Telegram from the USSR People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, V.M. Molotov, to the Ambassador of the USSR in the UK, F.T. Gusev, and the Soviet ambassador to the Allied governments in London, V.Z. Lebedev, 22 June 1944

TOP SECRET

For your guidance, I am giving you the following instructions that you must abide by during the next meeting with Mikołajczyk:

First. It is necessary to clarify to Mikołajczyk that this matter is not about replacing several ministers within the Polish government, but of overhauling the Polish government, in which Mikołajczyk could also stay on as Prime Minister.

With this overhaul, it is necessary to ensure the participation of not only the Poles of the Polish émigré [community] in the government, but also that of Polish activists within the Krajowa Rada Narodowa, as well as Polish figures in the United States and the Soviet Union.[[1]](#footnote-1).

Second. There can be no question of the Soviet Government’s retreat from the Curzon line. The Soviet Union's position on this issue remains unchanged.

Third. People such as Sosnkowski, Raczkiewicz,[[2]](#footnote-2) Kot,[[3]](#footnote-3) and Kukiel[[4]](#footnote-4) who have taken to making provocative speeches in the Polish government on the Katyn murders, must be removed from the Polish government.

Fourth. For the sake of fairness, the restored Polish government must admit to being profoundly mistaken on the part of the Polish government for [its handling of] the Katyn murders that caused a rift between the Soviet government and the Polish government.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Should these conditions be met, then the [issue of] restoration of diplomatic relations and the conclusion of agreements on the Polish administration will not be met with objections from the Soviet government.

Confirm receipt [of message].

Molotov.

[FPARF, f. 059, inv. 12, fold. 11, file 65, pp. 114–115]

Keywords: Poland

1. Apparently, in order to promote the Soviet leadership's plans for the formation of the Polish government with the assistance of loyal Poles living in the territory of the USSR, USA and Great Britain, a visit by ‘American Polies’, Professor Lange and PriestFather St. Orlemanski, was organized in May 1944. In one of the first meetings with them, Stalin said that "it is necessary to have an interim government or a committee that would be recognized by the British and Americans" (Noskova А.F. Stalin i Pol’sha. p. 127). For more see: Pechatnov V.O., Magadeyev I.E. Perepiska. T. 2. pp. 105–107, 120–122. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Raczkiewicz, Władysław (1885 – 1947) – Polish politician, President of Poland in Exile (1939 – 1947). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Kot, Stanisław (1885 – 1975) – Polish politician and diplomat, Polish Ambassador to USSR (1941 – 1942), Minister of State in the Middle East (1942 – 1943), Minister of Information (1943 – 1944), Ambassador to Rome (1945 – 1947). From 1947 in exile. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Kukiel, Marian Włodzimierz (1885 – 1972) – Polish Lieutenant-General and statesman, Minister of Defence (1942 – 1945, formally until 1949) of Polish Government-in-Exile. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. With this demand, it becomes particularly clear that the Soviet position has hardened in comparison to the end of May 1944. In Molotov’s telegram of 26 May to Lebedev, containing directives for negotiations with the Polish representatives, it stated that, "You should not have to push the issue of Katyn, which is no longer relevant" (АVP RF. F. 059. Op. 12. P. 27. D. 149. L. 7–9). Molotov’s instruction of 22 June, the day operation ‘Bagration’ was launched, was duly conveyed by Lebedev at a meeting with Mikołajczyk on 23 June. It was "clearly unacceptable to the Polish Government'", and "indicated that Stalin was close to making a decision on the question of who would be given power to rule over Poland" (Pol’sha v XX veke. Ocherki politicheskoy istorii. p. 392–393). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)