

THE POLISH REVIEW

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American Red Cross Photo

These schoolboys and girls in the tiny forest village of Bialowieza, Eastern Poland, wish to thank everyone in the American Junior Red Cross for the educational gift boxes they have received. In return, the Polish children have prepared booklets and albums telling about their village which they are shown presenting to an American Red Cross representative to bring back to the United States. The flowers were given by the children to decorate the representative's car on the return journey to Warsaw. Polish children have suffered horribly during the war and an indication of the maturity beyond their years that they have acquired is the fact that not a single child in this photograph is smiling. Most Polish children of kindergarten age have never tasted such delicacies as candy, oranges, cocoa. Many of them have suffered the loss of one or more parents and all of them have seen things no child should ever witness. It is to be hoped that foreign relief will help to eradicate the memories of the war years and will assure the youth of Poland of a measure of happiness and security.

Proclamation Of The Polish Government In London To The People Of Poland

THE Polish Government considers it its duty to warn the country of a new danger threatening it.

The so-called Provisional Government in Warsaw has recently announced that elections to Parliament would be held late this year or early next year. The Provisional Government is cognizant of the fact, however, that virtually the entire Polish nation is hostile to it, opposed to being ruled by a regime forcibly imposed upon it, and that it uncompromisingly wants an independent, unpartitioned, free and democratic Poland. In this state of affairs, the elections—if they are not faked—would show the world the insignificant following enjoyed by the Provisional Government and prove the utter bankruptcy of the regime in power.

But this does not mean that the so-called Provisional Government intends to recognize the will of the Nation and resign in the event of a defeat at the polls. That government has not been foisted upon us to capitulate to public opinion and to hand over, in conformity with the people's will the reins of government to the Poles. Its intention is to stay in power in spite of everything and to finish the work of destruction and subjugation of the country. Realizing its lack of support among the population, seeing the futility of its efforts to win public opinion over to its side, and having, aside from police methods, no other means of exerting influence, the so-called Provisional Government as well as the communist circles on which it is founded, intends to get out of the difficult situation by unleashing an even greater reign of terror and violence.

Reports coming in indicate that the communists are preparing a large-scale provocation in Poland aimed at generating pre-election insurgent activity. It is obvious that such activity would be drowned in blood with the aid of security organs, party police squads and military intervention by the Soviets, thus bringing fresh disaster, further oppression and the overt rule of the Eastern neighbor. The seriousness of the situation is increased by the existence of so-called forest units. The Government knows there are among them high-minded elements full of self-sacrifice, whom police oppression does not permit to return to a normal life. In addition to these, however, there are also destructive elements, even elements directed by imported and native provocateurs. It is imperative to make the greatest effort to empty the forests and prevent a further influx of Polish youth into them.

The Polish Government definitely warns the population against lending an ear to all calls to armed action and all incitements to civil war. The Polish nation should maintain an unyielding stand, defend its national rights, its cultural values, its economic achievements. It should direct its entire effort to strengthen its individuality and independence, not to give in supinely to a regime and way of life imposed upon it. It should carry on this fight, however, by avoiding armed action, which under present conditions can bring it nothing but disaster.

The Polish question is not a closed issue. It draws its strength from the independent spirit of the nation and is organically linked with the whole political picture of the post-war world. This picture has in it the seeds of unavoidable change and maturing transformations, which will also embrace the Polish question.

The Polish Government together with our nationals abroad stands guard over the cause of Poland's liberation and does everything in its power to serve that cause effectively. The Government expects that the Poles at home will not permit themselves to be seduced by foreign instigations, that they will preserve the strength

necessary to endure and will not allow the country to be steeped in the chaos of new calamities, fraught with incalculable consequences.

A WARNING TO OUR READERS

We wish to warn our readers not to confuse **THE POLISH REVIEW**, in its sixth year of publication, with the **POLISH MONTHLY REVIEW**, a magazine imitating **THE POLISH REVIEW** in general appearance, but printed in Poland and featuring propaganda for the Communist regime in that country.

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From One Soviet Official to Another . . .

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THE WARSAW REGIME'S FRAUDULENT ELECTORAL LAW

THE electoral law drafted by the Communist PPR (Polish Workers Party) and designed to insure a Communist victory at the polls in the forthcoming elections, provides for a legislature composed of 444 deputies, of whom 372 would be elected in the field and 72 named by the state. Poland has been divided into 52 electoral districts. Having the complete authentic results of the referendum and knowing which districts are more or less dependable and which are definitely in the opposition, the Communists apportioned the legislative seats in accordance with this information. Some districts are to elect one deputy for 23,000 inhabitants, while others are to elect one deputy for 80,000. Thus, districts with a pro-government majority have in some cases been assigned four times the number of seats allotted to the opposition districts.

Roughly speaking, the western lands where the politically most reliable element was settled, were particularly privileged. Those settlers who did not vote "yes" to the three questions of the referendum, have been forcibly deported, thus clearing the area of opposition elements. The western areas, at present numbering 3,500,000 inhabitants are to elect 100 deputies while the rest of the country, numbering 20 million inhabitants will elect only 272 deputies. This disproportion has been engineered in order to assure the regime of a majority in advance of the elections.

To assure itself of absolute control over the elections, the PPR's electoral law outlines the procedure for setting up the various categories of boards.

The Commissioner General of Elections is to be named by "President" Bierut upon "Premier" Osobka's recommendation from among the judges of the Supreme Court, the Supreme National Tribunal or the appellate court. Hence the finding of a "reliable" candidate will present no difficulty. The question of a deputy Commissioner of Elections was solved even more simply. Again he is to be appointed by Bierut at Osobka's behest and not necessarily from among the judges! In addition to the Commissioner General and his deputy, six political party members, one from each of the six legal parties, will also sit on the National Election Board. This means that the opposition PSL (Polish Peasant Party) will have a single representative on the board against the seven representatives of the regime and will of course always be outvoted.

At the lower levels the matter was settled with even greater openness. The districts and provincial election boards are appointed in their entirety by the regime. The Chairman and the Vice Chairman are named by the Commissioner General of Elections and the other members are chosen by the local soviets which are completely controlled by the Communists. Observers from the individual parties may (but need not) be admitted to the provincial boards, but they have no authority.

In addition to the special election geography and the control of the election boards, the regime has reserved unto itself the right to strike from the lists the name of any voter and any candidate for office.

The regulations regarding disfranchisement provide vaguely that persons linked with "fascist" underground organizations or with bands favoring the overthrow of the "democratic" regime of the Polish state are not to take part in the voting. Not a single word is said about who is to determine the affiliation with the underground. The PSL offered an amendment providing that a voter's name be stricken from the list only on the strength of a court verdict, but the government-supported parties rejected this proposal. In practise it will be the security

police that will have absolute power to prevent citizens from exercising their right to vote.

With equal ease the security police can strike out at will every inconvenient candidate for the legislature. The rules provide that the National Election Board be empowered to deny the right to run for office to persons who in the period of occupation, held important government posts in Poland or in exile and at the same time opposed armed combat with the occupants. Here again the regime is in a position on the strength of this regulation, to eliminate every candidate for office who held any sort of post in the government in London or in the underground state in Poland. Everybody, not excluding Mikołajczyk, can be accused of opposing battle with the occupants, especially since the united government parties have again refused to provide that the courts should have the final decision in this case and have left the decision to administrative factors. The PSL fought to prevent the adoption of the principle of striking out candidates put forth by the legal political parties, but it was outvoted.

Another loophole is the possibility of striking out names of voters "for having derived benefits from economic cooperation with the occupant." On these grounds every storekeeper, every railroad worker, mailman or factory hand can be disfranchised. In this case, too, the regime would not consent to have the fact of economic cooperation with the occupant determined by a court verdict, leaving unto itself the power to freely strike out any voter under this or another pretext.

In principle the electoral law does not alter the former age requirement for voters and candidates for office, but it does introduce privileged categories of individuals whom the regime is anxious to get into the legislature. The National Election Board may exempt privileged Communists running for office from the minimum age requirement of 25 years.

Separate rules govern the soldier vote which is to be cast in areas specially indicated by the military authorities. Thus the soldiers will vote separately under the supervision of their political instructors and will not be free to vote in accordance with their political convictions.

The PPR electoral law tries to avoid the mistakes made during the referendum period when the Cracow election boards announced their results, without waiting for their correction, thus creating a catastrophic fait accompli for the regime. The new Communist electoral law draws a lesson from this and forbids the provincial and district boards to publish election results. After the votes are counted, the registration lists and ballot boxes are to be sent to the National Election Board and the Commissioner General of Elections will publish the results, amended of course, which will be binding. The official results will be published two weeks after the voting.

To be safeguarded against the discovery of the abuses, the rules provide that only carefully selected members of the election boards have the right to question the books and the boards' figures, but this right does not belong to observers for the parties, even if they should have proof of abuses and false registrations.

The crowning feature of this fraudulent law is the procedure to be followed in prosecuting irregularities before the Supreme Court. The law provides no penalties for abuses on the part of the voter (multiple voting, false registration, etc.) or on the part of the members of the election boards.

It should be recalled that the law governing the referendum did not provide for protests. Hence the PSL

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THE SPECTER OF DISASTER FACING THE POLISH NATION

FOREIGN correspondents and the Poles themselves are agreed that the Communists in Poland form a small fraction of the population. The estimate varies from 5 to 15 percent. On the other hand, it is a well known fact that Communists hold the majority of key posts in Poland's administration, municipal government, economic and cultural life. In the Polish Supreme Soviet (KRN) alone there are some 400 avowed or undercover members of the Communist Party. The question naturally occurs, then, how it is possible for the regime to cull from the small group of its adherents so many individuals qualified to fill important posts and where so many Communists in Poland have come from.

This question cannot be answered briefly. In its early phase the regime imposed upon Poland by Soviet Russia was based on a small—20 thousand strong—Communist group, which had been organized secretly for the most part in the USSR. The Polish people, welcoming the Soviet troops entering Poland, expected that the Soviets would respect the will of the nation and would not force their system upon the Poles by means of a regime created around a small group of Communist Party activists. But these expectations were not fulfilled and if we further take into account the behavior of the Red Army in Poland, we can readily understand why the population turned away from the "liberators" and their agents in Warsaw.

The generally known course of events kept strengthening the Poles in a feeling of hostility toward the occupants and one might think any change in favor of the regime was out of the question. In reality, however, things happened differently: Russia has a well tested method of "winning" adherents, which is being employed by the present Soviet agencies in Warsaw. Ruthless terror, making people dependent on their jobs and government hand-outs by confronting them with the alternative of starvation or collaboration with the government, suppression of news about the changes in the international picture, which could offer hope for an improvement in Poland's situation—all these factors cause an increasing number of Poles to feel compelled to seek a place in the new shape of things.

Generally speaking, the Poles may be divided into three groups: 1. the supporters of the regime, who, according to recent reports from communist sources, do not exceed 300,000, 2. the opposition camp embracing a considerable majority of the population, and 3. neutral Poles waiting to see the course of events.

The Warsaw regime is making every effort to reshuffle these three groups to its own advantage. A means to this end is government propaganda, which seeks to prove that there is no connection between Soviet Russia and the regime in Poland and argues that one can support the regime without being a Communist.

Simultaneously with the propaganda the method of making people dependent on the regime is also being used. The examples of this method are very numerous: pulling people out from the lowest rungs of the social scale and giving them jobs of which they had never dreamt. E.g., an unskilled laborer is made a factory director, a student is made a vice-minister, an official in a small cooperative is made the prime minister; many pre-war non-commissioned officers have become staff officers. All these people form a new group which utilizes every means to defend its undeserved positions and material benefits and thereby defends the regime.

The program of "winning over" supporters is supplemented by the production of phony Polish citizens. There
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FROM THE SECRET FILES OF THE POLISH WORKERS' PARTY

Below are the full contents of a letter dispatched early this year from the offices of the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' (Communist) Party in Warsaw to the 17 Provincial Committees:

"We observe in the masses of America, England, Belgium, Italy and France an increase in revolutionary tendencies resulting from economic factors. We must emphasize with joy that this resilience of the masses, awakened by the need of daily bread, brings in its wake demands of another character, of greater importance to us: political demands (Poland, France, Spain, Italy, Greece, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, England) and nationalist demands (India, China, Palestine and Egypt).

"In the struggle for labor rights, for a better future of the world, in the struggle against the offensive of capital, are being trained new heroic cadres of labor, who swell the ranks of the international workers' army.

"This must be credited to the Communist vanguard which succeeded in occupying the place due it in labor circles and leads them in the direction it has marked out for them.

"The end of the capitalist era is drawing near. Here are the signs:

1. an increasingly acute economic crisis,
2. the growth of revolutionary moods in the capitalist countries,
3. an unusual gigantic victory in the land of dictatorship of the proletariat (socialism).

"This confronts us with a significant and new reevaluation of the present international situation in which we must, while outlining our strategy, our solutions and our decisions, draw the right conclusions in all our work. The tremendous rise in the strike wave, their revolutionary-political character, the appearance of new fractions of the proletariat among the workers fighting for an improvement in economic conditions, — all this confers a task upon us: to widen and strengthen the influence of the Communist Party by assuring it a leading role in the battle against capitalism and reaction.

"As far as Poland is concerned, despite a tremendous outlay of effort and money, despite favorable conditions in the shape of the Red Army units and the Red Army's political network, the cooperation of specially delegated activists of our Communist Party, the constant influx of cadres trained in the USSR by the Union of Patriots, we have to date not achieved the awaited results. We have not gained complete control over the working class nor have we won a majority in the nation through the democratic parties. Matters have been made even worse by a regrouping of political forces and by a strengthening of the position of reaction. The anti-bloc stand of the Polish Peasant Party has seriously weakened the democratic camp. We must define our position clearly: Everywhere we see the mounting offensive of reaction which undermines our gains at every step. The struggle for the support of the peasant masses has furnished the most painful and unexpected example of how deeply reaction has implanted itself in the soul of the Polish nation. We cannot permit this process to mature and the danger of a split to threaten the working class and particularly the Polish Socialist Party which is so closely bound to us.

"The blame for such a state of affairs falls upon the leadership of the Polish Workers Party.

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OPERATION "FAREWELL"

by WLODZIMIERZ OSIATYNSKI

THROUGHOUT the long years of German occupation the Poles, banded into one huge underground state, drew courage from the achievements of the Polish Air Force in Britain. The secret press defied the Gestapo and recounted the exploits of the heroic Polish airmen who gave up their lives in such large numbers to save Britain and Western civilization from the Germans.

The Polish record was a fine one. The Polish Air Force accounted for 9 per cent of the air victories in the historic Battle of Britain, destroying no fewer than 203 enemy aircraft.

Poles were proud of belonging to the famous R.A.F. and the Royal Air Force was glad to have these Poles with their enthusiasm, their air experience and their fighting spirit.

But political developments after the war were not what the Poles had expected.

The R.A.F. was bound to obey the orders of the British Government. Today the Poles are on the eve of disbandment.

The once-famous squadrons are now awaiting with sorrow the time when they will have to say good-bye to their beloved aircraft, and go to the Resettlement Corps. They are determined to stay on foreign soil until conditions enable them to return to the country of their birth.

The celebrations of the anniversary of the Battle of Britain were hardly over when, on September 18, at Coltishall, the base of Polish Air Force Fighter Command, the farewell fly-past of the Polish Fighter Squadrons in Britain took place.

The ceremony was attended by many high-ranking British and Polish Air Force officers.

On arrival Air Marshal Sir James Robb took the report from O.C. R.A.F. Station Coltishall, G/C Gabszewicz.

The Air Marshal greeted in their own language the squadrons standing at attention. "Czolem Panie Generale" repeated the echo of thousands of voices answering their leader.

Lord Tedder sent the following telegram:

"I cannot let this occasion pass without sending to you the good wishes of all those officers and men in the Royal Air Force with whom you have fought and worked side by side throughout the grim years of war.

"They and we remember that you joined us as very experienced fighters and we should like you to realize our deep admiration of your great dash and determination in pressing your attacks to very close range during the ruthless onslaught by our common enemy. Among your many successful engagements, the dates September 7 and September 11 in the year 1940 will remain in our memories.

"We remember too the vital help you gave us during the critical days in the Middle East. Now that the time has come to say farewell, I want you to know that you have won not only our admiration but our lasting affection."

Then the Air Marshal in his warm speech paid this

hearty tribute to the achievement of the Polish fighters in the war:

"That comradeship which was to achieve victory began early. No. 303 Squadron, for example, formed in Poland, re-formed in England early in 1940, and before the Battle of Britain was over had shot down a hundred enemy aircraft, sixteen of them on that not-to-be-forgotten day, September 15, which marked the climax of the battle. Altogether it destroyed well over 200 of the enemy.

"If I mention No. 303 Squadron first, it is because their good fortune was greatest—as was perhaps their skill—though the rest—306, 307, 309, 315 and 316 followed them closely, and 306 Squadron can claim the distinction of having shot down on December 31, 1942, the 500th enemy aircraft destroyed by Polish pilots. Between them, these squadrons (303 and 306) destroyed 243. This is an achievement of which you my Polish comrades may well be proud, and for which we in England must be for ever grateful.

"In the forefront of those early sweeps over France, when at the beginning of 1941 we were returning slowly but surely to the attack, Polish squadrons were always to be found. No. 306 Squadron, for instance, was one of the first members of the all-Polish Spitfire Wing formed in that year to take part in what were for many months the only operations against the enemy to be conducted in daylight. No. 308 Squadron was another, and celebrates June 24, the day on which four of its aircraft took part in "Circus XXI," its first attack on the enemy, as its festival day. So also was No. 315. Nor could I forget 308, known and loved for so long at Northolt. Between the end of June and the middle of December 1941 the Wing accounted for 56 of the Luftwaffe. Though a day fighter squadron, No. 306 claimed its first victim during the great night raid on London on May 10, 1941, and No. 307, armed with Beaufighters, became expert in this, the most difficult of all forms of air fighting.

"In the raid on Dieppe of August 19, 1942, that grim rehearsal for D-day two years later, Polish squadrons played their part. No. 306 was there and No. 303 shot down nine of the enemy.

"When D-day came, 302 Squadron gave cover to the Army on the beaches, and soon after the invasion No. 317 Squadron landed in France. There it took an honorable and strenuous share in those devastating attacks on German transport in which the 2nd Tactical Air Force fighter squadron specialized and which were a major contribution to the victory of the armies in the field. It was soon followed by No. 308 Squadron, which abandoned Northolt for Normandy, Northern France, Belgium, Holland and Germany in turn and which, when attacked (the Luftwaffe's dying effort), set about the attackers and accounted for twelve of them.

"One of the Polish fighter squadrons, formed at Detling in 1943, after long and honorable service in the Middle East and on Spitfires while engaged on essential reconnaissance in support of the armies in Italy, is back in the U. K.—and with us here today.

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LETTERS FROM AMERICA (1876)

by HENRYK SIENKIEWICZ

Henryk Sienkiewicz, the great Polish novelist whose *Quo Vadis*, published in 1896, has been translated into more than 30 languages and still rates as a best seller, visited America in 1876. He contributed an account of his travels to the *Gazeta Polska*, later published in volume form under the title of *Letters from America*.

In connection with the Henryk Sienkiewicz Centenary—the Polish Nobel Prize winner for literature was born in 1846—we are acquainting our readers with Sienkiewicz's colorful description of life in New York as seen through his eyes 70 years ago.

Letters from America have been translated from the Polish by Casimir Gonski.

MARBLE, bronze, rugs and mirrors: and you have American hotels. In New York, next to the banks and the postoffice, the hotels are the most beautiful buildings. In addition to the numbered guests' rooms, each hotel has a number of large salons, where the guests may receive their visitors, and sumptuously furnished boudoirs for the ladies. The Central Hotel, where we stopped for a few days, is a veritable little city in itself. Besides the permanent and transient guests, a great many city people congregate in the evening in the magnificent lobby to read the papers, to meet their friends and acquaintances, to smoke and chew, and to swing in the big rockers, of which there is an abundance. The hotel is located on Broadway, the widest and most lively street of New York, remarkable especially for its length. In the evening, after my arrival, it was too late to visit the city, so I had to be content to look around in the hotel; and then my companion and I went to the dining room. It is an immense salon, seating several hundred guests, furnished sumptuously but without taste. The stone columns supporting the ceiling are too thick and too low; the big double-door entrance with circular top reminds me of a barn driveway.

Three times daily all the guests of the hotel assemble here. The cost of board in American hotels is included in the room charge. Every guest having a room may come here five times a day and eat what he pleases, without extra charge, but the majority come only for breakfast, luncheon and dinner. All guests at the tables converse with each other, though not acquainted, without entering upon any social relations. After a meal one gets up and goes his way without thanking for the pleasure of the company or waiting for the others. Many ladies come without escorts, most of them even travel without any protection. All of them dress more richly than anywhere in Europe. They come without hats, especially in the evening, and the dinners have the aspect of private, formal affairs. The waiters in almost all hotels are Negroes. Such is the fashion and colored help is probably cheaper than white. The waiters are not tipped. At

every table stand two or three Negroes, with heads like those of black rams. They are very polite, serve quickly and efficiently, and they look in their dress coats and white neckties — if not handsome — quite original. But the service is not hard. According to the American custom, a multitude of china dishes is put before the guest at the same time and containing a great variety of food. You have before you at once soup, fish, meats, eggs, puddings, tomatoes, potatoes, strawberries, apples, almonds, coffee; in short, an unnumbered variety of dishes in small doses. Begin when you please, eat what you like; nobody pays any attention to you. The Negroes stand over you like executioners, and continuously fill your glass with icewater, saying invariably, "Yes, sir" to all your demands. The result of such a system of eating is that everything gets cold and stale, even in the best restaurants. American cooking is the worst cooking on earth; it does not concern itself that you should eat well and wholesomely, but that you should eat quickly and get back to business. Everything is calculated on the "hurry up" plan, except that the evening dinners are served somewhat more carefully, because with the stroke of five all business stops.

On the first day after my arrival, instead of sitting down in the writing room and noting down my observations on American manners (as did a certain lady correspondent of a Warsaw paper who, with miraculous intuition, had already fathomed such manners) I went down town to look, if only fleetingly, upon everything in sight. True, during the night I had not experienced such strong impressions as that correspondent who during the first several nights of her stay in the United States was kept awake by a fusillade of revolver shots which the Americans mutually fired at each other. I had slept peacefully and wondered if the noises which the lady heard really



The styles of dress have changed somewhat since the time of these letters.

had such tragic significance. But not wishing to prejudge the question I went to Broadway and ventured out upon the city.

But New York not only did not charm me, it disappointed me mightily. Every European city has some marks of individuality worth seeing. Paris and London have thousands of them; Vienna has her St. Steven; Berlin, her Kaulbach; Brussels, Wiertz and St. Gudule; Venice has her canals; Rome the Pope and Roman antiquities; Cologne, the foremost cathedral in the world; Cracow has Wawel and Matejko; and Warsaw has good intentions (with which it is paved), great people for small business, the longest tongues in the world and the Saxon gardens. Everywhere is some tradition, — centuries look upon you from the walls; everywhere you see history ingrown into walls and stone, everywhere some national characteristic, some big ideal whose beginning rests in the dawn of the past. There is nothing of that sort in New York. The greatest curiosities in the city are the hotels and banks; there are no historical monuments. For the history of the United States go to Washington. In New York you see only business, business and business. You see it from morning till night, you hear and read about it. At first glance, this is not a city inhabited by a population, but a great meeting place for business men, bankers, officials; a cosmopolitan wigwag, impressing you with its bigness, rush, industrial progress; but boring you with the one-sidedness of social life; producing nothing else but money. Wishing to describe the city one does not know where to begin, where to make a starting point for the mind or the eye. One street resembles the other, everywhere is rush, noise and crowding, a great number of carriages and omnibuses. The people rush, you see haste expressed in faces and manners. This rush you notice everywhere, even in the building of houses, streets and sidewalks. One thing is finished to perfection, the other is barely begun. On Broadway, for instance, next to a hotel built of marble from foundation to roof stand red brick buildings. A little farther on is a fire-blackened, empty space. There may have been a fire yesterday; today they start building. Then there is a church. But churches are closed on weekdays, because business does not admit of prayer. The churches are not distinguished for grandeur or architectural beauty; one might say they were built in a hurry. Near the churches are small cemeteries, and in these, more than anywhere else, one finds places of rest. Then there are some undertakers' establishments for business in coffins and monuments. Then comes another street. The store windows contain rich and dazzling displays, but are arranged without taste. On the sidewalk, before the mirrored show windows, lie heaps of refuse. The city is muddy, dirty, poorly paved; here and there are small pools of black, liquid mud, which cannot flow into the clogged sewers. A great number of torn newspapers, orange skins and apple peelings are everywhere, on the sidewalks and on the streets. Drays with heavy loads of freight drive among proud turnouts and busses, ownerless pigs with ears torn by dogs, pick their way. Plenty of pigs here. "There's one of them," says Dickens in his description



During Sienkiewicz's visit to New York Henry Bergh was engaged in his splendid work for the prevention of cruelty to animals. Mr. Bergh is the figure in the "plug hat" at the left. From a sketch in Harper's Weekly, 1878.

of New York, "lounging homeward by himself. He has only one ear; having parted with the other to vagrant dogs in the course of his city rambles. But he gets on very well without it, and leads a roving, gentlemanly, vagabond kind of life, somewhat answering to that of our club-men at home. He leaves his lodgings every morning at a certain hour, throws himself upon the town, gets through his day in some manner quite satisfactory to himself, and regularly appears at the door of his own house at night, like the mysterious master of *Gil Blas*. He is a free-and-easy, careless, indifferent kind of pig, having a very large acquaintance among other pigs of the same character, whom he rather knows by sight than conversation, as he seldom troubles himself to stop and exchange civilities, but goes grunting down the kennel, turning up the news and small-talk of the city in the shape of cabbage-stalks and offal, and bearing no tails but his own: which is a very short one, for his old enemies, the dogs, have been at that too, and have left him hardly enough to swear by."

There are less of these animals now than during Dickens' time; but even now you will meet more of them than in ten European cities, especially on the streets of the lower East Side. I have never seen a more untidy city in my life, although no city in Europe spends as much as New York for the upkeep of order and municipal wants. Like other official undertakings, the municipalities here are composed of such professionally clever thieves that all European corruption pales into insignificance in comparison with them. Public money and public weal are regarded here solely as grease with which to keep the boots well oiled while crossing the mire. Later on I shall have occasion to refer to these abuses as well as to the causes which evoke them.

(Sienkiewicz's letter about New York will be continued in the next issue of *THE POLISH REVIEW*.)

MALCZEWSKI'S "MARJA" - A BALLAD OF THE POLISH BORDER

by MARION M. COLEMAN

NO ONE searching for a link uniting the English-speaking world with the world of Malczewski will have to look either far or long. For both Antoni Malczewski himself and his stirring ballad *Marja* have often touched our English-American milieu.

To be noted first of all was Malczewski's own meeting face to face with Byron, at Venice in 1818. The conversation the two poets had at that time related to the theme Byron was to employ soon after, in part perhaps as a result of this very conversation, in *Mazeppa*, a tale of Malczewski's own Borderland. There was also the circumstance of *Marja's* being the first work in Polish to be printed in the original in England in 1836.

Then there was the debt owed to *Marja* by two Polish artists whose careers were closely linked with the English-speaking world: the Shakespearian actress Helena Modjeska (1844-1909) and the founder of modern piano instruction, Theodor Leschetizsky (1830-1915). In the case of Modjeska, it was a chance recitation of fragments from *Marja* to herself, when she thought no one was listening, that finally broke the apathy of the girl's family toward her ambition to go on the stage and convinced her brother, the key figure in the struggle, that acting was his sister's destined vocation. With Leschetizsky, brought up on the Potocki estate of Lancut, one of the moving experiences of his boyhood, one that remained "deeply graven in memory," was none other than hearing the *Marja* story told over and over again by his father's steward.

Then there was the painful episode of the migration to the United in 1834 of Malczewski's own son, Antoni August Jakubowski, the nineteen-year-old lad's pathetic efforts to popularize Polish poetry here, his journey to Mexico to join a relative, his return and death in Northampton, Massachusetts, in 1837. In the autumn following his arrival, Jakubowski translated two of the most popular portions of his father's masterpiece and published them, with the aid of his first American friend, the Reverend William Buell Sprague of Albany, New York, in the little anthology *Remembrances of a Polish Exile*. The selections were later re-worked by Thomas Dunn English and published by him in an article on "The Poetry of Poland" which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (Philadelphia) for October, 1838.

Malczewski's homeland was the southern half, comprising the provinces of Volhynia and Podolia, of the Border region called by Poles the Kresy. It was the part commonly thought of as "Slowacki country," as the northern half of the Kresy, above Baranowicze, is thought of as "Mickiewicz country."

It was at Kniahinin, near Dubno, in Volhynia, that Malczewski was born, probably on June 3, 1793. Antoni spent a good deal of time in his youth at the home of his uncle Franciszek Malczewski, at Tarnoruda, one of the great estates of Volhynia, famous for its hospitality.

* Condensed from *The American Slavic & East European Review*, Vol. IV, No. 8 & 9, 1945.



Scouting the Steppes by A. Wierusz Kowalski (1849-1915).

An event of his twelfth year that bore heavily in its consequences on Malczewski was the opening of the new Volhynian Gymnasium at Krzemieniec. Krzemieniec was one of those rare seats of learning, wherein however much its students may learn from the classroom routine and from books, they learn infinitely more from the indefinable something about the place that we call "atmosphere."

From Krzemieniec Malczewski proceeded in the autumn of 1811 to Warsaw, there to become an artillery engineer in the Polish Army of the Grand Duchy created by Napoleon. In 1812 he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant of Cavalry Artillery and made Field Adjutant to General Ksawery Kosecki.

The greatest experience a Pole could have in 1812 and the one for which every patriotic young man yearned was to join Napoleon's Army of Liberation, as it was known in Poland, and march in its ranks against Russia. Malczewski was one of those singled out for this experience, but he missed it by a hair's breadth. The fracture of a leg, wounded previously in a duel which he fought over a famous Warsaw coquette, Madam Alexander Chodkiewicz, prevented him at the last minute from going.

Instead, Malczewski was sent, as soon as his leg had knit, to the fortress of Modlin, on the outskirts of Warsaw, where he remained throughout the eleven months' siege which ensued. At Modlin Malczewski made a reputation for himself both as an engineer and as an expert in the art of love-making.

After the fall of Warsaw Malczewski found himself out of a job. Together with the husband of the above-mentioned Madam Chodkiewicz, an enthusiastic chemist, a student of the

various pseudo-sciences and a dabbler in "black magic," he now sought surcease from the despair that overcame him as he saw Warsaw change under his eyes into a foreign city, by excursions into certain of the less orthodox sciences.

It was not long before Malczewski's cardinal weakness, an excessive and indiscriminating fondness for women, led him to commit a folly he was to pay for all the rest of his life. Falling madly in love with Frederika Lubomirska (born Zaluska), Malczewski threw up the job he had finally got in Warsaw—some say it was a post in the municipal administration—to go chasing after this lady the length and breadth of Europe. The action was foolish enough in itself; in its consequences it was tragic, for it cut Malczewski off forever from the possibility of a normal life among people of his own social rank and intellectual attainments.

In 1821, after five years abroad, Malczewski returned home, to settle at Hrynów, in Volhynia on one of the family estates. Here the train of misfortunes began which, as it gradually brought Malczewski himself to ruin, at the same time produced *Marja*.

The poem appeared in the summer of 1825, to languish on the publisher's shelves. The next spring its wretched author himself died, probably of an internal cancer that even before his return to Poland had begun to trouble him.

* * *

It seems strange, reading *Marja* today, that the poem did not "catch on" at once. It was so native, so altogether Polish in its mood, so Polish in color and tempo, above all so imbued with that haunting *żał* which we find

in Chopin and which so endears that genius to his own race, that one can only wonder at its chill reception.

The explanation lies, probably, in the fact that the Polish reader of 1825 wanted something that would carry him, as Leon Potocki put it, "into the epoch of our glory, our fame, into the golden times of the Sigismunds." Something flattering, in a word, to the national pride, and stimulating to the national morale.

This, of course, *Marja* was not. With its plot a tale of murder and betrayal in high places, it was hardly the combination narcotic and morale booster the public craved.

Yet, looked at objectively, what a splendid and moving canvas of old Polish Border life from top to bottom it was!

For *Marja* begins, characteristically, with a Cossack horseman, who is seen flying across the steppe, bearing a message of urgent importance to someone as yet unknown to us. Here is a figure straight from the folk, one familiar and dear to every Pole, especially from the Kresy, and one that appears often in the balladry of the Border peasant. True to his type, Malczewski's Cossack is sensitive to the spirit of the steppe and deferential to its ghosts:

His racing steed he guided straight to yon familiar hill,
Where ancient ghosts were known to hide, their watch maintaining still.

His cap he doffed before the shrine, three times his bosom crossed,

Then swift upon the steppe-wind wild, both man and steed were lost.

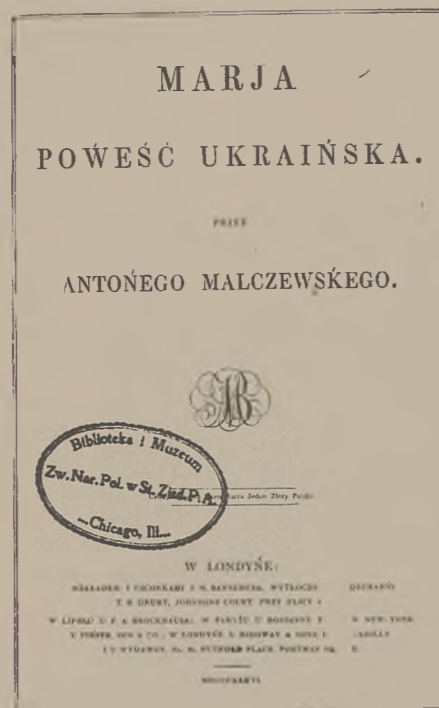
From the "empty, trackless waste" Malczewski moves next to the castle dominating this. Here we meet another typical Border figure: the Voivod. A harsh, arrogant old man, the Voivod is in the act of recovering from a bitter quarrel with his son. Harmony between the two has been achieved, but we are given to understand this is only on the surface and that some evil plan is about to unfold.

In the next scene Malczewski gives free rein to the Kresovian's love of military display. It is early dawn

and we hear the Voivod's army assembling for a foray, presumably against the Tatars. Signals are sounded, trumpets blare, horseshoes clatter in the stone-paved yard, and presently the cavalcade departs in brilliant formation, the flaxen-haired son of the Voivod, Waclaw, at its head.

As previously Malczewski has given us in the Cossack and Voivod two characteristic Kresovian types, he now gives us a third. This is the old Sword Bearer, a squire of middle station and the father, as it soon appears, of the heroine. Clad in his beloved old *żupan*, the Sword Bearer is dreaming beneath his linden tree of golden days of old, when he served his homeland not only "in hotly fought elections," but in war.

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"Marja" — A Tale of the Ukraine by Antoni Malczewski. London, 1836. First book in the Polish language published in England. Used by permission of Polish National Alliance, Chicago, Charles Rozmarek, President.



The Hunt by Bohdan Kleczynski (1851-1916).

Andy Mynarski Awarded Victoria Cross For "Valor Of The Highest Order"

ON OCTOBER 11, 1946 the Air Force Headquarters in Ottawa, Canada, announced that the 15th Canadian Victoria Cross of World War II and the second in the history of the Royal Canadian Air Force had been awarded posthumously to 27-year-old Pilot Officer Andrew Charles (Andy) Mynarski of Winnipeg, an R.C.A.F. air gunner whose heroic attempt to save a fellow crew member when their Lancaster was shot down in flames over Cambrai, France, in June 1944, ended in the young Winnipegger's death.

Andy Mynarski died because he placed comradeship above personal safety. Ironically enough, Flight Officer George Brophy, the trapped rear gunner he vainly tried to save, before he finally jumped from his plane with parachute and clothing ablaze, was miraculously thrown clear of the plane after it exploded.

"There isn't any doubt Andy Mynarski would have got out O.K. if he had gone ahead and jumped," Brophy, now working in a Port Arthur electrical equipment store, told a Canadian Press reporter. Brophy related how Mynarski, who had been a leather worker before enlisting in the air force, made his way back to the rear turret in his flaming clothing and endeavored to free the jammed turret. When Brophy saw Mynarski had no instrument with which to pry open the turret, he realized the hopelessness of the situation.

"I shouted at him, 'Get going. You're on fire and can't help me anyway,' and waved him away. I realized there wasn't any chance of him getting me out . . . He was just struggling with the thing with his bare hands."

Other crew members, all of whom survived the war, added their tribute to that of Brophy. The wireless air gunner, Flight Officer J. W. Kelly, also of Winnipeg, said, "You could always depend on Andy to come through with a joke when the going got tough and more than once he made us laugh, relieving the tension during a tense moment. . . ."

P.O. Mynarski's Victoria Cross was delivered personally to his mother, Mrs. A. Mynarski of Winnipeg, by Air Vice Marshal K. M. Guthrie, C.B., C.B.E., air officer commanding No. 2 Air Command at Winnipeg.

The message from Hon. Colin Gibson, Air Minister said:

"It is with a feeling of great pride that I inform you that His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to confer the award of the Victoria Cross, the British Empire's highest decoration for valor, upon your son, the late P.O. Andrew Charles Mynarski, in recognition of his most gallant and distinguished conduct during air operations against the enemy.

"I regret exceedingly that your son did not survive the action but I am confident that you and your family will derive some comfort from the thrilling story of his superlative bravery which will be forwarded to you in official form as soon as it is received at this headquarters. May I express on behalf of all ranks of the armed forces of Canada profound admiration of your son's gallantry, together with sincere sympathy for your great loss."

The citation accompanying the award of the V. C. to Andy Mynarski read as follows:

"Pilot Officer Mynarski was the mid-upper gunner of a Lancaster aircraft detailed to attack a target at Cambrai in France, on the night of June 12, 1944. The aircraft was attacked from below and astern by an enemy fighter and ultimately came down in flames.

"As an immediate result of the attack, both port engines failed. Fire broke out between the mid-upper turret and the rear turret, as well as in the port wing. The flames soon became fierce and the captain ordered the crew to abandon the aircraft.



It was over Cambrai. Their bomber was shot down in flames. All but Pilot Officer Mynarski, of Winnipeg, were saved. He died in an attempt to save his comrade, F/O Brophy, who was trapped in the tail turret. For his heroic action, Mynarski has been awarded the Victoria Cross posthumously. The complete crew of the R.C.A.F. Moose Squadron bomber is shown above. From left to right are: F/O GEORGE BROPHY, Port Arthur, Ont. (No. 2); P/O WILLIAM J. KELLY, Winnipeg; F/S ROY VIGARS, Guilford, Sussex; F/O ARTHUR DE BREYNE, St. Lambert, Que. (No. 3); P/O ANDREW C. MYNARSKI, V.C., Winnipeg, (No. 1); P/O J. W. FRIDAY, Port Arthur, Ont., and F/O ARTHUR R. BODY, Ocean Falls, B. C.

"P.O. Mynarski left his turret and went towards the escape hatch. He then saw that the rear gunner was still in his turret and apparently unable to leave it. The turret was, in fact, immovable, since the hydraulic gear had been put out of action when the port engines failed, and the manual gear had been broken by the gunner in his attempts to escape.

"Without hesitation, P.O. Mynarski made his way through the flames in an endeavor to reach the rear turret and release the gunner. Whilst so doing his parachute and his clothing, up to the waist, were set on fire. All his efforts to move the turret and free the gunner were in vain. Eventually the rear gunner clearly indicated to him that there was nothing more he could do and that he should try to save his own life.

"P.O. Mynarski reluctantly went back through the flames to the escape hatch. There as a last gesture to the trapped gunner, he turned toward him, stood to attention in his flaming clothing and saluted, before he jumped out of the aircraft. P.O. Mynarski's descent was seen by French people on the ground. Both his parachute and clothing were on fire. He was found eventually by the French, but was so severely burned that he died from his injuries.

"The rear gunner had a miraculous escape when the aircraft crashed. He subsequently testified that, had Pilot Officer Mynarski not attempted to save his comrade's life, he could have left the aircraft in safety and would, doubtless, have escaped death.

"Pilot Officer Mynarski must have been fully aware that in trying to free the rear gunner he was almost certain to lose his own life. Despite this, with outstanding courage and complete disregard for his own safety, he went to the rescue. Willingly accepting the danger, P.O. Mynarski lost his life by a most conspicuous act of heroism which called for valor of the highest order."

FROM ONE SOVIET OFFICIAL TO ANOTHER . . .

MY FUTILE ATTEMPTS TO TRACE 10,000 MURDERED POLISH OFFICERS

by JOSEPH CZAPSKI

Joseph Czapski, a prominent painter, is a Polish officer who was taken prisoner by the Russians when they invaded Poland from the East in September 1939 while Hitler was overrunning the country from the West and North. He was sent to the Prisoner of War camp at Starobielsk and miraculously escaped the fate of the ten thousand Polish officers from the Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow camps who were massacred at Katyn. (For an account of his experiences in a Soviet Prisoner of War camp see the previous number of THE POLISH REVIEW.)

Following the Sikorski-Stalin pact of July 1941 all Polish prisoners of war in Russia were ordered released. However, it soon became clear that the 10,000 officers from Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow were missing. Early in 1943 the Germans who advanced into the Katyn forest near Smolensk announced the discovery of the mass graves of these Polish officers. When the Polish Government in London asked the International Red Cross to investigate, Russia severed diplomatic relations with the Polish Government.

The following article which appeared in the London Tablet, September 14, 1946, gives a first hand report of how General Anders sought unsuccessfully since September 1941 to get information about the 10,000 missing officers from close-mouthed Russians:

THE formation of the Polish Army in Russia began in September, 1941, at Tatichtchev, a place near Saratov and Totsk, on the railway running between Orenburg-Kubishev-Chaklov. Hundreds of men poured into the summer camp every day. I recall one day when something like 1,500 wretched prisoners arrived. They were in the poorest of ragged colthes, and had come from the Far North.

I had received orders to organize help for the new arrivals. A kind of information office was set up, and it was my job to interrogate everyone arriving in the camp. All these liberated prisoners had come from Workuta, Kamtchatka, Magadan or Karaganda. They all wanted news of their deported families, and gave us long lists of their companions who were still interned in camps. I always started by asking each Pole whether he had been deported with anyone from Starobielsk, Kozielsk or Ostachkow. We always thought they might turn up at any moment, and ascribe their absence so far to the enormous distances they might have had to cover. At this time, the Soviet Government was releasing all prisoners, even those condemned to death. They came in from the farthest parts of Russia or from Kolyma (west of Kamtchatka) whence, according to the rules, no one was ever allowed to return. Was it likely, then, that the Soviet Government would withhold in prison the best collaborators and friends of General Anders, Commander-in-Chief of our Army then in Russia? Not only did every single one of them fail to turn up, but we had not a scrap of news of any of them either, apart from contradictory second-hand information.

As soon as he took over the command of the Army, General Anders appealed to the Soviet authorities, requesting them repeatedly for news of these lost prisoners. The answers he received were invariably polite and ambiguous, and sometimes accompanied by vague promises.

Reports on anything we could discover about the missing prisoners we sent to the Polish Embassy at

Kubishev. The Embassy, on their side, did all they could to find the prisoners or get news of their whereabouts. In November, during an audience which he had with Stalin, our Ambassador, M. Kot, asked him officially what happened to them and how much longer they would take to arrive. Stalin showed great astonishment, and even indignation, at the delay in their release. While the Ambassador was still with him, he telephoned to NKVD headquarters asking why the prisoners from Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow had not yet been liberated. He stressed that the "amnesty" applied to all Poles, and that everybody must be released forthwith. The Ambassador returned from Moscow with this news. Accordingly, we continued to expect them, and went on compiling the list of prisoners who had disappeared. When the Commander-in-Chief of our Armed Forces, General Sikorski, came to Moscow at the beginning of December, the list contained more than 4,000 names. It was taken to Moscow by General Anders.

We had heard vague reports that they were in the islands of the Far North, or Kolyma, whence it is only possible to return during a few months in summer. One Soviet officer, in his cups, was reported to have told several of our officers that he had been sent as an NKVD courier to Franz Josef Land, where he had seen more than 5,000 of our companions. Our military attaché at Kubishev sent a telegram to Novaia Zemlia (an island in the White Sea) demanding that all Polish prisoners be sent back. The reply he got was unexpected. It was signed by Moizerov, President of the Soviet of the Island, and affirmed that all prisoners there would be notified of the formation of the Polish Army, and efforts would be made to return them. To us, this was proof that our companions were, in fact, in the Far North.

On December 4th Stalin received Generals Sikorski and Anders. They asked him formally that the prisoners from Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow be sent back as soon as possible to the Polish Army. At the same time, General Anders presented him with the list of 4,000 names. His reaction was quite different from that of the preceding month when he had received our Ambassador. This time Stalin showed no indignation, but confined himself to an evasive reply, implying that the prisoners had probably escaped and taken refuge in Manchuria. Sikorski immediately pointed out that, had this been the case, London would have been informed immediately. London would also have known if they had escaped across German-occupied territory. General Anders added that he knew the workings of the NKVD too well personally to believe that such a number of prisoners had succeeded in escaping and crossing the frontier. Consequently, he resumed, it could only be supposed that these prisoners had been detained by the commandants of labor camps as necessary for essential work, and that this was the reason why their release had been refused. "Well," replied Stalin, "in that case we'll smash these commandants." And he gave formal instructions to Molotov, in the presence of both Polish generals, for the immediate release of the prisoners from Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow.

Another month went by and not one of the missing men turned up. Towards the end of December, thanks to the indiscretions of a Bolshevik, I learned that the GULAG (Supreme Camp Administration) had been

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transferred from Moscow to Tchkalov. Early in January, I was sent by General Anders to Tchkalov, as officer in charge of missing prisoners, to ask for precise information from General Nasiedkin, head of the Administration. At Tchkalov, I found that the address of the GULAG offices was secret, but thanks to another indiscretion I discovered where it was. Only the actual letters from General Anders to the heads of the GULAG and NKVD of the district (in which Stalin's order for the release of all Polish prisoners was quoted) secured me an audience.

General Nasiedkin received me in his office. He was stout, well fed, and wore a smart uniform of good cloth. He looked rather like a Tsarist officer. My first visit caught him completely unawares, and this probably accounted for the fact that I found him approachable. He remained seated before a large-scale map of the USSR on which were marked the positions of all the principal camps under his control. Most of the stars, circles and other marks which indicated the largest concentration of camps were in the Komi region (north-east of Moscow, stretching to the White Sea), on Kola (almost an island and northeast of Finland), and on Kolyma (west of Kamtchatka). I noticed, too, that there were a number of concentration camps at Wierchoiansk, because the stars which marked them were the same size as those at Magadan and Kolyma. Wierchoiansk is the coldest point in the Arctic circle. According to my information, none of our prisoners returned from this locality. It was through Magadan that crowds of political prisoners passed. They were put on ships carrying five to ten thousand men each, which left the gulf of Nachodka, near Vladivostok. According to eye-witness reports, there is, near Magadan, a small town of about ten or fifteen thousand inhabitants, all crippled, with their extremities mutilated by frost.

I explained to General Nasiedkin the position of our three camps. I pointed out that the fact that these prisoners had not been released, in spite of the specific



When Polish volunteers from all parts of Russia took the oath upon joining the newly formed Polish army, they were handicapped by the lack of Polish officers, ten thousand of whom had been murdered in the Katyn forest.

orders from Stalin to that effect, "looked very like an act of sabotage." Nasiedkin seemed at a loss, and even worried — unless, of course, he was only play-acting. He told me that in the spring of 1940, at the time of the first evacuation from the three camps, he was not yet chief of the GULAG; he was then only in charge of labor camps, for political prisoners and criminals and not for prisoners of war. He readily admitted that some Polish officers might be amongst the first group, but asserted that he had no precise knowledge of the subject. He promised that he would do all he could to clear up the question and to give me an answer the following day. I asked him whether he had sent any prisoners to Franz Josef Land or Novaia Zemlia, as so many released prisoners had reported. He assured me that he had sent no one to these places, and that in any case, the camps there were not in his charge. On the map which I have already mentioned, I saw no marks which would indicate the existence of GULAG camps on the islands in question. While I was still with him, the General gave orders by telephone to have the affair of our three camps cleared up. He quoted the words in General Anders' letter: "By order of Stalin."

That same day, at about 11 o'clock at night, I was received by Bzyrov, commanding the NKVD of the Tchkalov province.

Bzyrov received me with great courtesy, wishing to give the impression that he was prepared to do everything for me. He began by telling me that I would only be able to get information from central and senior authorities (two witnesses were present at our interview, both also members of the NKVD), and he gave me to understand that Mierkulov and Fiedotov would be able to help me. (The supreme head of the NKVD, at this time, was Beria. His deputy was Mierkulov; then came, in order of rank, Fiedotov and Reichman.) As soon as I mentioned Franz Josef Land and Novaia Zemlia, Bzyrov, far from showing astonishment, pointed out on the map the port of Dudinka, on the River Jenissei, where the largest transports of prisoner laborers left for these islands. He declared that there were no Poles detained as prisoners in his districts.

Next day, I again saw General Nasiedkin. His first surprise had passed. He told me he had nothing for

me and that only the central authorities could give me any explanation. He added that, if I was in possession of the lists (I had with me then the names of 4,500 prisoners of the three camps) I could hand them to him and he would see that they were sent to Kubishev. It looked as though he had received a severe reprimand for talking to me. I spoke again of Novaia Zemlia, declaring that I had information of Polish prisoners interned there. (In point of fact I had that very day heard of two White Russian peasants who had returned from deportation "to a distant island in the north" where several thousands of Polish officers worked in the mines and lived, so it was said, in large huts). Nasiedkin gave me quite a different reply this time. His precise words were: "It is just possible that detachments under my orders have sent small groups to these islands. But there is no question of the thousands of men you mention."

From Kubishev, where I failed to find either Reichman or Zukov, I was sent on to Moscow. It was only there, on February 3, 1942, after long efforts and even an arrest of short duration, due, I was told, to an error, that I finally succeeded in seeing Reichman in the Lubianka, a block of buildings joining the central administration of the NKVD with one of the main prisons of the capital. Zukov was away.

When I got to Moscow, I thought, rather naively, that I would be able to reach sources of dependable information through private men who could and would help me. So I went to see the writer, Ilya Ehrenburg, with whom I had had a pleasant meeting during General Sikorski's visit. I had also, several years previously, met him in Paris.

In his suite at the luxury hotel, the Moskwa, I put the tragic situation before him and asked his advice on the best way of tackling my mission in Moscow. He told me quite frankly that he thought I could accomplish nothing. He explained that my rank was not high enough for anyone to give me an interview. In his opinion, a phone call from the General would prove more efficacious than all my efforts. He was probably right, for nowhere else perhaps has rank so much importance as in Soviet Russia. I imagine it is far easier to get an interview with Attlee or Truman than with someone of third-rate importance in the NKVD.

Reichman's office was in the Lubianka. I was unable to deliver the letters I carried. I had to go countless times to an office up a dirty, smelly staircase outside the Lubianka. There I had to wait interminably for my interview, along with a crowd of people seeking news of their relatives in prison.

I was obliged to hand over General Anders' letters to a young official of the NKVD. He was bursting with health and even got as far as smiling at my ingenuousness when I obstinately reiterated my wish to hand the letters to the two Generals in person. I had to give in, hand him the letters, wait with the others and continue to inquire when I was likely to be received. Only after many days of waiting and a night phone call from the Lubianka did they send a special delegate to me in the waiting room.

General Reichman was fair with a tendency to baldness. He had a distinguished face and the red hairs which grew on his well-kept hands fascinated me. He received me with cold correctness. Naturally we spoke, as usual, before a witness. Having explained the situation, I requested Reichman to help me to obtain an interview with Beria or Mierkulov. He refused politely. I then presented a statement which he read in my presence, following each line with the point of his pencil. In this statement, I had recounted the history of the three camps, so far as I myself knew it, up to the time they were abandoned in May, 1940. After this introduc-

tion of hard fact, I had written, amongst other things:

"Nearly six months have passed since August 12th, 1941, the date of the 'amnesty' in favor of all Polish prisoners. Officers and other ranks liberated from prisons and camps have come in from all parts, either in groups or singly, to the Polish Army, but, in spite of the 'amnesty' in spite of the formal promises made by Stalin in person to our Ambassador, M. Kot, in October, 1941, in spite of peremptory orders given by Stalin in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Forces, General Sikorski, and of General Anders, on December 4th, 1941, when both were endeavoring to discover the whereabouts of the prisoners of Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow, not a single prisoner from these three camps (except for the group from Griazowitz and a few dozens interned apart and liberated in September) has turned up. We have received no request for help from these same prisoners of war from the three camps in question. We have interrogated thousands of prisoners coming from camps and prisons without succeeding in obtaining the slightest information about their fate. We have received only vague secondhand news as follows: Of the despatch to Kolyma, in 1940, of between 6,000 and 12,000 Polish officers and men across the Gulf of Nachodka; of the concentration of over 5,000 officers in the mines of Franz Josef Land; of deportations to Novaia Zemlia, Kamtchatka and the region of Tchukotka; of 600 officer-prisoners from Kozielsk working 180 kilometers from Piostraia Dreswa (Kolyma); of 150 men wearing officers' uniforms who were seen north of the Soswa River, near Gari (east of the Urals); of Polish officer-prisoners being embarked in enormous barges (1,700 to 2,000 men in each barge) and deported to the northern islands (two of these transports sank in the Barents Sea.)

"None of these rumors has been substantiated, although the information coming from the northern islands and Kolyma seems the most probable.

"We are well aware with what care the record of every prisoner is compiled. Each dossier, with numerous reports of interrogation, is kept in a special folder, together with photographs and carefully checked documents. We can none of us credit that the whereabouts of 15,000 prisoners of war, of whom 8,000 were officers, can be unknown to the NKVD authorities.

"After Stalin's personal promise and his formal order that the question of these Polish prisoners be resolved, could we not hope that the whereabouts of our companions could be revealed to us? Or, if they are dead, have we not the right to know when, and in what circumstances, they died?"

Then followed the figures, which had been estimated with all possible care. The statement concluded with these words: "From the facts given above, the number of officers and other ranks who were at Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow who have not returned amounts to 8,300. All the officers of the newly organized Polish Army, which on January 1st, 1942, numbered 2,300, were internees from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; with the exception of the 400 freed from Griazowitz, there were no prisoners of war amongst them.

"Since we are not in a position to name the exact total of all the Polish prisoners still missing, we quote only that of the prisoners of Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow (most of whom were officers), as we can fix this figure with relative precision.

"In accordance with a decision taken by Stalin and General Sikorski, we have undertaken to increase the strength of our Army in the south of the USSR. The absence of these men who were our best specialists and constituted the elite of our Army, makes our task far

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First Polish units formed out of the remnants of the Polish prisoners of war, released by the Russians following the Sikorski-Stalin pact of 1941. These men were captured by the Russians in September 1939 and held in primitive camps until Russia was attacked by her German ally.

THE WARSAW REGIME'S FRAUDULENT ELECTORAL LAW

(Continued from page 3)

protest against proven abuses was not considered. At present, catching someone redhanded in the commission of an irregularity may evoke a protest, but does not necessarily lead to unpleasant consequences for the offender.

The totalitarian electoral law of the PPR violates in almost every provision the constitution of 1921, which supposedly is in force in present-day Poland. Here are a few typical instances:

The balloting of the soldiers takes place in defiance of the definite provisions of the constitution.

Disfranchisement on the basis of a statement of the election board is again a violation of the constitution,

which clearly provides in two articles that only a court verdict can deprive a citizen of the right to vote.

The electoral law of the PPR has turned the elections into a cynical farce. Under these conditions the outcome of the elections is of no practical importance, even if the PSL is permitted to participate in the elections as a separate entity. The PSL will have, on the basis of this law, only as many seats as the regime will deign to grant it and will elect only those deputies who will be acceptable to the security police. Needless to say, certain large, independent segments of the population which have not been legalized in present-day Poland, are taking no part at all in the elections.

—J. K.

THE SPECTER OF DISASTER FACING THE POLISH NATION

(Continued from page 4)

is an increasing number of those who at Moscow's behest act as Poles. Tens of thousands of Russians were imported into Poland and placed in high positions. In many cases demobilized Soviet soldiers settle in Poland, receive Polish passports with polonized names, study Polish because they have been ordered to do so, and pretend to be Poles. The influx of Russians is hastened by repatriation from Russia which is accompanied by a wave of trained Soviet agents posing as unfortunate repatriates from Siberia.

On the other side of the ledger is the extermination of patriotic Polish elements by means of terror. It is espe-

cially the leaders of political and economic life on all levels of society — intellectuals, workers and peasants alike — who are the victims of this policy.

As the present regime in Poland becomes more firmly entrenched, and the Western powers remain indifferent, the Polish nation will be confronted ever more plainly with the specter of physical and moral death. Those will be destroyed physically who will refuse capitulation in any shape; those will be morally lost who will sell themselves to the Soviets. One hardly need be a Pole to see that the destruction of such a center of Christian civilization as Poland can be the beginning of the end of civilization.

OPERATION "FAREWELL"

(Continued from page 5)

"Nor must the skill of the Polish pilots against the flying bombs be forgotten. Those belonging to No. 316 Squadron were the most successful with a score of 73 to their credit. No. 306 comes next with 56, and No. 315 third with 49. The citizens of London and the southern counties of England had cause to bless these men and they did and do with full hearts.

"The crews of our merchant ships, ploughing in slow perilous convoy round these coasts, listened to the roar of the aircraft of No. 302 or No. 309 or No. 317 Squadrons on patrol above them, and felt their burden lightened.

"The American crews of the Flying Fortresses and Liberators had good reason to be grateful to the pilots of No. 309 and No. 316 Squadrons who flew as escort to them on many sorties into the heart of enemy country.

"There is in fact no duty in which a fighter squadron was engaged during the late war which was not shared by a Polish squadron at some time or another.

"At the beginning, in your own beloved land, soon in ours, you went on wings to battle, you fought and you prevailed. The steadfastness of your purpose, the skill you showed in flying, above all your fire in combat, have earned you the gratitude and admiration of all, and that special praise from the lips of your British comrades, who, being fighter pilots themselves, are able to put full value on your worth.

"This is a farewell parade and squadrons unsurpassed in skill and bravery will have to be disbanded. But let us not forget that they have left 'the vivid air signed with their honor' and will be a glorious and undying memory.

"What the future holds, no man can say, and I am no more of a prophet than my neighbor, but this I know, that if some of you may feel moved to seek in the Royal Air Force further scope for service, you will be doubly welcomed. You will be welcome first because you are Poles who have fought beside us, shared our burdens in the grim first years and our joy in final victory, and secondly because we know you to be men of courage, truth, honor and proven worth.

"The spirit in the Polish squadrons was a white flame in

war, and peace cannot quench it. May it burn as clearly and as steadfastly as ever and illumine a future which will be the brighter for its beams."

The speech was followed by the exchange of Colors.

Air Marshal Sir James Robb presented the ensign of the Royal Air Force to the Polish Fighter Squadrons as a symbol of gratitude and debts, which, he said, "we will never be able to repay."

In return, Polish Senior Liaison Officer Fighter Command G/Capt. Bajan presented the Air Marshal with the colors of the Polish Air Force as a mark of friendship and comradeship in arms.

Air Vice-Marshal Iżycki, Air Officer Commanding in Chief Polish Air Force, pinned the Polish badge on the tunic of Air Marshal Sir James Robb and Air Vice-Marshal McDonald, Officer Commanding No. 11 Group, as a token of personal friendship of the Polish fighter personnel to their leaders.

In the fly-past which ended the ceremonies all the aircraft of No. 12 Group took part.

The two squadrons of British jet propelled Meteor aircraft were followed by two squadrons of Mosquitos, with 305 Polish Squadron taking the lead.

Then came the glorious Spitfire, flown specially from the Continent for this occasion.

The three magnificent wings of Mustang aircraft left the air roaring with engine noise.

The fly-past was closed by Nos. 309, 306, and 315 Polish Squadrons, stationed at Coltishall.

The weather was grim and rainy, very unfavorable for flying, but in spite of this the formation flew very close, wings tipping wings.

Watching the splendid air display of the Polish Squadron in such bad weather, Air Marshal Sir James Robb paid this remarkable tribute to the Polish fighters:

"I am not surprised, they are the most experienced fighters in the world."

FROM ONE SOVIET OFFICIAL TO ANOTHER . . .

(Continued from page 13)

more difficult. I need scarcely point out to what extent the disappearance of thousands of our fighting comrades impedes the effort to create an atmosphere of confidence between our army and the Soviet Union, an atmosphere so necessary for the normal development of mutual understanding between two Allied armies in the fight against the enemy."

General Reichman read attentively. He followed each line with his pencil, held in those manicured hands—for one second did his inscrutable face alter its expression. The whole of my memorandum was read slowly while I sat there. He replied laconically that he knew nothing of the whereabouts of these men, because they did not come within his competence. Nevertheless, to oblige General Anders, he would look into the matter and keep me informed on the results of his inquiries. He asked me to remain in Moscow and await a telephone call from him. My dismissal was frigid. I waited ten days before I was at last called to the telephone—once again in the middle of the night. It was Reichman himself on the line. In a most polite manner, which rather surprised me, he told me that unfortunately he had to leave the capital the next morning. He much regretted that he would be unable to see me again, and advised me to return to Kubishev, as the relevant file had been passed to the Vice-Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Comrade Vyshinsky, and to Comrade Novikov. All I managed to say in reply was that I knew only too well that Vyshinsky would do nothing, since Kot had already appealed to him eight times on the subject without the slightest result; that I had come to Moscow because we had been unable to obtain any news through Comrade Vyshinsky; and that General Anders counted on the friendly attitude of General Reichman towards the Polish Army in the process of formation, and on his personal intervention. His only reply was one of polite formality. So ended my mission to Moscow.

A spark of hope remained with us, and was assiduously fanned by the members of the NKVD attached to our Army. We still hoped that our missing companions had been deported to distant islands and would rejoin us in July or August—that is to say, in the only navigable

period of the year in the northern seas. They used to whisper: "Above all, don't agitate. Your comrades will arrive in July or August. Just be patient." But the months of July and August came and went and no one came.

Another fact, to which I can testify, filled us with some misgiving. In October, 1940, eight months before the outbreak of war between Russia and Germany, the Bolsheviks assembled several officers of our General Staff, amongst them Colonel Berling, in a specially prepared camp in Moscow. They proposed to them that a Polish Army should be formed forthwith to fight against the Germans. When he accepted the proposal, Berling made certain specific stipulations. He insisted that all officers and other ranks must be allowed to join this army, regardless of their political opinions. Beria and Mierkulov were present at the meeting. "But that goes without saying," they replied. "All the Poles, whatever their political views, will have the right to enlist in the army we are about to form." "Very well," said Berling; "we have excellent cadres for the purpose in the camps at Starobielsk and Kozielsk." It was then that Mierkulov let slip a significant remark: "No, not those. We made a big mistake concerning them." (*balchouiu achibkou*). This sentence was quoted to me word for word, by three witnesses who were present at the interview.

The salient points in my experience of this matter therefore are:

(1) The rumors and reports concerning our comrades of Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow, alleging them to be in the distant camps of the USSR, always reached us at third hand; not one actual name was verified and the rumors were vague and impossible to check.

(2) Throughout the year during which the Polish Army in the USSR was being formed (1941-42) when Poles of all ages flocked in from the most distant parts of Soviet Russia, from Komi, Novaia Zemlia, Workuta, Norilsk, Kolyma and the Chinese frontier, not one of the missing men reached us.

(3) Since April, 1940 (i.e. since the evacuation of the three camps of Starobielsk, Kozielsk and Ostachkow) not a sign of life from our vanished comrades was received, either in Poland or by our Army.

FROM THE SECRET FILES OF THE POLISH WORKERS' PARTY

(Continued from page 4)

"The lost positions should be regained, the mistakes made should be rectified. Among the mistakes we include the following:

1. lack of a unity front at the lower levels and among the masses of workers and peasants,
2. a weak link with the masses at the various levels of all political parties,
3. an inadequate strengthening of revolutionary positions in workers' and peasant circles,
4. an unskilled maneuvering by the Polish Left which pro-

vides the reactionary elements with an opportunity to strike back.

"Having access to the masses, the leadership of the Polish Workers Party has every chance of standing at their head by backing their demands and by introducing on its own initiative demands which are in the interest of the peasants and workers.

"The struggle of the proletariat for economic gains must assume a more revolutionary character and must always be well integrated by means of the various elements and forms of political action. In its present stage this struggle is the chief link of a chain uniting the masses with world revolution."

MALCZEWSKI'S "MARJA" — A BALLAD OF THE POLISH BORDER

(Continued from page 9)

Onto the center of the stage he has step by step been completing, Malczewski now leads his heroine. The lovely, ethereal daughter of the Sword Bearer, Marja is indeed a being whose home is in heaven, a creature "on whom Earth weighs like a shackle." "A tender, gloomy sweetness" hovers about her, and her "tresses are aureoled with the smoke of snuffed-out happiness." She is the arch-type of the pre-romantic's heroine.

Having drawn three of his central characters in clear relief, Malczewski delineates the fourth and final figure in the drama. This is the Voivod's son Waclaw. We see him as he rides dashing and full of youthful verve to the Sword Bearer's manorhouse. The Cossack courier has prepared the way for him, heralding his arrival, and Marja is waiting expectant. The lovers rush ecstatically into each other's arms. Up to now the Sword Bearer has

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MALCZEWSKI'S "MARJA" — A BALLAD OF THE POLISH BORDER

(Continued from page 15)

hesitated about accepting the offer of reconciliation which the cossack has conveyed from Waclaw's father; he does not trust the Voivod. But now his doubt vanishes and he orders a feast prepared to mark the restoration of harmony. "Prepare the board with lavish hand," he cried,

... nor spice nor savor spare,
Bring out the fruits and sweetmeats, the ginger, saffron,
bay,

For is he not a noble knight who honors us this day?
The wine I shall select myself, and if when yonder sun
Its golden disc has buried deep and night is well begun,
Our plans are still proceeding fair, and naught appears
of stealth,

While Tatars sip the evening dew, I'll drink my new
son's health!

A passionate love scene occupies the following section of the poem, concluding with the famous confession of Marja:

To share thine every pleasure, to soothe thine every sigh,
No thought to have without thee, in all with thee comply,
To be the comfort of thy days, thy triumphs to adorn,
To live for thee and in thee, and from thy breast if torn,
To see, that final moment, amidst the deadly pain,
The sign of endless happiness upon thy face remain;
To die, but in thy memory to live, a sacred fire,
This is the sum of Marja's love, the whole of her desire.

The hour arrives all too quickly when Waclaw is in duty bound to take his leave. Marja is left desolate in her father's house. Her anxiety is doubled when the old Sword Bearer, seeing the knights depart, insists on joining them himself and riding across the steppe along with them against the Tatars.

The plot moves swiftly. Through a series of vivid, richly colored scenes the marital cavalcade proceeds on its way, plunging deeper each hour into the thrilling domain wherein "Solitude alone holds sway,"

Where Greed reaps not the harvest, whence tedious Toil
departs,

Where silent, lone and blessed lies a wondrous, virgin
land,

In secret beauty blossoming, unharmed by mortal hand.

The Tatar, who has long been harrying the Border, is caught up with at last and a battle to the death ensues. Malczewski describes this with brutal realism, omitting no detail of oozing blood or torn flesh, gouged out eyes or smoking villages. Honors for valor on the field are shared by Waclaw with his elderly father-in-law, as the old Sword Bearer, realizing his highest dream, sinks his good "Christian iron in the neck of the pagan foe."

But what of affairs at home? There something sinister is in progress, as we learn from a youth who enters the poem at the opening of the second canto. The sole desire of this youth, we are given to understand, is "escape," escape from the "murky skies" and "sour berries" of the savage steppe. The youth is obviously Malczewski himself, yearning for Italy and praising it in a charming song, yet bound by unbreakable, though mysterious, ties to the steppeland.

The youth longs, as he says, only "to flee Despair." Yet Despair crowds with each moment more close upon him, arriving, as Malczewski believes it always does in life, in fair and enchanting form, here in the gay disguise of a carnival party, or *kulig*. The merry-makers carol their light-hearted ditties, carrying forward at the same time a deadly design. A foreshadowing of what that design may be is given us in the "harsh, discordant song"

poured forth by the company "in jangled chorus." The refrain of this song is the theme of *Marja* as a whole:

On earth the hand of Death sweeps all away,

The worm is hatching in the rose today.

The poem's dénouement may be imagined: Waclaw returns, riding gaily up to the manorhouse gate, bursting with manly pride and wishing only to swoon with love upon Marja's breast. But something is wrong. Though it is a fine, moonlight night, there is not a soul stirring. Waclaw knocks on the gate, once, twice, a third time . . . But only Echo answers him, hollowly.

At length Waclaw summons courage to enter and makes his way to Marja's chamber. There, white and dishevelled, his beloved lies dead before his eyes.

Waclaw is beside himself. Vengeance rushes into his mind and he is ready to murder his father, whose hand he can clearly see is behind this crime. But then, so deep has the tragedy cut, soon even this desire passes, and all the youth is able to do is leap astride his steed and lose himself in a mad race with the savage winds of the steppe.

The final episodes are tender and serene. We are taken first to a church atop which rise "three cupolas," and in the quiet hush of which old Ukrainian women are heard mingling their prayers with lamentations. A funeral is in progress. We see the black coffin, the flickering candles, and, prone on the floor in the form of a cross, the old Sword Bearer.

For this he'd swung her cradle, a father fiercely proud,
For this he's bought her silver cloth, to make a funeral
shroud. . . .

And yet, curiously, he felt no emotion at all, not even sorrow, when they carried her away, for he had died with her, and his soul was "already in heaven with hers" that dreadful day.

In the final scene we find the Sword Bearer making his home with a regiment stationed to guard the Border. Each day he wanders alone on the steppe, returning at nightfall when the guard summons him. But once he does not return. The guard is alarmed and goes to search for him. He finds the old warrior in the churchyard, kneeling beside Marja's grave and that of his wife. He wears the cap he had worn with such pride as a young and warlike knight, and the same old *zupan*. Despite the marks of age upon his face his eyes are still alight with warlike ardor. But now, when the trumpets begin to blow for war,

When far across the steppeland their martial echoes
creep,

He does not lift his sabre, nor waken from his sleep, . . .

And presently three grave mounds, not two, are seen
dotting the silent plain, while

Yearning, deep and mournful, sweeps billowing
Ukraine.

Many editions of *Marja* have been published in the hundred and twenty years since the poem's first publication, two of a definitive nature, edited by Jozef Ujejski and Alexander Bruckner, respectively, at the time of the ballad's hundredth anniversary in 1925.

In his lifetime "this genius stole among us like a shadow," and "his words, with their tuneful harmony, flew out on the air and were scattered afar. A true artist was Malczewski." So wrote Mochnacki of the author of *Marja* in 1830. Today, a hundred and twenty-one years after, posterity accounts his words prophetically true. *Marja* still remains "an eternal monument" to its author's glory.