

9. In the face of this pressure, the Soviet Government gave way and agreed to the mass evacuation of the Polish forces. Then arose the question of the evacuation of the families of the Polish troops. This led to sarcastic Soviet references to the Polish forces going into battle with cradles. The Poles, however, realised that it would be impossible to maintain the morale of their troops if their wives and children were left behind to face the rigorous conditions of life in the Soviet Union. It became apparent to the Soviet Government, however, that it was the determination of the Polish Government to secure the departure from the Soviet Union of as many as possible of their citizens and this created the suspicion that the Poles were, to say the least, indifferent to the fate of the Soviet Union.

10. Among the Polish forces in the Middle East, one thought appeared to be uppermost at this time. A new Poland had to be built from ruins - a ruined country and a people reduced to destitution. The future of Poland, therefore, depended upon a nucleus being built up outside and from the Polish point of view this was impossible in the Soviet Union. They desperately wanted to get as many Poles as possible outside of the U.S.S.R., feed them, give them medical treatment, teach the children Polish and Polish history and give them religious instruction.

11. Two mass evacuations of Poles from Uzbekistan took place in 1942. The United Kingdom authorities assumed responsibility for the evacuees after they reached Iranian territory. In the first movement during the Spring about 45,000 Poles were evacuated and of this number around 28,000 were military personnel. The second movement took place in the Autumn when some 75,000 Poles were evacuated, of which about half were military personnel. The Polish troops from the Soviet Union were organised from the time of their arrival in Palestine in Polish divisions which ultimately came under United Kingdom command. These Polish divisions are now in Iraq and South-western Iran. The Polish civilians were sent to Kenya and Northern Rhodesia. This movement of Poles from the Soviet Union has now been completed and there are no Polish troops any longer on Soviet soil, although, of course, there are many conscripts in the Red army whom the Polish Government claim to be Polish citizens.

12. It is claimed by the Poles that about 150,000 Polish prisoners of war were taken by the Soviet authorities in 1939. Of these about 12,000 were officers and of these officers nearly 8,000 of the youngest and best have disappeared without a trace. The Soviet Government denies any knowledge of these officers or in some cases say they have been released which is not confirmed by the Polish lists. There are no escapees coming forward to throw light on the situation. The Poles have reason to believe that some of these officers, if still alive, are in Novaya Zemlya and Franz-Josef land.

13. Estimates as to the number of Polish civilians in the Soviet Union vary all the way up to 2,000,000. The Counsellor of the Polish Embassy told members of our Mission that there were still about 600,000 Polish citizens in the Soviet Union and that of this number 300,000 were Poles, 200,000 Jews, while the remainder were Ukrainians, White Russians and Lithuanians. In making this estimate he probably is basing it on the compromise definition of a Polish citizen and is not including those of other than Polish race who were residents of the areas occupied by the Soviet forces in 1939.

14. In accordance with the Soviet-Polish Agreement of July 30th, 1941, the Polish Government set up a relief organisation in the Soviet Union, consisting of eight depots in various parts of the country from which supplies were distributed to Polish citizens by relief officers