

a settlement because they do not wish to stir up United States and United Kingdom opinion by unilateral action. They might be prepared to agree to modifications of their 1939-41 frontier, provided they retain all of the predominantly non-Polish districts. The difficulty of the Polish Government, however, is that they could not retain the support of their present followers if they renounced claims to substantial portions of pre-war Polish territory, particularly such centres of sentimental attachment as Lvov and Vilna. The Czechoslovak Ambassador, who is pro-Soviet and well-informed, told me that General Sikorski's chief difficulty was with the younger officers of the Polish army who are extremely nationalistic and intransigent.

28. While the Soviet claims to the Western Ukraine, Western White Russia and the Vilna district are weak on purely juridical grounds, they have been clever enough not to ask for the restitution of the 1939-41 frontier but for a frontier based on the so-called "Curzon Line". This was a line proposed by Lord Curzon as the basis for a settlement between Poland and Soviet Russia before the war of 1920. The Soviet Government claim that this line was an impartial attempt to fix the boundary between districts inhabited by Poles and those inhabited by non-Poles. Actually the Curzon Line differs only very slightly from the 1939-41 frontier except in the North where it is somewhat more favourable to Poland. Left out of consideration in all this discussion is the question of East Prussia which many feel must be given to Poland if the question of the corridor is not again to arise and which Stalin has already proposed should be given to Poland. Mr. Officer of the Australian Legation is of the view that it might be suggested to the Soviet Government that they be authorised to offer East Prussia to Poland as compensation for the territory desired by the Soviet Union. I doubt, however, if even this would enable the Polish Government to relinquish their claims to Lvov and Vilna.

29. Meanwhile it is feared that if the Polish Government do not enter into a discussion of the frontier question with the Soviet Government the relations between the two governments will become progressively worse. My Swedish colleague, who is well-informed, expresses the view that in this event the Soviet Government will make up its mind to set up eventually a rival Polish Government, which will not necessarily be a communist government but one which will be prepared to cooperate with the Soviet Government in the same manner as the Czechoslovak Government is doing. In his view they probably will not take this step during the war as this would complicate their relations with the other United Nations but will do so as soon as they have cleared the German army from part of Poland.

I have the honour to be Sir, etc.

(Signed) L.D. Wilgress.

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8-5-43