vistula Sector: August 1944," Davies, *The Rising*, Appendix 17, 659.

⁶⁶ For a detailed account of the Moscow talks, 31 July-9 August 1944, see Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, 512-523; for English translations of Polish notes on the Moscow talks, see *DPSR II*, docs. 177-189; see also the reports of British Ambassador Clark-Kerr and U.S. Ambassador Harriman, in Polonsky, *Great Powers*, docs. 102,103. For Harriman reports and documents on U.S. policy, see "Poland," in *FRUS 1944*, v. III, *The British Commonwealth and Europe*, Washington 1965, 1216-1448.

⁶⁷ The most detailed English language study of the Warsaw Rising is Norman Davies' work cited in n. 64 above. There are many Polish language studies which cannot be listed here, but there is a very informative collection of papers on various aspects of the rising read at a conference held in Warsaw in June 1994, see *Powstanie Warszawskie z perspektywy półwiecza. Studia i materiały z sesji naukowej na Zamku Królewskim w Warszawie, 14-15 czerwca 1994*, edited by Marian Drozdowski et al., Warsaw 1994, summary by Andrzej Friszke, *Zeszyty Historyczne*, (Paris 1994), nr. 109, 223-235. See also the invaluable collection of interviews with participants and witnesses of the Warsaw Rising: Janusz Kazimierz Zawodny, *Uczestnicy i świadkowie Powstania Warszawskiego. Wywiady*, Warsaw 1994, and reprint edited by Andrzej Krzysztof Kunert, Warsaw 2004. On Churchill and British public opinion during the Warsaw Rising, see P.M.H. Bell, *John Bull and the Bear*, ch. 5, 128-172.

⁶⁸ For the Polish Council of Ministers resolution, text A, and the PPS resolution, text B, also the answers of the Krajowa Rada Ministrów and General Bór-Komorowski, see Baliszewski and Kunert, *Prawdziwa Historia*, t. 3, docs. 1754, 1799, 1800, after *AKD IV*, London 1977, docs. 898 ff; see also Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, I, 541-551; for the English translation of the memorandum of the Polish Council of Ministers, 29 August 1944 (final version), also Bór-Komorowski to Premier Mikołajczyk and General Sosnkowski, 29 August, see *DPSR II*, docs. 214, 215.

⁶⁹ For an account of the Moscow talks, 13-18 October 1944, see Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, I, ch. XIV, also *DPSR II*, docs. 237-246 and Polonsky, *Great Powers*, doc. 112; see also Gilbert, *Winston S. Churchill, Road*, ch. 53, "Moscow, October 1944: 'Powerless in the Face of Russia.'

⁷⁰ See resolution of the Polish Council of Ministers on the reply to the conditions put to the Polish Government at the October 1943 Conference in Moscow, *DPSR* II, docs. 258, 260.

⁷¹ For Ambassador Raczyński's note on the conversation of 6 November 1944, see *DPSR* II, doc. 261.

⁷² For President Roosevelt's letter to Mikołajczyk of 17 November 1944, delivered by Ambassador W. Averell Harriman five days later, and on the Harriman-Mikołajczyk conversations of 22-24 November 1944, see *FRUS* 1944, v. III, 1334-1337, *DPSR* II, docs. 268, 269, and Polonsky, *The Great Powers*, doc. 115; see also Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, ch. XV.

⁷³ See the report of a conversation with Mikołajczyk by John Gilbert Winant, U.S. ambassador to Great Britain, 25 November 1944, *DPSR* II, doc. 272.

⁷⁴ For an overview of the Polish question at Yalta, see Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland*, ch. 37, also Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, I, ch. XVI, and Andrzej Paczkowski, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk czyli klęska realisty*, Warsaw 1991, ch. V. For documents, see *FRUS. The Conferences of Malta and Yalta*, Washington 1945, also Polonsky, *The Great Powers*, docs. 123-130, and Zygmunt Szkopiak, ed., *The Yalta Agreements. Documents prior to, during and after the Crimea Conference, 1945*, Published by the Polish Government in Exile, London March 1986. See also William Larsh, "Yalta and the American Approach to Free Elections in Poland," *Polish Review* vol. XL (1995), no. 3, 267-280, and Anna M. Cienciała, "Great Britain and Poland Before and After Yalta (1943-1945): A Reassessment," *ibid.*, 281-314. For retrospectives from the Polish point of view see the study by a leading Polish historian. Krystyna Kersten, *Jalta w polskiej perspektywie*, Warsaw 1989, and her study of the policy of the "government of national protest," which succeeded Mikołajczyk's government, in *Historia Dyplomacji Polskiej, t. V, 1939-1945*, ch. VIII; also Marian Marek Drozdowski, ed., *Jalta. Szkice i Polemiki*, Warsaw 1996.

⁷⁵ For Mikołajczyk's negotiations with the PKWN in Moscow, see Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, I, ch. XVII. On the trial of the sixteen underground leaders kidnapped by the NKVD in Poland, see the NKVD documents in Polish translation edited by Andrzej Chmielarz and Andrzej Krzysztof Kunert, *Proces Szesnastu. Dokumenty NKWD*, Warsaw 1995.

⁷⁶ For Mikołajczyk's role at Potsdam, see Buczek, *Stanisław Mikołajczyk*, I, ch. XVIII. For documents on Polish frontiers and elections at the Potsdam Conference, see *FRUS. The Potsdam Conference*, vol. II, Washington 1960; the key documents are reproduced in Polonsky, *The Great Powers*, docs. 146-149.

⁷⁷ Robert O. Paxton, *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 3rd edition, Fort Worth TX 1997, 505.

⁷⁸ Anita J. Prażmowska, *Britain and Poland 1939-1943. The Betrayed Ally*, Cambridge 1995, 166. For a discussion of western historians' views of the policy

of the Polish government-in-exile, see A.M.Cienciała, "The Polish Government's Policy on the Polish-Soviet Frontier in World War II as Viewed by American, British and Canadian Historians," *Polish Review*, vol. XLVI, 2001, no. 1, 3-26.

⁷⁹ See Jan M. Ciechanowski, *The Warsaw Rising of 1944*, Cambridge 1974, 313-315; his book had three Polish language editions in People's Poland; see also his *Na Tropach Tragedii. Powstanie Warszawskiej 1944. Wybór dokumentów wraz z komentarzem*, Warsaw 1992. He reiterated his views in a biting critique of the Polish version of Norman Davies's book in *Zeszyty Historyczne*, nr. 149, Paris 2004, 99-117. Similar views were expressed by Polish historian Eugeniusz Duraczyński in *Zeszyty Historyczne* nr.150, 180-187; see also Tomasz Łubieński, *Ani Tryumf, ani Zgon. Szkice o Powstaniu Warszawskim*, Warsaw 2004. For a different view, also by a participant in the Rising, who became a political scientist and historian in the United States, see J. K. Zawodny, *Nothing but Honour. The Story of the Warsaw Uprising, 1944*, Stanford, CA 1978, Polish version translated by Halina Górka and edited by Andrzej Krzysztof Kunert, *Powstanie warszawskie w walce i dyplomacji*, Warsaw 1994, reprint 2005.

⁸⁰Text of the Atlantic Charter of 14 August, 1942: *FRUS, 1941*, vol. I, Washington, 1958, 368-369.

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