Letter from the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, I.V. Stalin, to the Prime Minister of the Polish Government in exile S. Mikołajczyk, 16 August 1944[[1]](#footnote-1)

Copy

TO MISTER STANISLAV MIKOLAJCZYK

 London.

I received your letter about Warsaw. I should inform you that after our conversation I ordered the Soviet command to immediately lay down their arms in the Warsaw area. Besides, a parachutist that was dropped down was not able to carry out the mission, as he was killed by the Germans[[2]](#footnote-2).

After that, a closer look at this case convinced me that the Warsaw activity, which was undertaken unbeknownst to and without contacting the Soviet command, was a thoughtless adventure that caused pointless losses of population. On top of that, it resulted in a smear campaign by the Polish press that alluded to the Soviet command deceiving the citizens of Warsaw.

In view of all this, the Soviet command decided to publicly disassociate itself from the Warsaw adventure (see. Refutation of TASS, August 12[[3]](#footnote-3)), as it should not and cannot bear any responsibility for Warsaw affair[[4]](#footnote-4).

[FPARF, f. 06, inv. 6, fold. 23, file 242, p. 31]

1. The letter basically repeated ideas expressed by Stalin in a letter to Churchill, sent on the same day. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. At a meeting with Mikołajczyk on 9 August, Stalin promised to help out with arms once a link between the rebels and the command of the 1st Belorussian Front has been established - hence the plan to send the parachutist-messenger (Sovetskiy faktor v Vostochnoy Evrope. T. 1. p. 86). In light of this, according to the Home Army (Armia Krajowa) documents, the Home Army headquarters already had a Soviet officer (Captain Kalugin). However, it is not entirely clear as to why it was not possible for him to act as a go-between with the Soviet command. The Deputy Chief of Staff of the Home Army reported on 17 August that "according to our Prime Minister, Kalugin might already not have Moscow’s full trust, hence Moscow's plan to send to Warsaw a special Soviet officer with the ciphers for Rokossovsky" (Russkiy arkhiv: Velikaya Otechestvennaya. T. 14 (3-1). p. 470). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Referring to ‘TASS’s Disclaimer’, published on 13 August. It stated that the claims made by the foreign press and the Polish government-in-exile of the existence of contact between the rebels and the Soviet command "are a result of a misunderstanding, or a manifestation of slander against the Soviet command ... the responsibility for what is happening in Warsaw falls solely on the Polish émigré community in London" (Izvestiya. 13.VIII.1944. p. 2). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Describing the exchange of messages between Stalin and Mikołajczyk at the Cabinet meeting on 18 August, Eden pointed out that "it eased our own position that the Poles should be made aware of the Russian position direct, and while they had not reacted too badly to it, they were not yet aware of the difficulties, which the Russians were making regarding the permission for Americans to drop aid for the Underground Army in Warsaw. M. Mikołajczyk was this afternoon replying to Premier Stalin in what appeared to be very conciliatory language, urging the case for Russian assistance both on merits and in the interests of future relations between Poland and Russia. (WM (44) 108th Conclusion, Conf. Annex, 18/08/1944 // TNA, CAB 65/47). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)