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April 25, 1943

From: London

To: The President of the United States

No. 284 Filed 1728Z/25

Former Naval Person to President Roosevelt personal  
and [REDACTED]

I understand that Stalin has repeated to you his message to me of April 21st about Poland.

My two immediately following messages contain my reply.

As you see, I am now going to follow these up with a fuller message appealing to Stalin to cooperate with us in getting as many Poles as possible out of Russia. Halifax has already spoken to Hull about this. I shall be sending you a further message on this subject.

Message from Prime Minister to Premier Stalin begins:

"Ambassador Maisky delivered your message to me last night. We shall certainly oppose rigorously any "investigation" by the International Red Cross or any other body in any territory under German authority. Such investigation would be a fraud and its conclusions reached by terrorism. Mr Eden is seeing Sikorski today and will press him as strongly as possible to withdraw all countenance from any investigation under Nazi auspices. Also we should never approve of any parley with the Germans or contact with them of any kind whatever, and we shall press this point upon our Polish allies.

"I will wire you later how Sikorski reacts to the above points. His position is one of great difficulty. Far from being pro-German or in league with them, he is in danger of being overthrown by Poles who consider he has not stood up sufficiently for his people against the Soviets. If he should go, we should only get somebody worse. I hope therefore that your decision to "interrupt" relations is to be read in the sense of a final warning rather than of a break and that it will not be made public at any rate till every other plan has been tried. The public announcement of a break would do the greatest possible harm in the United

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States where the Poles are numerous and influential.

"I had drafted a telegram to you yesterday asking you to consider allowing more Poles and Polish dependents to go into Persia. This would allay the rising discontent of the Polish Army formed there, and would enable me to influence the Polish Government to act in conformity with our common interests and against the common foe. I have deferred sending this telegram in consequence of yours to me in the hopes the situation may clear. April 24, 1943." First message ends.

Message from Prime Minister to Premier Stalin personal and secret.

"Mr Eden saw General Sikorski yesterday evening. Sikorski stated that so far from synchronising his appeal to the Red Cross with that of the Germans his government took the initiative without knowing what line the Germans would take. In fact, the Germans acted after hearing the Polish broadcast announcement. Sikorski also told Eden that his government had simultaneously approached Monsieur Bogomolov on the subject. Sikorski emphasised that previously he had several times raised this question of the missing officers with the Soviet Government and once with you personally. On his instructions the Polish Minister of Information in his broadcasts has reacted strongly against German propaganda and this has brought an angry German reply.

"As a result of Eden's strong representations Sikorski has undertaken not to press request for Red Cross investigation and will so inform the Red Cross authorities in Berne. He will also restrain Polish press from polemics. In this connection I am examining possibility of silencing those Polish papers in this country which attack the Soviet Government and at the same time attack Sikorski for trying to work with the Soviet Government.

"In view of Sikorski's undertaking I would now urge you to abandon idea of any interruption of relations.

"I have reflected further on this matter and I am more than ever convinced that it can only assist our enemies, if there is a break between the Soviet and Polish Governments. German propaganda has produced this story precisely in order to make a rift in the ranks of the United Nations and to lend some semblance of reality to its new attempts to persuade the world that the interests of Europe and the smaller nations are being defended by Germany against the great extra-European powers, namely, the USSR, the USA and the British Empire.

"I know General Sikorski well and I am convinced that no contacts or understanding could exist between him or his government and our common enemy, against whom he has led the Poles in bitter and uncompromising resistance. His appeal to the International Red Cross was clearly a mistake though I



am convinced it was not made in collusion with the Germans.

"Now that we have, I hope, cleared up the issue raised in your telegram to me, I want to revert to the proposals contained in my draft telegram to which I referred in my message of the 24th April, I shall therefore, shortly be sending you this earlier message in its original form. If we two were able to arrange this matter of getting these Poles out of the Soviet Union it would be easier for Sikorski to withdraw entirely from the position he has been forced by his public opinion to adopt. I hope you will help me to achieve this. April 25, 1943."

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To: The President of the United States

From: London

No. 285:          Filed 11455Z/26

Former Naval Person to President Roosevelt  
personal and  

I repeat to you herewith the reply I have  
just received to my telegram which I forwarded to you  
in my number 284. I shall be glad of your views.

Begins Premier Stalin to Premier Churchill  
personal and most secret. Kremlin April 25th.

"I received your message concerning the Polish  
affairs. Many thanks for your interest in the matter.  
I would like, however, to point out that the interruption  
of relations with the Polish Government is already decided  
and today V M Molotov delivered a note to this effect.  
Such action was demanded by my colleagues as the Polish  
official press is ceaselessly pursuing and even daily  
expanding its campaign hostile to the USSR. I was  
obliged also to take into account the public opinion of  
the Soviet Union which is deeply indignant at the  
ingratitude and treachery of the Polish Government.

"With regard to the publication of the Soviet  
document concerning the interruption of relations with  
the Polish Government, I am sorry to say that such  
publication cannot be avoided."

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*Sent to President as Green 57.  
Copy to Mr. Hull.*