Polish Ministry of Information, Stratton House,
Stratton St., W. 1

October 13, 1944.

This is to inform you that the following article appeared in the October 6, 1944 issue of TRIBUNE:

SILENCE REIGNS IN WARSAW

After five years, almost to the day, the heroic resistance of the Warsaw workers has been broken for the second time.

Last week the Polish President dismissed General Sosnkowski from the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army. This he did on the explicit and unanimous demand of the Polish Government. That the Polish Government was so anxious to get rid of the chief spokesman of the Pilsudskists was due to two major considerations. The dismissal of General Sosnkowski was calculated to put an end to the parallelism of civilian and military power, a parallelism that had actually deprived the Polish Government of any real control of its armed forces. Polish policy until recently moved on a double track; while the civilian Government was more or less anxious to put an end to the foolish and reactionary cult of Pilsudski for which Poland had paid so dearly, the military bigwigs continued to keep the army under the Pilsudskist spell.

This was by no means a futile controversy over the past. The worship of Pilsudski has always meant in Polish politics a tribute to his anti-parliamentary and anti-democratic ideas. As long as Pilsudski's name remains a sanctity to the army Polish democracy must feel itself threatened, and the army remains a weapon ready to be turned against it. In exile there has been a touch of seeming unreality about that controversy. But its real meaning and importance is bound to reveal itself when Government and army can return to Poland.

The other and the internationally more important reason for which Sosnkowski's dismissal ought to be welcomed is the fact that the former Commander-in-Chief has been the flag bearer of the most extreme anti-Soviet trend in Polish politics. Most of the Pilsudskists and reactionaries of other shades have never made peace with the obvious necessity for Poland to make territorial and political concessions to Soviet Russia. Many of them have never--even in these years--ceased to nourish the hope that sooner or later an all-

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European crusade against Bolshevism would start, this time under the aegis of British and American capitalism; and they have hoped to become the spearheads of that crusade.

Such hopes have been properly camouflaged according to the needs of the moment, but the camouflage has never been quite efficient. From all this it is abundantly clear that the dismissal of General Sosnkowski will not achieve its purpose--that of clearing the political atmosphere in the Polish Army--unless it is followed by further overhauls and radical reforms in that army, and unless the change is no more than merely a change of personality.

Even so, the dismissal of Sosnkowski has marked some progress in Polish politics, and one would have expected that the "progressives" and "democrats" of the Union of the Polish Patriots in Moscow and Lublin would welcome it as a good omen.

Instead, a new hail of abuse was showered upon the Poles in London by the chairman of the Polish Committee of National Liberation, M. Osobka-Morawski, in an interview with the British and American correspondents in Moscow. The Polish Government appointed General Bor-Komorowski, the leader of the heroic rising in Warsaw, now tragically crushed by the Germans to be the new Commander-in-Chief. M. Morawski described this appointment as "crazy" and raised against General Bor the old accusation that he "promoted the uprising too prematurely." "The hatred of the Polish people for Bor," he said, "was considerably stronger than its hatred for Sosnkowski." The general was therefore a "criminal" and would be brought to trial.

We know very little about General Bor-Komorowski, though it is certain that he has had no special political record and that he should certainly be regarded as preferable to Sosnkowski. His Moscow accusers criticise him not on the ground of his political activities, but solely and exclusively on the ground that he had made a "premature" rising. The accusation turns boomerang-like against the accusers.

The Facts

Let us re-capitulate the facts. When on August 1 the rising was started the spokesmen of the Moscow patriots bluntly declared that this was a mere propaganda canard of the Polish Government in London and that no fighting had taken place in Warsaw. With in-

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credible credulity a part of the British Press repeated the same "explanation." Yet the canard turned out to be a real heroic insurrection supported by the masses of the civilian people and especially by the workers of Warsaw.

The rising was universal and the insurgents fought for more than two months until the first days of October. When in the face of Warsaw's heroic sacrifice it was no longer possible to repeat the cynical and really criminal version about the canard manufactured by the Polish propagandists in London, when the rising itself inspired admiration and respect throughout the world, a new trick was played. Its leaders were accused of having provoked the fighting prematurely.

Whether the insurrection was, on purely military grounds, properly timed or not is, we think, politically irrelevant. The military experts may perhaps criticise it after the event when the archives of the Polish underground army are opened. But whatever the judgment of the military expert, the Socialist will even then continue to pay homage to the leaders and fighters of the rising. While the battle was still on it was the duty of all of us to assist it by all means at our disposal and to postpone possible criticisms.

This has been the first time that people who pose as champions of democracy have dared to describe as a crime a rising which even, according to their own statements, carried with it the whole people of Warsaw. The only "crime" of the rising was apparently that it demonstrated the real strength of the Polish underground movements led from London, and it revealed the political impotence of the Patriot's Committee. How could anybody believe that the Committee really represented the Polish people if a struggle of such magnitude could develop without the initiative and even the knowledge of the Committee? The question must have been asked by many: Was not the Committee itself a "propagandist" canard?

Then came the third stage, when vice seemed to pay an unwilling tribute to virtue. The Committee issued an appeal to the insurgents acknowledging their heroism, asking them to hold out and promising quick relief. In fact, the Soviet Government finally agreed to grant landing bases to American aircraft who would fly to help Warsaw. The agreement was given after long tergiversations, too shameful to be recalled. For a while it looked as if the Russians, as well as their Polish proteges were anxious to retrace their steps.

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But now comes stage four--the final disillusionment. The threat to court-martial the leader of the rising is repeated by M. Morawski shortly after his visit to Marshal Stalin. (Is one to deduce from this that the Soviet Government and the Soviet Command in Poland endorses the threat?) Then comes the reply of the POLISH DAILY in London, stating that, contrary to the accusations from Moscow, General Bor-Komorowski has been in the centre of Warsaw during the whole time of the rising. This seems to us to be altogether irrelevant. Even if he had been 20 miles away from Warsaw, as they say in Moscow, this could hardly be used as an argument against him. A C.-in-C. ought to have his H. Q. at some distance from the actual battlefield.

More important still, the Polish official daily accuses the Lublin Patriots of having disarmed and interned whole detachments of the Polish Home Army that were rushing from the provinces to Warsaw to assist the insurgents. The names of the detachments, their numbers, the places where they were disarmed have been published. What will the Lublin Commander-in-Chief--General Rola Zymierski--reply to this?

The Issue At Stake

The Polish Home Army has been recognised as a combatant force by the British and American Governments. The Soviet Government has refused to grant the same recognition. Suppose General Bor is taken prisoner by the Russians or by the men of Lublin and court-martialled. A first-rate conflict between the Great Allied Powers is then certain to arise. Or, to put it more accurately, the conflict over Poland may then suddenly come to a most dangerous head.

It is quite obvious that the Soviet Government is at present firmly decided to impose the Lublin Committee on Poland. Reconciliation with the Polish Government does not seem to play any important part in its plans for Poland.

What can we say about this? In theory, it might, of course well be that Poland should, in the years of the war, have changed her political outlook so much that she would prefer Sovietisation and incorporation into Russia to any other regime, and to her independent

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existence. Should this be the case then it would--from our viewpoint --be a crime to oppose the Sovietisation of Poland. We would then have to say to our own anti-Soviet elements that would like to use the Polish case against Russia: "Hands off Poland."

As things are, nothing seems to indicate any such change in the popular mood in Poland. The Warsaw rising has unmasked the political futility of the Lublin Committee. And neither the Russians nor their Polish proteges speak of any Soviet revolution in Poland. Stalin himself states over and over again his desire for "a strong, great and independent Poland," so great and strong as to include huge slices of German territory. The men of Lublin appeal to the Catholic Church and speak of the freedom for private capital in Poland in terms that would almost inspire any member of the Society of Individualists with envy. "Foreign capital--it is said--will be received in Poland with open arms." This does not look like a programme of a Soviet revolution.

No, the "Lublin regime" is not a victory for Socialism in Poland. It is the reduction of Poland to a vassal state. The chief attribute of a vassal state is to have its Government, its Command and its policy dictated from outside. Woe to those in the vassal state who want to maintain their independent views and policies. Any excuse that can be found will be good enough to be used against them. If they happen to lead a heroic rising that embarrasses the proteges of the great "protecting" Powers they will be stigmatised as "criminals" and threatened with punishment.

This seems to be the real issue. Please, do not ask us to show enthusiasm for such policies and to applaud the men who make them.

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