

Lizbona

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This is to inform you that the following article appeared in the Aug. 19th issue of "Time and Tide".

WARSAW.

The armed insurrection in Warsaw has been going on for more than a fortnight. It is the greatest effort yet made by any of the European "underground armies" against the common foe - and also the most costly in terms of killed and wounded. Its value to the common cause is clear - a heavy blow has been struck at the enemy's forces and communications immediately behind his front in a capital where roads and railways converge, where there are depots and provisions.

For more than a fortnight, the Poles, poorly equipped with rifles and machine-guns have held out against German tanks, artillery and dive-bombers.

And yet doubt is thrown upon the value of their action. We are told that the insurrection was untimely, that it was precipitate in so far as it was not co-ordinated with the general strategy of the Allies, and that the Allied High Command was not informed of its imminence and could not, therefore, send the help which was demanded, at least not until after some time had passed. In Moscow the insurrection is being condemned with particular severity as rash and, in any case, unimportant.

General Sosnkowski, the Polish Commander in Chief, who worked in collaboration with the British High Command, gave instructions to the Polish Underground Army to rise at the moment it considered most opportune. The moment chosen was the moment the Russians entered Praga, the suburb of Warsaw, on August 1st.

The Russians must themselves have considered this moment opportune, for at 3 p.m. on July 30th, the Russian controlled "Kosciuszko Station" called upon the "whole population" of Warsaw to rise to arms. The Polish Worker's Party/P.P.R./ which is the faithful instrument of Russian policy, urged that the rising should begin that same day, and indeed, began to act on its own. But this Party is very small and the real rising was begun at 5 p.m. on August 1st by the well-organised numerous Polish "Underground Army".

Help from outside was reasonably and confidently expected. But no help came. The difficulties of sending arms and ammunition to Poland from the west or south-west, are not insurmountable and it has, in fact, been done from time to time during the past twelve months. It was not however, until the insurrection had been going on for a week that the first help arrived - and that was miserably inadequate. Since then, more has been dispatched and the acute shortage of arms and ammunition from which the insurgents have suffered has been somewhat relieved, though it is, at the time of writing, doubtful whether they will be able to hold out much longer, so great were the losses in the early stages of the insurrection.

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But even more inexplicable than the attitude of Great Britain - which may have been the result of natural hesitation or excessive caution - is the attitude of Russia. The Russian advance in Warsaw was held up by the Germans and here and there the Russians were forced to yield ground. However, they could, it would seem, bombard the German positions with their heavy artillery - but there was silence on the front. The insurgents were dive-bombed but the Russians made no attempt at interception.

On August 13th, the Tass Agency stated that it was "authorised to dispel rumours" that "the Red army had anything to do with the Warsaw rising" and that "the revolt is considered here/i.e.in Moscow/ to have gone off at half-cock and to have been a costly and avoidable failure with many puzzling features."

Yet it was the Russian-controlled Kosciuszko radio station which just two days before the rising broadcast the stirring message: "Warsaw is shaking from the roar of guns. The Soviet armies are coming to bring us deliverance.....Inhabitants of Warsaw ! To arms !.....The million and more inhabitants of Warsaw should become an army a million strong, which will win deliverance and drive off the German conquerors."

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The Polish Ministry of Information.

