

described as "the bloom of the Slovak nation." Warm appreciation was expressed of the treatment received by the Slovaks in Roumania, who "enjoy the hospitality of a friendly nation." The references to Hungary, however, were bitter. The broadcast claimed there were 750,000 Slovaks in Hungary "cut off from the national body of our people," and went on to deplore "the fact that so many of our countrymen must live without Slovak education, without any spiritual, national guidance." The broadcast concluded with an expression of the resolve of Slovaks never to abandon their brethren abroad.

POLAND.

The late General Sikorski combined the offices of Commander-in-chief and Prime Minister. Under article 13 of the Polish Constitution of 1935, it is the President of the Republic who appoints to both these offices. On the 8th July President Raczkiewicz appointed General Kazimierz Sosnkowski Commander-in-chief, and on the 10th July he entrusted M. Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, a member of the Peasant Party, who has been Minister of the Interior and Deputy Prime Minister in General Sikorski's Cabinet, with the task of forming the new Government.

General Sosnkowski is perhaps the only Polish officer of high rank who, after taking active part in the campaign of September 1939, came out of it with an enhanced reputation. General Sikorski was not, of course, actively engaged in the campaign on Polish soil. When General Sosnkowski reached Paris before the middle of October 1939, M. Raczkiewicz, with the approval of General Sikorski, gave him a seat in the Cabinet as Minister of State, and also appointed him to succeed to the presidency in the event of his own death. The Polish Constitution specially provides that in time of war the President may nominate his successor; in fact, M. Raczkiewicz, the present President, was nominated by his predecessor, M. Moscicki, who, having been, to all intents and purposes, interned by the Roumanian Government, was unable to fulfil the duties of his office. There is no connexion whatever between General Sosnkowski's nomination to succeed to the presidency in the event of a vacancy and his present appointment as Commander-in-chief. It is not yet known what impression the new appointment has made in Poland itself and in the Polish Army of the Middle East; there is, however, no doubt that it is popular with the Polish forces in this country.

According to news received by way of Sweden, the representative of the Polish Red Cross on the commission engaged in investigating the mass graves of Katyn has reported that so far 4,243 bodies have been exhumed, of which 2,805 have been identified. It is stated that the bodies identified include those of 2 generals, 12 colonels, 50 lieutenants-colonel, 165 majors, 440 captains, 552 lieutenants, 930 ensigns and 146 privates.

The Polish soldiers in Scotland continue to make good use of the opportunities for higher education provided by their prolonged stay in that country. Thirteen Poles recently graduated at St. Andrew's University.

M. Stanczyk, the Polish Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, has returned from his visit to the Polish civilian refugees in the Near and Middle East.

SOVIET UNION.

The German offensive along the Orel-Kursk-Byelgorod sector has now been in progress for ten days, but although, as stated in the last *Summary*, powerful infantry and tank forces have been employed by the enemy he seems so far to have achieved strikingly small results to set off against his expenditure of manpower and material, which must have been heavy, even if Soviet figures are not accepted at face value. On the 8th July the Soviet Information Bureau issued a statement deriding the confused announcements issued from Berlin as to how the battle came to be started, in which announcement, *inter alia*, it was pretended that it was the Red Army which had opened it by themselves assuming the offensive. In this statement details were given of the divisions and air formations which had been massed by the Germans opposite the two main points of attack, and it was openly declared that the offensive had not caught the Red Army unawares. The Information Bureau on the 8th July took a sober, conservative view of the future progress of the battle: "It would be wrong for us to underestimate the strength of the German forces conducting the offensive. . . .

It is as yet too early to formulate final conclusions about the outcome of the battles"; but as regards the first three days of it the claim was made that the resolute enemy offensive had yielded no success. The same line was maintained on the 11th July in a leading article in *Pravda*, and readers were told that tension was not abating and that, despite enormous losses, the Germans had not abandoned their plan. Meanwhile, on the industrial front, the battle was made the occasion on the 9th July for a clarion call by *Pravda* to the workers to produce "still more war material for our glorious Red Army," and they were told that the Red Army was delivering a shattering rebuff to the enemy, which would grow. "The more arms the Red Army receive, the stronger will be their blows against the German invaders." None the less, the news of the landing in Sicily has come to the U.S.S.R. very opportunely. So far as is known, there has been no newspaper comment on the new Allied invasion, and slight prominence has hitherto been given to the operations in the Soviet press. British press correspondents, however, describe the Moscow public as having been electrified by the landing, and the atmosphere as being one of tense expectancy.

On the 9th July *Izvestiya*, which in general may be regarded as the mouthpiece of the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, published an article appreciating the part played in Soviet-Polish relations in the past two years by the late General Sikorski, and employed language which, especially when one bears in mind the acerbity of the present quarrel between the Soviet and Polish Governments, can fairly be described as generous. It commenced by saying: "The Polish Prime Minister and Commander-in-chief of the Polish army, General Wladislaw Sikorski, lost his life in an air accident on the 4th July near Gibraltar. Thus tragically ended the life of this prominent statesman and military leader, whose name is associated with an important phase in the development of Polish-Soviet relations." Next it emphasised that the late General "was one of those who understood and appreciated the great importance of the struggle of the Soviet Union against Hitlerite Germany for the common cause of all freedom-loving peoples," and it cited the various agreements which, under his leadership on the Polish side, had been arrived at between the two countries, with the aim of achieving victory over the common enemy. "At that period," the writer of the article affirmed, "General Sikorski maintained an attitude aimed at developing and strengthening Polish-Soviet friendship." But this was followed by a picture of his efforts for Polish-Soviet co-operation being exposed to sabotage by "Polish reactionary circles grouped around people of the Matuszewski and Mackiewicz type," of concessions by him to these circles, of the gradual frustration of co-operation between the two Governments, until at last diplomatic relations were suspended: "Noting the tragic death of General Sikorski, one cannot but express regret that his will to consolidate friendship and collaboration between the U.S.S.R. and Poland was able to be broken by circles whose policy had already proved ruinous to pre-war Poland." Since this article was certainly inspired by, if not written in, the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, considerable importance must be attached to the general conclusions arrived at therein. "The Soviet Union, as hitherto, abides by the view that after Hitler's defeat there must exist a strong and independent Poland in Europe. . . . Stalin pointed out that after the war relations between Poland and the U.S.S.R. must be based 'upon a foundation of solid neighbourly good relations and mutual respect, or, should the Polish people so desire, upon a foundation of alliance.' It goes without saying that the realisation of this task presupposes close Polish-Soviet collaboration. Naturally such co-operation is conceivable only with a Polish Government which would realise the immutability of the truth that a strong and independent Polish State cannot be created through a policy hostile to the U.S.S.R. but, on the contrary, only through friendship and alliance with the Soviet Union." The sting, of course, lies in the tail of the article, and, when the author wrote the last sentence, he may have meant that, now that Sikorski was dead, unless the Poles set up a Government which realised the immutability of the truth enunciated above, the essential condition for Soviet co-operation would be absent, and even the conception of a strong independent Poland might have to be abandoned.

While Polish-Soviet diplomatic relations are still interrupted there is likely to be an increase in the activities of the collection of Polish Communists in Moscow, headed by Wanda Wasilewska which are creating the conditions for discord in the future Polish State. Wanda Wasilewska has recently been inspecting the Kosciuszko division in its training camp, after which she announced that serious progress was being made in the training of the division, and that it was intended to swear the personnel in, and to present it with its Colour, on the