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Text of the telegram sent to the
Honorable James Byrnes, Secretary of State
by
National Committee of Americans of Polish Descent
on September 19, 1945.

THE HONORABLE JAMES BYRNES
SECRETARY OF STATE
C/O U. S. EMBASSY
LONDON, ENGLAND



On August 14, 1941, America, through the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter, declared that it desires "to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned," and in the same solemn declaration stated that it wishes "to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

At Yalta, February 13, 1945, upon the demand of Stalin, President Roosevelt obliged himself to recognize the Ribbentrop line, by this action giving to Russia almost half of Poland. This decision, made without the agreement or even the knowledge of the legal Polish Government with which the United States maintained well-established relations, violated the declaration of January 1, 1942, and made ineffective the alliance status hitherto existing between America and Poland.

In June, 1945, Harry Hopkins made a deal with Stalin, whereby agreement was given to the illegal trial in Moscow of the 16 leaders of the Polish underground 5-year-struggle against the Germans—leaders who revealed themselves to the Soviet authorities on the advice of the British and American Governments.

At the same time Mr. Hopkins agreed to American recognition of a Polish Government composed of Soviet agents with the Soviet citizen Bierut as its head, and the addition of such quislings from among the emigres as Stalin should select.

On July 6, 1945, you, Mr. Secretary, accepted the existing state of affairs, thus withdrawing recognition of the only constitutional and legal Government of Poland and recognizing the Bierut regime.

These facts show that the Government of the United States shares the responsibility with the Soviets of treating their Polish Ally as an enemy. For morality does not allow and international law does not foresee the possibility of one ally depriving another ally of its territory and its sovereignty.

After taking their country from the Poles and after the destruction of the Polish State, to whose sacrifices victory is in large measure due, the Government of the United States is at present proceeding in a manner that will also deprive of their freedom those Poles who are not on territory under Soviet occupation.

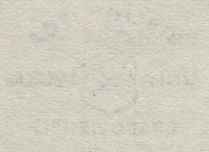
While you, Mr. Secretary, are in conference in London, the fate of some 2,000,000 Poles in the American and British occupation zones of Germany, and of the Polish army, which for 6 years heroically fought the Axis powers, is being decided.

A policy of pressure toward the Poles in the "displaced persons" category has been instituted in the American zone. According to the press this consists of depriving these people of their liberty, of making it impossible for them to seek employment and change of location, of prohibiting correspondence with relatives in the United States and Britain, and also of putting pressure on them to return to territory under Soviet occupation. This procedure cannot today be interpreted as dictated by the necessities of war.

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The future of the Polish soldiers, who together with our American soldiers fought the decisive battles of Monte Cassino, Ancona, and Bologna in the Italian campaign; the future of the Polish aviators, who beside the British airmen won the Battle of Britain; the future of the Polish sailors, who, on September 1, 1939, were the first to fight on the sea — the future of all these men is to be decided. After taking upon themselves co-responsibility for depriving the Polish army of its homeland, the British and American Governments cannot transform that army into Soviet prisoners. For thus should the monstrous proposal of transferring the command of the Polish troops in the West to nominees of Stalin be understood, since these men are to take those troops into Soviet-occupied territory, which means that they will be placed in concentration camps.

This being the situation, we turn to you with the very earnest appeal that you break with the Yalta tradition harmful to the interests of America. For at Yalta not only was an ally abandoned, but along with it the Atlantic Charter, justice, and honor. To offset the mistakes President Roosevelt made at Yalta, apparent now to all, we should not mistreat Polish deported and Polish soldiers but see to their welfare. We will not conceal those Yalta mistakes by mistreating the Poles in exile. Therefore we demand:

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1. That the promise given by General Eisenhower be honorably observed by America, namely, that no one will be in any way compelled to return to a Poland occupied by the Soviets;
2. That postal communication with displaced persons be made possible immediately, that printed matter, parcels and money may be sent them from America;
3. That a decided stand be taken against surrendering Polish troops now under British Command to the Soviets or their agents; respect for allied flags is indeed the minimum of army honor;
4. That there be an immediate working out of means whereby Poles deprived of an independent homeland may be assured a free and decent life in free countries.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF AMERICANS OF POLISH DESCENT, INC.

MEMBER OF THE POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

105 E. 22nd Street, New York 10, N. Y.

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J. GODLEWSKA, *Secretary*, New York, N. Y.

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