

sygn 241

POLAND

AND THE

FOUR FREEDOMS

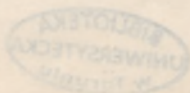
III.

Security



LONDON

1946



III.—SECURITY

THE STORY OF A POLICE STATE

"I am seriously concerned at the number of political murders that have been committed in various parts of Poland in recent weeks, in circumstances that in many cases appear to point to the complicity of Polish Security Police. I regard it as imperative that the Polish Provisional Government should put an immediate stop to these crimes in order that free and unfettered elections may be held as soon as possible in accordance with the Crimea decision.

"... At the same time I am looking forward to the end of these police States."

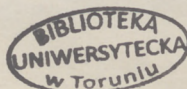
(Mr. Bevin in the House of Commons on January 23rd, 1946. Quotation according to *The Times*, January 24th, 1946.)

Terror reigns in Poland, with all the methods tried and tested in totalitarian countries at its disposal: arrests, deportations, concentration camps and assassinations. Violence is the order of the day; unarmed people are attacked, women are raped, while the Press is muzzled, freedom of speech and of association strictly denied and many aspects of private life controlled. This state of affairs—the very antithesis of Roosevelt's Four Freedoms—continues to exist in Poland ever since the entrance of the Red Army. The Terror aims at crushing the resistance of the Polish people and forcing them to accept all the changes imposed by a foreign Power.

While the so-called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity claims that a genuine democratic order is being built up in Poland, none of the democratic liberties are available to the Poles. On the contrary, under the pretext that "reactionary elements" are threatening the "new democracy," the Warsaw regime, mainly through the mouthpiece of the all-powerful Communist Polish Workers' Party, constantly reiterates the need for increasing the Terror. "The reactionary instinct must be scorched out by hot iron," runs the fond slogan. Everyone who is not either 100 per cent. Communist, or at least a close sympathiser, is labelled a reactionary, Fascist or foreign spy. Even the Polish Peasants' Party headed by Mr. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk has often been attacked as anti-democratic and reactionary, and Mr. Mikolajczyk has himself many times publicly protested against these constant threats and accusations.

THE RULE OF THE N.K.V.D.

The Lublin Committee organised its security system with the greatest care, making various changes from time to time and always seeking to mould it according to the pattern of the Soviet N.K.V.D. But in the beginning the system was inadequate, so the N.K.V.D. started to work in all towns large and small and all villages, but for many reasons with far greater advantages than its German opposite number. To begin with, this Soviet organisation was far more numerous in every Polish province than the Gestapo ever was. Then, except its comparatively small numbers of paid informers, the Gestapo had no means of inside information. For the N.K.V.D. the task



was easier in so far that it had at its disposal local Communists who had lived for years on the spot and possessed detailed information on every aspect of life in Poland. Thus before long the whole country found itself in the iron grip of the Soviet security and espionage organisation.

The N.K.V.D.'s method for insinuating its way into the lives of the people was almost perfect. While the Gestapo was distinct not only from the civilian population but also from the German Army, no dividing line can be clearly drawn between the N.K.V.D. and the Red Army. Its agents normally wear a special uniform and a distinctive red cap-band. But in Poland they were dressed either in ordinary Red Army uniform or civilian clothes. While the Gestapo nearly always lived separately in special barracks, the N.K.V.D. were billeted in private houses, pretending to be members of the regular army with the usual soldier's duties, drill and so on.

Outwardly the work of the N.K.V.D. often seemed chaotic and disorganised, but this impression was wide off the mark. Its agents lived in one place and worked elsewhere. If the relatives of a missing person tried to find him, this facade of chaos always greeted them; the members of the N.K.V.D. would claim that they were not competent to give any information, and so it was never possible to discover to what prison the unfortunate victim had been taken. Actually the organisation of the N.K.V.D. has been tried out for many years in the Soviet Union.

The N.K.V.D. invigilation methods—slow but sure—are based on a long preliminary observation. Only after this come the arrests, often not merely of individuals but of whole groups. The observation points are of two kinds, static and mobile. In all thoroughfares and at all cross-roads there are N.K.V.D. members watching closely the traffic and passers-by, while some important spots are watched from the windows of flats occupied by agents. Of course, any meeting-point of suspected persons is kept under close observation. When, for instance, the owner of a flat is arrested an N.K.V.D. agent will remain posted there for several days to take anyone who called there. All these arrests are very discreetly made. The N.K.V.D. agent who had been detailed to arrest someone in the street would approach his quarry under the pretext of asking for a light or a direction; then, very quietly, he would bid him walk in front. Anyone else approaching the suspect is also immediately taken along as well.

After several months of this sort of open activity the N.K.V.D. in Poland decided to retire into the background. The Security Police of the Lublin Committee, which in the meantime had been proclaimed the Government in Warsaw, was sufficiently trained to take over from its sister Soviet organisation.

THE "POLISH" SECURITY SYSTEM.

The most powerful man in Poland to-day is Mr. Stanislaw Radkiewicz, the Security Minister of the Warsaw Government, a member of the Communist Party of Western Byelo-Russia, described by the official papers as being "hard, stern and energetic." Radkiewicz has undergone a very long and specialised training in the security and espionage systems in the Soviet Union. He worked first of all for the political security division of the N.K.V.D. at its Moscow headquarters,

then in the Soviet Military Intelligence, in the Prison Guard Units, and finally at the Central Soviet Headquarters of the Concentration Camps.

Radkiewicz, educated so thoroughly in the Soviet Union, built up the Polish Security Police with great energy, staffing it by numerous officers and agents of the N.K.V.D. and by Soviet partisans parachuted in increasing numbers into Poland before the entrance of the Red Army. Between August, 1944, and January, 1945, there were no Poles at all in the headquarters of this Security Police. Poles were allotted only less responsible positions and were recruited from members of the Communist Polish Workers' Party or from its youth organisations known as the Union of Fighting Youth. Later some Poles were promoted, but the key posts are still held by Russians with some knowledge of Polish or by Poles born and educated in the Soviet Union.

In 1944 also a so-called People's Militia was created in Poland—the name being subsequently changed to Citizens' Militia. This is still in existence, playing a role similar to that of the police in other countries, controlling traffic and keeping order in public places. Many of its members are totally unsuitable for such work, being vagrants and criminals turned Communist in order to get their present jobs. But the Citizens' Militia has not come to exercise any important influence in Poland. The real security and espionage organisation has been created by Radkiewicz under the name of the Internal Security Corps.

Three hundred young officers who in May, 1945, graduated from the Officers' Tank School in Modlin (a town some eighteen miles north of Warsaw) and had undergone a special course of political education, were attached to the Internal Security Corps. Later this body was strengthened by other reliable officers from the Polish Army, along with many officers of the Red Army who had served in the Polish Forces.

The organisation of the Security Corps is based on the Soviet pattern and cannot be compared with any security system in any Western country. It is composed of two armoured regiments stationed in Warsaw and Cracow; fifteen special regiments, based on Warsaw, Lublin, Jastkow, Bialystok, Rzeszow, Katowice, Wroclaw (or Breslau), Cracow, Bydgoszcz, Starogard near Stettin, Danzig and Gora Kalwaria, and nine guard battalions. The Corps is completely militarised and, like the N.K.V.D., has its own uniform. Members of the Corps receive special rates of pay and better food rations, quick promotion and many other favours. Chosen units from its ranks guard the dignitaries of the Warsaw regime, while others are escorting valuable cargo convoys. Some are detailed to what is, from the Government's point of view, the most important job of all—the guarding of political prisoners. Other units are posted at the frontiers and guard the concentration camps. A good number of Corps members are used in intelligence work, which comprises both internal espionage and counter-intelligence.

The Poles usually call the Internal Security Corps the "Polish N.K.V.D." It has its main barracks at Boernerowo, near Warsaw, where anti-aircraft artillery regiments were formerly stationed. Here, too, is the central training school of the Corps, though the Headquarters are actually in Warsaw itself in Rakowiecka Street. Its chief training centre is located in the small town of Andrzejow, near Lodz.

The Commander of the Corps is a Soviet officer wearing the uniform of a Polish Lieutenant-General—Boleslaw Kienievich by name—who

was first military Governor of Warsaw's suburb Praga and then of Warsaw itself after its occupation by the Red Army. Kienievich was born in Pinsk, a small town in Eastern Poland, but when seven years old went with his parents to Russia and in 1932 graduated from the Officers' School there. In 1939 he fought as a Red Army officer in Finland, and during the Russo-German war was promoted to the rank of a Colonel of the Guards. When a Soviet-sponsored Polish Army was formed in Russia he was detached to it. Many Soviet officers in Polish uniform are with him on the staff of the Internal Security Corps, in which they occupy the key positions, especially in the political education division.

The espionage net of the Internal Security Corps is all-embracing. Its agents are posted in every office, every institution, factory and even in small workshops. Any and every criticism of the regime is noted and remembered. Whole groups as well as individuals are liquidated promptly and efficiently. People disappear without a trace and none of their relatives can ever learn anything of their fate.

Besides prisons and so-called places of detention to which people are sent by the Courts of Justice, there are many other secret dungeons in which the Internal Security Corps hides its prisoners. Many private houses are used for this purpose, as well as the basements of big blocks of flats. The victims are detained for many months without any warrant from any court or judge and are continually questioned, special methods being employed to extract "voluntary" confessions.

The system is entirely independent of all other authorities and is directed solely by Radkiewicz who is answerable to no Polish authority. Thus the Poles are at the mercy of every whim of his organisation and have no means whatsoever of legal defence against his tyranny.

CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

Immediately after the Red Army's entry into Poland, the members of the Polish Home Army who had fought gallantly for several years against the Germans, were arrested in increasing numbers and put into concentration camps. Thus many thousands of officers and men of the Home Army found themselves behind barbed wire during the first months of their country's "liberation," and these persecutions still go on.

As early as August, 1944, the Polish Government in London received information from Poland, that mass arrests of members of the Home Army were taking place, and that the victims were being herded in the Majdanek Concentration Camp, known during the German occupation as the "Camp of Death." The first batch of such prisoners consisted of the officers of the Eighth and Ninth Infantry Divisions of the Home Army and some three thousand non-commissioned officers and soldiers. The camp was then under the supervision of the N.K.V.D. In the districts of Wilno and Nowogrodek the arrested members of the Home Army were gaoled in N.K.V.D. prisons and between five and seven thousand soldiers were detained in a special camp at Miedniki.

In territories west of the Curzon Line only five concentration camps were at first set up. These were officially called ISOLATION CAMPS and from the beginning were under the control of the Polish Security Police, with the exception of those at Krzeslin, near Siedlce, and

Oldacowizna, near Minsk Mazowiecki, in which soldiers of the Home Army were mainly gaoled and which were accordingly supervised by the Lublin military authorities.

After a time not only members of the Home Army but also all those who were considered by the Lublin and then by the Warsaw regime as being dangerous were sent to concentration camps. Colonel Edward Ochab, Vice-Minister of Security, was appointed head of the concentration camp system, and on one occasion he declared: "It is necessary to eradicate with hot iron all unhealthy elements when one is cleansing a country from the dirt left by an aggressor. All who endanger Polish Democracy must be liquidated."

The Warsaw regime, however, tries to convince the public in Poland and abroad that only truly dangerous elements are being kept in concentration camps. It has many times been officially stated that only so-called *Volksdeutsche* or Polish subjects who obtained German citizenship during the German occupation are held in these places. But the percentage of *Volksdeutsche* in these camps is comparatively small. Recently it has been claimed in Warsaw that "speculators, corrupt officials, and other anti-democratic elements" are being "isolated," for the nation's benefit. Of course it is the Internal Security Corps who decides who is the "speculator, corrupt official or anti-democrat." Actually the great majority of the inmates of the concentration camps are good patriots, those who are not sufficiently enthusiastic about the present situation in Poland as well as those directly opposed to the Warsaw regime.

A very interesting message was received by the Polish Government in London from its delegate in Poland as long ago as October 6th, 1944.

It ran: "In Rzeszow Prison there are at present thirty *Volksdeutsche* and a hundred and forty-seven Poles, only one of whom is a criminal—except for him all are good Poles and members of the Home Army. The guards are bandits. They steal personal belongings and food. Three women have been raped. Interrogations are conducted only at night. Conditions are dreadful. Breakfast consists of a small piece of bread, dinner of soup. No food from outside is allowed."

Since then, conditions have not changed much in the prisons and isolation camps in Poland. The number of camps has steadily increased and larger ones have recently been established in Oswiecim (former German concentration camp in Auschwitz), Skrudowo (near Lubartow), Wesola, Krzesimow (near Leczna), Rembertow (near Warsaw), Glusk, Skobow (near Lublin), Kraczevice, Biedrusk, Matwy (near Inowroclaw), Sikawa (near Lodz), Legnow (near Bydgoszcz), Zimne Wody, Skarzysko, Potulice (near Poznan), Mielecin, Starogard, Lipno, Torun, Ciechanow, Poznan (at Sloneczna Street), Czynow (near Lodz), Wieliczka, Myslowice (the biggest camp in Silesia), Sosnowiec, Strzemieszce, Swietochlowice, Katowice, Janow Podlaski, Brzesc on the Bug, Wronki, Majdanek, Naklo and Pila. The largest political prisons are in Lublin (the Castle), Jaroslaw, Krakow, Tarnow, Katowice, Kielce, Czestochowa, Radom, Rawicz, Warsaw and Wlochy (near Warsaw).

This is far from a complete list of the concentration camps and prisons in Poland. Many establishments of this kind were taken over by the Warsaw regime from the Germans and immediately put to the

same purpose. The *New York Times* Correspondent, Gladwyn Hill, writing on October 22, 1945, about Oswiecim (Auschwitz), stated:—

“The camp still exists; it is now supervised by the Polish authorities and as before, it is cut off from the world by powerfully electrified barbed-wire.”

It is difficult to give the exact number of people in Poland who have been detained as dangerous elements. In October, 1945, it was estimated at one hundred and fifty thousand persons. At that time Gladwyn Hill wrote in his dispatch to the *New York Times* :—

“According to the official announcement of the Government spokesmen there are not more than one thousand political prisoners in Poland. Some members of the Government, however, have admitted to me in private talks that there are between sixty to eighty thousand political prisoners and hint that the majority are *Volksdeutsche*.”

Since that time more arrests have been made and more people put into prisons and Isolation Camps. A fairly accurate estimate claims that by the end of January, 1946, some two hundred and fifty thousand Poles are detained under one pretext or another by the Warsaw regime.

The regime follows a special policy in locating its concentration camps. A great number of them are situated in the forests and are then moved about from one place to another to create the illusion that some have been liquidated and their number is decreasing. As the camp installations are usually most primitive—consisting of lightly-built barracks or even tents—they are easily transported. The existence of most of them is never admitted by the Government and needless to say, visitors from abroad are not allowed to inspect them.

The paradoxes of our epoch are unending. But one of the most tragic is that at the very moment when German war-criminals are being charged at Nuremberg with creating the concentration camps system, that very system is actually flourishing in Soviet-sponsored “democratic” Poland.

DEPORTATIONS TO THE SOVIET UNION.

When the Red Army re-entered Poland in 1944, the deportation of Poles, begun at the end of 1939, was resumed. In 1944 thousands of Poles living in the Wilno and Lwow districts were deported. Then as Central and Western Poland was occupied many people there were also detained and sent to the Soviet Union.

The Polish Underground Movement noted these deportations and sent information about them to London. One of these reports—from Cracow—stated that on March 23rd, 1945, fifty goods trucks filled with deportees were sent to the East. On March 24th, three goods trains went, one each on March 27th and 30th and on April 1st, thirty wagons. Such details give some idea of the scale of these deportations.

Some of the deportees to Russia managed to send news to their relatives in Poland. Information received in Poland in July, 1945, described among other things the fate of people deported on March 21st, 1945, from Poznan to Dniepropetrovsk. On that occasion some eight hundred Poles were herded together into sealed goods trucks, along with a number of Germans, and driven off to the Ukraine. Workers and craftsmen were drafted to the ammunition factories and those of the intelligentsia class to the iron-ore mines. In these mines the shifts

are twelve hours a day and food consists of a few crumbs of bread with corn on the cob soup. Acute swelling usually results from such a diet and no medical attention is provided for the deportees.

Information of this sort is slowly but steadily filtering through to the outer world. It is, for instance, known for certain that in August, 1944, several thousand men were deported from Wilno to Kaluga in Central Russia. In September, 1944, the majority of the population in Kolomyja in Eastern Poland were sent to Siberia, while from Zloczow, a nearby town, all women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five were sent to work in the Donbass, a mining district in the Eastern Ukraine. It is also known that between the 8th and 15th of November, 1945, from Bialystok alone, one hundred and forty-three goods trucks with deportees were dispatched to the East. On January 1st, 1945, the N.K.V.D. in Bialystok and Grodno rounded up some thousand Poles for deportation. In these towns' districts the deportations continued well into 1945 and for February of that year the figure was one hundred and twenty-five goods trucks from Grodno and two hundred and forty-two from Bialystok. Some of these transports have been seen by numerous British liberated prisoners-of-war when on their way to Odessa. Deportations also took place in Drohobycz and Boryslaw oil districts from which many thousands of Poles, including substantial numbers of young people and the intelligentsia classes, were sent to Siberia.

Many transports of deportees passed through Warsaw on their way to the East. On July 12th, 1945, at five p.m., on Jerozolimskie Avenue, inhabitants of the capital were shocked to see a group of some three hundred and fifty men under the escort of the N.K.V.D. All were young and starved-looking and dressed in shabby uniforms. They were shouting: “We are members of the Home Army. We are being deported. Give us bread.” Several managed in the confusion to give their addresses to passers-by. Then the N.K.V.D. intervened and the group was led to the station and packed into a waiting train.

Some time after the creation of the “Polish Provisional Government of National Unity,” the deportations began to be made less openly, but they still go on. The Soviet authorities consider that some individuals and groups are not fit to live in Poland and so send them off to the Soviet Union.

The same arguments which the Warsaw regime used to justify the concentration camp system have been employed again. It has been officially stated in Warsaw several times that only *Volksdeutsche* are being deported to the Soviet Union, and when this claim becomes impossible to sustain, the excuse has been concocted that “regrettable mistakes have been made.” This is best illustrated by the following story. In the summer of 1945 an N.K.V.D. unit collected some six thousand men, women and children in the small town of Chelmza and sent them to the Donbass. The property of these people was looted. After some time it was announced in Warsaw that a mistake had occurred and, after clarification of the matter and the Government's intervention, some three thousand people were returned to Poland. No one ever heard what has happened to the rest. Those who were lucky enough to get back did not, of course, receive any compensation for the loss of their property.

A much worse situation prevails now in Eastern Poland, which was incorporated in the Soviet Union. This area is almost completely

cut off from the outside world and it was only very recently that Poles evacuated from there to Western and Central Poland have brought news that deportations are still carried out on a large scale. The territories east of the Curzon Line are now being forcibly Russianised, and the Polish population, a year ago estimated at over four million, is being moved to the West and East. The trains, packed with "dangerous elements," continue to run to Siberia and Asiatic Russia, and yet no one in the world raises a protest.

ARRESTS AND ESPIONAGE.

In making arrests the Polish Security Police copied all the N.K.V.D. methods, entirely different from those of the Gestapo. The Germans liked to make a show about it—they would operate in daytime, employing many agents, cordoning off several streets at a time and catching hundreds of people. Seldom have the internal Security Corps or the N.K.V.D., still acting in "special cases" in Poland, given any such performance. They shun publicity, preferring at all times to act invisibly.

The first task of the Security Police is that of Internal espionage, and this has been organised on a tremendous scale. The population is watched unceasingly to discover what their political opinions are and in which group they may be classified. The members of the Communist Polish Workers' Party act as informers, supplying the authorities with all details about the people among whom they live. No private individual can escape this invigilation.

In every one of the larger blocks of flats House Committees have been formed and, as a rule, at least one member of the Committee is a Communist who finds out everything about the tenants. The Union of House-Porters is put to the same use. Porters in Poland nowadays have many special privileges, and if their information should prove to be valuable are qualified to receive higher food rations. In this way the net surrounding the tenants is spread to perfection.

People working in offices, factories, nationalised or otherwise, and in all kinds of organisations and institutions are kept under similar-surveillance. Agents of the Security Police or members of the Communist Party are posted in every place of work. Very often such persons hold some minor position, but in reality they exercise decisive influence in all matters and receive their orders from the Party Headquarters or from the Ministry of Security organs.

Mr. W. Gomulka, who is first Vice-Premier of the Polish Provisional Government in Warsaw and also the Secretary-General of the Polish Workers' Party, recently gave it out at the meeting of the Central Committee of his Party how many Communists are employed by the Warsaw regime. According to him the percentage of members of the Polish Workers' Party on the staff of various Ministries is as follows :

	<i>Per cent.</i>
Ministry of National Defence	11
" " Foreign Affairs	26.4
" " Public Administration	38
" " Finance	19
" " Commerce	33
" " Communication	40
" " Supply	10.1

" " Post and Telegraph	30
" " Health	16
" " Labour and Public Works	37
" " Reconstruction	10
" " Art and Culture	20
" " Propaganda and Information	42
" " Justice	17.3

In addition, Mr. Gomulka stated that members of the Polish Workers' Party are employed in other institutions in the following percentage :

	<i>Per cent.</i>
The Broadcasting System	53
Peasant Co-operatives	61.7
" Spolem " (big chain of Co-operatives)	39
Public Libraries	50
The Publishing Co-operative (<i>Czytelnik</i>)	94

It is significant that Mr. Gomulka did not disclose how great is the percentage of his party members among the employees of the Ministry of Security. It is known that this Ministry is the largest body of the Warsaw regime, employing more than one hundred and ten thousand people, including the Internal Security Corps and the Citizens' Militia. Moreover, it is a fact that at least 70 per cent. of the Ministry employees belong to the Polish Workers' Party. As it was recently officially given out in Warsaw that the membership of this Party is more than 200,000 strong, it is fairly obvious that all Polish Communists are employed in the State Administration of Poland. They and their followers only constitute between 1 and 2 per cent. of the whole population and yet their influence is paramount.

With all public and often private life under such close surveillance the people go in constant fear of inducing arrest by some unguarded action. Relatives are rarely able to trace those arrested ; the Security Police sees to that. If, for instance, it should become necessary to take the arrested through a town in daylight, they are ordered to lie down out of sight in the lorries. They are not directed immediately to prisons or Isolation Camps, but are kept for weeks and months in the basements of big houses. "*Habeas Corpus*" in Poland to-day is an anomaly save in trivial cases, and in political matters the police waive it entirely.

THE METHOD OF OBTAINING CONFESSIONS.

How are the interrogations carried out ? Those who have been lucky enough to escape from prisons and concentration camps in Poland state that methods here also differ from those employed by the Gestapo. Besides beating and torturing the victim, the Internal Security Corps agents also try to exhaust him mentally. Questioning always takes place by night, often more than once, sometimes lasting a few hours, sometimes only a few minutes, when it is merely a pretext to wake up the prisoner. In the first stage of interrogation the examiner does the talking, harps on the political situation in general, mentioning the political activities of the pre-war Polish Government and those of the "reactionary elements." This is aimed at inducing the prisoner to give himself away by an outburst in support of the opposition. After some time he is presented with a full list of his habitual companions

or correspondents and the names of places he visits. He thus gets the impression that the Security Police knows everything and that any kind of denial is useless. Finally, often by torture, he is pressed to make a full confession, any discrepancy in his story being taken up as proof of his alleged crime.

Detailed reports are now available in London which describe how interrogations of prisoners are carried out by the Internal Security Corps with the help of the N.K.V.D. in the prison in Lublin Castle, in the detention place at Strzelecka Street in Warsaw and at Wlochy (near Warsaw). In these places a special form of torture known as the Temple Screw is often used, whereby the head is squeezed in a wooden appliance. The most popular kind of torture, in use in every Security Police Station, is that of placing tight bracelets round the wrist of the prisoner, causing the blood pressure to rise so much that the palms of the hands begin to bleed. Those who faint under it are injected with morphia.

Recent news from Poland tells that mass arrests of teachers are now being carried out. So far 2,000 of them have been detained. This has been done because of the refusal of the Polish Teachers' Association Congress, held in November, 1945, to elect a Communist Executive. They were warned that they must do so. The representative of the Polish Workers' Party, in his speech at the Teachers' Congress stated that "a great part of the Polish Intelligentsia has become indifferent towards political questions and the majority of the Polish teachers has been infected with opposition notions. The Polish Workers' Party cannot tolerate the false conceptions still persisting in Poland and desires to use the intellectual class for the building of a democratic Poland."

Nevertheless when the results of the ballot were made known, only 40 out of 600 had voted in favour of the communist-sponsored list of candidates for the executive. The Government's reaction was swift. The arrest of the teachers was made without any publicity, but it was unofficially stated that they will remain in jail until the Teachers' Union see fit to elect a "Democratic Executive" acceptable to the Polish Workers' Party.

What has happened to all those arrested in present-day Poland? Only a very few are ever released. The rest languish for an indefinite period in prisons or concentration camps, while the most "dangerous elements" are deported to the Soviet Union.

THE LIQUIDATION OF PRISONERS.

Although the general policy of the N.K.V.D. and of the Internal Security Corps is to avoid public notice, they do sometimes break this rule when anxious to terrorise the population.

In Minsk Mazowiecki, on the night of 2nd March, 1945, a unit of the Internal Security Corps shot down seven persons. The bodies were left in the street. Among them was that of a major of the Underground Administration. On April 14th, 1945, twenty-four men were executed immediately after arrest in a public square in Siedlce. Then six men were brought from the nearby village of Mokolody and also shot in the same square. All these executions were carried out by squads of the N.K.V.D., the victims being thought to be members of the Polish Home Army.

On May 20th, 1945, the N.K.V.D. arrested six men and a girl in Rejowiec. The men were deported to an unknown destination, but the girl was shot then and there. A few days later in the same town a woman called Genowefa Mikulska was tortured by the Soviet Security Police and then hanged. No reason was given for this. Her ten-year-old daughter and son of six were both deported to the Soviet Union.

On April 25th, 1945, all the inhabitants of the village of Wola Batowska (near Bochnia), including women and children, some 200 persons in all, were rounded up by an N.K.V.D. unit. After a certain amount of investigation a Soviet captain chose four peasants from the list which had been prepared beforehand, and had them shot. About twenty peasants were transported to the prison in Bochnia and then the remainder was set free. Once again no reason was given for the incident.

In the second half of May, 1945, at Iwanowice, some forty Poles were ordered to put on German uniforms and were then publicly executed. A similar number were executed on July 8th, 1945, at Lublin. They were hostages taken after a raid by an unknown band on the local tax office.

On July 10th, 1945, two men were arrested by the N.K.V.D. in the village of Turowiec (near Chelm). Both were tortured and then one was executed and the other removed to the prison at Chelm.

On July 12th, 1945, the entire population of the village of Zakliki (near Krasnik) was called to a meeting during which some Soviet propagandists delivered speeches. Then two men—chained, their mouths stuffed with rags—were brought in and publicly executed. The onlookers were warned that a similar fate awaited anyone who attempted to sabotage Polish democracy.

During the Christmas of 1945 in Grojec (near Warsaw), a N.K.V.D. squad one evening raided the house of a local member of the Polish Peasants' Party (that of Mr. Mikolajczyk), and arrested him and his three guests, the local judge, teacher, and the manager of the local Co-operative. They were taken in a lorry to a nearby forest, ordered to dig their graves, stripped and then executed. One of them who was only wounded, managed to get out of the grave, and informed the relatives of the other three of the crime.

Such examples—chosen at random—give some idea of the atmosphere in which Polish people have to live to-day.

THE INCREASE OF ASSASSINATIONS.

The latest weapon of the Security Police in Poland in their fight against persons unacceptable to the Warsaw regime is that of secret assassination. This weapon is a powerful one and has proved a great success.

Since autumn, 1945, when the Polish Peasants' Party was reborn under the leadership of Mr. Mikolajczyk, the existing puppet political parties and their sponsor, the Polish Workers' Party, have become increasingly alarmed. Mr. Mikolajczyk was generally supported not only by the population of the rural areas but also of the towns as well. Acting swiftly, spokesmen of the Polish Workers' Party began publicly to accuse Mr. Mikolajczyk of becoming the vanguard of reaction. Mr. Mikolajczyk's colleague in the Warsaw Government—the first

Vice-Prime Minister of that body, Mr. W. Gomulka, declared openly at the meeting of the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party that "the reactionaries want Mr. Mikolajczyk to remain in the Government of National Unity and in the bloc of the democratic parties so that he may play the role of the Trojan horse."

Some time after this another important Communist leader, Mr. Berman, who is now Under-Secretary of State in the Prime Minister's office, declared at the Conference of the Warsaw Branch of the Polish Workers' Party:

"The Mikolajczyk group is a spectrum which draws to it all the rays of reaction. It can be compared as well to a magnet which attracts all the enemies of democracy."

These accusations were followed before long by secret assassinations of prominent members of the Polish Peasant Party. One of the first victims was Mr. Narcyz Wiatr-Zawojna, the gallant Commander of the Peasant Battalions, a military organisation which fought against the Germans. He was murdered in a Cracow street, and his slayers have not yet been discovered. Then in September, 1945, a few days after the Congress of the Polish Peasant Party in Cracow, a prominent leader of this party, Mr. Wladyslaw Kojder, disappeared without a trace. When the news was published in the American Press, it was contradicted by Soviet sources, which claimed that Kojder was the name of a town in Poland—not of a man. But recently the Warsaw regime admitted that Mr. Kojder had been assassinated.

On November 2nd, 1945, unknown persons came to the house in Lodz of Mr. Boleslaw Scibiorek, the President of the *Wici*, the Peasant Youth Organisation, and General Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Polish Peasant Party and member of the Home National Council, and shot him dead. On the same day Jan Rytlewski, a prominent member of the Christian Labour Party, was murdered at Juchda, and on December 8th, 1945, at Zolkiewka, Jozef Wrona, another Peasants' leader.

These are just a few examples of secret assassinations which are being carried out on quite a large scale in Poland to-day; the total number of victims during the last four months is said to be about a hundred. It is interesting to note that Mr. Gomulka, who previously accused Mr. Mikolajczyk and his party of being a "Trojan horse for the reaction," was quick to affirm that Mr. Scibiorek was murdered by the "dark forces of reaction."

The increasing numbers of assassinations of the opposition political leaders and members of the Polish Peasant Party is undeniably done to ensure victory for the Polish Workers' Party and its puppet groups in the future elections. It can be presumed that "reaction" in Poland or elsewhere (if any) is not especially interested in the electoral victory of the Communist bloc, so it has no reason whatsoever to murder the representatives of the independent Polish political groups.

THE BURNING OF VILLAGES.

The N.K.V.D. and Internal Security Corps have discovered that the rural areas constitute the hard core of resistance against the subjugation of the Polish nation on the Soviet pattern. The Polish peasantry are very conservative in their outlook, deeply religious, attached to their homesteads and strongly anti-Communist. Their

passive resistance in face of all attempts to Sovietise them has often brought the weight of Communist wrath upon them. As the Press censorship in Poland is very strict and there are no foreigners in the rural areas, acts of terror in villages are perpetrated openly and on a wide scale. Here are a few instances witnessed by reliable persons, selected at random.

In the village of Swiderki (near Lukow), a quarrel occurred between a local militia man and a drunken peasant. The militia man, apart from being disarmed, was not injured in any way. On April 18th, 1945, a N.K.V.D. unit and the Internal Security Corps unit came to the village under the command of Major Bachkarov. The peasant who had been party to the quarrel was arrested with his father and some houses were set on fire. Then some ammunition which had been hidden in a barn exploded. After this some one hundred and thirty men were arrested and ten shot on the spot by Sub-lieutenant Pielnizynski of the Internal Security Corps. The rest of the arrested were deported to an unknown destination.

On April 8th, 1945, a Soviet unit set on fire the village of Kurylowka (near Lezajsk) and some twenty-five persons were thrown into the blaze.

On April 9th, 1945, the N.K.V.D. burnt down a part of the village of Ceranow (near Siedlce), arresting thirty persons and executing three.

On April 18th, 1945, a company of Soviet soldiers and some seventy Citizens' Militia men "pacified" the village of Pruchnik. Three men were killed, ten wounded and six arrested.

On April 20th, 1945, a unit of the Internal Security Corps fired the village of Czysta Debina (near Krasnystaw). Forty peasants were executed.

On 30th April, 1945, the village of Sikory (near Bialystok) was completely burned down by incendiary shells. A substantial number of inhabitants perished in the fire.

On May 17th, 1945, the village of Czolki (near Zamosc) suffered a terrible experience. After being surrounded by units of the N.K.V.D., it was attacked with incendiary shells from every direction. In an attempt to save their lives the inhabitants began escaping, but as soon as they left their burning houses, they were greeted with a hail of bullets. The N.K.V.D. rounded up everyone they caught, tying the people up and loading them into waiting lorries. The majority of the men succeeded in fleeing to the forest, soon, however, to see the women, children and aged fall into the hands of the Russians. The village was burned down to the ground.

On June 10th, 1945, the villages of Huta and Wlodzin in the Uchanic district (near Hrubieszow) were burned down completely by the Russians, part of the population being murdered.

On June 19th, 1945, a Russian gang destroyed all the crops belonging to the village of Przewale, in the Tyszowce district (near Tomaszow). The Polish population succeeded in driving the Russians away, who soon, however, brought more reinforcements from the Zamosc N.K.V.D., including thirty vehicles. The Russian gang dispersed in the locality surrounding the forest in which several people were taken, killed or

wounded. Simultaneously a Polish settlement, abandoned by its terrified inhabitants, was set on fire.

On July 6th, 1945, Polish peasants killed a Soviet officer who had raped several women, in the village of Siostrzytow (in the Lublin district). As a reprisal, members of the N.K.V.D. burned down ten farms and arrested twenty persons.

At the beginning of July, 1945, the N.K.V.D. burned down the village of Brzeziny (near Siemiatycze) and cruelly pacified the village of Dzialkowice (near Bielsk Podlaski). Then the village of Krole (near Kobylin) was shelled by the Soviet artillery, many people afterwards being shot down with machine guns.

On September 12th, 1945, a unit of the Internal Security Corps surrounded the church of Wisniowice, during the service, and arrested two hundred and eleven young men.

The districts of Bialystok, Suwalki and Sokolki are at present being subjected to a ruthless and cruel purge, carried out by the Russians.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE.

According to Western ideas, the Judiciary are servants of the Law and of no one else. The system of independent Courts of Justice, irremovable Judges, the protection of the individual against arbitrary rulers, which was guaranteed in England centuries ago by the bill of *Habeas Corpus*, are probably the most important conquests in the long struggle of the people against tyranny and oppression.

But Soviet ideas about justice and law are exactly opposite to these tenets—and the laws of Poland, previously akin to those of the West—are now being recast into the Russian mould. Right and Justice have always been subjected to the needs of expediency in the Soviet organisation. Lenin pointed this out clearly when he said, "Our decrees are only instructions."

Recently the "Ministry of Justice" in Warsaw published a work under the title: "Administration of Justice in Reborn Poland from the 22nd July, 1944, to 22nd July, 1945." The "Vice-Minister of Justice," Leon Chajn, in his article entitled, "Experiment of Balance," describes the aims and tasks of Polish jurisdiction as follows: "Jurisdiction must be transformed. The Judge should express public views and sentiments. He should abstain from the principles of 'objective truth,' so that a collective understanding of truth may be arrived at. The sentence should be adjusted to the people's feeling as to what is right and not to formal statutes of the law."

In another statement, given on the 6th September, 1945, in Warsaw, "Vice-Minister" Chajn declares: "We all know that among honest and devoted men in the Polish Courts of Law are also to be found reactionary elements, which are working for the enemy camp. These elements will be expelled in a short time by the Administration of Justice. Facing the hard struggle in Poland between the reactionaries and the democrats the Jurisdiction will have to show, once and for all, whose side it is on. It is evident that there is no place for Judges who stand for the principles of 'objective' truth. There is only one truth, that which serves Democracy, and the falsity which serves the reactionaries. If in the difficult problems of the nation the Jurisdiction

does not make a decisive stand for the vital interest of the Government, then Polish Democracy will be compelled to look for a new body of Jurisdiction, even if it should mean the removal of the entire profession of Polish Judges."

When one thinks how elastic is the term "reactionary" in the eyes of the Warsaw Government, then it is clear what a terrible weapon the Administration of Justice is now in Poland when brought to bear on any opposition, however powerful. How elastic indeed are the terms "reactionary" and "Fascist" is proved by a phrase in the speech of Mr. Mikolajczyk, given on the 25th November, 1945, in Warsaw, in which he complained that nowadays in Poland it is not the past of a man which decides if he is to be considered a Democrat, but only the fact that he belongs to a democratic party. Anyone who is not a member of a privileged party is looked upon as a Fascist and is arrested on the slightest pretext, even if he has spent years in a German concentration camp because of his struggle against the Nazis.

The declaration of the "Union of Democratic Lawyers," signed among others by the "Minister of Justice" Mr. Swiatkowski; the "Vice-Minister" Mr. Chajn, and the "President of the Supreme Court" Mr. W. Barcikowski, gives in its text that "only democratic lawyers can be guardians of the purity of legal democratic ideas, for they are aware of the power of uniform political conceptions." This "uniformity" is indeed a good guarantee that Right and Justice will exclusively serve the ruling political group in Poland.

On the 28th of November, 1945, the Polish radio broadcast a talk by Mr. B. Lipinski, in which he said: "The working class wishes to gain influence in the Administration of Justice by founding the People's Court. Jurisdiction in its present form has not passed the test. In many cases the Court has proved too indulgent in passing sentence. Now a bill for the People's Court and for Forced Labour is proposed."

Knowledge of the law in Poland, even when the subject is such an important one as codification, is no longer necessary. One merely needs to have "democracy" at heart! Mr. Adam Wendel, Director of the General Administration Division in the Ministry of Justice, claims that: "We have achieved in the Ministry the formation of a body of workers, who are true and devoted democrats. They may lack the experience of experts in settling important State questions, but they make up for this by their burning will and faith in the righteousness of the Cause and by their enthusiasm for the work."

The future tendencies of the Polish Law Court was mentioned by Dr. Muszkat, "Vice-President" of the Supreme Military Court, in his talk given at a discussion meeting of the Division of the Warsaw "Union of Democratic Lawyers." The newspaper *Gazeta Ludowa*, published the following report on it on the 2nd December, 1945:—

"The first proposition of Dr. Muszkat is that the Public Prosecutor's office should be separated from the Ministry of Justice. It should be placed instead under the supervision of the Home National Council. The same should happen to the Courts of Justice. The Ministry of Justice should have its activities limited exclusively to economics, administration, preparation of new bills and lastly to proposals to the

Home National Council regarding the selection of its staff. The Military Court and Military Prosecutor should be allied to the Civil Court and Public Prosecutor's Office.

"If the Prosecutor's Office was equipped with tremendous power it would have an uncommonly wide field in which to practise. It should have the right to alter sentences it considered too mild, the right to pass final sentence, to accuse, to annul decisions made by the local National Councils, and even to cancel orders given by the Government, in cases where they are contrary to the basic ideas of democracy. The Prosecutor should not only be allowed to arrest guilty persons, who indeed have acted against the law, but he should also be free to make preventional arrests of persons considered likely to perform unlawful acts in the future.

"He should also have the right to control and supervise the administration of State, all the Ministries, and the execution of Bills which have been passed. He should, too, examine the affairs of the railway, look into the conditions in factories, intervene in the collection of quotas, and have the power of execution of agrarian reforms."

Thus far the thesis of Dr. Muszkat. The conception that a prosecutor should have the arbitrary power to arrest people likely to perform unlawful acts must be considered most decidedly as a crime against the rights of the individual for which so many years of war have been waged. Such tendencies are, of course, completely strange to the Western views on law. But they fit closely into the Soviet pattern, where the system of Police supervision, under the Soviet Prosecutor, forms the basis of the whole structure of community life. This supervision penetrates into all fields and is exactly what the Warsaw regime proposes to establish in Poland.

THE MARTIAL LAW COURTS.

The first step in the realisation of these "new" ideas of "democratic" justice in Poland was the setting up on 17th December, 1945, of special courts of martial law. Their purpose is to punish all "enemies of democracy" and are authorised to promulgate sentences of death, life imprisonment and other prison sentences. Their structure is identical with that of the Nazi People's Courts and consists of one professional judge and two aldermen, representing "public opinion." These two are usually members of the Polish Workers' Party and in any decision can easily outvote the judge, should he be bold enough to go against them. There is no appeal against the sentence of these Courts.

In this way Polish Jurisdiction draws rapidly away from the Western pattern of law, whose basic motto is: *Fiat Justitia*, and is sinking to the role of a tool in the hands of a small group of oppressive rulers bent on a merciless and ruthless war against the freedom of the Polish nation.

Many crimes have been committed in the name of humanity. Now these are being committed in Poland by a totalitarian regime in the name of democracy.

This is the picture of a Police State. Only by constant terrorisation can an insignificant minority of the nation, backed by a foreign Power, keep its grip on the entire population of the country, on a people who fought the Germans to gain freedom and yet with the Germans defeated find themselves once more in chains.

Arch. Emigracji
Biblioteka

Główna
UMK Toruń

1371694

Biblioteka Główna UMK



300020378457

Printed by
ST. CLEMENTS PRESS, LTD.,
Portugal Street, Kingsway,
London, W.C.2.
