

POLISH LABOUR TO THE FREE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD



NEW YORK, N. Y.

We are appealing to you on behalf of fighting Warsaw. Our voice is the voice of the people of Warsaw, who in every generation for 150 years have risen to fight foreign invaders. Our voice is the voice of the workers of Warsaw, who are the backbone of the present struggle in that city.

Five years ago Poland was the first to put up armed resistance against the aggression of German imperialism. The workers' battalions stood up in defence of beleaguered and defenceless Warsaw. Warsaw paid for its resistance in September 1939—the price was 80,000 killed. We were alone then, but we did not regret the sacrifices because we linked them with the certainty of future victory and the Poland's right to recover her full freedom and independence in the hour of triumph of the free nations of the world.

In defiance of the German terror regime there grew up a wide network of underground organisation, especially of the underground Labour movement centred round the Polish Socialist Party. Underground Poland has never capitulated and during five years of struggle has sacrificed five million victims—men and women—tortured in German prisons and concentration camps, shot, hanged or executed in gas chambers. Never, not for a single moment, did the Poles waver, neither have there been any traitors amongst them. We continued fighting even when the German armies were at the peak of their successes, when they occupied nearly the whole of Europe, even when they were at the gates of Moscow and before Stalingrad.

We lacked one thing only: we were not sufficiently armed to contest the mechanised might of the modern Huns. For a long time now we have been appealing for arms, our voices ever growing in insistence. The flower of the Polish nation has been waiting for those arms.

Warsaw had to begin its fight on August 1st, 1944 insufficiently armed. The people of Warsaw began the struggle convinced that they would receive speedy and efficient help from the Allies. This help did not come five years ago, when the Allies were insufficiently armed. To-day the armed forces of the Allies have overwhelming superiority over those of Germany.

After years of the oppressor's hated rule the capitals of other subjugated nations are throwing off the yoke. We are sharing the joy of liberated Paris and of free Brussels. We are sharing the pride of the people of London, who have victoriously braved all trials. But to-day, looking on the ruins of burning Warsaw, we ask ourselves and the world: why is a similar joy denied to us?

With the first stroke the workers of Warsaw, the bulk of the Underground Home Army seized nearly the whole city. With bare hands they captured German tanks, with bottles of petrol they destroyed Panther and Tiger tanks. The arms of the insurgents consisted of small arms and hand grenades produced secretly in the underground workshops. Barricades blocked traffic for the German units, but when no effective help was forthcoming, torrents of fire and steel began to fall on our Capital. After having with fire cleared a passage through the three main thoroughfares and over the bridges across the Vistula the Germans began assaults on and the systematic destruction of district after district. Warsaw is under fire from 24-inch mortars, heavy artillery, flame-throwers, armoured trains and gunboats. German planes come in waves, without respite, dropping bombs.

Among the ruins and raging fires the units of the Polish Underground Army have clung to every inch of ground and the enemy was able to enter only where no human being remained alive. The beautiful Mediaeval Old Town has been destroyed, not a single one of its thousand houses has escaped destruction, and thousands of people have perished under the debris. One district after another falls into ruins.

The Germans drive the civilian population, men, women and children into camps around Warsaw, where the conditions are unbelievable in a civilised world. Warsaw is without light or water, as well as without food. Nothing can stop the fires raging in the city. High is the toll taken by hunger and epidemics. The Germans threaten to erase Warsaw completely. The fate which the Warsaw ghetto met in May last year shall now be the fate of the whole of Warsaw, the fate of a million men and women.

Warsaw is not waiting for words of sympathy or consolation. Warsaw is not inviting applause or admiration, nor asking for mourning wreaths. Warsaw is not begging for anything, neither are we begging for anything on behalf of Warsaw. We demand, and we have the right to demand, immediate and effective help in the struggle. We demand continuous and sufficient supplies of arms and ammunition for the Polish defenders of Warsaw. We demand fighter cover against the Luftwaffe. We demand the bombing of German positions and airfields in and around Warsaw.

We have the right to state that Poles have shed their blood in both hemispheres wherever the struggle for freedom has raged. The Polish soldiers have never been out of the fighting in this war, from any battle for freedom, either on land, on sea or in the air. Our nation cannot understand, and never will understand why, in the hour of its hardest trial, Poland should be left alone.

We repudiate all charges and all pretexts which aim at veiling the truth about the fighting in Warsaw. We know one truth and one reality only: the reality of a city fighting and perishing for the common cause—the freedom of the world. We appeal to the simplest morality in the relations between free nations. We appeal to the conscience of the world. Fighting with the utmost strain on nerve and willpower, Warsaw demands that the voice of conscience should be followed by the dispatch of effective help. We are transmitting the voice of Warsaw to the workers and peasants, democrats, trade-unionists and socialists of the whole world.

We believe that they will make the cause of Warsaw their own. We believe, we wish to believe, that the arrival of immediate and effective help for Warsaw will be, for the martyred Polish nation, a confirmation of its unyielding faith that a new solidarity, the solidarity of the free peoples of the world, will be born from the sacrifices and tortures of Nazi occupation, and from the struggle of millions for freedom. We appeal to all men and women of the free countries, to the ordinary people in towns and villages, who will understand Warsaw's plight. After forty days of unequal struggle, of fighting amongst ruins and fires with the last of its energy, Warsaw is still expecting effective help. This help can, should, and must be granted to her without any delay.

THE POLISH SOCIALIST PARTY

Foreign Committee in London

London,

September 9th, 1944.

