

**The Polish Country Section of the Special Operations Executive 1940-1946:
A British Perspective.**

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Summary

This study provides a history of the Polish Section of the Special Operation Executive (SOE) throughout its existence from 1940 until 1946. The Polish Section of SOE was a British organisation. For this reason, what follows is told from a British perspective. The effectiveness of SOE's work should not be judged purely from any accomplishment of direct support. It was involved in far more. In this it differed greatly from other country sections, where it needed only to supply the requirements of, in many cases, its own agents. As far as the Polish effort was concerned though, it supported a resistance force it knew only through other administrative offices, the Polish Ministries of the Interior and National Defence. The story of the Polish Section of SOE remains an open-ended one, because SOE rarely learned the results of its endeavours.

It was imperative that the organisational work undertaken by the Polish Section of SOE was kept secret. Copies of files were not issued to any department of the British Civil Service, simply in case they might have an interest in their contents, as may happen with other organisations. For this reason, the official files and histories retained in The National Archive's (TNA) vaults remain the most valuable sources of reference.

In order to follow the development of the organisation from an initially very amateur set-up to a highly professional and efficient force, and its relationship with the Polish Governmental departments especially the Sixth Bureau, episodes are related largely in chronological order. Specific dates mentioned are accurate, but monthly period headings given in the text should be regarded solely as approximate indicators.

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Introduction

The history of the formation of SOE during the early years of the Second World War has been adequately covered in a number of reliable publications,¹ the most notable of which are studio written long after the war's end by those who took part, especially 'Setting Europe Ablaze' by Douglas Dodds-Parker, 'Foreign Fields' by Peter Wilkinson, and 'Gubbins and SOE' by the same author, in conjunction with Joan Bright Astley. Briefly, the organisation was set up in 1940 in order to carry out clandestine, subversive operations behind enemy lines in such a way as to cause maximum disruption to enemy efficiency. Its charter was drawn up by ex-Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, in what proved to be his last important parliamentary act before his death on 9th November 1940.

Whilst many of the various country sections of SOE are quite well represented in various publications, the Polish Section, especially with regard to work written in English, lacks coverage. The exceptions are the works already mentioned and, particularly, 'Poland, SOE and the Allies', by Polish author, Józef Garliński. The reason why the Polish Section should be so relatively unknown is something of a mystery, especially as throughout the war, the Poles had the largest and most efficient resistance organisation anywhere in occupied Europe. The mystery can perhaps be solved, however, when consideration is given to the following: 1/ the lack of archival material; 2/ the secrecy involved, leading to the prohibition of literature following the war's end (only lifted in recent years); and finally 3/ the political situation and public feelings that prevailed at the termination of hostilities and the subsequent 'Cold War'.

To deal with these points individually:

1. At the end of the war, a fire at SOE headquarters is reputed to have destroyed some 7/8ths of its records, which may or may not account for the lack of Polish archival material. The number of documents held at the National Archive in Kew (approximately 200) suggests that

the Polish Section files may have largely escaped the effects of the conflagration. Lack of care taken in their preservation could account for some loss,² as can the reclassification of files, or their replacing into the records kept by the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), which means they are unlikely ever again to see the light of day.³

2. The second factor is the secret nature of the organisation. The delay of some 50 years prior to allowing publication of memoirs has led to the loss, through death, of many of the key players who were in the best position to relate their own stories. Even today, long after the conditional silence was imposed upon them, many survivors are reluctant to speak. Diaries written during the war sensibly made no mention of secret work. The war diary of Lord Alanbrooke, for instance, mentions SOE on only six occasions in over 700 pages and the Polish Section only once.⁴ Of late, a work by Ian Valentine, 'Station 43: Audley End House and SOE's Polish Section,'⁵ needs mentioning, but this deals mainly with the history of a house used as a training station for the Polish Section and the various individuals there, rather than the Section's history.

3. Perhaps the most disturbing factor was the attitude of the British public in 1945. 'Uncle' Joe Stalin's red star was in the ascendancy and many supporters of the Communist revolution returned from the battlefields intent on altering the then current political system. Little consideration was given to a country with a newly formed Communist government (Poland) when many in the British Isles were turning their backs on the wartime coalition to elect what was hoped by them would be a similar regime. The British press, especially, turned on the Poles with harsh criticism. The fact that Britain entered the war in an attempt to guarantee Poland's independence was also ignored when the aggressor was seen as an acceptable one. To all, the end of the war came as a relief and none wanted a protracted conflict with the Soviet Union, especially the only ones capable of doing so, the United States.⁶ Certain events, such as the conferences at Yalta and Teheran (again well covered elsewhere) although important to the Poles, are outside the subject of this study. Teheran appears to have had little, if any, effect on SOE. Yalta, however, was seen by SOE as a step forward in securing democracy in Poland and many believed Stalin's promises of free elections.

Nevertheless, mention is made of both conferences in the text when they affected dealings between the Polish Section and the Polish Government in Exile. Subsequently, when Poland was part of the Warsaw Pact during the Cold War period, little credit was likely to have been given to a nation that formed part of an alliance then seen as hostile. This is perhaps the main reason for the obscurity of the Polish resistance movement in Britain.

In common with all military and governmental departments, SOE has been criticised on various occasions and for various reasons, and some of this criticism may well be justified. One writer went as far as to claim that, as far as the Polish Section was concerned, SOE did 'little good and much harm.'⁷ This comment is extremely harsh, for if the British did not assist the Poles, then who did? Little, if any, help came from other quarters, and messages of appreciation from the Poles for supplies delivered demonstrate that they certainly did not believe this to be true. Another criticism, whilst recognising the difficulties, accused the British of 'virtually abandoning their Polish clients in their hour of need.'⁸ While there is some truth in this statement made in connection with supplies to Warsaw during the Rising of 1944, it will be demonstrated that the Polish Section never abandoned the Poles in any sense and always behaved with the very best of intentions to those for whom they had assumed responsibility.

Even after the war had finished, SOE still looked for ways to continue giving support. Whilst it is true that supplies in sufficient quantities were not forthcoming, this was rarely the fault of the Polish Section or indeed of SOE as a whole. Certainly, money, for the use of maintaining the Polish Home Army, appears to have been available in abundance. How this was used though, was the responsibility of the Poles themselves. It should also be realised that the Polish Section was not only involved in supplying equipment and support for the Poles in Poland alone. The Poles were active elsewhere too, and accounts for this section of the Polish desk are even scarcer, one exception being MRD Foot's, *SOE in France*.⁹

Unlike its extensive involvement in other countries, SOE was only responsible for a small part of the Polish resistance's effectiveness. The Polish Section, therefore, found itself in unfamiliar territory when dealing with the Poles, eventually becoming more of a liaison

organisation than a subversive one. Basically, its task was to train, supply and deliver the requirements of the resistance forces fighting in Poland. That the British did not send a Military Mission to Poland until December 1944¹⁰ (although originally requested in January of that year) is indicative of the fact that they relied heavily on reports from the Poles themselves. Through the Second and Sixth Bureaux, the Poles were generally extremely efficient when it came to intelligence reporting, which negated the need for a separate observation mission. Unfortunately, in the latter stages of the war, much intelligence was called into question as it conflicted with information received from elsewhere, namely, the Soviets. By the time it was discovered that the Polish evidence was the more reliable, it was often too late to react. The British could not be guaranteed such accurate information from other Allied countries, and for this reason, missions were sent more frequently elsewhere.¹¹

Notes.

¹ William MacKenzie, *The Secret History of SOE*, (St. Ermines Press, 2000).

² It is thought that some files were thrown out to make 'shelf room'.

³ For further insight into the destruction of files see Duncan Stuart, *Special Operations Executive. A New Instrument of War*. (Routledge. Abingdon, 2006), pp. 217-229 (Duncan Stuart CMG was the last SOE Advisor at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office).

⁴ *War Diaries 1939-1945 Field Marshal Lord Alanbrooke*. Eds. Alex Danchev and Daniel Todman. (Phoenix Press, London 2001).

⁵ Ian Valentine, *Station 43 Audley End House and SOE's Polish Section*. (Sutton Publishing, Stroud, Gloucestershire, 2004).

⁶ Roosevelt especially was content to cede much to the USSR, as he firmly believed that their assistance would be required to defeat the Japanese. Churchill, with the influence of the once powerful British Empire waning, was pushed further into the background at Yalta as Roosevelt and Stalin dealt together in private.

⁷ EDR Harrison, *The Historical Journal*, 43. 4(2000) . (Cambridge University Press 2000). p.1071.

⁸ Norman Davies. *Rising '44The Battle for Warsaw*. (Pan Macmillan Ltd. London 2003). p.634

⁹ MRD Foot. *SOE in France*. (HMSO, London, 1965) pp. 24, 100/101,112/113,140/141,155 - 161, 176/177, 188/189, 264 -267, 254/5, 366/7, 400/401, 418- 451.

¹⁰ Jeffrey Bines. *Operation Freston*. (J. Bines, Saffron Walden 1999).

¹¹ Davies, *Rising '44*, p. 633

Chapter 1

Beginnings 1939-1940.

Although the Polish Section of SOE did not fully come into existence until November 1940, the roots of the organisation can be traced back much further, to the British Military Missions to Poland during 1939. The first of these, a fleeting visit, was undertaken by Colonel Colin McVean Gubbins, an officer of the research section of Military Intelligence MI (R) which, along with 'D' Section of the British Intelligence Service, would provide the basis for the, yet to be, SOE. Gubbins was destined to play an important part in SOE in general and the Polish Section in particular.¹²

During July 1939, Gubbins received notification of his inclusion as GSO1 to the Chief of Staff for another mission to Poland. Almost immediately, he returned to Poland and made contact with Colonel Józef Smolenski, the Director of Polish Military Intelligence, whose intelligence reports indicated that war with Germany was likely by the end of August. Gubbins returned to London on 19th August and prepared for the final mission to Poland, which would be led by General Adrian Carton de Wiart, a veteran of the First World War, who also had led a British Military Mission to Poland in 1919, where he subsequently spent much time.¹³

Gubbins and his party arrived in Poland on 3rd September, and the mission stayed with the Polish Chiefs of Staff until their final retreat into Rumania.¹⁴ During this period, important links had been forged, not only between Gubbins and the Polish Chiefs of Staff, but also between many of the other British officers attached to the mission and their Polish counterparts. These links, together with the trust they had engendered, served both organisations in the coming years.

Soon, the exiled Polish Government established itself in Paris. Links between MI(R) and the Poles continued. This was somewhat to the chagrin of the French authorities, under whose authority the Poles were deemed to be. Nevertheless, they reluctantly gave permission for the liaison to continue, on condition that it was used solely for the exchange of

intelligence information and for activities outside France and her colonies. This afforded Gubbins the opportunity to investigate British involvement in supporting Polish clandestine activities in Poland itself.

The Polish Underground had organised a system of patrols known as '*Osrodeks*' to carry out sabotage on the orders of the Polish Government in Exile. Although members of the former Polish Army formed the basis of this resistance movement, these small and not necessarily military groups remained in allotted positions and waited for their territory to be overrun. When this happened, they would gather together in order to carry out allotted tasks.¹⁵ Regardless of the system the Poles used, their future needs would require building up, re-equipping and providing support with both supplies and trained personnel. Above all, they would need to establish two-way communication links.

General Władysław Sikorski, the Polish Prime Minister and Commander in Chief, discussed matters with Gubbins. Gubbins proposed to control all guerrilla activity from one central base or Bureau, situated in London.¹⁶ Control of these bureaux would be under the British General Staff but with the right of appeal by the representatives to their own governments. Sikorski readily agreed showing great enthusiasm for the idea. Gubbins suggested to him the names of two officers of his acquaintance who might be worthy of consideration for the tasks ahead. In December 1939, one of the nominated officers, Lt. Col Stanisław Gano, reported that intelligence networks had been established in Budapest, Belgrade and Bucharest. He was advised by the British to increase these lines of communications and to stop all subversive action within Poland for the time being. This, it was thought, would give everyone a chance to reorganise and prepare to take delivery of equipment intended for later use. Amongst these supplies would be numerous pistols with ammunition, hand grenades and gelignite, and dry cell battery-operated wireless sets of a type that had already been tried and found useful.

The Polish authorities were content with the arrangement, but they wanted to begin action against the Germans immediately and suggested working in countries that so far had remained neutral. Naturally, it was important that no evidence of such actions could be

traced, either to the Poles or to the British, for fear of diplomatic reprisals. A realistic operation could be mounted, for example, against the barges moored on the Danube which supplied Germany, or against the Rumanian oilfields.¹⁷ Whilst realistic, these were tasks far too large for Gubbins and his mission to handle, which by now was reduced to Gubbins himself and three others, Captain H. 'Boy' Lloyd-Johnes and a secretary as permanent members, with Captain Peter Wilkinson acting as a rear link in London.¹⁸ On 27th January 1940, Major Richard Truszkowski,¹⁹ an English officer of Polish parentage, rejoined the mission. Speaking both Polish and Russian fluently,²⁰ and having an extensive knowledge of Polish history and character, he became a valuable asset both to the mission and later to SOE.

On 1st April 1940, Gubbins was recalled to London and reassigned to take part in the Norwegian Campaign, during which he was instrumental in setting up groups that became the Commandos. Following the failure of the campaign, he returned to England and, with the possibility of invasion still strong, set up the Auxiliary Units, small British clandestine groups capable of living off the land using a system similar to that used by the Poles. In his absence, Wilkinson took over the Paris mission, his own rear link position going to Captain Douglas Dodds-Parker,²¹ a Guards officer whom Wilkinson had recruited into MI (R) less than a month before.²²

General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, the Polish Commander in Chief of the underground organisation ZWZ (*Zwiazek Walki Zbrojnej*),²³ reported that Polish guerrilla leaders were now established in their allotted districts and were anticipating being supplied by either the British or the French. Within a short time, the British were delivering stores through a Polish courier network. By 1st April 1940, 4 wireless telephony (W/T) sets, 130 revolvers, 1,000 lbs of plastic or gelignite high explosive were already in Polish hands.

Had the Polish public been aware that support was forthcoming, they would have been much relieved. The only information received by them was German propaganda. Radios had by now all been confiscated and the population was suffering brutal treatment. With the Polish population not realising that anyone else was actively fighting the Germans, there was a risk of a break-up of the Anglo-Polish alliance through ignorance, due to this

lack of intelligence. The RAF dropped leaflets, this being the only method of informing the Poles to the contrary.

The British liaison mission remained in close contact with the Polish General Staff as they removed, first to Angers and later to Bordeaux. It was obvious that France could not sustain a defence against the onrushing Germans, so on 15th June Wilkinson returned to Britain temporarily, to arrange preparations for the arrival of the Polish Army in the United Kingdom. Two days later, Lloyd-Johnes and Truszkowski contacted the Polish HQ at Libourne and tried to make hurried arrangements for the evacuation of Polish personnel. Wilkinson, in the meantime, had returned to France and made contact with General Sikorski, accompanying him to Biscarosse on 20th June, from where he assisted in the arrangements for the evacuation of the Polish troops. The following day, Wilkinson again returned to England, this time with Sikorski and twelve other high-ranking Polish staff officers. During the following days, approximately 20,000 Polish troops were evacuated from France.

Upon arrival in Britain, the Polish Government in Exile became established in the Rubens Hotel, London. General Sikorski assured everyone that he intended to continue to fight alongside Britain against the Germans but only under certain conditions. The first of these was that he should be granted the full rights and privileges of a Government. The British concurred, but for them it was a clear indication that from that moment on the Poles intended to determine their own destiny as much as they could. It was further decided that the liaison mission attached to the Poles would remain just that: for liaison purposes only. The Poles would retain total control over their communications in all aspects of the clandestine war that they were waging in their homeland. This was not altogether to the liking of some departments of the British Foreign Office, in particular, the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), which did not like the idea of encrypted messages being transmitted from London for which it had no method of decryption.²⁴ Nevertheless, it was agreed.

In London, reorganisation of the Mission was necessary, and once completed, the Poles concerned with clandestine operations in support of their home-based forces worked with the newly-formed branch of Number 4 Military Mission under the control of Brigadier

Charles Bridge. Wilkinson discovered that the Poles, too, were reorganising and had created a new department called the Sixth Bureau,²⁵ with the former chief of Polish Intelligence, Józef Smolenski, as its head. Lt. Colonel Gano of the Second Bureau (Intelligence) informed Colonel Jo Holland, the head of MI(R), that General Sikorski wanted the Polish Intelligence Service, now effectively split in two, to be closely bound with its British counterparts. It was decided that Gano should be put directly in touch with an officer of MI6.²⁶ The Sixth Bureau began with a staff of only fourteen officers and three typists, but the organisation grew as staff officers joined its ranks, eventually taking control of policy and leaving the remainder of the Sixth Bureau to take on a liaison role. This they did at the same time controlling wireless traffic, passing encrypted messages between the Polish homeland and the Ministry of the Interior, as well as being involved in the transportation of couriers and mail. A civil resistance organisation, which represented all political parties with the exception of extreme left-and right-wing groups, became known as the Delegatura of Civil Resistance, and flourished under the control of the Ministry of the Interior.

The Polish Section worked mainly in a liaison capacity with the Poles, and it is important to remember that at no time were they able to pass orders on to Polish forces; this remained the preserve of the Poles themselves. In their role as a transportation agency, the Polish Section carried agents and supplies to the places specified by the Polish VIth Bureau for military purposes, and political couriers for the Polish Ministry of the Interior.²⁷ The plans drawn up by the Poles to support insurrection suited SOE, for this was precisely their *raison d'être*. SOE trained those selected by the Poles from Polish forces in Scotland to become agents of their government, who would later pass on their newly-attained subversive skills to their colleagues in the field once they themselves had returned to Poland and joined the resistance movement.²⁸ Ironically, SOE's first directive had not given priority to support either the Poles or Czechs, despite the fact they were the only countries at the beginning of the war with significantly organised resistance movements already established.²⁹

In early August, Brigadier Bridge sent a letter to the Director of Military Intelligence. It was considered important at the time and especially so at the end of the war, as it contained

proposals that were subsequently adopted. It read:

1. For the last few months any help which we have been able to give the Polish V1th Bureau has been seriously handicapped, firstly, by the repressive methods of the Germans in Poland, and secondly, by difficulties of supply via the Middle East and Balkans. But the very good results obtained with the new W/T transceiver sets and the approach of long winter nights makes the rendering of active help to the Polish V1th bureau much more simple and emphasises its necessity.

2. If full advantage is taken of the new transceiver sets and the winter nights, and if the plan outlined in para. 3 below is carried out with determination, it will not only strengthen Polish morale both here and in Poland, but will also bring nearer the day when the Poles in Poland will be able and ready to rise successfully against the common enemy.

3. There exists in Poland an active organisation controlled from London by Colonel Smolenski. The plan will be to send to Poland, by night, Polish parachutists with the special W/T Transceiver sets. These parachutists will land in a neighbourhood in which the Polish organisation is constantly on the watch and in which a signal system has been prepared and is already in operation. The parachutists will carry with them instructions for the organisation and as many of the new Transceiver sets as possible. These sets will, it is proposed, be distributed to various points in the country and constant touch with them will be maintained thereafter by means of aircraft, which will fly over them at night during the winter months. Such contact will endure much closer co-operation than at present between the Polish V1th Bureau and their organisation in

Poland and will ensure also the regular control of supplies, money, etc., as the need arises.

4. The plan will overcome the two main difficulties referred to above, which at present limit activities. The wireless telephonic communication by means of the new Transceiver sets is un-D.F.able and therefore perfectly safe.³⁰

5. Once it is established, it will enable supplies for irregular warfare to be dropped in accordance with whatever instructions the ground operator of the transceiver set may give.

'There is no inherent impossibility in the plan from the flying point of view, and the Polish V1th Bureau is anxious that the necessary preparations shall be commenced with the least possible delay.'

'I should, therefore, be glad if you could ask the D.M.T. to make the necessary arrangements for the training of the W/T operators and parachutists, and if you would give me authority to issue to the Poles necessary Transceiver sets, which I understand I can obtain from MI (R).'

(Signed) C.B.

Brigadier, G.S.

No.4. Military Mission"³¹

Work soon began training Poles using long-range wireless telephony (W/T) sets at Inverailort Castle, Lochailort, Scotland, which had been previously set up by MI (R). Training was not, however, confined to radio work, as the nine-day course, split into 40 periods, also covered other aspects of guerrilla fighting. Before the course was complete,

Colonel Smolenski sent a memo to Brigadier Bridge asking for monthly flights to be made to Poland, beginning in September, eleven days hence.³²

Brigadier Bridge had, since the beginning of June 1940, been trying to assist the Poles in setting up a branch of their special Sixth Bureau in either Cairo or Alexandria. When the Poles decided to send a representative, Lt. Col Józef Matecki, alias Jakob Alek,³³ together with three wireless operators, they requested a signal be sent to Istanbul making arrangements for onward transport for the men from there to Egypt. The request was referred to Bridge, asking for clarification regarding Polish transmissions. The SIS was apparently making attempts to interfere with Polish wireless traffic, despite the agreement that this would be entirely in the hands of the Poles themselves. Bridge was understandably frustrated and, inasmuch as was in his power to do so, insisted that 'C'³⁴ should clear the matter up. This was finally achieved on 13th September, when official permission for a Polish wireless station in the Middle East was granted, subject to technical controls of frequency and working times. It was also confirmed that it had become approved policy for the Poles to run their own communications and ciphers.

On 26th September, Desmond Morton³⁵ informed the Minister for Economic Warfare, Hugh Dalton,³⁶ that he had spoken to Colonel Leon Mitkiewicz, the Polish Director of Military Intelligence, who controlled, with one exception, all naval, military and air intelligence as well as the Secret Service for the Polish Government. The one exception was an organisation, known by the name of the man who ran it, Stanislaw Kot. Kot, who did not speak English, came from an academic background having been professor of History at the Jagiellonian University Kraków. Politically, he was a member of the Polish Peasant Party and had a reputation for being more than averagely Polish for intrigue against his colleagues. He had been charged by Sikorski with controlling all subversive and underground civil activities and to arrange for, and organise, clandestine operations in all its forms within Poland itself. Kot's group dealt in propaganda, sabotage and potential revolution. Morton suggested that Dalton should get directly in touch with Kot, stressing Churchill's personal interest in ensuring co-

operation between the Polish and British Secret Services. Dalton and Kot met on 28th September. With them was Gladwyn Jebb (Dalton's Chief Executive and Under Secretary of State). Dalton promised help as Kot outlined what he envisaged as his future requirements, one of which was the return of Colin Gubbins as liaison officer. In the interim, it was agreed that Kot be given a Polish-speaking British intermediary, through whom he was to deal until all of his requirements could be sorted out.

Kot believed there were now some one million Poles working in Germany, some living in the western part as far as the Rhine. Practically all of them worked on the land, as the Germans did not trust them to work in industrial areas. He obviously considered this workforce to be a potential source of saboteurs if they could be recruited, and informed Dalton that he had sent in some Polish agents using Haitian passports and others with passports issued by some of the smaller South American Republics. These agents had carried large sums with them. Kot concluded by saying that he wanted more money, both in real and forged German Marks and Zlotys. Dalton was impressed by Kot's conversation and noted, 'There are definite signs of practical conspiratorial gifts of an existing network of reliable agents.' It was precisely what he was looking for and his opinion was shared with the head of SIS. Kot would soon be claiming that he was in touch with Poles in various occupied areas and, given the word, could 'light a number of fires'.³⁷

Sir Frank Cooper of the Foreign Office thought Kot's organisation would be beneficial and of considerable use if it was as good as Kot claimed. He had some concerns over liaison, however, as the British continued to try to come to terms with the fact that they were working with two Polish Intelligence sections instead of one. It was not considered to be a good state of affairs, and Churchill, in particular, was keen for these sections to be condensed. Gubbins, it was felt, should take over liaison with Kot from Bickham Sweet-Escott who had previously been responsible for this work. In future, all information from Kot would go through Gubbins to 'D' section. By this method, SO2, the active operations section of SOE, could examine Kot's schemes.³⁸ Direct contact already existed between SIS and Colonel Garma,³⁹ the head of Polish Secret Service, so matters relating to, or affecting, Kot's

organisation would be passed to him through Kot's friend and colleague, Professor Lewis Namier.⁴⁰

As Brigadier Bridge considered himself a liaison officer only, the suggestion that Gubbins succeed him was no doubt recognised by Bridge as a step in the right direction. Gubbins, through his dealings with Polish officials during the invasion of Poland, was highly regarded by members of the Polish Government. It would be unfortunate if, through any unexpected difficulties or military doctrine, he could not return to work with those for whom he had considerable respect. Churchill himself was aware of the Poles' affection for Gubbins, and Dalton knew that a direct order from Churchill would get him immediately transferred back, but Dalton did not want to resort to using the Prime Minister unless necessary. It would not be; Gubbins was to take up his new appointment the following December.

During the third week of October, Colonel Mitkiewicz ordered changes to the agents' training curriculum. First, he required the inclusion of lectures on German military and civilian administrations, especially those relevant to occupied Poland, and recommended two officers who had experience of the subject.⁴¹ The lectures were to take in general information on the Nazi Party itself, the SA (*Sturmabteilungen*. = Storm Detachments) and SS (*Schutzstaffeln* = Protection squads), the regular Army (*Wehrmacht*), and the organisation of German executive police and their different branches, the *Schutzpolizei*; *Kriminalpolizei*; *Gendarmerie* and *Gestapo*. The latter provided the biggest problem as so little was actually known about it or its methods. Lectures, he suggested, should be illustrated, especially with pictures of uniforms and armaments. The new course was planned to take four weeks, including Sundays. Arms training content on the new course was to be extended to include use of Erga and Suomi sub-machine guns, Webley .32 and Mauser 7.63 machine pistols, anti-tank rifles and rifle-launched grenades, and light mortars specifically designed for infantry use. He also wanted greater coverage of techniques to be used in industrial sabotage, especially for acts directed at power stations, oilfields, electrical high-tension cables and pylons, police stations and barracks. Especially though, he put more emphasis on physical training, wireless telephony and English-language classes. Of the 182 hours intensive

training, thirty hours were to be spent on small arms, high explosive and fight training; close combat would take a further twelve hours. Sabotage and PT and W/T eight hours each and English, surprisingly, a further twenty hours. Four hours would be dedicated to the earlier mentioned study of enemy organisations. The Poles took the training very seriously, wanting to run the courses continuously. They also provided additional instructors at the British Parachute training base at Ringway.⁴² The British, who occasionally put the Polish parachute instructors to their own good use, naturally welcomed this situation. Just as naturally, the finance department showed interest in how its resources were being put to use.⁴³

Finance of a more serious nature was given consideration when Kot asked for 200,000 Reichmarks and 100,000 US dollars to be parachuted into Poland. Until now, Kot's couriers had always carried money by overland routes to support his organisation, but his couriers were experiencing lengthy delays to their journeys. The Royal Air Force was giving low priority to the transit of Polish couriers for no other reason than it was busy elsewhere.⁴⁴ Sweet-Escott eventually wrote to Jebb requesting he ask his Minister (Dalton) to intervene on their behalf.

By early December, Gubbins had returned. In order that closer and more efficient liaison could be continued, a new, regular department was set up taking over from the old number 4 mission to deal with the Poles' problems. This was the Polish Section of SO2. Sensibly, the section was staffed by virtually the same personnel as the previous M I (R) Mission, and it became the sole link between Polish authorities concerned with clandestine and underground actions, both in their homeland and elsewhere abroad, and the British Government. It would work in especially close collaboration with the Polish Sixth Bureau of the Polish General Staff. Through SOE, exchanges of information from other European countries fighting a clandestine war could now be easily passed. All could then benefit from a common knowledge and technical details could be worked out. Gubbins became director of Training and Operations, with Wilkinson and Harold Perkins⁴⁵ joining him. Dalton was aware that he had been largely responsible for Gubbins' posting to what, in military terms,

was likely to be considered a backwater. He had no intention of being responsible for causing Gubbins' career to suffer and so, at Dalton's insistence, Gubbins was promoted Brigadier.

Until this time, the subversive resistance movements in Poland and Czechoslovakia had been under the guardianship of the War Office. From now on, they would, and to a greater extent than any other section of SOE, control their own destinies. So close were their interests that they would share Gubbins and Perkins and many other British members of SOE, but, in Poland's case, control of agents on the ground would be the responsibility of the Polish Government in London. No other section of SOE enjoyed such autonomy.

With the likelihood of the first parachute drop into Poland looming large, the number of meetings increased between Namier, Kot, or, in his absence, his secretary Jan Librach, and Gubbins. Much of the British effort was directed at renewing relationships with necessary contacts, reviewing suggested plans, attempting to provide a regular courier service for the Poles to the Middle East, and peacemaking between the rival political (Kot) and military (V1th bureau) organisations.

'C' was extremely suspicious of Kot, especially where finances were concerned. The fact that the Poles had two separate secret organisations operating effectively to the same end but working in different ways should have come as little shock to him as the British SIS and SOE were doing much the same thing. 'C' felt that in order to keep a better check on the financial outgoing from the British Treasury, Polish finances should be linked. It was not, he considered, the fault of the British that the Poles chose to have two organisations, so why should the British by necessity have the problem of sorting their fiscal problems out? ⁴⁶

At a meeting in early December at the Polish GHQ attended by Sikorski, Sosnkowski, Kot, Gubbins and Wilkinson, Kot's role was further defined as keeping up spirits and morale using the medium of propaganda and for providing information and charitable subsidies for groups that had political influence. These included several persecuted political parties and groups, sporting, cultural or professional, that had been banned by the Germans but still operated secretly. His organisation also extended to Poles in the Russian-occupied areas of Poland, but here his role was more limited. Kot insisted that the civil and

the military had separate roles, but said he was trying to form a body to provide both political and moral support for the Army. Gubbins and Wilkinson took this to mean that the relationship between Kot and the Army was sometimes strained. Kot, saying that his organisation must be more active for the sake of morale as well as the aforementioned groups, objected to the suggestion made by Gubbins that the Poles remained passive for the time being, reminding Gubbins that this cost a lot of money. He was obviously keen to see a return for the investments made so far.

Gubbins' suggestion of passivity was born of necessity. He knew that although Polish squadrons within the RAF were now being equipped with Wellington bombers, there were no plans for their exclusive Polish use or for long-distance flights to Poland. Sikorski, too, realised it would soon not be possible to reach Poland through the Hungarian or Rumanian routes, but he had decided to appoint a political delegate to arrange and direct an intended general rising. With SOE's inability to support even Kot's courier operations, it would obviously be a long time before thoughts of a general uprising could even be considered.⁴⁷ This long-term strategy was evidently uppermost in Sikorski's mind as he already had men in Warsaw and Poznań for this work, ready to receive orders from the Polish Government in Exile when the time came. Sikorski told the meeting of aid that had been received from the Americans in the form of clothing, food and medicine, all of which had been paid for by the Polish Government. When asked how much of this aid had fallen into German hands, he said about 20%, but this was mostly due to the naivety of the Americans. It was to make up for this that Kot needed money in the form of US dollars or Swiss francs.⁴⁸ Wealthy Poles and the Jews considered US dollars to be good capital investment, but German Marks were by now the standard currency in Poland.⁴⁹ Sosnkowski informed those assembled that the military only needed support from the British in the form of air transportation, as his military organisation in Poland was by now complete. The country was divided into regions and these regions into smaller districts, each with its own commanding officer, controlled via a headquarters in Warsaw. In all, a restricted secret army of 30,000 first-line troops existed, with further reserves to the equivalent strength of ten divisions. However, only four of these

divisions were fully equipped. Gubbins said his orders were to help in any way he could, but hinted that the Poles sometimes made it difficult for him, and cited an occasion when a seat in an aircraft promised to Sosnkowski had been allotted to Kot due to pressure from another Polish Government Department. This, to Gubbins' mind, ably demonstrated the Polish lack of co-ordination that needed to be rectified. The statement visibly shook Sosnkowski.

Kot told the assembled group that he wanted a radio transmitter of his own. He was told there were already three wireless transmitters exclusively for Polish use, one for the Army, one for the Secret Service and one for the Sixth Bureau.⁵⁰ Kot could not have another for his own use and so it was agreed that he would make use of the Sixth Bureau's transmitter using his own codes and ciphers. Before the meeting broke up, it was further agreed that any further questions and discussion of details should go either through Gubbins to Sosnkowski, Gubbins to Kot or, on controversial matters, Gubbins direct to Sikorski.⁵¹

Smolenski informed Perkins where he wanted his first parachutists landed and to let him have a decision whether it would soon be possible for this first landing to take place. On 20th December, the first flight to Poland to drop agents was scheduled. The aircraft requirements had been laid out by the Sixth Bureau long before. An aeroplane with the endurance for a 2,000-mile round trip and a speed of between 200 and 250 mph would be required to complete the journey within the hours of darkness in order to give the crew the best possible chance of survival. On the actual day, the aircraft supplied by the RAF turned out to be a Whitley, which had a maximum range of only 750 miles at a top speed of 130 mph. Not surprisingly, everyone was left wondering whether the RAF had even the remotest grasp of what was needed to accomplish the mission. The flight was immediately cancelled. Whether the fault lay with the RAF or with the Polish Air Force liaison was difficult to determine. In an attempt to ensure that it would not happen again, especially if the fault had indeed been a Polish one, Colonel Smolenski took the matter completely out of the hands of the Polish Air Force.⁵²

Sweet-Escott was simultaneously considering clandestine work closer to home. On 22nd December, he wrote to Frank Nelson, the head of SOE, suggesting approval for the

creation of a secret organisation for work in France, mentioning that there were an estimated 450,000 Poles living there. He outlined the advantages of having such an organisation, which could not only be used to keep contact with occupied France but also to organise political activities and spread propaganda. It could also, and more importantly, carry out sabotage operations in co-ordination with the French.⁵³ On this point, Sweet-Escott had some reservations and wanted further investigations to be carried out into the idea. It was difficult to foresee how the future of resistance operations would develop. With the exception of parts of Northern France, the French had no experience of resistance fighting, something the Poles had in abundance, and he felt that they would do little to organise anything themselves.

British residents in France would be unable to undertake similar work as they were carefully watched by the Germans and French officials, and were relatively small in number. The Poles, however, were different. Of the 450,000, half were in Northern France, with some 80,000 in Paris alone. They were largely made up of groups of pre-war emigrants, mostly workmen, labourers and a few members of the so-called 'intelligentsia' who had been educated in France. There were also soldiers who had hitherto been kept in prison camps within the occupied territory as well as many other mixed groups of Poles. Naturally, only the patriotic ones were likely to take part, so if it could be put to them that they would be doing a very patriotic thing, then Sweet-Escott was reasonably confident of support. They would need to be supplied via the Pyrenees, by sea via Brittany or Normandy or from the Mediterranean Coast. The plan was passed on to Dalton, who liked it, and wanted the scheme pushed through with utmost 'speed and energy.'⁵⁴

On 30th December, the Polish Government requested two seats to be permanently allocated for their use on the monthly aeroplane to Cairo. In a letter written by Frank Nelson's chief of staff, Colonel George F Taylor, confirmation was given to Jebb of SOE's willingness to comply. It said, 'Unless we can give the Poles some assurance that they will be able to send personnel fairly regularly to Cairo, the support we are able to offer them for their subversive activities is not very valuable. In view of the importance attached by Churchill and Dalton to liaison with the Poles, we should be grateful if you would get Mr. Dalton to

take the matter up with the Air Ministry in the strongest possible terms.⁵⁵ Gladwyn Jebb passed the request on to Sir Charles Portal, the Commander of Bomber Command, on 1st January 1941: one seat for one of Kot's couriers and the other for use of the Sixth Bureau.⁵⁶ Portal replied he would do what he could,⁵⁷ but the final result was negative. It would not be the last time that Jebb, or the Poles, were to be disappointed in this respect.

Summary

The establishment of the Polish Government in London came probably as quite a shock to the British. The French Government in exile, for example, was distinctly different from that which remained in France. The Czechoslovakian government was yet to be recognised, and those of other less powerful nations were still licking their wounds from their recent defeats. The Poles, though, knew exactly what they wanted and were eager to regain what they had lost. Compared with the French, they appeared decidedly united in their efforts, despite the experience of SOE showing they were not entirely so. Churchill recognised their importance from the start. Dalton also came to appreciate their potential. Through Gubbins and his colleagues, the British military leaders were made aware that their responsibilities did not only extend to British forces. By the time the first evacuees arrived from Dunkirk, Poles had already fought the enemy in Poland and France, making them the most experienced troops facing the aggressor. For this reason, preference for rearming was given to the Poles rather than raw British troops.

At the outbreak of hostilities, the Poles had what has been generally accepted as the finest intelligence organisation in the world. The fact that British intelligence was so keen to work with them is perhaps proof of this. Their intelligence organisation led them to recognise the possibility of being over-run by the Germans, and they had consequently laid down plans for subversive, clandestine action to be carried out in the event. The caution was not wasted on Gubbins, who himself later laid down plans for similar organisations.

The two countries could benefit a great deal from each other, the Poles supplying the experience, and the British, through SOE, supplying the wherewithal. Future years would see many pitfalls, and some stumbling blocks were already becoming evident.

Notes.

¹² Gubbins was born on 2nd July 1896 and served with distinction during the First World War. Remaining a regular soldier, he served in Ireland where he learned a great deal about guerrilla tactics and subversive actions. Being a Russian speaker, he was assigned in 1931 to Military Intelligence section MI3 (c), the Soviet section of the Military Intelligence Directorate. See Peter Wilkinson/Joan Bright Astley, *Gubbins and SOE*, (Leo Cooper London 1997).

¹³ For details of this mission see Lt. Gen. Adrian Carton de Wiart. *Happy Odyssey* (Jonathan Cape, London 1950).

¹⁴ This they did on the evening of 16th September. Peter Wilkinson, *Foreign Fields* (Taurus London 1997) p.82

¹⁵ This would be the same system adopted by Gubbins for the 'stay behind' troops of the Home Guard Auxiliary, should Britain be invaded.

¹⁶ This plan was originally put forward by Frank Nelson, former Conservative MP for Stroud who had been with the Foreign Office in Switzerland until the fall of France. He became the first controller of SOE in August 1940. Bickham Sweet-Escott, *Baker Street Irregular* (Methuen & Co. Ltd., London 1965) p. 41

¹⁷ The Danube barge sabotage scheme was handed over to the British Secret Intelligence Service, which controlled the operation throughout the war under the cover of the Goeland Transport and Trading Company. The National Archives (TNA) HS4/193

¹⁸ Both Wilkinson and Lloyd-Johnes had been with Gubbins in Poland.

¹⁹ He had previously been with the mission in Poland. Personal interview with his daughter Diana Hall. Various venues and dates.

²⁰ According to his daughter, Diana Hall, his Russian, surprisingly, was better than his Polish. Personal interviews various dates and locations.

²¹ Later Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker. Member of Parliament in Churchill's post-war Government.

²² Douglas Dodds-Parker, *Setting Europe Ablaze*. (Springwood Books, Windlesham, 1984) p.39 and personal interview June 2001.

²³ Union for Armed Struggle

²⁴ I am assured by John Gallehawk, archivist at Bletchley Park, that SIS did decrypt many Polish wireless transmissions later in the war. Personal interviews at various dates during 2003.

²⁵ A special bureau set up to control subversive action in Poland and support of the ZWZ.

²⁶ This would appear to be Cmdr. Wilfred Dunderdale. See *The Report of the Anglo-Polish Historical Committee Vol. 1* (Valentine Mitchell. London 2005) Ed. T. Stirling, D. Nałęcz & T. Dubicki p.30. The co-operation lasted throughout the War. See D Stafford, *Churchill and Secret Service* (Abacus, London, 1997) pp. 236 & 355.

²⁷ Many consider those dropped into Poland to have been soldiers and couriers rather than agents. Whilst this is perfectly true, they were nevertheless also agents of their Government in Exile and who were parachuted wearing civilian clothing. Many of those of other nationalities dropped into other countries came under the control of SOE and were considered by the Executive to be agents. For this reason, SOE always referred to all those dropped, including the Poles, as agents. As they often delivered money etc. to the reception committees they were also couriers, but political couriers were included in the drops into Poland from the same aircraft. In order to differentiate, I refer to all political couriers as couriers and members of Polish Special Forces as agents throughout. The name given by the Poles to these special operatives is Cichociemni, meaning silent and unseen. They therefore cannot truly be regarded as regular soldiers.

²⁸ In truth, the troops had never ceased to be members of the Polish Army. The Poles never considered their forces in Poland to be a resistance force but instead part of their regular army. Following the occupation of Poland however, the need arose to form a new fighting force, which later became known as the Home Army. Other groups also appeared such as the National Armed Forces (NSZ).

²⁹ P. Wilkinson & J. Bright Astley. *Gubbins and SOE*. p. 79.

³⁰ D.F. = Direction Finding. The means by which the position of a radio transmitter can be detected by using a radio signal that homes in on the transmitting radio set. The transceivers (transmitter/receivers) were erroneously considered undetectable.

³¹ TNA HS4/184.

³² TNA HS4/184.

³³ Colonel Józef Matecki was aged between 45-50 and born in Poznań. He served in the German army during WWI and was ADC to Piłsudski and a protégé of Sosnkowski. He commanded an infantry battalion at the age of 28, and, having been promoted Lt. Colonel in 1931, became a full Colonel at beginning of WW2; a rank he never accepted because he considered it an emergency measure. He served with Sosnkowski's staff at Lwów and in Paris. His wife, formally a clerk in the American Embassy in Warsaw, was then in the USA. TNA HS4/198

³⁴ 'C' the symbol for the head of the British Intelligence Service, Stewart Menzies.

³⁵ Desmond Morton was a member of Winston Churchill's Security Executive who oversaw matters relating to the various Governments in Exile as well as having direct contact with the British Secret Service and with Churchill himself.

³⁶ E.H.J.N. (later Lord) Dalton Minister for Economic Warfare and consequently the minister responsible for SOE.

³⁷ This possibly in response to Churchill's instruction to Dalton at the formation of SOE when he told Dalton to 'Set Europe ablaze'.

³⁸ Sweet-Escott, *Baker Street Irregular* P. 47.

³⁹ First name not known.

⁴⁰ Later Sir Lewis Namier. He was known as Bernstein when at Balliol; he had previously been Jebb's tutor at Magdalen College.

⁴¹ Lt Col Antoni Rosner and another known only as Major Władysław.

⁴² Now Manchester International Airport.

⁴³ When a bill of £15-2-8d (£15-14) appeared for sundry equipment, it was suggested to Brigadier Bridge that an allowance of £15-0-0 could be set up for each course. He replied that, in theory at least, the cost should be borne by the Poles themselves and taken from Polish funds, but suggested that it could perhaps be 'lost' somewhere. TNA HS4/185

⁴⁴ The RAF considered the bombing of targets to be more important. Following the bombing of Stettin (Szczecin) they were asked they bomb targets in Poznan. It was felt that this would have a tremendous effect on the Polish people, assuring them that 'their plight had not been forgotten in the West.' Cavendish Bentinck of the British Foreign Office asked Wing Commander Boyle of the Air Ministry to give sympathetic consideration to the request. TNA HS4/315

⁴⁵ Perkins had also been a member of the military mission to Poland during September

⁴⁶ HS4/315

⁴⁷ Shortly before this meeting, Benes and Sikorski had been corresponding via the Vatican about a proposal made in November for a Czechoslovakian/Polish Federation (possibly Hungary too). The British Foreign Office felt that there would be strong objections from the Russians (unless it was controlled by either the Russians or a pro-Russian Government) but that the relationship should be cemented whilst under the F.O's 'good influence'. In a letter from Frank Roberts (FO) to Gladwyn Jebb, he noted the odds the Poles and Czechs faced. 'In any case we must remember the Poles and Czechs together have 30,000,000 men against 80,000,000 Germans and 150,000,000 Russians.' TNA ref. HS4/315

⁴⁸ The Red Cross was ready to send Swiss Francs but it was impossible to exchange them in Poland.

⁴⁹ Just before the New Year, and with limited success due to lack of information, Perkins and Truszkowski discussed Polish finances with the Finance Department. Truszkowski had discovered that Kot had a plan to recover twenty million Marks from Switzerland by forming a commercial airline. The Airline would run between Switzerland and Portugal and benefit from the fact that, being based in Switzerland, the company could claim neutrality. TNA HS4/149

⁵⁰ Only the latter two sets had the strength to reach Poland

⁵¹ TNA HS4/325

⁵² TNA HS7/184 & HS4/194

⁵³ Authority for such actions was given by the Polish Government following consultation with the British.

⁵⁴ TNA HS4/ 319

⁵⁵ TNA HS4/319

⁵⁶ TNA HS4/321 & HS4/326

⁵⁷ TNA HS4/321 & HS4/326

Chapter 2:

1941

With the 'phony war' over, 1941 saw an escalation of hostilities. During the early months, Commonwealth troops captured Tobruk, which resulted soon after in the Afrika Korps' arrival in Tripoli. The United States and Britain signed a lease-lend pact, which ensured a steady supply of equipment, and the blitzing of London and other major British cities began. Later, the bombing of Pearl Harbor brought the United States firmly into the war. The Royal Navy had lost two capital ships, HMS Hood to the Bismarck, and HMS Ark Royal to an Italian torpedo. The loss of the Bismarck, determinedly sunk by the Royal Navy shortly after losing the Hood, did little to lower German morale as the Wehrmacht neared Moscow following its invasion of the Soviet Union. In the meantime SOE, still in its infancy, planned for an unknown future.⁵⁸

January - February.

Initial attempts to secure air liaison flights.

A method of hitting back at the enemy within Poland was badly needed, and Dalton became convinced of the great potential for subversive activities in Poland. Polish agents behind the enemy's lines could be most effective if it were possible to get them regularly in and out of Poland. Clearly, the only effective method of delivering these agents would be by air. Gubbins and Smolenski, in discussing the question of transference of personnel and materials to Poland, came to the same conclusion, and the only way to do this required the use of aircraft.⁵⁹

Aircraft were in short supply at this stage of the war, which necessitated the overture for aircraft to serve the needs of Polish operations moving to a higher level. Dalton stressed the need for direct air supply to Poland and for the supply of arms and money to the

Secretary of State for Air, the Rt. Hon. Sir Archibald Sinclair Bt. This was important politically as it proved to the Polish people that their Government in Exile was supportive of the actions they themselves were taking at home. Any alternative to using aircraft meant unacceptable delays in the infiltration and exfiltration of couriers/agents. Obviously, aircraft could not land in occupied territory, so the only method of delivery would be by parachute. Initial parachute training continued to be carried out in Largo, in Fife, Scotland, at a station known affectionately by the Poles as 'Monkey Grove', with final training, jumping from actual aircraft, at Ringway Airfield.⁶⁰ Many with parachute training were soon waiting to go into Poland. The matter was especially urgent if they were to meet the next moon period, which would occur on 13th February.⁶¹ Included in the request was a recommendation that a sub-unit of the RAF be set up under SOE to carry out such flights using, in these cases, Polish crews.⁶² For once, SOE had an ally in the Chief of British Secret Intelligence Service, Stewart Menzies,⁶³ who thought that direct flights would solve more than one problem. Despite the support from SIS, Sinclair disagreed with the proposal that special flights should be formed to carry out the type of work that SOE envisaged due to inflexibility of 'multitudinous' flights, which he considered uneconomical. Sinclair said he was aware of the importance of the work, and that a flight had been planned for the next moon period. It was the first official recognition that the proposals for flights to drop agents in Poland had definitely been adopted and Dalton was pleased something practical was at last being considered.⁶⁴ Sinclair further promised to try to supply Dalton with his future requirements. Dalton later said to Jebb of the Poles, 'They don't get much else from us at present except kind words.'⁶⁵ Perhaps kind words, or at least assurances of support, were all the Poles needed at the time.

Lack of aircraft alone was not then seen to be an insurmountable problem. The major problem would be delivering the men and equipment to Poland due to its geographical position, and this would continue to be a problem in the years ahead.⁶⁶ Despite the apparent reluctance of the RAF, aerial drops were envisaged that, in order to remain within the

operational endurance of aircraft of the period, emanated from bases in Greece; but the fall of Greece in May 1941 put an end to such speculations.

Birth of the Minorities Section.

Sweet-Escott, now having been succeeded by Gubbins, investigated funding for another of Kot's plans entitled 'The Polish Minorities Section', whose purpose was to deal with everything connected with Polish interests outside Poland, in so far as they could be used to assist SOE work. On 11th January, Gubbins contacted Nelson to inform him that he had discussions with Kot to examine the formation of a Polish organisation in France, and spoken about it to Librach.⁶⁷ Information regarding numbers of Polish workers in France, especially miners and former soldiers, was received, indicating their strengths and organisations, with the suggestion that they be used. Whilst Kot personally directed communications in Poland, Librach, considered by SOE an able and sensible man, had been charged with the organisation of similar work outside Poland. Clearly, an equally capable British officer would be needed to work with him. Eventually, Richard Truszkowski was chosen who had assisted with the Polish evacuation from France the previous year.

Librach, together with Truszkowski, elaborated the scheme and presented it to Sikorski, who approved the plan. Kot would run the Polish side of the organisation, with his assistant, Jan Librach, carrying out liaison with SOE. The expanded proposal included a headquarters in London, with sub-offices in Belgrade, Bucharest, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Cairo, Istanbul, Lisbon and Stockholm, where either the Polish Minister of Information or General Staff already had offices. SOE arranged an annual credit of £600,000 to be put at their disposal for subversive work against the Germans in countries outside both Poland and, significantly, the USA.⁶⁸

Reasons for the refusal of Kot's personal radio equipment and the Mikiciński case.

Kot⁶⁹ was full of ideas for subversive planning and equipment and had, for the previous two months, continued pressing for a wireless transmitter/receiver of his own in order to communicate directly with his contacts in Poland.⁷⁰ The British Secret Intelligence Service was reluctant to allow him to have one, as they were deeply suspicious of some of the professor's associates.⁷¹ One of Kot's agents⁷² destined for political work in Poland was able to obtain a Rumanian visa with apparently little trouble. This was considered by SIS to be most suspicious. Then, at some time between December 1940 and June 1941, Count Rozwadowski, described as an '*homme de confiance*' of Kot, arrived in Istanbul in an English warship from London and immediately called on a certain Frau Seni, who was known in Turkish and Polish circles as a German agent, and who was formally the mistress of von Moltke, the German Ambassador in Warsaw.

Hommes de confiance of Kot, such as Rozwadowski, were in constant contact with the Chilean Legation in Istanbul, where they appeared to have a store of documents for safekeeping. British Intelligence considered this strange, wondering why a country like Poland, which had few connections with South American countries, should suddenly have so close a relationship with Chile. The suspicion was a long-standing one that stretched back to an earlier case of a character known as Mikiciński.

Sameon Mikiciński, alias Paluchowicz, turned up in Warsaw shortly after the German occupation of the city, claiming to be the Chilean *Chargé d' Affaires*. Despite the fact that neither of the names he gave appeared on any diplomatic lists, he nevertheless had no problems travelling through the occupied territory on a Chilean Diplomatic Passport. He offered his services to the Polish Government and ensured their faith in him by managing, also by the use of Chilean Passports, to extricate amongst others, the daughter of the Polish Premier General Sikorski and the wives of senior Polish officers, including that of General Kazimierz Sosnkowski. Both the British SIS and the French *Deuxième Bureau* (Intelligence) immediately became suspicious of Mikiciński and through the Polish Second Bureau

informed the Polish Government of their suspicion. All the warnings, however, fell on deaf ears. Prominent in the London circles that gave Mikiciński their full support was Kot, but he was not alone, as not surprisingly, Sikorski and Sosnkowski shared Kot's confidence. Jan Librach did not share his superior's confidence, and informed SOE that Mikiciński was being kept under careful scrutiny.⁷³

Mikiciński contrived to have himself become the sole representative of the Poles in Rumania, insisting he had the confidence of the Polish Government, but when being followed by Polish counter intelligence officers he was observed at Bucharest Airport in the company of a Lieutenant Nobis, a well known member of the German Abwehr.⁷⁴ It was later discovered that he had also been in close contact with a German spy named Walochof (a former Ukrainian judge and known hater of Poles), and that they have made several business trips together.

Naturally, suspicion initially fell on Kot, but it was thought more probable that he was guilty of no more than possessing erroneous and naïve political views. The Poles quite naturally feared for the safety of family members still in Poland and, clutching at straws, were prepared to trust anyone who succeeded in extricating them from the clutches of the Nazis. Even Col. Gano, knowing Mikicinski to be under suspicion, approached him with a request to assist his own family.

Mikiciński, later at large in Turkey, was nevertheless considered to represent a considerable threat to Polish security, so a plot was hatched in December 1940 to kidnap him.⁷⁵ David Hamson, a representative of SO2, was asked to carry out the task and was introduced to his accomplices in Istanbul by a naval Commander named Wolfson. To assist was an experienced Polish counter espionage agent known only by his cover symbol ESS13, another Polish Secret Service agent, and a member of the Turkish Military Secret Police known only as 'Hussein'.⁷⁶ At the second attempt, on, or about January 19th 1941, Mikiciński was chloroformed, trussed into a sack, loaded onto a light aircraft and flown to Egypt.⁷⁷ In the meantime Kot had unknowingly ordered no Polish action against him.

Mikiciński languished as a prisoner for nearly six months, during which time he made five depositions. These led to the arrests of two collaborators, Kutten and Stefanowski.⁷⁸ Kutten, who had originally been employed by Kot's representative in Istanbul, operated mainly from Sofia and was seen at one time by no fewer than four independent witnesses to hand over ten diplomatic bags to Norbis at Bucharest airfield. In the meantime, SIS in Istanbul continued to watch German agents Nobis and Schulz, but according to Paluchowicz, as Mikiciński became known during his interrogation, Kot had tipped them off that they were being watched. Although no truth to the statement could be proven, it nevertheless fuelled SIS's suspicions of Kot and their doubts about allowing him his own wireless transmitter.

With no actual proof against him the British were unsure of how to proceed against Mikiciński. The Polish intelligence community had a more definite idea and one day he was driven into the desert by a Polish secret agent called Edward Szarkiewicz, (formerly Shapiro)⁷⁹ who shot him, leaving his body in the desert.⁸⁰

Despite not suspecting Kot of outright collusion, SIS felt that he must bear some responsibility for being taken in by Mikiciński. They stated, 'We cannot, without exposing ourselves to charges of negligence, sponsor the Kot Radio Station, or indeed any further facility which gives Kot the opportunity for evading censorship and other security control.' The fate of Kot's request for a station of his own was thereby sealed.⁸¹

SOE were still inclined to give Kot the benefit of the doubt. On 8th January 1941, Nelson asked Gubbins his opinion on Kot. Gubbins explained that Kot, Sikorski's nominee for the political reconstruction of Poland after the war, enjoyed full powers. It was felt by Gubbins that Kot could be trusted and that he should be accepted and worked with 'wholeheartedly' but 'with prudence'.⁸² On the other hand, Kot was doing little to enhance his reputation among the British. Gubbins questioned Nelson asking who Kot represented, his own Peasant Party or all the Poles, and whether or not he might be useful? Nelson replied that, according to a Polish news-sheet published the previous November, he represented all Poles. As for usefulness, Nelson thought Kot's passive resistance policy stopped the Germans

from fully exploiting their gains. Kot not only supplied the Second Bureau with intelligence, but his members diluted the effectiveness of the Gestapo who would otherwise be at liberty to concentrate on Second or Sixth Bureau agents. The very existence of Kot's people, Nelson felt, immobilised considerable numbers of German forces in the East and could possibly provide sabotage squads throughout Poland, and even Germany, which would then participate in armed uprisings at some time in the future.⁸³

Nevertheless, the British remained cautious of Kot. Dalton had a meeting with the Polish trade union leader Jan Stanczyk, who spoke in a private capacity about what he termed the Polish internal question. He said there was full co-operation between Sosnkowski and Kot over subversive action in Poland. He was somewhat concerned that, as a trade union leader, his members (generally socialist) carried out the plans of Kot, even though they were, for the better part, of a military nature. Kot, he told Dalton, was a life long conservative who joined the Peasant Party five years before the outbreak of war. In Poland, leaders of the Peasant and Socialist Parties were currently co-operating but not, it seemed, in London. Kot was responsible for stirring up trouble and exciting a fictitious rivalry between Sikorski and Sosnkowski by saying that Sosnkowski was linking up with the old 'Colonels regime'. Stanczyk believed that Sosnkowski was doing good work and had confidence in him. By contrast he had none in Kot.⁸⁴

The problem of Kot being able to keep contact with his agents abroad remained, so facilities were granted for the Poles to carry mail to and from Britain in diplomatic bags. These bags were used to carry covert materials, including weapons and, as the Poles possessed sovereign rights, were not subjected to censorship, their diplomatic immunity being respected by the British. The Foreign Office, who controlled SIS, feared the bags might be used for illicit purposes so, despite the diplomatic immunity, Menzies asked Gubbins to investigate the contents of the bags. Not wishing to alienate either the head of SIS or the Poles, Gubbins told Gladwyn Jebb he would open a few bags at random to check contents and Jebb informed Menzies of Gubbins' intention.⁸⁵ Knowing the contents of Polish Diplomatic bags though, was not enough, and SIS wanted all future wireless traffic to Poland

to be sent 'en clair', (not enciphered). Gano initially agreed but Colonel Smolenski, anxious not to jeopardise security and increase the risks to the forces in Poland, refused.⁸⁶ It would remain a bone of contention in the years ahead but the Poles were adamant and initially prevailed.

Perhaps the Mikiciński incident caused the Poles to look more closely at other organisations. Included was the former 'XYZ group' consisting of Jerzy Gizycki (Z), his wife Krystina, (X) also known as Madame G and later as Christine Granville, and a family friend, Andrzej Kowerski (Y). They had established themselves in Budapest in order to smuggle Polish soldiers across the frontier into Yugoslavia earlier in the war. Krystina had previously crossed the Polish border on four occasions and, during the spring of 1940, contacted a similar organisation in Warsaw called 'The Musketeers'. Allegations of collusion with the Germans had been made against this organisation and the Poles mistrusted all those who had been in contact with it, including the XYZ group. After discussions in London, support for the Musketeers was reluctantly withdrawn. SOE felt a very considerable obligation to the XYZ, feeling that an injustice had been done.⁸⁷ The Poles remained adamant they would not use them, but eventually SOE made further amends by arranging for Jerzy Gizycki to be attached to an intelligence department of the Diplomatic Corps. Andrzej Kowerski eventually became an SOE instructor, and Krystina was recruited into the French Section of SOE as Christine Granville, where she proved to be a more than overly capable operative.⁸⁸

Finance

Early in February 1941, a courier had crossed the Carpathians with £25,000 in cash but was long overdue reaching Warsaw. Gubbins wrote to Nelson expressing fears that that some funds were going astray. Poland's demands for finance had always been vague and the lack of definite statements as to where the money was to be used, coupled with the apparent lack of good organisation under Kot's direction, gave SOE cause for concern. Kot's representative in Budapest and Istanbul had been suspected of at best incompetence and at worst treachery, not only by SOE's people on the spot but also local diplomats and C's representatives.

Mikicinski's case was cited as an example of less than astute dealing. Mikicinski, who as far as Kot was concerned had mysteriously disappeared in Istanbul, was still having money sent for him.⁸⁹ Many cash advances had previously been made by SO2 to the Poles, but when this was reported to Dalton he agreed that Kot should be funded through Sikorski and the Treasury, and no longer through British secret sources.

Five million pounds had been put aside for the Polish war effort in excess of that earmarked for purely military expenditure.⁹⁰ In January 1941, the Poles sent an initial payment of £20,000, with future payments intended of £10,000 per month regularly to Poland in support of their secret organisation's lines of communication, and to purchase arms and ammunition from German operational troops, as well as to bribe German officials. During March, Squadron Leader John Venner, SOE's chief accountant, was authorised to purchase £25,000 worth (500,000 RM), from New York sources, for Polish use, but it was well short of a sum of RM200 million that Kot had asked for originally in 1940.⁹¹

Getting the currency was one problem, delivering it to Poland another. The Poles operated an effective courier system with their agents travelling from neutral countries, especially Spain and Portugal, making use of British companies with distribution centres established in these countries. There were concerns however, that with the possibility of the Germans invading and occupying the Iberian Peninsular thereby severing the links, a large and valuable organisation would exist in Poland without funds at least until liaison flights were well established on a regular basis.⁹²

The First flight to Poland.

During the daylight hours of 15th February, a brand new Whitley bomber carried out a three hour fuel consumption test. That night, the same aircraft, with a total of five hours flying in its logbook, took off to carry out the first flight to Poland, 850 miles distant.⁹³ The flight took 11 hours. 45 minutes, a record for a Whitley, and only possible because of exceptionally favourable circumstances on the night. Following this operation, the Air Ministry realised the Whitley was not suitable for Polish operations because of its low ceiling (altitude attainable)

and low cruise speed, and that for future operations, especially following an increase of anti-aircraft batteries defending Germany, flights using Whitleys could not possibly succeed. On this basis it was decided that no further flights would be undertaken to Poland until more suitable aircraft could be found.⁹⁴

[The following is included in detail in order to give an insight into the difficulties experienced by the Royal Air Force in carrying out long-range operations to Poland in 1941, especially with regard to navigation. Whilst improvements to navigational equipment were made later, many flights, including those of the Special Duties Flights, were unable to take advantage of all of the technology].

Operation *lotnicza* (air/flight) 'ADOLPHUS' had been flown by a crew of six; Captain and navigator F/L Keast, pilots F/O McMurdie and P/O Baker, a W/T operator and a rear-gunner with a Corporal named Cameron acting as dispatcher and parachute attendant. The agents carried were Maj. Stanisław Krzymowski, Lt. Józef Zabielski; courier Czesław Raczkowski. These were the first agents to be dropped by parachute for SOE anywhere in occupied Europe.⁹⁵ The aeroplane took off from Stradishall intending to fly to a point between Czestochowa and Kraków in the area around Słomniki. The three men were dropped with 800 lbs. of assorted equipment that included sub-machine guns and ammunition held in a special container ready for immediate use if required. This equipment was packed in specially constructed containers and held in the bomb racks of the aircraft.⁹⁶ The remaining containers held; 4 wireless telegraphy sets, 50 lbs (22.7 kilograms) of plastic explosive and 250 lbs (113.6 kgs) assorted paramilitary equipment. Tools were carried to bury the containers and parachutes, and sandbags were provided to sink the watertight containers in ponds or rivers if the ground proved too hard to dig.

The flight took off at 18.35 returning to Stradishall at 06.05, the outward journey taking 5 hours 30 minutes and the homeward leg 6 hours, including a reported 30 minutes over the target. (15 minutes spent taxiing makes up the 11hrs 45mins.) Though the aircraft encountered anti-aircraft fire over Holland and searchlights over Germany in the area of Düsseldorf, the journey was otherwise uneventful. With no blackout in force in major Polish

cities, built-up areas were clearly visible. Near Breslau (Wrocław), they ran into heavy cloud and had to continue using dead reckoning. This reportedly brought the aeroplane over Katowice; they then flew eastwards towards Kraków, well south of the intended drop zone. The pilot turned north and flew as near to the drop zone as his fuel would allow, issuing orders for the parachutists to depart over a clear spot near a wood. The agents parachuted first, followed by the containers, which were dropped after the aircraft had circled around, remaining close to the drop zone. A switch release mechanism, designed to operate when the parachutists jumped, had failed, necessitating the circling manoeuvre, but the rear gunner reported the containers all fell within a reasonable distance of the parachutists who had all landed together in a small field. This, however, was not the case as the parachutists had become separated. Zabielski and Raczkowski met up almost immediately, but Zabielski did not see Krzymowski again for some weeks. This is not the only discrepancy between the aircrew's report and facts discovered later.⁹⁷ The actual place of arrival was Dębowiec, near Skoczów, 30 miles from the intended place. (Zabielski's book mentions that the aircraft's crew had a task to perform in the Cieszyn area. This is strange bearing in mind the fact that the aircraft was at such a critical range and diversions unlikely. Nevertheless, when the parachutists landed they were very close to Cieszyn). The official report⁹⁸ also mentions that the aircraft was close to mountains (the Carpathians), which could be seen ahead and to the south. The Carpathians are well south of Katowice and Kraków, but not so far south of Ostrava and Bielsko-Biała.

Certainly, the landing place of the parachutists indicates that the crew may have misidentified Ostrava, assuming it to be Katowice, and concluded that the town visible ahead was Kraków. In the official account, the crew reported that care had to be taken avoiding the mountains at their altitude of 2,000ft. This should not have been a problem at Kraków, but certainly would have been between Ostrava and Bielsko-Biała. Zabielski complained that the drop had been made from a height considerably higher than 500ft (the height used for practice jumps), and higher than that expected to be used on the night. This indicates that the aircraft

was possibly maintaining 2,000ft and keeping clear of any high ground when Corporal Cameron dispatched the parachutists.

Normally, exit from the Whitley was difficult, and each man had to kneel in the doorway and be kicked out by the dispatcher. This aircraft, however, had been fitted with an especially large inward-opening door, so as not to hinder the parachutists' exit. Weather was generally good, with the exception of that mentioned, but snow covered the ground and no moon was visible in the overcast conditions. This raised thoughts as to whether future operations would be dependent on the moon period.⁹⁹ In order to keep the risks of such dangerous missions to a minimum, Gubbins informed the Polish GHQ that further flights could not take place until autumn, when once again the nights were long enough to allow the return flight to be made in darkness.

Dalton, ignoring the difficulties experienced, was naturally pleased that this first drop had gone so well. SOE had been subjected to criticism from some, and no doubt Dalton felt this action would prove the potential of his organisation.¹⁰⁰ The Joint Planning Staff was not so optimistic. In a report ordered by it from the Forward Planning Section, it was stated that in order to support fully the resistance forces in Europe some 200 aircraft would be needed continuously engaged in the work. Worse, from the Poles' point of view, was that in order to support fully a general uprising, the entire force of Bomber Command would be required for a period of six months and this clearly would never be possible.¹⁰¹ In theory, work of the Polish Section was completed as far as 'ADOLPHUS' was concerned, as information about their future would only likely to be heard of via the Sixth Bureau.

This later proved true when Sikorski wrote to Dalton giving details of the experience of the 'ADOLPHUS' team and information on conditions in Poland. There had been some considerable delay in wireless contact being established but with good reason. One parachutist had fallen into German hands but had managed to convince his captors he was guilty of nothing more than 'Illegal entry' into the Generalgouvernement.¹⁰²

March - June

The first attempted Polish drop into France.

On the night of 10/11 April, Flying Officer AJ 'Jackie' Oettle took six Polish parachutists to France with orders to destroy the Passac Power Station in the outskirts of Bordeaux. Due to an electrical fault, the canisters of equipment jettisoned en route somewhere in the region of the Loire Valley. Without the necessary sabotage materials, the aircraft returned to its point of departure, Manston Airfield, in Kent. The aircraft aborted the landing approach and stalled during the overshoot. The resulting crash killed two of Oettle's crew and injured the remaining four. Also injured were the six parachutists. This represented the first loss of life to RAF crew on Polish connected operations.¹⁰³

Courier transportation problems.

Further setbacks affected the transportation of couriers, especially as journey times between Cairo and England normally took longer than the hazardous route between Warsaw and Cairo. Because of the delays, the Poles wished to establish an alternative route via Stockholm, but it was questionable if it would prove any more successful. The entire question of positioning couriers by overland routes was never adequately resolved.

The Sixth Bureau sent Jakob Alek to the Middle East in order to organise the dispatch of military couriers through Cairo, Istanbul, thence on to London with the aid of the Middle Eastern GHQ, an arrangement with which the British were content. Military and political Poles in the Middle East were at best uncoordinated and Polish political couriers operated through a Polish *Chargé de Affaires* named Tadeusz Zaszuliński,¹⁰⁴ who was considered to be one of Kot's men.¹⁰⁵ Alek and Zaszuliński hated each other and Alek refused to recognise any authority in him, considering his lack of a sense of security would consequently put both the military and political Poles at risk.

Confusion reigned in Cairo as to who was Kot's representative. Alek certainly was not. Zaszuliński claimed not to be, and that his sole interest was to acquire the services of a

British officer charged with the role of evacuating himself and the Polish community in the event of a German invasion of Egypt. Kot was told about Zaszuliński's claims and said he would look for a replacement. Having previously told Gubbins that it was unlikely that control of couriers would be passed to Alek, Truszkowski now realised this was not impossible and, thanks to a definite rapprochement by Librach and Smolenski, it was possible that Alek could take over both organisations work.¹⁰⁶

Proposed Minorities Section: spheres of operation.

More harmony was becoming evident between Kot and Sosnkowski. Kot stated that Sosnkowski would be invited to co-operate with the administration and operation of any part of his organisation's work against Fifth Columnists abroad, especially those in the USA, where he felt the Poles could counter German propaganda. Here, he thought nationals of other occupied nations such as the Greeks, Serbs, Czechs etc. would likely follow suit if the Poles gave them the lead. In South America too, patriotic Poles would be expected to help fight the influence of Germany. Kot felt the possibilities of subversive work being carried out by Poles living throughout the world should be investigated.

After France, the largest population of Poles living abroad was in South America: Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay.¹⁰⁷ Scandinavia too, had sporting and cultural connections with the Poles, especially in Denmark, where they were being welded together for anti-German activities, but these formed a very small group.¹⁰⁸ The Sixth Bureau and Kot began making efforts to stimulate anti-German activity among these; that they were successful is apparent due to the fact that soon a great deal of 'C's' information was coming from these sources.

The British Foreign Office was not happy about possible action being carried out in the USA or Latin America, feeling that, if it was indeed necessary, the Poles should first let them know why. The Foreign Office felt sure that it was best to concentrate efforts in Europe as the United States was well aware of the situation regarding Fifth Columnists, and was satisfied with the counter measures they were taking. Gubbins penned a note to Nelson

outlining the Foreign Office's dissatisfaction with the Poles' idea, but added that Germany had a strong Fifth column in the countries mentioned who were building a reputation for themselves. South American Poles were worried about what would happen to them if the Nazis took over these republics. Gubbins thought help should be given to the Poles, as he could not see how this would harm relationships with South American states. 'The Poles are not a set of wild anarchists,' he wrote, 'they have considerable experience both of political and of conspiratorial methods, and there is no prior reason to assume that they cannot be trusted to undertake any action in countries where they have long been resident. For this reason the FO cannot have any objections'. If, in any way, this would affect the relationship between Britain and the USA, Gubbins could not possibly see how.¹⁰⁹

Elsewhere, the work of the Minorities Section was progressing, albeit slowly. 'ANGELICA' was the name given for the Polish Ministry of the Interior's Continental Action Group's work in France. It was decided in early 1941 to train wireless telephony operators to drop into the community. The first agent to go over, called Bitner, had been dispatched by sea at either the end of January, or the beginning of February 1941. The local leader in France was Aleksander Kawalkowski, previously Consul General in Lille.¹¹⁰

Poles living outside Poland generally fell into two categories, either labourers who had left Poland to seek their fortunes, or educated Poles who remained politically concerned and had left because they did not like the Government of the day. The former, by now a generation removed, had little interest in Poland at all, having been fully integrated into their adopted countries. Many had scant concern for the Polish Government, especially those furthest removed from the war, for example, in America. Before the war, a large number of Poles settled in many regions of France, particularly in the Pas de Calais and Clermont Ferrand-St Etienne. By far the largest group was around Lille (about 1,700 men), most of them working-class and involved in either mining or agriculture, with a few artisans, but very few intelligentsia. After the fall of France, the many Polish demobilised soldiers who had been left behind had increased their numbers. These troops were either left free or kept in camps and hired out for agricultural or other manual work, generally in unoccupied France.

Professional men, such as schoolteachers or Catholic clergy, who played a large part in keeping the communities together, ran their cultural organisations. There were, therefore, about half a million Poles in France and General Sikorski was anxious to recruit them for the war effort. The risk of using them for sabotage was high, with the likelihood of bloody reprisals, but SOE was keen to make use of them bearing in mind the dangers.¹¹¹

June - August

Agent training for Polish Operations and early discussions on flights.

The Special Training Station (STS) at Briggens in Essex, which had been established to train Polish agents, had been doing well and the first twenty-seven agents had passed the vigorous training regime during the early months of 1941. Of these, three were destined to become instructors at the newly acquired training station at Audley End,¹¹² also in Essex: Józef Hartman, Antoni Pospieszalski, and Jerzy Zubryzcki. By June, a third class was also ready for operations.¹¹³

Sikorski discussed air liaison with Ministers Sinclair (Secretary of State for Air), and John Moore-Brabazon (the Minister for aircraft production), who promised that all should be arranged by autumn of 1941. Based on this promise, he wrote to Gubbins on 7th June asking him to arrange for flights to be ready by 1st September. Churchill too, had promised Sikorski that the question of air liaison would be settled in the autumn to the General's satisfaction. He said, 'The Air Ministry will do everything in their power to assist you during the coming autumn and winter, when they hope to have the means to do so.'¹¹⁴

Sosnkowski, having learned the overland route via the Balkans was closed, wrote to Gubbins asking for a special liaison flight to train immediately for flights to Poland during the coming winter. He wanted two aircraft immediately, the number increasing to twelve later, plus a further four in reserve. Gubbins made a detailed statement to the Air Ministry regarding Polish requirements and they confirmed it would be possible. In his reply Gubbins suggested it would be better to use all Polish crews for future operations to Poland, as they

knew the countryside better. In an obviously 'belt and braces' move, Sosnkowski unnecessarily contacted Dalton, who answered saying he was familiar with the whole question of air liaison with Poland and confirmed that Sosnkowski's requirements had been presented to the Air ministry for their consideration.¹¹⁵ In the meantime, Smolenski presented his plan for liaison with Poland to Gubbins.

The German invasion of the USSR.

On 22nd June, the war took a not altogether unexpected turn. After Polish observers had reported large troop movements on the border eleven days earlier, Germany invaded Russia. The Poles expected the Germans to succeed against the Russians within two months and that Stalin would fall in a civil coup leading to the Germans taking control. Gubbins thought it would be the very best news. He wrote to Nelson, 'If this is the case the Germans will form puppet governments. The Poles are the ideal people to attack these puppet governments and should be used wherever possible.' (It is interesting to note that SOE were apparently pleased at the prospect of Germany prevailing against Russia).

Understandably, the Poles were not anxious to assist the Soviets, but stated that the Polish Government was ready to resume diplomatic relations with Russia on condition that the annexation of Eastern Poland was repudiated. (Gubbins could not help noting that it would soon be over-run by Germany anyway, but that it would at least be a gesture). Approximately a half-million¹¹⁶ Polish civilians were dispersed throughout Russia, with a further 200,000 Polish prisoners of war being held in the USSR. If possible, Gubbins wanted these people to be immediately evacuated to any territory not under the control of the Soviets. First choice, and the closest, was Iran. He was sure that Russian-based Polish troops would be ready to join the British and fight Germany on any front where there was fighting, and that the Poles would give full support to the USSR in any anti-German action.¹¹⁷

The Director of Plans gave careful consideration to the new situation in the East. While Polish subversive attacks on Germans in support of USSR were a good thing, if they became too much of a thorn in their side, the Germans might concentrate their forces against

them, which could bring about the defeat of the Polish forces working behind the lines. If this happened it would mean no attacks on Germans returning from Russia. Should this happen, and the Germans become victorious, it would put the UK more at risk without this diversion of German troops. Smolenski gave his opinion that if the Russians prevailed against the Germans and forced a retreat, then the Poles would rise up to hasten the German defeat. If, on the other hand, the Germans advanced, he was sure the Russians would fall back and 'harry' the Germans, in which situation they could hold out for some time.

The Director of Plans decided that some form of action, in the form of closer relations between the Poles and the Soviets, should be taken immediately and suggested that Gubbins spoke to Sikorski about it. Gubbins was of the opinion that Sikorski would be happy with the proposal once he was satisfied that Russian attitudes would allow renewed diplomatic relationships. He was also of the opinion that Sikorski was likely to drive a hard bargain, but would say that he would place the resources of his organisation at the disposal of the Russians provided a certain quid pro quo was vouchsafed by them.¹¹⁸

Gubbins's opinion proved to be wide of the mark. When Gubbins met Sikorski on 28th June, Sikorski, obviously in agreement with Kot, told him that the Poles would do nothing until reasonable treatment could be expected by the Polish prisoners of war in Russia, and that the same could be expected for Poles deported to Russia. Gubbins felt it unfortunate that politics interfered, but realised it was impossible for Sikorski to expect his people in Poland to undertake work in support of the Soviets until it was sorted out.¹¹⁹ Even so, Gubbins was aware that Polish sabotage on German-held territory had already doubled.¹²⁰

Truskowski discussed the Polish/ Soviet negotiations with Librach. Together they concluded, on the assumption that talks proved fruitless, that the Poles in Poland might not remain totally hostile to Germany and that a Germanophile puppet government might be installed. All endeavours should therefore be made to bring pressure on the Soviets to make their peace with Poland. Nelson, on receiving a report on the meeting, found their conclusion interesting but expressed to Gubbins his doubts about the Soviets and Poles coming to an amicable agreement.¹²¹

Very soon dissension between the Polish and Soviet Governments was evident.

Sosnkowski stated that the only way he could come to an agreement with the Russians was if they agreed to a return to the pre-war status quo, which they would not. He added. 'Soviet willingness to denounce her treaties with Germany of 1939 was of no importance whatever, as it was merely an acceptance of a fait accompli, more particularly in view of the fact that Germany had already overrun all the territory which Russia had occupied as a result of the agreement.'¹²² He emphasised that Poland had been the first to oppose with force the German programme of domination, and that she had now lost all in the common struggle. How could the Allies, especially the British, expect Poland to make further sacrifices before even the war was over, when she was still playing her full part in the war. It seemed to him, with justification, beyond reason that such sacrifices should be made to a power, which had only just become the ally of Great Britain. It was clear that not only Sosnkowski but also two other ministers, August Zaleski and Marian Seyda, wanted nothing whatever to do with the Russians, and Soviet statements indicating a desire to make their peace with Poland were doubted by all, including Nelson. ¹²³

The territorial clauses, as presented by Sikorski, and the difference of opinion regarding the acceptance of the Russian/Polish peace terms, together with Sosnkowski, Zaleski and Seyda's opposition to any concessions on the Eastern border, brought about a cabinet crisis within the Polish Government. On 29th July, Sosnkowski was injured during a bombing raid. Gubbins called on him to see how he was, and whilst there discussed his position on Soviet – Polish relations. Gubbins tried to persuade him to be more flexible to the question of frontiers but Sosnkowski was resolute and expected his recently tendered resignation to be accepted. ¹²⁴

Despite opposition, resumption of Polish diplomatic relations with the Soviets soon looked imminent and with it the need to appoint an ambassador to Moscow, a position that would go to either Kot or Sosnkowski. Kot said that in view of his health problem, ¹²⁵ he was willing to withdraw his candidacy in favour of Sosnkowski, who he thought was the right man for the job. ¹²⁶ Sosnkowski's view was different and his opposition to the peace project

as a whole was a good indication that he would not accept the post, therefore Kot would have to go.¹²⁷ Gubbins thought the prospect of Kot's going excellent news.

The re-establishment of Polish/Soviet diplomatic relations was not without cost, as Sosnkowski's and Zaleski's resignations from the cabinet were accepted. President Racziewicz's sole contribution was to let the cabinet sort it out themselves, he too, perhaps realising that Sikorski's options had been limited.¹²⁸

Truszkowski reported to Gubbins that while the Poles still considered Germany the more dangerous enemy, they also realised the Russians were as bad as the Germans. Polish soldiers were living in Soviet internment camps or had been dumped in the wilds of Siberia to fend for themselves. Negotiations were carried out with a representative of Bolshevik diplomacy, which, Truszkowski said, was notoriously the most tricky and unreliable in Europe. Whatever was agreed to on paper, all Poles felt that the Soviets would not have the least compunction in not conforming to all, or any of the clauses of the agreement, especially as the Soviets showed little sign of fulfilling the spirit of the protocol. There had been very strong pressure exerted by the British Foreign Office on Sikorski to conclude the pact without delay and the repercussions of the agreement reached were still in evidence. The number of POW's held by the Soviets in October 1940 was given as an estimated 200,000, but now this number had fallen to 20,000, and the suggestion was that the remainder had either been incorporated into the Red Army, or was being used as slave labour.

Some consequences of Polish Government resignations.

The Sixth Bureau representative in Cairo, Matecki (Jakob Alek), was bothered about Sosnkowski's resignation and informed SOE that Polish officers there had not believed it had happened. The resignations of Zaleski and Seyda had made many rather nervous and convinced that there was a secret reason for it, as they could not see why it had been necessary. *The Daily Sketch* newspaper gave weight to the conspiracy theory the following month when it published an article entitled, 'Inside Information', written by the editor. In it, he claimed that Stalin was responsible for the Polish cabinet crisis and that the National

Council had been dissolved in order to accommodate new men approved by Stalin. Jebb thought it could harm relationships between the Poles and the British, and SOE took as strong an objection to the article as the Poles. The newspaper was warned off to prevent anything similar happening in the future, as it was not the first time such an article had been written by them.¹²⁹

In order to put forward his point of view, Sikorski, accompanied by General Izydor Modelski, went to Scotland explaining things to his army in a series of 40-minute speeches. Sikorski managed his publicity well.¹³⁰ Modelski was second only to Kot as public enemy number one in Polish circles, but it now looked as though his star was in the ascendancy. There seemed no doubt Sikorski wanted Sosnkowski back in the cabinet. Both were very proud men but Sikorski felt it was for Sosnkowski to make the first move, though Sosnkowski was evidently unprepared to do so. Sikorski relieved him of his position in overall command of the Sixth Bureau, which came as no surprise to SOE, who thought the Poles would no longer trust him with the post. The consequence of this action was that most work in hand became paralysed at that moment, due to no one knowing who would be sacked next. The Poles were unwilling to make any decisions, but winter operations were approaching. Kot, as ambassador-designate for Moscow, was to be replaced by Stanisław Mikołajczyk, who refused to have anything to do with the Sixth Bureau. It was supposed, therefore, that General Modelski would be asked to take over the organisation. In his report to SOE on the matter, Truskowski thought that the end result would likely be a general strengthening of the authority of Sikorski.¹³¹

The Soviet/Polish agreement was not all bad news for the Polish Government. The first paragraph of protocol in the agreement for the re-establishment of diplomatic relations stated that, 'As soon as diplomatic relations are re-established, the government of the USSR shall grant amnesty to all Polish citizens, (civil and military)... on the territory of the Soviet Union.'¹³² This was good news for those Polish soldiers incarcerated in the Soviet Union, and soon Major Generals Władysław Anders and Michał Karaszewicz-Torkarzewski, who were currently still technically prisoners-of-war in Russia, began trying to arrange passage

for themselves and other Polish prisoners to Iran. A few Poles were already escaping from Russia, some arriving in Iran and others making their way through Afghanistan, to India. Although there was no Polish organisation in Iran, there were large numbers of Poles resident there, and whilst numbers would naturally increase dramatically if Polish prisoners were released from Russia, it appeared that to set one up would be the easiest and most sensible option. SOE were already aware of the situation. George Hill established a Soviet Section of SOE in Moscow during the previous September and remained there as the representative of both SOE and SIS. He had already been circulating the intelligence, but Wilkinson considered Hill's action to be a serious breach of security and was not pleased saying, 'Hill should not circulate such important information without first contacting us'.¹³³

Wilkinson met Gano who suggested action against the Caucasus oil pipelines, and wondered about possible British plans for sabotage within the USSR in the event of a Soviet collapse. What Gano most certainly would not have been aware of was the fact that an agreement had been reached between SOE and the NKVD¹³⁴ forbidding subversive actions in each other's territories; in the British case, this included the Commonwealth and much of the Middle East. Wilkinson passed on an account of the meeting to Gubbins and the decision was made to let the Russians carry out the Caucasus demolitions first, but if they are unable to do so then the British would attempt it despite the agreement, and the Poles were happy with this proposal. Truszkowski suggested that it would be better if the Russians did not know about the proposal and Gubbins replied to the comment, 'It all depends on whether we can trust Kot's organisation to keep a secret.'¹³⁵

Subsequent events forced the Soviets hand, and soon local observers in Borysław reported the Bolsheviks had destroyed all oil wells and refineries at Polmin.¹³⁶ The action appeared to have been completely successful as all the drilling rigs had been removed eastwards.¹³⁷

Minorities sections ADJUDICATE and ANGELICA.

Ron Hazell returned to England from Bucharest, where he had been dealing with Rumanian affairs since April 1940. Hazell was the former British Vice-Consul in Gdynia, having previously been the representative of the United Baltic Corporation, whose ships travelled frequently between Britain and Poland. The difficulties in finding him a job in London were resolved when it was realised that he was the ideal man to take over the Polish Minorities from Richard Truskowski, whose services were now needed elsewhere. Hazell took control in July and inherited not only the ANGELICA organisation but also another called ADJUDICATE. It is, perhaps, sensible to compare the two operations.

ANGELICA, as previously mentioned, came under the control of the Polish Ministry of the Interior, primarily for subversive work in France. The objectives of ANGELICA were to create Polish organisations in France linking centres of the Polish population and disseminate from these centres propaganda, first in Polish then in French. It was also:

1. To establish regular clandestine inter-communication between occupied and unoccupied France, with Polish centres located in both.
2. To develop this secret organisation so as to use their communications for information purposes and to train and employ personnel, either French or Polish, for general sabotage when the moment appeared ripe, the intention being to employ local people of long standing as this provided the best cover.

Obviously, this organisation required a great deal of planning, and the work it intended to carry out was still very much in the future. SOE remained concerned that the members of 'ANGELICA' were expending huge amounts of effort and money to little effect.

Sikorski was approached with the idea of sending a member of the General Staff over to investigate the possibility of forming small cells of Poles on a military basis to carry out specific acts of sabotage. It was agreed that the British should control the organisation in order to avoid political implications inherent in Anglo-Polish control. Not surprisingly, the Ministry of the Interior strongly objected to the proposed scheme, wishing to ensure that the officer designated would only have the authority to deal with Poles who had been

demobilised from the remnants of that part of the Polish army which had been left in France. Ultimately, the Second Bureau provided the officer, Lieutenant Teodor Dzierzowski,¹³⁸ who was given the code name 'ADJUDICATE' (the head of the operation was generally given the same code name as the operation). He was an energetic individual, having been given the nickname 'Nurmi' during training owing to his considerable turn of speed.¹³⁹ The British considered him something of a braggart without principle, and spendthrift, but he was well trained by SOE and finally dropped to a Second Bureau reception committee in France on 2nd / 3rd September 1941 after numerous cancelled attempts due to poor weather conditions.¹⁴⁰

The purpose of ADJUDICATE was to:

1. carry out specific tasks of sabotage including small raids under the direction of the British authorities.
2. to organise means of facilitating the evacuation from France of those required in England.

In short, ANGELICA was to wait until the right time for action to be taken, but ADJUDICATE was for immediate action.

Funding for the ANGELICA scheme had been decided in June, when the British Treasury granted £600,000 to the Polish Government specifically for the use of the Polish Minorities. The Poles looked upon it as a loan,¹⁴¹ not realising it was intended as an annual allowance¹⁴². Dalton confirmed the loan to Sikorski adding, 'This loan to Poland has no limit for military expenditure and will not in any way diminish the money available to Poland for other war-like expenditure.' Sikorski replied to Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Kingsley Wood, on 5th July, informing him that Kot had been authorised to administer the credit.¹⁴³

August - December

Air Liaison/Polish Squadron.

Smolenski wrote to Perkins proposing that he attached Col. Roman Rudkowski, former chief of 301 Squadron and Lt. Zbigniew Wysiekierski to Flight 419 to provide the nucleus of a wholly Polish liaison flight. Sikorski followed up the proposal by again asking both Gubbins

and Dalton for assistance in organising air liaison, which was passed on to the Air Ministry. The reply from the Air Ministry was not encouraging, saying that Flight 419 could not take the men as they were too busy to train them. Instead, they had arranged to have them attached to a Whitley training unit, the object being to prepare them for Special Operations work, promising that once they had passed out they would be attached to an operational flight. Gubbins was less optimistic, noting on the bottom of the reply 'not much help here.'¹⁴⁴

Colonel Bogdan Kwiecieński, (Air Attaché of the Polish Government), wrote to Gubbins urging the use of Polish crews for flights to Poland, the advantages being that they would have no language problems and, should the aircraft be forced down, they would have a better chance of escape.¹⁴⁵ Gubbins needed no convincing and requested a statement of technical requirements to put before the Air Ministry at a conference, which included the Poles, to be held on 20th September. The Air Ministry could not have failed to see the advantages of the Poles' proposal but the pleas apparently fell on deaf ears.¹⁴⁶

Before the end of the month, Wilkinson told Col. Kwiecieński that Air Vice Marshal Edward Medhurst had informed him that no 4-engined aircraft would be available before the beginning of 1942. Aware that this was another broken promise, and in an attempt to apply some pressure to the reluctant ministry, Sikorski considered it imperative that initially he had five Liberators and flight personnel, consisting of fourteen officers, 108 airmen and four crews with technical and administration staff, in line with what had been proposed.¹⁴⁷

The entire question of flights to Poland had come to a head on 13th August when the Air Ministry made it clear there was no possibility of operations on the scale that SOE and the Poles had envisaged. Nor was it likely that there would be a new bomber type being in use before January 1942. Disappointingly, Gubbins wrote to Nelson, resigned to relying on Whitleys in the near future and pointing out the limitations that the speed of the Whitley imposed for night operations. With anti-aircraft installations now preventing direct flights, it meant the range of 2,000 miles was effectively further reduced to allow dropping zones only to the west of Warsaw. Only in December and January were the nights long enough to proceed beyond Warsaw to areas west of a line Brześć to Premysł. Between November and

February, the range reduced to west of a line Warsaw to Nowy Sacz, which was further shortened to areas west of Łódź during the October/ March period.¹⁴⁸ Gubbins was far from satisfied, adding that whatever the Air Ministry might now say, the Poles had been given a tacit understanding that, provided they did not press their demands during the spring of 1941, their requests would be met in full during the Autumn/Winter of 1941/2. Gubbins also felt that the recent crisis in the Polish cabinet had arisen partly because of doubts about SOE's ability to meet their demands, with them feeling let down, followed by a subsequent loss of hope.

In early September, Portal was able to inform Sikorski that the Special Operations flight was soon to be enlarged to squadron strength with the intention that eventually it would become exclusively made up of Polish flight crews and ground staff. On 9th September, the United States extended lend lease to Poland. This should have allowed the Poles to skirt around the Allied Purchase Commission for buying aircraft which had, until now, refused Polish proposals, claiming all bombers were required for use by British Bomber Command. Perkins was sceptical, and noted to Gubbins, 'I doubt it will work, as it will put the Poles in badly with the Air Ministry, which could work against them'.¹⁴⁹ Sikorski, too, realised that any help from this quarter would not be forthcoming for some time, and informed Portal that he had undertaken to investigate the technical possibilities of using Whitleys, asking for instructions to be given for two flights to operate in October. Portal considered Liberators unsuitable, and that long-range Whitleys would be preferable,¹⁵⁰ especially if the proposal that had been put before the General Staff late in August was adopted, that the aircraft should proceed to Russia for refuelling prior to the return journey.¹⁵¹

This was something of a carrot to placate Sikorski following his earlier contact with Portal. Both Sikorski and Smolenski had doubts about practical values of operating in this way, as neither was in favour of using Whitleys, or of them then flying on to Russia to refuel. Perhaps the fear of losing a useful bomber like the Liberator to the Poles, rather than an outdated Whitley, was the reasoning behind Portal's remark about the Liberator. Whatever

the reason, the RAF appeared reluctant to release any aircraft to anyone outside Bomber Command.

Kot's departure and the various departments working with SOE.

On 1st September, Sikorski had written to Kingsley-Wood to advise him of Kot's impending departure for Moscow as Ambassador, and to inform him that Mikołajczyk would consequently undertake the duties previously done by Kot, including the administration of all credit. With Kot about to depart for Moscow, the British were anxious not to do anything that would jeopardise his mission. They were obviously pleased to see him go. Kot was full of ideas that would expand Polish involvement in the war, including a plan to set up posts in Eire, which was scotched by the British. He could easily come up with a similar idea for the Soviet Union and, officially, the British were not prepared to sponsor Polish operations on Soviet territory, which could easily be interpreted as contrary to the British/Soviet agreement.

SOE secretly hoped to take Kot's old organisation under their control in order to streamline its operation. Cautious of the political differences between the various Polish organisations, they were reluctant to put forward the suggestion and fearful that the Poles would assign it to another organisation that might require them working on a different scheme, possibly with uncooperative factions.

SOE currently worked with four separate executive bodies:

1. the Polish Minister of Interior, representing the Government of Poland.
2. the (hitherto) so-called Kot Organisation, which co-ordinated and organised the Polish minorities abroad.
3. the Sixth Bureau of the Polish General staff in the London headquarters of the Polish Secret Army of the Polish homeland.
4. The Polish Secret Service, as it was found impossible to separate their activities with those of SOE, despite their dealing directly with SIS.¹⁵²

The Sixth Bureau had hitherto been sceptical about the efforts of the Polish Government, saying it was not representative of real Poles inside Poland. They especially had

a low opinion of the Kot Organisation. Because members of the Sixth Bureau were all professional intelligence officers, they had contempt for what they thought an amateur organisation. SOE agreed with them; their experience during the past year was that the political bodies were amateurish, technically indifferent and reluctant to take professional advice. The attitude of the politicians to the Sixth Bureau was complicated. Many accepted the technical superiority of the Sixth Bureau and the power it bequeathed. They were, however, wary about the military following, the result being that the relationship between the two bodies was governed by the fact that the Government was always trying to curb the power of the General Staff.

The political situation in Poland as seen by SOE during September.

SOE felt that all Poland was prepared to accept Sikorski's men as being non-political representatives concerned with ousting the Germans. It was seen by SOE that once they became firmly established they also became more and more political, especially following the Polish-Soviet pact and the increase in their political bias was widely disliked. Despite this, many felt that, with the help of foreign contacts in England and America, Sikorski's regime, including Kot, and Sikorski's *Homme de confiance*, Józef Retinger,¹⁵³ would likely exist until after the end of the war. All naturally wanted a secure Government in Poland and Sikorski was still the obvious choice to back. Many realised that aid would not come from the Allied nations unless guarantees of stability were forthcoming. Sikorski was considered an honest man, and although Kot and Retinger were both intensely ambitious they would have been horrified to discover any rival to Sikorski. Their careers depended on his success, as neither was popular in Poland. The Kot organisation had been devoted to discrediting the military organisation whenever possible in Poland and the Balkans. Sikorski had promised to collaborate with the Soviets after the war, which Sosnkowski was against. This resulted in increased support for Sikorski as many Poles disapproved of Sosnkowski's criticism, thinking it untimely, and also thinking the pact should not be at risk because of political wrangling.

Although the majority probably sympathised with Sosnkowski, as few had faith in Soviet promises, they supported Sikorski in protest.¹⁵⁴

October Air Liaison.

By the beginning of October, about sixty Polish officers were trained and awaiting despatch to Poland but there were still no aircraft of the newly formed 138 Special Operations Squadron capable of making the flight. Air Vice-Marshals Norman Bottomely and Medhurst visited SOE to hear their plans and get some idea of the work they did. On hearing of SOE's problems, Bottomely could only reply making mention of Portal's letter to Sikorski, again suggesting the use of Whitleys refuelling in Russia, suggesting also using the aircraft for a similar mission on the return leg of the journey, provided agents could be positioned to Russia.¹⁵⁵

Wilkinson subsequently turned his thoughts to gaining assistance from the Soviets for Polish operations. The realisation that Moscow was some 200 miles closer to Warsaw than London, was worthy of consideration. It was evident to him that if operations from Moscow were not possible, because of the many problems associated with it proving insurmountable, then the Poles were faced with a close season for operations to Poland. Nothing, he thought, could be less satisfactory than a complete abandonment of operations for a period of nearly six months. The advantages of using Russian bases to refuel were obvious. With a smaller fuel load for the outbound journey, more agents could be carried on the flight. Flights were not the only thing worthy of consideration though. If overland infiltrations from the West could no longer seriously be considered, indications were that they might be possible from the East. There had been regular smuggling traffic between Russia and Poland for some time and it had been so widespread that there must have been many ex-Polish internees in Russia who knew the game backwards and whose skills could be put to the movement of men and equipment.

The disadvantages of using Soviet airfields were manifold, and not simply political. Fears of Russian infiltration and interference with the Home Army and sabotage plans etc.

posed a military threat to the Poles. Of lesser importance was the fact that SOE would require extra staffing to cover the extra bases, the organisation being split between Russia and London, and the associated duplication of the command. Much of the technical work would need to be repeated in Moscow, doubling both workload and expenditure, added to which would be the difficulties in transportation of men and equipment (including aircraft spares) between London and Moscow. It was a proposal that looked good on the surface but had far too many hidden dangers. Politically the scheme was heavy with perils.

Part of the question was finally settled when Portal wrote again to Sikorski on 2nd October. It had been decided that it was simply too impractical to drop parachutists and then fly on to Russia. Weather reports were only available at 4pm on the day of departure. Moscow would have to be told in time to inform their GHQ, Army Groups, Army HQ, Corps, Division and so on down to individual anti-aircraft batteries and fighter units that a flight was to take place. The duration of the flight would not leave sufficient time for all this to be achieved and there was a very real danger of the aircraft being lost to friendly fire.¹⁵⁶

What was really required were at least two fast long-range aircraft, and Perkins suggested the Poles might buy Liberators under the lend-lease agreement, subject to the British Purchasing Commission's approval.¹⁵⁷ Portal was not of the same mind, claiming that the aircraft most suitable for dropping supplies and personnel was the Halifax. Whether pressure from above had finally proved successful, or the thought of the Americans supplying the Poles directly to the detriment of the RAF had tipped the balance is not known, but it was decided to allot three modified Halifax aircraft to 138 Squadron. It was hoped they would be ready for the next moon period, which would begin on 7th November. RAF crews, accustomed to the Halifax, would be used, and Polish crews trained separately.¹⁵⁸ Sikorski thanked Portal for a satisfactory solution to the problem of liaison flights and said he had informed his officers to get in touch with Portal's staff to arrange further details.¹⁵⁹ The sting in the tail came when the Poles were told that due to limited resources, the three Halifaxes would not be exclusively for Polish operations and that consequently the creation of a special Polish flight could not yet be allowed. During discussions between Wilkinson, Perkins and

Rudkowski, it was made clear to Rudkowski that, with one Polish crew already fully trained and awaiting posting, he was unlikely to get more than this one crew at present.¹⁶⁰ It would not be until the night 7/8th November that, following modifications to the Halifax, Operation 'RUCTION' was dispatched to deliver men and materials, and to carry out reconnaissance of dropping areas for future operations.

Appalling weather meant that the main landing site could not be found, so the drop was made successfully at a satellite field. On the return journey, the aircraft made a forced landing in Sweden due to a hydraulic fault, which caused excessive consumption of fuel. The crew were interned for several weeks but later released. The loss of the aeroplane was a great blow considering it had taken so much trouble to get it and no doubt the RAF felt justified in their reluctance to provide bombers for clandestine operations.¹⁶¹

SOE, Polish and NKVD clandestine relations.

An agreement between Russia and Britain to better the working relationships with the NKVD brought Colonel Ivan Chichayev to London.¹⁶² A reciprocal mission headed by Lt. Col. Bob Guinness, left for Russia. Truszkowski, now a member of the mission, was cautious that he should not become an intermediary between the Russians and the Poles and Czechs as had been feared by many in SOE in London.¹⁶³ Despite Portal's letter of 2nd October, part of his task was to investigate the possibility of using Soviet air bases for Polish operations.

Guinness was keen that Truszkowski should be put in charge of re-equipping the Polish Army, but Gubbins refused to release him, whom he rightly considered an excellent intelligence officer but no quartermaster. In an excellent example of the amount of trust he had for his Soviet allies, Truszkowski left instructions that any message he sent to London over four lines long, which did not contain the words 'So to Speak', should be disregarded. One of Truszkowski's first reports clearly demonstrated the relationship between the Poles in Russia and their hosts was not good, saying that Poles recruited by the Russians for this work generally would not co-operate.¹⁶⁴

Changes made by Kot's replacement.

In what was considered a great honour, Perkins received a letter from General Sosabowski telling him he had been awarded the Polish Parachutists Badge. Congratulating him, the General said, 'I am happy that the Polish Army gained in you a Polish parachutist.' In the meantime staff changes had been made in the Sixth Bureau. Lt Col Józef Matecki 'Jakob Alek' had been sacked and replaced by Lt Col Walerian Mercik. The change had been made due to Mikołajczyk's insistence that the Sixth Bureau should be purged of Sosnkowski's supporters. Gubbins was sorry about Matecki being replaced and reminded Smolenski how well Majors Wilkinson and Guy Tamplin (SOE Cairo) had worked with him, and the excellent relationship they had built up. Smolenski agreed, as he too was distressed at Matecki's replacement, perhaps not mentioning that he was also a victim of the purge. Gubbins wrote a strong letter to Lt.Col. Franciszek Demel 'HECZKA', deputy head of the Polish Second Bureau, complaining about 'JA's' sacking, but the reply it engendered pleaded a 'force majeure', meaning, Wilkinson thought, Mikołajczyk.¹⁶⁵ The British feared that the Polish staff purge would include Demel and Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki, who were both first class men. Lt. Col. Leon Mitkiewicz-Zółter, became Director of Military Intelligence and henceforth the Sixth Bureau was subordinate to him.¹⁶⁶

Mikołajczyk, having contracted appendicitis, was late taking his post as the new Minister of the Interior with Librach continuing in his role as assistant, as he had been with Kot. Once recovered, Mikołajczyk informed Dalton of the function of the 'ANGELICA' organisation in France, which was now fairly well established. The time would come when it would need to be armed from Britain, and he wanted assurances from Dalton that this would be done. Dalton felt that Mikołajczyk would be easier to deal with, finding him more reasonable, not so suspicious nor so unpopular as Kot, who often made a nuisance of himself in his constant pushing for aircraft and his insistence that he be kept informed about all communications with Sikorski.¹⁶⁷

Rudnicki replaces Smolenski at the Sixth Bureau.

Smolenski remained in his role as head of the Sixth Bureau until his replacement, Tadeusz Rudnicki, took over. Gubbins affirmed his willingness to continue co-operation with the Sixth Bureau under Rudnicki, but that he could not speak for the other services.¹⁶⁸ It was obvious from Rudnicki's conversation that the Russians and Poles still viewed each other with suspicion and mistrust. The Poles, fearful of infiltration by Soviets, did not discuss the work of the Sixth Bureau at all in Russia, but Rudnicki said that in Moscow, Sikorski had agreed to keep Russians informed about secret operations carried out on their territory, and the Russians agreed to do the same. Rudnicki informed Gubbins that Second Bureau men were involved with Sixth Bureau operational parties, and had been selected to act as intelligence officers for the Sixth Bureau in Warsaw. To this Gubbins had no objection, saying he was satisfied with the arrangement.¹⁶⁹ Gubbins and Perkins were interested to hear that Colonel Rudnicki was able to get news through Sweden via the regular services operating across the Baltic between Swedish ports and Gdynia and Danzig (Gdańsk), and thoughts turned to the possibility of operating a courier service on this route. Regular courier services were being set up to operate after 4th November between the Middle East and Russia but there were limited facilities on these flights.¹⁷⁰

Gubbins gave some thought to the whole courier system and suggested to Col Mitkiewicz-Zólter that all couriers, including those not of the Sixth Bureau, i.e. Ministry of Interior couriers, should undergo the same technical training and should be trained with the military ones.¹⁷¹ Col. Mitkiewicz-Zólter (in the absence of the Chief of Staff, General Klimecki) agreed to Gubbins's suggestion, but already there was evidence of another definite division growing between Sixth Bureau and the political Poles.

A second German attempt at infiltration of Polish Intelligence.

On 19th November, an old friend of Guy Tamplin, Richard Maczyński, arrived in Istanbul with a German passport that had been issued in Breslau (Wrocław). Maczyński was the commercial agent for Feld and Company of Wrocławek. Tamplin considered him a good

chap who had previously given assistance and intelligence information regarding the set-up of the Gestapo in the Balkans, and was using him as an agent provocateur. The Poles were convinced he was a double agent provocateur, remaining a Gestapo agent, and requested that Tamplin be warned of the danger. In Istanbul, Maczyński had visited Kot's representative, claiming to be a member of a small Polish organisation but Kot's man was suspicious. Maczyński then said he wanted to get in touch with British authorities to give them information about Poland. He was sent to Aleppo, but it was later discovered that on his way to Istanbul he had met 'Sofia', a Sixth Bureau agent who was an old school acquaintance. He had advised two Sixth Bureau couriers of the route they should follow. Both were subsequently arrested by the Gestapo, which confirmed suspicions. British authorities in Aleppo despatched Maczynski to Jerusalem for interrogation. It would not be until March the following year that a telegram arrived from the Middle East saying Polish sources thought him to be 100% double agent in the employ of Gestapo. Eventually the Poles were proved correct; Maczyński was indeed a Gestapo agent.¹⁷²

The third agent drop to Poland.

On the night 27th/28th November the third Polish drop, operation 'JACKET', was carried out. Six men were dropped and four containers with arms, ammo, explosives, money and w/t equipment. Due to bad weather, the drop was made with no reception committee in attendance. The party landed in a forest, without their containers. They had landed some distance from their intended spot.¹⁷³ En route they came upon a party of Germans and in the ensuing firefight two of the agents, Marian Jurecki, Andrzej Świątkowski and four Germans were killed.¹⁷⁴ Having subsequently recovered their supplies, the remaining men proceeded to Warsaw, arriving by 3rd January, and passed on the money being carried. The drop zone could not be used again following the operation due to increased German security measures, during the implication of which, arrests and reprisals were carried out against the local residents.

Further problems with air operations.

At the end of November, Lt Col Barry exchanged telegrams with the Captain of the downed aircraft in Sweden and forwarded information received to the Air Ministry. The amount of fuel used for the flight was of prime importance to the planning departments, but, interestingly, no mention was made of the alleged technical fault, in fact, quite the contrary as defects were given as 'Nil'.¹⁷⁵ Four days later, at an Air Ministry conference, it was admitted that the range of the Halifax Mk.II, which had been allotted to the Poles, might have been inadequate after all, and that further trials and modifications would be required before similar flights could be made. Perkins had obtained details from Handley-Page, the manufacturers of the Halifax, and put them forward in an attempt to get the Air Ministry to reverse their verdict, while Wing Commander (Col.) Rudkowski maintained that the Halifax Mk.II with type 20 engines had sufficient range. The Officer Commanding 138 Squadron suggested that in order for the crews to gain experience, they should first operate short flights. General Stanisław Ujejski, responding to the apparent sleight, refused to allow his crews to operate anywhere except Poland. The Ministry was adamant, so Gubbins was obliged to write to Smolenski informing him of this, and that the programme for December was, therefore, not likely to be carried out in full.¹⁷⁶

In the forthcoming days, Wilkinson informed Gubbins of numerous Polish complaints against 138 Squadron, and their not having a special 'Polish Flight.' They claimed not to trust the reliability of 138's aircraft, feeling that 138 was responsible for delays in delivering their men to Poland. Comments were still being made by 138 to the effect that Whitleys were more useful than Halifaxes, due to ease of maintenance, despite the fact that it was now well known that Whitleys were totally unsuitable.¹⁷⁷ Whilst the Polish complaints about the reliability and unserviceability of 138 aircraft were not totally unfounded, they were interpreted by some as a move designed to replace British aircraft engineers with Polish ones. Even so, the matter was taken up with 138 Squadron, while Gubbins discussed the matter with the Air Ministry *ad nauseum* over a two-day period, assuring them that if the Poles ran their own flight they would certainly make a good job of it. Ujejski, being of a

similar mind, suggested to Air Vice-Marshal Medhurst that, owing to the difficulties of maintenance of Halifaxes, a formation of a special flight using Polish crews and ground staff be created and attached to an RAF station such as Linton-on-Ouse, where Halifaxes were normally kept.

The bombshell came on 16th December, when Medhurst confirmed to Colonel Kwieciński that the Halifax aircraft attached to 138 Squadron were not intended exclusively for the use of the Poles. Other nationalities would also fly them. This was a surprise to the Poles, who had been led to believe by the Chief of Air Staff and in subsequent negotiations that these aircraft were to be used for their purposes alone. Three Halifaxes were unserviceable at the time and, according to Rudkowski, they would remain unserviceable until suitable accommodation could be found for them at a Halifax station. The Halifaxes had, therefore, been allotted to 138 Squadron but not as a special flight. Colonel Smolenski wished to postpone further operations until the next moon period, but granting his wish was unnecessary; the December moon period was lost because of bad weather. The entire question of flights to Poland was now in the hands of Mikołajczyk and Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Secretary.¹⁷⁸

A comment in a memo to the Secretary of State for Air pointed out that only one Polish flight had taken place during the last two moon periods and that the Polish Government attributed this to the failure of the Air Ministry to provide a special Polish Flight. Mikołajczyk called attention to the need for air liaison with Poland and the need for its continuation, lamenting the fact that there had only been this one flight. He repeated the request for a special Polish Flight, suggesting that Eden should stress the importance of Polish activities to the Secretary of State for Air, Sir Archibald Sinclair.¹⁷⁹

Planning for future operations.

Smolenski prepared a budget for the years ahead, which required a considerable increase in money grants for military work in Poland for the year 1942. He informed Perkins that rising prices in Poland were responsible for an increase in his cash requirements. He wrote, 'In

accordance with plans laid down by the allies, 1942 is to be the last year of intensive preparations for decisive fighting (to begin) towards the end of 1942 or early 1943. You will realise therefore, that the time has come for Poland too to make the best of her possibilities in order to attain the highest degree of efficient preparation.' ¹⁸⁰

Librach spoke to Wilkinson about wireless broadcasts containing speeches etc. to Poland, the first to be in time for Christmas if possible. A previous similar attempt had failed because the transmitter had not been powerful enough. He hoped for better luck this time. Soon there was confirmation that the BBC would be urging positive resistance over the airwaves.¹⁸¹

News of the stoppage of flights to Poland filtered through to Warsaw and on 23rd December the Sixth Bureau received a message that said. 'By the sudden curtailment of the range of flights you are rendering void all our preparations carried out for the last two months in the southern provinces of Poland. Please extend your range to the former limit, i.e. Meridian 24.' Gubbins was given a copy of the message by Rudkowski and forwarded it to the Air Ministry with a renewed request for longer-range aircraft. This was followed by another request made by the Poles asking for the bombing of Poland on the grounds of raising the people's morale. Dalton, too, followed up the message by writing to Sir Archibald Sinclair on Christmas Eve, setting out Polish complaints and asking again for a special flight for work into Poland and Czechoslovakia attached to a Halifax station. In it he said he had fifteen Czech and twelve Polish agents whom had been waiting over two months for dispatch, even though all of the missions were important and most urgent. Pointing out that apart from the political aspects, with the Allied Governments in exile losing face at home, these flights had military value, and were of great importance. 'I know there are certain organisational and technical difficulties which have hitherto made it impossible for you to meet these special requirements but, in view of the overwhelming importance of the matter and the relatively small outlay on the part of the British to produce a really heartening result, I feel that your personal intervention in favour of the Poles and Czechs, who have already done so much for the common cause and are eager to do so much more, will bring great

reward both moral and material.' By the end of 1941 the third Polish crew was already being trained for attachment to 138 Squadron.¹⁸²

Summary

1941 proved a year of broken promises for the Poles. Firstly, over the Polish /Soviet pact and the recovery of those kept captive, and secondly in the matter of the provision of aircraft for operations to Poland, manned by Polish crews. Neither would be resolved to the Poles' satisfaction. The fate of some unaccountable Polish troops in Russian hands would come to light later, but some progress had being made, with many previously held captives already arriving in the Middle East.

The question of aircraft supply was no less complicated. The Poles were competing for aeroplanes against Bomber Command itself. The Allies had, at this time, only two methods of hitting back at the enemy from Britain, either through bombing or through clandestine operations. By comparison, Bomber Command was a Goliath against the Special Operations Executive's David, and the Polish Section was, of course, only one part of the Special Operations organisation, albeit an important part. Following the blitzes on London, Coventry and other major cities, the British public could see at first hand what bombing could achieve. The effectiveness of Bomber Command must therefore be similar and the Germans suffering equally. The effects of special operations were not evident to any other than those involved. Political pressure from the British public called for support for the RAF, and not for SOE, of whose existence they were not even aware.

For operational reasons it made sense to pool resources to have all aircraft and all crews under the control of the RAF. It was not in the least practical to have every government in exile controlling its own airforce. Technically, it can be argued that no Polish Airforce existed at all in Britain during the Second World War, only RAF squadrons operated by Polish nationals. Only when the Americans entered the war could two separate and independent airforces be maintained, not simply because of the American's mighty political power, but largely because their operations were, in many ways, dissimilar. Any other

separation of crews by nationality would have been likely to curtail the number of operational possibilities rather than enhance them. It is, however, evident that many in the RAF, (as well as the other regular forces), had little interest in special operations in general and SOE in particular. This is now known to be the case where Arthur 'Bomber' Harris was concerned. He had no interest in SOE and felt that the bomber was the only effective method by which to hit the enemy.¹⁸³ Certainly some high-ranking RAF officers had a great deal of sympathy with Poland's plight, doing everything they could to provide support, but remaining at all times aware of the disapproval of Harris.

Polish staff changes blocked some of the work in progress. The replacing of Smolenski by Rudnicki, in particular, was a definite step in the wrong direction, but this had little effect during the remainder of 1941 whilst Smolenski remained to oversee his replacement. What sometimes appeared to be inconsistent vacillations in the thinking of the Polish authorities no doubt resulted in further lack of sympathy, especially from British politicians and other authoritative bodies who were themselves guilty of wavering indecision. Importantly, it is clear that the Polish Section had become involved in work for which it was not intended, i.e. political work. Perhaps this suggests that the Poles may have more political power in Britain than some others. It was important to the British government that the population of Poland realised that their government in exile continued to have their interests at heart and SOE was the medium through which this could be achieved. This was of far lesser importance in other country sections of SOE such as the French or Yugoslavian, especially at this stage of the war. Clearly the greatest ally the British had in the European war during this period were the Poles.

Little criticism can reasonably be heaped on SOE for any of the above; the problems they encountered were not their own. The influence they exerted upon Churchill (SOE was one of his favourite children) without doubt enabled them to procure more than some other departments, even from bomber command, which, had Churchill not have been so enthusiastic, might not have been so forthcoming. With the delivery of Halifax aircraft (albeit only three) there now existed a safer method for the delivery of both agents and cash, the

latter of which was of higher priority at this stage. In return, the trust engendered between SOE, SIS and their counterparts in the Sixth and Second Bureaux ensured a good and steady supply of top grade intelligence from occupied Poland.

Notes.

⁵⁸ *Chronicle of the Twentieth Century*, Ed. Derrik Mercer, (JL International Publications, Farnborough, Hants. 1993).

⁵⁹ TNA HS7/184

⁶⁰ Now Manchester international Airport.

⁶¹ A full, or near full, moon being required to assist in finding the drop zones

⁶² TNA HS4/326

⁶³ Knighted 1943

⁶⁴ TNA HS4/184.

⁶⁵ TNA HS4/326.

⁶⁶ Calculations on fuel planning against load carried can be found in TNA AIR24/269. (Substitute bomb load for personnel/ equipment).

⁶⁷ It was Librach who had first come up with the idea of the Minorities section for work outside Poland.

⁶⁸ The Treasury agreed this arrangement in July 1941. Apparently the Poles were unaware that it was intended as an annual allowance and during the period from July '41 until the end of the war 4 years later, only £550,000 was actually drawn by the Poles.

⁶⁹ Kot, (the Polish word for cat), was given by SOE the code name Felix, after the cartoon cat character popular at the time.

⁷⁰ Despite some of his outrageous plans, he was given a great deal of respect by the British who were well aware that he was a protégé of Sikorski, despite his not being on such good terms with other members of the Polish Government, especially General Sosnkowski. He also detested the Polish Second Bureau, which had been set up before 1939, and he was intensely suspicious of them.

⁷¹ TNA HS4/213

⁷² Named Kurcuz, Christian name not known: SOE code named him Dwarf.

⁷³ TNA HS4/213

⁷⁴ Abwehr = defence = German Intelligence

⁷⁵ According to Peter Wilkinson, in a report he wrote to Gubbins, the Turks had also suspected Mikiciński and that his abduction and 'liquidation' had been suggested by naval intelligence. TNA HS4/198

⁷⁶ TNA HS8/875

⁷⁷ According to one British officer, Peter Wilkinson, the best thing that D section ever did

⁷⁸ Both Kutten and Stefanowski were later arrested in Palestine by British and Polish authorities and charged with high treason.

⁷⁹ Szarkiewicz was a Polish counter-intelligence officer (throughout the war he retained the rank of a second lieutenant as a cover) of the Polish Secret Service, not military intelligence. He had an office outside the Rubens where he selected his own staff and had direct contact with British security services. After Kutten had been arrested Kot tried to have him released. It was Szarkiewicz who kept him locked up with the authority of General Marian Kukiel.

⁸⁰ Wilkinson was pleased not to be involved see. P. Wilkinson, *Foreign Fields* (I B Taurus London 1997) p.122.

⁸¹ TNA HS4/ 213.

⁸² TNA HS4/149.

⁸³ This statement proves that the British supported the idea of a Polish uprising early in the war when all possibilities were being considered but completely went off the idea following the first operational flight to Poland when the impracticalities became evident.

⁸⁴ TNA HS4/321 History. Kot had been imprisoned by Piłsudski for working against the interests of the state and remained bitter. He and Sikorski collaborated in furthering the ideas of the Polish Nationalist movement in Vienna during the First World War with General Haller, who represented the

other Nationalist party. Both of these movements were against Piłsudski. After the war many felt that Sikorski changed his political faith to Piłsudski but Kot remained strongly opposed to his ideals. According to Wierusz Kowalski, many felt that the Government in Exile did not represent the Polish people as a whole, and that Kot's Peasant Party probably was in the majority. Some of those in government he considered to be no more than crooks whom, for some reason he felt, only held their posts because of close relationships with British Trade Union leaders. TNA HS4/198.

⁸⁵ TNA HS4/326 The practice continued until the end of 1943, when the Foreign Office received information that the privilege had been abused, although not necessarily by the Polish Government. From then onwards all packages had to be put together in the presence of a British officer. Censorship was carried out by a Polish Minorities Section (E/UP) Officer. TNA HS6/184.

⁸⁶ TNA HS4/197.

⁸⁷ They had previously been treated extremely badly by 'D' Section, to whom Krystina had been deputed for independent work in Budapest. Wilkinson interviewed Krystina and Kowerski in Cairo where they were trying to reconstitute their exfiltration lines via Istanbul during the summer of 1941. None were happy with the outcome of the interviews but Wilkinson kept them both on the SOE payroll.

⁸⁸ At the end of May, Wilkinson contacted Gubbins to inform him that Jakob Alek alleged that Krystine Gizyka had contact with French Vichy intelligence and that her indiscretions had led to the death of at least one of his men. Gubbins proposed that both she and Kowerski should not be used pending further investigations. Colonel Demel of the Polish IInd Bureau, known as HECKA, felt that both Khrystine and Kowerski were patriots but did not know what to do with them. Perkins suggested to Gubbins that they be used provided they had nothing to do with Polish affairs was accepted with an endorsement pencilled on the request, 'OK by me.' Andrzej Kowerski remained with SOE using the alias Andrew Kennedy. Despite having lost a leg in an avalanche before the war, the disablement did not stop him from ultimately becoming the chief instructor at SOE parachute training schools in Palestine and later, Italy. (Wilkinson. *Foreign Fields*. op cit p.122) The couple had a close relationship and with humour rather than malice, Kennedy was code-named 'FORCIBLE' and Christine 'WILLING'. Jerzy Gizycki became a British agent with the name George Norton, and, as he was unsuspected by the Hungarians, was sent to Budapest where he was given the cover of Assistant Military Attaché of the British legation. (After diplomatic relations were broken off with Hungary he went to Moscow and later, via Teheran, to Istanbul. PRO ref. TNA HS4/198 & HS4/299

⁸⁹ TNA HS4/326 HS4/149.

⁹⁰ TNA HS4/149.

⁹¹ TNA HS4/326.

⁹² TNA HS4/297 & HS4/321.

⁹³ Although of the same type as the aircraft supplied the previous December, this one had been especially modified to carry out the flight.

⁹⁴ TNA HS7/184.

⁹⁵ Agents had been landed elsewhere by boat and by small aircraft (Lysander), landing at quickly prepared airstrips, but never before by parachute.

⁹⁶ It is thought that some of these containers had been designed by Harold Perkins himself but Polish patents were applied for and granted. Later the Poles developed his idea enabling the containers to be broken down into five sections for ease transportation in the field; they eventually became standard equipment for SOE, Airborne Division and Commando operations. For details see *Secret Agents Handbook of Special Devices*. Pages 127/8 & 131/2. (Public Records Office publication, Richmond, 2000). *Polish Forces in Defence of the British Isles 1939- 1945*. Ed. Eugenia Maresch (Home Front Recall Conference, Federation of Poles in Great Britain, London, 2005 papers published London 2006). p.68.

⁹⁷ J. Zabielski, *First to Return*, (Garby Publications, London. 1976). p. 10.

⁹⁸ TNA file ref. HS4/77.

⁹⁹ The need to be dependent on long winter nights to ensure the lowest risks for the aircrews, and sufficient moonlight to ensure accurate navigation was of prime importance but further reduced the opportunities for dropping men and stores. TNA HS4/177.

¹⁰⁰ Wilkinson states that the logistics of such operations was generally not appreciated at this time in Baker Street headquarters. P Wilkinson. *Foreign Field*. (IB Taurus. London, 2001). p108.

¹⁰¹ Wilkinson & J. Bright Astley. *Gubbins & SOE*. (Pen and Sword, Barnsley 1997). pages 82 & 87.

¹⁰² Official documents say that Zabielski, the parachutist concerned, was sentenced to three months imprisonment for illegal entry into the General Government. This appears to be questionable as there is no mention of this in his book, *First to Return* (Garby Publications, London, 1976). First published

in Polish as 'Pierwszy Skok' 1946. He had in fact broken two bones in his right foot and one cracked in his left upon landing and, although had had encountered Germans during his entry to the General Government, the text seems to indicate that the delay caused prior to his reporting in Warsaw was due solely to his injuries.

¹⁰³ Freddie Clark. *Agents by Moonlight* (Tempus Publishing Ltd., Stroud, Gloucestershire, 1999). pp 11 & 303. Freddie Clark assumed this to be the first drop in connection with the Adjudicate operation, despite Adjudicate not actually becoming established in France until October 1941.

¹⁰⁴ First name unknown.

¹⁰⁵ Originally it had been decided that the Sixth Bureau would be responsible for all couriers, political and military, but then Kot decided to have an independent channel of communications and appointed Zaszuliński as his representative.

¹⁰⁶ TNA HS4/198

¹⁰⁷ About 500 men and agents were finally infiltrated into Latin America directed by a chief agent in Buenos Aires and working for such organisations as Lahti-Condor Air Services Office, the Police and the Port Authorities.

¹⁰⁸ Denmark proved a bad country for SOE operations of any type mainly due to its size and the large number of German troops stationed there.

¹⁰⁹ TNA HS4/147.

¹¹⁰ TNA HS4/149.

¹¹¹ Cells eventually became dispersed throughout France including Vichy, and by the end of the war about 150 cells existed in mining communities around Lille, Caen, Grenoble, Montlucor, Ste. Etienne, Toulouse and Perpignon. Others formed in agricultural communities existing around Toulouse and Limoges. Of a total Polish community of around 500,000 living in France, about 5000 eventually enrolled for anti-German operations.

¹¹² For full details of the Audley End training station see J. Bines. *STS 43 SOE*. Newport News Magazine. Newport Essex. No. 48 Winter edit.1997.p 17. J. Bines, *House of Spies* Essex Countryside Magazine. Coggeshall Essex Vol 47 Issue 514 October 1999 p. 38. Ian Valentine *Station 43 Audley End House and SOE's Polish Section* (Sutton Publishing Stroud 2004).

¹¹³ Jędrzej Tucholski *Cichociemni* (Instytut Wydawniczy Pax. Warsaw 1988). pp. 65 & 66.

¹¹⁴ TNA HS4/321.

¹¹⁵ TNA HS4/184.

¹¹⁶ This is the figure given in the records of the day. It is now known that 1.7 million Poles were deported by the Soviets between 1939 and 1941.

¹¹⁷ TNA HS4/243 HS4/323.

¹¹⁸ TNA HS4/323.

¹¹⁹ The Sikorski/Maisky pact, restoring Polish/Soviet relations, promised assistance to rebuild the Polish Army in Russia and an amnesty for all Polish citizens on Russian soil.

¹²⁰ TNA HS4/323.

¹²¹ TNA HS4/321.

¹²² TNA HS4/149.

¹²³ TNA HS4/199. HS4/321.

¹²⁴ TNA HS4/321 & HS4/315.

¹²⁵ Kot suffered from severe heart disease

¹²⁶ Since the two men did not agree on several matters, Kot may have seen it as an opportunity to get Sosnkowski out of the way.

¹²⁷ TNA HS4/321.

¹²⁸ TNA HS4/315.

¹²⁹ TNA HS4/199 HS4/315.

¹³⁰ HS4/199.

¹³¹ TNA HS4/137.

¹³² Ibid

¹³³ TNA HS4/243.

¹³⁴ NKVD *Narodnyi Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del*. People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. Soviet State Security.

¹³⁵ TNA HS4/288.

¹³⁶ Polish Mineral Oil Company

¹³⁷ TNA HS4/243.

¹³⁸ Dzierzowski, code name 'Judy', was something of a character. A Pole of a good family from Poznan area, about 43-44 years of age but looked younger. During World War 1 he was proud to have

fought alongside the Germans. In 1917 he had connections with German intelligence service in Warsaw. After the armistice he joined the Polish army with the same rank (2nd Lt). Fighting against the Germans at Poznan. Left the Polish army in the 1920's and married a rich girl of the Polish gentry who was also from the Poznan district, - marriage failed. He was reported as having no self-control, once shooting one of his wife's stable boys. The boy lived and he was sent to prison but didn't serve total term and was reprieved. After separation he worked for a Jewish firm in Upper Silesia but was also working for the Polish intelligence service. TNA HS4/236.

¹³⁹ Possibly after Paavo Nurmi, the Finnish Olympian gold and silver medallist of the 1928 Amsterdam Olympics.

¹⁴⁰ On one occasion the drop zone could not be found due to the large number of lights in the area. TNA AIR20/8334. See also Freddie Clark '*Agents By Moonlight*' (Tempus Publishing Ltd. Stroud. 1999). p 18.

¹⁴¹ Sikorski had forbidden Poles to take payments from anywhere unless considered a loan in order that all credit is given to the Poles.

¹⁴² The Poles eventually drew £100,000 on July 9th. 1941, £100,000 on January 11th 1943 and later £200,000. A further £150,000 was drawn on Jan 31st 1944.

¹⁴³ TNA HS4/149/letter in full HS4/184 HS4/326 HS4/230 and HS4/184.

¹⁴⁴ HS4/173.

¹⁴⁵ TNA HS4/173 & HS4/184.

¹⁴⁶ Number 2752/VI.

¹⁴⁷ TNA HS4/173, HS4/321 & HS4/321.

¹⁴⁸ TNA HS4/321.

¹⁴⁹ TNA HS4/173.

¹⁵⁰ Despite experience that showed they were not.

¹⁵¹ TNA HS4/184 & HS4/321.

¹⁵² TNA HS4/149.

¹⁵³ Józef Retinger known as the *eminence gris* of General Sikorski. A Kraków-born writer whose attempts to regain Polish independence resulted in his renown and respect amongst Western politicians. As an apparent adviser to Sikorski he became involved in high-level diplomacy.

¹⁵⁴ TNA HS4/149.

¹⁵⁵ TNA HS4/321.

¹⁵⁶ TNA AIR20/8242.

¹⁵⁷ TNA HS4/184.

¹⁵⁸ TNA HS4/321.

¹⁵⁹ TNA AIR20/8242 & HS4/184 .

¹⁶⁰ TNA HS4/173.

¹⁶¹ TNA WO208/3307.

¹⁶² P. Wilkinson & J. Bright Astley, *Gubbins and SOE* (Pen and Sword, Barnsley 1997). p.95.

¹⁶³ TNA HS8/198.

¹⁶⁴ TNA HS4/242.

¹⁶⁵ TNA HS4/199.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁷ TNA HS4/147.

¹⁶⁸ HS4/203.

¹⁶⁹ TNA HS4/203.

¹⁷⁰ TNA HS4/199.

¹⁷¹ TNA HS4/179.

¹⁷² TNA HS4/199.

¹⁷³ Estimates vary from 4 to 36 kilometres.

¹⁷⁴ To serve as an inspiration to others the photographs of Jurecki and Swiątkowski were hung in the Polish Secret Training Station where they were known as 'The Saints'.

¹⁷⁵ TNA HS4/177 It is surprising that the RAF thought the fuel consumption to be relevant. The hydraulic problem suffered caused the undercarriage not to retract fully. This would have increased the amount of fuel used, due to extra drag, by a considerable amount. (Enough, in fact, to only allow the aircraft to fly as far as Sweden on its return). If the RAF used this as a means to calculate future fuel consumption it is no wonder they arrived at the conclusion they did.

¹⁷⁶ TNA HS4/184 & AIR20/8160.

¹⁷⁷ TNA HS4/199.

¹⁷⁸ TNA HS4/184 HS4/321.

¹⁷⁹ TNA HS4/184.

¹⁸⁰ TNA HS4/297.

¹⁸¹ TNA HS4/170 HS4/321.

¹⁸² TNA HS4/184. HS4/173 HS4/321.

¹⁸³ MRD Foot, *SOE The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946* (Pimlico, London, 1999). p.31

Chapter 3:

1942

At the beginning of 1942, the war still appeared to be going Hitler's way. The Battle of Britain, during 1940, had proved his only major defeat thus far, as he continued his plans for a new order, and the Nazis agreed on their final solution for what they deemed the 'Jewish problem'. The Japanese virtually walked into Singapore at about the same time that Britain's current war spending exceeded the total spent for World War One. On the brighter side, India had been promised dominion status and the island of Malta, following a heroic withstanding of German and Italian bombing raids, was awarded the George Cross. The tide of war seemed to be turning as the first one thousand bomber raid was launched against Cologne, almost destroying the city and the RAF launched its biggest raid to date against Italy. In Africa, Allied troops stopped Rommel at El Alamein and started to drive the Afrika Korps back across the desert. Britain signed a 20 year long pact with the Soviet Union, Brazil declared war on Germany and the British milk ration was cut! In Poland, Jews were being slaughtered in the Warsaw Ghetto and, for what it was worth, the Allies condemned the atrocities.¹⁸⁴

January

Situation reports.

In early January 1942, reports covering the last quarter of 1941 indicated that 7446 acts of sabotage had caused output in Polish factories to fall by 30%. BBC Polish Broadcasts announcing the effectiveness of Polish operations were followed by arrests and shootings. The Poles complained, indicating that only British and Russian successes should be covered in the broadcasts, there being no need to provide information about their own countrymen who they were confident were fighting.¹⁸⁵

Soviet /Polish relations.

On Sikorski's return from Moscow, he appeared to have been more successful and Wilkinson thought the Poles should gain from his negotiations.¹⁸⁶ Evacuation preparations were soon underway for 25,000 men and 5,000 children to leave Russia for India, but still no trace of many missing officers had been found although 5,000 of them were reported to be at Nova Zembla. The Soviets were fulfilling the terms of the agreement but only slowly and grudgingly, which came as no surprise to Wilkinson, who told a fellow officer in Egypt, Guy Tamplin, that more than 500 officers were about to be sent to Russia to 'spread the Sikorski gospel.' He added, cynically, that some of them might lose their 'political purity' whilst there.¹⁸⁷ Sikorski had been dissatisfied with what he had seen in Egypt, but Wilkinson felt that his criticism of those in the Middle East was more political than military. Making Tamplin aware of the situation in London, Wilkinson said, 'GHQ (Polish) here is in the clutches of the inquisition and a purge of heretics is expected daily.' Tamplin was content to sit back and await any Polish staff changes in Egypt, as he laid his own plans for a staged evacuation of his station, and for sabotage work, should Rommel prevail in the desert and over-run the country.¹⁸⁸

E/UP Minorities work, 'ADJUDICATE' and 'ANGELICA'.

The 'ADJUDICATE' operation¹⁸⁹ was causing political friction among the Poles in London. Lt. Teodor Dzierzowski, code name 'ADJUDICATE', was, after several abortive attempts, eventually dropped blind on 2/3rd September 1941 but was injured during the landing.¹⁹⁰ According to instructions, Dzierzowski was to organise fourteen sections of seven men each in unoccupied France, all exclusively military. He increased the number of sections but in cases reduced the number of men within the sections, sometimes to only three depending on local conditions. In February he had 87 men working for him, all directed from London. His set up included stores, three medical aid posts, a wireless telegraphy station and a finance department. Plans had already been made for railway sabotage on lines running between Spain and France (bridges etc.) and for the destruction of an aluminium factory at Tarascen,

whence all production went to Germany. His orders, in case of invasion of Europe or an anti-German revolt in France, included instructions to remain independent of normal military operations. Tasks set for 'ADJUDICATE' would only be performed by those with local knowledge, and carried out so as to render it impossible to determine that Poles of any group were concerned.

Dzierzowski's men were mainly demobilised soldiers, and, having been supplied with the stores he requested, he organised and carried out a small number of sabotage operations. Dzierzowski, however, appeared to be meeting large numbers of both Second Bureau and Kot's agents, and his tactless attitude caused some intrigue between the two rival organisations. The Poles were obviously worried in case 'ADJUDICATE' jeopardised their 'ANGELICA' operations, but Perkins, under the impression that the centre for 'ADJUDICATE' action was to be in unoccupied France, was satisfied the two operations should not clash.

Technically, Dzierzowski was a British agent funded by the British, even though they had no say or knowledge in those he recruited. Rumours spread among members of 'ANGELICA' to the effect that 'ADJUDICATE' was working for a foreign nation (Britain) on work not compatible with Polish interests.¹⁹¹ Sikorski thought it undesirable that Britain should contemplate using Polish nationals as freelance agents outside the official Polish organisations, saying he did not want it said of him, as he had heard of de Gaulle, that he was a paid agent of the British.¹⁹² He was also worried in case Dzierzowski's use of Poles only could lead to reprisals being carried out among Polish communities in France should the operation fail in any way.

Mikołajczyk, in particular, did not like 'ADJUDICATE' being controlled by the British, so Librach wrote to Gubbins at the request of his Minister asking him to withdraw 'ADJUDICATE' immediately. If the British were not prepared to do this, he asked Gubbins to signal 'ADJUDICATE' telling him to especially steer clear of 'HUBERT',¹⁹³ one of the 'ANGELICA' agents, and that in future to confine his contacts to military personnel, even though he realised this was currently difficult in France. Dzierzowski resented the (threat to

security) implications and sent a message in return, outlining the difficulties in recruiting suitable people. He explained, 'They are very reluctant to give a helping hand because matters are made difficult by the indecision of our people. Individuals, as well as civilian and military organisations, maintain that they have proofs of great indiscretions on our part. For God's sake, let us be careful so as not to make matters even more difficult to those who are working so hard.'¹⁹⁴

Having initially failed to have Dzierzowski recalled, the Poles then tried to discredit him. SOE did not wish to upset the Poles, so orders were sent for his return, which he did through Spain in April 1942. Gubbins, in an attempt to let the Poles cool down their views about him, offered to allow Mitkiewicz-Zólter to interview him if he wished. The British, not wishing to upset the Poles, felt they would not be able to use him again as they wanted.¹⁹⁵ Ron Hazell, who felt 'ADJUDICATE' and 'ANGELICA' would eventually have to be combined somehow in any case, offered a solution, 'Give him a flat and office in Baker Street, and maybe a decoration for his service, which will give him credence amongst the Poles. He has done as asked.'¹⁹⁶

Dzierzowski had the impression that the Poles at Stratton House (Ministry of the Interior) wanted 'ADJUDICATE' to fail; Hazell agreed. A meeting between Dzierzowski and Mikołajczyk quickly proved the latter to be by far the cleverer of the two, but Mikołajczyk's argument made little sense to SOE. He did not consider 'ADJUDICATE' to be a sabotage organisation, claiming it too dangerous to send sabotage material to France, nor did he think that air operations would be the best way to achieve its aims.¹⁹⁷

Polish objections did not put an end to the 'ADJUDICATE' operation entirely, as during the ensuing months the organisation continued to function in France, with some of its members eventually becoming part of a new scheme. When, late in May, a French newspaper printed an article about 'French' saboteurs dynamiting a railway line between Nantes and La Rochelle, Gubbins noted to Nelson that, as lots of ammunition trains passed along it, Dzierzowski had left instructions that this line was to be one of the major targets. Gubbins was convinced that 'ADJUDICATE' had done this.¹⁹⁸ Exactly how much resistance work

carried out in France by Poles that has since been attributed to French organisations is never likely to be known.

By this time, it had already been decided that, in connection with re-organisation of SOE work within France under the 'ADJUDICATE' scheme, it was necessary to cease using Poles with the exception of one or two key men. In future, all Poles in France were to be controlled by 'ANGELICA' but 'ADJUDUCATE' would continue to operate using various other nationalities, Spaniards, Frenchmen etc for SOE sabotage operations.¹⁹⁹

It is lamentable that the 'ADJUDICATE' operation, as an attempt at forming an Anglo-Polish group for subversive work in France, failed owing to the political activities and rivalries of the Polish Ministry of the Interior and the Second Bureau. There is no doubt that with support from his own Government, Dzierzowski could have built up an effective force in France, although it was felt that someone of better character would have succeeded more. There had been some very unsatisfactory operations by 'ANGELICA' that had, in Wilkinson's opinion, effectively 'blown their show' for some time to come. Wilkinson found the whole position extremely confusing and, in a later note to Hazell, stated that as far as he was concerned, Dzierzowski's operation was completely successful whereas 'ANGELICA' had been a complete failure.²⁰⁰ Perhaps this was the reason for the Poles' resentment of 'ADJUDICATE' and for their desire to see it fail.

Whilst South America still appeared potentially viable for ANGELICA operations,²⁰¹ the set-up in Denmark was underdeveloped and of little military value.²⁰² In France, according to Librach, some 5,000 men were scattered and awaiting further instructions, but the only attempt made to transport stores to them had proved unsuccessful. SOE asked what use they would be in the event of an invasion, but Librach was non-committal. The conclusion was that the Ministry of the Interior was indeed not capable of serious active paramilitary operations at present and the political scheme ('ANGELICA') was no longer required; only a military one which, SOE felt, should be under the control of the Polish General Staff.²⁰³

Dzierzowski wrote reports on the situation of the Poles in France, and based on these reports, steps were taken between SOE and the Polish Ministry of the Interior to arrange for proper representation on a future operation called 'MONICA'. It was decided that the 'MONICA' operation was too important to be put at risk and that Poles currently involved in 'ADJUDICATE' operations would be stood down.²⁰⁴ Long after its disbanding, ADJUDICATE's agents kept arriving spasmodically in the United Kingdom.

AIR 1

At the beginning of February, Medhurst announced that a Halifax had been modified to meet Polish requirements. The aircraft had an all-up weight of 61,600 lbs (28,000kgs), well in excess of normal Halifax maximum permissible weight, but required runways in excess of one mile in length to operate. As Stradishall was not suitable for Halifax operations, another airfield was found and designated for use by 138 Squadron. Graveley had had its runways extended to accommodate the heavier bomber and 138 Squadron planned to move there in early March.²⁰⁵ Tempsford, near Sandy, in Bedfordshire, also had its runways extended, and control of a new airfield at Roxted was gained as part of a plan to use these airfields solely for clandestine operations.

Group Captain Brian Boyle²⁰⁶ was against the inclusion of Polish crews in 138 squadron, despite constant requests by the Sixth Bureau that flights to Poland should be carried out only by Polish crews.²⁰⁷ Apparently, someone was now questioning the ability of Polish technicians as well as their aircrew. Some bigotry could perhaps be put down to inter-services rivalry, but the results of it were much more serious. During the recent operations, no one had been present to look after the crews or the parachute parties. Even the British autopilots came in for criticism, many claiming they simply did not work, although the American ones were considered unfailing. Certainly, the fitting of serviceable autopilots would help aircrew with flights of up to thirteen and half-hours' duration, the Halifax's maximum range, and could, if used properly, actually save on precious fuel. It had been

noticed though, that Polish crews did not always use the recommended routings and on one occasion 200 miles had been added to the trip so they could look at their hometown.²⁰⁸

The next planned flight to Poland, Operation 'COLLAR', would soon be ready for dispatch and it was decided that the flight would operate even though the planned date fell outside the moon period. Unfortunately, and despite the fact that the Poles wanted a Polish crew to operate it, the officer commanding 138 squadron had sent all the Polish crews on leave (not thinking they would be needed), but retained a British crew, under Squadron Leader Ron Hockey, standing by.²⁰⁹

Serious delays had been experienced during the current winter programme. 'JACKET' and 'SHIRT' had been fully prepared for departure on 27th November 1941 but did not operate until 26th December 1941 and 6th January respectively. 'COLLAR' and 'BOOT'²¹⁰ had been standing by since 14th January and still not yet dispatched. Weather was the reason for delay, plus the late recognition of the unsuitability of the Whitley. On 26th January, Rudnicki wrote to Gubbins, 'Owing to the fact that our requirements, indispensable for the carrying out of our flights to Poland, have been disregarded, I am forced to cancel, as from today, all intended operations until such time as the whole question is elucidated.'²¹¹ This caused something of a startled reaction from SOE who, whilst sympathetic, felt such drastic action to be pointless. Perhaps Rudnicki felt the same, as within days he told Perkins he required 10,000 meters of Bickford fuses, 10,000 sapper detonators and 2,000 electric switches, as well as 2,000 quick action poison pills for use in Poland. How exactly he expected to have them delivered, following his cancellation of operations, is not recorded. Nevertheless, SOE became convinced that reorganisation was necessary regarding RAF policy towards their flights.

In support of the idea of Polish crews flying to Poland, Hugh Dalton again wrote to Archibald Sinclair. 'Reluctant as I am to place any limitations on the employment of the Halifaxes, I consider the relative value of the secret organisations in Poland and Czechoslovakia is sufficiently great, compared with activities in other parts of Europe, to justify this allotment.'²¹² Dalton pointed out the Poles had been promised twelve flights

minimum, of which, to date, they had had three. He continued, 'I understand your officers feel this is an entirely RAF matter, but I have gone into the matter very carefully and decided we must treat the Polish and Czechoslovakian problem quite separately from our own general scheme of operations, since technical conditions as well as the political considerations peculiar to these flights give them a complexity of their own. We must allow the Poles to run their own show for a trial period or we will be badgered interminably.'²¹³ The importance of the flights was not missed, as shortly after, an *aide memoir* went out to the aircrews of 138 squadron: it read, 'The task (Polish parachute operations) itself is far more important than the loss of aircraft or crew. Consequently, the flights are effectuated (sic) regardless of risk'.

Air Ministry policy at the time was that Wing Commander Alan Boxer was the sole channel through which SOE could discuss matters regarding operations with both the Air Ministry and 138 squadron. The procedure was as follows: dropping points were planned by SOE and submitted at a monthly meeting at which the Commander of 138 Squadron was present; his staff decided whether the flight could be operated in practice. SOE delivered packages and containers direct to 138, but had no official contact with 138 Squadron except through Boxer. There was a liaison officer with the squadron at Tempsford, but he had no official status and no decisions could be taken except through Boxer, an approach that created an unnecessary delay. The squadron decided which operations were possible at 12 o'clock (sometimes as late as 2 p.m.) because of the need to wait for meteorological reports. This left a very small margin of time for SOE to prepare agents and equipment and bring them to the airfield.

The SOE were not allowed to communicate directly with the Air Ministry except through Boxer, who had no knowledge of secret operations in Europe and was therefore not qualified to assess the validity of SOE requirements. The performance figures of Whitley and Halifax bombers had been grossly overestimated by him, and SOE, using his figures, planned a series of operations that had proved impracticable. It was suggested that SOE be given a charter to contact 138 and 3 Group direct for meteorology, spares, routing etc. as necessary,

that they should be able to deal directly with the Director of Operational Requirements at the Air Ministry and that the services of Boxer should be dispensed with.²¹⁴

Rudnicki's cancellation of operations, and SOE's suggestion of short-cutting the Ministry's system, would obviously give the Air Ministry something to think about.

February - March

Arrival of Selborne.

During February Hugh Dalton became President of the Board of Trade. His replacement as Minister for Economic Warfare was the Earl of Selborne,²¹⁵ a personal friend and political ally of Churchill. Dalton had done much to make SOE an effective organisation and he had supported the Polish Section well, no doubt due in part to the respect and admiration he felt for the Poles themselves. Selborne would prove to be equally efficient, if not more so, as his close relationship with the Prime Minister allowed him to cut many corners and assert his influence when required to do so. One of his first acts as Minister for Economic Warfare was to set a task for John Hanbury-Williams, the manager of Courtaulds and a director of the Bank of England, assisted by Edward Playfair of HM Treasury, to investigate allegations against SOE of incompetence and waste of manpower. Although the findings of the investigation remain confidential, it is known that those commissioned to the task generally found the allegations to be without foundation.²¹⁶

Resumption of Operations.

Rudnicki's ban on operations had evidently either come to an end at the beginning of March, or alternatively, some agreement had been reached, for on the night of 3rd/4th March, operation 'COLLAR' was launched. 'COLLAR' landed without problems, but a report later handed to Perkins by Rudnicki enabled some conclusions to be reached. Rudnicki considered it essential for navigators to be able to navigate accurately under a low cloud ceiling, and had to have, therefore, a thorough knowledge of the terrain. (This was obviously included to

support their pleas for all-Polish crew operations).²¹⁷ It was essential for the aircraft to be punctual in order to reduce the risks to the reception committees but operation 'SHIRT' had arrived one hour late at the drop point and the reception committee had already dispersed. The agents were therefore dropped 5-6 kilometres from the correct point over a village, and three containers fell into the hands of Germans. The agents were safe, but the area could not be used again. Colonel Mitkiewicz- Zólter had written seven weeks earlier to Brigadier Gubbins informing him that it was satisfactory for agents to be dropped without a reception committee being at hand, but not the containers.²¹⁸

Polish Flight.

A decision was finally reached that a recommendation be put forward to provide for a separate Polish Flight to be established. Despite feeling that the Poles put their views unconvincingly, based on little more than sentimentality and political expediency, it was further recommended that the Flight should be manned by Polish crews whenever possible. Possibly because of language difficulties as much as any other reason, it was thought that there should be no 'mixed' crews.²¹⁹ There were likely to be difficulties though, due to mixed maintenance personnel and the fact that a separate flight would be uneconomical in its use of both aircraft resources and crews. It soon became obvious that Rudnicki was not entirely satisfied with an arrangement. He by-passed SOE and approached the Air Ministry directly for his intended aircraft requirements and had been promised priority for the next five Halifax flights, which he now discovered was not true. Both Perkins and Wilkinson pointed out that the Air Ministry was not competent to allot priorities, as these were a matter for various interested parties, one of which was no lesser personage than Brigadier Gubbins. Rudnicki was also convinced of the likelihood of Liberator aircraft being supplied by the Americans, and that their usage would be a private affair of the Poles. When Wilkinson and Perkins told him this would definitely not be the case, they reminded him that any attempt to side-step SOE by approaching various departments directly for his requirements would get him nowhere. He obviously did not appreciate that all aircraft based in Britain at the time

required RAF facilities in the form of aerodromes and personnel. On hearing the warning, enraged, he refused to discuss the matter further. It was typical of the attitude that SOE expected from him and one that caused annoyance not only to SOE but also to all the departments he contacted. His attempts to cut red tape did little to further the Polish cause and in many cases resulted in resentment.

Dissatisfaction with head of Sixth Bureau.

The full co-operation that had been enjoyed between the Sixth Bureau and the Polish Section was by now sadly lacking. Perkins informed Gubbins and Wilkinson of the direct approaches made thus far, not only to the Air Ministry but also to the Treasury. He noted ruefully, 'In the days of Smolenski there was the closest collaboration and mutual faith. Those days are past and Rudnicki subjects all his men to strict censorship. This complaint (is) not because our old friend Smolenski was replaced by someone unknown to us, but the whole set-up of the Sixth Bureau, with one exception, has changed and all seem to pursue a policy of non-co-operation under Rudnicki. They don't seem to realise that we want to help'.²²⁰

Under Rudnicki, a new training section of the Sixth Bureau had been formed and Perkins now found it difficult to get any information about the Section. The current system of training called for volunteers from the 4th Cadre Brigade in Scotland. In the preceding months, the quality had deteriorated enormously and Perkins felt those put forward were only those they wanted to get rid of and lamented that the old spirit, evident in the 'SHIRT', 'JACKET' and 'COLLAR' parties, had disappeared. After selection, the men went through a paramilitary course given by Polish instructors at Inverlochy, which was under the Allied Wing of the Special Training Centre and outside the control of SOE. Despite trying to co-ordinate SOE's future requirements into the course, it remained unsatisfactory. After this, recruits moved on to Ringway for parachute training, but this also proved unsatisfactory because the normal parachute course did not include reception committee and container reception drills, which were considered by SOE to be essential. Following satisfactory completion of parachute training, the trainees were sent to Briggens. Perkins was satisfied

with the course there, despite having little control over it, but recommended that a Polish-speaking British officer be sent to undertake a course. There were many coming out that Perkins found did not have sufficient technical knowledge for SOE's requirements and a British officer could, perhaps, fill the gap. After Briggens, candidates were returned to their units, which was a bad idea as far as security was concerned, but which did at least negate the requirement, if adding to the expense of providing a holding unit.

Gubbins came forward with a proposal of his own and made clear to Rudnicki that no other proposal was acceptable. In future, only the best candidates were to be selected and sent in groups of fifteen to twenty at monthly intervals to Arisaig for SOE's normal military course lasting three weeks. From here, the men went to Ringway for a one week course and then, (following one weeks leave and depending on whether they had passed the parachutists' course or not), to a finishing school at Beaulieu. This would take a further three weeks to complete, whence they would be sent to the Polish holding school which had been proposed at Audley End.²²¹ This would be staffed by the present instructors from STS38 (Inchmery House, Beaulieu), thus ensuring a thorough and solid basic training, plus, at the holding school, such special training as the Poles thought necessary. STS38 could be liquidated and good use found for Audley End, which was currently something of a white elephant because of its size.²²²

When Rudnicki later requested the bombing of targets in German-occupied Poland in retaliation for 100 political prisoners being shot in Warsaw, he approached not the Air Ministry, but Gubbins.²²³ Almost simultaneously, Colonel Rudkowski requested an urgent meeting with Perkins to discuss matters concerning the Sixth Bureau changes in staff before another meeting between General Tadeusz Klimecki and Gubbins took place. The meeting was quickly arranged and Rudkowski confirmed to Perkins that Rudnicki was most harmful to the Sixth Bureau and that any officer of value had been dismissed with the exception of Capt. Jaswiński and a Colonel of the finance department. Rudnicki, he felt, had been Mikołajczyk's choice of replacement for Smolenski, who was pushed, unwillingly, into taking command of a training station in Scotland.²²⁴ He also felt that Rudnicki's ability to

gain considerable authority was based purely on the fact that he had once been a member of Sikorski's staff at the time when Sikorski was Minister for War in Poland (1924-1925).

The cessation of activity during the recent non-moon period was not due purely to problems with aircraft and crews. Sikorski's special courier, Colonel Sycholski,²²⁵ had said that the problems were more internal. Sycholski had been scheduled to go to Poland, despite his reluctance to leave before the problems within the Sixth Bureau were sorted out.

Rudkowski had made a statement to General Klimecki personally about his dissatisfaction with the current situation. Further statements had been taken from himself (Rudkowski), Jaswiński and Zygmunt Oranowski of the Sixth Bureau, all condemning Rudnicki.

Rudkowski told Perkins that Klimecki had the power and the desire to remove Rudnicki from his present position.

According to Rudkowski, Rudnicki had used his post to install his friends and relatives into positions of authority. Rudkowski's comments no doubt confirmed what Perkins knew already. He had encountered considerable difficulty when trying to gain access to Rudnicki who rarely appeared at his office before 10.30am. Wilkinson had encountered the same problem and, like Perkins, very much disliked the man. Another statement of Rudkowski's was more damning. It would appear that Rudnicki had tried on numerous occasions to purchase gold coins that the British had obtained for the use of the Sixth Bureau. On each occasion Colonel Władysław Prohaska²²⁶ had refused to hand any over, finally stating that he would not release the gold except with the authority of the Chief of Staff. At this point Rudnicki dropped the matter, and it was not mentioned again. When Rudnicki insisted that £12,500 worth of dollars should be purchased in Sweden, Wing Commander Venner, SOE's Director of Finance, called upon his Polish counter-part telling him it would be better to purchase the dollars here and then send them to Sweden, and that such a purchase in Sweden would undoubtedly arouse the attention of the Germans. The Polish financial officer said apologetically 'Sir, I know, I know, but my Colonel, (Rudnicki) he says it must be done this way,' Rudkowski's theory being that in this way Rudnicki and some old acquaintances in Sweden would somehow profit by the transaction.

Rudkowski gave operational problems as further evidence of Rudnicki's inefficiency. Until now, Warsaw had been informed of an aircraft's operational return, at 9 o'clock in the morning. On the last occasion owing to Rudnicki's absence the cable was not dispatched until two days later. This alone was good indication of the inability to act without first obtaining Rudnicki's authority even in such simple matters. Worse still Rudnicki had ordered his junior officers not to contact the British SOE about any matters pertaining to Sixth Bureau business. Fortunately, not all of Rudnicki's officers were so short-sighted and Jaswiński passed on relevant information privately to Perkins, having first had the assurance that Rudnicki would not be told for fear of reprimand.

Perkins knew that there could never be any sort of working relationship between the Polish Section and the Sixth Bureau whilst Rudnicki remained. In the summing up at the end of his report of the meeting with Rudkowski, Perkins said that he had heard that Klimecki was travelling to Scotland and would probably see Sikorski about Rudnicki. He felt it likely that Klimecki would return with orders for Rudnicki's removal.²²⁷ Perkins was wrong. Klimecki did not come back from Scotland with orders to sack Rudnicki, but Jan Podoski of the Sixth Bureau said that it would only take another incident for him to do so. Perkins added 'I think we should administer that last straw'²²⁸

April

Replacement of head of Sixth Bureau

On 11th April, Gubbins wrote welcoming Sikorski back from a visit to the USA. 'I understand the new head of Sixth Bureau was with you. I look forward to meeting him.' Rudnicki was gone, sent to Moscow as military adviser to Kot, where he would remain as military attaché.²²⁹ This was considered throughout Polish headquarters as '*Wielki Skandal*' (great scandal) and definitely a 'political' appointment. Colonel Michal Protasewicz became head of Sixth Bureau and was popular from the outset. He was young, energetic, very much a supporter of Sikorski and had been with him in Russia. He was small, dark, spoke good French and

thought to have no political sidelines. Wilkinson informed Tamplin of the appointment concluding, ' As far as we are concerned our relationship with the Sixth Bureau has improved.'²³⁰

Air 2

On 26th March, a meeting of the Defence Committee was presided over by Churchill at which Selborne proposed the use of Liberator aircraft for Polish operations. The plan was approved in principle, and on 27th March Selborne and Gubbins were invited by the Minister for Air, Archibald Sinclair, to discuss the matter further. Sinclair could not provide Liberators with adequate range, but instead increased the Halifax strength to five aircraft and agreed to take all measures (eg double ground crew and allotment for highest priority of spares etc), to ensure that during the next moon period the maximum effort would be available from 138 Squadron. The season was drawing to a close, and suggested target areas between Warsaw and Brześć could no longer be reached owing to the shortness of darkness. A suggestion that 138 Squadron become independent of the Air Ministry and be put under the control of SOE was not greeted with enthusiasm.²³¹

Many Polish aircrews were over their allotted duty hours and were due to be rested. Perkins suggested that they should not be bound by ordinary Air Ministry standards. Rudkowski had selected some high quality Polish crews and 138 were well satisfied with them. Perkins felt he should not lose them for the forthcoming autumn, therefore they should rest during the summer so they were ready for autumn drops. Gubbins strongly endorsed Perkins's suggestion, looking for a way around the bureaucracy.²³² The Polish crews, however, said they did not want to rest and wanted to keep on operational flights. It was decided that they would get as much rest as possible, but if there was total cloud cover between England and Denmark, with clear weather beyond it might be possible to get some flights to Poland done during the summer months. There was though, only about one occasion every two months when such conditions occurred.²³³

Fear of Soviet objections to Polish support.

The agreement between SOE and NKVD, signed on 30th September 1941, which excluded operations in what were considered each other's spheres of interest, was closely scrutinised. Conversations between Poles, Czechs and Russians had taken place and it was doubtful whether there was to be any active co-operation between their subversive organisations. Colonel Seddon²³⁴ of the Russian section was worried that SOE had undoubtedly operated in these countries without consultation with the NKVD, so that they were apparently in breach of the agreement.²³⁵ He contacted Colonel George Taylor, SOE's chief of staff. Taylor did not agree with paragraph 5 of the agreement, which stated, 'The question of possible co-operation by the Soviet authorities with the sabotage organisations in Poland and Czechoslovakia will be a matter for discussion between the respective governments of those countries and the USSR.' Further, Article 17 stated. 'The question of guerrilla forces in Poland and Czechoslovakia is one for discussion by the Soviets with the governments of those countries.' Seddon was not at all certain it reflected the current situation, but the nature of the agreement seemed to him to be so elastic that it was difficult to arrive at its exact implications. As he saw it, subversive action in Poland and Czechoslovakia should be arranged with the Soviets, and SOE should not intervene.

SOE, on the whole, considered the Poles and Czechs to be outside the strictest terms of the agreement, but it is perhaps fortunate that the NKVD had not raised the point. It was decided that should the NKVD try to cause trouble by attempting to implement this article they would be reminded that SOE had landed Russian agents in both France and Austria up to this date, but the NKVD had not been asked to do anything in return.²³⁶ It would have been a weak argument perhaps, but fortunately no more came of the matter. Not until 18th July was the matter finally resolved, when SOE London decided that, in respect of general sabotage, there was nothing to preclude active co-operation between SOE and the representatives of Poland and Czechoslovakia, and that SOE Moscow should be 'kept outside the conference room of Polish and Czech discussions.'²³⁷

Truszkowski left Russia for Cairo and settled in to write his final report on his observations in Russia and the relationships evident between the Allied nations. It contained the comments: 'To this I ascribe the impossibility of any real co-operation between the Russians and the Allies. We (the British) are useful to them now as sources of supply, but potentially dangerous. Very few Russians would trust a fellow Russian, but practically no Russian will trust an Englishman in particular or indeed, any European in general. They feel whatever we do or say there must be a subtle catch to it. Transactions between us should be on a basis of strict reciprocity if we are to retain their respect; their love we cannot hope to have, whatever sacrifices we make.'²³⁸

Air 3

On 20th April, an aircraft was lost with its all Polish crew on a non-Polish mission. Lt. Col. Richard Barry, the Director of Plans, asked the Air Ministry if the remaining Polish crews could be reserved only for operations to Poland. 'They have experience and expertise: other crews will learn from their experiences and they must not be lost on other flying'.²³⁹ With so small a unit the loss of one aircraft was a severe blow, replacements being so difficult to obtain.

The loss of a valued crew was evidence that aircraft were not the only problem. It took an extra three months training to be carried out for special operations flights, and many thought the problem could only be solved in one of three ways:

1. A separate Polish/Czech unit, which was not practical;
2. A Polish/ Czech flight, which was slightly less impractical, or;
3. A pool of allied navigators who could all speak good English so they could be drawn upon when there was a flight to their homeland. This would cut out language problems with crew and agents and give the agents some assurance, more so than a non-Polish/Czech speaker.²⁴⁰

The station commander at Tempsford was anxious to obtain a replacement crew and, by now being very pro-Polish crews, asked if Polish HQ would supply replacements. His

answer came a week later when they telephoned to give Perkins a list of names of those selected.²⁴¹

May - June

The arrival of Hambro

During early May an important change affected SOE when Charles Hambro took over as controller from Frank Nelson, who had for some time been suffering from over-work. Hambro had previously been head of SOE's Scandinavian Section and was chairman of the Great Western Railway Company; he was also a director of the Bank of England.²⁴² Not surprisingly, changes followed Hambro's appointment but, while many of them were minor, one affected SOE to a great extent. SOE had no official charter to deal with the General Staff of the occupied territories or to co-ordinate subversive action within them.²⁴³ The British Chiefs of Staff provided SOE with an updated directive, which was issued on 12th May. Entitled 'SOE Collaboration in Operations on the Continent', it made clear that SOE's role was now secondary to normal military operations. With plans well advanced for a possible invasion during 1943, it was evidently thought sensible that all SOE action should be in support of the invading troops. Until now, SOE had, along with Bomber Command, been the only method of hitting the enemy. This was thought soon to change and the top priority previously taken for granted by SOE for men and materials would no longer be available. The effect of the new directive would obviously be far-reaching and may well have put supplies to Poland a little lower in the pecking order to the advantage of less effective forces in the proposed invasion areas. Perhaps more importantly for Poland is the fact that the directive called for prevention of a premature rising; but that was something SOE had always dissuaded the Poles from contemplating, though perhaps not forcibly enough.²⁴⁴

Wireless communication and production.

Gubbins was not too put out by the new directive as he had always envisioned SOE to act primarily in such a role. More good news followed when Col. Heliodor Cępa of Polish HQ placed at Gubbins' disposal, with the exception of that destined for the Second Bureau, all output from their radio and wireless workshop establishment at Stanmore. When the Poles first arrived in Britain they set up a transmitter/receiver station code-named 'MARTA' to communicate directly with their forces in Poland. In order to improve collaboration between the intelligence organisations an agreement was struck whereby the Radio Security Service offered to the Poles the services of their facilities at Stanmore. Soon, Polish communications experts moved into a number of buildings in the area to continue their work with 'MARTA', at the same time deciphering intercepted messages from both the Germans and Russians. They also set up a research section under the title of the 'Polish Military Wireless Research and Development Unit', to develop, among other devices, high-speed wireless transmission equipment and miniature wireless sets. Here, the Poles proved to be leaders in the field, producing smaller sets than previously imagined; and thus giving an obvious advantage to those involved in clandestine work.

Air 4

In mid-June Sikorski heard that his direct approach to the Americans to supply Liberators had received disapproval from the Air Ministry, who instead promised more Halifaxes. The Halifax was a well-proven type with a readily available spares supply and one for which modifications had already been worked out.

Sikorski proposed a scheme to prepare for the transportation of a Polish airborne force to Poland, which was rejected by General Sir Alan Brooke.²⁴⁵ The Chiefs of Staff were well aware of the impracticality of placing a large force into Poland; it was proving difficult enough occasionally infiltrating six agents, let alone an entire parachute brigade. Brooke, nevertheless, assured Sikorski that assistance to occupied people in their attempt to overthrow the Germans was very important, and the very reason SOE had been set up,²⁴⁶ but

SOE did not have the resources to mount invasions. Exactly what Sikorski hoped to achieve by sending the Parachute Brigade appears not to have been discussed. Whilst Sikorski's links with SOE, especially the old number 4 mission, had appeared influential in the early days, the war was now being fought on a much broader spectrum and Polish resistance activity was, not surprisingly, being given a lower priority. The War Office was under the impression that Sikorski would never be persuaded that SOE was properly constituted to deal with military matters. Nor, they thought, was he convinced that the SOE was the proper authority with whom the Poles should deal in matters relating to subversion, sabotage, and the organisation of resistance. Sikorski's attempts at short-cutting the system (such as his direct approaches to the Americans for aircraft etc.) were proof of his feelings that SOE no longer had enough influence higher up and could not obtain the required equipment as easily as a more powerful organisation could.²⁴⁷ In this he was totally wrong. Anything the Sixth Bureau had, and much else, came through SOE.

The Chiefs of Staff were obliged to write to Sikorski informing him that SOE was the proper British authority to deal in all matters affecting sabotage and resistance as well as the activities of patriotic forces in occupied countries.²⁴⁸ Sikorski acquiesced, assuring Brooke that the Polish General Staff would continue to co-operate with SOE on all matters affecting sabotage and the organisation of resistance.²⁴⁹ His fears for lack of support for his Secret Army were not entirely unjustified, as by now he had an estimated strength of 300,000 men available to take the field, of whom only 120,000 were equipped.²⁵⁰

July - August

Stores delivery

By the beginning of July, Type 'C' containers²⁵¹ were now in production at a rate of about 400 per week for the Inter Services Research Bureau,²⁵² most of them reserved for use in the Middle East.²⁵³ So far, only when a drop had been made to an area without a reception committee had equipment been lost, but even with reception committees, handling and

transportation could be difficult. For this reason, the Poles asked that only enough should be dropped that could be carried on a peasant cart, approximately 500 kgs. (20 containers). For ease of collection the drop area should not exceed 500 metres, meaning that the best drop height was 3-400 metres (1400 ft.) as the divergence of the wind would be negligible.²⁵⁴ Losses also occurred from thefts by peasants if the recovered cache was not hidden well enough by reception committees, but deliveries of cash were better by air than by courier; typically, only 3% being lost on aerial drops compared to 30% by courier. The report also called for more supplies of 'S' phones²⁵⁵ and 'Rebecca' sets.²⁵⁶ Speed of reception was essential for a successful drop: the sound of a heavy bomber meant only one thing to the enemy; a drop was taking place. As the aircraft only reached the drop zone after 1am, it allowed only four hours to complete the collection and evacuation. SOE noted the above, adding that training for speedy evacuation of the aircraft must be intensified.²⁵⁷

Introduction of regular meetings.

Gubbins told Wilkinson he considered it totally unfair that the Poles did not get what they wanted and compared the situation to one whereby Britain was occupied and a foreign nation forbade British flights operating in support of her resistance organisation.²⁵⁸ Wilkinson suggested to Protasewicz that fortnightly meetings between SOE and the Sixth Bureau could be advantageous. Protasewicz agreed, and his immediate reply included an agenda of items to discuss.²⁵⁹ On 16th July, the first such meeting took place in Protasewicz's office. Present were Lt. Col. Protasewicz, Lt. Col. Piotrowski, Lt. Col. Prohanska, Captain Jaswiński with 2nd Lt. Jerzy Zubrzycki to take the minutes. British officers present were Lt. Col. Wilkinson, Major Perkins and one other British officer, Lt. Alun Morgan.

The meeting proved successful and it was considered that 100 flights should be possible, weather conditions permitting. The Sixth Bureau agreed to furnish SOE with an operational chart, and to ask reception committees to stand by at home for Iodoform signals²⁶⁰ during the moon periods, and ready for a Rebecca reception if weather conditions were favourable. SOE would provide a scrambler telephone line from Tempsford to Polish

HQ London for last-minute changes of plan. SOE would examine the programme of the final course at Audley End ²⁶¹ and give the Sixth Bureau a report of their observations.²⁶² Finally, a demonstration exercise was arranged (later carried out at STS 43,²⁶³ with Polish crews from 138 Squadron present on the ground to watch as the aircraft dropped containers).

While the outcome of the meeting achieved greater co-operation, SOE, if not the Poles too, realised that Western Europe, with a possible invasion of France projected for the following year, was being given precedence over the East. Perhaps this was one reason that Sikorski was so keen to short-cut the established line of supply through SOE. Wilkinson wrote to Gubbins, 'As you probably noticed there has been a tendency for the last few months for the Polish and Czech bureaux to make themselves independent as far as possible of the centralised organisation of SOE. This has not been accidental. If we are to establish a third front we will have to rely largely on our own resources, that is, on the joint resources of the Polish and Czech Sections here and the authorities in London.' With the majority of resources destined for France, Wilkinson suggested combining Polish/Czech activity in order to make best use of supplies in hand.²⁶⁴ Previous experience indicated that backing would not be forthcoming, but given sufficient backing both Sections could be totally independent of the rest of SOE, and this self-reliance could be vitally important. The remainder of SOE could concentrate on Western Europe, whilst the Polish and Czech Sections could provide invaluable service in Central and Eastern Europe when the third front opened. There was good news for all countries involved in SOE operations as more recognition of SOE as a whole by other departments was becoming evident, as more requests came for SOE representatives to sit in on inter-services committees etc.

Air 5

Towards the end of July, Group Captain Colin Grierson expressed that, in view of the success so far enjoyed by Polish crews in operations to Poland, every effort should be made to meet the repeated requests for more Polish crews. Grierson's view was not shared by all members of the RAF, however, and one member of the Air Ministry claimed it doubtful that the Poles

were as good as the high quality of the English crews in 138 Squadron.²⁶⁵ Wilkinson was scathing about the Air Ministry's criticism, considering it illogical in principle and misleading in practice to use Bomber Command operations as a yardstick for those of 138 Squadron. Giving as example previous claims that British crews had been successful in operations to Czechoslovakia when in fact out of five attempts only one came within 100 miles of the Target area. He concluded that the Air Ministry's definition of success differed greatly from his own.²⁶⁶

Minorities operational change to 'MONICA'

Sabotage in France suffered a severe setback towards the end of July when seven members of 'ADJUDICATE' were arrested by the Gestapo. The head of the organisation, evading arrest, tried to escape through Spain funded by 'ANGELICA'. By 28th August, all communications with 'ADJUDICATE' had broken down with, in all, about 180 Polish and French members arrested.²⁶⁷

On 26th August, Sikorski informed Selborne that he feared the impending breakdown of 'ADJUDICATE' might prove damaging to all operations in France, including 'ANGELICA' as a result of which he was reorganising French operations, into two separate organisations, one military and one civil. Selborne confirmed he would collaborate with both and agreed that direct action in France by Poles at this time was a good idea. Sikorski said the civilian organisation currently had about 5,000 agents and that he would take control of military action in France from now on with Mikołajczyk in charge of 'MONICA', the new title of the joint scheme.²⁶⁸ Selborne was satisfied, as this was what SOE wanted all along,²⁶⁹

Records show that in-fighting was going on between Sikorski, Jan Stańczyk, the Social Welfare and Labour minister, and one other code-named 'Felix 2', in connection with the 'ANGELICA'/'MONICA' operation. The original Felix was, as stated, Kot; Felix 2 can really be one of only two people, Librach, his former assistant, or Mikołajczyk, Kot's replacement. It is doubtful whether Librach would have had sufficient political authority to argue with either Sikorski or Stańczyk. It might be assumed, therefore, that Mikołajczyk was

the third person although Librach was certainly involved. SOE, despite asking constantly for details about the operation, knew little about 'ANGELICA' at the time and were concerned to hear that the quarrel was apparently making Sikorski's position surprisingly insecure, although they could not see why. Librach's involvement led him to threaten to resign over the matter, which SOE found equally disturbing as they considered him agreeable to work with and liked him a lot.²⁷⁰

Wilkinson told Józef Retinger, Sikorski's confidant, that he thought Mikołajczyk to be more concerned with post-war Poland than with the current operations for which he was responsible, 'ANGELICA' being one.²⁷¹ It is quite possible that the argument was over the decision by Sikorski to increase military influence in 'ANGELICA' and, due to the rivalry between the Ministry of National Defence and the Ministry of the Interior, this did not sit well with Mikołajczyk. This lack of co-operation between the two ministries is exemplified by the fact that for a long time SOE was to become the only linking liaison between the two.

²⁷²

Continuing with support from the E/UP Section, 'ANGELICA'/'MONICA', plans of operation were:

'MONICA 1'. Disruption of rail, water and road communications,

Telecommunications, utility services, power stations etc. in the Lille, Armèntieres, Tourloing, Robubaix, Tournai, Douai and Béthune areas for a period of 72 hours following the invasion.

'MONICA 2'. Political action over the whole of France. Strikes, agitation, local rising and anything the local population could take part in.

'MONICA 3'. Local action on the Calvados coast in the event of a British landing there. Supply of guides, information and disruption of communications and electricity supplies.

'MONICA 4'. Disruption of electrical supply in Vichy, Lyon, St Etienne, Marseilles, Bordeaux, Nord, Pas de Calais, Calvados and the frontier between occupied and unoccupied France.²⁷³

Hazell was aware that the Poles saw 'ANGELICA' as a pre-invasion army, wishing eventually to place it under the control of General Juliusz Kleeberg who was currently living in France. Consequently, the Poles made plans to bring him secretly back to England for briefing before smuggling him back, which they hoped to do without arousing suspicion from the French secret police, something Hazell thought naïve. With so much already underway in France, Librach complained that he had no knowledge of invasion plans to pass on to his men there. He was quickly told that such information should not go to France, nor would he be told anything.²⁷⁴

SOE, in support of their conviction that Minorities action should be under a more militaristic wing, told Sikorski they wanted future operations to be under the control of Col. Protasewicz of the Sixth Bureau.²⁷⁵ This, they no doubt hoped, would make French operations more efficient and up to the standards achieved during drops into Poland. Thus far, they had been somewhat haphazard. The reception committee for an operation at the Chateau le Roc, Périgueux, a drop of three agents and stores carried out during the night of 23rd April, took all night to dispose of three containers arms and explosives, eventually taking two weeks eventually to disseminate the equipment.²⁷⁶ Operation 'ELDER' on 29th May had fared no better, a bungled ground signal sending the bomber in circles and so attracting the attention of the French police who, rushing to the scene, seized some of the dropped equipment and identified some of the Poles signalling.²⁷⁷ Truszkowski, currently in Egypt but formerly EU/P chief dealing with 'ANGELICA', expressed his sorrow that the operation had been a flop, but added, 'How Perks would rub it in if I were available.'²⁷⁸

Invasion plans and their effect on the Poles.

Lt Col DR Guinness of SOE believed that the Poles should know something of the proposed invasion of Europe plans, in so far as they were likely to affect them. In a letter to the Joint Planning Staff, Guinness outlined the necessity for certain information to be passed to the Poles to allow them to continue their own planning. A return to the continent was planned for early in 1943, but other plans under consideration might postpone this until autumn 1943

or Spring 1944, and the effectiveness of actions carried out on the eastern front by the Russians would naturally necessitate changes. Rapid successes here could bring the date of the invasion to the forward end of the estimate, whereas a German victory could delay a move back to the continent even further.²⁷⁹

Guinness estimated the strength of the Polish Home Army at the end of 1941 to be 100,000 men (50 infantry battalions) with a further 40 battalions that could be created if sufficient arms were supplied.²⁸⁰ The Poles had always had in mind the re-taking of their country from the enemy, and insurrection, once started, would have been impossible to stop. Guinness pointed out that failure of an uprising would mean total destruction of the nation. In any case, certain conditions would have to be met before the order to attack could be given. Firstly, it must be part of an Allied invasion plan co-ordinated with rebellion in other countries, (Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia etc.) and secondly, a port of supply would have to be created, preferably in the Baltic, necessary to forward essential supplies.²⁸¹ It was decided that an outline plan should be drawn up by Guinness and agreed with Col. Marecki. The drawing up of such a plan would have been more optimistic than difficult. Co-ordination with the Czechoslovakians was perhaps possible, with the Yugoslavs unlikely, and the establishment of a supply port in the Baltic impossible, except by permission of the Soviets.

US involvement

By mid-August, the Americans were making their wartime contribution presence felt more. Gubbins discussed Polish matters with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)²⁸² and negotiated funding on the Poles' behalf. In a letter to Hambro, Gubbins stated that he considered it essential that Americans were seen by the Poles and Czechs to be taking an active part in support of their resistance forces. He felt that an American uniformed dispatcher should be present at the departure of agents so they could report the fact when they arrived in their homeland. He warned Hambro that there was a danger that attempts were likely to be made to play the OSS off against the SOE in order to receive double

measures. It was therefore essential that SOE and OSS work together to ensure this did not happen and to ensure smooth running of future operations.²⁸³

September - December

September moon period operations.

The inclusion of American dispatchers at Tempsford bothered Sikorski less than whether or not his own men should be allowed to see off their agents. The Air Ministry had put restrictions on the numbers of those attending the departure of special operations flights and Polish representation was scant. Gubbins supported his claim for greater access.

The moon period coincided with the beginning of the month and the night of 1st/2nd September saw the departure of Operations 'CHICKENPOX' and 'SMALLPOX' and, two nights later, Operations 'RHEUMATISM' and 'MEASELS'. Perkins informed Gubbins that 21 fully trained operators, two Couriers, \$600,500 in notes, \$620,200 in gold, 1000 roubles, 1,000,000 RM in paper, plus political money of a sum not disclosed had been sent with: one Rebecca set; five radio sets capable of transmission to this country; and ten IODOFORM receiving sets for BBC messages. Altogether, there were fifteen containers (another three failed to release) carrying approximately two tons of sabotage material.²⁸⁴ Both the Sixth Bureau and the Polish General Staff were extremely satisfied but Perkins gave the credit of the success being largely due to, 'the Polish organisation in Poland and the enthusiasm of the London Poles, (Sixth Bureau). We have done little except carry out their commission. 36 men and containers (a similar number) are being prepared for the September/October moon period, with 12-16 reception committees available'.²⁸⁵

October/November moon operations.

With the October/November moon period approaching, and the first four missions planned for the night of 1st/2nd October, it was revealed at a fortnightly meeting that some of the

agents were not yet ready for infiltration. SOE suggested sending more couriers and containers rather than waste the opportunity. The Sixth Bureau said they were desperately short of signals personnel and had sixty shortly arriving from the Middle East, with a further ninety being trained there. Once in England, they would all need further training in parachute jumping, field craft and signalling procedures. It was planned that all should be ready by April 1943. Such large number would put a strain on SOE training resources and it was doubtful if so many would be able to finish the training in time. This was the first time that the Poles were unable to meet an operational deadline.

The four planned operations left Tempsford on schedule. Operations 'HAMMER', 'GIMLET' and 'CHISEL'²⁸⁶ departed on the night of 1st/ 2nd October with Operation 'LATHE' on the following night. There was, however, one difference in their departure from previous flights: a Polish liaison officer was present. Sikorski's previous request had been acceded to and a Polish Wing Commander²⁸⁷ had been appointed to act as liaison between Polish HQ and Tempsford. His duties included the passing of general information, quantities of equipment involved, drop zones and dates of operations. He was also to pass on, in English, the same information to flight crews in the presence of either the station or squadron intelligence officer, having first given him a detailed written copy the day before. He was not to deal with the crews directly in any other way until after their return when he could talk freely to them. As before, agents were briefed by a Polish officer before departure for Tempsford whence they would be escorted by an SOE officer. Here they were equipped, their parachute harnesses checked and they were given any late instructions. Colonel Protasewicz, or a member of his staff, and one other officer were allowed to accompany the agents, but were to remain under the orders of the station commander.²⁸⁸ Cash delivered on Operations 'COLLAR' through 'LATHE' amounted to \$2,849,031 in notes; \$170,400 gold; 970,000rm; 70,000 rm gold as well as the agents, men essential for work with the Home Army.²⁸⁹

Plans for the retaking of Poland ²⁹⁰

The prime concern for the Polish Government was planning for the successful retaking of their homeland. By 1942, the method by which they could achieve this was becoming evident in the minds of the Polish Government and General Staff. Until now, the build-up of wireless communications and reception committees for aerial drops was being achieved with the likelihood of improvements in the near future. A three-part 'Big Scheme' plan emerged, part one of which involved sabotage and intelligence work anywhere within the occupied area known as 'MUCHA'. The primary objective was to strike a blow at Germany's rear whilst engaged in either the East or West. The Joint Planning Staff generally agreed with this part of the scheme, but the Chiefs of Staff considered that its best efforts should be primarily directed at support for the Soviets, something directly contrary to the thinking of most Poles. The Poles, dependent on the Chiefs of Staff for continuation of supplies from Britain, outwardly showed some support for the suggestion. SOE, on the other hand, felt that much would be sent to Poland under the auspices of the 'Big Scheme' that was in no way intended to be supportive of the Russians. In truth, it mattered little, as any action behind enemy lines would invariably give support to the Soviets whether intended or not.

Part two of the scheme, known as BURZA, called for open diversive warfare behind the frontline and part three, POWSTANIA, by far the most controversial, called for a General Rising. The Chiefs of Staff, on hearing the proposal, were in no doubt, and informed their Polish counterparts that no support would or could be forthcoming. The Poles, however, refused to accept anything other than driving Axis forces out by the use of a newly recreated Polish National Army. This the Polish General Staff expected to arrive by air, delivered by the Polish Airforce to airfields, which were the intended prime targets and which had been captured by paratroops. This would double as the signal for the start of the uprising. A major component of the new army would be those currently working secretly in Poland, These, although growing in number, were lightly armed, having no tanks, artillery or heavy weapons. The entire operation, including the transfer of ten Polish divisions currently with

the British Army, was to be completed within two weeks. Further supplies would then allow the Home Army to increase its ranks by a further 50%.

If the Poles believed that a general uprising would be supported from the West it is debatable whence this belief came. Whilst Wilkinson thought that SOE's position on support for an uprising was not put forcefully enough, there is no doubt that the General Staff made clear the requirements for a successful rising to the Poles. That they chose to ignore the position and assume that help would be forthcoming was their decision alone.

Bearing in mind that the Poles required some 600 officers and NCO's and 90 tons of equipment for the coming winter and spring, they had only three aircraft manned by Polish crews for their use. To these must be added another seven aircraft to call on, subject to the competition with other demands elsewhere. This number was insufficient even for their immediate needs and they requested another six with Polish crews allotted to them, proposing eventually a Polish flight of nine aircraft to form under 138 squadron. To these, 400 transport C47 aircraft would have to be added to transport airborne forces and equipment. Once they arrived in Poland, a further 40 rifle battalions could be formed with the equipment, engineers and medical supplies contained within them. Equipment envisaged as being required before and after 'zero hour,' the day of the uprising, was:

Arms and equipment required before Zero		arms and equipment required after Zero
Anti tank rifles	40	720
Ammo for above	4,800	72,000
LMG (Bren)	80	2,000
Ammo for above	160,000	10,000,000
Sten (SMG) Guns ²⁹¹	1,500	240
Ammo for above	600,000	2,400,000
Thompson SMG	200	2,000
Ammo for above	200,000	2,000,000

Auto Pistols (Colt or Mauser)	3,400	4,000
7.65 & 9mm ammo for above	170,000	20,000
Rifles		16,000
Ammo for above		4,800,000
Mortars		640
Grenades		100,000
Respirators		25,000
Explosives with accessories		70 tons
Anti-tank mines		20,000
Plus telephone sets, cable, motor cycles, first aid dressings (50,000) and medical supplies for 90 battalions.		
(The above equates to 20,426,800 rounds of ammunition). ²⁹²		

The whole Polish three-part scheme was certainly both ambitious and grandiose and, in the eyes of SOE, impossible to accomplish. Nevertheless, when the Director of Plans asked for a report on Polish requirements he was more supportive than critical. While SOE recognised that the requirement for large numbers of aircraft in the short term could not be provided, suitable aircraft might well be available in sufficient numbers and a large demand might well become a reasonable request. Feeling the Poles had asked for C47's because they knew that 400 were being delivered from the USA to Britain, SOE commented that the C47, designed in 1934, was obsolete, feeling more suitable types were already in production, such as the York, St. Louis and Commando.²⁹³ Also, Horsa gliders could be towed the required 800 miles each carrying three tons as opposed to two tons in a C47.

SOE knew that the Polish Home Army could well be a formidable force by the end of the war and, following an invasion, all diversions would be useful, especially after bridgeheads had been established. The immediate requirements were for the Polish Airforce to remain fully at the disposal of the Air Ministry, and that the Polish Parachute Brigade should continue to be limited to home defence, where it fulfilled the role of an air-borne

reserve. SOE saw no reason to change this arrangement at the moment. Agreeing with the Poles that nine aircraft were now required to support the Home Army, they stressed the need for them to have sufficient range to reach Western Poland, since reception in the East was limited due to the nature of the ground and the activities of the Gestapo. 'The strategic advantages of having an additional army of fresh troops in the rear of the Germans at the crucial moment cannot be overestimated. If approval was given to the immediate Polish requests, the effort diverted from the main theatre would be infinitesimal, while the effect on the Home Army preparations and on morale in Poland would be incalculable.'²⁹⁴

Late October operations.

The fortnightly meeting with the Sixth Bureau, held on 28th October, introduced an American army officer who would attend all future meetings of what was rapidly becoming known as the Fortnightly Club. It was decided that previously promised railway sabotage lessons would be carried out at Brickendonbury, while Audley End was to be provided with anti-tank weapons for experimentation in their use. With the onset of winter, it was announced that white parachute clothing called 'striptease' was likely to be ready in time for the first snow, and that immersion suits, for landing in water, were proving effective and that landings were reported as being very soft. Parachute training was always carried out using a type 'A' harness and package but SOE agents were now using ordinary 'X' type harness with type 'A' packages.²⁹⁵

Before the next flights departed for Poland an order was passed forbidding agents to take with them presents for friends at home. An agent on a previous mission had taken food and coffee, which was later consumed in a safe house that was being used by the man in question. A little girl who had eaten at the house complained to her mother that the people living there had better food than she had. The mother reported the matter to the local police, who informed the Gestapo. The occupants were arrested and shot, as were a large number of the inhabitants of the village, which was later razed to the ground.²⁹⁶

On the night of 29th October, two flights operated, Operation 'PLIERS' and Operation 'WRENCH'. Operation 'WRENCH', under Captain Krol, was carried out at the request of the Polish Government, taking off with the intention to bomb Gestapo headquarters in Warsaw. Despite locating the target area, Krol found it impossible to identify the Gestapo HQ and carry out an accurate bombing run and so he flew to his secondary objective the airfield at Okecie, south of Warsaw. On the return flight, his aircraft was attacked by two night fighters (JU 88 or ME 110) and ditched in the sea one mile from the English coast at Sherringham, the crew being rescued by the local lifeboat.²⁹⁷ Had the operation been an SOE drop it would perhaps have been considered worth the loss, but as it was carried out merely as a political gesture, the loss of the aircraft was thought deplorable in the upper ranks of SOE. Further similar requests, it was suggested, should be resisted. Perkins was of a different mind and wrote to Gubbins hailing the operation as a success as it proved to secret organisations in Poland of the British willingness to assist them. 'The main purpose' he said, 'was to boost morale by carrying out the wishes of the secret organisation. It was 100% successful. One day we may ask them to sacrifice their lives for the cause; how much easier it will now be because we have made this sacrifice.' Gubbins agreed, and commented to a colleague, 'The secret of SOE work is to get (the) confidence of people in the country concerned and show we are at times willing to carry out their requests. Imponderables are important: they live on imponderables, which allow them to fight on. I do not think this will reflect badly on SOE.' The fact that a bombing raid had been carried out at such a distance was thought by him to be a feather in the cap of the RAF.²⁹⁸

The 'PLIERS' operation was even less fortunate. The Halifax, under the command of Mariusz Wodzicki, crashed in southern Norway, killing all the crew and the three agents: Jerzy Bichniewicz 'Blekitny'; Stanisław Hencel 'Pik' and Wiesław Szpakowicz 'Pak'. The loss of these men was devastating as was the loss of the supplies carried and \$156,000 and 70,000rm in cash.²⁹⁹ The current moon period was not proving to be a happy one. Operation 'BRACE' was dispatched on the night of 3rd November following some confusion caused by Polish HQ not adhering to agreed procedures.³⁰⁰

Disbanding of ADJUDICATE.

For the Polish Minority Section in France, conditions seemed to be moving in the right direction. 'ADJUDICATE' had officially been disbanded by the British during October and a greater degree of unity between the political and military Poles had become evident. Even so, both Kleeberg and HUBERT felt they had control, but, according to information received, Truszkowski believed the Second Bureau were out to shoot both down.³⁰¹

North African campaign

The speed of events in the North African desert following Montgomery's victory at El Alamein brought about a rethink for SOE Middle East regarding Polish operations. Montgomery claimed the end in sight, with the General Staff convinced that Tripoli would be reached during the current advance. The Poles and Czechs had drawn up plans assuming a northern European invasion but a strike from the south now looked possible for the forthcoming year.

With Montgomery's victory came the threat of premature uprising in the occupied countries, which may well have seen the action as a portent for the future; but there was still a long way to go before such dreams could be realised. SOE were content that, if the uprisings were deferred, there was great opportunity for gun-running from southern bases. Mikołajczyk forwarded a message from the Government Delegate in Warsaw, congratulating the British Army, considering the victory a great fillip greeted with spontaneous joy and increased eagerness to fight. Placards appeared in Warsaw and pamphlets issued mocking Rommel. Selborne passed the message on to Eighth Army.³⁰² By now the Polish home forces were estimated to be two-thirds the strength of the pre-war Polish regular army (14 infantry divisions).³⁰³

Following close on the heels of El Alamein came the 'TORCH' landings, British and American troops invading Vichy-French North Africa in Morocco and Algiers. SOE's thoughts of improving air operations to occupied countries were dulled as three of their

special long-range Halifaxes and two fully-trained crews were lost to the operation. Worst news was yet to come when they were informed that the Eighth Army would need another eight aircraft during December. Losing the aircraft was not too bad, but the departure of the special operations crews was a bigger problem.³⁰⁴ Not surprisingly, SOE raised objections to the loss of their means of transport and Minister Selborne protested that SOE had not been consulted before they were sent.³⁰⁵

Truskowski thought that if the Eighth Army could be shown that greater dividends were to be realised by dropping agents rather than bombs they might consider the return of the Halifaxes.³⁰⁶ The destruction of Radio Paris, which transmitted vital information for the enemy, and the destruction of transformers supplying power to southern France, including the shipbuilding yards at Bordeaux, were carried out earlier in the month. This damage, achieved for the loss of one plane, was the equivalent to that achieved for the loss of fifteen on normal operations, and was an adequate example for the basis of his argument.³⁰⁷ Unfortunately, SOE's fears were not without foundation, and of the eight aircraft sent to Benghazi one Polish and one Czech crew were lost. Immediately, a representation was made to ensure that the remainder of the Polish crews stayed in Britain.

At the Rubens Hotel, Mediterranean developments, and the possibility that the Middle East could become an important operations centre, was high on the agenda. So too, was the situation at Stalingrad, where German troops were being routed by the Soviets. With British support for the Russians very much in evidence, Protasewicz said he thought British Chiefs of Staff were unsympathetic to Poles because they foresaw the Poles eventually turning against the Russian ally. Wilkinson assured him this was not the case, but that plans to use the secret armies next year by the Chiefs of Staff had been made and that further information as to their details would come through Sikorski nearer the time. Wilkinson further assured Protasewicz that it was not thoughts of rivalry between the Poles and the Russians that was the problem, only the demands made on the British for such huge amounts of supplies and support that led to any lack of sympathy from the Chiefs of Staff. Wilkinson noted secretly, though, that virtually every agent sent to Poland claimed to be going to fight

the Russians, and in some cases the fact that they had to fight the Germans first never entered their heads. He also noted that five divisions of the Home Army would not be able hold up 300 Russian divisions in full cry after fleeing Germans. Protasewicz reminded Wilkinson that his prognosis on his return from Russia, that the Germans would penetrate to the Volga and into the Caucasus but not achieve their ambition, had come true.³⁰⁸

Middle East training

At the fortnightly meeting it was agreed that no further Sixth Bureau training would take place in the Middle East, which would put extra strain on the already overcrowded training stations in Britain, in particular STS43 Audley End, the Poles' main training station.

Accommodation at STS43 was becoming difficult because of an influx of new students.

Audley End, far from being SOE's white elephant, was now a fully-equipped training station with training covering everything including wireless training, language lessons, counter-espionage measures, police functions, physical fitness, instruction in all types of vehicle driving, lock-picking, marksmanship, guerrilla warfare, mining and booby trapping, hand-to-hand combat fighting and conspiracy, sabotage and night drops. Micro photography and the use of invisible inks was also taught here and some forgery carried out. Mainly though, forgery for SOE was carried out at the former Polish training station STS14, Briggens House at Roydon, Essex..³⁰⁹

Ideas for OSS involvement

Anxious to secure Reichsmarks for Polish use, to add to those he was able to obtain through sterling and dollar credits in New York and London, Perkins contacted the OSS to ask if they could purchase them on his behalf in South America.³¹⁰ Until now, OSS, being a new organisation and lacking in experience, had made little impression on Special Forces operations; a situation they were eager to rectify. On the first anniversary of America's entry into the war, Calvin Hoover, an OSS representative, met Peter Wilkinson to discuss further OSS involvement. Hoover said his experiences here caused him to modify his views. He had

come to set up as many OSS lines as he could but now realised that SOE was in control and he would not start up in competition. He proposed, on his return to the USA, to put forward the idea that a number of American officers should be attached to SOE to provide sufficient reserves. If, later in the war, Eastern or Central Europe became predominantly an American theatre of operation, then adequate trained staff would be available. Wilkinson was pleased Hoover did not want to interfere. The Poles were resolute that Polish Intelligence should remain in the domain of the Poles who had an efficient organisation, which Wilkinson made arrangements for the Americans to benefit from. He ensured though, that Hoover realised that intelligence was the affair of SIS, not SOE. Hoover admitted that OSS was not as politically aware as SOE, something that had struck him in England, which, he claimed, was one of the most valuable lessons he had learned.³¹¹

Reports from Poland including first report on German retreat.

A telegram from Poland said German troops were moving east to west through the country. Ten principal railway lines had subsequently been blown up and all traffic on them was held up for 24 hours. The telegram concluded with a request for all available aircraft to support this project with money and material.³¹² Perkins observed to Wilkinson that the Sixth Bureau still had not impressed on the GOC secret army that all flights to Poland were world record breakers. 'If we had the best aircraft to be designed in the next twenty years available now, I doubt we could do more than we are at present.' The demolition exercise carried out against the railway system, as well as the one carried out in October, proved the efficiency of the Polish organisation.³¹³

Conclusion for 1942.

It is clear that SOE were evolving from a new and relatively amateur unit into a very professional organisation. Their efficiency was recognised by the Americans, who realised they themselves could play no part in special operations until they had gained considerable experience. In fact, all that OSS knew of conspiratorial actions they had learned from SOE at

a camp known only as 'X', which had been set up in Canada before the US entered the war, but which they used extensively.³¹⁴ SOE's fellow British organisations were less than enthusiastic about their exploits. SIS remained less than keen and it is now known that Arthur 'Bomber' Harris mistrusted SOE intensely.³¹⁵ This, perhaps, is the main reason for the non-co-operation that certain sections of Bomber Command displayed later in the war. Even so, many tried to help as much as they could. This is evident in the proposed 'TUXEDO' operation where Bomber Command was prepared to lose a valuable bomber to help the Polish cause.

Polish demands were great, perhaps too great for such a small organisation as SOE that did, after all, have demands made upon them by other country sections. The foundation of the relationship between SOE and the Sixth Bureau was strong and mutual respect built up. This is demonstrated by the removal of Rudnicki. Conflicts within the Polish Government gave the Polish section of SOE bigger problems with operation 'ADJUDICATE' an evident victim. It would not be the last.

The replacement of Nelson by Hambro was necessary but probably affected little the overall running of the Polish Section. Selborne's appointment, on the other hand, proved most helpful. Dalton had been a great champion of the Polish cause but lacked the political clout of Selborne. Selborne's friendship with Churchill and, to a lesser extent Eden and Sinclair would prove to be a boon in the forthcoming years. There is no doubt that SOE was developing along the right lines.

Notes.

¹⁸⁴ *Chronicle of the Twentieth Century*. Mercer.

¹⁸⁵ HS4/120

¹⁸⁶ The National Archives, Kew. (TNA) HS4/199.

¹⁸⁷ TNA HS4/199.

¹⁸⁸ TNA HS3/123.

¹⁸⁹ Adjudicate was planned to remain independent of any Polish civilian organisation that already existed and not recruit people in the workman/peasant centre of the old emigration.

¹⁹⁰ He was reported to have broken his leg. According to Wilkinson, he also reputedly used his transmitter whilst in hospital. Peter Wilkinson & Joan Bright Astley, *Gubbins and SOE*. (Pen and Sword) 1997 pp. 109/110.

¹⁹¹ TNA HS4/236.

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- ¹⁹² TNA HS4/316.
- ¹⁹³ Real name Aleksander Kawałkowski. TNA HS4/236.
- ¹⁹⁴ TNA HS4/221.
- ¹⁹⁵ TNA HS4/236.
- ¹⁹⁶ He was awarded the Military Cross. TNA HS4/236.
- ¹⁹⁷ TNA HS4/221.
- ¹⁹⁸ TNA HS4.236, HS6/589.
- ¹⁹⁹ TNA HS4/236.
- ²⁰⁰ TNA HS4/200 In claiming Adjudicate a success, Wilkinson meant it only from a Polish point of view. As far as an SOE operation, he considered it 'almost entirely valueless'. Wilkinson/Bright Astley *Gubbins and SOE* p. 110.
- ²⁰¹ Polish ANGELICA operations in South America, it was thought could be of great value in countering German influence there. A German plan to invade Uruguay and turn the country into a grain-producing region for the Third Reich, for instance, would have been a likely target for action by ANGELICA. See the Daily Telegraph and Morning Post Newspaper Wed. 19th June 1940. Widely circulated in Argentina were letters from Germans outlining the benefits that would be enjoyed by the Argentineans should they remain friendly to Germany. All addressed to individuals and posing as friendly, they were, without doubt, official. High-ranking officers met in Argentina to discuss the possible take over of the cabinet should the Germans look like winning the war, and the setting up of a military state in Argentina jointly with other South American countries to provide a unified foreign policy. The Germans said they would treat them in accordance with the support they had given to the Axis. Uruguay would be worst off, and be charged with 40 million Pesetas damage in connection with the sinking of the Graf Spee. TNA HS4/232.
- ²⁰² Denmark proved a difficult place for subversive operations. Being a small country with a marked German presence made movement of supplies and personnel extremely difficult.
- ²⁰³ TNA HS4/221.
- ²⁰⁴ TNA HS4/221.
- ²⁰⁵ Graveley, a satellite station for Tempsford. TNA AIR20/8242.
- ²⁰⁶ Former director of intelligence at the Air Ministry later director of personnel SOE.
- ²⁰⁷ TNA HS4/173.
- ²⁰⁸ TNA ACAS1/95/42.
- ²⁰⁹ TNA HS7/184.
- ²¹⁰ In fact, the BOOT party had been put temporarily out of action by accident at a demonstration of the Spigot Mortar. As no flights took place until after replacements had been found for the men it did not in itself delay the operation.
- ²¹¹ TNA HS7/184.
- ²¹² TNA HS4/321.
- ²¹³ TNA AIR20/8242.
- ²¹⁴ TNA HS4/143.
- ²¹⁵ In fact, when he took over from Dalton he was the Viscount Wolmer but succeeded his father almost immediately.
- ²¹⁶ Wilkinson /Bright Astley, *Gubbins and SOE*. (1997) p.101.
- ²¹⁷ A thorough knowledge of terrain would have been difficult to achieve, given that the Polish countryside is heavily forested and consequently often quite featureless over considerable distances.
- ²¹⁸ The military organisation in Poland had actually informed him that this was acceptable. TNA HS7/184.
- ²¹⁹ i.e. Poles and British crew members.
- ²²⁰ The exception referred to was Captain Jan Jaswiński
- ²²¹ Ancestral seat of the Barons Braybrooke near Saffron Walden, Essex.
- ²²² TNA HS4/203.
- ²²³ TNA HS4/203.
- ²²⁴ Personal interviews with Maciej (Matt) Smolenski (son of Józef Smolenski) various dates and venues. Matt stated that his father felt it was a disgrace to be given, for political reasons, such a lowly task.
- ²²⁵ This is probably Lt. Col. Józef Spsychalski who was parachuted into Poland on 30/31st March 1942.
- ²²⁶ Finance Department.
- ²²⁷ Report no. MP/PD/820. TNA HS4/203.
- ²²⁸ TNA HS4/236.
- ²²⁹ TNA HS4/236.

230 TNA HS4/200 & HS4/203.
231 TNA HS4/143.
232 TNA HS4/173 & HS4/177.
233 TNA HS4/177.
234 I have been unable to discover this officers Christian name. It is believed he may also have been a representative of the SIS.
235 TNA HS4/327.
236 A series of operations under the umbrella code-name 'PICKAXE'.
237 TNA HS4/327.
238 TNA HS4/242.
239 TNA HS4/147 & HS4/177.
240 TNA HS8/120.
241 TNA HS4/173.
242 Wilkinson./Bright Astley *Gubbins and SOE* p.113.
243 TNA HS4/143.
244 Wilkinson./Bright Astley *Gubbins and SOE* p.114.
245 Later Lord Alanbrooke.
246 TNA HS7/184 & HS4/147.
247 TNA HS4/147.
248 TNA HS4/147.
249 TNA HS4/160.
250 TNA HS4/147.
251 These were the first types of container in use for deliveries to Poland. They were large and awkward to handle being 5' 8" long and 15" in diameter (1730mm x 380mm) and weighing 96lbs (44 kgs.) making them suitable for dropping where recovery was not a problem. The preferred type for Polish operations were the Type 'H', which could be broken into sections for easier handling.
252 Inter Services Research Bureau - the cover name used for SOE.
253 TNA WO199/448.
254 The geostrophic wind, that is the wind not affected by the earth's surface, at night occurs at approximately 1,500 ft. At night this wind is generally three times the strength of the wind at surface level. Any drops made above this height would certainly necessitate recovery of the containers being spread over a large area.
255 S Phone a highly directional radio set for communication between the reception committee and the pilot of the aircraft.
256 'Rebecca' a guidance system for aircraft. These were later found by the Poles to be too complicated for their use.
257 TNA HS4/177.
258 TNA HS4/173.
259 TNA HS4/196.
260 Iodoform. Pre-arranged wireless signals sent by the British Broadcasting Corporation.
261 This was the agent's final training course/ finishing school at Audley End, which, among other things prepared the student for life in Poland following his parachute drop, with fine-tuning of his legend (assumed identity and background).
262 TNA HS4/196.
263 Audley End House.
264 TNA HS4/143 & HS4/147.
265 Author unknown. The Air Ministry obviously has not learned the lesson of the Battle of Britain when Polish pilots had been kept in reserve due to a mis-trusting of their ability, In the event they proved to be the most effective, scoring more kills per squadron than any of the other nationalities involved.
266 TNA HS4/173.
267 TNA HS4/236.
268 For a long time the scheme was referred to as both ANGELICA and MONICA
269 TNA HS4/315.
270 TNA HS4/200 see also HS7/184 Polish Minorities Section, section 1 page 4
271 HS4/221.
272 An agreement was reached later that year but personality clashes ensured no greater co-operation.
273 TNA HS4/221.
274 TNA HS4/221.

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- ²⁷⁵ TNA HS4/221.
- ²⁷⁶ Following this a suggestion was made that in future smaller quantities be dropped. Freddie Clark's book *Agents by Moonlight* p. 61 states that this was an ADJUDUCATE 2 operation whereas the National Archives (PRO) records show it as being carried out under ANGELICA.
- ²⁷⁷ TNA HS4/221 F. Clark *Agents by Moonlight*. p 68.
- ²⁷⁸ Harold Perkins. TNA HS4/200
- ²⁷⁹ Stalin continually pushed Churchill and Roosevelt in order to get them to open a second front to the fighting by an invasion of Europe from the west in order to relieve pressure on his own forces. The western Allies would not commit themselves until they were assured of a good chance of success. It is evident from this that a degree of success by the Soviet army was first necessary before they would commit their troops fully.
- ²⁸⁰ The figure given here is somewhat at variance with the figure given by Sikorski to Alanbrooke.
- ²⁸¹ TNA HS4/147.
- ²⁸² Office of Strategic Services. An American organisation based on SOE. They were disbanded immediately after the war but soon re-emerged as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).
- ²⁸³ TNA HS4/ 151.
- ²⁸⁴ TNA HS4/149.
- ²⁸⁵ TNA HS4/177.
- ²⁸⁶ Crashed during forced landing at Goldsborough, Yorkshire, due to fuel shortage.
- ²⁸⁷ I believe this to have been Wing Commander Ramuald Suliński DFC
- ²⁸⁸ TNA HS4/179.
- ²⁸⁹ TNA HS4/297.
- ²⁹⁰ TNA HS7 & HS8.
- ²⁹¹ SMG - Sub machine guns.
- ²⁹² TNA HS7/184 for details of packaging of equipment see also HS7/14 and for details of standard loads within containers see TNA HS7/124.
- ²⁹³ In this SOE were completely wrong. C47's, known in Britain as Dakotas, were, in some parts of the world, still in service commercially seventy years later. The other types mentioned barely outlasted the war.
- ²⁹⁴ TNA HS7/184 author unknown.
- ²⁹⁵ TNA HS4/196.
- ²⁹⁶ TNA HS4/175.
- ²⁹⁷ TNA HS4/177 & HS7/184.
- ²⁹⁸ TNA HS4/177.
- ²⁹⁹ TNA HS4/297.
- ³⁰⁰ TNA HS4/177 & HS8/135.
- ³⁰¹ TNA HS4/221.
- ³⁰² TNA HS4/319.
- ³⁰³ TNA HS4/315.
- ³⁰⁴ TNA HS4/321.
- ³⁰⁵ TNA HS4/196.
- ³⁰⁶ TNA HS4/203.
- ³⁰⁷ TNA HS4/160.
- ³⁰⁸ TNA HS4/203.
- ³⁰⁹ In an interview with Morton Bissett, a forgery expert based at Briggens, he told me that upon his arrival there, the first people he met were Poles, already carrying out forgery work. Another former Briggens forger, Pauline Brockies, could not believe that forgery was being carried out at Audley End. It was, in fact, undertaken by Lt. Alfred Wisniewski.
- ³¹⁰ TNA HS4/232.
- ³¹¹ TNA HS4/143.
- ³¹² TNA HS4/203.
- ³¹³ TNA HS4/177.
- ³¹⁴ *The Oxford Companion to the Second World War*, Ed. I CB Dear (Oxford Press 1995), p. 1019.
- ³¹⁵ MRD Foot SOE *The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946*, (Pimlico London 1999) p. 238.

Chapter 4:

1943

In 1943, the tide of war continued to flow in favour of the Allies. The Germans at Stalingrad surrendered to the Soviets following long and bitter fighting. The Germans felt it necessary to raze seven Polish villages to the ground and murder the male inhabitants in reprisal for the Polish contribution to the retaking of Tripoli in North Africa as the Allies advanced. The Dambusters' famous raid on the Ruhr dams was carried out, but, despite the ingeniousness of its conception and the effect that it had on morale, it is now considered to have been less effective than first thought. However the U-boat war in the Atlantic was certainly going the way of the Allies. In the Mediterranean, the Allies invaded Sicily and the Americans bombed the Ploesti oil fields. Later in the year, Italy signed an armistice, Kiev fell to the Red Army and Germany lost its last capital ship, the Scharnhorst. This was also the year that Penicillin was used to treat wounded Allied soldiers.³¹⁶

January – July

E/UP

Discussions between Gubbins and Mikołajczyk in connection with continental action by Poles, and about co-operation between the appropriate Polish ministries and SOE led to the belief that an efficient solution to working together had been reached that would be of value to the war effort.³¹⁷ Arrangements were now made whereby active sabotage by Poles in all territory outside Poland was to be carried out by an organisation set up by the Polish Ministry of War, and given the code name 'GURTEEN'. Passive sabotage and Polish intelligence etc. would remain under 'ANGELICA' / 'MONICA' as before.

A letter from the Polish Deputy Prime Minister to Selborne said, 'Co-operation between the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of National Defence and Major General Gubbins' office in the activities embraced by the Continental Action has now been precisely

defined.³¹⁸ Finally, the two ministries and SOE had come together in a way that SOE had been pushing for all along, and Mikołajczyk was proving an easier man to work with than his predecessor.

Already, plans for the first action under the new operation had been approved by Gubbins and expected to commence operating on 14th January. Called Operation 'BEER', it was intended to assist in the exfiltration of 'ADJUDICATE' people who had been compromised. The intention was to land an ex-Adjudicate agent in France to organise sabotage using the stores they already had at their disposal, then arrange for them to escape to Spain.³¹⁹ Wilkinson felt the 'BEER' operation to be relatively important in its own right. Yet it was at the same time only part of the much more important, larger 'GURTEEN' operation. If all went as planned, 'GURTEEN' would develop an organisation for secret recruitment amongst Polish soldiers currently in internment camps in what was previously unoccupied France, who would ultimately become the nucleus of a secret Polish army in that country.³²⁰

The possibility of using 120 French-speaking Poles as 'JEDBURGH'³²¹ agents was perhaps more realistic. 'JEDBURGH' was a plan to use teams of three, made up of one British, one Frenchman and one American. These teams were to drop behind the Allied advance following the invasion of Europe, destroying communications etc. Unfortunately this suggestion also had its problems. At the recently-held Casablanca Conference, the Americans had pushed for an invasion of Western Europe during 1943. The British, on the other hand, preferred an advance through the Balkans. This latter option, if successful, could have provided the Poles with direct support, at the same time denying the Soviets too much influence in the East. Without American support though, this option was unlikely to succeed. As far as SOE was concerned, the planned invasion might not happen at all in 1943 and their plans had to be based on the fact that it would not, and the question begged; where were these potential 'JEDBURGH' men to be kept? It would not be advisable to keep them in SOE training establishments; it had been tried before when it was found that keeping graduate students at a permanent station simply did not work. The alternatives were either to return them to their units, which could not be done for security reasons, or form them into an

independent company. In the latter case, they would cease to be under SOE control. This was not desirable as their work would invariably overlap with that of SOE who would, therefore, need control over them.³²² Eventually, Hazell sent them to STS 52 at Thame Park, in Oxfordshire, with the request that they should be given the very best wireless telegraphy training and not classified as 'JEDBURGH' but instead called 'BARDSEA'.³²³

Home Army Strength

The formation of the much requested Polish Flight looked no closer during January 1943, despite the Poles' agreement that the flight could be used for other SOE operations when not needed by them. Nor, still, was there any sign of six Liberator aircraft that had been promised to Sikorski by Roosevelt.³²⁴ Wilkinson informed SOE's Director of Plans, Colonel Richard Barry, that information received indicated there being 130,000 officers and men in Poland, the equivalent of 60 battalions, who were trained and equipped with hand weapons. Called the Cadre of the Inner Organisation, a further 60 battalions not armed or equipped, were held in reserve. Their sole supplies of equipment came from either SOE drops or were bought or stolen from the Germans.³²⁵ Wilkinson put forward requirements for the immediate future and the scale of equipment required for each one hundred men sent to the field, which amounted to:

2 cwt high explosive.

120 type 36 Grenades.

80 Sten guns.

10 Smoke grenades

24,000 rounds Sten ammo.

30 Automatic pistols.

10 incendiaries.

40 light machine guns.

13,000 rounds .303 ammo.

40 high explosive bombs.

20 Smoke bombs.

2- 2inch Mortars.

100 field dressings.³²⁶

The above to be used to combat the German security services in Poland. These consisted of approximately:

10 regiments of SS, approximately or 30,000 men in the General Government.

Sonderdienst – 8,000 men. Wachbataillone – 15. Schupo – 5 Regiments

Gendarmerie – about 2,000 men. SA about 48 detachments in occupied areas in August 1942.³²⁷

On 16th January, the Sixth Bureau passed on a report suggesting targets which included submarine construction docks and bases at Danzig, Schichauwerft and Holm, as well as fuel tanks and ammunition stores, barracks, a wireless station and a dam. Each target was efficiently detailed with latitude and longitude co-ordinates and the intelligence that the defence of Danzig was now light, making it a good target.³²⁸ Perkins thought a raid could be used to cover an SOE operation, but a week later, at the regular fortnightly meeting the Poles said that with no flights in three months, unless something was done, the Home Army would remain passive against the Germans during the coming summer and autumn.³²⁹ This was possibly a statement of fact rather than intended to be taken as a threat, unlike the similar one made by Rudnicki the previous year. There seems to have been no animosity between Protasewicz and SOE in the same way as there had with Rudnicki, but the ministries of National Defence and the Interior were again fighting each other at this time to decide who controlled what.³³⁰

The Sixth Bureau made no secret of the fact that they believed the lack of success of drops to Poland was due to the RAF navigators not being as good as Polish ones, especially

during the latter stages of the flight. The English crews, they claimed, were better at astral and wireless navigation but were probably out of map-reading practice. Polish navigators, on the other hand, had considerable experience in map-reading at night, which was essential for the final phases of the flights. This, the Sixth Bureau claimed, was why so many drops were successful using Polish navigators. It was an obvious argument for Polish-only crews and a Polish Flight, so Perkins passed the comments on to the Air ministry. The reply he received said that the Poles should get used to English crews as the RAF had reports to the contrary regarding accuracy of navigation.³³¹

Regardless of whose navigation was more proficient, on the night of 25/26th January Operations 'BRACE', 'SCREWDRIVER' and GAUGE departed for Poland. The departures that night had not been without incident. At 1900 hours, containers were loaded onto the aircraft designated for 'BRACE', which took off, only to return later from an only partially successful mission without dropping its cargo. The 'BRACE' reception committee had been endangered and could not operate, so the agents were dropped blind. As one of those on board was Wing-Commander Roman Rudkowski, it was probably he who ordered the drop to proceed, which would have been typically characteristic of one of only two agents who parachuted twice into Poland.

Soviet Interest in Poland.

The Sixth Bureau told SOE that all their operatives dropped into Poland must be prepared to fight alongside their reception committees against Soviet saboteurs who were constantly trying to raid their secret stores. This statement told SOE how much the Soviets had become established in Poland and as clashes had taken place already, they were probably not interested solely in securing the Poles' equipment for immediate use, but also ensuring the Polish Home Army did not become too strong.³³²

Wilkinson estimated that there were about 10,000 active Communist partisans in Eastern Poland. Dr. Retinger's optimistic and frequently expressed views that Polish-Soviet relationships were better than expected were not borne out by the facts, which led many in

SOE to believe him a communist sympathiser. Wilkinson disagreed.³³³ Sikorski's February visit to Russia achieved little in the eyes of SOE. Sikorski once again pushed for the re-establishment of the Polish pre-war borders, and amazingly, Stalin agreed. SOE were certain though, that whilst Sikorski was talking about the pre-war borders of 1939, Stalin meant the pre-war borders that existed when Russia entered the war in June 1941. Sikorski felt it was not necessary to take Soviets into consideration as after the war, Russia would be 'so exhausted and famished' as to accept anything suggested by the USA, assisted by England.³³⁴ Sikorski, returning to Britain, no doubt felt he had achieved his objective when, in fact, the situation regarding borders remained the same.³³⁵

SOE's thinking on Polish / Soviet Relations and their effect on Polish troops.

Although twenty months had passed since the re-establishment of the pact between Poland and the Soviets, there remained much dissension between various individuals, and Truszkowski was asked to prepare a report to aid the understanding of SOE's interested parties, namely Wilkinson, Perkins and Lord Selborne. Both Sikorski and, to a much lesser degree, Sosnkowski, outwardly supported the pact. Opponents said the pact gave the Russians advantages but not the Poles, and that the Soviets had since progressively nullified numerous clauses, apparently without protest. The British press adopted a policy of support for Russian claims but not Polish ones, and the British Government, in common with other world governments, accused the Poles of being either irresponsible, romantic or both. British politicians, the Poles complained, were incapable of understanding or of sympathising with the methods and principles of Polish policy.³³⁶

Truszkowski felt that Sikorski should make a stand against the Russians, even if it appeared to disrupt Allied unity. The Poles could not stand against Russia alone though, Truszkowski believing that their choices were either to fight the Soviets alongside the Axis, join together with other Central European nations to form a Central European Bloc, or become a Soviet Republic, the second option being the most attractive. In general conclusion, Truszkowski wrote of the considerable pressure from the British that had been put upon the

Poles for the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the Russians following the initial break off, and again since the invasion by Germany of Russia.³³⁷ The Poles, he said, should receive sympathetic consideration, for if they did not, work of previous years (SOE and resistance) would be seriously jeopardised. Selborne read the report and commended it as a valuable paper, despite disagreeing with Truskowski on his prediction of Soviet domination.

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The unrest amongst the Poles spread to the Middle East, particularly in Iraq, where many were stationed.³³⁹ The most disturbing intelligence, however, came from Captain Patrick Howarth in Cairo in the form of a telegram. It read: '... Rumours also appear to be current in the Middle East to the effect that if General Sikorski pays a visit to the Middle East he will be assassinated by a group of pro-Sosnkowski extremists led by General Anders' ADC Captain Klimkowski. Although General Paszkiewicz takes these rumours seriously, it is doubtful whether anybody else would and we do not think they need to be taken into consideration'.³⁴⁰

The British expected any attempt by this 'secret military clique' to take place sometime in March, possibly at the Rubens. The information was rapidly sent to the Poles, who took the following measures:

1. All leave was cancelled.
2. Special manoeuvres were planned to keep their troops occupied.
3. A careful watch was to be maintained.
4. At the Rubens, new passes were to be issued and all visitors and packages carefully scrutinised. A special guard was placed on the 1st floor by the offices of both Sikorski and Modelski.³⁴¹

Air Operations

The February moon period saw the departure of a number of flights to Poland, firstly Operation 'RASP'. This drop took place over 100kms in error, perhaps adding some weight to Polish claims about standards of navigation by British crews. Operation 'VICE' reached its

objective as did Operation 'SAW'³⁴² The following night saw the departure of two more, Operation 'FLOOR' and Operation 'WALL'. Klimecki wrote to Gubbins informing him that the Home Army was ready to receive 50 flights during the forthcoming March and April.³⁴³ Aircraft left Tempsford on the night of 19/20th February on operation 'SPOKESHAVE' with two more on the following evening operations 'RIVET' and 'FILE'. The beginning of March also saw the first non-moon operation to Poland during which supplies were dropped.³⁴⁴ A request by Protasewicz to operate from an airfield nearer the East Coast, instead of Tempsford, in order to reduce the flying time was tried once or twice, but not adopted as a permanent measure. Tempsford was, by now, firmly established and, being slightly further away from prying German reconnaissance sorties, was overall a possibly safer option.³⁴⁵ During the moon period a number of operations were mounted: 'BRICK', 'WINDOW', 'TILE', 'DOOR', 'STOCK', 'STEP', 'ATTIC', 'SHAWL', 'BEAM' and 'CELLAR', which signalled the end of a busy month for both SOE and the Sixth Bureau.

Major General Klimecki contacted Gubbins to say that the regularity of the timing of the drops coupled with the fact that no bombing was used to cover the operations increased the vigilance of the Germans. He asked that intermittent bombing raids be carried out, without obligation to hitting targets if necessary, which would have a great impression on the Germans and divert attention from subversive operations. Gubbins replied that to be effective at least fifteen aircraft would need to be dispatched and the airforce was not willing to risk such a high number.³⁴⁶

Recognition of the Importance of Poland's Secret Army by British CoS and the 'Wildhorn' Proposal.

Before March 1943 the Russians had experienced a difficult time³⁴⁷ and it had become the policy of the British General Staff to give them assistance. The Polish 'Big Scheme' was recognised for its potential to this end and was, for this reason, accepted by the British Chiefs of Staff, in principle. They now considered the sabotage of communications against the Germans on the Russian front to be of prime importance, and realised that the forces carrying

out this action would undoubtedly benefit from supplies that would enable them later to become a more important and organised military force. This was not to be done at the expense of the sabotage that was already being carried out.³⁴⁸ This recognition of effective action in Poland came as a relief for SOE, who had been trying to ram the point home for the last three years. Perkins, already with a plan up his sleeve, contacted the Air Ministry stressing that use of the Polish Home Army for the Allied cause was increasing in importance. Couriers, he told them, could reach Warsaw within two days of leaving England, but the return journey took months and many went missing. The overland trip from Poland to England was precarious and of too long a duration to be of value. He therefore asked them to consider the possibility of landing an aircraft in Poland, suggesting that a Lockheed Hudson would be adequate for the job. Sending maps showing two potential landing areas, he wrote, 'I am assured and that we can guarantee a supply of petrol for the return if required. It would be of lower octane rating but good quality having recently been acquired from the German airforce. Please investigate most thoroughly.'³⁴⁹

The following day, Perkins informed the Sixth Bureau of his plan and forwarded a request from the Air Ministry for photographs of the proposed landing sites. As it was virtually impossible to obtain the photographs required, the Poles said they could provide accurate reports of fields. A code name was shortly forthcoming and allocated for the proposed operation: 'WILDHORN'.³⁵⁰

Impressed by the excellent way the 'WILDHORN' plan had been presented, Wing-Commanders W G Lockhart³⁵¹ and John Corby of the RAF considered the project put before them. The nearest airfields to the British coast for Polish operations were either Coltishall or Horsham St. Faith³⁵² in Norfolk. As the Hudson had insufficient range in an unmodified state, Lockhart had written to the Director of Operations asking if the range could be extended by use of extra fuel tanks. The range required for the plan was 2750 miles but Lockhart was optimistic. The Hudson would require an estimated 9hrs 40 minutes to complete the mission in ideal conditions. Allowing an extra 1½ hours for adverse winds and weather meant that just over 11 hours of darkness was needed to ensure adequate safety. This

would not occur until late October but as the moon would not be bright enough then to guarantee a successful mission the operation could not take place until 8th or 9th November at the earliest.

Perkins passed the information on to Wing-Commanders Krol and Suliński at the Sixth Bureau with the recommendation that October would be preferable, as there was likely to be less risk of snow hindering the operation. The Poles thought the RAF had overestimated the amount of time required for the flight and that one hour could easily be trimmed off the total time. They asked Perkins to request 7th /8th October as the first possible date, mentioning that weather conditions were generally considerably worse in Poland during November making accurate flying difficult. Not surprisingly, the Air Ministry considered the Poles estimate to be optimistic, offering 11th/12th October as the earliest date and refusing to cut the safety margin further.³⁵³

Effectiveness of Radio aids to Air Navigation.

The success of a mission carried out during the non-moon period came as a surprise to many in SOE as it had been achieved without the use of 'REBECCA'/'EUREKA' ³⁵⁴

Before the advent of 'REBECCA'/'EUREKA', moonlight had been considered essential to guarantee successful navigation to drop sites, and the fact that the recent Polish drop had been achieved without either was astonishing. Selborne contacted Perkins for details of the operation whilst Brigadier Eric Mockler-Ferryman³⁵⁵ asked Gubbins whether or not similar successes could be expected in other territories, particularly in France. Gubbins wasted no time in telling Mockler-Ferryman that the operation had only worked because the Polish pilots who flew the mission had a thorough knowledge of the terrain, and that in other countries the RAF used British crews who did not have such local knowledge. Later, use of the 'REBECCA'/'EUREKA' system would become standard practice for non-moon period drops and this, coupled with the use of 'S' Phones, (a short wave radio that allowed the reception committee to talk directly to the pilot of the aircraft), proved very beneficial.³⁵⁶

Field Reports

Whereas radio developments were, perhaps, evidence of a more overt side of SOE's function, the 'dirty tricks' department also had a role to play. Protasewicz continued to supply 'no window dressing' sabotage reports that showed the main directive, to attack enemy communications, was being carried out. Perkins noticed, however, that in numerous recent reports German officials and others had died under mysterious circumstances and asked Protasewicz if he had any reports from the field as to the use of 'SACCHARINE'.

'SACCHARINE' was a term used for substances supplied to SOE from the Chemical Defence Experimental Station at Porton Down. These ranged from mustard gas based substances to 'L' (lethal) pills, the infamous 'suicide pill'. Perkins stated, 'We are most anxious to obtain actual operational experiences of some of the 'SACCHARINE' which we produce and would be grateful if you could let us have any information obtainable from Poland.' Protasewicz replied that 'SACCHARINE' had been used in 189 reported cases in February 1943.³⁵⁷

Provided the news was good, reports from the field were always welcome as they gave an indication to SOE of the effectiveness of their efforts. A particularly welcome message arrived on 12th April from the GOC Home Army via Klimecki, thanking Charles Hambro for the March flights. It continued, 'They supplied us with essential war material, raised our spirits and brought the Germans to rage. As, in spite of all efforts, they were unable to attain anything except capture of 'STOCK', part of 'YARD' material. Please convey full appreciation of excellent work of aircrews.' Klimecki added, 'The content of this telegram is greatest reward any of us could expect. You and your staff entitled to share credit. Sincere thanks to all.' Hambro was more than pleased to pass the message on to Gubbins, saying that great credit was due to Perkins for his 'untiring efforts, initiation, resource and pertinacity. 'Wilkinson', he continued, 'laid sure foundations.'³⁵⁸ The loss of a few supplies was of little concern; more important was the safety of agents and, as less intelligence of their fates tended to reach the Polish Section, news of their experiences was of particular interest to SOE. This was especially important both for the planning of future instructional courses, and to check the effectiveness of existing ones. One such report gave immense delight to

Perkins. An agent dropped on 'DOOR' was arrested en-route to Warsaw by the Gestapo and his documents taken from him whilst he was detained for 24 hours for checking. His forged documents were apparently found to be 'in order' and returned to him on release. This was proof positive that the Sixth Bureau's preparation of documents and cover stories for agents worked extremely efficiently and was well up to date. Congratulations were especially sent to Station 14³⁵⁹ for their excellent reproduction of the documents in question; Selborne added his comment, 'Very excellent, Many congratulations to our Polish Section'³⁶⁰

A report from SIS provided more information on actions carried out in Poland. General Krueger, the leader of police and SS forces, and Governor Hans Frank's deputy, and a Gestapo officer named Schultz, were killed in retaliation for the execution of 70 Poles. The following had also been liquidated; during March, two Gestapo officers; on April 16th an employee of the State Social Insurance Co.; and previously on April 8th –the head of the Labour office in Warsaw, his deputy and 27 Gestapo agents were liquidated. Poison was used in 105 cases. In Kraków district, a raid on a prison released 120 prisoners and at another police station, soldiers of the underground army were released.³⁶¹

Other reports were less than welcome. On 11th April, the German Transocean Agency released news that, through information provided by the local population, German military authorities in Smolensk discovered in a forest at Katyń the graves of 3,000 Polish officers buried in layers, who had been murdered by the GRU³⁶² in February and March 1940. Their initial estimate for the total number of bodies was 10,000. At a press conference the following day, it was announced that all had been shot in the base of the skull. The bodies were well preserved and pine trees had been planted over them to conceal the mass grave.

The British felt a great deal of sympathy for the Poles who, for the last two years, had been telling them of the disappearance of 8,000 officers and getting no account from the Russians as to what had happened to them. Offering no explanation for the find at Katyń, the Soviets tried to avert the finger of suspicion by changing the subject and accusing the Poles of doing nothing to assist their cause. Always prepared to hedge their bets, the Foreign Office

warned SOE to remain neutral and not discuss their position openly but instructed the Polish Section that, 'Our co-operation and assistance to the Poles should continue as always.'³⁶³

Polish Forgery carried out at Audley End.

It was, perhaps, partly the result of the congratulatory telegram from the Polish GOC earlier in the month that now sent Major CB 'Jack' Ince and a printing expert to Audley End, following Polish requests for photographic equipment for their forgery set-up there. Part of their brief was to ensure that the Poles were not duplicating work that was being done at Briggens and partly to inspect their document-copying department. The Poles were able to assure Ince that the material required was to allow them to complete the documents that had been supplied from Briggens for individual agents. The Polish document copying department was divided into two sections:

1. A document copying workshop in the main building, where cover stories and the documents printed at Briggens were completed for the agents;
2. A photographic department in the stables block where the main job was to take photographs of the students.

Ince thought the operation appeared very amateurish. The Polish officer in charge, second Lieutenant Alfred Wisniewski, complained he had no direct contact with Ince other than through the Sixth Bureau and expressed his great ambition to visit Briggens regularly. He was apparently unaware that Briggens was not solely for the use of the Polish Section but served all of SOE. Ince did not tell Wisniewski otherwise, but in order to provide better co-ordination suggested that he (Ince) and his assistant visited more often to clear up small points.³⁶⁴ Terence Roper-Caldbeck,³⁶⁵ the British Commandant of the Station, agreed this to be the best plan.

Stanmore.

Regular meetings regarding Stanmore were held and a committee set up during March 1943 to govern the general operation of the station. Members of the Anglo-Polish Radio

Committee formed the new board of directors, comprising members from the Polish Wireless Research Unit, (PWRU) Stanmore, a branch of the Polish General Staff, as well as members of the Inter-Services Research Bureau (ISRB)³⁶⁶ and British Secret Intelligence Service (SIS). Members of the Committee included six Poles, two SIS, one British technical expert, two SOE plus financial overseeing by John Venner. It was decided that Stanmore should remain Polish, but as SOE and other British organisations (SIS) had considerable interest (financial and otherwise) the board would meet quarterly to discuss matters other than those that affected detailed management. For financial reasons, the buildings at Stanmore³⁶⁷ were now transferred from SOE to the Poles, with instructions that they should prepare a production programme for the next twelve months. Throughout the war, work was confined mainly to the development and manufacture of types in the 16m/cs range in frequency and 60 watts of transmitter output, though it was thought possible to produce equipment in 300mc/s and even 600 mc/s ranges as well as make separate transmitters up to 2-3 kw high frequency (HF). Flight navigation equipment experiments were also carried out at Stanmore. The production line could deal with between 20 and 500 items. The total number of personnel at PMWR was seventy persons, among them fifteen leading scientific and technical officers, nine administration clerks and semi-skilled workers.³⁶⁸

Plans to assist RAF bombing operations.

On 1st June, Perkins was made aware that the Germans were moving their industries in the Ruhr etc. further east to Danzig, Łódź and Silesia to avoid bombing. Bomber Command would undoubtedly be interested in these targets when longer nights came. He offered the RAF the services of SOE to set up 'REBECCA' sites near to suitable targets to guide in the bombers. In return, he wanted Bomber Command to inform SOE in good time when a raid was imminent so as to use the bombers as cover for SOE operations, or to pass information on to SOE sabotage units to attack targets not attackable (sic) from the air. He assured the RAF that experience had shown that the Poles could be trusted to carry out any of their requirements for co-operation and that secrecy was assured. Whilst such co-operation was

appreciated, the RAF explained that targets were often decided at the last minute due weather etc. and that close targets that had still to be bombed, were given priority as there were lots of them. Adequate notice for SOE agents of the type envisioned by Perkins was therefore rarely possible.³⁶⁹ This would have been a disappointment to Perkins, if not unexpected.

At this time, a request from the Poles that Perkins's secretary, Vera Long, be attached to them was met with approval. Vera Long had been with SOE since its inception and her secondment to the Poles in order to assist in improving their written English provided a welcome diversion.³⁷⁰ It was agreed that Miss Long should join the Poles on a temporary basis on 21st June.

US Supplies to Poland.

Polish attempts to buy stores direct from the USA were again turned down. The Poles had previously been confused in believing they could buy direct from the USA due to the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff having given them conflicting information. SOE remained the appropriate authority through which they had to gain authorisation and it was left to Perkins to sort the matter out with them.

The OSS had supplied Leica cameras in the past but refused to supply pistols until they had approval from SOE, saying they would withdraw all support if asked to do so. The Poles had ordered 9,000 Colt .38 pistols plus high explosives and other arms as well as collapsible cycles and motor-cycles, flame throwers etc. The Americans required consent to release the weapons from SOE, who gave it willingly. Perkins, in an effort to overcome the obstacles involved in direct supply, discussed the matter with War Office officials to discover the best procedure. It was decided that the bulk requirements would be submitted first to SOE in London. Equipment would come from British stores in the first instance but if it were not available then orders would be placed with the US. Stores not classified as 'warlike' e.g. cameras and photographic equipment, and any item not catalogued by the British Army Staff, could be bought directly through Washington. Perkins called a meeting with Major Jaswiński and Captain Jan Podolski of the Sixth Bureau to inform them of the decision and to tell them

that Col. Mitkiewicz- Zólter could liaise directly with Washington. It was agreed that first priority for supplies by the British would be Mk IV Sten Guns and anti-tank rocket weapons from SOE. The supply of the 9,000 pistols was agreed and the Poles were told to expect delivery of 1,500 before August. Perkins considered these to 'hardly come under the category of warlike stores'. The meeting concluded with a list of other 'non-warlike' items, which included anti-tank rocket guns, flame throwers, and incendiaries as well as German types of cameras, cigarettes, matches, paper etc. When asked if he wanted a formal agreement, Perkins replied 'No'.³⁷¹

Death of Sikorski

On 4th July, tragedy struck when General Sikorski was killed in an air crash at Gibraltar en route from the Middle East. The exact cause of the crash has never been resolved and conspiracy theories abound to this day. German propaganda quickly placed the blame on Allied Secret Services but, in the light of the earlier intelligence collected by Howarth in Cairo during March, the finger of suspicion pointed directly at the Poles themselves.

Following the death of Sikorski, Polish control over the Polish Home Army, which until then had worked well, began to become less efficient. Sikorski was on friendly terms with both Churchill and Roosevelt and was liked and trusted by both. As Prime Minister and Commander-in-Chief he was able to control both the military and political Poles but following his death there was a great deal more dissension between them, making SOE's work more difficult and at times having to conceal from one what the other was doing. Sikorski had skilfully maintained a balance of power between the rival factions, and SOE now feared a major internal crisis. Sosnkowski was not considered as wise nor as good a politician as Sikorski and he continued to press for a general uprising which, because of the impossibility of its implementation, was not looked on favourably by the Chiefs of Staff. It gave added problems to SOE who considered it their 'bug bear', knowing the unlikelyhood of its success but failing to convince the Poles of this.³⁷²

Hazell expressed the opinion that Sikorski's death would probably not affect current operations but he realised that the military Poles would not like Mikołajczyk, Sikorski's successor, and that radical changes following the change in leadership might affect SOE interests and relations.³⁷³ In a message to Gubbins, Hazell said, 'Another time, Sosnkowski would have been a candidate to replace Sikorski, but I do not think the Poles will accept him now as his anti-Soviet opinions might appear to be a gratuitous provocation of Russia. The least contentious candidate for Commander-in-Chief would be Anders. Political leadership would fall into the hands of Raczyński, Kot or Mikołajczyk'. The former was considered by SOE to be the least contentious whereas Kot was thought the ablest but not the most popular. He was, in fact, universally disliked and distrusted since he had been accused of espionage whilst Ambassador in Moscow. 'Poles will not want anything that will appear to provoke or placate Russia.'³⁷⁴ Perkins summed the situation up succinctly, 'Apparently, SOE is more particularly concerned with this matter than any other Government department and our decision and opinion will be vital in determining Foreign Office policy.'³⁷⁵

Cabinet Crisis

The expected turmoil was not long coming. The Polish President, Raczkiewicz, appointed Sosnkowski as Commander-in-Chief, which immediately precipitated a cabinet crisis.³⁷⁶ Eventually, Mikołajczyk, with great difficulty, was persuaded to accept him on condition he was involved only in military affairs and not political ones.³⁷⁷ Sosnkowski, ever anxious to get on with the job in hand, signalled a message to his troops in Poland, confirming that he wanted to keep a firm hand on their activity. Within ten days of the loss of their leader, the Poles formed a new cabinet with Mikołajczyk at its head. Jan Kwapiński, a left wing politician, was his deputy. Tadeusz Romer took over the Polish Foreign Office and General Kukiel, Defence, with Władysław Banaczyk as Minister of the Interior. New challenges were to face the Polish Section, as new personalities and ideas would have to be accommodated.³⁷⁸

July – August

Mikołajczyk's possible alterations to the Sixth Bureau.

Perkins discussed matters as they affected the Polish Section with Retinger on 21st July.

Many wanted to see the return of Smolenski as head of the Sixth Bureau, which would not have been discouraged by Perkins. Despite Retinger's opinion that Protasewicz was not fitted for his task due to his poor state of nerves, Perkins claimed to be happy with both Protasewicz, and his second in command, Jaswiński, whom he considered were doing as well as any could.³⁷⁹

At the end of the month, Mikołajczyk was finding his feet as Prime Minister, thanked Selborne for all past work and confirmed his continued support for the future.³⁸⁰ However, at a later meeting at the Foreign Office, Mikołajczyk announced that he wanted to take control of Home Army operations as well as policy, for which he was already responsible. The British felt that it would be better to maintain the situation as it was, with Sosnkowski remaining in charge and passing orders through the Sixth Bureau to those fighting in Poland. Sosnkowski still held a powerful political position and a move, such as the one Mikołajczyk was proposing, would seriously interfere with the work of SOE and could well precipitate yet another cabinet crisis.

On the face of it, the situation in Poland looked particularly bad at the time. The Commander of the Polish Home Army, General Stefan Rowecki, had recently been arrested. Selborne tried to use his influence in an attempt to help Rowecki but Churchill had already been approached by the Polish Foreign Affairs Minister for assistance and replied that nothing could be done. An exchange for Rudolf Hess, or some other captured German General, was not on the cards, with Churchill being fearful of setting a precedent.³⁸¹

Upon learning of Mikołajczyk's proposal, Perkins indicated that any changes would be unfortunate as the current system worked well and could be relied upon. As an example of his confidence in Polish efficiency, he claimed that if nine flights went out, they would be met by nine reception committees; that could not be bettered. The efficiency shown by the

military forces in Poland was largely due to the Sixth Bureau, both by the way it was managed and by the personnel involved. Perkins was mindful that SOE had accepted certain responsibilities regarding the Polish Home Army and it would be difficult to honour the responsibilities without the Sixth Bureau if Mikołajczyk caused them to stop operating. Naturally, the Foreign Office could do nothing to stop Mikołajczyk taking control if he wished, but suggested that SOE, by tactful indication, might infer that by not conforming to SOE's wishes the money and equipment might not be so forthcoming. SOE already had a plan before the Chiefs of Staff in Washington that required large amounts of both, as well as transport facilities. They would not be prepared to support the plan in Washington unless a clear picture of future Home Army plans was forthcoming and how it would alter the organisation (i.e. the Sixth Bureau) in which the SOE had so much faith. It was decided, therefore, that it would be left to Gubbins to sort out, using this information as a lever.³⁸²

Hitherto, 1943 was marked by a string of victories for the Allies, the surrender of Stalingrad, the taking of Tripoli, the increased bombing offensive of Germany, including the Dam Buster raid, the massive tank battle at Kursk and the turning in the 'U' Boat war. Perkins mentioned that 'victories and changing war situation' had enabled SOE to lay hands on large quantities of Reichsmarks from Iceland, so it was perhaps the declining success of the Atlantic wolf packs that was more significant for the continuing Polish offensive. The currency could be purchased by the British Treasury, then passed on to the Sixth Bureau at either the current rate of exchange, as a gift or sold to them for a nominal sum. It would require ageing and, as the Poles had previously expressed concern over British methods of effecting this, the process would probably be left to the Poles themselves. Perhaps the promise of a new supply of funds was a carrot dangled in front of Mikołajczyk to protect the Sixth Bureau; it was more likely a simple coincidence. By the end of August, Sosnkowski had become the new Commander-in-Chief with Kopański as Chief-of-Staff,³⁸³ and although there was talk of a replacement for Protasewicz, the future of the Sixth Bureau looked secure.³⁸⁴

September - October

E/UP

By early September, the civilian side of 'MONICA' had set up their communications with eight wireless sets in the field and seven more due to go over during the next moon period. Two sets were already working, as was one other from the military side. A drop had been carried out, code-named 'COVEY', infiltrating Kukiel's senior military representative and two others into France as a prelude to 'BARDSEA' operations; soon he would be working in co-operation with the civilian side as joint commander. The Polish Ministry of National Defence and the Polish Ministry of the Interior still bickered with each other but so long as things were well in the field, Hazell felt it did not matter.³⁸⁵

There were currently about 105 men in training for operations in France.³⁸⁶ The Poles reported that they foresaw problems with their 'MONICA' / 'BARDSEA' operations, in particular with regard to assisting the progress of Allied tanks. Hazell viewed the report with scepticism and doubted the Poles' ability to operate effectively against a Panzer division.³⁸⁷ In this he was clearly expecting rather too much. It had been decided that SOE and OSS would each provide 35 'JEDBRURGH' teams and these were to remain completely separate from planned Polish operations in France.³⁸⁸

Air Operations.

During the September moon period, SOE was able to dispatch agents to Poland on ten flights under the operational name of 'NEON', plus eleven supply drops with the operational code name of 'FLAT'. During the 'FLAT' drops, many packages had been lost, one due to the parachute becoming detached. Perkins questioned whether packages should be sent, even though the Poles did everything to ensure collection as they contained valuable equipment. Much of the problem lay inside the aircraft and a lightweight, Duralumin roller conveyor was suggested to speed up their exit in flight. The longer the intervals between packages being thrown out, the greater the dispersal area.³⁸⁹

Gubbins Becomes Head of SOE.

By the end of September, it was decided at a meeting of ministers that SOE should work more closely with the Foreign Office. Charles Hambro could not accept the proposed arrangement and tendered his resignation. Selborne had, for some time, believed that a military man would be better suited to serve in the post and, with Churchill's approval, appointed Gubbins to the role with Harry Sporborg as his deputy.³⁹⁰ For the Poles, this could provide hidden benefits, as Gubbins was one of their staunchest supporters.

Air (Mediterranean) and Supply.

The Chiefs-of-Staff responded to a request by Perkins that SOE should plan to intensify sabotage and maximise guerrilla activity in Poland. Six heavy bombers allocated primarily for work to Poland were soon to be transferred from the United Kingdom to the Mediterranean base. They could probably only operate about 24 sorties per month from there as the distance was not drastically reduced from routes emanating out of England, nor was the weather proving to be as clement as expected. The Poles had originally been told that nine additional flights would operate from England when conditions allowed, but with the increase in fighter defences over Germany all would now originate from the Mediterranean.³⁹¹ Sorties from Italy were possible up until May, but Polish operations planned in support of D-Day would need to be completed before 30th April due to the length of time required for the delivery and distribution of goods in Poland. A subsequent increase in supplies would also be needed to support 'OVERLORD', the invasion of Europe.

The discontinuance of sorties from the UK would also apply to two US squadrons allocated for support of the resistance in Poland when they arrived. The maximum possible amount achievable from present resources delivered between the beginning of January 1944 and the end of April, based on 6 aircraft each delivering 3 successful sorties (72) would be 72 tons of stores. This made up of 1,900 Sten/Brens, 2,600 pistols, 950,000 rounds of ammunition, 13,000 grenades and 33,000lbs of explosives

SOE estimated that reprisals for small operations were likely to be confined to the close locality but would be severe if the German collapse was imminent and Poles took action on a large scale at that time. There was a desperate need therefore for arms to enable the Poles to defend themselves.³⁹² Sporborg said it was now up to the Chiefs-of-Staff to decide what they wanted done. Gubbins thought the new aircraft would be simply put into a MAAF 'pool', which would mean that some nights the Poles could get more than six aircraft, possibly as many as twenty to thirty supplying Poland, but only when they were not required elsewhere.³⁹³

Polish Resistance strength.

Following a request from the Foreign Secretary, Mockler-Ferryman asked Perkins to supply figures indicating the strength of resistance forces in Poland to put before the War Cabinet. Perkins happily obliged. It was currently believed that the Polish home forces could put into the field a maximum of 300,000 men, about 50% of whom were organised into companies and battalions on a divisional basis. Estimates were that 30 – 40,000 men were armed with small arms, pistols, Sten and Thompson sub machine guns, which SOE had supplied. In all, since the formation of SOE, about 80 tons had been sent, which Perkins made clear was inadequate. thirty tons each of explosives and weapons, ten tons of propaganda material and a further ten tons of miscellaneous, at a cost from British funds of £1,176,462 – 17 – 10d during the 1942/3 operational season, with more being supplied by the Poles themselves. It was impossible to estimate how much sabotage had been carried out, but from the quarterly reports received there was every reason to suppose the supplies were being put to good use. These reports claimed many hundreds of derailments as well as sabotage against communications and agriculture, the burning of oil stocks, industrial installations, and harassment of enemy troops, many of whom were 'tied' up in Poland guarding the installations and establishments. Perkins' report concluded, 'The spirit of Poland has never been conquered.'³⁹⁴

A few days later, the Poles expressed their extreme dissatisfaction with arrangements for the supply to groups in Poland. Uncannily, it was almost as if the Poles had seen the report to the Foreign Office, especially Perkins' comments on the inadequacy of stores delivered. Using as an excuse the inadequate support from SOE, the Polish Government intimated that they intended to approach the Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of State for Air directly to say that unless facilities could be placed at their sole disposal, they would issue orders to stop all resistance and gathering of intelligence in Poland. The Sixth Bureau, who had a better understanding of the problems faced, was unlikely to have been in support of the interference.

Air Operations

Sosnkowski again complained that he had only six aircraft manned by Polish crews. SOE had given the Poles a theoretical figure of 300 flights to Poland as being the operational maximum possible that could be attained with six aircraft. The figure had not been intended as a firm undertaking but, unfortunately, the Poles wrongly assumed that it had been given as such, with flights being spread over an eight-month period at a rate of 36 each month. During September, the first month of currently planned operations to Poland, only sixteen flights had been successful. On one night 14/15th, a special effort of eleven aircraft was sent with four being lost. With enemy opposition on the route stronger than before, it was decided that operations of this nature, and on this scale, should be discontinued until another route could be found. Nevertheless, three flights again departed for Poland the following night and it was clear that the Air Ministry and SOE were offering as much support as they could.

Prior to the October moon period, Polish HQ approached SOE requesting a special effort be made to increase in the number of operations during October, since the weather in November was usually unfavourable. This was agreed to, but the Poles set up sixty reception committees, which was in excess of what SOE advised. On first day of the moon period, a decision, taken by the RAF station commander, put all but six of the sixty reception committees out of flying range. This, the Poles assumed, was because the aircraft had been

re-allotted to other targets and, not surprisingly, they again complained about aircraft being taken for use elsewhere. Losses lightened slightly, but even so, during the period six aircraft failed to return out of twenty two sent.

Harry Sporborg put his thoughts into a letter to Selborne. 'Polish HQ do not yet understand why they have to work through SOE, which seems a source of irritation to them. They don't appear to realise that whilst their Secret Army is a major part of their war, there are others who have equal claims to attention.' The complaint made by the Poles was in his opinion a typical one, that the Poles should use another avenue of approach if one had failed. 'Polish HQ desires, quite naturally, that they keep control of their work, but in spite of advice to the contrary, consider the six aircraft to also be under their sole control and don't understand why they should have to work through SOE, the Air Ministry, the Station Commander at Tempsford and eventually the Squadron Commander of 138 squadron. The Poles are among our staunchest allies, and always have been, but at the moment, with the current strained situation between them and the Russians, they see what they perceive to be the influence of Moscow in even the most trivial incident that does not accord with their wishes. Polish HQ has always, quite rightly, considered they should be solely responsible for their work and considered the six aircraft manned by Polish crews should also be under their control. It is galling to them that, under present regulations, the chain of command from them to Flight Commander must pass through SOE thence to the Air Ministry, thence to Station Commander Tempsford and finally to the Squadron Commander 138 Squadron as laid down by the CIGS in June 1942. It may be possible to devise a system whereby this chain is more direct but there is otherwise little we can do. It must be realised though that the Polish contribution is important. They realise the present winter may be the last they have to suffer under German occupation and the last chance they have to equip their compatriots to actually contribute to the German's demise. In this connection arrangements are in hand with the Air Ministry approval to enable operations from the Mediterranean theatre providing a shorter and safer route.'³⁹⁵

Selborne's involvement in Flights to Poland.

Selborne met Sosnkowski to discuss Polish complaints. Sosnkowski stressed the importance of support for his men facing an estimated 500,000 German troops then occupying Poland. He acknowledged the 300 conspiratorial flights had been given as an approximate figure, but said a statement by Gubbins of, 'Twelve flights on any night when weather conditions are favourable, and you should base your calculations on this,' was what he had based his planning upon. The GOC in Poland was also working on these figures and asking for 600 flights during the current season, but Gubbins said the number of flights available would be no more than 300 up until 1st April 1944. At this point Sosnkowski had asked Sir Archibald Sinclair and General Alan Brooke to intervene on his behalf and that of the GOC Warsaw. With the possibility that the Poles could be facing extermination in their homeland, it is not surprising that Sosnkowski was worried. He informed Selborne that he was well aware of the need to spread the resources and the commitment to others that the British had, but stressed the effectiveness of the Polish home forces and how he envisioned their role in future, especially following the invasion of mainland Europe.³⁹⁶

Sir Archibald Sinclair replied to Selborne regarding a letter he sent about Sosnkowski's complaints. He regretted that Bomber Command's assistance had not yet amounted to much. During September, Bomber Command suffered between 25 – 30 % casualties on Special Operations work, which was six times the normal rate for bomber operations. Sinclair agreed that Britain should help the Poles but six aircraft with the range and carrying capacity of the ones required was not a small proportion of the total number in existence. He assured Selborne he would do his best. Sporborg provided a draft letter in reply believing that Sinclair had certain misapprehensions about his views on Bomber Command. 'We realise the paucity of their effort is not their fault, they have genuinely tried to help. The fault lies in the idea that *ad hoc* ops (operations) like ours can rely on allocation from Bomber Command to be effective.'³⁹⁷

WILDHORN

Planning for the forthcoming 'WILDHORN' operation was progressing smoothly. Naturally, the Poles wanted this, too, to be operated by Polish crews, but were prepared to concede that a British crew, with more experience of pick-up operations, could be used in preference.³⁹⁸

The Sixth Bureau was well in control of the planning and Protasewicz ordered that everything relating to the operation should be marked 'Top Secret' and placed in a sealed envelope marked 'Most Secret and Personal' and addressed only to Jaswiński. Lighting and refuelling facilities were organised and details and sketches of four landing grounds earmarked for the operation were given to Perkins. The sketches, however, were considered unacceptable by the Air Ministry, who would have preferred photographs, therefore the operation was put off until spring because of expected poor winter weather. The operation was considered very important indeed, and no one wanted to take chances. By spring, operations from the Mediterranean would be possible, which could possibly reduce risks further. The problem remained however, that the Lockheed Hudson still only had a range of 600 miles.³⁹⁹

Air Operations Deployment to the Mediterranean.

Moves were now advanced for the re-establishment of the Polish Special Operations Flight to the Mediterranean. On 30th October, Air Command in the Mediterranean informed the Air Ministry that they would be ready to accept a Polish SOE flight of three Liberators and three Halifaxes in December. It was presumed that the flight would be a separate, self-contained unit, which only required that all ground personnel, unit equipment and motor transport, including specialist vehicles, be despatched prior to arrival of the air echelon. The Polish flight was to be placed under operational and administrative control of HQ through 334 Wing.

November - December

E/UP

With Kukiel's approval, Hazell was preparing to send a British Liaison Officer to France to smooth out local difficulties that Polish agents were encountering. Captain Chalmers-Wright was sent to Beaulieu for refresher training over three days, after which he would be sent to the field during December. Chalmers-Wright, pseudonym Francis Chalkeley, his permanent *nomme de guerre*, was to leave for France carrying six months' funds, although it was intended he stay no longer than three months. Once in France, he was to rent two flats from which to work under the code name XAVIER. His expenses were to be borne by SOE and not the Poles, as Hazell insisted he was 'his' man.⁴⁰⁰

Air: Polish Flight.

During November, the Polish flight was separated from 138 Squadron and became the independent 1586 flight of 334 Wing, and moved to the Tunis area. Spurborg expressed his concern that the re-location of the Polish Flight was likely to cause problems regarding the arrangements concerning the six aircraft allotted to it. Following a high level decision, Air Commodore Henry Thornton, SOE's senior man at Tempsford, was informed that sorties into Poland planned from the UK would now be routed through North Africa and Italy. SOE sorties into Poland from the United Kingdom would no longer be acceptable whilst prevailing conditions existed. Shortly after, the Poles were officially told that no flights would operate from England during December. In the event, efficient flights from Tunis were virtually impossible to operate because of atmospheric conditions and only two flights were possible during the two months the flight remained there.⁴⁰¹

At the end of December, with twelve aircraft including three Liberators and sixteen crews, the Polish Flight again moved, this time to Brindisi. Remaining on the establishment of 334 Wing, they were detailed for Special Operations. The crew establishment was never fully filled. During quiet periods, the Poles operated flights to the Balkans for the British, under a reciprocal deal the British of 148 Flight operated flights to Poland in support of the

Poles whenever weather conditions allowed. The move to Italy appeared to be a good one for the Poles, and there was even a possibility of stores being provided for them from the OSS in conjunction with SOE.⁴⁰²

Poles in the German Army

Wilkinson was concerning himself with the German Section of SOE, over which he had taken command. Through Henry Threlfall, Perkins' deputy, he asked Perkins if definite instructions or directions had been given regarding Polish prisoners of war (POW's) in German hands, both for certain work and for action in event of a German collapse. Wilkinson wanted to know because he was in touch with other POW's in Germany and would like to make use of them as a potential source of trouble.

Both spoke to Headley-White of MI9, the escape organisation, about the possibility of British POW's in Eastern Poland putting themselves at the disposal of Polish forces.⁴⁰³ Hazell, equally involved in the recruitment of Polish potential to cause trouble, contacted Mockler-Ferrymen to inform him that the Polish Ministry of the Interior was in touch with about 500 Poles who had been conscripted into the German army and stationed in Denmark. Hazell asked should they desert now and be organised into cells to wait until D-Day? 'If they deserted now', he thought, 'at least they will have deserted. If they wait they may be moved elsewhere. On the other hand, if they do desert now they will become an embarrassment to all concerned with their only escape available being through Sweden.' This could cause diplomatic problems, so he suggested that Mr. Banaczyk tell the Minister of the Interior to organise them but take no action until the time was right. General Kukiel wanted as many as possible to desert and come to England. It was difficult to talk him out of this idea.

Hazell considered the problems of exfiltrating those in France. Any large movement of men through Spain would embarrass British relationships with the Spanish Government, which would have added to the difficulties of getting such a large number through Gibraltar. Hazell was aware that a similar evacuation had been tried by the Sixth Bureau in Yugoslavia and Greece with the result that SOE had to take the responsibility to sort them out. He later

wrote to Mockler-Ferryman 'We must convince Kukiel that SOE can only cope if these men are simply standing by for use in support of D-Day. This support could come through 'MONICA'. Just between the two of us, the Polish Ministry of the Interior supports the idea of leaving them where they are for future use. Their support however, is probably purely negative in that they make a point of opposing any suggestion put up by Polish GHQ.' At Hazell's suggestion, a letter was sent from Gubbins to Kukiel trying to talk him out of the idea for the reasons given.⁴⁰⁴

Proposal for a British Military Mission to Poland.

On 31st December, Gubbins put forward an idea to Mikołajczyk that a British Military Mission be sent to Poland and Mikołajczyk suggested that, in the event of one being sent, it should contact Ron Jeffery and work through him. Gubbins asked Threlfall if he knew anything about Jeffery's qualifications. It transpired that Jeffery was serving as a lance corporal with the Royal West Kent Regiment when he was captured in May 1940 and sent to Stalag XXIa. He escaped at the third attempt 19 months later on 4th January. Five days later, on 9th January 1942, he found himself in Warsaw and sent a message to the Times using Polish clandestine communications. Promoted to Captain by the Polish secret army, his thorough knowledge of German, and later Polish, allowed him to travel freely using forged documents and posing as a German official. He later made contact with Perkins and regularly reported to him.⁴⁰⁵ He was apparently a useful man to know who would play a larger role later.

Summary

1943 proved to be a good year for the Poles. Air support more than doubled compared with 1942 figures and, despite opposition, the Poles had managed to secure their own Flight, even though it was not as exclusive as they would have wished. The possibility of the first 'Bridge' (two-way pick-up) operation to Poland, with the title 'WILDHORN', had enormous

possibilities for better future liaison, if successful. Hambro's resignation left a gap which was filled by possibly the most able of men, Colin Gubbins, who would remain in the position until the end of the war. Hazell persistently appears to have had more problems with the Poles in England than the ones he was trying to organise in France and elsewhere, but he managed to continue his work in preparation for their future use. Wilkinson's move to the German Section was not as disastrous as might first appear as contact between him and the Polish Section remained close. By far the most important move though, was the establishment of the base in Italy. Flights from North Africa had been difficult to effect without a formal base and working with limited resources. Italy would prove to be a better option. Importantly, SOE now seemed more free from the political confusions of the previous years. Not surprisingly, the Poles stayed true to their cause and could not be shaken in their resolve to initiate an uprising at some time or another. A Report on the Polish underground movement compiled from German SD intelligence at the end of 1943 said, 'With the exception of the Polska Partia Robotnica (the Polish Workers Party), which is largely communistic, none of the political groups, not even the Piłsudskists, oppose the Polish Government in London: all of them are loyal.'⁴⁰⁶ Perhaps this is what Eden should have presented to Stalin.

Notes.

³¹⁶ *Chronicle of the Twentieth Century*. Mercer.

³¹⁷ TNA HS7/184.

³¹⁸ TNA HS4/312.

³¹⁹ TNA AIR20/8221 & HS4/298.

³²⁰ TNA HS4/143.

³²¹ Jedburgh was not an E/UP operation but an SOE plan in support of advancing troops following the invasion.

³²² TNA HS4/229.

³²³ TNA HS4/296.

³²⁴ President Roosevelt did in fact recommend to Churchill that Poles be allocated 6 Liberators. TNA HS7/184.

³²⁵ TNA HS4/143.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*

³²⁷ *Ibid.*

³²⁸ TNA HS4/191.

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- ³²⁹ TNA HS4/196.
- ³³⁰ TNA HS4/136.
- ³³¹ TNA HS4/173.
- ³³² TNA HS4/191.
- ³³³ TNA HS4/137.
- ³³⁴ TNA KV2/516.
- ³³⁵ TNA KV2/516.
- ³³⁶ TNA HS4/144.
- ³³⁷ Ibid.
- ³³⁸ TNA HS4/323.
- ³³⁹ TNA HS4/141.
- ³⁴⁰ Internal memorandum reference number MX/PD/168, Wilkinson to Gubbins. 20th March 1943. During a personal interview with Patrick Howarth at his home in Sherbourne, Dorset, September 2001 he told me he distinctly remembered sending the telegram in question. The Poles in London certainly took the matter seriously. Vera Long, Perkins' personal assistant, told me she remembered that guards at the Rubens Hotel, The Polish Government in Exile's residence in London, were doubled during this period and security tightened. Personal interviews, various occasions, London.
- ³⁴¹ TNA KV2/517.
- ³⁴² TNA HS4/177 Serious injuries were suffered by all the operators, 1 agent dead, Bolesław Aleksander Odrowaz-Szukiewicz.
- ³⁴³ TNA HS7/184 & HS4/297.
- ³⁴⁴ TNA HS7/184.
- ³⁴⁵ Ibid A German aircraft investigated Tempsford shortly after the commencement of secret work from the station. Following one or two passes, it was thought likely that the aircrew were using the station to accurately plot their navigational position. Presumably, the enemy gave it no special status.
- ³⁴⁶ TNA HS4/175.
- ³⁴⁷ This was due to the seige of Stalingrad.
- ³⁴⁸ TNA HS4/184.
- ³⁴⁹ TNA HS4/180.
- ³⁵⁰ Ibid.
- ³⁵¹ This, I believe, to be Guy Lockhart, being the only senior officer named Lockhart involved in Special Operations Flights.
- ³⁵² Now Norwich Airport.
- ³⁵³ TNA HS4/180.
- ³⁵⁴ 'REBECCA' and 'EUREKA' were two component parts of a navigational aid developed by the Telecommunications Research Establishment. 'REBECCA' was a transmitter positioned in the aircraft, which, upon sending a signal, received a response from 'EUREKA', a portable unit positioned on the ground. Use of this aid could guide the aircraft from approximately 70 miles (110 kilometres) to within 200 yards (180 metres) of the intended drop zone. 'EUREKA' was not popular with reception committees however, as it was bulky and heavy, weighing in at almost 1 cwt. (50 kilograms), and difficult to conceal when not in use.
- ³⁵⁵ SOE's head of operations into North West Europe.
- ³⁵⁶ TNA HS4/196. The 'S' Phone also allowed aircrews to 'home in' on reception committees. Their size and light weight made them a favourite with Polish home forces. See also Fredric Boyce and Douglas Everett, *SOE The Scientific Secrets*. (Sutton Publishing, Stroud, 2003). pp.202-204.
- ³⁵⁷ TNA HS4/191 see also Boyce /Everett *SOE The Scientific Secrets*. p.78.
- ³⁵⁸ TNA HS4/179.
- ³⁵⁹ Briggens House, Roydon, Essex. Used by SOE to house their forgery section. Although desperately short of materials and equipment in the early stages of the war, later no expense was spared to ensure correct materials, paper etc, were used in the reproduction of documents and money. Poles carried out document completion for their agents at Audley End House (STS43), but many members of the forgery section at Briggens were unaware of this. When Morton Bisset, SOE forgery expert, first reported to Briggens he took control over the three Polish forgers already working there. It had often been said that members of the criminal classes carried out forgery at Briggens. This is not true; in fact one expert on handwriting stationed there was formerly a Police sergeant from Scotland Yard named Gatward. Morton Bisset, personal interview, Whaley Bridge Derbyshire. March 2002, and Pauline Brockies, also formerly of the forgery section. Personal telephone interview, March 2002.
- ³⁶⁰ TNA HS4/179 & HS4/316.
- ³⁶¹ TNA HS4/142 & HS4/218.

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- ³⁶² GRU. *Glavnoye Razvedyvatelnoye Upravleniye: Soviet Military Intelligence.*
- ³⁶³ TNA HS4/137.
- ³⁶⁴ HS4/191.
- ³⁶⁵ At Audley End there were two officers in command: Lt. Col. Terry Roper-Calbeck was in charge of administration for the British whilst Lt. Col. Józef Hartmen was in charge of the Polish contingent and training.
- ³⁶⁶ Cover name for SOE.
- ³⁶⁷ Except Wykeham House, which initially remained solely British and on loan without charge to the Polish Wireless Research Unit (PWRU).
- ³⁶⁸ TNA HS7/184.
- ³⁶⁹ TNA HS4/175.
- ³⁷⁰ Personal conversations with Vera Long, various dates and venues.
- ³⁷¹ TNA HS4/153.
- ³⁷² TNA HS4/144 & HS7/184.
- ³⁷³ TNA FO 34614B News of Sikorski's death brought praise for him even from Russians. Kuibyshev to FO says article in *Investiya*, 'Despite intrigues the Soviet Union pursued a policy of friendship with the Polish people and desired an independent Poland. ,which however could not be created by methods hostile to the Soviet Union.'
- ³⁷⁴ TNA HS4/316.
- ³⁷⁵ TNA HS4/144.
- ³⁷⁶ TNA FO 34591-2.
- ³⁷⁷ TNA AIR20/8342.
- ³⁷⁸ TNA HS4/144.
- ³⁷⁹ TNA HS4/144.
- ³⁸⁰ TNA HS4/316.
- ³⁸¹ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸² TNA HS4/144.
- ³⁸³ TNA HS4/316.
- ³⁸⁴ TNA HS4/141.
- ³⁸⁵ TNA HS4/229.
- ³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸⁷ TNA HS4/269.
- ³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*
- ³⁸⁹ TNA HS4/177 With an aircraft flying at 120 knots a time delay of sixty seconds in dispensing the packages from the aeroplane meant scattering over a distance of 2 nautical miles (3.8 kilometres) between the first package dispatched and the last.
- ³⁹⁰ p.140 Gubbins and SOE op cit.
- ³⁹¹ With the huge increase in bombing sorties from England the Germans had increased their fighter defences. Earlier, a lone bomber might not have been intercepted, but now, with more fighters at their disposal, there was less chance that it would get through. This is primarily the reason and 'condition' that the flights would no longer be possible.
- ³⁹² TNA HS4/147, HS4/184 & HS4/316.
- ³⁹³ TNA HS4/316.
- ³⁹⁴ *Ibid.* Reports of the sabotage in Poland was relayed to the British Ambassador in Moscow, (Clarke-Kerr) so he could counter accusations by Stalin that not enough was being done by the Poles in the war effort.
- ³⁹⁵ TNA HS4/184 & HS4/316.
- ³⁹⁶ TNA WO 106/716.
- ³⁹⁷ TNA HS4/316.
- ³⁹⁸ TNA HS4/180.
- ³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰⁰ TNA HS4/269 & HS4/273.
- ⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁰² TNA HS4/177, HS4/153 & HS4/184.
- ⁴⁰³ TNA HS4/225.
- ⁴⁰⁴ TNA HS4/226.
- ⁴⁰⁵ TNA HS4/255 For Jeffery's story see R Jeffery, *Red Runs the Vistula*, (Nervron Associates, Peterborough. 1989).
- ⁴⁰⁶ TNA HS4/218.

Chapter 5

1944

The technical war entered a new phase at the beginning of 1944, when the British announced details of their new jet-propelled Gloster aircraft. Although the first test flight had taken place in May 1941, they had dragged their heels sufficiently to allow the Germans, later in the year, to be the first to bring their jet-fighter into service. There was still time for the Allies to lose the war and the appearance of the V1 flying bomb and the V2 rockets certainly made them appreciate the reality of this possibility. Despite the technical advantage that the Germans appear to have had at the time, they were in a state of sufficient desperation to be putting fifteen year-old boys into front-line fighting positions. Before the end of the year, Monte-Cassino was captured and Rome liberated. Paris followed, and Belgium was freed. In the Pacific, MacArthur made his promised return to the Phillipines as the Japanese were driven back. Following Warsaw's defiant rising, the Germans had, by comparison, razed the city to the ground after an order from Hitler. Some of his generals, mistrustful of his sanity, had tried unsuccessfully to assassinate him in a July bomb plot, prior to the intention to negotiate peace terms once Hitler was out of the way. The year ended with a notable counter-attack by the Germans through the Ardennes forest, as they re-entered Belgium in what became known as the Battle of the Bulge, at the same time testing the American airborne forces in a way they had never quite been tested before. The attack was bravely repulsed; it was the last gasp of Nazism.⁴⁰⁷

January to July.

E/UP

COSSAK, the name given to the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Command and the organisation he headed, was Lt-General Bedell Smith.⁴⁰⁸ COSSAK's organisation's prime function was to plan the invasion of Europe and also to implement a deception scheme that

would keep the Germans alert. Hazell was concerned that COSSAK had no plans for the future of the Poles currently working for the Germans in the TODT organisation⁴⁰⁹ who were willing to desert and join forces with the Allies following the invasion. COSSAK would not sponsor their evacuation, which Hazell intended should be achieved through Spain.⁴¹⁰ While the TODT held Poles' potential contribution to the war effort was not insignificant, they obviously represented small fry compared to the large fish that COSSAK was currently playing.

It is, perhaps, no wonder COSSAK showed little interest in the enemy's foreign workers especially as they would have been aware that the Poles could still not decide with one another on how to co-ordinate matters in France. It was essential that the two Ministries, Interior and National Defence, should reach an agreement of some sort, but they were reported as not even being on speaking terms. SOE however, continued regardless, and carried out a drop under the code name 'COLONY' in support of 'BARDSEA' teams. This first drop took place on 7th January when two agents⁴¹¹ and stores were dispatched into France.⁴¹²

Polish-Soviet Relations following 'EUREKA' (Teheran conference).

Information regarding the discussions at Teheran between the 'Big Three', Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin held late in November/ December 1943, were beginning to filter through to SOE. At a Cabinet meeting, the FO indicated they again wanted to give the Russians assurances about Polish good faith and sought Gubbins' opinion on how to achieve this. Having given the assurances, the F.O. was fearful that Polish uncensored wireless traffic might contain anti-Soviet wording, which would upset any chance of unity. Naturally, their solution, backed by SIS, was censorship. They suggested the Poles should hand over copies of all future messages sent, give up their wireless station in Britain and hand over copies of the ciphers they currently used for communications with Poland. Given the fact that it is now known that a number of Soviet agents worked for both SIS and the FO, this would not have been a good idea. If these suggestions had come from one of these men it would explain,

perhaps, why the suggestions were made, as it would have been a very important source of intelligence for the Russians. Outwardly, no further action was being taken but, secretly, the Cabinet directed the Chiefs of Staff to investigate the possibility of closer control over Polish communications and of packages sent to Poland. This was not a problem in the latter case, as the British did the packaging.⁴¹³

Anything connected with Polish feelings could not be concluded without a report from Truskowski. As usual, it was concise and to the point. The Poles wanted to reinstate a relationship with the Soviets on condition the Soviets did not insist on the annexation of Eastern Poland. Stalin had intimated an expansion of Soviet borders at Teheran, and naturally the Poles were fearful of the outcome. The Soviets, for their part, wanted Eastern Poland to remain in their hands and certain members of the Polish Government, seen to be anti-Soviet, to be replaced by those more friendly to their regime. Truskowski saw the immediate future as a deadlock and dismissed any ideas that evidence of loyalty, integrity or of the strategic value of the Home Army would have the slightest effect on Russia's intentions. The Soviets already had as good, if not better, means of obtaining such information. Truskowski felt that the Polish Home Army and the Government in exile must be seen as a stumbling block to the Russian advance and the more powerful they became, the more violently the Russians would oppose them.⁴¹⁴

Shortly, Churchill wrote to Eden, 'Please tell Polish Government that I earnestly counsel them to adopt in principle the proposals which seem are not unacceptable to the Soviets namely in East Königsberg to the Curzon line excluding the Lomberg area, and in the west of the line of the Oder with the special concession of most of the Oppeln district. This would give Poland a fine territory in which to maintain a strong and independent Polish state three or four hundred miles square and with 250 miles of seaboard on the Baltic. The lands along the Oder from which the Germans would be expelled are of great value. It would be a sacred duty for Poland to guard the line of the Oder in the interest of the Russian State and thus receive from them the friendship and support without which their Polish future is most precarious. I personally should regard this settlement as a full discharge of all our promises

and obligations to Poland, and that if it were not accepted in a loyal spirit and recommended by the Polish Government in London, I should certainly not take any further responsibility for what will happen in the future.'⁴¹⁵

Clearly, Churchill was content to allow the Soviet/Polish border to fall along the Curzon Line, a geographical position he would have denied to the Germans but not the Russians. He was not alone. Roosevelt was also in agreement with Stalin's demands for more influence in Europe following Germany's defeat. The Teheran Conference was intended to plan future strategy prior to, and following, the invasion of Europe, but Stalin used the opportunity to further his own claims. The United States thought that to beat the Japanese, Soviet help would be required, and with Churchill, his power waning and anxious to retain as much influence as he could,⁴¹⁶ the Western leaders were guilty of ceding far too much to Stalin.

Communist Sympathies in Poland.

A report arrived in London that was politically worrying. As the Russians became more successful, and clothing and food became less available, the Communists gained more support in Poland, especially amongst the lower class, who showed little interest in border disputes. Perkins was faced with a dilemma and put a question to Chris Warner of the Northern Department. 'If the Poles in Poland supported the Lublin Government, was it not the duty of the British to support them and not the Polish Government in Exile?'⁴¹⁷ A further question begged an answer regarding the statement made by Churchill, when he said the Poles should accept the Curzon Line. Was this an attempt to bring the Government in Exile in line with the thinking of the Lublin Government, and consequently the thinking of the Polish people in Poland? Was this really a move to support those he now thought to be the real representatives of the Polish people or, as it is generally accepted, was it simply made to placate the Soviets? If rumoured claims were true, two thirds of stores supplied by SOE were held in reserve to be used against any aggressor. Who would be deemed the aggressor, the Germans, the Russians or the Lublin Government?

The wavering indecision regarding whom to support represented a change from that which had long been accepted. Far-reaching, it also affected Hazell's minority's section. He felt certain that some of the funds provided to the Poles to use against German subversive activity in South America, mainly in the form of propaganda, was being used by them to counter Communist activity, an opinion that was perhaps perfectly justified. The Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) strongly criticised such possible usage, although Hazell thought they were making a mountain out of a molehill. To his mind, their criticism could only mean they thought the use of funds against Communism to be an unjustifiable Polish threat to Allied unity, despite Stalin's claim that, as he had dissolved the Comintern, action against Communism was not considered to be activity against the USSR. The fact that the JIC had made the criticism indicated to Hazell that His Majesty's Government might be thinking differently from himself, which came as a surprise to him, considering it hypocritical of the British Government if this was the case. ⁴¹⁸

Polish Flight

Elsewhere, more normal difficulties prevailed. The Polish Special Operations Flight 1598 under 334 Squadron of the Mediterranean Air Command operated three Liberator aircraft and three Halifaxes. Before they left England, there were indications of the difficulties in operating mixed fleets and now, despite pushing so frequently for Liberators, the Poles were asking for the Liberators to be replaced by Halifaxes. Other units of 334, 148 & 624 Squadrons already operated Halifaxes, so between them they had 39 Halifaxes and three (Polish) Liberators. It would be more economical to have a common type fleet. Perhaps the Poles were beginning to realise that the British were telling the truth when they said that Halifaxes were, in many ways, superior for Polish requirements to Liberators. Certainly Halifaxes were capable of doing the job satisfactorily. Since both types had to be modified anyway, it made little difference which type was used. Now the flight was based in Italy problems in the supply and delivery of spare parts came home to the Poles; similar difficulties to those that arose in the supply to Poland itself. As the Liberators had been

especially modified they could not easily be used elsewhere, nevertheless, it was suggested that the RAF gave some thought to the Poles' request.⁴¹⁹

Stanmore Production and censorship requirements.

Work at Stanmore continued apace. Between 1st September 1943 and 1st January 1944, 315 type AP4 sets were manufactured with sales of 548 transmitter/receivers of all types between 1st May 1944 and 31st January 1945. At the beginning of January, a further innovation by the Poles was unveiled, a high speed w/t set that would greatly decrease the risks to operators by ensuring the time they spent on air was at a minimum.⁴²⁰ Certainly, risks needed reducing, as Polish radio traffic was prolific. Between August 10th 1940 and December 31st 1943, 4,983,000 groups were sent of which 58% were to the Sixth Bureau, 38% to the Second Bureau, the remaining 4% being other traffic. In 1943, 2,194,000 groups were sent and received, the Sixth and Second Bureaux together accounting for 88% of them. None of this traffic could be read by the British authorities,⁴²¹ which for some, especially SIS, gave cause for renewed concern now that the invasion of mainland Europe was imminent, so fresh attempts to obtain Polish ciphers and codes were made.

SOE's reasons for non-interference with Polish radio networks were fourfold. Firstly, Polish cipher censorship was a question for HMG and was of no concern of either SOE or 'C' (SIS). Should it become necessary (as appeared likely) to raise the question of control, it should be done through both the Sixth Bureau and SOE, as they were working under the directives of the Chiefs-of-Staff and not, as proposed, by SIS. The Poles did not enjoy a good relationship with SIS⁴²² through no fault of their own and had often turned to SOE for assistance when they had been unable to obtain support for their projects through 'C's' channels. Secondly, a larger percentage of traffic on Polish channels was of an SOE nature and therefore of little concern to anyone else. Thirdly, Polish activity in France co-ordinated with D-Day for which SOE was exclusively responsible ('BARDSEA') was dependent on Ministry of the Interior and Polish Military wireless channels. It was considered that such operations might well be jeopardised if the communications passed under the control of 'C'

and did not remain a joint SOE/Polish responsibility, or preferably come solely under SOE. Finally, relations between SOE and the Poles were smooth, as were their operations, so why spoil a good thing?

Soon Harry Sporborg discovered that Eden had been overruled regarding Polish Radio censorship but that the matter was still alive and therefore suggested SOE should be ready with advice if asked. Almost simultaneously, Christopher Warner of the FO informed Sporborg that the Poles could now contact any part of Poland by w/t including areas held by the Russians, the latter being subject to censorship. Mockler-Ferryman passed the news of the decision to Perkins, confirming he could continue operations as normal for the time being.⁴²³ The desire of the Poles to retain control over their wireless transmissions was understandable, as were British fears that some of their transmissions might cause confusion at best and danger at worst for those in the field. With the invasion about to be launched, a vast amount of wireless traffic would be sent, much of it vital to ensure success in major operations.

After a great deal of negotiation, it was agreed on 2nd May that, as a temporary measure, the Polish ministries could continue to communicate with their w/t stations in France but all had to be of an operational nature and plain text copies sent to SOE. Outward messages were to be submitted for censorship and SOE staff were to be present at the time the messages were enciphered. In order to protect their ciphers the Poles would not agree to the conditions and the Polish Prime Minister was not prepared to make exceptions. The Chiefs of Staff, therefore, decided to withdraw the privilege, and until 'BARDSEA' ciphers were submitted, no messages to the resistance in France were allowed.

Now all messages to the field were impossible. This meant that planned operations could not take place and it was unlikely they would before the end of the next moon period. Wireless operators were left in the dark, not knowing why communications had been cut. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to re-connect communications. With this in mind, Hazell wrote, 'The Chiefs of Staff decision must be reversed or SHAEF must drop the 'BARDSEA' plan altogether. It should be remembered the loss of the operation will be a great one, as will the effect on morale of a large body of Poles in France, the organisers, w/t

operators etc. who have been sent there at considerable risk to themselves'. He continued, "BARDSEA' is an SOE/SO plan not a Polish one but is one of the few direct contributions to the Allied cause that SOE/SO have been able to obtain from the Polish Government and that a break in communications would present the opportunity for the Polish Government to blame UK/US authorities and cancel the plan. The Chief of Staff will not be hindering the Poles in their Polish schemes but stopping them from contributing to the success of 'OVERLORD'!"⁴²⁴

The response Hazell received from SHAEF's operational section was not helpful. It said that if the change to the 'BARDSEA' agreement was not agreed, then SHAEF might have to discontinue supplying the Poles in view of their 'limited potential' compared with French groups.⁴²⁵ Perhaps he was unaware that Polish groups had been carrying out subversive action in France from almost the beginning of hostilities and that much of their success had almost certainly been credited wrongly to the French resistance.⁴²⁶

WILDHORN

Plans were for operation 'WILDHORN' to be carried out on 6th February. Perkins asked Captain Jan Podoski (Jaswiński's number two) to arrange for a Hudson aircraft to be sent to Torment, the codename for the operational base in Italy, to carry out the operation.⁴²⁷ Consultation between senior officers of the Home Army and the Polish Commander-in-Chief in London was becoming more urgent than ever before and there was a dire need to get those concerned out of Poland for a meeting. Mikołajczyk, too, had his own reasons to evacuate someone to England, Wincenty Witos.⁴²⁸ He informed Perkins that any Polish Government reform was of little value unless the present President, Władysław Raczkiewicz, was replaced by Witos, and he was anxious that Witos should come to England at the first opportunity. Soon Perkins was able to reply that 'WILDHORN' was standing by and ready but as the Germans had recently been carrying out 'Pacification' operations in the intended area of landing, the operation had been delayed by a month.⁴²⁹ Any alteration in the planned landing site would have been difficult to arrange at short notice. Wing-Commander Alan

Boxer had laid down requirements earlier. The surface must be frozen without a tendency to thaw, the snow depth must be less than 5 cm. with no more than a 5mph crosswind component.⁴³⁰

On 18th January, Colonel Perkins and Major Pickles visited the Sixth Bureau to discuss the 'WILDHORN' project with Colonel Protasewicz, Major Jaswiński and Captain Podoski. Their first reaction when told that details of the operation were known by Minister Banaczyk was to cancel the project. Not trusting the Ministry of the Interior, they were fearful that if Banaczyk knew, then the Germans probably did too. They asked Perkins to tell Banaczyk, but he was reluctant to become embroiled in Polish interdepartmental squabbles and said they should deal with their own government ministers. They argued that they could not go against government wishes and so Perkins contacted Selborne who approached Banaczyk asking him not to pass any information on to his associates, as special security measures were necessary. The Sixth Bureau also spoke directly to Banaczyk, and he agreed only to tell his delegate in Warsaw to contact the GOC about the operation nearer the planned time without giving details.⁴³¹

Interdepartmental squabbles were not restricted to the Polish Government, however, and Perkins came under criticism for not dealing with certain aspects of 'WILDHORN' through the correct channels, especially the direct contact he had had with Boxer. Perkins explained (through proper channels) that he had battled with the Air Ministry for about a year for 'WILDHORN' to go ahead and that a February departure had left little time for niceties.⁴³² The problem was again one of aircraft availability. Clearly, a Hudson could possibly be required to stand by during an entire moon period in order to ensure a successful mission. There were five Hudsons available for any single moon period, but only three crews. SIS used Hudsons extensively for their secret operations into France, and Bomber Command could see no justification in transferring a Hudson to Italy because of 'C's' commitments. The problem was seen by the RAF to be a logistical one, but SOE considered it somewhat political, as to whether 'C's' French operations were more important than 'WILDHORN' or not.⁴³³

The fate of 'WILDHORN' appeared to be settled at the very highest level on 3rd February, when Churchill and the Defence Committee decided that the operation should be carried out forthwith. All were anxious that nothing should jeopardise the forthcoming action, which was now planned to take place in March, and for which a Polish crew had been made available, even though no aircraft had been allotted for the purpose.

At a meeting at the Air Ministry with Air Commodore Easton and Wing-Commander Boxer, Perkins asked if there were any technical reasons why 'WILDHORN' should fail. Easton said that although the proposed landing grounds were not entirely satisfactory, he saw no reason why it should not be successful, possibly using a Dakota aircraft. A Dakota would need a 50 yard longer take-off run, as it was heavier than a Hudson, but he had no objection to Perkins making tentative arrangements for the operation to go ahead.⁴³⁴ A month later the problem was resolved when the decision was made to use a Dakota aircraft with an American crew of 267 Squadron under the control of 334 Wing.⁴³⁵

Mediterranean Operations.

Whilst in Italy, Kopański informed Gubbins that Major Jan Jaswiński had been appointed senior Polish Officer at Torment. Gubbins welcomed the appointment as he considered Jaswiński to be keen, reliable and supportive. The organisation in Italy differed from that in London, mainly because they were working in an operational theatre under the command of the Allied Commander in Chief of the Mediterranean Forces, Sir Harold Alexander, and his local commanders. SOE staff were appointed to represent the Polish operational base with regard to local military authorities, and it was the intention of Gubbins to strengthen that representation. The responsibility for all SOE Mediterranean activities has been vested in Maj. Gen. William Stawell, so Gubbins appointed Brigadier H. 'Bonso' Miles, the senior SOE officer in the Italian theatre. Subsequently the British officers in charge of Torment became directly responsible to him.⁴³⁶

Air Supplies and Finance

During the previous month, Kopański had asked for an increased effort to Poland, and he now received the reply he was looking for, a promise to increase the number of aircraft in order to treble the amount of equipment supplied. Selborne wrote to Sosnkowski, confirming the allotment, and the Chief of Staff informed Air Force Headquarters of the decision to increase the Polish Flight to twelve aircraft and the authority to use a further six belonging to 334 Wing when they were available.⁴³⁷ This decision to increase the potential for deliveries to Poland came none too soon for SOE, and John Venner asked for a report to be written in order to make financial projections. Until now, support had been on an infinitesimal scale. The report pointed out that since operations started, 73 successful operations had been carried out, delivering six tons plastic explosive, 2171 pistols, 1067 automatic weapons, 202 w/t sets and about \$13,500,000 of which about \$5,000,000 came from the Treasury. With increased support SOE were optimistic they could put into Poland during March, April and the first half of May about six times as much as hitherto during the whole course of the war.

Six Halifaxes from number 300 Polish squadron were now to go to Italy to bring the Polish flight up to twelve aircraft, plus others to bring strength of Italian-based squadrons to eighteen aircraft each. This was, in some way, made possible by the Americans who would use their aircraft to assist supplies to Balkans, thus releasing British aircraft for flights to other destinations.⁴³⁸ Content with the procurement of extra aircraft, the Poles insisted that all eighteen aircraft be allotted for Polish operations when conditions were suitable, but agreed that at other times they could be used for other purposes. SOE were satisfied that they would not affect their commitments to supply either the French Maquis or Tito's partisans.⁴³⁹ Following a letter written to Sosnkowski by Selborne, Perkins suggested to Gubbins that his Minister's (Selborne) reply should not mention figures when speaking to the Poles of flights to Poland as, when this had been done in the past, the Poles interpreted the figures as promises.

Before the move to Italy, the Poles were told that weather conditions in Brindisi were expected to be better than those in England, but since the move no operations had been managed in eight weeks due to bad weather. Perkins wrote, 'It should be remembered that last year, in similar conditions, the Polish flight of six aircraft managed twenty-two successful flights. Trebling the effort as promised in his personal letter would mean sixty six flights when he (Selborne) is providing only thirty. They would consider this to be high-level sabotage. There is no reason to bring this miserable figure to the Poles' attention. They will be happy if he assures them the eighteen aircraft will go to Poland whenever possible, they want no other assurance and are happy to pool the aircraft and recognise the need to do so.'

⁴⁴⁰ Bad weather caused the loss of two Liberators during February. ⁴⁴¹

British Prisoners of War in Poland

Perkins brought up the question of British Prisoners of War (POW's) in Poland (in German prison camps) with his director of plans, and of the attitude they should take when the uprising took place. SOE had heard from escaped POW's that they had much sympathy for the Poles, many of whom had helped in their escapes and some of the escapers had expressed a wish to return to Poland to help the Polish Home Army. The Poles expected released POW's to assist following their liberation during the uprising, but MI9 suggest the prisoners remain neutral and stay in their camps for fear of possible repercussions. Perkins was not satisfied with this proposal and felt a higher authority than MI9 should make the decision. ⁴⁴² Polish claims that there were 300 British POW's in Warsaw were thought to be exaggerated, but the entire question appeared primarily to be a War Office matter and it was suggested that Gubbins write to them for a ruling. ⁴⁴³

One escaped prisoner was Ronald Jeffery. ⁴⁴⁴ Jeffery first came to the notice of British Intelligence, and subsequently SOE, when he succeeded in having messages sent from Warsaw to The Times in London giving details of life in the German-occupied capital, which, in accordance with security arrangements at the time, was never published. Gubbins wanted information about him and was told by Threlfall that he was a private soldier

claiming to be a captain in the Home Army. Threlfall did not know whether Jeffery invented the rank of captain or whether the Poles gave him the rank, so he did not inform the Poles that he was not an officer.⁴⁴⁵ Jeffery soon became a figure of some importance to SOE who thought he should be brought out with the Wildhorn operation.⁴⁴⁶ Jeffery made his own arrangements and, posing as a German official, by 25th February arrived in England. His interrogation proved very interesting. Truszkowski interviewed him on 10th March. Truszkowski's report on Jeffery said that his vision of the Poles was in no way coloured, despite his marriage to a Polish girl;⁴⁴⁷ his opinion remained cold and sober. There is no doubt that he was to become an important source of information.⁴⁴⁸

MI9 arranged for Perkins to meet courier Jan Nowak, partly to discuss the subject of prisoners in Poland and partly to hear if he knew anything of Jeffery.⁴⁴⁹ Perkins later confirmed to MI9 that he was satisfied that Jeffery was in no way a security risk. MI5 had reached the same conclusion, especially since a Lt. Nowak knew Jeffery well and was quite ready to vouch for him. Some doubt still remained, however, regarding Jeffery's account of how he had left Poland.⁴⁵⁰

Minorities.

Sabina and Company, a Polish group based in Denmark, was keen to see action but Hazell stressed that none should be taken prior to D-Day that would likely put their operators at risk due to increased activity by the Germans. The Poles gave their assurance that no cells would become active until after the invasion.⁴⁵¹ The Poles were thinking ahead where 'BARDSEA' was concerned. Sosnkowski had agreed to a further 37 officers to be recruited and trained by SOE, who would form a cadre of groups. They and their equipment were to be dropped into Polish prison camps in Germany when the opportunity arose in an operation called 'DUNSTABLE'. The objective was for the prisoners to break out and slaughter the surrounding population, which would appear to many Poles to be a deserving one. The men would be German-speaking and dropped into Western Europe. There were many problems associated with 'DUNSTABLE', though. Only two operations to Germany had taken place

during the previous two years, both of which took a considerable time to complete due to bad weather and the strength of enemy defences. It was thought by some that air operations of this kind could only be carried out if there was first a radical change in the internal situation in Germany.

Before such an operational proposal would be accepted by Bomber Command, strong pressure would have to be exerted by SHAEF. Hazell was advised to inform the RAF which areas he had in mind for the drops to take place. Hazell was aware that 'DUNSTABLE' was a long-term scheme and at that moment he had no idea where he proposed to drop the agents. The men's training should be complete by September, but doubts and fears of reprisals remained in everyone's mind about using POW's for such actions.⁴⁵² Hazell informed Mockler-Ferryman that he was making arrangements for the new men to be trained at STS63 and that they would come under the Polish Ministry of National Defence, just as those 'BARDSEA's intended for France.⁴⁵³

Mockler-Ferryman was investigating various ways of taking advantage of the 'BARDSEA' teams and suggested that Hazell obtain permission to vary the agreement with the Poles under which the 'BARDSEAS' were to operate i.e. once the Allies were within 72 hours of the Lille area. He wrote, 'We can either wait until D-Day and then call upon the Poles, saying there is an urgent operational situation and we need to use the 'BARDSEAS', or approach them now saying that operations in Italy and elsewhere have shown it will take time before the Allies can advance and it may be desirable to despatch all the 'BARDSEAS' to the field, even though it may be some time before the Allies reach their positions. They would be in no worse a situation (being in uniform) than SAS troops who are planned to be dropped along the coast of France.' Hazell disagreed and replied that it was not a good time to approach the Poles. 'I think best to wait for an urgent situation, or at least until D-Day. The French may rise spontaneously and the Poles in the Lille area will be carried along with them and we could put the 'BARDSEAS' in then. The men are in such good heart that I do not think they are worried about not being relieved within 72 hours.' A Polish message sent to the

'BARDSEA' groups perhaps indicated that they sensed doubt in Hazell's reply. It read, 'Anglo-Saxons to a great extent have lost faith in the French resistance.'⁴⁵⁴

Bombing of Poland to disguise Special Operations.

Perkins repeated a request to the Air Ministry for bombing raids onto Poland. The few aircraft with the capability to fly to Poland would, due to their need to carry sufficient fuel for the round trip, only be able to carry a small bomb load. The morale effect that even a small amount of bombing would have on the population Perkins considered inestimable. This had been tried earlier from England and one of the special operations aircraft had been sacrificed in order to drop a few bombs on a target in Warsaw. The slightly shorter distance from Italy to Poland could be used to advantage, provided Mediterranean Allied Air Force (MAAF) agreed. They did not. Perkins was informed that to be genuinely effective, bombing must be sustained and devastating.

Perkins felt obliged to put the record straight by writing to Colonel David Keswick, the Director of the Mediterranean Group, asking him to inform air advisor AVM Alan Ritchie that, 'We don't want sustained devastation, only a few bombers to cover our operations. I know British bombers over Poland would have a most heartening effect. The Poles have frequently asked for it. Where do we go from here?' Keswick does as asked and points out to Ritchie that a little bombing diverted the enemy's attention from SOE operations and that was the idea. The enemy was by now aware of SOE procedures and expected drops on moon lit nights. The idea of bombing was to fool them by diverting their attention to the explosions. Also their counter measures were different if they believed the aircraft overhead to be on a bombing raid.'⁴⁵⁵

Plans for March/April/May supply drops.

On 6th March, discussions were held at the normal fortnightly meeting on Polish operations. Jaswiński outlined a planned task for maximum disruption of German communications with a critical phase occurring when the invasion started from the West. The Officer Commanding

the Polish Army estimated a requirement for 500 tons of stores, but his first proposed area was out of range of the Italian air bases. Stawell could not promise increasing the share of flights to Poland but added he would take the matter further. Operational supplies were based on standard sets and a proportionate 40 sorties worth had been packed as well as a number of incomplete sets. Piats and grenades which were in short supply, were not available from Force 133, but perhaps could be obtained from elsewhere. Jaswiński pointed out that German equipment was more valuable as it allowed ease of re-equipping and theft or purchase could supply ammunition.⁴⁵⁶ Stawell promised to take up with the 15th Army Group the question of an expedition to collect captured arms with which to supply the Home Army. Jaswiński called for two more pick-up operations (Wildhorn) but Stawell cautiously would not commit himself until the results of the first one were seen.

Later, the headquarters of the MAAF in Algiers informed the Air Ministry in London that the Poles could be assured that whenever weather permitted they would put all available aircraft on their targets up to the limit of their capacity for reception. They added, 'We are bearing in mind that after the 1st week in May there is insufficient darkness for a Halifax to make the round trip from Brindisi to most Polish targets. Extra effort is therefore essential now.'⁴⁵⁷

Table of arms and equipment required and delivered for the period with a comparison table was:

	1941-3	April '44	May '44
Plastic explosive	13,735lbs.	17,470lbs	13,420lbs
LMG	-----	234	216
Sten	2,673	----	---
Small arms	1,067	2,007	2,567
20mm	-----	5	13
Containers	347	609	651
Packages	159	651	714 ⁴⁵⁸

Finance

On 14th March representatives of the Polish Finance ministry contacted SOE's John Venner in search of a loan. The Polish expenditure estimation was \$30,000,000 for military requirements and a further \$18,000,000 for civil ones. On the credit side, they expected to receive during 1944 \$9,000,000 from the USA and a further \$2,000,000 in Intelligence service credit, including British Military credit. In reserve, they held \$3 million worth of Złoty notes printed in the UK, \$1 Million in Reichmarks obtained from British authorities and credit in Sterling of approximately \$1 million. This gave them a total \$16 million, thus leaving them somewhat short of their requirement. Obtaining additional credit from the British Government was of major importance to them. Venner could not check their figures but did not doubt them and so he considered that the finance should be granted. Contacting Harry Sporborg, he pointed out that only a short period remained in which to deliver such funds, so a decision must be made quickly as to whether they were to be given the money. Venner reminded Sporborg that the Poles expected to receive \$12,000,000 per year from the USA in accordance with an agreement made between Sikorski and Roosevelt from the President's secret fund, which was not an authorised American loan. This meant the Poles had no recourse to claim if the Americans changed their minds. Naturally, the Poles were worried they might lose this, hence this special application.

Monetary support of special operations to Poland had been agreed on 25th March 1942, when the Defence Committee decided that 2/3^{rds} should be provided by the Treasury and 1/3rd by the Polish Finance Ministry in the form of dollar notes. The amount so far provided had been \$2,666,666 for 1942 and \$3,000,000 for 1943. However, the situation in Europe was now very different from that in 1942. The Sixth Bureau appreciated the point and was told that a loan should be requested from the Treasury by way of an addition to the military credit if they required more money. This they did. Projected requirements for the April moon period alone were six million francs by the Ministry of the Interior and, for the

Ministry of National Defence four Million francs, \$10,000 and 30 one carat diamonds for 'BARDSEA' operations.

The Poles wanted another \$3,000,000 to add to their own \$1,500,000 to support the 1944 season. The original purpose of this financial scheme was to support the Poles providing assistance to the Russians. Obviously such assistance was not needed but financial assistance for other Polish schemes was still required and SOE were worried that, even with the increased effort, they would still fall short of giving the Poles the support they deserved. Strategically, Polish action was just as important in 1944 as it was in 1942, as far as Perkins was concerned, and he suggested that Britain should continue financial support. Polish-Soviet politics remained unsteady and Perkins feared that if the proposal were put up now it would be judged exclusively on its political merits. He therefore suggested that Gubbins should be consulted'.⁴⁵⁹

Sporborg sent Venner's report to Selborne, agreeing the recommendation that the Poles should be given support. Victor Cannon-Brookes at the Ministry of Economic Warfare replied. 'I agree the Poles have no chance unless we sponsor them.' Roberts at the FO confirmed HMG policy in support for the Poles, saying that they should not think that any reasonable assistance is being withheld from them. By the end of the month, the Treasury telephoned Venner to inform him that a loan of \$3,000,000 had been approved. Venner took steps to obtain the money in dollar notes for onward transportation to Poland.⁴⁶⁰

JULA and EWA

The proposal for two new operations had marked the start of April. In Poland, activity against the German lines Lwów - Kraków began, intended to help the situation in the East. The first operation was called 'JULA', a diversionary action carried out with equipment already in the hands of the Home Army. A second, much larger operation named 'EWA', would be supported with material sent in. Telegram 623 from Warsaw to the Polish Government in

London informed them that orders had been given to prepare for diversive action controlled from the Warsaw headquarters aimed against strategic railway lines.

If successfully carried out, all east-west main line traffic would be cut at the same time, isolating the large numbers of German troops in the north and south of the Pripet marshes. The Poles expected a Russian drive on Lwów and Brześć and if these were in any way tied up with 'OVERLORD', the Polish actions would have a serious effect, with severe consequences for German troop movements to either front. SOE suggested that the timing of the operations should be put into the hands of SHAEF and that Sosnkowski might like to bring it to the attention of the British Chief of Staff, Sir Alan Brook.

The Home Army had intended to put 'JULA' fully into operation between 6th and 10th April, much too early to support the D-Day landings. Sufficient supplies were dropped for 'EWA' on 3rd April and a major operation was planned in the areas of Przemysł and Sanok between 10th and 30th April against the viaduct and bridges between Kraków -Lwów. This was intended to assist the Russian advance.

'MONICA'

The 'BARDSEA' operation, once deployed, would render 'MONICA' obsolete and the Poles were beginning to wind up the operation. Gradowski ⁴⁶¹ of the Ministry of the Interior contacted Venner requesting four million French francs that were needed for its liquidation. ⁴⁶² Just as 'MONICA' operations were winding up, Hazell heard that Communist Poles were approaching the heads of the French resistance, claiming that, as they were the only ones actively working against the Germans, they should be given assistance. The Polish Government needed to counteract such claims and in an effort to do so contemplated approaching the Ministry of the Interior of the French Liberation Committee in Algiers. The British advised them not to, but said they should let the French know that an organisation already existed ('MONICA') but suggested they gave the French no details. The Poles evidently took the British advice, but within a very short time the French began to question the existence of a Polish organisation working in France. Claiming that all work in France

should be through them, they wanted details of 'MONICA'. The British answer was simply that all involved in 'MONICA' were agents of the Poles and they, therefore, could not give the French details without Polish permission.⁴⁶³

Air Operations.

In response to an accusation that Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden was failing to do all he could for the Poles, Eden immediately asked for details and was told that since the establishment of the Italian base the total number of operations attempted since December was 36, of which five had been successful. Seven tons of material had been delivered for the loss of two aeroplanes with their crews, both due to bad weather over the home aerodrome.⁴⁶⁴ Bad weather meant that only 3% had been delivered of what had been planned; this, SOE informed him, was a miserable figure but nobody's fault.⁴⁶⁵

On the night of 3/4th April, two operations were launched, one of which was 'SALAMANDA'. 'SALAMANDA', as well as being the name of the operation, was also the *nom de guerre* of one of its participants who was none other than Jòsef Retinger, friend and confidant of the late General Sikorski, who was now returning to Poland as a Political Emissary. With him was an experienced jumper, Tadeusz Chciuk 'SULIMA', a courier who had parachuted into Poland on a previous occasion.⁴⁶⁶ The field was informed that, 'within the next few weeks, a man might approach the 'MONICA' organisation giving the code-name 'SALAMANDA'. Gubbins is particularly interested in him and he should be given every assistance.'⁴⁶⁷

Italian based operations and WILDHORN I.

Threlfall, now responsible for flights from Italy, confided in Dodds-Parker. 'We are far behind schedule for deliveries to the Polish Secret Army because of the lack of flights going out in December last year.' Due to atmospheric conditions, there had been two flights only in December and one each in January, February and March. The April moon was the last opportunity to get agents away until autumn because of the shorter nights. Had the recent

flights not been able to operate it would have left the Polish underground unable to carry out the tasks set by the Chiefs-of-Staff. Threlfall had contemplated using aircraft operating during the day with fighter escort, or by fully arming the bombers so they could, to some extent, protect themselves.⁴⁶⁸ In the latter case, part of the journey would have to be timed so it could be carried out in darkness, after the fighters had turned back. The limited range of fighters would not have allowed an escort for the entire route.⁴⁶⁹

On the night of 15th/16th the first flight to Poland of its kind departed; 'WILDHORN' under the command of Captain F/Lt E.J. Harrod and his Polish co-pilot Flt Lt Korpowski. Their passengers were;

In -

Lt Tomasz Kostuch 'Bryła';

Maj. Narcyz Łopianowski 'Sarna'.

Out -

Pplk Dypl Marian Dorotycz-Malewicz 'Strzemie' 'Bancia' 'Ryszard Hancza' 'Hancza';⁴⁷⁰

Lt Andrzej Pomian 'Dowmunt';

Gen Bryg Stanisław Tatar 'Turski' 'Tabor';

Zygmunt Berezowski 'Zyzio' 'Olesnick' (a political emissary) and

Stanisław Ołtarzewski 'Stefan Stanisławski'.

The collected men had never met before and did not know each other's names. 30 men made up the reception committee with another 150 acting as guards.

The Germans had suspected something was going on and previously a battle had been fought which had lasted three days with about forty Poles killed. Due to an oversight, the landing direction lights had not had their direction changed with a change of wind and the aircraft landed downwind. This would have required the aircraft to take a much longer landing run than should have been necessary, thus increasing the risks. A report of the landing was sent from Podoski to Perkins, who thought the oversight to be singularly foolish. Pickles replied to Podoski mentioning the mistakes made by the reception committee adding,

'We were lucky'.⁴⁷¹ On 19th the 'WILDHORN' party set off from Brindisi at 0630am for England.

Operations carried out between 3rd and 15th ensured that of 85 attempted drops 44 had been successful and 38 agents delivered with 426 containers and 459 packages. The moon period still had another night for further success and on the night of 16th/17th three more flights operated. The RAF reported that flights to all parts of Poland were now possible throughout the summer. The assumption that this was possible was based on a speed of the aircraft over the ground of 180 mph (288kph) after covering the first 100 miles (160kms) during twilight hours. Archibald Rankin, the airforce officer who had sent the message, was wrong on two counts, however. A requirement for an 850 miles radius flight needed 9½ hours of darkness, which would preclude operations between 1st May and 15th August. A flight of 750 miles required 8 hours 20 minutes, which was possible except within the period between June 1st and July 15th. His statement that, 'Wind may extend or shorten this time' was also wrong.⁴⁷² Even so, the news was welcome and a flight covering 650 miles brought most of Poland in range and required only seven hours of darkness.⁴⁷³

Censorship.

In consequence of a ban now imposed, all clandestine communications were to be controlled by the British, and the Poles were being asked to deposit all ciphers and submit plain language texts of all messages both in and out of England. Messages were sent out to all section heads, advising them that due to extra security, all bags were now subject to examination and censorship. Roberts, at the Foreign Office, had previously asked Sporborg if Polish packages, except those of a diplomatic nature, could be screened, and suggested that Sporborg should again bring up the question of Polish communications with the Poles at some stage. Understandably, the Poles remained unwilling to submit their ciphers for British examination.⁴⁷⁴ The situation though, had changed considerably. D-Day was soon to be launched and it was essential that any messages sent would not cause confusion and misunderstandings. The effects of an innocent message being misinterpreted are obvious, and

if that message had come from an independent source that had nothing to do with the operation in question, there was an even greater chance of failure. The Allies could not afford to fail in any way with respect to the invasion.⁴⁷⁵

SOE had sympathy with the Poles, questioning whether or not a message sent in a Polish cipher to Poland could be misinterpreted as an order relating to D-Day. Perkins was able to inform Threlfall in Italy that it had been established that plain copies of messages sent to the field need to be passed to SOE, but only after they had been sent. He warned Threlfall that SOE had no authority to do this other than their own. The cipher question had still not been resolved but he noted, 'Job must go on.'

Hazell too, wanted to send messages directly to his contacts in the field, France and Belgium. These were considered more important by SHAEF than the Operations to Poland at this stage as far as censorship was concerned. 'BARDSEA' was, after all, a British operation and not a Polish one, so censorship was not likely to be such a problem but the Poles had others in these countries that were now grouped with the 'BARDSEA's. It was ruled that Polish ciphers could be used for 'BARDSEA' on condition a. an English text was provided. b. They were only used for operational matters and c. If possible SOE watched the ciphering. (The FO did not insist upon this).⁴⁷⁶

London signalled bases abroad advising of extra security measures to be taken prior to D-Day. These included extra careful searching of agents prior to their departure to the field. They were also to ensure no telegrams were accepted for transmission unless prior approval had been given by SOE, the message having been enciphered by them or in a code deposited with them. Operational messages to Poland were the only exception and could still be sent in Polish. The proviso had altered slightly by the beginning of May, by which time they first had to be supplied and approved in *en clair* text prior to being sent.⁴⁷⁷

E/UP

Mockler-Ferryman passed a requested report to the operational section of SHAEF on the 'BARDSEA' operation. In it he explained that resistance comprised approximately 3,200

Poles in cells of five men each. They were to take no part in resistance until after D-Day or until directed by the Polish Government in the UK. The original E/UP charter had been for action to be taken in areas where it was expected that the Allies would overrun the area within 2-3 days. Mockler-Ferryman asked for confirmation that this was still the case.⁴⁷⁸

Selborne wrote to Mikołajczyk, reminding him that the 'BARDSEA' agreement signed in February 1944 was originally based on an idea of almost a year previous. Since this time, SOE Western Europe operations had been put into the hands of a joint US/UK organisation known as SOE/SO under the direct control of SHAEF. Eisenhower, as supreme commander, wished to review the plans. He appreciated that the Polish Government wished not to use their own people before the advance was made, in order to render them comparatively safe from reprisals. The policy, as it currently stood, had considerable disadvantages. The 'BARDSEA's were situated astride the principal routes into Northeast France and Belgium and it was now not considered that action here within two to three days of the Allied arrival would be of much use.⁴⁷⁹ It was necessary that continental action required all fighting sources to be available (including 'BARDSEA') to the supreme commander for use at his discretion. Any restrictions, such as those laid down in the original agreement, depreciated their value. It was therefore requested that discussions should begin with a view to modify the agreement of 27th February. There was, of course, no question of bringing out Polish forces in France without due regard to their chances of survival.⁴⁸⁰ Plainly SHAEF wanted complete control over any E/UP action and threatened to withdraw support if the Poles did not allow them to control the 'BARDSEA's directly. SOE responded that such a threat was useless as it had taken them a long time to convince the Poles that 'BARDSEA' was a good idea. SOE were certain that the Poles would welcome a withdrawal of support.⁴⁸¹ . Meanwhile Hazell pushed on with 'BARDSEA' training.⁴⁸²

Selborne again wrote to Mikołajczyk urging him to accept that 'BARDSEA' should come under direct control from SHAEF, he eventually agreed the alteration subject to their own conditions. .⁴⁸³

Reports on the Home Army.

Major General Tabor and Lt. Colonel Dorotycz-Malewicz (Hancza), who had arrived from the 'WILDHORN' operation, were both empowered to give full information on the Home Army. On 26th April, SOE learned that the General had held the office equivalent to Director of Military Operations and the Colonel had been in charge of all reception committees. They said that all political parties were united except the Communists. The Secret Army therefore represented about 90-95% of the Polish population. It was highly organised for general insurrection, which had always been the ultimate plan of the Polish Government and regarded covert operations as merely training exercises for the uprising. The Polish High Command thought the German army would crack when maximum pressure was being applied from both west and east and this was the time they planned to put their insurrection into action, leaving the Poles in command of their country.

On 1st May, a meeting was held to discuss the amount of equipment required by the Polish Secret Army. Present were Tabor, Perkins, Pickles, Podoski and Protasewicz, and another known simply as Major 'H' (probably an SIS officer). Following information from Tabor, the 'JULA' operation appeared not to be the failure that many thought it was, as many successful actions had subsequently been carried out. 'EWA' was currently in hand, aimed at communications between Kraków and Lwów. These larger operations were certainly causing long term problems for the enemy. Other areas were now being considered for future operations. This information boded well for action co-ordinated with 'OVERLORD'. An anonymous hand wrote, 'The potentialities of the Polish Secret Army could only be realised when it is fully understood that it is, without doubt, the most highly organised, the best trained, and shortly, we hope to be the best equipped conspiratorial force in Europe.'⁴⁸⁴

Air

Selborne was worried that the Poles were still not getting the support they were promised. He wrote, 'We must give the Poles priority until we have done 300 sorties, which we said that we would make our target. If more work is required in Northern Italy then the Air Ministry must

produce more planes. I feel very strongly about this.' It appears that further problems with regard to aircraft had precipitated Selborne's concern. The existence of the Polish Flight 1586 was something of a mystery to many in the Mediterranean, Poland not being the responsibility of the Strategic Air Command Mediterranean (SACMED). The only reason they were there was because the weather on northern routes from England was so bad. The Polish Flight was seen as a lodger unit in Italy and, constitutionally, the Mediterranean Allied Air Force had no commitment to provide any sorties to Poland beyond those of which 1586 were capable, unless instructed by the Chief of Staff. The arrangement, whereby they operated to Poland and in return the Polish Flight operated to the Balkans, was purely a gentleman's agreement.⁴⁸⁵ Sporborg did not share Selborne's concerns and saw no reason to worry, thinking the Poles were getting adequate priority and very fair treatment.⁴⁸⁶

Security measures in Italy.

Threlfall informed Jaswiński of extra security measures with respect to 'OVERLORD'. He assured him that the precautions applied to everyone leaving the UK and not just the Poles, but that he had gained approval for Polish personnel on urgent operations to still be sent from England to Italy for onwards transportation (other nationalities could not). Jaswiński fully understood. The reduced efficiency of his W/T due to the restrictions had not adversely affected dropping operations. The only ones that had proven problematical were when navigators failed to find reception committees or when enemy troop movements meant that reception committees had to disperse. He admitted that he may sometimes give Major Alun Morgan *en clair* texts a little late due to understaffing at his operations office but he hoped soon to get more staff from the UK.⁴⁸⁷

Threlfall, together with George Klauber, had taken over the organisation of stores at the Torment base. Until this time, the organisation had been a shambles, due to lack of staff. Klauber built up a reserve of containers so as not to live such a hand to mouth existence and Jaswiński was delighted. He further managed to get some German weapons for Jaswiński as

had been earlier requested. The takeover would enable the Torment men to run the base and packing station and records would now be able to be kept.⁴⁸⁸

Soon the target to treble airdrops to Poland had been reached and a relieved Spurborg learned that the February estimate of 168 sorties with 50% success had been exceeded. 187 attempts had been made of which 90 were successful. He also learned that operations could continue during all the summer months except one. Selborne questioned why and asked, 'Would it be June, Invasion month?'⁴⁸⁹

Future of Agents.

The minutes of a weekly meeting held on 12th May reveal that a Polish Minister had already done some preliminary work endeavouring to contact groups of Poles in Germany to assist with the 'DUNSTABLE' operation.⁴⁹⁰ There were an estimated 52,446 Polish POW's in Germany plus 1,187,000 civilians.⁴⁹¹ Whilst SOE pondered the use of POW's for future operations, the Foreign Office was concerned with what to do following the defeat of Germany, with SOE's agents who might fall victim of a new i.e. Soviet regime. Peter Loxey of the FO said that the Foreign Office could offer no help and that it was up to SOE, SIS and MI9 to get together and compile a complete list of their agents for future consideration. As far as the Polish Section was concerned, SOE had no agents working for them directly. Pickles wondered how he could recommend people whose names he did not know, and asked Perkins whether the agents sent could be considered to be working for SOE. Perkins could see his point, and that a list would be helpful if he could obtain one from the Poles. Truskowski added that he only knew of two Poles working for the British, Andrew Kennedy and Christine Granville.⁴⁹²

Soviet knowledge of Polish action.

On 20th May, the Chiefs of Staff held a meeting during which they considered the possibility of providing support for an uprising in Poland. It was realised that the timing of such action would have to be decided upon by the commander on the spot. Short summer nights would

restrict the number of sorties to Poland and stores supplied by air would likely be inadequate to support a general rising. The Poles, they thought, should concentrate on intensifying diversionary sabotage and the SOE representative in Moscow, George Hill, should pursue the question of co-operation between the Polish Underground and the Soviet Army with the NKVD.⁴⁹³ The chances of a successful outcome to negotiations with the Soviets lessened three days later when the Polish Government was obliged to inform their GOC in Warsaw of a deadlock in Soviet/Polish relations. They had not entirely given up on British mediation attempts although they were doubtful of a favourable outcome, and thought it desirable that the American Government should start to increase co-operation in the matter.⁴⁹⁴

State of the Home Army in May 1944

By now, there were some 350 reception committees throughout Poland. In mid-May, Alun Morgan lamented to Threlfall that it was impossible to issue a w/t set to each reception party in Poland as there were so many, unlike in the Balkans where the reception parties were permanent and generally attached to British liaison officers. 'Crack' (pre-arranged) signals from the BBC were not altogether satisfactory as they limited the reception to only one night and were further limited by the number of flights to those that had been arranged in the previous month. This was no good for short-notice flights or anything out of the ordinary. Efficient underground links needed between three and ten sets. If a group had thirty committees on standby, five may be out of action due to enemy troop movements in their area. If, therefore, the BBC called up twenty five with only twelve aircraft available, thirteen would be standing by uselessly.⁴⁹⁵

The strength of the Home Army was known to be about 350,000 men, but it was difficult to keep accurate records within the conspiratorial conditions under which it was working. The estimate was based on the number of platoons given and allowed for an increase in numbers due to mobilisation in the areas in the immediate rear of the Germans' Eastern front. The Polish HQ in London estimated 6,500 platoons averaging 50 men. Of the 350,000 total, only about 60-70,000 were fully armed, but nearly all the men had some sort

of weapon (pistol, grenade etc). They had no heavy equipment, transport or artillery. Their main equipment were PIATs, Boyes anti-tank guns, 3" mortars, Brens, Stens, Thompsons, pistols, grenades, explosives and sabotage equipment, plus captured German automatic weapons. These were supplemented by rifles and machineguns preserved since 1939. Clandestine production of grenades and flame-throwers continued. As well as good internal communications, communications were also good between the UK and Poland, and Poland to Italy. Messages were always received within 48 hrs of sending (including decode times etc). The use of couriers continued but naturally this was slower, sometimes taking days if not weeks to reach a destination. SIS considered intelligence coming from Poland to be of the highest standard. German penetration of the cells (counter-espionage) was minimal and had been localised due to the nature of the cell system so it was of little consequence. Witness to this was the fact that the Polish Home Army had existed under the gaze of the Gestapo for five years. Interrogation of German agents captured in the Middle East confirmed there had been little penetration of the actual Home Army, although the Germans had had some, but not much success with the political organisations.⁴⁹⁶

In Italy, Alun Morgan passed on to Henry Threlfall details of the Chief of Staff directive, which was that the Poles should concentrate on sabotage of communications and that small arms and PIATs should be sent to afford protection to guerrilla bands carrying out this work. It seemed that action had changed in Poland and the quantities of explosives and weapons now being sent there were different from that originally envisaged in London. Morgan said, 'I am not sure these changes are appreciated in London, and we must guard against any reluctance of theirs to supply these weapons. It appears we are currently tending to a Balkan style of permanent reception committees and continuously working w/t stations which indicate that troops are operating on the ground in uniform and are not undertaking the old-style clandestine warfare.' Morgan was later proved right. When Jaswiński, in a telegram, referred to 'bastions', he unwittingly indicated that the underground army was already 'above ground' and the shift had been made to open fighting.⁴⁹⁷

'WILDHORN II'

One other important operation took place at the end of May when, on the night of 29th, a Dakota took off on 'WILDHORN II'. It carried Lt. Col. Romuald Bielski ('Bei') and General Tadeusz Kossakowski ('Krystynek') plus 964 lbs ammunition into Poland. 'WILDHORN II' left Italy during the evening with four long-range cabin tanks fitted to give an endurance of fourteen hours. On the return they brought out Major Zbigniew Sujkowski ('Leliwa') ('Wygoda'); plk Roman Rudkowski ('Rudy') and political emissary Jan Domanski ('Bartnicki'). Two other passengers failed to turn up at reception. The operation had been finally arranged at short notice to take advantage of favourable weather conditions. The mainly British crew with Polish co-pilot was escorted until darkness fell by two Liberators, as no long-range fighters were available. Threlfall apologised to Perkins that the operation had been completed before he knew it was going. One of the missing men at the reception was called Paisley and the other was known to be a Professor of about 70 years of age who had refused the strain of the journey across country to the reception area,⁴⁹⁸ otherwise the operation was a completely successful. ⁴⁹⁹ Threlfall wrote, 'You will remember Rudko. (Wing-Commander Rudkowski was dropped into Poland on 25/26th January 1943). He got into trouble at one of our airfields and was put into jail for a short time, which he deemed an honour. He was dropped into Poland and is now back. Perhaps it is a pity he has now been brought out again.'

Censorship

The censorship problem continued to give headaches to Perkins. He complained to Threlfall that other departments had apparently waited to see what SOE did so they could follow suit. Grasping the nettle and taking the lead, Margaret Jackson, Gubbins's secretary, had set up a censorship section with Polish speaking FANY's who were most efficient. Every communication passed through this office. Reminding Threlfall of the large number of messages sent by the Poles, Perkins wrote, 'As you know more of Polish affairs and their ciphers, which, even in your days here were hardly monthly, Truskowski will appreciate

some of the fun and games we have reading some of the horrors. What Mikołajczyk says about his boss and what Sosnkowski says about both of them is nobody's business. In general, I am delighted with the results. We now know what exactly is going on, not just politically. We see all outgoing between the Sixth Bureau and the Torment base; what we do not see is Torment traffic to Poland, which leaves a serious loophole. We hope you can enforce the censorship there. Jaswiński will be a beggar about it but you must convince him our security is better than his is. Tabor has helped considerably and recently gave us a map showing his complete battle order. He has been withholding this from us for three years. All crossed themselves and fumbled for their 'L' Tablets, I expected a mass hari-kari. Pickles is producing a map showing complete network he is interested in, both inside and outside Poland, which is of great use to us, SHAEF and the Chiefs of Staff for determining the time lag between dispatch of orders and action in various areas of Poland. Three months ago the production of such a map would have been impossible.' ⁵⁰⁰ Threlfall quickly replied saying that Jaswiński had not made any difficulties over censorship once it had been explained to him, and he was most reasonable and understanding. 'His delinquencies' Threlfall wrote, 'lay in tending to forget rather than deceive. Morgan will have to keep an eye out for the inevitable forgotten material.' ⁵⁰¹

'BARDSEA'

SOE were not happy with their own wireless communications when, on 5th June, they asked 'C' to assure them that the frequencies allocated to them and other arrangements for post D-Day would be satisfactory. If they were not, there was little time to make changes, for the following morning heralded D-DAY and the Allies' return to France on the coast of Normandy. ⁵⁰² Now would be the time that 'BARDSEA' came into its own. Four days after the invasion Deputy Polish Prime Minister Kwapinski agreed the change to the 'BARDSEA' charter on three conditions: Firstly, that 'BARDSEA'/'MONICA' would only be put into action in conjunction with French resistance activity and with full collaboration between

General Marie Pierre Koenig⁵⁰³ and the Polish authorities; secondly, that the overall plan envisaged small drops of French, Belgian, United States and Polish parachutists to strengthen resistance groups; finally that 'BARDSEA' troops would be dropped in the neighbourhood of controlled areas. Fifteen blind drops had been planned for 'BARDSEA', six within areas banned by the Air ministry, two of them on account of severe flak. Seven areas had been agreed but there was no immediate likelihood of any 'BARDSEA' going ahead until the fighter/flak problem had been sorted out. Hazell was not happy with any such arrangement and said that decisions on 'BARDSEA' drop points would have to be made later.⁵⁰⁴

Lifting of the Ban

Soon it became apparent that the ban on the censorship of ciphers would be lifted. Hazell, however, still wanted all signals vetoed by SHAEF to stop the chance of innocent disclosure of plans, real or cover, being sent. (He had had this happen three or four times already). Mockler-Ferryman thought this unlikely especially where the Poles were concerned, as they knew nothing of the overall plans.⁵⁰⁵

Two things may have pleased the Poles. Firstly, SHAEF had fully agreed to accept the stipulations made by the Polish Government with respect to the use of 'BARDSEA' troops.⁵⁰⁶ Secondly, following the restoration of diplomatic privileges, the operational base PUNCH (Force 139 Poland HUNgary CzeCHoslovakia) asked if Torment signals should still be censored. The reply came from Klauber, 'Responsibility for censorship definitely cancelled. The Sixth Bureau realises that censorship has increased co-operation and led to better understanding between us. They now pass copies to us after transmission. Am asking them to suggest the same to Jaswiński.'⁵⁰⁷

Mikolajczyk in the USA

On 6th June, Mikolajczyk was in Washington for talks with Roosevelt. One of the points high on the agenda was for twelve Liberator aircraft, plus another four supplied each month, to be allocated for use by the Polish Flight. The British had decided to re-equip 1586 Flight with

Stirling bombers and four Polish crews were instructed by the Air Ministry to retrain and familiarise themselves on the different aircraft.⁵⁰⁸ Mikołajczyk also asked the President that the \$12,000,000 credit be increased to \$97,000,000 in order to allow the Poles to continue their fight. Roosevelt agreed on principle but remained uncommitted. Mikołajczyk, for his part, believed he had been successful in his negotiations and that the loan would be forthcoming.⁵⁰⁹

At a meeting in Baker Street on 20th, Tabor reported on the visit by himself and Mikołajczyk to Roosevelt and informed those present of Mikołajczyk's request for the loan of \$97 million for use in supporting a general rising. The President had been non-committal (some seven authorities would have to be consulted for advice) but had put Tabor in touch with Admiral William Leahy who introduced him to the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff. Tabor requested them to authorise a slight increase in SOE effort in supplying the Poles, to release more w/t equipment in accordance with Mitkiewicz- Zółter's list of May 1943 and to consider support for the rising with 1,200-1,500 sorties by air. The Combined Chiefs-of-Staff agreed on principle but said it must go through proper channels. When Roosevelt was consulted, he stated that US air bases in Russia might be used for supplying an uprising but made it clear that the Russians would have to be consulted to gain their approval.⁵¹⁰ Perkins left the meeting with the impression that Tabor thought his meeting with the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff was successful. Perkins, on the other hand, felt the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff and the British Chiefs-of-Staff were going to take no further action and, if this proved to be the case, Tabor first should be told. He remarked, 'I do not wish this misapprehension to continue and feel it will lead to unnecessary reorganisation in Poland.' News of Perkins' thoughts reached Gubbins, who gave orders to inform Tabor that no action was being taken by either the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff or the British Chiefs-of-Staff.⁵¹¹

British Chiefs-of-Staff withdraw advice.

At an unofficial meeting between Tabor, Protasewicz, Grocholski, Perkins and Pickles, Perkins was obliged to inform those present that the British Chiefs-of-Staff would no longer

offer advice on activity within Poland, as Poland came under the Russian sphere of operations. Therefore, activity should remain as at present. By way of perhaps excusing the Chiefs-of-Staff for the reason behind their decision, Perkins put forward the argument that Eisenhower would not have tolerated Russian support for the French had the situation been different. Perkins promised wholehearted support from SOE, regretting the fact that it appeared SOE could do no more. Tabor thanked Perkins for his clear and honest explanation adding that it would be impossible for them to approach the Russians until the current political question had been settled.⁵¹²

SOE thought that two conditions were necessary for the restoration of Polish/Russian relations: firstly, the defeat of the Germans in the East, which would be impossible, or at least prohibitively expensive without US support, and secondly for the Pluto-democrats to impress on the Russians that unless anti-Polish aggression ceased drastic sanctions would be imposed against them both now and after the war. The latter option was not, of course, in SOE's hands.⁵¹³

Russian claims on Poland.

On 1st July, news came, via Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, the British Ambassador in Moscow, of the Polska Partja Robotnica, the Polish Workers' Party (Communist). In his message to the Foreign Office he stated that he had been informed by the Russians that this 'peoples' army' was responsible for resistance in Poland, and many officers of the AK had gone over to it. The Russians claimed that since 1942 the AK had taken credit for acts of sabotage not committed by them and later the AK had itself been shamed into isolated demonstrations, such as the 'murder' of Gestapo Chief General Franz Kutch (by Adam Borys "Plug"⁵¹⁴). He was further told that the AK had restrained themselves from attacking transport and did not use the explosives sent by air for this purpose, but instead hid the material. The Russians claimed the AK did not have enough men even to meet the flights as reception committees.

⁵¹⁵

Eureka allocation.

Morgan informed Jaswiński that he had been allocated four new Eureka sets from the total Mediterranean allotment. For some unknown reason, Jaswiński was opposed to their use but if he refused these Eureka sets he would almost certainly not be granted a further allocation. Poland was the only country not using Eureka sets successfully, but if good results could be obtained then SOE would have a better argument for supplying larger quantities. Threlfall asked Morgan if he could get Jaswinski to change his mind.⁵¹⁶

The need for a new directive.

On 7th July, Threlfall asked Jaswiński for his estimated requirements for July to December 1944 and for the whole of 1945, as requested by London. Threlfall had asked London in June if there was likely to be any variation in airlifts to Poland in the near future, or should he continue to send on current basis, ie about 100 successful sorties per month. Now that it appeared that sabotage was likely to decrease, would the proportion of fighting equipment need to increase? The directive given to the Polish Section of SOE from the Chiefs-of-Staff in London had stated the task of the Home Army was mainly to sabotage German transport. Now the Home Army was coming out into the open and acting as guerrilla forces, which had been proven by the recent events in Poland, tending to make the directive out of date. Threlfall's question hinted that the whole question of supplies to Poland should be reviewed.

He was advised to continue as at present. London said the directive was still for promoting sabotage, intelligence and subversion first, but thought they would be able to justify to the Chiefs-of-Staff the heavy proportion of arms, ammunition and other military equipment sent. The Sixth Bureau had sent Jaswiński a directive based on 1,000 sorties between July '44 and August '45 with increased allocations of ammunition as requested by General Tabor. The Poles did not expect any increase in the number of airlifts to Poland, as they knew no large-scale daylight drops would take place until agreement had been reached between the Poles and the Soviets.⁵¹⁷

Anticipating a change of attitude from the Chiefs of Staff, SOE headquarters in London expected that during 1945 more military, as opposed to sabotage stores, would be delivered, and continued to examine technical possibilities of large-scale daylight drops in case permission was given.⁵¹⁸

WILDHORN III

On 30th June, following intelligence reports from Poland, the British asked for more details on the rockets that had been mentioned in one report.⁵¹⁹ A secret telegram sent at the beginning of July mentioned the possibility of a missile being the subject of a special 'WILDHORN' operation but warned that the GOC in Poland should not be made aware of it at the moment. The missile, seemed to be an improved flying bomb or rocket, of a type recently used against London. SOE responded, asking urgently for details of how the rockets were transported to their launch sites. The truth was that the Poles had captured one of the rockets intact and the plan was to bring components back to London for analysis. The Commander of the Balkan Airforce briefed those concerned with a plan to bring this special freight out on a 'BRIDGE' operation. Threlfall knew nothing of the matter but questioned Perkins, who told him that Jaswiński had sent a telegram on 7th July, which gave him some details. He went on to inform Threlfall that a special 'WILDHORN' (code named 'WILDHORN X') was to be mounted for 'CROSSBOW' purposes. Threlfall asked 'What does CROSSBOW mean?' Perkins again signalled Threlfall. Every hour was important, as 'CROSSBOW' was a German secret weapon. He finished by saying to Threlfall, 'Ensure no slip up at your end.' The Air Ministry wanted the 'WILDHORN III' aircraft with the equipment and specialist as soon as possible once the mission is successful.

The Sixth Bureau had already made enquiries about landing grounds so Perkins presumed the Torment base would get a copy. The operation was of great urgency and had the highest priority. Perkins regretted that Threlfall had not been informed and added that the matter was in hands of Air Ministry, but its details would pass through Threlfall's hands to the Balkan Airforce and not through SOE in Bari. Perkins finished by asking Threlfall to

ensure that Jaswiński had full details from Warsaw regarding landing grounds or to wire him immediately. The need to rapidly plan the operation meant that many were left in the dark as to its details and confusion reigned. Jaswiński received instructions saying 'WILDHORN X' was cancelled and the equipment would be carried on 'WILDHORN III'. When questioned about this apparent change of plan, Perkins said he did not mind what the operation was called, only that the material was of greater importance than the men they planned to exfiltrate with it. Orders for priority were given: firstly 'CROSSBOW' apparatus, secondly the 'CROSSBOW' specialist, then finally Retinger, followed by the other passengers. Perkins warned Threlfall however, that Witos might be among the passengers so do not mention priorities to the Poles in case they try to exfiltrate him in preference to the listed priorities.⁵²⁰

On the night of 25th/26th, a Dakota took off under the command of F/L Culliford and 2nd pilot Capt Kazimierz Szrajter. Into Poland went four agents and out came Tomasz Arciszewski ('Stanisław') ('Tom'); Lt Tadeusz Chciuk ('Celt') ('Sulima'); Lt Czesław Micinski (6th Bureau) 'with Józef Retinger ('Salamanda') ('Brzoza') and nineteen suitcases. The Poles had reduced the rocket to its basic, important components for transportation.⁵²¹

Later that same day, Perkins received a message informing him that 'WILDHORN III' had been successful including 'CROSSBOW'.⁵²² The 'CROSSBOW' specialist, he was informed, was travelling onwards to Cairo as Meduniecki with five other passengers. All arrangements for flights to the UK were upset because the Air Ministry said the material was important but not urgent. Threlfall had originally persuaded the BAF to allow the operational aircraft to complete the trip but now it had been re-deployed and yet again the best laid plans of SOE were scuppered by Air Ministry incompetence.⁵²³ Cairo received a message from London saying that two Polish emissaries were arriving in Cairo on the evening of the 27th and that they should keep them housed in secrecy until the arrival of Perkins and Mikołajczyk. Perkins was travelling on a special mission for Gubbins to Teheran. Apart from the 'CROSSBOW' personnel, all others went to Cairo with Truszkowski. Retinger was partially paralysed following an injury from which he should recover after one or two months, and Gubbins asked that every assistance be afforded him.⁵²⁴

Poles in the Maquis

Hazell continued to be busy with his E/UP Section. A message from the French resistance (RF), passed via an agent known as 'SULTAN', informed Hazell of Poles fighting alongside the Maquis under the orders of French officers. The possibility of setting up a Polish maquis section, using miners in the Southwest of Aveyron and North of Du Gard, was not overlooked, and could prove important as 'SULTAN' said he could count on as many as 1,000 men, mainly Poles, in each active area. The only problem was that the French would not allow them to be armed until all the French Maquis were. Hazell asked the RF if there was a Maquis that was dominated by Poles, and if so was it worth considering sending a 'BARDSEA' unit to them. The RF Section reply was not helpful so Hazell decided to take no further action. The signal from 'SULTAN' gave Hazell more resolve. Owing to the general attitude of the French in the Maquis to the Poles, Hazell felt it to be essential, when the time came, to send over Polish officers to deal with them. He asked if they would let him know when 'SULTAN' was in a position to organise the Polish Section in his Maquis to enable Hazell and the RF Section to discuss the matter further.⁵²⁵

Hazell soon learned from the RF Section that 'SULTAN' was already organising the Poles in his Maquis but asked for Polish officers to be sent to assist. At this stage, SOE⁵²⁶ were becoming more fully integrated with the French under the EMFFI set up and could take no action without telling them first. As 'SULTAN' was a French officer, it was felt that any requests regarding sending in Polish officers should be made through the relevant French authorities and not directly by SOE. The RF Section said they appreciated Hazell's problem and asked if he would put it before EMFFI and let them know how soon 'SULTAN' could be ready to receive a Polish 'BARDSEA' group. Hazell could then take the matter up with the Poles and arrange for the drop directly with Colonel Vernon of EMFFI.⁵²⁷ There was likely to be no protest from the Poles over the matter. Banaczyk had already informed Mockler-Ferryman that he wanted to enlarge the sphere of action of 'BARDSEA'/'MONICA' to

provide the best help to the general war effort, which he said, 'had always been his principal aim.'⁵²⁸

On 17th July, Hazell wrote to Vernon asking him to get in touch with 'SULTAN' to ask about receiving a 'BARDSEA'. Hazell was concerned about the lack of co-ordination between the Department of SHAEF dealing with subversion and that dealing with the mobilisation of allied forces and civil affairs. He pointed out his concern: so far, no satisfactory liaison had been established between Vernon's representatives and the Poles in the Lille area. In view of their large numbers, there was a danger of crossed lines and he considered this an urgent matter to be sorted out. The Polish military had always opposed the use of Poles residing outside Poland for E/UP operations. It had taken years to educate and convert them even to the current unsatisfactory level of enthusiasm, i.e. that they would co-operate in subversive activities but only at a given time, and then as part of a general action in collaboration with the French.

The civilian Poles, the Prime Minister, and the Ministry of the Interior were interested in E/UP work. By contrast, the military Poles, namely General Sosnkowski, the Ministry of National Defence, General Kukiel and the chief of the Sixth Bureau, General Tabor, kept stressing that they were against spilling Polish blood either in France or in Germany. They were not as concerned with the humanitarian aspect of the case as with the very fact that the civilian members of the government supported E/UP activities, which, in itself, was sufficient to induce the military to raise every objection to E/UP's plans. The military Poles' objective seemed to be to get SHAEF to facilitate mobilisation of Poles in France and Germany to form new Polish divisions to assist in realising the long-held dream of marching into Poland along the lines of the Piłsudski Legions with Sosnkowski at their head. The more SHAEF encouraged them, the less interest they had in subversive action in Western Europe. According to the Poles, which Hazell thought may or may not be true, the civil affairs division of SHAEF had promised everything and reinforced Sosnkowski's ideas. SHAEF, Hazell felt, should sort it out, as it was contrary to Eisenhower's requirement that all Allied support should be directed to the battle being fought.⁵²⁹

Air

It was, by now, the general opinion of all concerned that flights from Italy were proving to be more desirable than those which previously operated out of England. The Poles, however, now called for a resumption of flights from England to supplement those from Brindisi. Perhaps this was born somewhat out of frustration, for the Poles had been turned down in their request for more Liberators. This did not stop Mikołajczyk pressing Churchill for more aircraft. Initially, he wanted another sixteen for 1586 Flight, subsequently followed by another allocation of Liberators. Churchill had not been unheeding of Mikołajczyk's pleas, but on 17th July a letter confirmed that, in accordance with his February promise to treble air effort to Poland, eighteen aircraft had already been allocated, thus giving the potential for 70-80 flights per month for sorties to Poland. He probably felt this should have been sufficient.⁵³⁰

Later, Colonel Mitkiewicz-Zółter renewed the request, this time directly to the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff, for flights originating from Britain to Northern Poland by using Liberators instead of the Stirlings that were available. Perkins wrote, 'You will note in this instance it is the question of the type of aircraft, next it will be for Polish crews, operational ranges, petrol tanks, de-icing and whether the pilots shall have ham and eggs for breakfast. Is it not possible for someone to ask the Combined Chiefs of Staff to refuse to accept questions direct from Mitkiewicz- Zolter?' Shortly afterwards, he was assured that this would now be the case.

Polish/Soviet relations

Perkins next wrote to Tabor informing him officially of a decision made in connection with Polish/ Soviet relations. He was obliged to tell Tabor that there would be no further support from either the British Chiefs-of-Staff or the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff until full co-operation between Poland and Russia was achieved. Having read a copy of the letter, Gubbins wrote in the margin that he had spoken to Selborne about it, who agreed with him that the Poles knew the situation well enough but added that they liked to pretend they did not.⁵³¹

Thoughts on sending a British mission to Poland.

A memo issued by Truszkowski on 18th July claimed there to be no doubt in the Poles' minds of the outcome of the war, (not since the start in many cases). It read, 'They intended an armed uprising as a show of strength to the Soviets and to prove themselves capable of liberating sections of their own country. They would not abandon this intention and SOE should plan on the basis of this happening.' One of the recommendations was to send an SOE reconnaissance party, followed by a Military Mission, to make contact and remain with the Polish Home Army General Staff, as had been suggested by Mikołajczyk the previous February.⁵³² He continued, 'They could examine local conditions and opinions and report on the equipment and supply position of the Polish army, their military preparedness, strength and morale and the intentions of Polish leaders and people. Our knowledge of Polish conditions would then, for the first time since 1939, be based on something more reliable than hearsay.'

Threlfall sent a copy of Truszkowski's memo to London in the full knowledge that they felt the same way. He had been thinking about Poland a lot recently, especially since things had moved so quickly there. From a PWE directive he received on 14th July, he thought it looked as though the Chiefs-of-Staff had something similar in mind, despite the fact that stores and planning indicated the contrary. A general uprising, he felt, was inevitable, given the Polish character. According to conversations he had with the Poles the Russians might well encounter armed Poles having won some control over their own country, as they advanced into Poland. What was the Polish Section to do? Threlfall commented, 'The Polish Section has had a long and glorious history. We don't want to be overtaken by events and just peter out as I'm afraid we might if we carry on as we have been at the present rate of supply of men and materials. The current rate of progress looks to put us out of business within a month, anyway. We must make a positive contribution right up to the last and continue to do the best we can for the Poles. We can either wind up the Polish Section or continue doing the best we can. Sending a British Mission would be the first step to meeting

their needs. Poles are conscious that if we do this, regardless of whether they are of the Polish Section or purely a Military mission, it could be of historical importance. We should cash in on the situation but we are currently making no preparations at all. I agreed with Truszkowski we should, now that we have a sort of air superiority, carry out large daylight drops. I have talked to the BAF about this but they are definite about where their responsibilities end and will do nothing unless the order comes from London. Can't you forge a telegram from the Air Ministry to MAAF saying the Chiefs of Staff want it urgently'?

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The Polish request for a British Military Mission to Poland appeared to have been rejected when, on 27th July, the Foreign Office informed the Embassy in Moscow that, 'It has been decided, after careful consideration that, until there is some degree of practical co-operation between the Poles and Soviet authorities, the presence of British officers with Polish Government forces, or with forces controlled by the Polish National Council, would only result in very serious embarrassment for us. This outweighs any practical advantages.'

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MONICA

On 21st July, a problem arose for Hazell following a signal received from the head of 'MONICA' saying his headquarters had been raided by the Gestapo and eleven members of his staff arrested. Hazell discussed the incident with the Poles during the morning and it was felt that this was the result of a leak of information. The leak had not come from the military side of the organisation, but was the result of German endeavours to penetrate the Polish political set-up in France. The Germans had made approaches to various influential Poles in France with the proposal they assisted in work against Communism. Hazell immediately instructed all wireless stations to cease sending messages but to remain on a listening schedule. He also issued instructions to refrain from sending to the field instructions for 'CROSSBOW' operations and requested that the leader of 'MONICA' in the south, should report independently on what had happened. It was soon clear that the arrests by the Gestapo

had not affected or compromised the military side in the Lille area and Hazell was soon able to instruct those in the field to attack immediately any communications cables serving 'CROSSBOW', which might be in their area. ⁵³⁵

WARSAW

On 30th July General Tabor saw Gubbins and told him that on 24th the Polish Government delegated to Deputy Prime Minister and Polish GOC Secret Army (Warsaw) full powers to act as they thought fit in the Warsaw area. The GOC reported on 25th that he had put the Home Army into a state of readiness and it only needed one more signal for a general rising. He called for the following assistance: firstly, for the bombing of the area Warsaw – Kraków – Łódź on the greatest possible scale, with the environs of Warsaw as a priority; secondly, that Polish aircraft, (approximately four flights), be allowed to land in Warsaw to render assistance and be a symbol of Poland's efforts to free herself; thirdly, that all or part of the Polish Parachute Brigade should land as a token of force, and lastly, that air sorties be launched to deliver heavy machine and anti-tank guns. The GOC Warsaw expected assistance and not only from the Russians. Tabor warned of unaccountable consequences if this aid was refused. SOE could only assure Tabor that their operational capacity would be exploited to the full, with absolute priority for Poland. The Strength of the Home Army was estimated at 43,000 men in Warsaw with a total of 75,000 in the country, all of whom were armed. Gubbins forwarded the above to the Chief-of-Staff as a matter of urgency. ⁵³⁶

Despite the warnings, so often repeated to the contrary, the Poles were about to launch their long-term plan in the belief that an uprising could, and would, be supported from the air. The difficulties they had experienced throughout the war, especially in the procurement of aircraft, should have been a strong indication that their demands could not always be met simply because they wished them to be.

Summary

Developments in Hazell's minorities section looked as though it would shortly provide assistance to those involved in the D-Day landings, which had taken place on 6th June. Censorship remained an issue, but now with full co-operation from the Poles who appreciated the need. The 'WILDHORN' operations proved more successful than could have been envisaged, especially the bringing out of the V2 rocket information. Events at Teheran, however, effectively led to Churchill's virtual abandonment of the Poles for the time being, leading to the Chiefs-of-Staff to no longer being prepared to offer advice to the Poles on activity within Poland and for SOE to ask for a new directive.

Notes.

⁴⁰⁷ *Chronicle of the Twentieth Century*. Mercer.

⁴⁰⁸ It became absorbed into SHAEF, Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, in February 1944.

⁴⁰⁹ An organisation named after Nazi engineer Franz Todt (1892 - 1942) mainly made up of forced labour workers.

⁴¹⁰ TNA HS4/226.

⁴¹¹ In all 28 E/UP agents went into France before D-Day of whom 21 survived.

⁴¹² TNA HS4/269.

⁴¹³ TNA HS4/144.

⁴¹⁴ TNA HS4/138.

⁴¹⁵ TNA HS4/317.

⁴¹⁶ This was much more evident at ARGONAUT the later Yalta conference.

⁴¹⁷ TNA HS4/145.

⁴¹⁸ TNA HS4/233.

⁴¹⁹ TNA AIR20/8221.

⁴²⁰ TNA AIR20/8221 & HS4/187.

⁴²¹ According to John Gallehawk, archivist at Bletchley Park, some Polish messages were indeed deciphered. Personal interviews various dates during 2003.

⁴²² TNA FO 56689 proves that the Germans were aware of this fact.

⁴²³ TNA HS4/144 & HS4/145.

⁴²⁴ TNA HS4/229.

⁴²⁵ TNA HS4/226.

⁴²⁶ TNA FO 47711 gives details of some Polish operations in France.

⁴²⁷ TNA HS4/180.

⁴²⁸ Peasant Party Leader and former Premier of Poland. see P. Stachura, *Poland 1918-1945*: (Routledge, Abingdon, 2004). p33.

⁴²⁹ TNA HS4/145.

⁴³⁰ TNA HS4/180.

⁴³¹ TNA HS4/144 & HS4/317.

⁴³² TNA HS4/183.

⁴³³ TNA HS4/180.

⁴³⁴ TNA HS4/180.

⁴³⁵ TNA HS4/183.

⁴³⁶ TNA HS4/179.

⁴³⁷ TNA HS4/184.

⁴³⁸ TNA AIR20/8221.

⁴³⁹ TNA HS4/317.
⁴⁴⁰ TNA HS4/317.
⁴⁴¹ TNA AIR20/8221 & HS4/317.
⁴⁴² TNA HS4/150.
⁴⁴³ TNA HS4/150.
⁴⁴⁴ Ron Jeffery. *Red Runs the Vistula.*, (Nevron Associates, Market Deeping,) 1985.
⁴⁴⁵ In fact, the Poles were well aware of Jeffery's rank. Jeffery was born in London in 1917 and came from a good middle-class family He was well educated and intelligent. He served as a non-commissioned officer in the Royal West Kent Regiment and was taken prisoner in France during the spring of 1940. He escaped captivity in January 1942 and joined with Polish resistance fighters where he gained their full confidence. (The Polish underground sent a radiogram on 26th April 1943 to inform the regiment that Jeffery was with them asking that he be promoted to second lieutenant. Later they themselves promoted him captain). TNA HS4/255.
⁴⁴⁶ TNA HS4/255.
⁴⁴⁷ Marysia Kaziu. They married on 5th May 1943.
⁴⁴⁸ TNA HS4/255.
⁴⁴⁹ TNA HS4/317.
⁴⁵⁰ Jeffery had managed to effect his escape with the assistance of a high-ranking German Secret Service officer called Count Boris Smyslowski but who in reality was Count Von Regenau. Truskowski was confident that Von Regenau wanted to make provision for his own future now that he saw the Nazis being defeated. It was realised that Von Regenau had now put two 'agents' out by the same method. One called 'DEBNICKI', whose cover was that he went to Syria in order to sow dissension amongst the Poles thereby convincing them that Russia was a greater enemy than Germany, and Jeffery, who was to go to Sweden posing as a disillusioned Estonian prepared to do anti-Bolshevik work. In reality, the missions were to put the case of the certain members of German intelligence before the Polish and British governments. Both had been dressed as Sonderführer of the Abwehr and given military escorts to facilitate their exits and both had left clandestinely TNA HS4 /255 Admiral Wilhelm Canaris, the head of the Abwehr (German Intelligence) was not sympathetic to the Nazi regime and, although a patriotic German, passed some information through his girlfriend, Halina Szymanski, herself an MI6 agent living in Switzerland. His assistant Hans Oster, was openly hostile to the Nazis from the outset of the war. Information he passed with respect to the invasion of Holland and the Low Countries was ignored by British Intelligence as a ruse. They began to take his information more seriously after his information became reality. Both Canaris and Oster were later executed by the Nazis at Flossenburg in April 1945.
⁴⁵¹ TNA HS4/136.
⁴⁵² TNA HS4/225.
⁴⁵³ TNA HS4/225.
⁴⁵⁴ TNA HS4/226 & HS4/229.
⁴⁵⁵ TNA HS4/175.
⁴⁵⁶ Allied supplies were evidently insufficient, for Polish and German weapons and ammunition came largely to them from factories manned by Polish workers such as the one at Starachowice. This proved something of a double-edged sword. Sabotage by Polish workers during manufacture sometimes led to the weapons being unreliable. Sten guns were often not suitable for the conditions in which the partisans fought. They were of rough workmanship and were inconvenient to use and transport and they jammed easily. Their cone of fire was too dispersed. They were considered inferior to German machine pistols and Russian automatics. The following prices were paid in Poland for German weapons. Automatic Pistol (pre-war type) 8,000Zł. Present day (wartime) manufacture (often sabotaged) 6,000Zł. Auto Pistol (Parabellum type) 6-7,000 Zł. P.38 10,000 Zł. Rifle or infantry carbine + 50 rounds ammo 9,000 Zł. German sub-machine gun 40,000 Zł. Bergamn machine gun 50,000 Zł. One cartridge about 4 Zł.
⁴⁵⁷ TNA HS4/317.
⁴⁵⁸ TNA HS4/146.
⁴⁵⁹ TNA HS4/297.
⁴⁶⁰ TNAHS4/297, HS4/298, HS4/317 & HS4/326.
⁴⁶¹ I have been unable to find a Christian name for this person.
⁴⁶² TNA HS4/298.
⁴⁶³ TNA HS4/226.
⁴⁶⁴ Two Polish Liberators with the loss of 20 crew members.
⁴⁶⁵ TNA HS4/144.

⁴⁶⁶ Operation 'JACKET' on the night of 27/28th January 1941.
⁴⁶⁷ TNA HS4/240.
⁴⁶⁸ In order to carry sufficient fuel weight was saved by reducing the armament of the bombers.
⁴⁶⁹ HS4/177 Only the North American Mustang fighter truly had sufficient range to escort bombers to a distant target and back. The Spitfire, for example, had a fuel endurance of only one and a half hours, which was further reduced to around 20 minutes if the aircraft actually engaged in combat.
⁴⁷⁰ Not to be confused with Franciszek Demel who also has the nom de guerre 'HANCZA'.
⁴⁷¹ TNA HS4/177.
⁴⁷² Unless there is a drastic change in wind direction any wind on a round trip i.e. to Poland and back, will always extend the total flight time and never reduce it.
⁴⁷³ TNA HS4/177.
⁴⁷⁴ TNA HS4/144.
⁴⁷⁵ HS4/144
⁴⁷⁶ TNA HS4/229.
⁴⁷⁷ TNA HS4/188, HS4/265 & HS4/229.
⁴⁷⁸ TNA HS4/229.
⁴⁷⁹ This is because the invasion was planned to be at Normandy not northern France and it was unlikely that Allied troops would be in northern France within 72 hours.
⁴⁸⁰ TNA HS4/226.
⁴⁸¹ TNA HS4/317.
⁴⁸² TNA HS4/238.
⁴⁸³ TNA HS4/226, HS4/229 & HS4/317.
⁴⁸⁴ The operations never achieved their potential. In Pickles' report on the operation he wrote that 'JULA' was conceived and carried out not only for military tactical situation but also to show that, contrary to Soviet claims, the Polish underground took their orders from Sosnkowski in London. The propaganda value of 'JULA' was in the hands of McLaren an officer of the intelligence section of the Political Warfare Executive, who liaised with the Foreign Office for the release of information. In Pickles' opinion the newspapers, although realising the importance of the information, universally refused to afford it the prominence it so richly deserved. There appeared to be a definite ban in the British press on anything considered favourable to the Polish Government and it was evident that the British public was more interested in news of anti-Semitic incidents. 'JULA' as a propaganda operation had therefore failed. The effect on Polish morale would be considerable. Anti Polish campaigners and derogatory reports about Jews in the Polish Army would have an effect on the war effort and it was time these matters were seen in their true light both in parliament and the press. McLaren said the Poles were sheltering thousands of Jews and the fact that 'JULA' should fail for anti-Semitic reasons was ridiculous.
⁴⁸⁵ TNA HS4/177.
⁴⁸⁶ TNA HS4/317.
⁴⁸⁷ TNA HS4/265.
⁴⁸⁸ TNA HS4/177.
⁴⁸⁹ TNA HS4/317.
⁴⁹⁰ TNA HS4/177 & HS4/225.
⁴⁹¹ TNA HS4/239.
⁴⁹² TNA HS4/291.
⁴⁹³ TNA HS4/147.
⁴⁹⁴ TNA HS4/303.
⁴⁹⁵ TNA HS4/188.
⁴⁹⁶ TNA HS4/160.
⁴⁹⁷ TNA HS4/146.
⁴⁹⁸ The identity of either is not known.
⁴⁹⁹ TNA HS4/177.
⁵⁰⁰ TNA HS4/265.
⁵⁰¹ TNA HS4/265.
⁵⁰² TNA HS4/226.
⁵⁰³ Commander of the French Forces of the Interior.
⁵⁰⁴ TNA HS4/226 & HS4/229.
⁵⁰⁵ TNA HS4/229.
⁵⁰⁶ TNA HS4/226 & HS4/229.
⁵⁰⁷ TNA HS4/188.

508 TNA HS4/184.
509 TNA HS4/299 & HS4/32.
510 TNA HS4/153.
511 TNA HS4/147 & HS4/153.
512 TNA HS4/153.
513 TNA HS4/146.
514 Parachuted into Poland 1st/2nd October 1942 Operation Hammer.
515 TNA HS4/140 & TNA HS4/139.
516 TNA HS4/188.
517 The Chiefs of Staff did not think they could effectively support the Secret Army without a Soviet agreement.
518 TNA HS4/146.
519 TNA HS4/303.
520 TNA HS4/180, HS4/182 & HS4/317.
521 TNA HS4/176.
522 TNA HS4/177.
523 TNA HS4/182.
524 TNA HS4/182.
525 TNA HS4/225.
526 The French Section.
527 TNA HS4/225 & HS4/270 .
528 TNA HS4/226 & HS4/317.
529 TNA HS4/225 & HS4/226.
530 TNA HS4/153 & HS4/184.
531 TNA HS4/153.
532 HS4/247.
533 TNA HS4/146 & 139.
534 TNA HS4/139.
535 TNA HS4/226.
536 TNA HS4/156.

Chapter 6

1944

(August to December)

Warsaw Rises

On 1st August, Truskowski sent a priority marked cipher message to London for re-transmission to Mikołajczyk. The message contained information from a reliable Polish official source, which reported that if Mikołajczyk made far-reaching concessions to the Russians both Sosnkowski and Anders would repudiate and go into internment with all armed forces. This, the source felt, would almost certainly result in civil war in Poland. Anders currently waited in Italy for an announcement of the results of Mikołajczyk's meeting with Stalin. If no agreement were reached Sosnkowski would take no action. The informant further believed that if the Poles were to fight against the Russians they would be exterminated as a nation and considered that, failing effective Allied support, surrender to the Russians gave them their sole chance for survival.⁵³⁷

A second report received on 1st August demanded more attention. Warsaw had begun an uprising.⁵³⁸ Things happened quickly and it was a few days before Morgan could get a report to London about the situation. In preparation for supporting the uprising, Jaswiński had suggested on 27th July that blind roof-top drops could be effective, but 1586 Flight did not like the idea and were sceptical about finding the drop zones, Jaswiński said he could probably find them in a taxi but not in a Halifax. Rankin (OC 334 Wing) was worried about losses, which were expected to be high. Meanwhile, Morgan's staff prepared maps of the city and soon Hancza, Jaswiński and Morgan went to Monopoli to explain it all to SOE's George Klauber who contacted London for approval. Immediately, Churchill ordered flights to Warsaw regardless of weather.⁵³⁹

Major Mike Pickles of SOE, without much chance of success, was already fighting for an increase in stores to be delivered. He had instructed PUNCH to expect more effort and

prepare for mass drops once an agreement had been reached between Stalin and Mikołajczyk. PUNCH reported they had 230 tons of stores in hand with the possibility of a further 270 tons being available shortly.⁵⁴⁰

Kopański asked Selborne to send a British liaison officer to the underground army, as he thought such a presence might help by lowering the risk of reprisals should the uprising fail. He also requested immediate assistance to the Polish Home Army and recognition of its combatant rights. He requested:

1. An increase in the supply of stores and, consequently, the number of dropping operations.
2. The bombing of airfields around Warsaw
3. Polish Mustang fighter planes to be sent to airfields near Warsaw
4. The 1st Polish Parachute Brigade to be sent.

The War Office considered the proposals impractical, pointing out that no extra aircraft were available for transportation of fighters, parachutists and supplies. All efforts would have to be co-ordinated with Russia since Poland was now regarded as falling within their sphere of operations. Combatant rights were a matter for the Polish government and Foreign Office to discuss.

Perkins felt that the despatch of even a token parachutist force would have a very great effect on Polish morale, and a Polish parachute battalion was currently in Italy. The sending of some parachutists might make the Poles withdraw their demands for aircraft (Mustangs) to be sent, which was even less possible to achieve. Perkins was in favour of a mission being sent as it could confirm Polish reports and furnish the Chiefs-of-Staff of the actual situation in Poland. SOE were aware that the Poles were anxious to support the uprising as they felt their moment had come, and it seemed unlikely that the Russians would object as they were already supplying the Poles with liaison officers and stores.⁵⁴¹ The Foreign Office immediately informed their Embassy in Moscow of the situation, asking them to ensure that Mikołajczyk was aware of the facts and also of the possibility of a liaison

mission as it might help in his conversations with Stalin.⁵⁴² Meanwhile, the Joint Planning Staff considered the points raised with the exception of recognising the Home Army as combatants and affording them the appropriate status. This had been referred to the Foreign Office for approval.⁵⁴³

Selborne told Churchill that the Chiefs-of-Staff and SOE were discussing the question of a mission and suggested that a little pressure from him could possibly help. He reminded Churchill that the Poles had, for the last five years, fought alongside the British as proven comrades in arms. The idea of sending a company of their Parachute Brigade within the compass of SOE would be a gesture of support and have a great effect on morale. Selborne thought that not making a declaration recognising the Polish Home Army as an Allied force would be difficult and unjustified. The French resistance forces had already been recognised by Eisenhower as such, and Selborne saw little reason for depriving the Poles of the same courtesy.⁵⁴⁴ He reminded Churchill, as if there was any need to remind him, that the Poles' recent taking over of an aerodrome from the Germans in order to smuggle out V2 rocket parts on the last Wildhorn operation was an indication of their efficiency.⁵⁴⁵

On 2nd August, two telegrams from Warsaw told that the Home Army had seized and was holding certain areas in the city. The GOC Warsaw was not afraid of anything except lack of ammunition. Arms had been captured from the Germans but there was little hope of capturing ammunition. Ammunition, of which only five days' supply existed at the start of the uprising, was soon rapidly depleting, so consideration was given to encouraging uprisings in other parts of Poland to relieve the pressure on Warsaw.⁵⁴⁶ The Polish Government in London had instructed the Commander of the Polish Home Army, General Bór-Komorowski, to put a general rising into effect in the whole of the General Government area of Poland but the timing for the uprising in Warsaw had been left to him. As open fighting for Warsaw began, Komorowski requested Russian assistance through an immediate attack from outside the city.

The Poles' request to send the Polish fighter wing and the Polish Parachute Brigade was turned down by the Commander-in-Chief, as was their request for intensive bombing of

the Warsaw area owing to difficulties of co-ordination with the Soviet Army. Lt Colonel Marian Utnik directly sent Pickles copies of messages received, together with maps showing the requested drop areas. Utnik added that he expected similar risings in other areas outside Warsaw. He finished. 'Though no definite promises were made by SOE to support a rising in Poland, I do trust you realise that the rising is the result of three years of our activities, and it would be absurd if, just at this time, your support should not be granted because of existing difficulties.'⁵⁴⁷ Clearly the Sixth Bureau recognised the difficulties. There was no question of SOE's willingness and they requested urgent action to be taken so that material support could be provided. They signalled to Stawell impressing on him the absolute necessity for operations to Warsaw. At the same time the Chiefs of Staff signalled General Wilson a request that supplies be sent to Poland as soon as possible. The TORMENT operational base in Italy requested permission to carry out token drops on Warsaw and was told to 'Go ahead.'

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Stawell already had details of sixty tons of equipment required and the British Government attached the greatest importance to comply with the request, telling SOE's mission in Moscow to inform the Soviet military authorities that they had been asked to undertake delivery. Bad weather ensured that no operation took place, however, and the hope was expressed that the weather might shortly prove more clement.⁵⁴⁹ General Tabor contacted Gubbins, saying Colonel Hancza in Italy had informed him that Group Captain Rankin had refused to allow flights to operate to Warsaw on the grounds that losses would be heavy and the results slight.⁵⁵⁰ Unfortunately Tabor saw Hancza's report as a complaint, but Hancza appreciated that weather conditions were bad. He also realised that although the Polish flight was free to operate, the sending of their currently available aircraft was unlikely to achieve anything. It would have been impossible to find the target, and could only have had a symbolic meaning at the possible cost of the complete destruction of all the aircraft. In a move intended to provide more flexibility for airborne supply drops, Hancza suggested that the GOC be asked to provide a list of dropping areas outside the town.⁵⁵¹ Tabor's complaint

against Rankin, therefore, was unjust, as Rankin did not have the authority to make such a refusal. The decision had been made at a higher level.⁵⁵²

Of the requirements listed earlier, Tabor now realised that none had been achieved. The increase in the supply of stores had not been achieved and combatant rights for the insurgents were no nearer being a reality. He evidently expected a great deal to be achieved in the few days Bór-Komorowski had made provision for. He would have been slightly less distressed, perhaps, to discover that planning was going ahead for the bombing of airfields around Warsaw as he requested, and for a British liaison mission to be sent to Poland.⁵⁵³ He now knew that the Parachute Brigade would not be used, nor the fighters sent.⁵⁵⁴

Operations were carried out on the 4/5th August when, of the 13 aircraft despatched, four were lost over the target and two more crashed on landing. New German radar apparatus had been set up and a new fighter belt in Hungary.⁵⁵⁵ Alun Morgan told Hancza that, in his estimation, 50% of the losses were directly attributable to the new radar belt and Hungarian-based fighter aircraft.

In spite of this, supplies were delivered to reception committees 15 km Northwest of Warsaw and, although it was impossible to obtain confirmation, it was probable that some Polish crews successfully dropped on Warsaw in defiance of orders, although this was never confirmed. On the basis of these losses, Slessor, through William Elliot (OIC BAF), cancelled all operations to Poland. Staff at the Allied Forces Headquarters (AFHQ) had given careful consideration to supplying Warsaw and came reluctantly to the conclusion that it was not possible to provide practical support, even when the weather permitted it. To have aircraft proceeding north of Zagreb and returning either in daylight or by full moon was too risky, and they were needed on equally important tasks elsewhere. A further point they considered relevant was the effect operations of this kind would have on the Russians. They wondered what their views would be if this situation were reversed and the Russians attempted to support a resistance group in Florence. Wilson and Slessor expected most of what was supplied to fall into German hands because of the height from which the drops would have to be made, as low-level drops would have been suicidal.⁵⁵⁶ Added to this was

the fact that the American 15th Air Force had no experience of this type of operation and General Ira Eaker⁵⁵⁷ was convinced it was not worth trying.⁵⁵⁸ Both remained convinced that the only help for Warsaw would have to come, as the Poles had previously been informed, from Russia.⁵⁵⁹ SOE in Moscow were again asked to approach the Soviets, informing them that, as bad weather precluded assistance from Italy, could they undertake supply operations to the beleaguered city as a matter of urgency. Supplies should include ammunition for captured German weapons if possible.⁵⁶⁰ President Raczkiewicz wrote to Churchill, and Tabor to Gubbins protesting that further flights had been cancelled.⁵⁶¹

The situation in Warsaw was rapidly becoming increasingly more desperate and German bombers had been deployed over the city. The translation of a message from the GOC Home Army passed on to SOE read: 'We begin the 6th day of the battle of Warsaw. The Germans are introducing into the fight technical means we do not possess: armour, artillery, flame throwers. That is their advantage; we dominate them by the morale of our troops. I state solemnly, that Warsaw in fighting does not receive assistance from the Allies in the same way as Poland did not receive it in 1939. Our alliance with Great Britain has resulted only in bringing her our assistance in 1940 in repelling the German attack against the British Isles, in fighting in Norway, in Africa, in Italy and on the Western front. We request you to state this fact before the British in an official *démarche*; it should remain as a document. We do not ask for equipment, we demand its immediate dispatch'.⁵⁶² Tabor immediately renewed his request for assistance, saying, 'Cannot accept BAF losses of 50% as being unacceptable, there are times when 100% is necessary. We do not ask for British crews but Polish ones, sent from the UK faster than now (and faster than they are lost). There is no point in suggesting that the scattering of stores is excessive when the future of the Capital of Poland is at stake.'⁵⁶³ Gubbins asked for maps showing areas of Warsaw which were thought large enough for drops to be successfully carried out either by day or night as well as from a high level.⁵⁶⁴

On 8th August, a cipher telegram received in London from the GOC Warsaw read, 'I am sending a message from Soviet Captain Konstanty Kalugin, (a Russian liaison officer),

who has reported to the Commander of Warsaw City and is in constant touch with him. Having no liaison of his own with Moscow he asked us to help him in transmitting his message.' Kalugin's message begins. 'To Moscow, for Marshal Comrade Stalin. I am in personal contact with the Commander of Warsaw garrison, who is leading the heroic partisan fight of the Nation against Hitlerite bandits. After acquainting myself with the general military situation, I come to the conclusion that in spite of the heroism of the army and the entire Warsaw population, there are still needs which if made good would permit a speedier victory over our common foe. These needs are automatic arms and ammunition, grenades and anti-tank weapons. Drop arms on Wilson Square, Invalids Square, Ghetto, Krasiński Field and the Cavalry Barracks in Bowiśle and Bielany. German airforce destroys the City and kills civilian population. Direct artillery fire on Vistula bridges in the Warsaw area, on Saski Garden, Lejce Jerozowmsie as these are main channels of movement for the German Army. The heroic population of Warsaw trusts that in a few hours' time you will give them armed support. Help me get in touch with Marshal Rokossovsky. Signed Konstanty Kaugin from Czarny Group 66804 Warsaw' Message ends. The GOC added, 'Please pass this on to proper authorities.' Col. Keswick ensured that this was done, again stressing to SOE's base in Moscow the desperation of the situation in Warsaw.⁵⁶⁵

Henry Threlfall, in Monopoli, put his thoughts about Warsaw on paper. The cancellation of flights had caused considerable unrest amongst those stationed there. Should the defenders of Warsaw lay down their arms he considered the consequences to be:

- '1/ Forfeit remaining British and American sympathy for Poland, for what it is worth.
- 2/ Hinder the war effort against Germany and delay liberation of Poland.
- 3/ Confirm Russian claims that the Poles are anti-Russian not anti-German.
- 4/ Finally end the possibility of restoration of QUEEN's (Mikołajczyk) government and play right into the hands of the Moscow Committee.'

None of the options was to his liking. 'We must try to salvage sympathy from the wreckage instead of making it worse. We are in close contact with SHINE (Sosnkowski) and some

other Generals here and have some grounds for hoping we will avoid a crisis by getting some air support.' The reply he received from London concurred with his thoughts.

'1/ We have passed the gist of your para. 3 but despondency still prevails.

2/ Resistance in Warsaw will be crushed unless help arrives.

3/ If this happens neither we (SOE) nor the Sixth Bureau can carry on, however politic the action might be.

4/ The Poles want action now not excuses and this time they mean what they say.

5/ Two Squadrons of Liberators, if available immediately, would save the situation; otherwise, things may develop in a most unpleasant way.'⁵⁶⁶

Even as the reply was being read, Sir Charles Portal reported to the Chiefs-of-Staff that he had received concurrence from the Secretary of State for Air to telegraph Slessor, instructing him to carry out operations to Poland. The first of these was carried out that night on 8th /9th August when three aircraft of 1586 Flight were 100% successful in dropping supplies to Warsaw. The War Office was informed of the success. There had only been some 40mm light flak reported over the city itself and although fighters had been observed en-route none were attacked. Five similar operations were planned for the night 9th /10th August by 1586 Flight, which were unfortunately cancelled again due to poor weather conditions.⁵⁶⁷

SOE had previously warned the Poles that support for an uprising could only be given by the Soviets. It was therefore with some relief that they learned from the Foreign Office on 9th August that Stalin had promised to supply all help to Warsaw. Mikołajczyk, through Clark-Kerr, the British Ambassador in Moscow, asked the Foreign Office to telegraph at once to Soviet authorities the method by which they should contact the garrison commander in Warsaw, and the place where Russian liaison officers should be dropped.⁵⁶⁸ With a warning that parachuting directly into Warsaw was a risky business, the Soviets were advised the following day that the defenders were ready to receive Soviet liaison officers in given areas anytime within Puszcza Kampinoska (Kampinos Forest) from whence they could be transferred to Warsaw.⁵⁶⁹

Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEF), appear to have presumed that supplies now being requested for Warsaw were intended solely for the future, and not immediate use. Major General JFM Whiteley (G-3Div. Planning) wrote, 'The Supreme Commander is not authorised to deal with requests for the re-equipment of the post-war armies of the Allies. His authority is confined to the equipment of Allied units, which are essential to the prosecution of his operations. Any Allied requirement covering their post-war requirements will therefore have to be submitted through diplomatic channels. The term 'post-war armies' may require interpretation to the French since they are the only allies who may be able to raise field forces for participation in the campaign of 1945. On this assumption the United States authorities are at present discussing the equipping of additional French Divisions.'⁵⁷⁰

Evidently, SHAEF's concern was for the invasion forces in the West, and considered the Polish fight to be one that only the Soviets should be fighting and that supplying the AK was merely in order to arm them for post-war activities. Perhaps they were fearful that support for the Poles might lead to the Soviets being uncooperative to Roosevelt's desire to get them to lend assistance in fighting the Japanese in the Pacific at a later date, if they were aware of Roosevelt's intended proposal. The Joint Staff Mission (JSM) in Washington advised the US Chiefs-of-Staff to suggest that Warsaw was a British problem and let the British make the decision on whether it was feasible to support it or not. They agreed, however, that supplies could come from US bases in Russia, including captured equipment. Flights to Poland were to be processed through SOE and not SHAEF (i.e. not their problem). They had not told Eisenhower, believing he should not be bothered with it.

The British certainly had a greater appreciation of the situation than the Americans, but whilst the seriousness of the Warsaw situation was fully realised they now believed that Stalin had accepted the responsibility to help. They did not leave the responsibility to him entirely though. An unsigned note reads, 'It is most desirable, for political reasons, that we do our utmost to help and we have been considering ways to do this. Short nights and full moon have prevented large-scale supply dropping but three successful sorties have been flown by

Polish crews from the Mediterranean on the 8th and four on the 9th August. Slessor hopes to start larger-scale drops using British crews tonight. We cannot send Polish parachute troops because of lack of transport aircraft; moreover, losses would be too high. No objection to supplies coming from US bases in Russia but the high drops which would be needed during daylight (prevent anti-aircraft fire) would probably result in the supplies not reaching those who needed them. Although the SOE are responsible for submitting Polish requirements, planning operations is the responsibility of the Airforce commander concerned. All operations to Poland are now carried out by the Balkan Air Force and Slessor, under Wilson, is finally responsible for deciding the practicality of suggested operational plans.' ⁵⁷¹

In the meantime, a strangely prophetic propaganda broadcast emanating from Berlin intended to be received by Polish resistance forces and the Polish radio station in Bari. Claiming to be Poles, it said, 'We have been disarmed by the Russians. This is the end of the Polish Army. Long live Poland. This news is a bombshell to those Poles who listen to British and American false advice about supporting the Russians. Meanwhile, the Polish PM, on the advice of the British and Americans, has gone on a pilgrimage to Moscow to negotiate a compromise. Poles are risking their lives for nothing, None will see their homeland again if it falls into Bolshevik hands.' ⁵⁷²

Threlfall contacted Pickles about the broadcast. Worried about propaganda he wrote, 'Knowing how interested you were in eradicating anti-Russian feeling among the Poles, particularly those in Italy, I send the attached German Broadcast, which has been brought to my notice here. This sort of stuff must clearly disconcert Poles and it would be desirable if we produce something showing how groundless and futile the remarks are. I would be grateful for anything you could send me to combat this insidious propaganda'. ⁵⁷³ When Banaczyk asked Selborne to broadcast his support for the Poles he agreed willingly. ⁵⁷⁴ The simple fact was that there was considerable concern about the effects on morale of the Polish troops under British orders in other parts of the world, and on the future of Anglo-Polish relations if Warsaw collapsed. ⁵⁷⁵

Naturally, there would be an intervening time before the Soviets could begin supplies to Warsaw of certainly no less time than the eight days it had taken the British.⁵⁷⁶ Colonel Keswick contacted Sporborg pointing out this fact and asking if he could try to get some further support for the Poles via the Chiefs-of-Staff. It was a vain hope. Selborne sent an updated report of the Warsaw situation to Churchill, which coincided with the delivery of an appeal from the Polish Deputy Prime Minister Kwapiński. He, too, had realised the likelihood of a delay and now asked for a mass drop by 300 aircraft from British bases.⁵⁷⁷ Tabor was concerned that unless the Russians helped the Poles, Warsaw would fall within days.⁵⁷⁸ As considerable areas of Warsaw were in the hands of the Poles, there was no unreasonable risk of stores falling into enemy hands. The Polish Commander in Warsaw said that anti-aircraft guns only had a range of up to 10,000ft., therefore, it was safe to approach at heights in excess of this figure.

On the night of 12th/13th August, 28 Liberator aircraft of 205 Group were sent from Bari in support of the uprising. Twelve managed to drop their loads successfully but four were missing, one having been lost over the target. One pilot reported 30 anti-aircraft guns, a fact confirmed in a report from Bór-Komorowski that spoke of an increase in defences. One unit in the centre of the city acknowledged receipt of its requested loads, but the whereabouts of the other loads dropped was not known. The programme for the night of 14th and 15th was for another 28 Liberators, with the suggestion that five of them might carry bombs to attempt to deal with the anti-aircraft defences⁵⁷⁹

On 14th Mikołajczyk returned from Moscow to discover the Foreign Office remained unsuccessful in obtaining a commitment from the Russians to help.⁵⁸⁰ Eisenhower had at last been made aware of the situation in Warsaw. The American airforce considered that both the conditions and distances involved made US aid impractical. The American Chiefs-of-Staff still did not intend to make definite commitments to aid at this time and there was a strong belief that all operations were tied in with the Russians.⁵⁸¹ They did, however, consider a request from the British that the 15th Airforce be used. This proposal was eventually turned down on the grounds that the 15th had insufficient range for the operation (extra fuel could

not be carried due to a shortfall in the number of fuel tanks that could be mounted in the bomb bay). Furthermore, the lack of fighter escort would make it even more hazardous as they were, in any case, already committed elsewhere.

Plans were being developed for a night effort by the US 8th Airforce using a shuttle system through their Russian bases. General Carl 'Tooey' Spaatz considered that the operation would not conflict with the prior requirements of SHAEF who now welcomed the possibility of supplying Warsaw.⁵⁸² The US Chiefs of Staff thought that this night effort, plus the help that Stalin promised, would be sufficient and probably the best solution.⁵⁸³ Aerial reconnaissance photographs of Warsaw showed a marked difference from those taken of the city when it was photographed on 15th June. All visible signs of normal city life had disappeared. The streets were deserted and no road, rail or river traffic was to be observed. Smoke from fires in the old city hung over the northern area and damage was severe.⁵⁸⁴ Pickles furnished Keswick with a résumé of operations to Warsaw thus far.

Date August.	Sorties.	Successful	Area.
4/5	14*	6	2 Warsaw, 1 nearby, 3 Radom
8/9	3	3	Warsaw
9/10	4	4	Kampinos
12/13	11	7	Warsaw
13/14	30*	11	Warsaw

* Disparities in the figures can be put down to poor communications.

Podoski thanked Pickles for the effort and expressed sympathy for the families of the crews lost, adding, 'Your air effort enabled us to continue the fight.' He was also able to provide Pickles with details of successful drops. On the night of 13th/14th, of the 47 containers dropped, 12 were lost to the Germans. The following night there had been seven drops and the GOC Warsaw acknowledged receipt of a total of 106 containers.⁵⁸⁵ Utnik provided details of the anti-aircraft sites with the suggestion that they be neutralised in a separate bombing operation.⁵⁸⁶

Plans for American planes operating a shuttle service via their Russian bases were put before the Soviet authorities. The British Ambassador to Moscow was able to furnish the Foreign Office with a copy of the text from Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Andrei Vyshinsky's letter of reply to the US Ambassador, in which it states. 'I am instructed by People's Commissioner to state that the Soviet Government cannot lend its hand to it. Marshal IV Stalin on the 5th August informed Mr. W. Churchill that it could not be supported that a few Polish detachments, the so called National Army, could take Warsaw which does not possess artillery, aviation or tanks at a time when the Germans had assigned for defence of Warsaw four tank divisions.' ENDS.

The letter did at least make a lie of earlier Soviet claims that the forces of the Armia Ludowa (People's Army) were the only ones fighting, but little else. Clark-Kerr was evidently surprised, if not shocked, at the response, adding, 'I can do little more than speculate upon the motives; it looks as if at some point something has happened to make Stalin change his mind.'⁵⁸⁷ The Foreign Office's response⁵⁸⁸ was definite, informing Clark-Kerr that, 'Issues at stake are of vital importance going beyond the fate of Poles in Warsaw. Every effort should be made to see Stalin and bring home to him that the Soviets' attitude and our deep anxiety is likely to have an effect on Polish /Soviet and future British /Soviet relations. The Russians have always encouraged the Poles to do more and now they are condemning them for it. It is the principle that whoever fights the Germans should receive support from HMG.' In a statement that was perhaps intended for use against any future argument Stalin might give, the FO made clear that they considered that, due to its current success, the Warsaw uprising was clearly not as badly planned as the Russians claimed.⁵⁸⁹

Shortly afterwards, the US Ambassador was told that the Soviets did not object to US or British drops to Warsaw, but only to landing in Soviet territory after dropping. They wished not to be associated either directly or indirectly with the 'adventurers' in Warsaw. The American Ambassador's requests to see Stalin were turned down on the pretext that he was too busy and Molotov told him that the Soviet Government could not reconsider their

decision.⁵⁹⁰ This left the US 8th AF waiting to start drops but unable to do so until they could obtain a clearance from Moscow. To make matters worse for the defenders of Warsaw, Britain again stopped operations to Warsaw due to heavy losses.

Up to and including 16th /17th August, 56 tons of supplies had been delivered to Warsaw including: 1,300,000 rounds small-arms ammunition; 54 light machine guns; 262 Stens; 4,700 grenades; 70 Piats and 1,700 rounds of Piat ammo. Over 50% was known to have been recovered but possibly more was in Polish hands. The Polish effort in Warsaw was containing four German divisions, therefore, there was good reason to continue operations from Italy. In the eight days since 8th /9th August, 99 sorties had resulted in 53 being successful at a cost of 17 aircraft missing, nine seriously damaged, six slightly damaged and one crashed on landing. Air-Vice Marshal Eliot, assessing the present losses from Italy, came to the conclusion that this was no way to save the situation in Warsaw. An offer was made to drop on undefended areas in the vicinity of the city, but Tabor told Gubbins that airborne operations into the city were the only means of supply, as there were no guarantees that those dropped outside the city would be collected. The stopping of direct supplies, he felt, would cause a catastrophe.⁵⁹¹ Ironically, Churchill, who was in Italy at the time, had personally taken time to investigate what was being done to assist Warsaw and, unaware that operations were again about to cease, said he was satisfied with the effort, a fact that Eden informed Racziewicz of by letter.⁵⁹²

The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs informed HM Ambassador in Moscow he was uneasy at not receiving news of Russian assistance for Warsaw. Stalin definitely promised Mikołajczyk on August 9th that he wanted to send help to Warsaw. Clark-Kerr could do little more than sympathise. He was not alone in his feelings. Threlfall signalled Perkins with what must have been a sense of inadequacy. 'I think we have shot our bolt from here. Difficult to explain to South African airmen why they should fly 850 miles when our Russian allies need only fly 20! When you meet the chaps face to face it is not easy to be convincing. We have done all we can from here, and I mean the RAF too.'

By far the most dangerous aspect of flights to Warsaw was the low flying involved in order to deliver supplies accurately, which brought bombers into the range of the anti-aircraft guns. In order to lower the risks, and therefore be able to resume flights, consideration was given to dropping equipment from a greater height. In order to reduce the effects of high-level winds at greater altitudes, a suggestion was made that ammunition could be dropped without parachute, (about 50% would, it was expected, remain serviceable).⁵⁹³ There was, however, an alternative. Devices had been tried in the Middle East that had proved effective in delayed automatic opening of parachutes, and SOE wondered if these could be used to great effect over Warsaw.⁵⁹⁴ Doubts and objections to the idea were raised, one due to the irregularity in the working of the fuses which gave little precision. In a note to Colonel Keswick, AP Richie, the Air Advisor, objected on the grounds that the Royal Aircraft Establishment (RAE) at Farnborough had not approved them. Keswick noted, 'I think we are chasing a hare and that little good will be achieved by pressing this line'. But a note added to the paper reads, 'He (Richie) ought to be juggled. Any water, however dirty, is sweet to a man dying of thirst. We are not staging a Hendon Air Pageant but fighting a war!' ⁵⁹⁵ Who wrote the comment is not clear, but it certainly typified the style of Perkins.

The headquarters of research and development at the RAE was asked to undertake development of delayed opening devices. Tests were carried out on three main types linked in conjunction with the Mk. XIV bombsight, as fitted to Lancaster bombers to ensure greater accuracy. An American system proved the most reliable and the question was optimistically asked whether 240 parachutes could be fitted with the device in 24 hours. The reply came that three weeks would be needed to produce 250 but this could be reduced to one week if priority was given to the order. ⁵⁹⁶ Although this delivery date was later reduced to three days, for some reason an order was not placed, probably because there was still some doubt about their efficiency, as no testing had yet been fully carried out from an altitude at which they were intended to be used.

Utnik forwarded a message to SOE on, or about, 22nd August, that he had received on 11th. It had been sent over Polish wireless links from a British escaped prisoner-of-war named Ward, who was currently in Warsaw. It said that about 40% of the City centre had been destroyed completely and a further 20% badly damaged with high loss of life. Ward also indicated that there was no need to fly very high on dropping operations as there were no organised German defences.⁵⁹⁷ Frank Roberts at the Foreign Office wondered who Ward was and asked SOE, who were also curious as to his identity, to make enquiries. John Ward, sometimes known as Clark, went missing on 10th May 1940 when his Fairey Battle aircraft was shot down over Luxembourg. He arrived in Warsaw a year later having escaped from a prison camp near Frankfurt. Ron Jeffery reported having dealings with him in Warsaw during March 1944, where Ward was acting as a Lieutenant⁵⁹⁸ in the AK and running a Crown and Anchor game,⁵⁹⁹ which made him unpopular with the Poles.⁶⁰⁰ Ward's situation reports and general information passed on Ministry of Interior links were of value, and his eye-witness accounts well received, and proving instrumental in obtaining support. His messages were considered by the Foreign Office as independent evidence confirming Polish reports of positions inside the capital. His telegram of 22nd August read, 'Avoid making distinction between the AK and the civilian population. All are fighting heroically, united as never before. Little boys and young girls are attacking tanks; the people build barricades while under fire, and so on. Lay stress on this unity.' Perkins asked Siudak at the Ministry of the Interior to let Ward know how valuable his reports were considered to be.⁶⁰¹

On the night of 18/19th August, the Soviets made the first of their promised drops in support of the uprising in Warsaw; it consisted entirely of leaflets describing the uprising as the work of an irresponsible clique in London and encouraging the population to cease resistance. The leaflets further promised that Warsaw would be relieved but that the leaders of the rising would be arrested and punished for provoking so many civilian deaths. Retinger informed the Foreign Office of the contribution.⁶⁰² The following day, Slessor was persuaded to let four aircraft of 1586 Flight fly to the city that same evening if conditions were favourable.⁶⁰³ The Poles estimated that seven flights per night could greatly alleviate

the situation, delivering a minimum of 90 containers, each carrying ammunition and grenades. At present, they had not received as much as this but, as the fight continued, it was thought that any supplies received were proving helpful. Slessor's offer of four sorties would at least keep the Poles going.⁶⁰⁴

Slessor's offer of four aircraft represented the total number he then had available. Of the five Halifaxes and one Liberator of 1586 Flight that he then had at his disposal, two were unserviceable. From eleven complete crews, two had not completed their conversion training from Stirling aircraft, only two had any degree of experience, and only one crew was capable of flying the Liberator.⁶⁰⁵ The Poles had, by now, approached every possible high-level authority in England. Keswick suggested that Perkins should get Mikołajczyk to support an appeal made to Churchill by Selborne urging him to order the Mediterranean Airforce to lay on a large-scale daylight drop by US long-range aircraft.⁶⁰⁶ The fact that SOE could do no more was confirmed in a telegram from General Stawell to Gubbins, 'Clear that everything possible has been done recently both here and Italy to assist Poles. Matter is now out of the hands of the SOE and on a higher level. Thank you for your efforts.'⁶⁰⁷

Between 2nd and 18th August, 134 sorties took off, 54 being Polish. 34 drops were carried out over Warsaw and 52% of operations were successfully concluded. The field confirmed the receipt of 27 drops. Warsaw received approximately 40 tons, (two tons per day) of equipment and 20 aircraft were lost, of which three were Polish. In the course of the twenty nights, the Polish aircraft took off on twelve of them and British aircraft accompanied them on seven occasions. The help of 205 Group was obtained three times. In total, 44 aircraft of the Group took off and carried out 20 drops, losing 10 aircraft.⁶⁰⁸ Without insistence and constant pressure from SOE, it appears little would have been supplied to Warsaw. Clearly, efforts to supply Warsaw had not been as slight as many believed either at the time or in the present day. Nevertheless, it was appreciated that inadequate support had thus far been provided and there was indeed a need to double the number of aircraft in the Polish Flight to ensure seven deliveries of stores each night for as long as the uprising lasted.

Future of Polish Section.

In Italy, Threlfall pondered on the future of the Polish Home Army and asked Perkins what its envisaged role was to be. Was it for sabotage and the diversion of German forces, the protection of the civil population against deportations and massacres, or was it to capture territory in order to facilitate the Soviet advance? He also wondered what the probable development of SOE work in Poland was to be during the next two months? Realising the questions he posed were difficult to answer, he apologised, saying that his only sources of Polish intelligence were either from the BBC, when his set was working, or from local newspapers, which were good on 'Jane'⁶⁰⁹ but poor on Poland! Perkins appreciated Threlfall's difficulties of being somewhat out on a limb and far removed from headquarters in London. Although SOE was officially no longer involved with the Warsaw Rising its members continued to do what they could on the Poles' behalf.

The intelligence reaching Perkins was far from good and, with two aircraft recently lost from a flight of four or five, even Perkins questioned the rationality of Polish crews. He said, 'We must put aside heroism and the honour of Polish crews dying for their capital, for Warsaw cannot be rationally sustained in this manner.'⁶¹⁰ With 40% to 50% losses it would not be long before there were no aircraft or crews to support Warsaw or anywhere else. Bravery was not enough; continued support could only come through consideration for safety that necessitated a degree of caution. Delayed opening devices for parachutes would, it was expected, go a long way to reducing the risks to the aircrews. Even so, it was estimated that 120 Lancasters would be needed to furnish Warsaw's requirements and there was simply not this number of aircraft available.⁶¹¹

SOE's George Klauber was summoned to London to discuss the supply situation in connection with the changing Polish situation and the future of the Italian bases.⁶¹² Meanwhile, in reply to a complaint from Tabor that SOE were not doing all they could, Selborne wrote to Tabor explaining that supply decisions were taken not by SOE but by the War Cabinet and the Air Ministry, who would certainly do more if they could without hesitation. Churchill, the War Cabinet and SOE were all concerned about the Warsaw

situation.⁶¹³ Tabor replied with a message of gratitude for the help Selborne had given in connection with the British Government declaration regarding combatant status of the Polish Home Army. Selborne replied,

'I am glad they have accorded the recognition to which the Polish resistors have shown themselves so deserving. I have the deepest sympathy with the cause of Poland as you know, and I am always at your service.'⁶¹⁴

Independent confirmation of conditions within Warsaw was given in a telegram from Ward. He had, with Perkins' permission, become a correspondent for The Times, on the proviso that his writings were first passed through Perkins. The telegram told that in Warsaw all hope of help, from either the Russians or the West, was lost. The only hope was that the Germans capitulated before Warsaw was totally destroyed. 'Warsaw is grimly determined to hold on to the last cartridge as they were certain the Germans would show no mercy if the city surrendered.'⁶¹⁵

On 12th September, Eisenhower made it known that a US drop was planned for the following day. This would be co-ordinated with the Russians, once confirmation of details came through from Moscow.⁶¹⁶ By this time, 198 sorties had been flown, 90 of them successful in delivering their loads at a cost of 36 aircraft manned by mostly British or South African crews. 250 airmen were lost in the attempts. Over 100 tons of stores were dropped, including 250 PIATS, 1,000 Sten guns, 3,000,000 rounds of ammunition and 19,000 anti-tank and anti-personnel grenades. How much of this fell directly into German hands is unlikely ever to be known.⁶¹⁷ Reports from Warsaw showed the high-level drop, low parachute deployment device to be successful.⁶¹⁸ Missing the point of using delayed opening devices, the Poles suggested that a reduction in scatter could be achieved if the containers were dropped from a lower level!⁶¹⁹

Threlfall informed the Air Officer Commanding the Balkan Air Force that Warsaw's Old Town had been lost but the remainder carried on despite the shortages of ammunition, and food, and the heavy casualties. Ward's telegrams continued to give a vivid picture of the exhausted defenders.⁶²⁰ It transpired that he had interviewed Bór-Komorowski, who told him that had he

not taken up arms on 1st August there would have been no one left in Warsaw; all would have been digging trenches⁶²¹ or sent to factories. Komorowski said he had not, unfortunately, been able to co-ordinate the fight with the Soviets, despite a number of attempts that had been made with this in view, but they had yielded a negative result.⁶²² At least the Allies knew why Komorowski had called for the uprising at that time; it was not solely to take the city before the Russians arrived as a gesture of defiance. It was a sound reason to attempt to protect the community from slavery, at the same time assisting the Soviets by ensuring the Germans could hinder them less.

Perkins saw Mikołajczyk to inform him of a Chief-of-Staff decision not to send the Polish Parachute Company to Warsaw. He said SOE were under the impression that equipment was needed not men. 140 men had been standing by in Italy but 100 of them had been despatched to the 2nd Corps, in view of the fact that they were not required by the GOC in Warsaw. Mikołajczyk was relieved and told Perkins strictly confidentially that he had signed the request for the Polish Parachute Company to Selborne under pressure from Kukiel and Sosnkowski. Although not a soldier, he realised how difficult it was to relieve by air, as demonstrated by the Germans trying to relieve their Tunisian troops.⁶²³

Proposed Soviet Recriminations

Perkins contacted the Foreign Office. Both the Soviets and the National Committee in Poland had issued statements that they intended to arrest and condemn officers responsible for the Warsaw rising. The Russians would most probably soon be in possession of the city and in a position to carry out the threat. This, Perkins warned, would result in further Polish/Soviet and even Soviet/ British frictions and misunderstandings. Apart from the belligerent rights accorded to the Home Army, he felt that some special diplomatic action should also be taken to protect those threatened to act as a deterrent. Perkins feared for the future of Bór-Komorowski, and discovered that Gubbins had just informed Selborne that Bór already had good contact with Marshal Rokossovsky and that he would receive proper treatment.⁶²⁴

The Foreign Office requested information about one of the Polish operations. Apparently, Sosnkowski had sent Captain (later Major) Maciej Kalenkiewicz⁶²⁵ to Poland in December 1941 with literally fantastic orders to prepare the country for an invasion by air! During the time Kalenkiewicz was at an SOE holding station, every endeavour was made to make him realise the impossibility of his orders. When Sosnkowski replaced Sikorski as Polish Commander-in-Chief he issued the same instructions to other officers. These had no backing from the Chiefs-of-Staff, or from SOE. During discussions at the Sixth Bureau, the officers concerned constantly expressed the necessity for landing the Polish Air Force in Poland and were told of its impossibility. Nevertheless, many Polish airforce officers were dispatched to Poland under Sosnkowski's orders. There is, therefore, circumstantial evidence to indicate Sosnkowski led the underground to assume they would receive considerable assistance during an uprising.

Jaswiński had recently resigned due to differences with Sosnkowski over policies in connection with the amount of help that could be given by the Allies for an uprising.⁶²⁶ He realised the limitations of the number of aircraft in Italy and was unwilling to raise false hopes. When he signalled Poland to that effect, he was ordered not to make direct contact again. Jaswiński said he was unwilling to be implicated in useless bloodshed. Telegrams encouraging an uprising were continually sent from Sosnkowski in London. Poles connected with underground work complained to SOE about the lack of a directive from Sosnkowski to the GOC and local commanders in Poland, regarding their attitude to the advancing Russians. They needed guidance from Sosnkowski and were not getting it.⁶²⁷ It is interesting to speculate whether or not the uprising would have taken place had Sikorski still been alive. In all probability, it would not. Although he would probably have been in favour of a plan for the uprising in the early years of the war, he certainly would have realised the difficulties in carrying out such an operation at this stage.

Polish/ Soviet Liaison

Following a large drop by the Americans, greeted with enthusiasm by the Polish defenders, the Russians began to deliver limited supplies. They made it clear, however, that the more co-operation they received from the Poles, the greater increase in the amounts of stores delivered. Around 20th September, Warsaw enjoyed two days free of German air activity due to the presence of Russian fighter aircraft. In Italy, the Sixth Bureau gave instructions for the SOE base to stop sending sorties to Warsaw! Immediately, Perkins asked the Sixth Bureau in London the reason why. They replied that there were two reasons, firstly, because of the heavy losses that had been sustained by the aircrews and, secondly, due to the unfavourable amounts dropped compared with that of the Russians. They were also worried that a comparison might affect future political issues. ⁶²⁸

The Sixth Bureau may have wanted to put a stop to supplying Warsaw, but they certainly did not want all flights to Poland to cease. Within days, Perkins was being pressurised by Utnik for operations to resume from Britain along the northern route. ⁶²⁹ Perkins was keen to assist, realising the importance of supplying Poland, and not just Warsaw, from this country. The weather in Italy had been worse than in England. During the winter months, flights over the Carpathians proved almost impossible, and between mid-December and the beginning of April, only four successful flights to Poland had been achieved. Operations were always difficult during winter, but flights from England were often possible. Between April 1st and August 31st, SOE dropped 171 sets of equipment, sufficient for 50,000 men. The balance of the resistance was yet to be supplied. The Poles had always contended, and SOE agreed, that it was not the number of men available but the number of weapons. Even the Russians eventually admitted the Polish Home Army did magnificent work in assisting their advance east of the Vistula, and they could continue to make a valuable contribution if SOE could continue to get the equipment to them. Perkins, therefore, suggested SOE be allowed to start supplying from England again. ⁶³⁰

Selborne wrote to Tabor to inform him that more delayed action parachute devices had been ordered from the Mediterranean and already dispatched to England.⁶³¹ He added, 'I am glad to hear of the success of the American mass drop to Warsaw and I fully appreciate the urgency of sending further supplies.'⁶³² Control of the forthcoming American drop was out of the hands of SOE but they could, at least, assist with the planning. Perkins suggested that all requirements of the Poles should be made known either directly to the Americans or through the British Chiefs-of-Staff.⁶³³ Reports from Warsaw indicated that a degree of co-operation between Bór and Rokossovsky was in evidence. SOE in London was informed that, as the Soviets now had liaison officers at resistance HQ Warsaw, there was no longer a need to forward information that was available in London onwards to Moscow.⁶³⁴ On 28th September, Selborne rose from his sick bed to inform Tabor that SOE was approaching the Chiefs-of-Staff with a request that the fullest support be given to a second American drop. He assured Tabor that the delayed opening devices had arrived and they would add materially to the success of the operation and that SOE had preparation of the required loads in hand.⁶³⁵ Mikołajczyk approached Eden on the subject and the Foreign Office sent a letter to the Chiefs-of-Staff asking them to consider the proposed flight.⁶³⁶

On 1st October, Podoski contacted Pickles to say that all loads from the planned American mass drop should be released directly over the city, not 75% of it, as had been previously requested. The Kampinos Forest should not now be used as an alternative drop-zone as before. Shot-down crews must try to reach the western part of the forest avoiding the north-eastern part. Obviously, the Germans had over-run the area. The password for crews to use when contacting the Home Army was 'New York' and reply 'Warszawa'.⁶³⁷ The passwords would not be necessary. London signalled Special Operations Mediterranean that the last area in our hands was the middle of the town where heavy fighting was in progress. Warsaw fell. The last shots were fired at 20.00 hrs on 2nd October after 63 days of fighting.

The last message received from Bór came at 5am the following day,⁶³⁸ when he said that, as all ways of escape were closed, he would surrender at noon.⁶³⁹ 'We are left after the battle with the oppressive feeling that the realisation of the postulates of justice has

prevented, by some foreign influence hostile to Poland, and by underhand diplomatic action, which prevented help from being given us by our friends and left a free field for action of forces inimical to Poland. In spite of this, Poland will continue fighting until the day of total victory, until the moment when we shall achieve the complete liberation of all our territories and can feel secure in them; when we shall be a fully sovereign nation taking its place among the free nations of the world.' ⁶⁴⁰

The interrogation of a Pole in Sweden confirmed that on 1st August the Poles had good reason to believe the Russians were already sufficiently near Warsaw for them to make tactical contact. Perkins, in a message to Selborne, wrote that allegations made by the Russians that the rising was premature or uncoordinated now ceased to hold water. Perkins concluded, 'There is liable to be a very great political problem in the city, which has gone through incredible sufferings, that the Russians did not think it politically expedient to relieve.' Morgan agreed with Perkins conclusion. ⁶⁴¹ For the British, a new enemy was slowly appearing in their minds. It is, perhaps, no coincidence that Gubbins, at this time, gave orders that a central registry of agents be set up for those who could be used in a possible future war. ⁶⁴²

Elsewhere, German attacks on Poles were less successful and a strong force, supported by four aircraft and six tanks was repulsed with heavy losses near Radom, where more than one hundred Germans were killed and heavy machine guns captured. ⁶⁴³ Warsaw was gone, but the Poles still needed the support of SOE.

Departure of Sosnkowski

By the end of September, Mikołajczyk had agreed to dismiss Sosnkowski in favour of Bór as titular Commander-in-Chief, leaving Kopański to work with Mikołajczyk in London.

President Raczkiewicz formally relieved Sosnkowski of his post on the 30th, thanking him for his past work. With Bór in Warsaw he would not be able to perform his duties until in a place in which the President and Government had their seat and so, in the interim, President

Raczkiewicz, the Minister of Defence (Kukiel) and Chief-of-Staff (Kopański) were to be appointed his deputies. Officially, Sosnkowski said little but in the order of the day no. 22 he called Bór 'Heroic'. Privately, though, he was reported to have called Bór-Komorowski a criminal who had ordered a premature rising in Warsaw. ⁶⁴⁴

(August to November)

BARDSEA/ MONICA

Possibly worried about their lack of support for Warsaw, Kukiel sought assurances from SHAEF that they would support the Poles in France. In early August the Polish Continental action group (BARDSEA/MONICA) was carrying out sterling work. Banaczyk assured Selborne that they would do all they could to assist in the anti flying bomb/rocket case. Between 23rd June and 1st August, they had handed over to SHAEF information on the location of flying bomb sites and dumps, observed results of Allied bombing of these sites and details on the transportation of flying bombs. ⁶⁴⁵ Kukiel was evidently looking for something in return, but SHAEF was obliged to remind him that the only Polish troops they had under their direct control were the Polish Parachute Brigade and the Polish First Armoured Division and that they were currently mainly concerned with obtaining support and equipment for them. ⁶⁴⁶

Hazell said to Kowalewski that, subject to his approval, he would arrange for a Polish liaison officer, Captain Andrzej Fedro, to be sent to any Maquis in France, or anywhere else that Poles were collected in considerable numbers, as part of a 'BARDSEA SPECIAL' operation. Fedro was to arrive via Algiers as part of a JEDBERGH team and contact 'DANIEL', Chief of the Military representatives of the 'MONICA' organisation in the area. ⁶⁴⁷ He was dropped on 25th August. Upon arrival, his task was to gradually mobilise members of 'MONICA', so that the advancing Allied forces, as they arrived in Southern France would find organised and competent Polish units in situ. Subject to SHAEF's agreement, he was to be followed by several small groups of 3-5 parachutists, each with considerable supplies of arms. ⁶⁴⁸

Soon, Hazell sought approval to signal Fedro to the effect that all Poles in southern France currently with the Maquis should be directed to Lyon, where they would be organised under a Colonel named Bogusz, who would be leaving London on Friday 8th September.⁶⁴⁹ Needed for another operation, it was to be one of the last acts that Hazell performed as head of the Minorities Section in England as, on 17th September, his place was taken over by C.B.'Jack' Ince, who would remain in control until the end of the war.

The Poles readily agreed a draft of principles laid down for Polish Underground action in Germany, which was discussed on 5th September. The proposal was to use personnel drawn from the BARDSEA teams, together with personnel recruited in the Lille area, in order to contact Polish workers in Germany under a scheme code-named DUNSTABLE.⁶⁵⁰

The draft proposed:

- 1a. Organise and prepare Polish workforce in Germany that when the German break up occurs they are in a position to defend themselves and act in accordance with Polish Government policy in the common interest of the Allies.
- b. Propaganda to monitor Polish morale and to destroy German morale.
- c. Carry out intelligence-gathering activity
- d. Carry out economic sabotage according to special instructions.

In order to carry the scheme the requirements were:

- 2.a. To recruit suitable Polish personnel. (training at STS 63).
- b. To make use of MONICA personnel in the Lille area.
- c. To set up an organisation in Germany.
- d. To organise liaison posts in the counties bordering Germany.
- e. To collaborate with the BBC for broadcasting purposes.
- f. To recruit and equip Polish parachutists.

DUNSTABLE was to initially operate in:

1. Hanover - Westphalia - The Rhineland.
2. Baden - Wurtemberg.⁶⁵¹
3. Hamburg - Kiel.⁶⁵²

This was the full extent to which SOE were likely to become involved in Polish activity within Germany itself, but as late as 15th September, Hazell asked Kowalewski for ten volunteers from the troops at STS63 to be trained to infiltrate Germany dressed in civilian clothing in connection with DUNSTABLE. In addition, he wanted ten wireless telegraphy operators to accompany them, all acting as foreign workers, and infiltrate the groups of foreign workers already there. Hazell said that if the DUNSTABLE men are not fully trained, then consideration should be given to using BARDSEA troops, as the matter by then was becoming urgent. ⁶⁵³

One of the JEDBERGH teams, 'HAMISH', reported that a Polish major had visited them on 23rd August. Following enquiries, it was discovered that the major concerned was a certain Stanisław Maleciński, who was well known to the Poles, being a member of the Polish Second Bureau. Maleciński currently led a group of around 300 men in France, having been there since 1939. Hazell asked Kowalewski for his views on Maleciński and his policy. Kowalewski told Hazell that Maleciński's unit would continue to act under orders of the FFI (*Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur*) military chief until the Allies over-ran his area, at which time he would put his troops at the disposal of the Polish military authorities. Thus satisfied, Hazell informed Kowalewski that Maleciński's group would be supplied with weapons, if possible. ⁶⁵⁴ The 'if possible' had been inserted deliberately. Hazell felt he must be guided by FFI priorities in connection with weapons in the area concerned, in spite of the Polish request, therefore, unless Colonel Vernon ⁶⁵⁵ thought it advisable. Hazell had no intention of supplying special deliveries to this group, leaving the decision entirely in Vernon's hands. ⁶⁵⁶

Pressure was being brought to bear on Pickles by Major Edward Fryzendorf, who was attempting to establish Polish posts in Belgium and was trying to infiltrate Polish agents into Switzerland. Pickles told Fryzendorf that it was now necessary for SOE to ascertain whether his work in Europe was organised. Pickles was continually being asked questions by the French, Swiss and German sections of SOE about Fryzendorf's intentions and posed

numerous questions to him, the answers to which Pickles would need in order to further Fryzendorf's requests. The replies came quickly from Józef Hartman⁶⁵⁷

Q 1. From which HQ and by whom is work into Germany controlled?

A 1. Work into Germany is conducted by the Commander-in-Chief, Ministry of National Defence and by the commander of the Home Army.

Q 2. Is there any division into spheres of influence in Germany as between Gen Bór and Polish HQ in London?

A 2. There is no division of influence in Germany. General Bór, having the easiest approach, embraces in the organisation groups of Poles in Germany.

Q 3. What department of Polish HQ in London controls work in Germany, if any?

A 3. Intelligence matters on German territory are carried out by the intelligence department of the C in C's staff. Courier links are conducted by the special bureau of the C in C's staff.

Q 4. Am I right in assuming that the Minister of National Defence is in full control of all work in France?

A 4. This statement is correct. ... (although) contact with the AK (conducted by the special bureau) and military intelligence (conducted by the Intelligence dept.) is excluded.

Q 5. Am I right in assuming that the Ministry of National Defence had delegated responsibility to the Sixth Bureau for work into Italy, Southern France and the Balkans?

A 5. Special Bureau (Sixth Bureau) was entrusted with conspiratorial work in Yugoslavian and Greek territory in the sphere definitely discussed by you. In other Balkan territory and Southern France, the special bureau is restricted to communications work.

Q 6. Would you tell me which department of your HQ controls your various posts in Europe?

A 6. Each department controls its own sphere. The special department of the C in C's staff had difficulty in co-operating with its post in Hungary as a result of irregular communications, and therefore continues to endeavour to strengthen this.

Q 7. I should be grateful if you could give me a brief outline of the state of affairs in Germany and the degree to which your work there is organised?

A 7. The Special Bureau of the C-in-C's staff in common with the AK has courier links throughout Germany leading to Denmark and Sweden, France and Switzerland. These routes are composed from different points of territory, contact addresses, hide-outs and so on but with regard to the character of their work, they have no right to conduct any other actions (no sabotage, intelligence etc.).⁶⁵⁸

During early September, and with the fight for Warsaw still raging, the swift advance of the Allied Army in France and the Low Countries rendered the BARDSEA operation purposeless and caused its cancellation by SHAEF. Timing for the infiltration of the BARDSEA groups had been spoiled only by the rapidity of the defeat of the enemy in the areas in which they were to carry out their missions. Only days before, Hazell had said he expected the 17 BARDSEA groups to be sent on operations during the next moon period.⁶⁵⁹ It was already too late. Mikołajczyk regretted SHAEF's decision in that it prevented them from taking part in the fighting in Western Europe. It was planned that Polish Independent Parachute Companies would back up the BARDSEA operators and they had been eager to get to grips with the enemy. They would later get their chance at Arnhem.⁶⁶⁰ Unaware that this opportunity would arise, Mikołajczyk had written to Selborne begging that they be allowed to go to Poland in support of the 'lonely defenders of Warsaw' or failing this to another detachment of the Home Army.⁶⁶¹ All Selborne could do was to ask Gubbins to forward a copy of Mikołajczyk's letter to the War Cabinet.

Soon, Gubbins received a reply from the War Cabinet on the subject. They felt that such a small unit could have little influence on the situation in Warsaw, even if they were dropped into the city. Elsewhere, they would have no effect at all. 'You (Gubbins) will be aware of heavy losses of aircraft from Italy on supply work and the risks would be much greater over a heavily-defended city where the aircraft would be flying lower and slower for accuracy in order to drop the parachutists. Mikołajczyk's suggestion, that they be sent to another part of Poland, is considered feasible but only on the following basis: - we would expect transport to be available in the next few days to take the Parachute Company to Italy, but it must be

understood that they would be dropped at the expense of supplying Warsaw. Both could not be done, Mikołajczyk, therefore, would have to authorise this. Chiefs-of-Staff would also have to consult the Russians before they could make their final decision to let this proposal go forward. Chiefs-of-Staff think there is no military advantage to this operation but are prepared to examine it further if the Poles think there is any political value to the operation. If Mikołajczyk agrees let us have his decision.'⁶⁶²

To make use of the trained BARDSEA teams, a suggestion was made that if they were not required for operations to Poland, perhaps they could be used for operations into Germany, in addition to the forty special troops being trained for German action.⁶⁶³ The fact that no thoughts were given to using them in other parts of France is perhaps indicative of the success of MONICA, in as much as extra personnel would act more of a hindrance than help. The civil head of MONICA in the Lille district was code named 'PAUL'.⁶⁶⁴ He was also the Polish Consul General.⁶⁶⁵ The British intended to set up in Paris a rear link for Lille operations. On hearing of this intention, the Polish Government requested that a mission be despatched to the Lille area forthwith to join Poles sent there prior to 6th June. SHAEF was approached on the matter and asked to deal with it as a matter of urgency.⁶⁶⁶

It was decided to increase the number destined for DUNSTABLE to one hundred men who were soon undergoing training for the operation. He asked Kukiel if he had decided what to do with the remaining BARDSEA men. Due to the length of time it took to train wireless telegraphy operators, he asked if eight men could be retained from BARDSEA to join DUNSTABLE.⁶⁶⁷ Almost immediately five were transferred and a new chief appointed for the DUNSTABLE project in the field.⁶⁶⁸

On 18th August, Chalmers Wright (alias Major F. Chalkley) was ordered to proceed to the field on a special mission to Lille. He was dropped with the Belgian Section on the night of 1st/2nd September in the Ardennes, where he joined the Belgian Maquis group and harassed the Germans for several days. Soon, the area was over-run by the Allies, so he immediately made his way to Lille to head the MONICA organisation there. Ron Hazell,

with two members of the FANY (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry) left Britain to take up residence in Château La Fontaine, Croix, near Roubaix. Here, he was to run two operations, 'EUPHEMIA' and 'FLUSHING',⁶⁶⁹ working with Chalmers-Wright investigating a Polish/French Communist recruiting organisation in the Pas de Calais area.⁶⁷⁰ Chalmers-Wright was soon to discover that the mining pits were being picketed by the local 'Association of Patriotic Poles', which induced the miners to join them. Recruits received 12-1300 Belgian Francs per month and as much as 3-5,000 Belgian Francs per month if they took part in Communist activities. Leaflets circulated amongst miners by the PTPF (Polish National Committee of Liberation, a largely Communist group that supported the Lublin Government,⁶⁷¹) who supposedly represented Polish Fighters, Free Rifles and Partisans. They soon made the Lille area unsuitable for continued operations owing to unrest amongst some Polish elements, notably left-wing infiltration groups. For this reason, Hazell was obliged to inform Ince that his (Hazell's) HQ would soon be moving to somewhere in Belgium or Luxembourg, if approved by SHAEF. This he did on 16th October, when ME22, as the mission was known, established headquarters in the Château de Chevetogne, in the Ardennes, which had the added advantage of putting them closer to the front line.⁶⁷² Here, they set up three houses; his own HQ, a Polish special operations office and a finishing school and despatch station for agents. Hazell's first financial statement shows that most of the supplies he obtained came from the black market, it being the only place to draw 'proper rations' when he was first in France.⁶⁷³ He informed John Venner that Belgian Francs were required, as the Belgians would not accept French ones.⁶⁷⁴ ME22's objective was to infiltrate Poles and other nationals into Germany.

On 17th October, Brigadier Mockler-Ferryman wrote to Lt General Kukiel saying that the experience gained by Colonel Hazell in the field made it clear that it was not possible to transfer the independent Parachute Company to the Lille area for further training. This, he said, was regrettable but practical, and he explained how the situation in Northern France had made it necessary to move Hazell's mission to Belgium, where his Polish counterpart would

have to join him at least for the time being. On the question of the original BARDSEA troops, he suggested that perhaps the best step would be to disband the original company and post them to serve with other units of the Polish Army, with the exception of those destined for DUNSTABLE (German) operations. He concluded, 'I leave the final decision up to you. We will carry out whatever you decide. In view of the heavy casualties incurred in the Polish parachute brigade,⁶⁷⁵ perhaps they can be used there. Hazell is doing good work in the Lille area and Chalmers Wright will remain there to give every assistance to the Polish recruiting mission, which, I understand, is due to arrive there in the next few days.'⁶⁷⁶

On 19th October, Frank Roberts sent Perkins a copy of a Soviet broadcast claiming successes achieved by the Polish Committee of National Liberation by Poles (PTPF) in rallying support in France. It was the first time the Foreign Office had heard of any such headway being made by the committee amongst Poles in France. Perkins forwarded it to Ince, who replied, 'Claims of Polish Communists in France seem to be very exaggerated. None of the evidence mentioned therein has anything to do with the organisation with which we have had contact over the last three years.' The reply to the Foreign Office read, 'Had the National Liberation Committee been of any importance in France during the last six or eight months our opposite number (Sixth Bureau) would have heard of it. I think therefore that you can take it that the report is a gross exaggeration.'⁶⁷⁷ This statement is undoubtedly true.

October to December

Lack of Air support from Italy

In Italy, Threlfall was taking to task the airforce in a letter to the officer commanding the Balkan Airforce. A promise had been made on 5th October, to the effect that 205 Group had been allotted the task of lifting to Poland 400 tons of special operations stores during October. This was subject to weather permitting and a proviso that bombing tasks should have priority over their special operations work if a conflict arose. If this situation occurred, then MAAF would decide which should have priority. On 8th October, 33 aircraft were

allocated for operations to Poland but the operations were cancelled due to bad weather. The next night that operations were possible, 16-17th, from the total of 14 aircraft only six came from 205 group. Bombing priorities had taken the remainder. On October 21st and 22nd, six aircraft were originally put on for Poland to supplement seven from 1586 flight, but later cancelled due to predicted bad weather over the base at the time of their expected return. Threlfall said, 'I am reluctant to wait to see whether the ruling works on the next night that flights are possible to Poland as so little opportunity to do so arises. Although somewhat hesitant, therefore, at putting my own interpretation on what of course is purely an RAF ruling, I would like to ask if the ruling could be re-examined.' ⁶⁷⁸

Future of Polish operations.

Thoughts had already been expressed in London over the future of Polish operations and a report written. The dilemma facing SOE was whether to give the Poles to understand they would continue to help them in view of the scarcity of aircraft and experienced weather conditions, or tell them not to rely on SOE for material support and instead adopt a policy of passive resistance inside Poland. ⁶⁷⁹ Certainly, Threlfall was pushing for more direct support and Tabor clearly was expecting more. In a meeting with Selborne, he gave clear reasons to re-open the northern route to Poland. Firstly, because the southern routes from Italy had proved disappointing, secondly, because of the change in the military situation, a testing of Germany's fighter defences might now be called for, and thirdly because the Polish Home Army was in desperate need of support.

At a meeting with Slessor in early October to discuss the autumn and winter programme, it was made clear to the Polish Chiefs-of-Staff that it would not be possible to carry out all the flights that were promised. SOE supported the proposal to re-open the northern routes which, they considered, could be easily done from this country. Their argument was that bad weather on one route was unlikely to be repeated on the other, at least one route could be expected to be useable. SOE had all the men required trained and ready

and the Polish Special Bureau (Sixth Bureau) could make the necessary arrangements at once. ⁶⁸⁰

Selborne suggested to the Secretary of State for Air, Sir Archibald Sinclair, that flights to Poland be resumed. ⁶⁸¹ He told Sinclair that Tabor expressed thanks to the BAF for their past efforts, but at the same time reminded him of Churchill's promise made the previous February and the subsequent Defence Committee's ruling to increase air support, a promise which had never been fulfilled. The depths of winter were rapidly approaching and Tabor feared the Italian weather, fears that were well-founded. ⁶⁸²

Moscow conference

On 26th October, the results of Mikołajczyk's Moscow conference were being made known to SOE. They found difficulty in judging fully their implications. Seemingly, the visit had centred on Poland's Eastern border and the Poles now realised the Soviets were determined to keep the Curzon Line. All other issues were subsidiary to this. Mikołajczyk and his party had returned to London to consult his cabinet on this point. SOE had expected the Poles to stick out for demarcation of western frontiers before agreeing the Curzon Line. Perkins supplied Threlfall with all the details he had on the meeting by telegram, to which Threlfall responded, 'Your 872 (telegram) admirable'. To this Perkins replied, 'Your 231(telegram) unnecessary.' Upon Perkins' reply Threlfall scribbled 'That helps to maintain good relations.' ⁶⁸³

Winding up MONICA

On 26th October, General Omar Bradley of the United States Army expressed his objection to Hazell setting up his operation within his section. Hazell explained that OSS was doing similar work with the 21 Army Group in the British sector without problem. To his surprise, Colonel John Haskell⁶⁸⁴ backed Hazell's venture and said the two organisations, SOE and OSS, had worked well together in the past and it was necessary for this co-operation to continue. ⁶⁸⁵ Two days later, on the 28th, the MONICA operation was officially wound up. Colonel Zakrzewski, head of the forward Polish Special Operations Office, and his assistant,

joined Hazell's ME22 organisation at Dinant and Major Chalmers-Wright joined the new HQ. At the same time, Hazell changed the name of his mission to SPU 22.⁶⁸⁶

WILDHORN IV

Podoski informed Pickles that there were a number of agents in Poland waiting to be sent from Warsaw to England, namely Zych, Gromoski, Jaworski, Ward and Adam. Podoski said 'Ward you know. I can give no information on the others.' The only likely successful way of extricating these men was by another WILDHORN operation. Number 267 Squadron of the RAF turned down the proposal, considering the danger from fighters to be too great. Podoski needed his couriers back as much as Perkins wanted Ward, and suggested Perkins take the matter up at a higher authority. The Foreign Office also wanted Ward, as did Churchill, so another WILDHORN operation was agreed.⁶⁸⁷ Podoski's agents soon became low priority. It was decided that the two most important figures needed in London, apart from Ward, were Witos and Rudkowski.

The Sixth Bureau was especially keen that another WILDHORN Operation be launched, if only to extricate Rudkowski, who was due to return a report on the organisation of the Polish Home Army following the fall of Warsaw that was vital to the future of the Home Army.⁶⁸⁸ Tabor was confident that normal command and organisation was being set up following the fall of Warsaw. SOE, for their part, were always anxious for recent information from Poland, especially on the Lublin Committee. At this time, intelligence about the organisation was considered to be a very scanty and mainly based on broadcasts from the Union of Polish Patriots and of Lublin Radio, with some information from other independent sources. The Committee was a by-product of the Polish National Council that was formed in January 1944 in Warsaw and claimed to be the Underground Parliament, representing many varied 'democratic groups' that were heading the struggle against the Germans. In reality, its ideologies were Communist and the names of the groups it claimed to represent largely fictitious.⁶⁸⁹ SOE would be lucky if the proposed WILDHORN operation

produced any concrete information about the organisation, which was perhaps more in the line of work of a proposed operation named FRESTON, if it was ever going to be launched.

Good news came in early November, when it was decided that Poland would be given priority over other nations for supplying by 1586 (Polish) Flight, with an estimated load to be delivered for November of 35 tons.⁶⁹⁰ The decision was an indication that London considered the Polish Home Army to be becoming increasingly more important in the future conduct of the war following the fall of Warsaw, and not less so, as it could go some way to help stabilise the Eastern front.⁶⁹¹ The proposition of operating another WILDHORN was met with a BAF proposal suggesting that routing over Russian territory would avoid the strong German zone, thus ensuring safety to a greater degree. Hancza agreed the route but any approach to Moscow for help in obtaining a safe passage was less agreeable to the Poles.⁶⁹²

The Mediterranean Allied Air Force (MAAF) was not prepared to discuss the operation with the Russians at all, considering it to be a normal operation of a special duty squadron. 30 Mission in Moscow, on the other hand, did discuss routes with the Soviets, who appeared to raise no objection to the proposal, provided the flights did not fly over the Russian lines within Polish territory. The idea was that the route should be Brindisi - Szeged thence to Budapest area and on over Czechoslovakia into Western Poland. The original suggestion of Monopoli - Szeged then Przemysl and back over Russian lines to Western Poland was advised against by 30 mission, who thought the Russians would be suspicious of the idea. The MAAF had asked 30 Mission to suggest the former route but informed them that if they received no reply within three days, they would be prepared to authorise the operation following the old route, i.e. over territory passing west of Vienna, thence to Western Poland, ignoring the Russian disapproval.⁶⁹³

The Russians were prepared to take no risk to their ground troops and were happy to fire on any aircraft over their lines regardless of nationality. The MAAF had no objection to operating over the Russian lines if the risk from their flak and fighters was likely to be less than that from the Germans. London advised them not to bring the Russian's attention to the

flight beforehand. This was perhaps partly because they felt the Russians might make an extra effort to bring them down, or in some other way interfere with the mission, but more likely because they did not want it to become a political issue.⁶⁹⁴ Perkins informed Hancza the MAAF had provisionally fixed the date of 23rd November for WILDHORN VI. By 9th November, Ward was already at the proposed pick-up point but Witos was having difficulties in getting there.⁶⁹⁵ On 16th November, however, 30 mission in Moscow reported difficulties with the Russians concerning the operation, with the result that MAAF cancelled all further preparations.⁶⁹⁶

Additions to 1586 Flight

Earlier in the month, on 6th November, Air Vice-Marshal Richie had confirmed to Gubbins that a further twelve Liberators from XV USAAF would be added to 1586 Flight.⁶⁹⁷ With the addition of the new aircraft it was decided to raise 1586 flight to squadron status and re-number it 301 Polish Squadron. The flight currently had nine Halifaxes and three Liberators. It was made clear, though, that it would not be possible to allocate exclusively Polish crews to the squadron and the Liberators would be a wasting asset, i.e. no replacements would be made available for lost aircraft so the question of re-equipping eventually with Stirlings was again being considered.⁶⁹⁸

At this same time, a message was received from the AK which said, 'We are having good weather, moonlit nights and no clouds. Soviets receive drops every night. Our troops see them and believe you have forgotten us, as we receive nothing. Due to lack of equipment we are helpless.'⁶⁹⁹ The message was a clear indication of how easy it was for the Soviets to supply the area compared with the difficulties experienced by the Western Allies. It also indicated how easy it would be for the Russians to supply the Home Army if they wished to do so.

Perkins, constantly pressed by the Poles about the re-opening of the northern route, reminded his superiors of the amount of time that had passed since Selborne's letter to Sinclair for which, thus far, no reply had been received. He was told it was going through the

mill, meaning it was still being considered by the Air Staff. Selborne, ever supportive, asked Richie to expedite its progression through the Air Ministry as time would be needed for planning if the proposal was approved.⁷⁰⁰ Richie was already doing so, but discovered that Sinclair's delay was unwittingly partly the fault of Selborne who had caused him to decide to redraft his reply, the contents of which were still unknown.⁷⁰¹ Sinclair finally replied to Selborne on 14th November. It had been decided that re-opening the northern route was still too risky. Whilst the invasion of Europe had disrupted German fighter operations, they were still a formidable force and this, coupled with the weather likely to be experienced, had forced the decision. Sinclair was aware that the weather in Italy was sometimes as bad as over northern Europe, but it definitely worsened the further north the aircraft travelled. He expressed his sorrow that Tabor felt the airforce had failed to carry out Churchill's ruling about trebling drops to Poland. The Defence Committee invited the Air Ministry to submit proposals for trebling the load dropped in Poland during February, March and April without reducing support given to Yugoslavia, Greece and France. They hoped to achieve 84 successful sorties to Poland during these three months. Due to weather in February and March, they only achieved 54, but then followed up in May with 40, plus 65 in June. Sinclair was content that the Air Ministry had done all in its power to implement the Defence Committee's ruling.⁷⁰²

Selborne was not so happy and immediately replied to Sinclair saying, 'I can't go back to the Poles with your reply. Their records are as accurate as mine, which do not agree with your figures. I suggest you have been misinformed.'⁷⁰³ Selborne also disagreed with Sinclair's assessment of the weather. During the winter of 1941/2 there had been six favourable nights for flights to Poland via northern Europe as opposed to only three from Italy during the same period, and in 1942/3 there were fifteen nights of operational weather over northern Europe as opposed to none from Italy! He continued, 'I can let you have further details regarding the above operations. You state 65 successful sorties in June 1944 when, I can assure you, not a single aircraft was flown to Poland. However, criticism of your figures is not constructive and won't help these gallant people. 'I am not asking for a further

allocation of aircraft. I am not asking for the RAF to face new hazards. I am not asking for anything that will in any way interfere with Bombing or Special Operations. I only ask that on the one or two nights when it is possible to fly from this country to Poland, this shall be done within the limits of existing resources. In conclusion, I would ask you for your urgent reconsideration of this matter in view of the fact that more than 14 days have elapsed since the request was put to me by the Poles.' ⁷⁰⁴

Proposed work behind the lines.

On 9th November, Tabor told Perkins that he wanted money for the Polish Home Army's secret work behind Russian lines. Perkins spoke to Roberts at the Foreign Office, expressing his feeling that the British Government should have nothing to do with it. The fact that Tabor had told him made the request in some way 'official', but Perkins considered that Tabor should not expect him to do anything as it was not British policy to interfere with Polish /Soviet relationship. ⁷⁰⁵ It was the first time the Poles told him that they had been working behind Russian lines at all. Perkins was unlikely to have been surprised, despite his caution. This was, after all, the type of operation that SOE had been set up for, but not in areas already occupied by the Allies!

Flights to Poland

On 20th November, Perkins gave Roberts the results of the last nights' operation and told him of the BAF decision not to send aircraft on the 'dangerous route'. Flights had taken place the previous Saturday without loss, but the BAF had refused to operate British-crewed aircraft in view of the report that nearly all aircraft reported flak and one actually saw a night fighter! Perkins commented, 'This does not surprise us very much for we have always understood that this is what one expected to meet if one flew over enemy territory, in the same way as a soldier going into battle really does expect his opponent to fire shells and lob mortars. We always thought this was the idea of war. We may be wrong. However, the Poles cling to this old-fashioned notion and are not hesitating to say so.' He continued, 'BAF in making this

ruling of no British aircraft are supposedly exercising their rights as the operationally responsible body. In our opinion the ruling is incorrect and all aircraft, both British and Polish, should go or none at all. It is intolerable that the Poles should be asked to undertake greater risks than our men.' ⁷⁰⁶

Threlfall received the latest amendments from London and contacted the officer commanding the BAF, informing him that the suggestion of thirty aircraft to Poland per night agreed on 14th November had been modified. A ruling had been made that on the first night of operations, only ten aircraft from the Polish squadron should fly, as the dangers on the route were not known and it was not desired to put all their eggs in one basket. This caused disappointment to the Poles. Greater disappointment came by the unexpected order that aircraft should not fly over Russian-occupied territory until 30 Mission negotiations in Moscow were successfully concluded. This had caused great consternation amongst the Poles and the Prime Minister restricted the air effort and virtually put control of supplies to Poland into the hands of the Russians. It was impossible to forecast the full consequences and no decision had been reached regarding what further action would be taken either by the Poles or the British. Polish alternatives ranged from informing the field that difficulties made by the Allies were too great to enable them to continue to support the Home Army, to compelling the complete withdrawal of 301 squadron from the Mediterranean. ⁷⁰⁷

It did not help that many bomber crews were beginning to question the very existence of the Polish Home Army. In an attempt to reassure the crews that their efforts were not in vain, Threlfall contacted Podoski suggesting that the Home Army should no longer be shrouded in mystery and that Threlfall should be allowed to pass on to 205 Group's intelligence officers a certain amount of information in order to better brief the crews. He added that whenever British and South Africans came into contact with the Poles they had always got on well, mainly due to the Poles always inviting them to take part in their activities (sporting and cultural). He further suggested that Podoski arranged a concert party to visit Brindisi, or for Captain Leliwa to lecture on the Home Army. In a letter to Threlfall endorsing the suggestion, Pickles said, 'You will notice it is mainly 'bla'. Nevertheless, I do

think if you could get down some of the concert parties to Brindisi, it would not only give you the opportunity of seeing some very fine shows, but might also be of some assistance.'⁷⁰⁸

Threlfall agreed that there was some truth in Podoski's letter regarding South African crews risking their lives when they could plainly see that the Russians did not. Regarding the question of supplying more information to crews, he said the first proposal was to get Squadron Leader Stanisław Krol or a similar Polish officer to talk to the crews. Krol was very popular, and his DSO and DFC and bar underneath a row of Polish medals were always impressive, but Slessor and Elliot did not think this necessary. In his reply to Pickles Threlfall wrote, 'Truskowski will tell you I have several times expressed the opinion of the slap-dash RAF manner of letting their crews fly off to do an entirely new job without the briefing necessary or possible. (This he thought was responsible for some of the losses). 205 Group is no longer with us as they have been removed from Special Duties work, so this is perhaps no longer necessary.'⁷⁰⁹

Following a meeting with Tabor, Selborne instructed Keswick to inform Gubbins that he had sent the draft of a letter intended for Churchill to be given his consideration. Keswick pointed out that the last paragraph contained a line of great importance. He had asked that the War Cabinet issue a definite order that a minimum monthly delivery was to be made, which was subject only to weather conditions.⁷¹⁰ For more than a month, there had been no flights to Poland. SOE, and the Poles, were led to believe this was due to adverse weather. On the night 16/17th November, the weather had been excellent, but it transpired that MAAF were in negotiations with the Russians, without the knowledge of SOE or the FO through 30 Mission (Moscow), to obtain permission to fly over Soviet-occupied territory. A telegram from 30 Mission said that until the arrangement had been made, no planes were to fly by this route so all flights were cancelled. The Foreign Office rapped MAAF over the knuckles for starting negotiations of great political significance without consulting them. A telegram of unknown origin states, 'I have heard it suggested that the British group operating to Yugoslavia and Poland, no. 205 Group, consists mainly of South Africans and Australians who are very left in outlook and who much prefer supplying Tito rather than the Poles. The

briefing in Italy is purely technical and they think they are supporting one set of Poles against another (Lublin). Their left tendencies lead them to dislike the job of supplying the Polish Secret Army.' ⁷¹¹

Selborne sent his letter to Sinclair, adding, 'This matter has been brought to a crisis by the Russian refusal to allow aircraft from Italy to fly over Hungary.' A letter destined for Churchill went further and mentioned the Russian refusal to grant the MAAF request. The Russians claimed that supplies were going either directly to the Germans or to Poles not fighting the Germans. Selborne wrote, 'I trust you will direct that clearance for flights over Soviet-held territory be taken up vigorously in Moscow. I would be grateful if you confirm to SACMED the importance of sorties to Poland and the desirability of reciprocal British efforts to match the contribution that Polish aircraft in Italy have made both to Marshal Tito and to the Italian partisans.' ⁷¹²

Churchill's attention was turned to the reopening of the northern route by Selborne's note, which concluded: 'However impractical Polish politicians may be, their Services have fought with us with the utmost gallantry on many fronts, and I fear that if we do not make more strenuous efforts to help them, even at some loss to ourselves, the Polish people will feel, not without cause, that we have let them down.' ⁷¹³ Sinclair's reply to Selborne gave little hope for the reinstatement. He said that the AOC Bomber Command was emphatic about heavy casualties on the northern route and did not consider it a reasonable operation of war. Meteorological experts assured Sinclair that weather conditions were 50% better from Italy. Also, as there were now more night fighters in East Prussia to cover Russian attacks on the Baltic ports, they could quickly be used against aircraft on the northern route. Therefore the Air Ministry's opinion regarding the northern route remained unchanged. ⁷¹⁴ When the Poles retaliated in the only way they could, by claiming that their airmen had an aversion to involve themselves in flights in support of the Soviets (supposedly), the RAF stopped asking them to carry out flights to Yugoslavia. ⁷¹⁵

Resignation of Mikołajczyk

On 24th November, SOE were advised that Mikołajczyk had resigned on the issue of signing the Curzon Line Agreement with the Soviets. Mikołajczyk considered that the Western frontiers of Poland were well-established, but the Eastern frontiers were not.⁷¹⁶ He thought, therefore, that the Curzon Line should be accepted, but that Lwów and the oilfields should be subject to further negotiations. The problem was that the Soviets now occupied this land and it appeared that nothing would remove them from it. Mikołajczyk saw no way out of the dilemma other than by literally giving ground to the Russians. His main rival, Kwapiński, took the opposite view and refused to entertain the notion. Although Kwapiński was said by Tomasz Arciezewski to have little support amongst the Poles, feelings over the Curzon Line were strong enough to cause Mikołajczyk's resignation, and the following morning newspapers announced that he was to be replaced by Kwapiński.⁷¹⁷

In a speech Mikołajczyk made on the conditions of the Polish/Soviet settlement, he said, 'The responsibility for the postwar settlement and the security of the world rests primarily with the three world powers; the British Empire, the United States of America and the Soviet Union. We all know that the two Anglo-Saxon powers do not threaten the world with an attempt against liberty and independence of other nations. We still need to be reassured in this respect in so far as Soviet Russia is concerned.' When Mikołajczyk took over from Sikorski in July 1943, the Polish Government issued orders to support the Soviets against Germany, despite the breakdown of Polish/Soviet relations. It was issued in the hope that co-operation of this type would cement the relationship.⁷¹⁸

The British Government had always tried to persuade the Poles to accept the Curzon Line, it being a major stumbling block in Polish / Soviet negotiations. Sir Owen O'Malley asked Mikołajczyk to warn his successor that the privileges of Polish communications did not extend to the successor. The British were very concerned that Mikołajczyk's replacement would stir up more anti-Soviet feelings and cause a rift amongst the Allies. It was agreed that

as soon as the new Government was formed, Perkins was to see the Sixth Bureau and the Minister of the Interior. He was to tell them that his orders were to ask them to hand over their ciphers and to submit to the British, *en clair*, all transmissions to and from Poland. Perkins would not be allowed to discuss this matter with the Poles. They would also be told that it had been decided that they could no longer transmit clandestine messages to areas liberated by the Soviets in Poland and, perhaps more importantly for SOE, all drops into Poland were to cease with the exception of WILDHORN.⁷¹⁹

Perkins saw Col. Utnik of the Sixth Bureau and Siedak of the Ministry of the Interior on 30th November regarding ciphers and informing them of the new British requirements. It was thought that the handing over of ciphers would be difficult and complicated and a meeting would be needed to sort the matter out. Courier and diplomatic bag traffic would also be submitted to Perkins' office before dispatch. Perkins informed General Tabor of the details of the meeting. Orders were given that Hancza hand over all Polish ciphers, and within two days, the Poles were passing on their messages, *en clair*, to Perkins.⁷²⁰

True to Arciezewski's word, Kwapiński was unable to form a Government due to his lack of support, and a new Government, which excluded the Peasant Party, was formed on 1st December with Arciezewski at its head. A place in the new government was found for Kwapiński who was made Deputy Prime Minister and put in charge of finance. The new ministers for National Defence and the Interior were Kukiel and Zygmunt Berezowski, respectively. The British Foreign Office cabled their Moscow Embassy saying, 'I said there was no prospect of HMG being able to afford effective support to Poland while a Polish Government was in power which was opposed to an accommodation with Russia.' The message indicated that while a new Polish Government would be treated correctly by HMG, there was no intention of having the same intimate relationship as with Mikołajczyk. A strongly anti-Soviet Arciezewski could expect little sympathy from Westminster.

The most important operation that this affected was the British Military Mission to Poland, Operation FRESTON, which had been waiting in Italy for a suitable opportunity to be infiltrated for some time. The mission's purpose was to gather first-hand information on

the situation in Poland and, had it been launched into Poland earlier as planned, it might have caused the British to have modified their views on the relationship they felt should have existed between the Poles and the Russians. Perkins, in a message to Bill Hudson, the commander of the mission, explaining the situation, said that in his opinion the ban was imposed purely as a manifestation of disapproval of the new Polish Prime Minister.⁷²¹

News of Mikołajczyk's resignation was not likely to improve the chances of an agreement with the Russians to over-fly the areas they occupied. Evident that the ban was a temporary one, possibly proving Perkins' conclusion to Hudson, Anthony Eden suggested to Churchill that a public request for flights over Russian held territory should be made in order to show the Poles and the British public that an attempt had at least been tried. Eden also suggested, because of a drop in morale of Polish crews following the stoppage of flights, that they be allowed to fly using a more circuitous route.⁷²²

Reports came in from various regions, the most disturbing of which came from Poland. At the fall of Warsaw, Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki⁷²³ successfully negotiated with the Germans combatant rights for the insurgents.⁷²⁴ This was to ensure that they would be treated as prisoners of war and not killed out of hand. This report, however, told of civilians who had been deported from Warsaw and imprisoned in Oświęcim (Auschwitz) concentration camp. Here, they were separated, and those fit for work sent to Germany. Those not fit for work were exterminated by gassing.⁷²⁵ In October 1944, the figures estimated the total of Polish workers in Germany to be less than 1.3 million, but Retinger now estimated the figure to be three million.⁷²⁶

German report on Soviet strategy.

A Polish message received on 4th December by SOE told that on 15th November 1944 the Soviets had discovered a radio station and arrested the radio telegraphist with his two staff members and shot him. The report also carried information about the Soviet army's earlier halt on the Vistula. A German report stated that on 16th August, they captured a Soviet

captain named Surkov. During interrogation he said, 'When we learned of the rising in Warsaw, our operational plan for taking Warsaw was quickly changed and our units had to make a sharp turn northwards in order to avoid the city, which we crossed off our plan for special political reasons.'⁷²⁷ Subsequent claims that the Russians stopped before Warsaw to regroup or await supplies are apparently more false than previously believed.

Arciszewski informed Selborne officially of the changes he had made in the Polish Government. Before Władysław Banaczyk left his post in the Ministry of the Interior, he wrote a letter of appreciation to Gubbins, hoping the 'valuable ties of co-operation and friendship will continue'.⁷²⁸ In a later conversation with Richard Truszkowski, Banaczyk confided that it was not felt in Polish circles that Allied policy towards the Poles had been either loyal or honest. The chief trouble was over the Teheran meeting.⁷²⁹ This came as no surprise to Truszkowski, who was well conversant with the situation.

Censorship

By 7th December, the Foreign Office had done little regarding Polish ciphers, and Perkins was asked to contact Gubbins to see if he could bring the matter up at the next meeting between Foreign Office representatives, a representative of the Secret Intelligence Service, and SOE. This, it was rightly thought, would immediately raise the question of Polish ciphers to the highest level to get a procedure for dealing with them sorted out. The meeting occurred the following day at the Broadway offices of SIS at which the head of SIS was present. It was agreed that a complete veto should be placed on all messages to Russian-occupied areas of Poland. There was to be no attempt to prevent transmissions from one Polish radio transmitter to another in German-occupied Poland, and no censorship of outgoing messages was to take place, only that copies of the messages were to be made available. Finally, periodical snap checks were to be made of outgoing transmissions. 'C' was friendly and co-operative throughout and Perkins was aware that he had no fully-fledged organisation for dealing with Poland, and that SOE were the only ones qualified to deal with such messages.

It was not the policy of SOE to interfere with Polish transmissions. Roberts made clear to Perkins what was currently the official Foreign Office line when he said that the aim was not to censor all messages to Poland, only to see copies so that they could determine if they contained anything to which the Foreign Office might take exception.⁷³⁰

Perkins tried endlessly to dream up methods by which Polish messages could be passed without causing annoyance to anyone. Soon, though, he was obliged to inform the Polish Minister of the Interior that from now on all censorship would be carried out prior to sending, not post-censorship as had been the case until now. Therefore, he requested that the Poles let him have copies to see before dispatch as had done previously prior to D-Day.⁷³¹

Possibly still unaware of the operational ban that had been placed on flights to Poland, a request was received in Italy for more drops. Equipment requested included one complete meteorological observation station, 300 instructional booklets on infantry battalion fighting and 50 on fighting units that were larger than battalion strength, 200 instructional booklets on shock units and 200 on anti-tank weapons. In addition, instructions for laying and removing minefields were asked for as well as copies of traffic regulations for motorised and armoured units.⁷³² Obviously the Poles were planning operations of a type far more grand than they had thus far carried out. Meteorological observation stations were not normally a requirement of an underground army. If the Poles intended using them against the Soviets by starting another war, they could expect no help from elsewhere, even from those sympathetic to their plight.

On 8th December, Churchill received a communiqué from Stalin which read, 'Since my last meeting with Mikołajczyk it has become clear he cannot help in the solution of Polish affairs. His negative role has become apparent. The Polish National Committee serves as a cover for the elements which carry out criminal terrorist work against Soviet officers and generally against Soviet people in the territory of Poland. We cannot reconcile ourselves to the fact that the Poles kill our people and carry out a criminal fight against the Soviet troops who are liberating their country. Ministerial changes in the Polish émigré government are not

of serious interest - they have lost touch with the National soil. The Polish Committee of National Liberation (Lublin) has achieved notable success in strengthening its national democratic organisation, carrying out land reform for the benefit of the peasants and it carries great authority among the Polish population'.⁷³³

In the area east of the Bug and San rivers, the Soviets were showing determination to treat the area as part of the USSR, including the extermination of every sign of Polish culture. West of the lines, it was clear that the Soviets were striving for rapid and total subordination of the whole Polish nation. The more important acts were the liquidation of the AK, despite their continual activity against the enemy, by the removal of their leading men, either by murder or deportation, the disarming of units, arrests and deportations and the recruiting of men for Berling's army. Acts of destruction of links with the Polish Government in London and their representatives in Poland continued, as did the ruthless collection of grain quotas and the requisitioning of cattle etc for the Red Army, which was provisioned from local suppliers.⁷³⁴ Lengthy lines of communications for the Red Army were required mainly for fuel and ammunition. Other provisions were stolen locally.

Reduction of air support potential.

On 14th December, Selborne wrote to Sir Archie Sinclair at the Air Ministry. SHAEF had sent Selborne a copy of a letter dated 7th inst. which purported to be an agreement between SHAEF and the Air Ministry for the proposed removal of 138 Squadron from Special Operations. The suggestion was for its return to what was described as its normal bomber role in Bomber Command. Selborne was already aware that this had been raised by the Commander-in-Chief of Bomber Command and was under consideration. Ritchie had made it clear to the Air Ministry that SOE had views to express on the matter and would need to be consulted as they obviously had not. Selborne wrote, that whilst SOE were not opposed in principle if this happened, a number of consequential changes would be necessary to ensure the continuation of their work. Selborne followed his letter with another, this time to Churchill. In it he expressed his hope that Churchill would decide that British sorties to the

Polish Army of Resistance should continue, otherwise, he reminded Churchill, there was a risk of violating the Anglo-Polish Alliance of 1939. Churchill replied, 'Let us talk this over.'⁷³⁵ Until now, Churchill had given instant support to Selborne and SOE. This was, perhaps, the first time that he had replied to a request from Selborne with the words 'Let us talk this over'. It is surely an indication that his appreciation of SOE's Polish Section was waning. More probably, he considered that bomber support for the continued success of the invasion was more important as there was still a chance that the war could be lost, even at this late date. Whilst he had Churchill's ear, Selborne confirmed his support for the Foreign Secretary's suggestion that a British Military Mission be sent to both the Polish underground and to the Lublin Committee (Operations FRESTON and FERNHAM).⁷³⁶

Pickles, thoughts on Poland's future.

The Poles were dissatisfied with the constitution of their new government, which called for immediate accord with Russia. Pickles wrote unofficially to Lt. Col. William Deakin in Bari to inform him of Polish matters. In it he said he had attended a debate in the House of Commons (on 20th December) and had come away cheered. He wrote, 'The Old Man's (Churchill) speech was extremely unimpressive, as though he was fed up with the Poles and said, 'The Russians are being justly and rightly treated in being granted the claim they make to the eastern frontiers along the Curzon Line'. Hardly a single member spoke in favour of the (British) government and our impression was that if a free vote had been allowed they would have been thrown out! Eden put up a magnificent performance trying to soothe things down, but the Americans are not being too helpful, either. Our hope that the new Polish Government would fall has been dashed to the ground by the damned foolishness of HMG's Foreign Office and the British press. Had they continued the lukewarm treatment, they (the Polish Government) would have succeeded in being foolish enough to get themselves out of office. Opposition in the press made the Poles more supportive (being naturally pig-headed), and support for Mikołajczyk in parliament left the idea in Polish minds that he is completely under British influence. SOE are charged with implementing HMG policy but that does not

mean we cannot criticise that policy if we think it wrong. The Foreign Office have not been clever on the subject of Poland and thinking back to Oct 2nd (the day Warsaw fell) it is obvious to me that had the mission (FREESTON) gone in we would not have many of our present difficulties. Let Hudson have this information before he leaves so he knows what he is going into. The biggest nigger in the woodpile is the President and it is fairly evident that Arciszewski is his tool. There is no doubt the Polish government is hoping to emerge with a Poland reconstituted in the same, or larger, area after a future quarrel between Russia, on one hand, and the USA and us, on the other. I cannot imagine a more serious thought than this. If Mikołajczyk had gone through with his policy, Poland would have gone through a very difficult time under Russian domination for 10 to 15 years. Nevertheless, it would have emerged free and independent. As it is, the only result is that power will drift to the Lublin Committee by default, who will 'vote' themselves into the USSR. Mikołajczyk told the Prime Minister and Foreign Office he can never again accept office in the hands of Raczkiewicz, therefore, it is vitally important that Raczkiewicz's successor be brought out on the next WILDHORN. In any case, the next move must come from the Poles themselves as there is no possibility of getting rid of this (British) government until they are thrown out by the country itself. The next move is in the hands of Hudson and his boys. Whether he goes or not rests with the Prime Minister. The Polish government here may not be a set of fools but they are misguided. We must do something to make sure the people inside Poland are not misguided by them.⁷³⁷

SOE certainly considered it bad news that the Poles had managed to rid themselves of Mikołajczyk as they thought him the best man for dealing with the Russians, not only from the Polish point of view but also from US and UK standpoints. Deakin read the letter, afterwards lending it to Threlfall and asking for more information, as he felt it gave an insight from only one angle.⁷³⁸

'The Economist' ran an article on the House of Commons debate that complained that it had been more about the Curzon Line than the real issue, which was the guarantee given to the Poles in 1939. It considered it a test case for the nations of the whole peace

settlement and said that only the great powers could command effective policy of a settlement, 'but no alliance will be lasting which ignores the elementary rights of smaller nations. In the case of Poland, a small nation's independence was threatened by one of the major partners in the alliance and, although the other two disliked what was happening, they were unwilling to carry the protests to the point of straining the alliance. Units struggle against injustice and authority is divided. The Curzon Line was not the cause of the problem but the fact that the Russians refuse to negotiate was. The Polish Government included anti-Russian members, (Sosnkowski) but with his removal the Russians no longer had anything to complain about. Arciszewski's Government was no longer representative as Mikołajczyk's Peasant Party had been, which was no longer a member of the coalition, and the Socialist Party was divided. The Arciszewski Government is almost as much a Russian creation as the Lublin Committee.' The paper continued, 'Both the major allies (US & UK) know that whatever else, they will not go to war with Russia, and even though they deplore the methods chosen by Moscow in dealing with the Poles, they cannot, and will not, push their intervention beyond a certain point.'

A Council of National Unity's declaration indicated that Arciszewski's government was viewed with as much importance in Poland as in Britain. Evidently, it was now up to the Polish people inside Poland to decide how the relationship with the Soviets should be settled and not the Polish Government in London. It now seemed, however, that Mikołajczyk's original policy was not wholly unacceptable to the Polish people. Although the contents of the message were passed to the Foreign Office for consideration, Keswick wrote, 'I fear it is too late.'⁷³⁹ HMG continued with their feeling that the best way Poland could hope to get democratic independence was by reaching a firm and friendly agreement with the Soviets. Pickles ensured their opinion was passed to the members of the FRESTON mission.⁷⁴⁰

US approval of DUNSTABLE

On 22nd December, Lt Col Joseph Dasher (Military Intelligence Chief of the Polish Section of OSS) wrote to Col Jerzy Lunkiewicz of the Polish Ministry of National Defence to say

that OSS had studied DUNSTABLE, which he considered a praiseworthy arrangement between Britain and Poland but which was being implemented largely in US operational zones. He assured Lunkiewicz that OSS extended every possible co-operation to the project and was assisting with the procurement of rations etc. He said, 'We believe our own armies will benefit from DUNSTABLE activities and the very capable British and Polish personnel involved, even though we shall not be directly involved in it. Any involvement in the DUNSTABLE plan by US personnel would not serve to improve the situation, which is already so well organised. We are grateful for your readiness to include us in your operational plans.' ⁷⁴¹

Contrary to forecasts, December turned out to be a good month with exceptionally good weather. Six flying nights were lost however, due to the ban on flights.⁷⁴² Ironically, the only flight the ban did not affect, WILDHORN IV, was unable to operate due to adverse weather. On 7th December it was cancelled due to a wet landing ground. On 15th, it had started out but was recalled due to strong crosswinds at the landing site. Now, on 26th December, Podoski informed Pickles that German pacification being implemented in the landing field area meant that it could not be carried out until 2nd January 1945.⁷⁴³

Better news came when the ban on flights to Poland was lifted and on Boxing Day night two drops were carried out, one of them the important deployment of the British Military Mission, operation FRESTON. The Liberator aircraft, piloted by Edmund Ladro and navigated by Roman Chmiel, successfully delivered Col. DT Hudson; Major P Solly-Flood; Major P Kemp; Sergeant D Galbraith; Capt A Pospieszalski 'Luk' who, for the purposes of this mission went under the name of 'Tony Currie'.⁷⁴⁴

Soviet co-operation?

By the end of December it appeared to be a foregone conclusion that the Lublin Committee would become the Provisional Polish Government and at various stages would in due course receive recognition as such from the World powers. It came as no great surprise

when, on 31st of the month, a PWE⁷⁴⁵ intelligence report said that the Committee of National Liberation had transformed into a Provisional Government (Lublin).⁷⁴⁶

During the time that the Red Army was forcing its way through Poland, little co-operation by the Russians had been evident. SOE and NKVD had co-operated in the past in Western Europe but not in Central Europe and the Balkans. SOE had maintained a liaison mission in Moscow (SAM) but had received no co-operation from the NKVD, apart from a certain amount of intelligence about central Asia, which had been passed on to the SIS. A further effort of co-operation was now thought worth trying due to changes in circumstances, i.e. liberation of occupied countries except parts of Italy, Yugoslavia, Poland and Czechoslovakia, the narrowing gap between the Allies' armies in Italy and the advancing Russians. As long as the deadlock in the Polish situation lasted, it was useless to prepare or even consider any form of co-operation with the NKVD in Poland.⁷⁴⁷

Supplies delivered during 1944

In a round-up of events throughout 1944, it was seen that Poles trained at Base 10, a training station at Ostuni in Italy, numbered a total of 173. Of this number twenty three were sent to field, ten remained at the holding station, eleven or twelve were employed at the base, thirty six were found to be unsuitable, fifty were transferred to number 2 Corps due to a change of policy, three had died and thirty nine were sent for further training in the UK. Money sent to Poland during the period amounted to \$194,400 in Gold, \$10,433,400 in paper plus 43,099,800 paper Zlotys. (These figures do not include Ministry of Interior cash supply). 290 successful operations were carried out with 330 unsuccessful. 152 operators were infiltrated and 361.98 tons of stores delivered at a cost of forty eight aircraft lost.⁷⁴⁸

As recently as November 1944, the Chiefs-of-Staff had instructed SOE to continue to maintain contact with the Polish Home Army in close collaboration with the Polish Government in Exile. Support, they had said, should be maximum in western Poland but within the limits of SOE's allotted resources, weather conditions and distances. SOE were not

to encourage the Home Army to believe sufficient arms and supplies would be available for another general rising, but then, they never had. Although the political situation had changed since November, the basic principle remained, which was the loyalty to the Allied cause of the people inside Poland and HMG's policy to recognise them as allies with belligerent rights not to be altered. More recently, on 20th December, at a meeting chaired by Churchill, it was agreed to continue supplying agents, equipment and money to German-occupied Poland but not to areas near the Russian lines. This decision was made after the question had been debated in parliament and public opinion had been gauged. Polish intelligence had provided much reliable information according to those concerned. SOE's task in promoting sabotage in submarine assembling and pre-fabricated submarine works at Gdynia and Danzig was yet to be accomplished.⁷⁴⁹

Summary

The work of the Polish Section from August 1944 was clearly divided into two separate departments, one supporting the Warsaw Rising and one supporting BARDSEA. Whilst Warsaw was important to the Poles, success in the invasion of Europe certainly meant more to the British and American Chiefs-of-Staff; the Poles were trying to win a battle, but others were trying to win a war. SOE clearly never abandoned the Warsaw Poles, though others might well have. The Polish Section tried continuously to gain support to supply Warsaw, even after they were effectively 'stood down'. An earlier response by the Americans might have saved the situation, but the real fly in the ointment was Stalin, who had promised help after only nine days. The fact that it was not forthcoming was not the fault of the Western Allies. While there is much truth in Bór Komorowski's message mentioning 'underhand diplomatic action', his comment about abandonment in 1939 shows that, like so many of his countrymen, he had little knowledge of the problems involved in supporting and supplying the elements of a battle that, in relative terms, was so isolated.

Although the work of the continental action groups was proceeding well, exactly how well will probably never fully be known, as its work was so indistinguishable from that carried out

by the Maquis. The fact that Hazell thought it prudent to move his headquarters nearer the front line is, perhaps, an indication that confirms the statement. Mikołajczyk's resignation was significant to the Polish Section, which had become used to his ways and liked him.

Notes.

⁵³⁷ TNA HS4/146.

⁵³⁸ TNA HS4/157.

⁵³⁹ TNA HS4/177.

⁵⁴⁰ TNA HS4/139.

⁵⁴¹ TNA HS4/317 These stores, dropped from low level without parachutes, on collection were found to be useless. The Soviets used mainly Polish pilots for this work.

⁵⁴² TNA HS4/156.

⁵⁴³ TNA HS4/157 .

⁵⁴⁴ The Foreign Office thought that recognition of Poland as an Allied Force would be unlikely to be heeded by the Germans and might only irritate the Russians because they came under the Soviet sphere of operations. Therefore they considered the situation different from that by French Forces, operating in France under Eisenhower. The above was forwarded for War Cabinet distribution on 10th August 1944. See TNA HS4/157.

⁵⁴⁵ TNA HS4/156.

⁵⁴⁶ Five days food supply was also available to the residents of Warsaw at the start of the uprising. This indicates that when calling for the uprising to begin, Bor Komorowski had either expected to free Warsaw from the Germans within the first week, or that he expected the Soviets to enter the city and provide support.

⁵⁴⁷ TNA HS4/157.

⁵⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁹ TNA HS4/148.

⁵⁵⁰ TNA HS4/156 .

⁵⁵¹ TNA HS4/157.

⁵⁵² TNA HS4/156.

⁵⁵³ TNA HS4/241.

⁵⁵⁴ This was something that would have been totally impractical as they had been intended for use on captured airfields, which would have already been bombed out of existence by the RAF had all his requirements been met.

⁵⁵⁵ Formally thought to be in Southeast Poland.

⁵⁵⁶ This is not a justifiable consideration. Any ammunition would be advantageous to the defenders of Warsaw. The Germans, on the other hand, were not suffering a shortage of ammunition so any extra they might receive would have been of little relative value. Indeed, some of it would have been of made for use in weapons of a different calibre to those used by the Germans and would therefore have been useless for their needs.

⁵⁵⁷ Commander in Chief Allied Airforces in the Mediterranean.

⁵⁵⁸ Large formations of aircraft attracted large numbers of defending fighters. On the first American attack on the Poesti oilfields in Rumania during 1943, 57 heavy bombers were lost along with 570 crewmembers.

⁵⁵⁹ TNA HS4/148 & HS4/317.

⁵⁶⁰ TNA HS4/148.

⁵⁶¹ TNA HS4/317 & HS4/157.

⁵⁶² TNA HS4/317.

⁵⁶³ HS4/157 & HS4/317 Exactly where Tabor expected to obtain stores once 100% of aircraft were lost, regardless of the nationality of their crews, he does not say.

⁵⁶⁴ TNA HS4/317.

⁵⁶⁵ TNA HS4/139.

⁵⁶⁶ TNA HS4/157.

⁵⁶⁷ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/157.

⁵⁶⁸ Ibid.
⁵⁶⁹ TNA HS4/156.
⁵⁷⁰ TNA HS4/226.
⁵⁷¹ Author unknown. TNA HS4/148.
⁵⁷² TNA HS4/168.
⁵⁷³ Ibid.
⁵⁷⁴ TNA HS4/317.
⁵⁷⁵ TNA HS4/148.
⁵⁷⁶ This was well within the capabilities of the Soviets who had certainly been dropping stores to the AL since April 1944. John Erickson. *The Road to Berlin* Phoenix Giants London 1996 p. 259.
⁵⁷⁷ TNA HS4/157.
⁵⁷⁸ Tabor asked again for more arms and ammunition, Polish parachutists and for the bombing of Okecie and Bielany airfields, the Citadel, Physical Training Institute and the fort of Bem. (Precision bombing was required as Polish troops were nearby). Also to send arms and ammunition for 3,000 men in the Kampinos forest 120 miles north of Warsaw. The accuracy he required was outside the ability of RAF Bomber Command and thoughts turned to whether the US 15th Air Force could help.
⁵⁷⁹ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/157.
⁵⁸⁰ TNA HS4/317.
⁵⁸¹ TNA HS4/148.
⁵⁸² Ibid.
⁵⁸³ Ibid.
⁵⁸⁴ TNA HS4/156.
⁵⁸⁵ The difficulties in supplying large quantities of containers to Poland had been investigated in 1942 and it was soon realised that vast number of aircraft would be needed to supply Poland's demands. TNA WO199/448. It must also be remembered that these Polish demands were being made when the Allied airforces were fully occupied supporting the invasion of France, which could not be allowed to fail at any cost.
⁵⁸⁶ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/157.
⁵⁸⁷ TNA HS4/157.
⁵⁸⁸ Telegram 2535 Foreign Office to Moscow Embassy.
⁵⁸⁹ Telegram 2552 Foreign Office to Moscow. Embassy. TNA HS4/320.
⁵⁹⁰ TNA HS4/157.
⁵⁹¹ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/157.
⁵⁹² TNA HS4/136, HS4/157 & HS4/317.
⁵⁹³ TNA HS4/157 & HS4/159.
⁵⁹⁴ TNA AIR20/2180, BJ5/205.
⁵⁹⁵ TNA HS4/148.
⁵⁹⁶ TNA HS4/171.
⁵⁹⁷ TNA HS4/157.
⁵⁹⁸ This accounts for him occasionally being referred to as a Flight Lieutenant.
⁵⁹⁹ Crown and Anchor, a gambling game.
⁶⁰⁰ TNA HS4/158 & HS4/256.
⁶⁰¹ TNA HS4/157, HS4/158 Telegram L.dz. K. 4798/44.
⁶⁰² TNA HS4/158 & HS4/320.
⁶⁰³ TNA HS4/157.
⁶⁰⁴ TNA HS4/148.
⁶⁰⁵ TNA HS4/157.
⁶⁰⁶ Ibid.
⁶⁰⁷ Ibid.
⁶⁰⁸ TNA HS4/157 & HS4/158.
⁶⁰⁹ Jane was a popular cartoon character of the period that regularly featured in the Daily Mirror newspaper. See also TNA HS4/146.
⁶¹⁰ TNA HS4/158.
⁶¹¹ Ibid.
⁶¹² TNA HS4/146.
⁶¹³ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/158.
⁶¹⁴ TNA HS4/156.
⁶¹⁵ Telegram L. dz. K. 5147/44. TNA HS4/158.
⁶¹⁶ TNA HS4/148.

⁶¹⁷ TNA HS4/158.
⁶¹⁸ Report no. 1656 said the load was scattered over 2 kilometres but 11 containers had been retrieved. Number 1657 reported all containers collected.
⁶¹⁹ TNA HS4/159.
⁶²⁰ TNA HS4/146.
⁶²¹ To provide German defences against Russians.
⁶²² TNA HS4/158.
⁶²³ Ibid.
⁶²⁴ TNA HS4/156, HS4/158 & HS4/318.
⁶²⁵ Maciej Kalenkiewicz parachuted into Poland on the night 27/28 December 1941.
⁶²⁶ He agreed with SOE that the uprising was neither a good idea or possible to support in the way Sosnkowski hoped.
⁶²⁷ TNA HS4/145.
⁶²⁸ TNA HS4/158.
⁶²⁹ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/168.
⁶³⁰ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/184.
⁶³¹ It was found in Wasaw and contrary to the findings of the tests carried out on the devices when the American type was considered the most efficient that the British Middle East versions proved to be better. TNA HS4/159.
⁶³² TNA HS4/156.
⁶³³ TNA HS4/318.
⁶³⁴ TNA HS4/156HS4/158.
⁶³⁵ TNA HS4/318.
⁶³⁶ TNA HS4/156.
⁶³⁷ TNA HS4/172.
⁶³⁸ The delay in receiving the message was probably due to the time it took to decode the message.
⁶³⁹ S/OPS/9565. TNA HS4/158.
⁶⁴⁰ TNA HS4/156.
⁶⁴¹ TNA HS4/318.
⁶⁴² TNA HS4/291.
⁶⁴³ TNA HS4/159.
⁶⁴⁴ TNA HS4/145 & KV2/516.
⁶⁴⁵ TNA HS4/317.
⁶⁴⁶ TNA HS4/226.
⁶⁴⁷ TNA HS4/225.
⁶⁴⁸ TNA HS4/226.
⁶⁴⁹ TNA HS4/225.
⁶⁵⁰ Ibid.
⁶⁵¹ I have been unable to find a place of this name in Germany. It I probably a spelling mistake for Würtzburg.
⁶⁵² TNA HS4/318.
⁶⁵³ TNA HS4/225.
⁶⁵⁴ TNA HS4/225.
⁶⁵⁵ Real name Henri Ziegler. Chief of Staff to the French Forces of the Interior under General Koenig.
⁶⁵⁶ TNA HS4/225.
⁶⁵⁷ Jozef Hartman, Sixth Bureau officer, formally in charge of training at STS 43, Audley End.
⁶⁵⁸ TNA HS4/192.
⁶⁵⁹ TNA HS4/22.7
⁶⁶⁰ This makes a lie of claims that the Polish Parachute Brigade was deliberately kept back from Warsaw in order to take part in the Arnhem operation. They were being held in reserve in support following the invasion.
⁶⁶¹ TNA HS4/156 & HS4/229 & HS4/318.
⁶⁶² TNA HS4/156 & HS4/318.
⁶⁶³ TNA HS4/226.
⁶⁶⁴ Real name Szczesny, Christian name not known.
⁶⁶⁵ TNA HS4/239.
⁶⁶⁶ TNA HS4/226.
⁶⁶⁷ TNA HS4/225 & HS4/229.
⁶⁶⁸ TNA HS4/238.

669 TNA HS4/292.
670 TNA HS4/222.
671 TNA HS4/226.
672 TNA HS4/239.
673 Ibid.
674 TNA HS4/298.
675 At Arnhem during September.
676 TNA HS4/225
677 TNA HS4/140.
678 TNA HS4/159.
679 TNA HS4/156.
680 TNA HS4/318.
681 TNA HS4/156.
682 Ibid.
683 TNA HS4/145 & HS4/146.
684 OSS.
685 TNA HS4/239.
686 TNA HS4/238 & HS4/239.
687 TNA HS4/180.
688 TNA HS4/159.
689 TNA HS4/140.
690 TNA AIR20/ 8342.
691 TNA HS4/180.
692 TNA HS4/159.
693 Ibid.
694 TNA HS4/180.
695 Ibid.
696 TNA HS4/184.
697 Ibid.
698 TNA HS4/156.
699 TNA HS4/159.
700 TNA HS4/156.
701 Ibid.
702 Ibid.
703 Sinclairs statement about the June flights was not his mistake. The RAF suffered some confusion about moon-periods and had put down some of the flights carried out in May as happening in June.
704 TNA HS4/156.
705 TNA HS4/145.
706 TNA HS4/156.
707 TNA HS4/159.
708 TNA HS4/174.
709 Ibid.
710 TNA HS4/156.
711 TNA HS4/318.
712 TNA HS4/156.
713 TNA HS4/318.
714 TNA HS4/156.
715 TNA AIR20/8221.
716 Although Churchill gave verbal agreements (as did Stalin) regarding borders no statements would be made until after the US Presidential elections so as not to conflict with US policy. This was confirmed at a lunch Churchill had with Siudak on 9th December. TNA HS4/145.
717 TNA HS4/145.
718 TNA HS4/139.
719 TNA HS4/145.
720 Ibid.
721 TNA HS4/159.
722 TNA HS4/156.
723 He had been dropped into Poland by SOE on 13th/14th March 1943 on operation 'STOCK'.

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- ⁷²⁴ After the Warsaw collapse the Poles helped Home Army prisoners of war kept in Offlags and 9 Stalags numbering about 14,000. Delegates of the Polish Red Cross and the international Red Cross in Geneva with other aid organisations sent food parcels. TNA HS4/307.
- ⁷²⁵ TNA HS4/305.
- ⁷²⁶ TNA HS4/270.
- ⁷²⁷ TNA HS4/145.
- ⁷²⁸ TNA HS4/318 & HS4/326.
- ⁷²⁹ TNA HS4/145.
- ⁷³⁰ Ibid.
- ⁷³¹ TNA HS4/145.
- ⁷³² TNA HS4/306.
- ⁷³³ TNA HS4/318.
- ⁷³⁴ TNA HS4/307.
- ⁷³⁵ TNA HS4/145.
- ⁷³⁶ TNA HS4/318.
- ⁷³⁷ TNA HS4/146.
- ⁷³⁸ Ibid.
- ⁷³⁹ TNA HS4/318.
- ⁷⁴⁰ TNA HS4/145.
- ⁷⁴¹ TNA HS4/225.
- ⁷⁴² TNA HS4/305.
- ⁷⁴³ TNA HS4/180.
- ⁷⁴⁴ For a complete account of this mission see J. Bines *'Operation Freston'*. Saffron Walden 1999.
- ⁷⁴⁵ PWE. Political Warfare Executive.
- ⁷⁴⁶ TNA HS4/140.
- ⁷⁴⁷ TNA HS4/146.
- ⁷⁴⁸ TNA HS4/177.
- ⁷⁴⁹ TNA HS4/156.

Chapter 7

The war was rapidly coming to an end by the beginning of 1945, even though the fighting remained hard and sustained. On 31st January, a Soviet submarine sunk a German liner, the *Wilhelm Gustloff*, which was carrying refugees in the Baltic. An estimated 7000 were killed in what was the largest-ever loss of life at sea. A sustained bombing offensive against Dresden by American and British airforces left the city totally destroyed, with incalculable loss of life. The atomic bomb raids on Japan were more devastating, but succeeded in bringing the hostilities to an end, so by the end of 1945, the Allied victory over Germany and Japan was complete. Leading political figures Hitler, Mussolini, and Roosevelt were dead, all had died during April within eighteen days of each other. Both sides counted their losses as War-crimes trials began. The first ray of hope for a more secure future came on 30th January 1946, when the United Nations held its first session.⁷⁵⁰

1945 - 1946

Lublin and the Observer Parties.

Perhaps, because it controlled large areas where French prisoners of war were thought to be held, on 1st January the French Government recognised the Lublin Committee. The British Government was thought not likely to follow suit. Arciszewski broadcast to Poland, claiming the Polish Government in London to be the only legal and constituted body entitled to speak for the Polish State.⁷⁵¹ It was hoped that the British observer party in Poland (FREESTON) would shortly be able to confirm the state of affairs in Poland. With the possible deployment of yet more observer parties, the Poles worried that they would be supplied at the cost of the AK. If British observation missions were supplied the Poles would complain, (even though they had asked for them), if the Poles were supplied, the Russians would complain. Any amount of equipment was available but the means to deliver it was not. Even at this late stage

of the war, the eternal difficulty in the transportation of stores was still proving a major stumbling block.

To consider not sending supplies was a major turnabout in terms of policy. Some 75 POW's, British and American, were held, fed, clothed and looked after by the Poles. This was no time for the British to turn their backs on the Poles, and SOE had no intention of doing so. The Chiefs of Staff apparently supported this, and any decision to the contrary would have to be made at a much higher level, and this was likely to have repercussions. Another ban on flights to Poland would have a considerable effect on the morale of Polish troops elsewhere. With Poland, in theory, being largely liberated, the most important task of the day for SOE was penetration of Germany through DUNSTABLE. This was important work, but it was also dependent on continued friendly relations existing between Poland and SOE.

Perkins warned the Foreign Office that stopping supplies to Poland could lead to the moderate Poles believing that their policy of establishing an understanding with the Russians was not to His Majesty's Government's liking. Even SOE's meagre supplies were of great political value and served as a manifestation of unity between Poland and her Allies. Deliveries to Poland were a token of the reality of SOE's assistance to Poland. The nature and amount of stores shows they could have no material effect in a fight against Russia. They consisted mainly of medicine, clothing, money and small arms for personal protection against German punitive parties. He reminded the Foreign Office that the British still had a treaty with Poland and suggested the Russians be reminded of the fact. To withdraw support from Poland, at the Russian's request, would alienate Polish friendship with the United Kingdom. Pressure should, therefore, be brought on the Soviets to allow them to fly over their occupied territory.⁷⁵² Throughout the war Poland had supplied considerable intelligence. SIS happily admitted that Polish intelligence was more reliable and accurate than any received from elsewhere. The fuss that occurred following the departure of Ward from Warsaw suggests that SIS had no one of their own in Poland at all. If true, this was a gross oversight that bordered on madness. At the time that the Freston Mission was established, it would appear

that the oversight had been rectified, as no fewer than 30 SIS operatives were reported as being in Poland.⁷⁵³

Since 1st January, the Lublin Government had begun to attack Mikołajczyk verbally, which seemed to indicate the Russians were out to force the pace before the next meeting of the three great powers. In order to attempt to counteract the claims made by Lublin, the Polish Ambassador saw Eden, asking for (currently forbidden) uncensored messaging to Poland, especially to Russian-held areas of Poland.⁷⁵⁴ Eden feared anti-Russian messages, and asked the Ambassador if he would consider censored messages to the Russian-held areas. The Ambassador said he thought his government would consider this a valuable concession.⁷⁵⁵ Meanwhile, the Lublin Committee's Minister for War, General Michał Rola-Żymieski was calling for all Poles in the West (Holland, Italy and the Western front), not to carry out the orders of their commanders and declare a readiness to join Polish units under the Lublin general's command.⁷⁵⁶

BARDSEA

Kukiel had still not reached a decision as to whether or not to use the BARDSEA men for DUNSTABLE. He was aware that a decision had to be made soon, as morale suffered if their manpower was continually drained for special operations. One of the biggest problems facing him was the fact that BARDSEA had trained the men to act individually whereas those selected for DUNSTABLE were intended to act together as a company. Colonel Marian Ogorkiewicz, the chief of the Polish special operations office, therefore decided to recruit 30 more men for DUNSTABLE as this would allow an equivalent number of BARDSEA men to be released for special operations that were more in line with their training.⁷⁵⁷

Flights to Poland

On 6th January, the Foreign Office again questioned whether flights should continue to Poland. Keswick and Perkins saw Sir Orme Sargent, who sought their opinion as well as that of SIS. Sargent thought all flights should cease, except those supporting the FRESTON mission.⁷⁵⁸ Keswick and Perkins made it clear they thought all flights should continue. Sargent later wrote, 'Make no mistakes; support of Polish resistance by this country has got to cease.'⁷⁵⁹ To SOE, it now seemed clear that soon the Secretary of State would have papers submitted to him advocating cessation of support on the grounds of avoiding conflict with the Russians. SOE felt strongly that this would be both disastrous and dishonourable, and asked Selborne if he could see the Prime Minister before he received the minute; if not, could he approach the Secretary of State to stop it being passed?

Gubbins urged Selborne to maintain support, suggesting he remind the Foreign Office that intelligence received from the Poles was valuable. He further suggested they be reminded of the care shown to escaped British POW's by the Poles and the risks involved if they removed their support from the British. He urged Selborne to give as evidence the Poles' past record, information on V2's, sabotage to U-Boat pens and the German-controlled shipyards. Selborne endorsed Gubbins suggestions and included them in a letter to Eden.⁷⁶⁰

Christopher Warner at the Foreign Office spoke to Harry Sporborg about the cessation of flights to Poland and also about the liaison missions. Although the Foreign Office had informed the Soviets about the FRESTON Mission, it had told them nothing about the other intended parties, assuming they would not be sent unless they were given further authority.⁷⁶¹ In reality, the Foreign Office, or more correctly the Ambassador in Moscow, had been very lax informing the Soviets of the intended infiltration of the FRESTON Mission. Thus far, the Foreign Office had proved to be less than efficient and, judging by the number of times information had to be given it before it comprehended a situation, not particularly proficient either. Something at least was achieved; it had eventually given its approval for the

Poles to transmit censored messages to the Russian occupied areas of their country.⁷⁶² In Soviet-occupied Poland, all press and officially-recognised political and social organisations were only instruments of the Lublin Committee. Civil underground, and the Underground Army had been dissolved in areas of Lublin Committee activity, and civil servants and soldiers had been murdered, arrested, disarmed and deported, often with their families.

On 9th January, Mikołajczyk asked Perkins to visit him. Mikołajczyk expressed his concerns about the proposed WILDHORN. He was anxious that Witos be brought out, saying that any action to reform the Polish government would be useless unless he could replace the current President. Perkins assured Mikołajczyk that the flight was already standing by in Italy and that it would not be subject to any ban. In fact, a second flight was being planned to bring out British and US fliers. If it would help, Perkins suggested Mikołajczyk should talk to Tabor to see if Witos could link up with this flight. Perkins let Gubbins know how critical Mikołajczyk was of the present Polish administration. In the meantime, Poland continued to fight. The Home Army fought a battle near Szczakowa (50 kms NW of Kraków) on 13th January and the following day attacked a transport column near Myślenice (25 kms S of Kraków). Similarly, another battle took place at Opoczno between Radom and Piotrków.⁷⁶³ Despite their continued fight for independence the whole country realised they would soon be likely to be under the Soviets at any time and that the Lublin Committee was likely to establish themselves in Warsaw, thus giving them more authority.

Disbanding of the Home Army.

On 19th January, General Okulicki disbanded the Home Army and released its soldiers from their oaths.⁷⁶⁴ There now seemed little point in trying to carry out operations from a country fully occupied by the Soviets so, that same day, Truszkowski announced that he was no longer trying to establish a base in Poland for work into Germany and that the project had been abandoned.⁷⁶⁵ With the over-running of the proposed landing ground, and the vagaries

of the weather, it now looked as though WILDHORN IV would be the next in line for cancellation.⁷⁶⁶

ME22/SPU22

From January onwards, ME22/SPU22's Special Planning Unit were given the task of questioning foreign (Polish) workers as a part of a vetting procedure.⁷⁶⁷ At the monthly review held at the end of January, the future of operations in Western Europe was discussed. ME22 had established a number of stations for infiltrations into Germany with a headquarters at Aalter and three long-term agents had been sent to the field on 12th / 13th January, followed shortly by two more. Soon, SPU22 had approximately 40 men undergoing training for future operations.⁷⁶⁸

Ince explained the idea of the DUNSTABLE operation to Colonel Barry. It was now apparent that the Polish organisations were unlikely to be ready to receive the DUNSTABLE company, so Ince suggested they be split up into six sections comprising one officer, one w/t operator and sixteen others. These were intended to carry out short term commando type raids after being dropped, and where they had sufficient manpower to cover the w/t transmissions or to drop to selected POW camps to organise the POW's until the arrival of the Allies.⁷⁶⁹ There is nothing to indicate that Ince's suggestion was taken up.

Freston Mission news

With the continued uncertainty about the WILDHORN operation, and the desire to get Ward back to England, the suggestion was made for Ward to contact the Russians and ask them to contact Colonel Hudson and the FRESTON party. Perkins asked Utnik to pass the message on over his wireless links. Jan Nowak, a recently returned courier, warned that it was impossible for Ward to be safe in contacting the Russians. He should therefore continue underground if there was to be no pick-up operation. On 7th February, SOE were finally informed that FRESTON was with the Russians and that the team was currently in Moscow.

⁷⁷⁰ The chances of another British Mission being sent at this stage were slim, to say the least.

The Poles had been informed that there could be no further drops into Poland and that Hancza should be advised to make this clear to those in the field. ⁷⁷¹

Yalta ⁷⁷²

On 4th February, the Yalta Conference took place, the results of which were published on 12th February. The Polish Government disagreed with the Big Three's decision, but enjoined the Polish regular army to continue fighting alongside the British. ⁷⁷³ With no further support being possible to the Polish 'irregular' army, a liquidation meeting was held in London. Present were Lt Col Utnik, Lt Col Hancza, Capt Podoski, and Capt Szanser for the Sixth Bureau. Lt Col Perkins, Lt Col Threlfall and Major Pickles for SOE. Utnik stated he wanted a listening watch maintained on wireless messaging as long as bases were open, or for as long as the commitment lasted. It was confirmed that subversive work among the Poles in the Wehrmacht in Northern Italy would be the task of the Second Bureau instead of the Sixth from now on. Therefore, Mikołajczyk's office (sic) in Bari should be closed and his staff possibly transferred to the Second Bureau. ⁷⁷⁴

The Crimea conference called for the establishment of a provisional Polish government pledged to hold free and unfettered elections as soon as possible under secret ballot. The three heads of government, Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill, considered the eastern frontiers of Poland should follow the Curzon Line with digression from it in some regions of 5-8kms in favour of Poland. They recognised Poland must have substantial accessions of territory in the north and west. ⁷⁷⁵ The earlier Atlantic Charter had called for rights of all people to choose the form of government under which they lived and for the restoration of sovereign rights and self-government where people had been deprived of them by an aggressor nation. To foster the conditions in which the liberated people might exercise these rights, the three governments agreed jointly to assist the people in any liberated European State or former Axis Satellite State in Europe where, in their judgement, conditions were required:

A/ To establish conditions of peace;

- B/ To carry out emergency measures for the relief of distressed people;
- C/ To form interim governmental authorities broadly representative of all democratic elements in the population, pledged to the earliest possible establishments through free elections of governments responsible to the will of the people; and
- D/ To facilitate where necessary the holding of such elections.⁷⁷⁶

On 21st February, the Cabinet decided that, in view of the Crimea conference being over, communications to Poland were now reinstated. TE Bromley at the Foreign Office informed Gubbins that the Polish Government was again entitled to the privileges of a government recognised by HMG, so the ban on communications was lifted. It is now clear that the ban had been imposed in order to stop messages being passed that would interfere with the forthcoming negotiations at Yalta and for no other reason.⁷⁷⁷

On the face of it, the agreement arrived at in Yalta did not appear too bad in the eyes of SOE, but Perkins was worried about messages being sent to Poland wherein the Polish Government was transmitting, what he thought to be, a very biased view of the Yalta conference results. Communications had been set up for Mikołajczyk to broadcast in his own cipher to Poland, as this allowed all points of view to be put across.⁷⁷⁸ Polish authorities had overheard a message going out and had themselves imposed a ban. The radio facilities granted were not the exclusive right of Arciszewski's government, but intended for the use of all accredited leaders of the various political parties. Therefore, Foreign Office was eager for Mikołajczyk to resume his communications with Poland and instructed SOE to arrange for this to be achieved privately. Perkins threw the instruction back in the face of the Foreign Office, pointing out that the authority for wireless traffic rested with SIS, and as a consequence, 'C' should be approached. Perkins observed that only Soviet references in Polish communications had been cut out until now. From this, Perkins gained the impression that the Foreign Office was now asking for communications from all political sections to be referred to them for a decision as to whether they should go or not. Perkins made it clear that he wished none of his men to be held responsible for passing messages that might, at a later date, have exception taken to them. Gubbins gave Perkins approval for his action and told

Keswick to speak to Warner, mentioning also that, 'At some future date the BBC must go on the air and tell Poles that Mikołajczyk has been prevented from transmitting.'⁷⁷⁹ It was not long before Gubbins learned that the Foreign Office intended notifying the Polish Government of a War Cabinet decision that no messages should be allowed to be transmitted to Poland, which would have the effect of building up opposition in Poland to the policy of HMG, as set out at the conclusion of the Crimea Conference. Only those of a technical nature and relating to enquiries about safety of individuals would be allowed past censorship.⁷⁸⁰

Winding up Sixth Bureau affairs.

Everywhere, both SOE and the Sixth Bureau were winding up their affairs. The liquidation of the Cairo office meant that transportation of Polish personnel could no longer be arranged, so Truskowski suggested that Polish military personnel should apply through ordinary military channels and civilians through their diplomatic representatives.⁷⁸¹ On 2nd March, Utnik wrote to Perkins telling him that the operational section of their Special Bureau known as 'S' section (Sixth Bureau) under Capt Podoski would cease to exist as from 15th of that month and that all enquiries of a general nature were to be directed to him. On 4th March Sporborg informed Gubbins that Molotov had offered to accept parties of British observers in Poland. The Prime Minister was thinking of including a 'public' man, such as a Member of Parliament. Christopher Warner, with Sporborg's permission, intended suggesting to Eden that, in addition to Robin Hankey, who was designated Chargé de Affair for Poland, Perkins and Pickles should be included in the team, and perhaps one or two members of the FRESTON Mission, if they were willing to go back.⁷⁸² Soon Perkins and Pickles were released for observer work,⁷⁸³ and on 12th March Warner announced that a British observer mission would soon be going to Poland in connection with the Crimea Conference to examine political conditions there. The mission, with Hankey in charge, would consist of Perkins as his number 2; Pickles, Truskowski, Howarth and a Captain named Peter Lee, plus others, in total between twenty and thirty people. (Perkins described them as 'all the old

thugs.')

⁷⁸⁴ The object of the observer mission was to see if Russians meant what they said at Yalta.⁷⁸⁵ Their main concern was whether their communications would be secure.⁷⁸⁶

On 24th March, Perkins reported from Poland that although conscription was coming to an end, about 32,000 had been called up in Kraków by the Communists, all of whom were asked their political affiliations and whether they had been members of the AK. Many of those interrogated had not been released. The Mayor of the Underground Administration and six others had been shot by the Office of Security in Minsk Mazowiecki. At a secret meeting here the Workers' Party (PPR) decided to exterminate all soldiers of the AK and their sympathisers. Members of the Office of Security and Citizen Militia were conscripting men and rounding up former AK soldiers. The bloody Soviet occupation was surpassing the German one in its bestiality.⁷⁸⁷

On 19th March, Sir Orme Sargent wrote to Gubbins acknowledging the fact that SOE, with Sargent's hearty concurrence, were attempting to make arrangements to put Mikołajczyk in touch with his people in Poland. It was now useless to try to pass messages to him under the Polish government communications system and so Sargent suggested SOE set up a Polish operator in a house with his own apparatus for the purpose. Mikołajczyk had been supplied with a Peasant Party cipher, which he was certain had not been broken. The risks involved were two-fold. Firstly, there was likely to be some repercussions by the Polish Government if they were to find out about Mikołajczyk's transmissions and, secondly, the Russians might succeed in tracking down the receiving station in Poland, thus putting the operators' lives in jeopardy. Orme Sargent had asked SIS, as they would supply the equipment and advice, to contact Perkins. SIS thought that this should be the limit of their involvement in the matter and that SOE's Polish Section should be asked to take the responsibility. An appended note in pencil by an unknown author indicates that Gubbins was reluctant to shoulder the responsibility.⁷⁸⁸

Ward Arrives in Britain

Ward arrived back in Britain, having gone through Moscow. He had missed the FRESTON team, who had returned already. Having previously been warned not to inform the Russians that he was a member of the AK, he was first sent to a POW camp where he was searched before departing by train to Odessa.⁷⁸⁹ Upon arrival in London he was interrogated as standard procedure and he made it known that he had brought with him a cipher which could be used for messaging to his friends in Poland. Gubbins let Orme Sargent know that he thought this to be a better cipher than the one Mikołajczyk was currently using and suggested it could be used by him to contact his supporters. 'C' agreed, saying he too thought it had a better chance of success than the one Mikołajczyk was currently using, in which 'C' had no faith. Even so, both 'C's men and the Director of Signals for SOE investigated the possibility and had come to the conclusion that his efforts would be unsuccessful. Nevertheless, an attempt to make contact with Poland was to be made in the next three or four days.⁷⁹⁰

Whereas Ward had managed to reach England with the help of the Russians, there was little chance of the same privilege being afforded the others intended to be exfiltrated by WILDHORN IV. By now, the Sixth Bureau had liquidated their section dealing with flights to Poland.⁷⁹¹ This being the case, Perkins was obliged to write to the Polish Minister Berezowski to inform him that there was now no chance of another pick-up operation being launched to Poland. He, therefore, suggested Berezowski issue instructions to the Poles that their organisation need not take any more conspiratorial risks that might lead to more accusations by the Soviets. The FO agreed the content of the letter.⁷⁹²

Lublin Government

Differences became increasingly more evident between the British and Russians over the forming of a new Polish Government. Whilst the British wanted a new government for Poland, the Russians demanded to reconstruct the existing one in Lublin.⁷⁹³ Already important members of the NKVD were declaring Poland as part of the USSR.⁷⁹⁴ A report from Poland incorrectly told that no Poles were being deported to Russia but the Lublin

government had arrested many, apparently with Russian approval, for being considered dangerous. Those arrested fell into three classes: the independent partisans who were considered undesirables and mostly bandits whose leaders were interned and some executed but most released with small punishments, especially if someone in the villages could speak for them. Members of the NSZ (operating mainly in western Poland) were, in the majority of cases, imprisoned and executed. Finally, there were members of the AK but the report gave no indication of their fate.⁷⁹⁵ We now know that many were executed.

Anxious to find out the real feeling of the Polish people in Poland, SOE gave questionnaires to ex-POW's, the members of the FRESTON team and Poles smuggled out from Odessa posing as Allied POW's. All said that the Polish Government in London was considered the real Polish government by the Poles in Poland, and one expressed the opinion and feelings of the people in the form of percentages.⁷⁹⁶

Towards Russia	afraid	lukewarm	for
Industrial areas	30%	45%	25%
Country areas	60%	35%	5%

Towards Britain & USA

Industrial areas	5%	10%	85%
Country areas		10%	90%

On 11th April, Clark Kerr sent a copy to London of a message from Molotov, which read, 'I have to state that Soviet military authorities had not been instructed to conduct any kind of negotiations with representatives of the London Polish Government. The Soviet government has no relations with them.'⁷⁹⁷ Within a week, the Foreign Office told Clarke Kerr that the Polish Government in London had received information that Witos had been taken from his home to an unknown destination. They asked Clark Kerr to ask the Soviet Government, as a matter of urgency, for information on his whereabouts.

No information was forthcoming about Witos though, a fact the Foreign Office thought ominous.⁷⁹⁸

The Minorities section of SOE was rapidly closing down its operations. On 15th March, Librach officially informed SOE that MONICA had been dissolved⁷⁹⁹ During the first week of April, the DUNSTABLE situation changed rapidly. Hazell had opened up a new headquarters at Rheine where it was intended all agents would be gathered together with Poles from Revogne. Both bases were soon to be closed.⁸⁰⁰ At the beginning of May, training station STS64 closed, followed closely by the virtual closure of STS63, the station used for preparation of BARDSEA and DUNSTABLE troops.⁸⁰¹ It was no longer possible to carry out further short-term infiltrations. The rear Headquarters and training schools of SPU22 in Lille/Ostend were closed down as SPU22 moved into Hamburg. Major Ince spent a week in consultation with Hazell about the future of SOE's involvement and between April and June many FANY were released from their jobs with E/UP.

At 0241 hours on 7th May 1945 the war in Europe ended.

On 9th May, Arciszewski issued a statement criticising Mikołajczyk's past achievements. Churchill was furious and issued instructions that all special privileges for Arciszewski be terminated.⁸⁰² Two days later, a message was sent by the Combined Chiefs-of-Staff to Eisenhower, which read, 'In view of present situation, the Polish Government in London should not receive further transfers of equipment and supplies for sabotage and intelligence activities. This refers to programmes in the past which have been under the OSS and SOE organisations and which we assume have been terminated for some time.'⁸⁰³ Whether this was in reaction to an instruction from Churchill is not clear, but a possible alternative for the action was a report in a newspaper. It told of 'assistance afforded to anti-Russian Poles by British Special Services' and referred to continued wireless contacts between London and Polish elements hostile to the Russians behind the Red Army front.'⁸⁰⁴

The F.O. sent a copy of the article to Gubbins asking for an explanation. He replied that the Russians had probably intercepted the messages. Polish political radio transmissions were sent through a short-wave wireless telegraphy broadcasting station called 'Buttercup', which sent Polish-language messages enciphered in five-figure numbered groups. These were the preserves of the Poles themselves, and to interfere would not have been diplomatic, to say the least. SOE felt that if the Foreign Office was worried about the Soviets intercepting the messages, and wanted 'Buttercup' to stop operating, the FO must tell the Poles themselves.

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On 9th March, following consultation with Perkins, Pickles had told Hartman that SOE were anxious to support all agents after the war. Gubbins intended to form a central top secret registry under the direction of one of his assistants to provide assistance in finding work etc. Although it was primarily intended for those who were returning from work abroad, section heads were asked if any of their people could help the agents by providing work for them in their own businesses.⁸⁰⁶ Pickles, too, was of the opinion that SOE should support Polish agents. Although the Polish Section of SOE had never directly employed any Poles, (they were paid by their own government), they had nevertheless carried out the policy of SOE through the Polish General Staff and had always worked under the direction of the Combined Chiefs of Staff. Pickles went on to say that 'without exception every one of them, where they were opprobrious to the Government now in Poland, were now in definite danger of their lives.' The same could be said for all Polish forces that had served their government in exile. Should the political situation in Poland change, and a government be installed which fulfilled the provisions of the Yalta agreement, the situation could be reviewed. He considered it unlikely under present circumstances that the 'European elements' in the government in Poland would be sufficiently powerful to protect agents from the attention of the Russian-controlled side of the Government.⁸⁰⁷

On 17th May, a report stated that 700,000 Russians were learning to speak Polish with the intention that they would be sent to Poland to control the situation for the PPR

during elections.⁸⁰⁸ It was now obvious that Stalin's promised 'free elections' were not to take place and Threlfall asked what the future of SOE would be following the end of the war. He felt the chief threat to world peace was the increasing divergence between Russian aims and the policies of the Western Allies. If these two could be ironed out, then there would be no problem, but if not, the Western Allies could be faced with the alternatives of surrender to the Russians or war. He was aware that the Poles had several thousand men who understood the Russian mentality and could therefore be of inestimable value to the Western Allies in the event of another war. Threlfall wrote, 'SOE Polish Section should be represented in whichever body is formed to deal with the problem, in order to ensure continuity of liaison with our contacts, and in order that this potential asset should not be dissipated.' He felt that disposal of Polish expatriates could only be by a permanent settlement of Poles outside the Russian sphere of influence. He gave three alternatives: Let them stay here; Persuade them that all was OK and send them back, which he considered was not acceptable; or lastly, hope that Russian policies changed, which he thought unlikely.⁸⁰⁹

The 19th June 1945 saw the official closure of the Polish Section of SOE. Unofficially, there was much work to do winding up the organisation. Polish communications were no longer their problem since the recent closure of Buttercup broadcasting station⁸¹⁰ meant that the Foreign Office would now take over censorship duties⁸¹¹ at the same time taking over the Polish wireless research organisation, PMWR. The section's history had to be written, a task allotted to section heads, but, as Perkins was away, much of the responsibility fell onto Truskowski's shoulders, aided by one secretary to prepare files for the archives. The Polish card index was considered valuable enough to be retained for possible future use by the Foreign Office. The closing down of the remaining SOE stations continued while the section disposed of stores no longer required. The safe return of agents became a priority. twelve remained in Murnau (Germany) for 'repatriation' to this country and some were located in the US zone three miles from Dachau. All those in the British zone had returned but others could still appear, so some form of organisation had to

remain in place in case they did. Couriers, too, had to be withdrawn from mainland Europe for return to the United Kingdom but no problems were foreseen in accomplishing this. It was thought that Perkins could manage this from his base in Pilsen,⁸¹² those in the American zone, negating the need for the section's involvement. Tentative arrangements were made with the Foreign Office to liquidate the rear link with Mikołajczyk, for whom Kot and Suidak were now working. Mikołajczyk had, in the past, been given information that could not be given by other British departments, but no risk to security was thought to exist.⁸¹³ With the likelihood of war-crimes trials becoming increasingly more probable, Gubbins ordered all directors and regional section heads to inform him of any reliable witnesses they might come across. All section heads were told to prepare statements concerning their own people.⁸¹⁴

On 26th June, Cavendish Bentinck told Gubbins that it was possible that in 5-10 days the British Government would recognise a reconstituted Polish Government in Poland and withdraw recognition of the Polish Government in Exile in London.⁸¹⁵ It was therefore necessary to simultaneously close down at once facilities which had been granted to the Polish Government in London. On receiving this information, Keswick asked Pickles for his response. Pickles replied:

'1/ Communications: no longer our concern. Buttercup closed down and Stanmore controlled by the Joint Board. Staff there will be military personnel paid by the Polish Government.

Should it be closed therefore or should someone else employ these men?

2/ Couriers: Perkins (can deal with them) as before.

3/ Agents; We have a definite obligation to these men and must continue to return them once their whereabouts are known.

4/ Archives: Great concern if new government get(s) them so will the Soviets. Also refers to records held in Sweden, Switzerland, Portugal and Turkey.

5/ Venner will sort out finance.

6/Honours and awards: Should be honoured as Poles intend to decorate many from Gubbins to Corporal Sue Ryder (FANY).⁸¹⁶ Their services to the Poles should be recognised, as should the list of Poles for British decorations that we hold.

7/ A certain number of inventions and devices should not fall into the hands of the Soviets. High speed radio transmissions, for instance. Their patent is held jointly by the Polish General Staff and Romac Radio Corporation. One of our parachute containers is also covered by a Polish-owned patent.

8/ We intend to remain friendly with (*supposedly disbanded*) Sixth Bureau if allowed, and require a directive as they are part of the General staff.⁸¹⁷

On 2nd July, a telegram stated, 'In view probable early recognition by HMG of reconstituted Government of Poland and withdrawal of all privileges for present Polish Government in London, you must not from receipt of this signal give any special facilities to Poles without prior reference.'⁸¹⁸ The Soviet press expressed satisfaction that the United Kingdom and the USA recognised the new Polish Government (Lublin), which was also recognised the following day by Italy and Canada.⁸¹⁹

A final report about conditions in Poland at the time of the Warsaw Rising reached SOE. It was from Adam Truszkowski, the brother of SOE's Richard Truszkowski. Adam had been in Warsaw at the time of the rising, so he had first hand knowledge of the action. He had recently returned to Britain. Richard Truszkowski was somewhat dismissive of his brother's writing when, in a message to a colleague in Military Intelligence said, 'I enclose two copies of another effusion from my brother, which should reach you just in time for putting in a file and scrapping. I hope your rheumatism is better. Love to Betty, Yours Trusko.' Pickles was less casual about the report saying, 'Adam Truszkowski is quite the most unbiased observer that we have yet had.'⁸²⁰ It was to be one of the last comments that Pickles was to make with SOE. On 18th July Gubbins was in contact with John Venner, SOE's Director of Finance, about the Treasury's Liquidation Committee for Polish Affairs which

was being set up, comprising Ellis Rees of the Treasury, Orme Sergant and Christopher Warner (FO). Gubbins had suggested Venner and Pickles be available when required to work with them. Gubbins was informed that Pickles was unable to serve on the Polish Finance Committee as he was being struck off the strength on 31st July. In fact he had already left and George Klauber had taken his place.⁸²¹

26th July 1945 the Labour Party came to power following the British General Election.

On the 1st August, the (supposedly non-existent) Sixth Bureau submitted a list of the names of 86 of their agents who were either in prison or concentration camps. Soon, 22 of them arrived in the UK. A further eight in Brussels and three in Paris were known of, and three more were with the Polish First Armoured Division in Europe. Perkins (still in Pilsen) asked for six more people (men and women) to be sent to England; the number included, with his wife, a Ministry of the Interior agent who was sent in 1943. Due to the fact that the British Government no longer recognised the Polish Government in Exile, the Foreign Office had imposed a ban on Poles entering the United Kingdom, so SOE asked Christopher Warner for an exemption to bring back any remaining under their aegis.⁸²²

Perkins had an important Polish agent named Piotr Szewczyk (code named 'CZER') who had trained in England. He had destroyed 30 German trains on the Russian front and had been in command of Home Army forces in the Lwów area. He co-operated with the Red Army in the relief of that town and was later sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment by the NKVD. He escaped and reported to Perkins. Perkins thought he could not hold him more than a day or two and felt it was imperative that something was done for this 'honourable British agent'. The Foreign Office considered his case, but in the meantime Perkins sent him to the officer commanding a special unit in Paris apologising for burdening him with another man at his busy station. 'CZER' left for Paris on 9th August by air.⁸²³ The Foreign Office, in what appears to be an attempt to pass the buck, claimed Polish matters to be the concern of the Home Office. SOE were confused. The Poles could move their troops in and out of the

UK with ease but agents were classified as civilians. Klauber made the suggestion that SOE should establish liaison with the Home Office through the Security Section, ('C' had had the same problems despite having some of his people in the Home Office). Nevertheless, Klauber persisted with the Foreign Office and eventually they summoned a committee to meet. Klauber was instructed that if the committee appeared to be against SOE's wishes he should tell them that SOE would take the matter to higher authority. At the meeting it was finally agreed that SOE should bring back those sent on special missions, the military ones through normal channels and the civilians to return under the same conditions as existed when the government that sent them was in power.⁸²⁴

On 14th August Japan surrendered and the Second World War was finally at an end.

On 5th September Władysław Gomułka (sic), the first secretary of the Communist party, complained that wireless telephony was being used to pass messages to Poland from the UK-based Polish Government and subversive actions were being carried out by those opposed to the present regime. SOE had stopped all transmission in June 1945, but 'C' retained contact with the Second Bureau and carried on. (SIS in early August had not closed down all Polish wireless telephony stations in Britain). During the summer sixteen Polish radio operators had been arrested in Poland with their equipment, all of which were Stanmore-made sets.⁸²⁵ One of those arrested by the NKVD was well known to the Polish Section, Adam Mackus, who had been an instructor at one of the training stations, STS43 at Audley End in Essex.⁸²⁶

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The returning Poles certainly needed assistance, and echoes of Pickle's earlier statement were heard when one person commented, 'It is essential that we should fight these peoples' battles for them'. It was not only those who had returned that needed help. Rudkowski was reported

to be still in Mokotowski prison in Warsaw, held by the Russians, and in February Hartman asked Perkins for his help in getting Fryderyk Serafiński back from Czechoslovakia.⁸²⁷ Major NG Mott replied to Hartman, (having been informed of the situation), that Perkins was no longer in a position to help since SOE had been wound up. Although he was no longer involved, Perkins continued to try to help by writing to the War Office etc. He wrote to Hartman during January 1946 saying that help should be given to 'our boys' returning from the field. Although meant sincerely he knew that he was no longer in a position to help, nor did he claim to be, but it was probably this note that induced Hartman to solicit his assistance.⁸²⁸

In May, as a result of a letter from General Kopański to Selborne, Gubbins expressed to Perkins his fears that the Russians would make use of the Nuremberg Trials to get certain Germans to testify that the Home Army collaborated with them. He had taken the matter up with the Solicitor General and the Attorney General, having seen them at the House of Commons. Perkins replied saying how appropriate that Gubbins's letter had been dated 3rd, Polish Independence Day. In his response Perkins made suggestions for use as counter-arguments should the Russians attempt to put any blame on the Poles. He noted that the Poles kept the Air Ministry supplied with information regarding all Heinkel repairs carried out in Poland and this was considered of great value when building up a Luftwaffe order of battle. A great deal of first-class intelligence had come from Poland, in particular concerning 'secret weapons' such as the V2. He wrote, 'We have never been able to check figures of derailments claimed by the Poles and at first I did not believe there could be that many trains in Poland at one time, but now I believe the figures are correct. There is certainly no evidence to the contrary.' He was aware that certain Poles did collaborate with the Germans despite Polish government policy to deny the fact and present a united front. The right-wing NSZ certainly did, especially after the Russians entered Polish territory but the Home Army would have nothing to do with them and they were effectively enemies. Perkins thought Kopański should swallow some national pride and admit this so the blame could be laid at the feet of those

responsible. It would stop the charges against the Home Army and probably stop all charges completely.⁸²⁹

During May, Jaswiński⁸³⁰ officially resigned on matters of policy from the supposedly defunct Sixth Bureau. Major NG Mott asked SIS to get him back from Italy where he was serving with the Polish 2nd Corps. Jaswiński had detailed knowledge of many aspects of SOE which could prove an embarrassment to them, himself and HMG, so SIS were asked to warn him he might have to return to the UK at short notice. It was thought best to let him know this through his wife, who was employed by the Polish Red Cross in London. The wheels turned slowly though, and Jaswiński was finally granted a visa to come to the UK in July.⁸³¹

In response to a letter from Miss Irene Henderson (letter dated 31st May 1946) to the Earl of Craven and the subsequent query raised by him, SOE gave details of the murder by the Communists of Mieczysław Szczepański.⁸³² The draft of the reply for the Foreign Office records that SOE had a list of 34 men, mainly officers, still held by the Soviets and the present Polish government. The information was gathered from escapees and the families of those held who were living in Poland. The 34 included 2 generals, Okulicki and Rudkowski. Also in the country were 14 officers who had been arrested by the NKVD and were willing to be interviewed. The Russians did not know that SOE had such a comprehensive list. SOE even knew where they were being held, the date of their arrests and the charges levied against them in most cases. This information, it was thought, could be used as ammunition for the Foreign Office in trying to effect their releases.

As late as December 1946, Perkins, still in Pilsen, was sending back Sixth Bureau agents and AK men who had not previously been in Britain. Not surprisingly, the Foreign Office objected. The Poles who had previously entered the country as immigrants or refugees had come in under a Prestige Agreement. Perkins, perhaps in order to short-cut the system, was apparently claiming to be working to another agreement, one made between SOE and the Home Office, but of which there was no trace!⁸³³

Notes.

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- ⁷⁵⁰ *Chronicle of the Twentieth Century*. Mercer.
⁷⁵¹ TNA HS4/167.
⁷⁵² TNA HS4/145.
⁷⁵³ TNA WO 193/833.
⁷⁵⁴ This was not an unreasonable request as other Governments in exile enjoyed such a right.
⁷⁵⁵ TNA HS4/145.
⁷⁵⁶ TNA HS4/167.
⁷⁵⁷ TNA HS4/238.
⁷⁵⁸ Ultimately, no flights were ever carried out in support of the mission..
⁷⁵⁹ TNA HS4/318 A friend at the Foreign Office informed SOE that Sargent, upon reading a draft letter advocating continued support for Polish flights had sent it back to the writer saying it should be rewritten to reach the opposite conclusion. The name of the writer of the draft is not recorded.
⁷⁶⁰ TNA HS4/156.
⁷⁶¹ *Ibid*.
⁷⁶² TNA HS4/145 & HS4/156.
⁷⁶³ TNA HS4/140.
⁷⁶⁴ TNA HS4/140.
⁷⁶⁵ TNA HS4/270.
⁷⁶⁶ TNA HS4/180.
⁷⁶⁷ TNA HS4/270.
⁷⁶⁸ For a long time, nothing was heard of the agents until one turned up at the Belgian training school exhausted. He knew where most of the others were. One had died in Gestapo hands but later SPU22 were able to recover the others. TNA HS4/238.
⁷⁶⁹ telegram 2419/1/9 TNA HS4/154 & HS4/225.
⁷⁷⁰ TNA HS4/256.
⁷⁷¹ TNA HS4/145.
⁷⁷² TNA FO 47584 to FO 47651.
⁷⁷³ TNA HS4/145.
⁷⁷⁴ TNA HS4/154.
⁷⁷⁵ TNA HS4/310.
⁷⁷⁶ TNA HS4/318 & Eden paper on Crimea conference N1776/6/55.
⁷⁷⁷ TNA HS4/145, HS4/310 & HS4/318 .
⁷⁷⁸ TNA HS4/145 & HS4/189.
⁷⁷⁹ TNA HS4/145.
⁷⁸⁰ TNA HS4/318.
⁷⁸¹ TNA HS4/192.
⁷⁸² TNA HS4/262.
⁷⁸³ *Ibid*.
⁷⁸⁴ TNA HS4/318.
⁷⁸⁵ TNA HS5/262.
⁷⁸⁶ *Ibid*.
⁷⁸⁷ TNA HS4/319.
⁷⁸⁸ TNA HS4/318.
⁷⁸⁹ TNA HS4/256.
⁷⁹⁰ TNA HS4/189 & HS4/318.
⁷⁹¹ TNA HS4/145.
⁷⁹² TNA HS4/179.
⁷⁹³ TNA HS4/310.
⁷⁹⁴ TNA HS4/319.
⁷⁹⁵ TNA HS4/140.
⁷⁹⁶ *Ibid*
⁷⁹⁷ TNA HS4/145.
⁷⁹⁸ *Ibis*.
⁷⁹⁹ TNA HS4/231.
⁸⁰⁰ TNA HS4/238.
⁸⁰¹ TNA HS4/228.

⁸⁰² TNA HS4/318.
⁸⁰³ TNA HS4/148.
⁸⁰⁴ New Statesman 10th March 1945.
⁸⁰⁵ TNA HS4/145 During interrogation at the end of the war Hans Hermann of the German secret service in Switzerland stated that Polish secret codes had been cracked for some time. He said they were aware of SIS/ Polish rivalry, finance from America and Polish / Swiss contacts. .
⁸⁰⁶ TNA HS4/291.
⁸⁰⁷ Ibid.
⁸⁰⁸ TNA HS4/319.
⁸⁰⁹ TNA HS4/291.
⁸¹⁰ On 18th June. TNA HS4/192 .
⁸¹¹ TNA FO 56689 Following the disclosure that Polish codes had been broken as early as 1939 SIS became worried that, following the surrender, the Germans had passed the codes to the Russians. This was probably one reason for the closure of 'Buttercup'. Is this what the Poles believed?
⁸¹² TNA FO 47657 - 47659 for details in finding the whereabouts of persons in liberated Poland.
⁸¹³ TNA HS4/145.
⁸¹⁴ TNA HS4/291.
⁸¹⁵ TNA FO 47575.
⁸¹⁶ Later Lady Ryder of Warsaw.
⁸¹⁷ TNA HS4/145. It is interesting to note the intention to continue friendship with the Sixth Bureau, which had officially ceased to exist on 15th March 1945.
⁸¹⁸ TNA HS4/313.
⁸¹⁹ TNA HS4/139.
⁸²⁰ TNA HS4/211.
⁸²¹ TNA HS4/326.
⁸²² TNA HS4/268.
⁸²³ In the official records it shows that Piotr Szewczyk was sent in on Operation Cape. This is wrong, he actually went in on operation 'Floor' on 17th /18th February 1943. HS4/268 & HS4/314.
⁸²⁴ TNA FO 47711.
⁸²⁵ TNA HS4/204 & HS4/274.
⁸²⁶ TNA HS4/314 and later parachuted to Poland on operation 'KAZIK 1' on 22nd /23rd November 1944. He survived the NKVD interrogation and immigrated to Britain in 1946.
⁸²⁷ Serafiński was parachuted into Poland on 9th /10th September 1943 on operation 'NEON 4'.
⁸²⁸ TNA HS4/287.
⁸²⁹ TNA HS4/293.
⁸³⁰ Jaswiński had taken over in Italy during the previous November, his place in London being taken by Jan Podoski.
⁸³¹ TNA HS4/296.
⁸³² TNA HS4/293 from FO file N.6629/2195/55. Personal interview Irene Thornton nee Henderson, Audley End and London, various dates.
⁸³³ TNA HS4/293

Chapter 8

Conclusion.

In all, approximately fifty-five million people died in World War Two, the majority being Russians, followed by Chinese. German losses were the next highest, with Polish close behind. The major difference in the totals is in the comparison between the civil and the military figures. The majority of Soviet losses were military, the German losses about half military and half civilian. The vast majority of Chinese and Polish losses were, however, civilian. The figures prove that the largest crime of the war was not the fighting of it, but the inhuman ways the occupiers treated the populations of the countries they had invaded. An opportunity for those so inclined to fight back was therefore essential, and SOE provided the equipment and the training. In all cases, their efforts were not enough, and indeed never could be, for one incidence of inhumanity is one too many. Perhaps it is the lack of recognition of this important fact that has caused SOE to come under considerable criticism from many sectors and, in particular, from postwar Poles. It must be remembered that the Poles connected with the organisation during the war, with a few exceptions, had nothing but the highest respect for it. This had started early in 1939 with the British missions, the common denominator being Gubbins and those members of the mission who became SOE's Polish Section, Wilkinson, Perkins, Truskowski and the rest. Although Sikorski resented having to approach the remainder of the Allies through SOE for his requirements,⁸³⁴ he nevertheless never blamed the Polish Section or in any way held it against it. He had the highest regard for it as it had for him, far more regard, in fact, than he shared with many of his countrymen. Mikołajczyk too, soon came to recognise SOE as a valuable asset, realising its potential and abandoning his earlier scepticism.

Given the technical difficulties in supplying a country, Poland, at such distance, SOE carried out a difficult task extremely well. Procurement of suitable aircraft was always SOE's biggest problem. There were never enough to go around even after the Americans entered the war. It is sobering to think that after the intervening sixty years, an aircraft is now flying (The

Aerospace Industries Airbus A 380) that could deliver one quarter of the total stores sent to Poland in one flight at a speed that would make it almost invulnerable to German attack.

The vacillations of the Polish Government helped the situation little, but it is true to say that those of the British Government generally matched them. This perhaps led to SOE being guilty of misleading the Poles into believing they could deliver more than they promised, as they too had been misled. They cannot, however, be accused of doing so where the Warsaw Rising was concerned. Quite the contrary, they had warned on many occasions the Poles that an action of this magnitude could not be supported. Even if they had not, the Poles should have learned from past experience that even the most meagre of supplies were difficult to provide. The Chiefs-of-Staff had made it plain to the Poles only days before its launch that a rising could not be supplied. The Poles in London knew this, but probably not Bór-Komorowski, who was left out on a limb.

The work of Poles and the Polish Section is relatively unknown in Greece and Yugoslavia, where SOE worked to encourage desertion from the German Army and to extract them and former prisoners. Their work in France is only slightly better known. Here, supply was not such a problem, but all the credit for using it went seemingly to the French resistance alone. The Bardsea operations could have proved as effective as the Jedburgh teams, but, unlike the Jedburgh teams, their geographical positioning made them redundant from the start. The training had been done though, to the same high standard as had been given to the agents destined for Poland, which, along with the forged documents is one of SOE's greatest achievements, especially as it must have saved many Polish lives.

It must be remembered that the Polish Section launched only one operation on its own behalf, Operation Freston, at the end of 1944. It played no part in any operation carried out by those they had trained and 'delivered' to the field. That was the preserve of the Poles themselves. What the Section achieved was the supply of 344 agents for the use of the Polish Government, the majority (317) being soldiers of the Home Army. They also delivered 600.9 tons of equipment, \$34,823,163, 1,775 gold sovereigns, 19,089,500 German marks, 40,569,800 Polish Złoty and 10,000 Spanish pesetas. Losses amounted to 70 aircraft on SOE

operations, 41 of them during the support for the Warsaw Rising. 30 of these aircraft were manned by Poles, losing 28 crews; 38 by British and South Africans, 33 crews lost and two by Americans with 1 crew lost. This gives a total of 437 crew members lost to deliver 600 tons of stores and 344 agents.⁸³⁵ The full measure of the achievement cannot be realised unless the cost to the enemy, through the use of the agents and equipment, is taken into consideration. This is unlikely ever to be fully known. The work of the Polish Home Army was mainly diversionary, keeping German divisions away from areas where they could have been more effective. SOE provided men and materials for them to continue to do this. This is what SOE's Polish Section did for Poland. It is unlikely that any other organisation would have supported the Poles in the same way. The RAF, if left to its own devices, would have concentrated on the bombing of occupied areas and not the supply of resistance organisations.

From the start, men like Dalton led SOE from an amateur group to become an effective force by the time it was inherited by Selborne. There is no doubt that the Poles were fortunate in the selection of those who made up the Polish Section. Gubbins was a prime mover in all acts relating to SOE. Wilkinson too, always in the background, had played his part in the blossoming organisation. Perkins was, perhaps, its greatest champion, while Truszkowski was an irreplaceable intelligence officer. Others, such as Hazell and Threlfall, tirelessly played their parts, even though much of Hazell's work came to nothing.

At the outset of war, it was generally assumed that the bomber would always get through, and that bombing alone could win. Following a devastating raid against Hamburg, which had resulted in a firestorm, Albert Speer, Hitler's armaments minister commented that six more such raids would finish the war proving there was some validity in the assumption. SOE proved that special operations could be more cost-effective than bombing. The Americans, perhaps, learned better than the British what was needed in modern warfare. At the beginning of the war they had no organised secret service or special operations department. What they learned, they learned from SOE. Now it is inconceivable that a war should not include special operations missions. SOE was the father of the directional change

of thought in this respect. A little of this can be attributed to the Polish Section, but its role was different. What it achieved it did through other agencies, in particular the Sixth Bureau, but it also was a channel for information to be passed to the SIS from Polish sources.

Plans were made for the continuation of the Polish Section as the war came to an end, and some former Polish agents were approached with a view to their use in the coming Cold War.⁸³⁶ Many refused. They were agents not spies and wanted no part in what they thought to be underhand operations against their own people, even Soviet-backed Communist ones. The work of SOE, as a whole, could not be wasted, so during 1946 what remained of SOE (including Perkins) was absorbed into SIS.⁸³⁷

Notes.

⁸³⁴ TNA WO193/633 The Poles, along with other Governments in Exile, were informed by General Alan Brooke that SOE was the only avenue through which they could approach British organisations in a cipher telegram no. 07/474 in June 1942.

⁸³⁵ *Poland, SOE and the Allies*. Garlinski. Pp. 235-238

⁸³⁶ I have interviewed two such men who were approached by SIS representatives with this in mind. Both men wish to remain anonymous.

⁸³⁷ Stephen Dorril. *MI6 Fifty Years of Special Operations*. Fourth Estate. London 2001. P 32.

Appendix 1

Air Operations to Poland to drop agents.

Note. In the Polish Air Force the captain of the aircraft is often the navigator and not the pilot. The aircraft commander listed is therefore not necessarily the pilot.

1941

Operation.	Aircraft Commander	Agents
15/16 February ADOLPHUS	F/L Keast,	Stanisław Krzymowski 'Kostka', 'Stefan', 'Kostek'. Józef Zabielski 'Zbik'; courier Czesław Raczkowski 'Orkan', 'Włodek', 'Janek'

Operation *lotnicza* (air/flight) 'Adolphus' had been flown by a crew of six; Captain Keast, Co-pilot F/O McMurdie, Navigator P/O Baker, a W/T operator and a rear gunner with a Corporal named Cameron acting as dispatcher and parachute attendant. It was to prove to be the first drop of a parachutist agent into the whole of occupied Europe.

1/2 November RUCTION	Stanislaw Krol / Rudkowski	Niemir Bidziński 'Karol Ziege'; Jan Piwnik 'Ponury' and 'Courier Napoleon Segiera 'Wera', 'Broniek'
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27/28 December JACKET	Mariusz Wodzicki	Marian Jurecki 'Orawa'; Maciej Kalenkiewicz 'Kotwicz'; Alfred Paczkowski 'Wania'; Andrzej Świątkowski 'Armurat' 'Akmet' with couriers Tadeusz Chciuk 'Celt' and Wiktor Strzelecki 'Buka',
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1942

6/7 January SHIRT	Mariusz Wolzicki	Tadeusz Klimowski "Klon"; Henryk Krajewski "Wicher"; Jan Marek "Walka"; Zbigniew Piasecki "Orlik"; Jan Smela "Wir" and courier Benedykt Moszyński "Andrzej"
3/4 March COLLAR	Mariusz Wodzicki.	Jan Kochanski "Jarma"; Zygmund Milewicz "Róg"; Stanisław Jankowski "Burek"; Franciszek Pukacki "Gzys"; Bohdan Piątkowski "Mak" and Jan Rogowski "Czarka".
27/28 March BOOT	Antoni Voelnagel	Zbigniew Bakiewicz "Zabawka"; Lech Lada Zagiew"; Jan Rostek "Dan"; Tadeusz Śmigielski "Ślad"; Rafal Niedzielski "Mocny"; and courier Leszek Janicki "Maciej".
30/31 March LEGGING	Mariusz Wodzicki.	Stanisław Gilowski "Gotur"; Wiesław Ipohorski-

		Lenkiewicz "Zagroda"; Aleksander Kulakowski "Rywal"; Józef Spychalski „Grudzień” Janusz Zalewski "Chinek" and courier Stanisław Zaborowski "Grzegorz, Walek"
30/31 March BELT	Antoni Voelnagel.	Jan Jokiel "Ligota"; Stefan Majewicz "Hruby"; Piotr Motylewicz "Krzemien"; Jerzy Sokołowski "Mira"; Tadeusz Sokołowski "Trop" and courier Jerzy Mara-Meyer "Filip, Vis".
8/9 April CRAVAT	Mariusz Wodznicki	Adam Boryczka "Brona"; Teodor Cetys "Wiking"; Stefan Mich "Jez"; Henryk Kozuchowski "Hora"; Roman Romaszkan "Tatar" and Alfred Zawadzki "Kos".
1/2 September CHICKENPOX	Radomir Walczak	Bolesław Jabłoński "Kalia"; Władysław Kochanski "Bomba"; Franciszek Rybka "Kula"; Stanisław Winter "Stanley"; Jan Woźniak "Kwasny"
1/2 September SMALLPOX	Mariusz Wodzicki.	Mieczysław Eckhard "Bocian"; Michał Fijałka "Kawa"; Bolesław Kontrym "Zmudzin"; Waclaw Kopisto "Kra"; Hieronim Lagoda "Lak" Leonard Zub-Zdanowicz "Dor".
3/4 September RHEUMATISM	Stanisław Krol.	Jan Lech "Granit"; Zygmund Policiewicz "Swierk"; Stanisław Sędziak "Warta"; Bartłomiej Wincenty Sciegienny "Las" and couriers Adam Cużytek "Roman, Wicek" and Stanisław Stach "Marian"
3/4 September MEASELS	Mariusz Wodzicki.	Jan Grycz "Dziadzio"; Julian Kozłowski "Cichy"; Wincenty Michałczewski "Mir"; Kazimierz Smólski "Sosna"; Wraclaw Zaorski "Ryba" and Wiktor Zarembiński "Zrab"
1/2 October HAMMER	Radomir Walczak.	Adam Borys "Plug"; Stanisław Kotorowicz "Kron"; Bronisław Zelkowski "Dabrowa" and courier Jan Ceglowski "Konik".
1/2 October GIMLET	Stanislaw Krol.	Marian Gołębiowski "Ster"; Stanisław Jagielski

Gacek”; Ewaryst Jakubowski “Brat”; Władysław Klimowicz “Tama”; Ryszard Kowalski “Benga” and Jan Poznański “Plywak”.

1/2 October
CHISEL Mariusz Wodzicki. Eugeniusz Kaszyński “Nurt”; Artur Linowski “Karp”; Waldemar Szwiec “Robot” and Adam Trybus “Gaj”

1/2 October
LATHE Mieczysław Kuzmicki. Antoni Jastrzębski “Ugor”; Tadeusz Stocki “Cma” and Władysław Szubiński “Dach”.

29/30 October
PLIERS Mariusz Wodzicki Jerzy Bichniewicz 'Błękitny'; Stanisław Hencel 'Pik' and Wiesław Szpakowicz 'Pak'.

1943

25/26 January
BRACE Stanisław Król. Ignacy Bator ‘Opor’; Tadeusz Gaworski ‘Lawa’; Roman Rudkowski ‘Rudy’ and courier Wiktor Czyżewski ‘Cap.’

25/26 January
SCREWDRIVER Kingsford-Smith. Bronisław Grun ‘Szyb’; Mieczysław Kwarciański ‘Zuit’; Władysław Miciek ‘Młot’ and courier Stanisław Łuczkiwicz ‘Sep.’

26/27 January
GAUGE Radomir Walczak. Florian Adrian ‘Liberator’; Waclaw Pijanowski ‘Dym’; Stanisław Sołtys ‘Sowa’; Michal Tajchman ‘Mikita.’

16/17 February
RASP F/O Rutledge. Marian Mostowiec ‘Lis’; Stanisław Olszewski ‘Bar’; Leszek Ratajski ‘Zal’ and courier Tadeusz Samotus ‘Lis 2’

16/17 February
VICE Radomir Walczak. Tadeusz Burdziński ‘Malina’; Feliks Dzikiewski ‘Oliw’; Stanisław Kazimierczak ‘Ksiadz’; Michal Parada ‘Mapa’

16/17 February
SAW Karol Gebik. Michal Buslowicz ‘Bociiek’; Henryk Januszkiewicz

		'Spokojny'; Bolesław Odroważ-Szukiewicz 'Bystrzec' and Adolf Pilch 'Gora'.
17/18 February FLOOR	S/L Boxer.	Tdeusz Benedyk 'Zahata'; Jòzef Czuma 'Stryty' Jacek Przetocki 'Oset' and Piotr Szewczyk 'Czer.'
17/18 February WALL	Mieczysław Kuzmicki.	Antoni Iglewski 'Vanadi'; Tadeusz Jaworski 'Gont'; Władysław Wiśniewski 'Wróbel' and Antoni Żychiewicz 'Przerwa.'
19/20 February SPOKESHAVE	Mieczysław Kuzmicki.	Kazimierz Człapka 'Pionek'; Piotr Nowak 'Oko'; Czesław Pieniak 'Bór' and courier Jerzy Lerski 'Jur.'
20/21 February RIVET	Radomir Walczak.	Marian Garczyński 'Skala'; Henryk Jachciński 'Kret'; Lech Rydzewski 'Grom' and Kazimierz Rzepka 'Ognik.'
20/21 February FILE	Karol Gebik.	Walery Krokay 'Siwy'; Ryszard Nuskiewicz 'Powolny'; Witold Pic 'Cholewa' and Ludwik Witkowski 'Kosa.'
13/14 March BRICK	S/L Boxer.	Longin Jurkiewicz 'Mysz'; Franciszek Koprowski 'Dab' Wojciech Lipiński 'Lawina' and Janusz Messing 'Bekas.'
13/14 March WINDOW	Mieczysław Kuzmicki.	Antoni Chmielowski 'Wolk'; Stefan Ignaszak 'Drozd'; Stefan Jasiński 'Alfa'; and Władysław Makstś 'Azot.'
13/14 March TILE	Karol Gebik.	Oskar Farenholc 'Sum'; Janusz Pradzyński 'Trzy'; Jan Rostworowski 'Mat' and Edwin Sceller-Czarny 'Fordon.'
13/14 March DOOR	F/O Austin.	Stanisław Kolasiński 'Ulewa'; Adam Riedl 'Rodak'; Lech Żabierek 'Wilkan' Iván Szabó 'Hun.'
13/14 March STOCK	Bogdan Lawrenczuk.	Jan Horl 'Frog'; Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki

‘Antoni’; Czesław Rossiński ‘Kozioł’ and
Witold Strumpf ‘Sud.’

- 14/15 March
STEP Stanisław Król. Jan Gorski ‘Chomik’; Janusz Jarosz ‘Szermierz’ and
Olgierd Stołyhwo ‘Stewa.’
- 16/27 March
ATTIC Józef Gryglewicz. Jerzy Kowalski ‘Baba’; Ezechiel Łos ‘Ikwa’ and
courier Roman Litwin.
- 19/20 March
BEAM Józef Polkowski. Ignacy Konstanty ‘Smaragd’; Wilhelm
Pluta ‘Pion’; and Jan Wiącek ‘Kanarek.’
- 24/25 March
CELLAR Józef Gryglewicz. Eugeniusz Chyliński ‘Frez’; Zbigniew Twardy
Trzask’ and courier Aleksander Olędzki ‘Rab’.
- 9/10 September
NEON 4, Stanisław Król. Bolesław Polończyk ‘Kryształ’; Fryderyk Serafiński
‘Drabina’ and Elżbieta Zawacka ‘Zo’;
- 14/15 September
NEON 7 Antoniego Freyera. Kazimierz Fuhrman ‘Zaczep’; Roman Wiszniowski
‘Hercerz’ and Franciszek Żaak ‘Mamka.’
- 14/15 September
NEON 10 Władysława Krywdy. Ryszard Chmieloch ‘Blyskawica’; Józef Nowacki
‘Horyn’ and Henryk Ostrowiński ‘Smyk.’
- 14/15 September
NEON 9 F/O J.M. Milne. Kazimierz Lewko ‘Palec’; Władysław
Siakiewicz ‘Mruk’ and Ryszard
Skowronski ‘Lechita.’
- 14/15 September
NEON 8 Mieczysława Malinowski Stanisław Kujawinski ‘Wodnik’; Anatol
Makarenko Tlok’ and Józef Zakowicz ‘Tabu.’
- 14/15 September
NEON 6 Mieczysława Wasilewski Zdzisław Peszke ‘Kaszmir’; Jarosław
Poliszuk ‘Arab’ and Ryszard Zyga ‘Lelum.’
- 16/17 September
NEON 1 Władysław Krywda. Hieronim Dekutowski ‘Zapora’; Bronisław

Rachwał 'Glin' and courier Kazimierz Smolak
'Nurek.'

16/17 September

NEON 2 Antoni Freyer.

Norbet Goluński 'Bombram'; Otton Wiszniewski
'Topola' and Bogusław Żórawski 'Mistral.'

16/17 September

NEON 3 Wincenty Wasilewski.

Mirosław Kryszczukajtis 'Szary' and Bernard
Wiechula 'Maruda';

21/22 September

NEON 5. Władysław Krywda.

Tadeusz Seeman 'Garbus'; Stanisław Skowroński
'Widelec' and Stanisław Zapotoczny 'Plomien.'

18/19 October

OXYGEN 8 Antoni Freyer

Włodzimierz Kłócek 'Garluch'; Michał Wilczewski
'Uszka' and courier Franciszek Młynarz 'Biegacz,
Murzynek'

1944

3 /4 April

SALAMANDA Stanisław Daniel

Józef Retinger "Salamanda" "Brzoza"; Tadeusz
Chciuk "Sulima"

WELLER 5 Antoni Freyer

Stanisław Biedrzycki 'Opera'; Jan Biezuński,
'Orzyc'; Marian Pokladecki 'Zoli'; Zygmunt
Sawicki, 'Samulik'

8/9 April

WELLER 4 Edward Bohdanowicz.

Bolesław Jackiewicz, 'Labędź.' Edward Kiwer
'Biegaj'; Stanisław Racykowski 'Bułanz'; Ludwik
Wiechula 'Jalen';

8/9 April

WELLER 6 Antoni Freyer.

Władysław Hauptman 'Gapa'; Kazimierz Niepla,
'Kawka'; Jerzy Sztrom, 'Pilnik'; Henryk
Zaachmost, 'Zorza'

8/9 April

WELLER 7 . Kazimierz Wunsche.

Jan Kamieński 'Cozas'; Tadeusz Kobyliński
'Hiena'; Tadeusz Starzyński 'Slepowron' and
courier Wiktor Karamać 'Kabel'.

9/10 April

WELLER 1 Stanisław Daniel.

Zygmund Gromnicki 'Gula'; Edward Kowalik

‘Ciopus’; Albin Łakomy ‘Twornik’ Felicjan
Majorkiewicz ‘Iron’

9/10 April

WELLER 2 Kazimierz Wunsche. Stefan Bałuk ‘Starba’; Benon Łastowski ‘Lobuz’;
Tadeusz Runge ‘Osa’; and courier Henryk Waniek.

12/13 April

WELLER 3 S Daniel. Leon Bazala ‘Streiaz’; Adolf Galacki ‘Maszop’;
Aleksander Piekarski ‘Turkuc’ Edward Piotrowski
‘Mema’

12/13 April

WELLER 14 Antoni Blazewski. Adam Benrad ‘Drukarz’; Zbigniew Mrazek
‘Aminius’; Tadeusz Zelechowski ‘Ring’ and courier
Jan Ciaś ‘Kula’.

14/15 April

WELLER 11 S. Daniel. Bronisław Kamiński ‘Golf’; Włodzimierz Lech
‘Powislak’; Jerzy Niemczycki ‘Janczar’; Józef
Wątróbski ‘Jelito’

15/16 April

WILDHORD I F/Lt E.J. Harrod and his Polish co- pilot Flt Lt Korpowski with P/O JA
Wells (nav) and P/O N. Wilcock.
Men infiltrated–Tomasz Kostuch ‘Bryła’; Narcyz Łopianowski ‘Sarna’.
Men exfiltrated–Marian Dorotycz-Malewicz ‘Strzemie’ ‘Bancia’ ‘Ryszard Hańcza’
‘Hańcza’; Andrzej Pomian ‘Dowmunt’; Stanisław Tatar ‘Turski’ ‘Tabor’; (political emissary)
Zygmunt Berezowski ‘Zyzio’ ‘Olesnick’ and Stanisław Ołtarzewski ‘Stefan Stanisławski’.

16/17 April

WELLER 10 S. Daniel. Andrzej Czaykowski ‘Garda’; Tadeusz Nowobilski
‘Dzwon’ Leopold Skwierczyński ‘Aktor’; Adam
Sztudowski ‘Poleszuk’.

16/17 April

WELLER 12 E. Bohdanowicz. Stefan Górski ‘Brzeg’; Gustaw Heczko
‘Skorpion’; Marian Kuczyński ‘Zwrotnica’
Aleksander Tarnawski ‘Uplaz’

16/17 April

WELLER 15 Władysław Krywda. Jerzy Buyno ‘Gzegzułka’; Stanisław Harasymowicz
‘Lalka’ Mieczysław Psykala ‘Kalwadosik’; Jerzy
Szymański ‘Boga’

27/28 April **	Stanisław Król,	Jan Biały 'Kadlub'; Jerzy Iszkowski 'Orczyk'; Bronisław Lewkowicz 'Kurs' Edmund Marynowski 'Sejm'
30 April/1 May **	Kazimierz Wunsche	Franciszek Cieplik 'Hatrak'; Kazimierz Osuchowski 'Rosomak'; Jan Skrochowski 'Ostroga'; Kazimierz Szternal 'Zryw'.
4/5 May **	E. Bohdanowicz	Tadeusz Jaworski 'Blawat'; Zdzisław Luszowicz 'Szakal'; Antoni Nosek 'Kajtuś'; Cezary Nowodworski 'Glog'; Mieczysław Szczepański 'Debina'; Czesław Trojanowski 'Litwos'

** Operational names for these flights appear not to have been recorded.

4/5 May WELLER 26,	Józef Gryglewicz	Adam Dąbrowski 'Puti'; Adam Krasieński 'Szczur'; Andrzej Prus-Bogusławski 'Pancerz'; Jan Walter 'Cyrkiel'; Alfred Whitehead 'Dolina II' Józef Zajac 'Kolanko'.
10/11 May WELLER 27	Władysław Krywda	Kazimierz Bernaczyk 'Rango'; Jan Bienias 'Osterba'; Bohdan Kwiatkowski 'Lewar'; Zdzisław Straszyński 'Meteor'; Zygmunt Ulm 'Szybki' and courier Lt Stanisław Niedbał-Mostwin 'Bask'.
19/20 May WELLER 18	K. Wunsche	Rudolf Dziadosz 'Zasaniec'; Dypl Ludwik Fortuna 'Sila'; Aleksander Lewandowski 'Wiechlina'; Jan Serafin 'Czerchawa'; Zdzisław Winiarski 'Przemynik'; and courier Franciszek Klima 'Witoski' 'Oszczep' 'Dysk'.
21/22 May WELLER 29	Eugeniusz Arciuszkiewicz.	Marian Golarz 'Goral 2'; Krzysztof Grodnicki 'Jablon 2'; Władysław Marecki 'Zabik 2' Leopold Okulicki 'Kobra 2' Zbigniew Waruszyński 'Dewajtis 2'; Tomasz Wierzejski 'Zgoda 2'.
24/25 May WELLER 23	S. Daniel.	Bronisław Konik 'Sikora'; Zbigniew Matula 'Radomysł'; Michal Nowakowski 'Harpun'; Alfred Pokultinis 'Fon'; Zbigniew Wilszkiewicz 'Kij'; and courier Jan Nodzyński 'Luk'.

29/30 May

WILDHORN II F.Lt O'Donovan

Infiltrated Romuald Bielski "Bej" and Tadeusz Kossakowski

Exfiltrated Zbigniew Sujkowski, "Leliwa", "Wygoda", Roman Rudkowski "Rudy" and political emissary Jan Domański "Bartnicki".

30/31 May

WELLER 30 E. Arciuszkiewicz,

Maksymilian Klinicki 'Wierzba 2'; Adolf Lojkiewicz 'Rys 2; Karol Pentz 'Skala 2'; Feliks Perekladowski 'Przyjaciół 2'; Tadeusz Tomaszewski 'Wawoz'; Stanisław Trondowski 'Grzmot 2'.

25/26 July

WILDHORN III F/L S Culliford and co-pilot Capt Kazimierz Szrajter.

Infiltrated - Kazimierz Bilski 'Rum'; Zdzisław Jezioranski 'Zych'; Leszek Starzyński 'Malewa'; Bogusław Wolniak 'Mieta'.

Exfiltrated - Tomasz Arciszewski 'Stanisław' 'Tom'; Tadeusz Chciuk 'Celt' 'Sulima'; Czesław Miciński (Sixth Bureau) 'with Józef Retinger 'Salamanda' 'Brzoza'

30/31 July

Jacek 1 S. Daniel

Jacek Bętkowski 'Topur 2'; Franciszek Malik 'Piorun'; Stanisław Ossowski 'Jastrzebiec 2'; Julian Piotrowski 'Rewera 2'; Zbigniew Specylak 'Tur 2'; Władysław Smietanko 'Cyrp'.

21/22 September

PRZEMEK 1 Stanisław Kleybor

Marian Leskiewicz 'Wygoda'; Przemysław Nakoniecznikoff-Klukowski 'Kruk 2'; Zenon Sikorski 'Pozar'; Tadeusz Sokół 'Bug 2' Aleksander Stpiczyński (sic) 'Klara'; Kazimierz Sliwa 'Strazak 2.

16/17 October

WACEK 1 Roman Chmiel

Władysław Flont 'Grandziaton'; Władysław Godzik 'Skrzat'; Toedor Hoffman 'Bugaj'; Waclaw Kobyliński 'Dziad'; Mieczysław Pękala 'Bosak'; Jan Różycki 'Busik'

16/17 October

POLDEK 1 S. Kleybor.

Jerzy Emir-Hassan 'Turek 2'; Leopold Krizar 'Czeremosz'; Aleksander Makagonow 'Wschod'; Bruno Nadolczak 'Piaś'; Stefan Przybylik Gruch'; Roman Rudkowski 'Rudy'.

18/19 November

KAZIK 2 Roman Chmiel.

Kazimierz Czerwiński 'Bryzga';
and couriers Jan Błaszczak 'Kret'; Józef
Góljski 'Borowik'.

22/23 November

KAZIK 1 E Arciuszkiewicz.

Przemysław Bystrzycki 'Grzbiet'; Bernard
Bzdawka 'Siekiera'; Adam Mackus
'Prosty'; Stanisław Mazur 'Limba';
Kazimierz Raszplewicz 'Tatar 2'; Marian
Skowron 'Olcha'

26/27 December

STASZEK 2 E Arciuszkiewicz.

Bronisław Czepczak 'Zwijak 2';
Stanisław Dmowski 'Podlasiak'; Jan
Matysko 'Oskard'; Jan Parczewski 'Kraska';
Zdzisław Sroczyński 'Kompresor';
Witold Uklański 'Herold'.

26/27 December

FRESTON

(The British Military Mission).

Navigator Roman Chmiel. Pilot Edmund Ladro.

Col. DT Hudson; Major P Solly-Flood;
Major P Kemp; Sergeant D Galbraith; Capt
A Pospieszalski 'Luk' who, for the purposes
of this mission went under the name of
'Tony Currie'.

Appendix 2

British Staff.

<u>Name.</u>	<u>Position.</u>	<u>Symbol.</u> ⁸³⁸
Dalton, Hugh	Minister for Economic Warfare 'til Feb 1942	SO
Selborne, Earl of	“ “ “ “ from Feb '42	SO
Nelson, Frank	Head of SOE Aug. 1940 - May 1942	CD
Hambro, Charles	" " " May '42 - Sept. '43	CD
Gubbins, Colin	" " " Sept.'43 - 1946.	CD
(Prior to this appointment his symbol was M)		
Barry, Richard (Dick)	Director of Plans	AD/X, CD/S, MO, D/PLANS & M/POL
Boxer, Alan	Cmdr. 161 Sqdn. March '44 onwards	A.1.2
Boyle, Archie	Air Commodore RAF	AD/P & A/CD
Cavendish-Bentinck, Victor	Foreign Office, Chairman of the Joint Intelligence Committee	V
Corby, John	Wing Cmdr. RAF Tempsford	AL
Dodds-Parker, Douglas	Massingham	D/HM & AM
Dunderdale, Wilfred	British intelligence Chief liaison with Polish secret service. Responsible for setting up transcription service after the war with about 100 Poles and White Russians. ⁸³⁹	
Easton, James	Director of Intelligence Research	DD.1.2
Grierson, Colin McK	Took over from Barry 1942 Director Ops. Section	DD Pol (G)
Guinness, 'Bob' Lt Col		
Hazell, Ron	Head of E/UP (Minorities) Section	E, MPO & E/UP
Hill, George	SOE Moscow	DP/101
Howarth, Patrick		MP50 & MX1
Ince, 'Jack'	Took over from Hazell	E/UP1 & E/UP
Keswick, David	Director Mediterranean group '43	A/DH

Klauber, George		MPT & MP60
Maxwell, A	Aug '41 - Aug. '42	A/DH
McLaren, Moray	Head of Polish Section of PWE (Political Warfare Executive)	
Menzies, Stewart	Head of SIS	C
Mockler-Ferryman		AD/E
Morgan, Alun		MPM & MP21
Mott, Norman,	until 1941	MDH
Palmer, John	Air Ministry. Comdr Tempsford after Fielden.	A.1.2 (C)
Perkins, Harold	Section Head	D/HQ & MP
Pickles, Mike		D/H78 & MPP
Richie, Alan	Air Advisor (Took over from Grierson)	AD/A
Sporborg, Harry	Deputy or Vice Chief	DCD, V/CD
Stawell,	Director Cairo Group Oct '43 - '45	AD/C
Sweet Escott, Bickham		D/HS, G/M 150 & AD/1
Tamplin, Guy	from 1941	MDH
Taylor, George		AD
Thornton, Henry	Air Commodore and senior SOE officer responsible for flights to Poland from Tempsford.	
Threlfall, Henry	SOE Mediterranean	MP1
Truszkowski, Richard		MPX & MP61
Venner, John	Finance Director	D/FIN
Wilkinson, Peter		D/HM & MX

⁸³⁸ The coded symbol allotted to each member changed with the duty assigned.

Appendix 3

Code Names given by SOE

Ace/Rubie - General Sikorski
Fec - Stalin
Felix - Prof. Stanisław Kot
Queen - Mikołajczik
Shine - Sosnkowski
Straight/Mean - Władysław Anders

SOE Codes for Poland

38 land
I land
Kensal

Twos = Poles
Drinks = Polish Second Bureau.

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ACAS1/.

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British Personnel

Bisset, Morton. SOE Forgery Section;

Bright Astley, Joan. (Personal Assistant to General Ismay, Chief of Staff to Churchill);

Brockies, Pauline. SOE Forgery Section;

Clark, Freddie. (Author *Agents by Moonlight*);

Darton (nee Stanley), June. FANY;

Dodds-Parker, Sir Douglas. SOE;

Gallehawk, John. (Archivist Bletchley Park);

Hall, Diana. (daughter of Richard Truszkowski SOE);

Howarth, Patrick. SOE;

Jackson, Margaret. (Personal Assistant to General Gubbins);

Long, Vera. SOE (Personal assistant to H. Perkins);

Niven, Lady Pamela (Pammy). FANY;

Ryder of Warsaw, Lady (Sue Ryder). FANY;

Stuart, Duncan. (SOE Adviser Foreign and Commonwealth Office);

Thornton (nee Henderson), Irene. (Fiancé of Mieczysław Szczepański Cicochiemni);

Polish Personnel

Dąbkowski, Witold. (Sixth Bureau instructor);

Dziedzic, 'Lala'. (wife of Jan Dziedzic, Polish Air Force Special Operations Flight);

Garliński, Józef. (Author *Poland, SOE and the Allies*);

Iranek-Osmecki, Jerzy. (Son of Kazimierz Iranek-Osmecki);

Mackowiak, Alfons. (aka Alan Mack) Sixth Bureau Instructor;

Nosek, Antoni. Cichociemni;

Piechocki, Leon. (Polish Air Force Special Operations Flight);
Pospieszalski, Antoni. Sixth Bureau Instructor / Cichociemni;
Smolenski, Macei. (Matt) (son of Józef Smolenski Polish Military Intelligence 1939, Sixth Bureau 1940/1);
Zaremba, Szymon. AK;
Zubrzycki, Professor Emeritus Jerzy. Sixth Bureau;
Zyga, Ryszard. Cichociemni;

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Glossary

ADC - *Aide de Camp*
AFHQ - Allied Forces Headquarters
AK - *Armia Krajowa* the Polish Home Army
AL – *Armia Ludowa* a Communist led resistance group.
AOC - Air Officer Commanding
AVM - Air Vice-Marshal
BAF - Balkan Air Force, a section of the MAAF.
BBC - British Broadcasting Corporation.
C - The Head of British Secret Intelligence (SIS) Stewart Menzies
CD - Head of SOE
C-in-C - Commander-in-Chief
Col - Colonel
CoS - Chiefs of Staff
COSSAK - the name given to the Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Command and the organisation he headed
EMFFI & FFI - *Forces Françaises de l'Interieur* The French Resistance
EU/P or E/UP - Section of SOE dealing with Polish operations outside Poland.
F/L - Flight Lieutenant
F/O - Flying Officer
FANY - First Aid Nursing Yeomanry
FO - Foreign Office (British)
GHQ - General Headquarters
GOC = General Officer-in-Chief
HE - High Explosives
HF - High Frequency
HM & HMG - His Majesty's Government i.e. The British Government
hrs. - hours
ISRB - Inter Services Research Bureau, cover name for SOE
JIC Joint Intelligence Committee
JSM - Joint Staff Mission
LT. Col - Lieutenant Colonel
Lt. Com - Lieutenant Commander
Lt - Lieutenant
MAAF - Mediterranean Allied Air Force
ME22 & SPU22 The name given to an EU/P operation in newly liberated areas of Europe.
MI (R) - Military Intelligence Research section.
MI5 - Military Intelligence section with special responsibility for Home affairs i.e. UK.
MI6 - Military Intelligence section with special responsibility for operations abroad.
MI9 - Military Intelligence section with special responsibility for escaping personnel.
MiP - *Mieze i Plug* (Sword and Plough), a spurious organisation set up by the Germans in an attempt to infiltrate the Polish Home Army (AK).
NCO - Non Commissioned Officer
NKVD - *Narodnyi Kommissariat Vnutrennikh Del.* People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, i.e. Soviet State Security.
NSZ - *Narodowa Sily Zbrojne* The Polish National Armed Forces
OC - Officer Commanding
OIC - Officer in Command
ONR - a far right -wing group.

OSS - Office of Strategic Services, a US version of SOE and forerunner of the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency).
 P/O - Pilot Officer
 PAL - Polish People's Army. See AL
 POW - Prisoner of War
 PPR - Polish Workers' Political Party
 PT - Physical Training
 PTPF - Polish National Committee of Liberation, a largely Communist group that supported the Lublin Government
 PUNCH - Force 139 (Poland HUNgary CzeCHoslovakia) The SOE office and organisational base in Italy, otherwise know as 'Torment'.
 PWE - Political Warfare Executive. Propaganda specialists.
 PWRU - Polish Wireless Research Unit based at Stanmore.
 PMWR - Polish Military Wireless Research
 RAE Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough
 RAF - Royal Air Force
 RF - French Gaullist resistance organisation.
 SA - *Sturmabteilungen*, Nazi Storm Detachment
 SACMED Strategic Air Command Mediterranean.
 SAM - SOE mission in Moscow.
 SHAEF - Supreme Allied Expeditionary Force.
 SIME - Security Intelligence Middle East
 SIS - Secret Intelligence Service, British Intelligence.

SO2 - Operational Section of SOE
 SOE - Special Operations Executive
 SS - *Schutzstaffeln*, Protection squads, including Hitler's personal bodyguard.
 STS - Secret Training Station
 TODT - An organisation named after Nazi engineer Fritz Todt (1892 - 1942) mainly made up of forced labour workers
 USA & US - The United States of America
 USAAF - United States Army Air Force
 USSR - Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
 V1 - A pulse jet powered flying bomb.
 V2 - The first inter-continental ballistic missile.
 W/Comdr - Wing Commander.
 W/T - Wireless telegraphy
 ZWZ - *Zwiazek Walki Zbrojnej* Union for Armed Struggle, precursor of the *Armia Krajowa*