

**POLISH COMMUNIST FOREIGN POLICY 1918-1948:
INTERNATIONALISM AND THE NATIONAL INTEREST**

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ABBREVIATIONS

AK	Armja Krajowa (Home Army, 1942-1945)
CBKP	Centralne Biuro Komunistów Polskich w ZSRR (Central Bureau of Polish Communists in the USSR, 1944)
ECCI	Executive Committee of the Communist International Comintern (1919-1943)
KPD	Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands (German Communist Party, 1918-1946)
KPJ	Komunistička Partija Jugoslavije (Yugoslavian Communist Party 1920-1952)
KPP	Komunistyczna Partia Polski (Polish Communist Party, 1925-1938)
KPRP	Komunistyczna Partia Robotnicza Polski (Polish Communist Workers' Party, 1918-1925)
KRN	Krajowa Rada Narodowa (National Council of the Homeland, 1944-1946)
PKN	Polski Komitet Narodowy (Polish National Committee, 1943)
PKWN	Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego (Polish Committee of National Liberation, 1944)
PPR	Polska Partia Robotnicza (Polish Workers' Party, 1942-1948)
PPS	Polska Partia Socjalistyczna (Polish Socialist Party, 1892-1948)
PPS-Lewica	Polska Partia Socjalistyczna-Lewica (Polish Socialist Party-Left, 1906-1918)
PRL	Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa (Polish People's Republic, 1944-)
PSL	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (Polish Peasant Party, 1895-1947)
PZPR	Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza (Polish United Workers' Party, 1948-)
RKP(b)	Rossiiskaia Kommunisticheskaia Partia (boleshevikov) (Russian Communist Party (bolsheviks), 1918-1925)
RPPS	Robotnicza Partia Polskich Socjalistów (Workers' Party of Polish Socialists, 1943-1945)
SDKPiL	Socjal-Demokracja Królestwa Polskiego i Litwy (Social-Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania, 1898-1918)
SL	Stronnictwo Ludowe (Peasant Party, 1935-1945, 1944-1948)
VKP(b)	Vsesoiuznaia Kommunisticheskaia Partia (bolshevikov) (All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks), 1925-1952)
ZPP	Związek Patriotów Polskich w ZSRR (Union of Polish Patriots in the USSR, 1943-1945)
ZWW	Związek Walki Wyzwoleńczej (Union for the Liberation Battle, 1941)

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In setting out to research and write this thesis, I was influenced most in the direction in which I took by the academics I met in Poland. My time in Poland as a UNESCO Fellow coincided happily with the first year of my research programme. At this early stage my mind had not yet focused on a finite subject within the Polish foreign policy field. Whatever the illusions I had regarding Poland's more or less independent foreign policy, I was soon confronted with a perceptual divide that seemed to leave little room for Western intellectualising. On the one hand, I was advised that Poland's foreign policy was best characterised by its independent initiatives in the area of European security. On the other, I was told that to study Polish foreign policy one should best begin in Moscow. Independent or subservient? Was there a middle ground? If so, what did it consist of? The final decision to go back into the foreign policy history of the Polish communists came from a suggestion by Docent Jerzy Jastrzębski. I would take this opportunity to repay my debt of gratitude to Docent Jastrzębski and to all who discussed these issues with me in Poland. Thanks are also due to Roger Clarke, Georges Tomaszewski and Jim White for their help and encouragement. I am grateful especially to Professor W.V. Wallace, whose steadfast support continued throughout. A very special thanks also to my wife, whose patience gave me the space to write and whose faith lent me the will to finish.

ABSTRACT

In post-war Polish communist foreign policy, of three national interests, two — state security and territorial security — are inextricably linked to the Polish communist internationalist interest — Soviet security. The third — national prestige — gives Polish communist foreign policy a degree of flexibility, but at times of international threat to Soviet security is also subject, to a greater or lesser degree, to the internationalist constraint.

The source of this internationalist/national interest fusion lies in the linkages created between Polish communist foreign policy and Soviet security during the inter-war years and the immediate post-war years to 1948.

From the creation of the Polish Communist Party in 1918, classic Luxemburg internationalism became immediately subordinated to the security of the new Soviet state. The Polish Communist Party was seen to provide a crucial link between the revolutionary new state and the German and wider European socialist revolution. During the Polish-Soviet war of 1920 the internationalism of the Polish Communist Party was transformed into an instrumental relationship dominated by Soviet state security and prestige interests. The Polish Communist Party's reaction was to accept its organisational 'Bolshevisation' as a trade-off for a greater 'national' profile domestically. Subsequently, the Polish Communist Party split between two rival orientations: a 'national' wing, and an 'internationalist' wing with Soviet security

as its priority. In the period up to the party's dissolution in 1938, the security and prestige positions of the 'national' wing were encompassed within the policies of the 'internationalist' wing via the policies of the Third (Communist) International.

The 'national' position in Polish communist foreign policy was given a higher profile with the creation of the Polish Workers' Party in 1942. Patriotism became the basis on which the new party was to operate in war-time Poland. In its foreign policy positions the new party linked the domestic security of the post-war Polish state and its territorial security fundamentally to the issue of Soviet security. Balancing this linkage, the party's patriotic profile encouraged its 'national' elements to emphasise the Polish national prestige element of its policy.

The balance of internationalist and national interests present in Polish Workers' Party foreign policy applied also to the policy programmes of the Polish communists organised in the Soviet Union. Here the 'internationalist' wing of the pre-war party was strongest, and the three elements of the Polish national interest were all presented with significantly greater concern shown to Soviet security interests.

From July 1944, the foreign policy of the new communist regime concerned itself in turn with state security, territorial security and national prestige. On the issue of state security, the internationalist interest dominated, with the focus of policy being to institutionalise and legitimise internationally the new relationship created between the Polish and Soviet states.

The territorial security of the post-war Polish state had already been established prior to the new regime coming to power, on the basis of the clear Soviet security interest in the new Polish borders. Now the role of foreign policy became to institutionalise and legitimise internationally this new territorial status quo.

With the security elements of the post-war Polish national interest settled largely on the basis of the Polish communists' internationalist responsibilities, the 'national' wing of the Polish Workers' Party was encouraged to give Polish national prestige a higher profile. Under the pressure of an increasing Western threat to Soviet and Polish interests in Eastern Europe, however, the Polish regime's balance between security and prestige became subject to the greater internationalist imperative. As a result, the 'internationalist' wing of the party was able to consolidate its power and Polish foreign policy was given a firmly internationalist profile.

1. INTRODUCTION

*The strongest is never strong enough to be always the master
unless he transforms strength into right
and obedience into duty.*

ROUSSEAU

For the past ten years, International Relations specialists in East European communist foreign policy have complained at the lack of comprehensive analytical research being undertaken in the field. Linden in 1979 wrote that there was a 'paucity of studies whose purpose is a systematic, precise, carefully controlled and conceptually guided description of the foreign policies of the states of Eastern Europe'.¹ The same year Mastny described the East European foreign policy research deficit as 'potentially the most consequential of the neglected topics of inquiry'.² According to Mastny, the deficit had implications for the future viability of the comparative communist foreign policy field, the re-assessment of which had sparked off the methodological debate in its East European sub-field in the first place.³

In 1980, Linden followed up his own previous effort to introduce greater conceptual rigour into the discipline with another volume, this time devoted solely to the case for 'methodological pluralism'.⁴ East European foreign policy research needed to be put into 'potentially more generalizable frameworks', Linden wrote.⁵ Included in his plea was the need to utilise the case study approach and not to leave it solely to area studies specialists to develop. The call for a re-evaluation of the case-study had also been made earlier during the general comparative foreign policy debate. Contributing to that debate, Horelick had argued for a rehabilitation of the case-study method: case-studies were the 'building blocks that must provide the

essential data base for purposes of theory building or other generalisations about the foreign policy behaviour even of single states'.⁶ Without a general proliferation of such 'building blocks', little progress could be expected in the larger area of foreign policy comparison.

Analysts of Polish communist foreign policy, not surprisingly, have complained along the same lines. Kanet, for example, wrote that few 'single, general volumes dealing with post-war Polish foreign policy' were available, and that most 'articles on Polish foreign policy tend to cover and update the same material'.⁷ Morrison had earlier made a parallel point:

It is rare to find anything at all written about how Polish foreign policy is made and executed, what the interests, objectives, and perceptions of Polish foreign policy makers really are, or what constitutes the major internal and external foreign policy determinants.⁸

Morrison then proceeded to deal with the problem he had outlined by referring to the 'two major and apparently conflicting interpretations of Polish foreign policy underlying most of the popular journalism about Poland as well as many of the more scholarly works on Polish-Soviet foreign policy' — the 'obedient satellite' theory 'which argues that Poland is still totally subservient to the USSR in foreign affairs'; and the 'independent satellite' theory which postulates 'a course [since 1956] in both foreign and domestic policy that deviates significantly from Soviet preferences'. Morrison's own operational hypothesis was that 'within certain absolute Soviet imposed limits', Polish foreign policy makers since 1956 enjoy 'considerable room... for manouever and experimentation', far more than had in fact been attempted. Internal determinants were as important as external determinants in explaining the failure to deviate more from the Soviet line.⁹

Morrison did not give any more attention to what the 'absolute Soviet-imposed limits' might be in his 'rough and tentative outline' of the internal and external determinants of Polish foreign policy. The 'interests, objectives and perceptions of Polish foreign policy makers' he also left to others with the comment that by discovering what these intangibles were, 'some meaningful basis' would have been established for assessing 'the degree of Polish independence'.

No lack of foreign policy research exists in Poland itself. If more Western analysts availed themselves of this work, and the comparable work in the other East European states, the much lamented deficit in Western research might soon be overcome. Perhaps the reluctance of Western analysts to tap these sources can be explained by the commitment East European foreign policy makers and analysts profess to the principles and practice of Marxist methodology. This is unfortunate, since it is in these principles and this practice that the general theory of East European foreign policy is imbedded.

In focusing their attention on the degree to which national imperatives, whether domestic or external, are expressed in the foreign policies of the East European communist states, Western scholars inevitably commit the 'independence' factor to continually oscillate according to current or individual attitudes toward the 'satellite' theory. The unchanging ideological framework within which these national imperatives have been so far expressed is given little if any attention.

The better established field of Soviet foreign policy research offers some clues as to why Western scholars of East European foreign policy have been so reluctant to venture into general theory building. Considerable disagreement still exists as to the influence of either ideology or the national interest on Soviet foreign policy. On the one

hand are analysts who consider that the theories of scientific Marxism form the overwhelming impetus for Soviet foreign policy. Ra'anani, for example, claims to typify 'analysts of Soviet affairs [who] find their patience tested when asked for the n'th time just why should Soviet leaders be acting as they are at the moment'. In reply, he expounds the view that the concept of the dialectic can explain all Soviet foreign policy both as the framework within which the elite perceives the international environment, and as the imperative that motivates their actions.¹⁰

At the other extreme are those who argue that *Realpolitik* in Soviet foreign policy has largely overtaken any ideological scruples. Zimmerman, for example, sees the 'maintenance of *élan* domestically through the retention of doctrinal purity internationally' as having been 'consistently sacrificed to the aspiration to pursue foreign policy goals rationally and efficiently'.¹¹ National interests are the motivating force of Soviet foreign policy for this school. Dallin writes that the difference between the global activities of the Soviet Politburo and the more limited activities of the Romanovs can be explained exclusively by the Soviet Union's greater military and economic might.¹² Gerner adds some detail to this argument, explaining that Russian elites have always defined the foreign policy of their state in terms of dominance and surveillance of weak neighbours — the precedent being the incorporation of the Kazan Khanate into Russia in 1552, and of isolationist peaceful coexistence with strong empires — the precedent here being the relationship with Manchu China in the eighteenth century.¹³

The school that straddles both these extremes is represented by Bialer for whom ideology and the national interest are 'inseparable... entwined... blended in the minds of the people who make policy...

[and] cannot be separated when analyzing the elite's intentions and actions'.¹⁴ Ulam provides perhaps the best Soviet foreign policy history of this school, writing of the 'unconscious Russian nationalism' imbedded within 'the internationalist and socialist phraseology of the Bolsheviks', of the deep realism of Lenin and *Realpolitik* of Stalin.¹⁵

Little disagreement exists in the work of Polish analysts as to the dominant element in their country's foreign policy. Their research adheres closely to what is called 'the Marxist commitment of the social sciences'.¹⁶ In his review of foreign policy literature published in Poland since the war, Szczepański confirms that 'a great majority of writers' in the area of Polish foreign policy 'accepts the Marxist interpretation'. These writers, Szczepański continues, 'explicitly reject all positivist trends and ideals of "pure science" in their description and explanation of the essence of Polish foreign policy'.¹⁷ The 'essence' Szczepański refers to, he describes as the 'supreme, most important aim' of Polish foreign policy: 'to react to the outside world in a manner which would assure security and good conditions of life to the Polish nation, and promote the development of socialism'. This aim, he continues, has been enshrined in Article 6 of the Polish Constitution. 'It is characteristic', Szczepański added in a footnote, 'that an identical aim was formulated as fundamental in the USSR Constitution (Art. 29, 30)'.¹⁸

Poland's modern foreign policy is based firmly on the political 'turn' made after the war by the state's new leaders. This fact is emphasised in all basic treatments of Polish foreign policy by practitioners and theorists alike.¹⁹ The evident banality in such an acknowledgement makes it no less critical as the basis from which to begin an analysis of post-war Polish foreign policy. Poland's foreign

policy is not only concerned with maximising the nation's unchanging interests. National interests, of course, are the currency of international relations; but in the Polish case, they build on a political 'turn' in place now for forty years. How does this 'turn' impact on the manner in which modern Poland pursues its national interests through its foreign policy?

Rychłowski writes that Poland's national interests 'are conditioned' by 'the interests of the main social classes and the geopolitical situation in which these interests are being realised'.²⁰ De-coding this statement, one is left with the assertion that Polish national interests are determined via the theoretical communist working class interest and the reality of Soviet influence in Poland. In his preface to the first volume of *Historia dyplomacji polskiej* (The History of Polish Diplomacy), Polish Foreign Minister Olszowski makes this assertion explicit: Poland's 'entire foreign policy serves the working peoples, and especially the working class, which has acknowledged the overall national interest to be its greatest priority'.²¹ So the precedence of class interests over national interests provides an overt linkage informing the 'essence' of Polish foreign policy.

The result has been to distance Polish policy makers and analysts from the mass population which considers 'great politics' as having little indigenous content, and what content there is, as targeted at maintaining the security of the regime rather than the welfare of the population. Foreign policy rationalisations in book form remain unbought by the public at large. Instead, the general view has tended toward the opposite extreme, seeing in Polish foreign policy little more than an extension of Soviet foreign policy. According to the 'Experience and Future' survey of contemporary Polish attitudes

carried out in 1979, the Polish public saw 'a deep contradiction between the interests of Poland and the present configuration of international relations, between the interests of the outside world and our own national interests'. One of the respondents to the survey wrote: 'The awareness of limited national sovereignty... the doctrine expressed in the article of the Polish Constitution that treats our alliance and friendship with the USSR as a guaranteed political duty of Poland, weighs painfully (more or less so depending on people and circumstances) on the civic attitudes of the Poles'.²²

Within this credibility gap, however, lies an area of common ground set firmly in Poland's historical foreign policy dilemmas. Non-communist Poles of the Realist school accept, for example, that advantages can and do accrue to the contemporary national Polish state through its participation in the Soviet alliance's promotion of collective security in Europe.²³ They regard the imperative of Poland's *Primat der Aussenpolitik*, which looks to the environmental advantages to be gained by continuing the domestic status quo, as perforce the Poles' political priority.²⁴ At their most general, official commentators on Polish foreign policy also express the overarching goal of Polish foreign policy to be the political and territorial integrity of the state, and to provide the external conditions for it 'to realize its social, economic, and cultural-civilizational aspirations'.²⁵

Polish foreign policy, then, is neither wholly ideological nor national, but a complex fusion of both elements. This fusion lends its support to the arguments of both the state officials who, with a touch of bravado, define the state's policy in terms of its independent national initiatives, and the Polish opposition and wider public who, in their hostility, tend to see this policy as the outcome solely of

Soviet interests. At the same time, official analysts understand well the ideological interest that permeates their work, and the opposition and public have no choice but to acknowledge those aspects of the national interest that the state by nature defends. The degree to which this fusion is either accepted or supported depends on the political viewpoint of the interested party.

But in Western studies of Polish foreign policy, the interaction of ideological and national interests seems to have been excluded altogether. The few studies of any type relating to post-war Polish foreign policy put their emphasis instead on the limitations to Polish (and other East European) foreign policy imposed by the national and ideological interests of the Soviet Union.²⁶ It is my belief that these limitations are indeed fundamental. It is also my belief that by viewing these limitations outside a wider Polish historical context they can easily become distorted; further, by viewing them outside the prism of the Polish policy makers' own national and ideological perceptions and interests their impact can often be seriously misplaced.

Communism in its traditional Marxist sense, as Demaitre points out, is 'universalistic-international', whereas an appreciation of national worth implies an exclusivity in cultural terms.²⁷ Whatever the theoretical implications inherent in the classic understanding of these two concepts, their fusion became inevitable from the time that communism became a state strategy rather than the organisational inspiration of a revolutionary political party. Well before the Bolshevik Party took power in Russia, the existence of the national/international dualism of communism had become the cause of a fundamental split among two of the leaders of the Second (Socialist) International — Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg. Under Lenin's leadership,

the Bolshevik *coup* was followed very quickly by state consolidation. Outside the Soviet state, however, internationalism remained the slogan for all communist parties, now sections of a Third (Communist) International with its base in Moscow — the Comintern. The 'cardinal point of faith' was that any policy that was 'a necessity from the standpoint of Soviet Russia', was also 'a necessity from the standpoint of the world revolution'.²⁰

The Polish Section of the Comintern, physically close to the Bolshevik leadership, was split by the obvious dichotomy in Soviet strategy. One wing saw national consolidation on the model of the Bolsheviks in Russia as the practical model to follow even if still in opposition. The other held to the tenets of revolutionary internationalism demanded by the Comintern. With the gradual consolidation of Stalin's power in the Soviet Politburo, this latter wing was consistently favoured. The strength of the Polish 'internationalists' lay not in their ideological integrity, however. Rather, they were favoured because of a possible weak link in Soviet security from a nationally inclined Polish Communist Party. Poland had lost none of its inherent geo-strategic value for the new leaders of the Soviet state. Just as it had been the route into Russia for the invading armies of Napoleon and the Kaiser, so now it was also the bastion of Western 'imperialism' and conversely, the revolutionary bridge between Bolshevik Russia and socialist Germany. From this perspective, a Polish Section of the Comintern with national interests as its priority would by nature be less than revolutionary and instead would pose a potential threat to Soviet ideological authority. With the increasing threat to Soviet security from the rise of the fascist movement in Europe, the Soviet insistence on revolutionary tactics among the Comintern's sections receded. In the Polish case, this did

not result in the 'national' leadership regaining its authority; leaders loyal to Stalin were instead able to further consolidate their power. Eventually, the Polish Section of the Comintern was done away with altogether.

The culmination of Stalin's brand of *Realpolitik* came with the onset of the first war involving the Soviet state under his leadership. Following the German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941, Stalin sought to utilise a particularly high profile Russian patriotism in an attempt to galvanise the country behind him. An expression of this was also the re-creation of the Polish party along patriotic lines; the Polish national interest now became the preoccupation of the Polish communists. At the same time, in place of an 'unconscious nationalism', a very conscious internationalism came into play in Polish communist policies. The form of the national/internationalist duality internalised in Polish communism through the inter-war years now showed its real value for Soviet security.

Ever since the Second World War and the 'turn' in Polish politics, the official Polish foreign policy position has been that only the communists, represented in the Polish United Workers' Party, are able to guarantee Poland's geo-political stability — its territorial security in the face of a constant threat from German revanchism, and state security in view of the acknowledged possibility of greater Soviet interference. In all of Poland's post-war political crises, this point has been the bottom line of the domestic debate, the cut-off point beyond which internal opposition could not go.²⁹ It has been labelled by the Polish United Workers' Party Poland's *racja stanu*. Without the communists in power, the argument goes, Poland would lose the guarantee that ensures the country's current position in Europe. In other words, the national form of the Polish state depends vitally

on its ideological content. This argument results in the Polish communists claiming a monopoly on foreign policy realism, a tautology which has in turn played a crucial post-war role in defining the communist regime's political legitimacy.³⁰

The issue for the analyst interested in the linkages between ideology and the national interest in Polish communist foreign policy can no longer, therefore, be the question of whether or not the linkage exists, in the way that the debate regarding the Soviet linkage has been shaped, but *why* does it exist and *how* does it operate.

The thesis of this analysis is that the source of the particular internationalist/national interest linkage operating in post-war Polish foreign policy lies in the linkages created between Polish communist foreign policy and the Soviet security interest during the formative years of the Polish Communist Party, and the formative years of the post-war Polish state. As a result of this formative experience, in post-war Polish communist foreign policy, of the three principal national interests, two — state security and territorial security — are inextricably linked to the Polish communist internationalist interest, ie. Soviet security. The third — national prestige — gives Polish communist foreign policy a degree of national flexibility, but at times of international threat to Soviet security is also subject, to a greater or lesser extent, to the internationalist constraint.

State security, territorial security, and national prestige are defined as Poland's core national interests for the purposes of this study. State security is an imperative second to none in a country which for over a century disappeared from the European state system. Unremarkably, with the re-creation of the Polish national state in

1918, the emphasis given to the concept of 'state' by the new national Polish regime was overwhelming. In 1926, following a coup led by Marshall Pilsudski, the new military *Sanacja* regime made state 'health' its goal. Poland's *racja stanu* was established as the doctrine that justified all domestic and international measures taken in its name. The security of the Polish political entity became one of the highest values of the new political order.

Even before its loss of political identity, Poland was never allowed to accept its territorial identity as granted. With few clear geographical frontiers, the country has had historically to rely on the internal strength of its political regime and its identification with outside powers to ensure its territorial security. Security was also commonly sought through expansion. With expansion went contraction, with the result that Polish foreign policy became vitally sensitive to any threat to the territorial status quo.

Poland's historical efforts to defend its political and geographical identity were matched by the country's search for a national identity. Polish nationality took on a new and politically charged significance during the period of partition from 1795 to 1918. This blow to the nation's prestige, fuelled by the consciousness of Poland's greatness in the sixteenth century, resulted in an intense patriotism that became the driving force of Polish nationalism. In the inter-war period, as result of the experience of partition, socialist as well as nationalist leaders understood Polish prestige to be firmly based on the country's national independence since only true independence could provide the country with a satisfactory national identity.

These three national interests have continued to inform the foreign policy of the post-war Polish state. I have already referred to the

role of the political and territorial security interests united in the contemporary version of the Polish *racja stanu*. I have also implied that Polish prestige continues to be considered in terms of an independent contribution to the issues of most importance to the country's foreign policy — European peace and security. Polish policy makers are understandably proud of the Polish initiatives in forums such as the United Nations and Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

In general, security and prestige form the two sides of the coin of statecraft. They are determined in their parameters by the physical and national constants in a given state. But they are also influenced by political change, by the ideological interpretation of a given political regime at a give time. I have called the result of this interpretation process the foreign policy 'climate'. The policy climate commonly associates both sets of interests in order to legitimize the regime's ideological interest as basic to the state's national interests. Domestic and/or international legitimacy is sought in this manner. The Polish post-war regime, as I have mentioned, regards the security of the Polish state as synonymous with its own security; Poland's territorial security can only be guaranteed through the regime's continued viability; and Poland's prestige abroad depends on the community of interests in the fraternal Soviet alliance and the room left Poland to manouver within that alliance.

The ideological interest as it applies to Polish communist foreign policy is taken for the purposes of this study to be defined by the concept of 'internationalism'. During its period of opposition, internationalism formed the greatest single ideological interest of the Polish Communist Party's foreign policy. This opposition period can be split into two phases. The first phase lasting from 1918 until

1941, when the party was illegal and proscribed, is described in chapters two and three. Internationalism moved in this initial period from a focus on the Luxemburg interpretation, through an intimate identification with the Bolshevik Russian Communist Party, followed by a political re-evaluation based on Polish national interests, and finally, over a period of years as described in chapter three, to an instrumental dependence on the Soviet party for policy and tactics.

The second phase of opposition began with the creation of the Polish Workers' Party in 1942, when the internationalist relationship created prior to the war was fused with the three core Polish national interests. The new party took as its *raison d'être* the national struggle against Germany and an internationalist, ie. Soviet option for national Polish politics in the period after the war. The foreign policy of the newly created Polish Workers' Party forms the subject of chapter four.

Polish Workers' Party foreign policy was complemented by the policies of the Polish communists gathered in the Soviet Union, the subject of chapter five. Here also national interests were given a high profile as the Poles prepared to march with their newly formed army back into Poland. Like the Polish Workers' Party, these future Polish leaders needed to present a credible political alternative to the establishment foreign policies of the pre-war regime. The internationalist interest as seen from Moscow was being established in as non-provocative a manner as possible.

Chapters six, seven and eight deal in turn with state security, territorial security and national prestige. Chapter nine returns to the internationalist interest. It has been possible to arrange the chapters in this way, since while overlapping to a certain extent, the national and ideological interests took on a heightened profile in

succession.

From the creation of the Polish Committee of National Liberation in July 1944, the foreign policy priority of the new regime became international recognition of the relationship between regime security and Polish state security. The establishment of a communist regime was not to be an easy task considering the popular Polish understanding of the communist ideological interest. Crucial to the success of this venture, therefore, was international recognition of the way the new regime interpreted its security interest: Poland's right to state security on the basis of a close alliance with the Soviet Union, a guarantee able to be delivered only by the Polish Committee of National Liberation.

State security was matched with territorial security and the regime's next most important foreign policy goal — international recognition of Poland's new borders. By the time the new regime had come to power Poland's borders had already been determined. From the regime's point of view, the process of this determination highlighted the practical interaction of the internationalist interest and national territorial interest. Once in power, this new territorial reality, like state security, had to be confirmed both domestically and internationally. Toward this end, a wider political base for the regime's territorial policies was ensured by the support of the non-communist aligned Polish Peasant Party.

With its security enhanced, the regime began to look to its national prestige. Here it sought the opportunity to balance the internationalist interest with a greater role for traditional Polish national independence. Poland was to find its 'own road to socialism'; it would trade with the West on a pragmatic basis; it would establish itself as an economic power to counter Germany's potential industrial

strength; and it would play a leading role in ensuring a Slavic defence from future German aggression. All these goals were intended to give Poland a socialist voice in the post-war European state system, but independent nonetheless.

Domestic and external factors soon combined to undermine this balance. In chapter nine, the final two years of the study — 1947 and 1948 — are profiled. As well as their security, Polish policy makers were increasingly identifying the prestige of the new state with internationalism. The interpretation process took on a highly charged ideological approach reminiscent of the earlier Polish Communist Party period of opposition. Domestically, this trend was the result of the communist regime's consolidation. Internationally, it was the outcome of the ideological hostility generated by the conflict in national interests between the USSR and the Western allies. The change in the foreign policy climate of the Polish regime is readily observable in the foreign policies of the Polish Workers' Party's socialist ally, the Polish Socialist Party, which prior to the two parties' amalgamation in December 1948, moved from seeking an independent policy role for itself to accepting unquestioningly the internationalist commitment of the Polish Workers' Party. The climate change is also observable in the increasing prominence of the 'internationalist' wing of the Polish Workers' Party which oversaw amalgamation with the Polish Socialist Party.

Interpretation takes place not only in the private perceptions and policy councils of a regime's leaders. Just as importantly, interpretation takes place in the public eye. Only public interpretation of national interests will generate the broad policy climate suitable for regime legitimization domestically and internationally; and only widespread public interpretation will create

a sufficiently comprehensive policy climate for the regime to be able to influence the degree of popular legitimacy afforded other regimes and states.

Public perceptions, for the purposes of this study, are those officially stated in order to justify policy in the public arena. They may or may not coincide with private perceptions. Private perceptions reveal the personal views of a given policy maker; public perceptions reflect the public interpretation process. Public perceptions can be identified in policy speeches, parliamentary debates, political commentary and the political press. All these sources enable a comprehensive picture of a regime foreign policy climate to be built up, and of the change and/or continuity in that climate over time.

For this study I have gone to the political press of the period and the parliamentary protocols of the communist-aligned Polish Assembly from 1944 to 1946, and Polish Parliament (Sejm) for 1947 and 1948. I have also relied on collections of leaders' speeches and on documentary sources in later Polish publications. The best documentary sources publicly available are the collections contained in *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego* (Archive of the Workers' Movement) published by the Central Archives of the Polish United Workers' Party Central Committee, and *Z Pola Walki* (From the Battlefield) published by the Party Historical Department of the Central Committee. Other collections of documents have regularly appeared since the communist regime came to power. All these primary sources have been most useful for the period from the establishment of the Polish Workers' Party in 1942.

For the period of Polish Communist Party opposition, I have had to rely rather more heavily on secondary sources.²¹ This period spans some twenty-four years as opposed to the two years of war-time

opposition and four years of the regime in power. It was, therefore, not possible to treat it as comprehensively. What I have sought to establish in chapters two and three is the ideological interest that has dominated communist foreign policy in opposition and the way this interest changed over time to produce the form which came to dominate in the immediate post-war period.

In both primary and secondary sources the issue of credibility arises. The Polish Peasant Party press especially was heavily censored during the period of its independent operation. In Polish library collections entire issues of these series are not available. Parliamentary protocols were also censored to remove remarks considered to be politically damaging. Collections of speeches that have been published are to this day not complete, and have often been edited to reflect the appropriate sentiments. Collections of source documents are also intended to contribute to the reinforcement of the official view of Polish foreign policy in the immediate post-war period.

But the situation is far from hopeless. The fact that parliamentary protocols or collections of documents and speeches may have been edited does not diminish their validity for the study proposed here. Unless this editing has changed the entire sense of what was said by the policy maker, the printed word continues to hold a valuable indication of the ideological interpretation given a particular national interest. What is at issue here is the overall policy climate created by public perceptions taken across the regime and across time.

Also helping to overcome the credibility issue are primary sources published outside Poland. Of most help here have been the *Zeszyty Historyczne* (Historical Series) published by the Literary Institute in Paris. Taken in tandem with the documentary evidence available in

Poland, external primary sources give even greater weight to the regime's interpretation of national interests. Many of these sources, intended as condemnation of the ideological interest exhibited by the post-war regime, in fact highlight the process that is the focus of this study.

Secondary sources are also subject to a credibility test. It is clear that works published officially in Poland suffer from having to reflect the institutionalised foreign policy interpretation.³² But from the methodological viewpoint of this study, this suggests only that the contemporary policy climate and how it reflects the climate of forty years past is worthy of attention and research for its own sake. For my purposes, these types of sources are valuable guides as to the intentions and perceptions behind regime policy in the earlier period, often still informing Polish foreign policy to this day.

Works published unofficially in Poland and later in the West do not deal with Polish foreign policy as such. In taking in the early post-war period they do, on the other hand, consider the international conditions surrounding the birth of the post-war regime. These works are often well researched and documented, and form a valuable addition to the history of the communist regime. Their status as unofficial works normally implies they have an anti-regime bias. Where this is the case, the position of prosecutor can be highly informative regarding those areas of official policy deemed unsuitable for the public debate.³³ Western studies that focus on the early post-war years of the Polish communist regime provide a similar general review of the international situation. Other works devoted to Poland's international relations of this period focus normally on the Polish issue in the foreign policies of the great powers and take as their cut-off point the end of the Second World War.³⁴ These secondary

sources are most useful as reference sources and background material on the attitudes and perceptions of outside parties reacting to the foreign policy climate being formed within Poland. On Polish communist foreign policy itself, nothing substantial has been written at all. The following study is an attempt to rectify this large gap in communist foreign policy research.

Finally, a word on the use of Polish names. Where names have common English spellings, I have used these. Examples are Warsaw, Cracow, Silesia and Rosa Luxemburg. Otherwise, I have used the Polish spelling throughout.

Notes

1. R.H. Linden, *Bear and Foxes: The International Relations of the East European States 1965-1969*, East European Monographs, Boulder, Colorado, 1979, p.2.
2. V. Mastny, 'East European studies at a crossroads', *Problems of Communism*, 28 (3), May-June 1979, p.60.
3. See Peter Berton, Charles Gati, *Symposium on the Comparative Study of Communist Foreign Policies*, Los Angeles, University of Southern California Press, 1975.
4. R.H. Linden (ed.), *The Foreign Policies of East Europe: New Approaches*, New York, Praeger, 1980.
5. R.H. Linden, 'Foreign policy studies and East Europe', in *The Foreign Policies of East Europe*, p.3.
6. Arnold Horelick, 'Does the comparative approach merit high priority', in Berton & Gati, p.39.
7. R.E. Kanet, 'Research on East European foreign policy: Other needs, other areas, new directions', in *The Foreign Policies of East Europe*, p.313.
8. James Morrison, 'The foreign policy of Poland', in James Kuhlman (ed.), *The Foreign Policies of Eastern Europe: Domestic and International Determinants*, Sijthoff, 1978, p.129.
9. Morrison, pp.130-1.
10. Uri Ra'anana, 'Soviet decision-making and International Relations', *Problems of Communism*, 29 (6), November-December 1980, p.41.
11. William Zimmerman, 'Elite perspectives and the explanation of Soviet foreign policy', in E.P. Hoffman, F.J. Fleron (eds.), *The Conduct of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Chicago, Aldine-Atherton, 1971, p.28.
12. A. Dallin (ed.), *Soviet Conduct in World Affairs*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1960, p.190.
13. K. Gerner, 'Kazan and Manchu: Cultural roots of Soviet foreign policy', *Cooperation and Conflict*, 15 (2), 1980, pp.57-70.

14. Seweryn Bialer, *The Domestic Context of Soviet Foreign Policy*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1981, p.429. Most analysts of Soviet foreign policy fall within this category. Aspaturian, for example, writes that an analysis of Soviet national interests without taking into account ideology 'no matter how superficially attractive it may appear to be as a useful analytical tool, ruptures the image of Soviet reality and results in the calculation of Soviet foreign policy on the basis of false assumptions. V.V. Aspaturian, *Process and Power in Soviet Foreign Policy*, Boston, Little & Brown, 1971, p.333. In the wider area of communist foreign policy, the ideology/national interest fusion school also dominates. Hans Adomeit, for example, accepts that ideology as well as the national interest plays a role in shaping foreign policy goals, priorities and tactics and influences elite perceptions regarding the external environment. See H. Adomeit, R. Boardman (eds.), *Foreign Policy in Communist Countries: A Comparative Approach*, New York, Praeger, 1979, p.155.

15. Adam Ulam, *Expansion and Coexistence*, New York, Praeger, 1968, pp.60,79,144.

16. For a discussion of this point see Waldemar Szczepański, 'Research on foreign policy conducted by the Polish People's Republic', *Polish Political Science*, 12, 1982, p.135. A good example of this method may be found in the three volumes of *Historia dyplomacji polskiej* published by Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe. See also Mieczysław Rakowski, *Polityka zagraniczna PRL*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1974; and Eugeniusz Gajda, *Polska polityka zagraniczna 1944-1974. Podstawowe problemy*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1974.

17. Szczepański, pp.138-9.

18. Szczepański, pp.146-7.

19. Some more recent examples are Sławomir Dąbrowa, 'Bilans czterdziestolecia polityki zagranicznej Polski Ludowej', in *Polityka zagraniczna Polski Ludowej 1944-1984*, Warszawa, Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych, 1986, pp.6-9; Wojciech Multan, *The Foreign Policy of People's Poland*, Warsaw, Polish Interpress Agency, 1984, pp.3-5; and Stefan Olszowski, 'Poland's foreign policy (40th anniversary of the Polish People's Republic)', *International Affairs* (Moscow), 8, 1984, p.9.

20. Bogumił Rychłowski, 'Goals and determinants of Polish foreign policy', *International Relations: Studies of the PISM*, 1 (1), 1984, p.48.

21. *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, tom I. Połowa X wieku-1572, Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1980, p.5.

22. *Poland Today: The State of the Republic*, compiled by the 'Experience and Future' Discussion Group, Armonk, New York, M.E. Sharpe, 1981, pp.102-4.

23. See for example Andrzej Micewski, 'Polish foreign policy. Historical perspectives', in A. Bromke, J.W. Strong (eds.), *Gierek's Poland*, New York, Praeger, 1973, p.191.

24. See Adam Bromke, *The Meaning and Uses of Polish History*, East European Monographs, Boulder, Colorado, 1987, for an expression of this point.

25. Rychłowski, p.48.

26. The best example of this is the standard work of Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Soviet Bloc: Unity and Conflict*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1967. See also R.W. Dean, 'Foreign policy perspectives and European security: Poland and Czechoslovakia', in R.R. King, R.W. Dean (eds.), *East European Perspectives on European Security and Cooperation*, New York, Praeger, 1974, pp.118-50. Two more recent works taking the same approach are Peter Summerscale, *The East European Predicament: Changing Patterns in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Rumania*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Aldershot, Gower Publishing Co., 1982, and A.R. Rachwald, *Poland Between the Superpowers: Security vs Economic Recovery*, Boulder, Colorado, Westview Press, 1983.

27. Edmund Demaitre, 'The origins of national communism', *Studies in Comparative Communism*, 2 (1), January 1969, p.1.

28. Ulam, p.135.

29. See Andrzej Szczypiorski, 'The limits of political realism', *Survey*, 24 (4), Autumn 1979, pp.22-3, for a discussion of this point.

30. For the historical context of Realist legitimacy in Polish politics, see Bromke, *The Meaning and Uses of Polish History*.

31. Most Polish works on the KPP avoid controversy by citing extensively from the party's policy programmes. I have avoided having to go back into the documentation of this period by using these citations where applicable.

32. The best example of this has been the copious work produced by Włodzimierz T. Kowalski, until recently head of the Polish Institute of International Affairs' History Department.

33. An excellent and the most recent example is Krystyna Kersten's *Narodziny systemu władzy. Polska 1943-1948*, Paris, Libella, 1986.

34. Good general background of this sort is provided by Jan Karski, *The Great Powers and Poland, 1919-1945. From Versailles to Jalta*, Lanham, Maryland, 1985. An earlier work in the same genre is E. Rozek, *Allied Wartime Diplomacy. A Pattern in Poland*, New York, John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1958. See also Antony Polonsky and Bolesław Drukier, *The Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980, and John Coutouvidis & Jaime Reynolds, *Poland 1939-1947*, Leicester University Press, 1986, for two good Western reports on the early years of the Polish communist state including (in the former) translated documentary material.

2. INTERNATIONALISM IN OPPOSITION

1918-1929

In the period prior to the dissolution of the Polish Communist Party (KPP) in 1938, the foreign policy climate generated by the party's policies moved from an initial position of radical internationalism, through dependence on the Red Army, to a greater regard for Polish national interests, back to radicalism and finally, prior to its dissolution, national interests once again. The reasons for this development lay in the close linkages between the KPP as a section of the Comintern and the Russian Communist Party (RKP(b)), and in the particular role the Polish party played in the internationalist policies of the Comintern and Russian party. Following the first period in which national interests were given a higher profile, the leadership of the Polish party split between a 'national' wing and an 'internationalist' wing. Throughout the later period, the 'internationalist' wing either shared power with the 'national' wing, or dominated the party outright. It entrenched in the party's foreign policy the tenet of internationalist duty which required all communist parties as Comintern sections to defend the security of the Soviet Union. Through the various changes in Comintern policy, all having an immediate influence on the policy climate presented by the KPP, this tenet continued to dominate KPP foreign policy. The final Comintern change in policy prior to the KPP's dissolution saw the 'internationalist' wing inherit the 'national' policy climate of its rivals in the party leadership.

As revolutionaries in the same imperial state and united in the Second (Socialist) International, the Russian and Polish social-democratic parties had maintained intimate links for some time prior

to the Russian Revolution. These links were symbolised by the internationalist theories of Rosa Luxemburg, particularly that of 'organic incorporation'.¹ The links did not loosen with the creation of the independent Polish state in 1918. Thanks to the Polish party's illegality, they remained strong throughout the inter-war period, perhaps stronger than any other two parties in the Comintern. Along with the other sections, the Polish party followed all the various tactical changes signalled from the Comintern, in its turn influenced by the factional infighting in the RKP(b) Central Committee.

After the death of Lenin, the dominant figure in the RKP(b) became Stalin. Stalin's concern for the internal and external security of the 'proletarian dictatorship' heightened the attention paid to Soviet security in the policies of the Comintern. The effect this had on the Polish party, strategically vital to the security of the Soviet state, was to subject it to the same extreme methods being used by Stalin within the Soviet Union. In 1938, the KPP was declared by Stalin to be 'infected' with 'Trotskyism' and an 'agency' of Polish and German military intelligence. It was dissolved and the majority of its leaders purged. Less than a year later, Stalin concluded a pact of non-aggression with Nazi Germany over the centre of Poland.

The German invasion of the Soviet Union in June 1941 brought a reversal in the fortunes of the Polish communists; steps were taken in the Soviet Union to re-create the Polish party. This time, however, it was not to admit to its communist motivation and would deny any internationalist pretensions or Comintern links. The Polish Workers' Party (PPR) would be instead overtly nationalist, evolutionary and realistic. Polish national interests would be the principal items on its foreign policy agenda. The PPR represented a direct continuation of the final period of KPP foreign policy — the fusion of the

'internationalist' wing of the party with the 'national' policy position — the outcome of a long period of direct Soviet influence and strategic interest in the Polish party.

2.1 Proletarian Internationalism

The KPP was born from the fusion of two Polish Marxist parties, the Social-Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland and Lithuania (SDKPiL), and the revolutionary wing of the Polish Socialist Party (PPS-Lewica). Prior to the Russian Revolution, the German based SDKPiL Central Committee of Luxemburg, Leo Jogiches, Julian Marchlewski and Adolf Warski had maintained a position independent of both the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. What were called the 'splitters', Feliks Dzierżyński, Karol Radek and Józef Unszlicht, had been much closer to Lenin and the Bolsheviks.² These groups came together during the events of the February revolution and in the spirit of proletarian internationalism gave the Bolshevik's their full support. After the revolution, many of the SDKPiL leaders remained with the Bolsheviks, becoming high ranking members of the new Soviet state (Dzierżyński, Radek, Unszlicht, Marchlewski).

The PPS-Lewica, in contrast, came from the Polish Socialist Party (PPS) tradition of Polish independence. It was led by intellectuals such as Feliks Kon, Henryk Walecki and Maria Koszutska, who had rejected the mainstream PPS maxim of independence with socialism, and the insurrectionary practice of PPS leaders such as Józef Piłsudski. Instead, the PPS-Lewica advocated a strategy of working through the bourgeois representative institutions and cooperative fronts with other non-Marxist parties toward a social revolution first and

foremost. Its move toward Marxist proletarian internationalism brought it close to the SDKPiL, but its support in the Russian Revolution went initially to the Left Mensheviks with whom it had most in common.

In the final analysis, any policy or tactical differences between the two parties lost their significance as the Bolshevik victory in Russia gave them the incentive to unite in a joint struggle for a 'dictatorship of the proletariat' in Poland.³ Their next priority was complete internationalist support for the world's first socialist state in its fight with counter-revolution. This was intended to be more than a simple consolidation of the socialist regime within Russia. Internationalist support meant working for the revolution in Poland, for Poland to be part of the borderless international proletarian revolution. Far more important at this stage than the needs of any one national working class was the fight for working class power in Europe as a whole.⁴

The SDKPiL and PPS-Lewica continued to be influenced as much by Western revolutionary theory, especially German Marxism and the *Communist Manifesto* ('Workers do not have a fatherland'), as by Russian revolutionary practice. Luxemburg did not spare the Bolsheviks her criticism. Their revolution was fatally flawed in her view; Bolshevik policies on the nationality, agrarian and organisational questions, as well as the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty were all badly determined and even worse in their execution. Similarly for the leaders of the PPS-Lewica, Bolshevik revolutionary practice certainly did not present the ideal model for the proletarian revolution. In August 1918, Koszutska had this to say:

We do not accuse the Bolsheviks of the fact that they agreed to rule in a country in which the majority is represented by the peasantry, but that they have based their rule on their armed might without clearly seeing the dangers tied to this and have established terror and force as their system of government not only in regard to the bourgeoisie, but often also in areas where

only the force of ideology should have been victorious.⁵

In Moscow in October 1918, an SDKPiL delegate to a 'Conference of Communist Organisations and Parties of the Occupied Territories' (Poland, Ukraine, Bielorussia, Finland, Lithuania, Estonia and Latvia) called by Stalin in his capacity as People's Commissar for Nationality Affairs, made the following observation: 'There cannot be direction from the side of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party since it is not competent in local affairs'. The Polish communists, he went on, would be coordinating their activity only with the German revolutionary movement (Spartacists) and with Rosa Luxemburg. The issue being debated was whether workers' and peasants' councils should be introduced into Poland. Much of the SDKPiL and PPS-Lewica opinion was not at all in favour of this proposal, regarding the councils as 'Russian creations', the result of the Russian 'peasant revolution' and not compatible with the more developed Polish and European conditions.⁶ Following the conference, however, the Polish delegates were given instructions by a group of Polish communists in Moscow to proceed with the councils in spite of the 'opportunists' from the Warsaw based Central Office of the SDKPiL and Central Workers' Committee of the PPS-Lewica. These 'opportunists' were soon in full agreement with the instructions from Moscow following what they believed to be the outbreak of the proletarian revolution in Germany in November which saw the Hohenzollern monarchy overthrown with the help of the German workers' soviets.⁷

At the Unification Congress of the two parties on 16 December 1918, the newly created Polish Communist Workers' Party (KPRP)⁸ identified not only 'workers' Russia' as responsible for the Polish party's unique opportunity to join in the European wave of workers' revolts, but importantly, also revolutionary Germany, where Luxemburg was

playing a decisive role.⁹ The unified party's political programme reflected the dominance of the internationalist Luxemburg position. It condemned the creation of a bourgeois state, disclaimed the need for any conflict to protect the border, and rejected the concept of national autonomy:

In the era of the international social revolution that destroys the foundations of capitalism, the Polish proletariat rejects every political solution connected with the evolution of a capitalistic world, solutions like autonomy, independence and self-determination... National borders do not pose a problem for the international camp of social revolution; it bases itself on the principle of international working class interests, eliminating all national oppression and removing the basis for any disputes on the grounds of nationality or language.¹⁰

Principles of proletarian revolution and internationalism were emphasised in the programme with the utmost vigour, particularly solidarity with the Russian and German revolutions on which the new revolutionary Polish party was counting for speedy help with its own. Resolutions were passed during the course of the Congress declaring the formation of 'Councils of Workers' Delegates' which were to be joined 'into one great centralised organism, able to take power in close cooperation with the proletarian governments and Workers' Councils of other countries'.¹¹ The KPRP, alongside the German Communist Party (KPD) one of the first communist parties to be formed in Europe, also took practical action in announcing its participation in the Third (Communist) International at that time still in the process of being organised.¹²

2.2 Soviet Republic

Already by the autumn of 1918, and certainly by the beginning of 1919, Lenin regarded the KPRP's somewhat conventional Marxist views on the national question and revolutionary tactics as deviationist and an example of 'the infantile disease of leftism'.¹³ From the outset Lenin had accepted the limitations imposed on the Russian party's ideological interests by the need to consolidate the socialist state's security. He had argued strongly against Dzierżyński and Julian Leszczyński (director of the Bolshevik Commissariat for Polish Affairs), leaders of the SDKPiL in Moscow who represented the position of international revolution and nothing less. In contrast, Lenin, having understood the inevitability of the Polish nation regaining its independence in the absence of either Russian or German imperial power dictating otherwise and the need for the communist movement to accommodate itself to the new realities surrounding it, now advocated national self-determination and the possibility of the 'revolutionary utilization of the bourgeois parliamentary system' through which to channel the aspirations of the working class.¹⁴

At the Brest-Litovsk peace negotiations with Germany on 3 March 1918, the Bolshevik delegation led by Trotsky had insisted on the need to create a Polish state in which the people themselves could decide 'what their political destiny is to be'.¹⁵ Poland was not represented at these negotiations, but the Bolshevik statement was very much in line with the international concern being shown at this time for the future of the Polish nation. It was a statement of intent which had no basis in the Bolsheviks' power to follow up their words with actions. It was followed in August by another declaration, issued this time by

the Council of People's Commissars and known as the 'Annulment of the So-called "Partition Treaties"'. Article three of the declaration read as follows:

All agreements and acts concluded by the Government of the former Russian Empire with the Government of the Kingdom of Prussia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire referring to the partitions of Poland are irrevocably annulled by the present decree, since they are contrary to the principle of the self-determination of peoples and to the revolutionary legal conceptions of the Russian people, which recognise the inalienable right of the Polish nation to independence and unity....¹⁶

After some months of Bolshevik power, the young Soviet state was beginning to understand the possibilities which lay in bourgeois diplomacy. Polish independence was rapidly becoming a very real possibility and the Bolshevik leaders had no wish to see a Polish alliance with Germany against the Soviet Union. When Polish independence became a reality, Chicherin, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs, began an as it turned out unsuccessful exchange of notes with his newly installed Polish counterpart.

The gulf between Lenin's evident pragmatism and the Polish communists' revolutionary *élan* was partially broken down by the action of the Comintern being established in Moscow in the first months of 1919. More important to the development of the Polish party's foreign policy position at this stage, however, were the domestic difficulties being encountered by the KPRP. It was becoming obvious that the party's radical internationalist policies on Polish security and independence were costing it the massive support of the Polish proletariat. Something needed to be done to prevent the haemorrhage continuing.

In February 1919, the KPRP published a document setting out the political platform of what were now being called on the Russian soviet model 'Councils of Urban and Rural Workers' Delegates'. It contained

the party's first concession to the idea of a separate Polish state identity: a 'Polish Soviet Republic of Urban and Rural Workers' Delegates'. Immediately afterward the KPRP Central Committee was forced to pass a supplementary resolution answering criticism from the wider socialist membership of the Workers' Councils that the sovereign status of such a Polish Soviet Republic remained highly ambiguous. In the case of the Red Army needing to encroach on Polish territory in pursuit of its counter-revolutionary enemies, the supplementary resolution suggested, the Russian side should declare that its goals were not to limit Polish independence.¹⁷

By the beginning of 1919 the Polish and Soviet armies were rapidly bearing down on one another and so it is difficult to say what either the Polish or Russian communists considered Polish territory. From November 1918 Polish armies had been fighting the forces of Ataman Petlura's West Ukrainian People's Republic for the control of eastern Galicia. In July 1919, having successfully occupied the area, the Poles came up against the Red Army advancing from the east in pursuit of its 'White' opponents. In the north-east, Polish troops had begun in January to take over the German positions which had been maintained in order to secure Europe from the 'red danger'. Pilsudski capitalised on the momentum this had created to personally lead a spring campaign into Lithuania and Bielorussia, occupying the city of Wilno in April. This brought him into direct conflict with the Red Army, beginning the undeclared Polish-Soviet war.¹⁸ Lenin had earlier in March sued for peace with Poland, saying that the Soviet Union did not want to wage war over territorial boundaries, and that it was time to finish with the stereotype of a Great-Russian being only an oppressor. But within Poland the uprisings in Wielkopolska and Silesia, and the campaign in the east, had made the matter of Poland's borders a critical issue for

the new national Polish regime, one which seemingly demanded a military solution.

Domestically, no credible political party, revolutionary or otherwise, could in this situation afford to ignore the issue of Polish independence, or as the KPRP had been advocating, suborn the security of the Polish state to the greater interests of the class revolution. A great deal of ill feeling had been directed at the KPRP over its internationalist commitment, and the party now began making it all the more obvious to its members and the working class in general that what it proposed would be a bona fide national Polish state albeit Soviet. In April, in preparation for a proposed conference of all the Workers' Councils, the KPRP published a resolution in which it emphasised that its proposed Polish Soviet Republic would be fully independent. Immediately following the Polish workers' revolution, the republic's foreign policy would be to establish alliances with other socialist republics, namely Soviet Russia and Soviet Ukraine. These alliances would help defend the Polish revolution against the reaction of 'international imperialism'; they were also to provide for mutual economic and planning assistance for the reconstruction of the Polish economy along progressive socialist principles.¹⁹

As the wave of revolts in Europe lost its momentum and died down altogether, what was left was the Soviet state, not able to abolish itself, but instead, in the face of the threat to its revolutionary gains from within and without, having to strengthen its central power. The theoretical revolutionary imperative of proletarian internationalism now became the very practical imperative of support for the world's first socialist state. Pilsudski's attempt to take advantage of the weakness of the new Soviet state strengthened this

imperative and cast the KPRP into the front line of the struggle with 'counter-revolution'. It was in these conditions of acute threat to the security of the Soviet state that the Comintern institutionalised the internationalist obligation of its members. At the Comintern's Second Congress in July and August 1920, point fourteen of the 'Conditions of admission to the Communist International' stipulated as follows:

Every party that wishes to join the Communist International is obliged to give unconditional support to any Soviet republic in its struggle against counter-revolutionary forces. Communist parties must carry on unambiguous propaganda to prevent the dispatch of munitions transports to the enemies of the Soviet republics; they must also carry on propaganda by every means, legal or illegal, among the troops sent to strangle workers' republics.²⁰

To indicate their allegiance to the Comintern, all its members changed their names to include the qualification 'Section of Comintern'. What had been a natural instinct for Polish or any other European communists, to work to protect the successful Russian revolution from reactionary forces, now became a regulation governing communist membership; commitment to Soviet security was established as the test of revolutionary internationalism, and the Polish communists found themselves subject to the greatest pressures.

For Polish communists, the commitment to an active participation in the fight against counter-revolution was deepened immensely by their appreciation of Poland's geographic position and the use to which this position was to be put in the plans of the Western capitalist powers.²¹ It was further deepened by their proximity to the Soviet leaders themselves. As mentioned, many leading members of the KPRP were at the same time active members of the Russian party; many also served in the Bolshevik and Comintern administrations; others were directly employed by the Bolshevik security service led by Dzierżyński, the Cheka. In direct contrast to the assertion of Marx that 'a worker

had no fatherland', the intimate contact with everyday Bolshevik activity created among these Polish communists the perception of the new Soviet state as the 'fatherland' of the international proletariat, and a model for building socialism in the other countries of Europe.²² Internationalism on this basis no longer turned on the Polish party's own role in instigating and leading a successful proletarian revolution, but more practically, on an 'aggressive and enduring brotherhood in arms with revolutionary Russia'.²³

Within Poland, the KPRP undertook a campaign of industrial sabotage and organised strikes to weaken the Polish military effort. It led demonstrations against the sending of arms and ammunition to the front and encouraged desertion among Polish soldiers.²⁴ The party's solid support for the rapidly approaching Red Army alienated much of its less committed constituency, however, and this together with a heightened campaign of anti-communist repression by the Polish police rendered its efforts largely ineffective.

More effective were the Polish communists within the ranks of the Red Army itself. Considerable efforts were made by the Red Army political leadership to recruit Poles into the political sections of Russian combat units engaged on the front. These cadres were to provide for a smooth transition of power from the Soviet military authorities into Polish communist hands.²⁵ Polish cadres in the Cheka were also massively expanded and brought to the front to work in the Red Army's 'Special Departments'. Finally, on 19 July 1920, in anticipation of an imminent victory and occupation of Warsaw, the Bolshevik leadership put itself in direct control over the situation in Poland by replacing the ineffective KPRP leadership organs with a 'Polish Bureau' of the RKP(b) Central Committee, with Dzierżyński as its Chairman. According to a Soviet historian, the KPRP was recreated

as 'an organ of the Russian Communist Party (bolsheviks) for work among the Polish population'.²⁶ On July 30, with the Red Army preparing to lay seige to Warsaw, the Polish Bureau was turned into the Provisional Committee of Revolutionary Poland, with Marchlewski now as Chairman, Dzierżyński, Kon and Unszlicht as Committee members. Announcing in Białystok that it was taking control of the Polish state which it declared to be the Polish Soviet Socialist Republic, the Committee published a Manifesto to the Polish people, announcing that peace could only be attained by an agreement between socialist Russia and socialist Poland.²⁷

It had been initially hoped by the KPRP in Poland that the victories of the Red Army over Piłsudski's forces in the Ukraine would spark off the proletarian revolution in Poland. When this did not happen, and the KPRP found it lacked the power to carry out a revolutionary *putsch* on its own, its leadership concluded that the only way they would see a socialist Poland was for the Red Army to occupy the country.²⁸ The commitment to the survival of the Soviet state now took on a new dimension. Its survival was needed not only for its own sake, but also for the military power to ensure the very success in Poland of what was still being called the proletarian revolution. Parallel to the establishment of Soviet security as the test of internationalist commitment, came the realisation within at least a section of the KPRP that more important than their own organisational strength to the success of the class revolution in Poland was the new found military power of the Soviet state.

The Bolshevik position had also been to expect a revolution in Poland as the outcome of the over-extension of Piłsudski's forces in the Ukraine. Trotsky, People's Commissar for War, in his theses 'On the Polish Front and our Tasks' accepted by the Bolshevik

Revolutionary War Council on April 30, wrote that 'the gentry and bourgeoisie of Poland will be rounded up by the Polish proletariat who will then proceed to turn their country into a socialist republic'.²⁹ And in May, the Comintern Executive Committee (ECCI) wrote that the Soviet government had been 'firmly convinced that the Polish workers, allies of the Russian proletariat, would sooner or later take power into their own hands'.³⁰ When the KPRP proved ineffective as a revolutionary organisation and failed to capitalise on its opportunity, Lenin, opposed by Trotsky and Radek, decided that the Red Army should follow up the Polish retreat and provoke not only the Polish revolution but also the revolution in Germany. Poland, Radek wrote in May, would be turned from being a 'wall protecting Europe from Russia [into] a bridge between Russia and Germany'.³¹

In the event, Piłsudski on August 16 counterattacked the Red Army positions under Warsaw, his armies swollen by a flood of patriotic volunteers, and began another Polish offensive to the east. In the wake of the Red Army retreat, the Polish police carried out a series of harsh repressions paralysing still further the activities of the KPRP membership. The general atmosphere was one where communists or anyone else presenting a class analysis of the war was seen as a national traitor.³²

2.3 Independence and Internationalism

In the next few years, the KPRP underwent a dramatic change in policy and tactics. A new realism was forced on the party leaders by the devastating outcome of the Polish-Soviet war. The KPRP's positions on Polish independence and its attitudes to the type of internationalist commitment fostered under the conditions of the war, both needed clarification. The bourgeois Polish state had not fallen under the spell of the Red Army's advance and surrendered its power to the progressive proletarian revolution. Indeed, the reverse had happened. Its reactionary character had been strengthened by the Polish military success. In the aftermath of the war, the KPRP's critical reliance on the Red Army and the Bolshevik Central Committee for the success of its Polish revolution left it defenceless from internal and external criticism as to the strength of its character. If this was to be overcome, an effort needed to be made to provide the party with a greater degree of autonomy vis-a-vis the Russian party, particularly relating to the KPRP's own domestic tactics. In early February 1921 the KPRP announced it would contest future Sejm elections under the name 'Union of the Urban and Rural Proletariat'.³³ Having failed to initiate its own KPRP led revolution, and now without the power of the Red Army behind it, the KPRP would attempt to win communist representation in the bourgeois state's own democratic institutions.

The new mood in the KPRP reflected a much wider realignment of policy across the international communist movement. The Kronstadt rebellion, Lenin's New Economic Policy, the 'March Action' in Germany, all contributed to what Trotsky called at the Comintern's Third World

Congress in June/July 1921 the move from 'post-war revolutionary ferment' to 'winning the masses using the united front', and 'organising the masses on a programme of transitional demands'.³⁴ The debate within Poland on the lessons to be learnt from the KPRP's lack of success in either its classic internationalist policies or their Red Army based variant, was matched by the debate at the Comintern Third Congress on the defeat of the German revolution. Little disagreement existed as to the fact that like the Polish party, the German communists had clearly been too weak to carry through a successful revolution on their own. In this light, Lenin decided on a compromise. No longer could the International's longer term interests be undermined in heroic but futile gestures. What was needed was a wider proletarian alliance, a tactical accommodation with other left groups in a 'united front' against the bourgeoisie.³⁵

For the KPRP, the implications of this tactical policy change were to be far reaching. In the following eighteen months, two competing interpretations of the 'united front' were established. Radek, Trotsky and the pragmatic section of the German Communist Party (KPD) leadership advocated a 'united front from above', a formal political alliance with socialist parties, unifying the working class and enabling the communists to work to their own advantage from within an immediately strengthened political position. An opposing view was represented by Zinoviev, General Secretary of the ECCI, Stalin, and the German communist radical left. This group would have no truck with the 'treacherous social-democratic leaders' and instead, wanted to organise directly among the working masses themselves, a 'united front from below'.³⁶ For its part the KPRP, under its own newly installed pragmatic leadership, lent its wholehearted support to the 'united front from above' position, setting it on a collision course with

Stalin and Zinoviev.

The same split in the Russian party was operating in another debate, that on the issue of war-time and post-war internationalism.

Opening the Fourth Comintern World Congress, Zinoviev remarked that:

It is obvious that the [Comintern] Executive must "interfere" in the affairs of practically every party.... Representatives of the Executive attended practically every important congress and gave them ideological direction.³⁷

And not only 'ideological direction' but also tactical direction. In its resolution on the Versailles Peace Treaty of 5 December 1922, the ECCI observed that the central European states had 'sunk to being colonies of English and French capital.... Poland, which was given large territories with a non-Polish population, is France's furthest outpost, a caricature of French imperialism'. The ECCI then issued its instructions: 'The communist parties in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the other vassal states of France have the duty of combining the fight against their own bourgeoisie with the fight against French imperialism'.³⁸

For his part, Bukharin worried that the relationship between the Comintern's sections and the centre was becoming too mechanical. The old revolutionary *élan* had been already lost. 'Nine-tenths of the significance of the Fourth Congress consisted in this, that it "interfered" in the affairs of the national sections', Bukharin told the RKP(b) Central Committee in April 1923. 'The chief defects in the national parties were a deficient degree of internationalism, a lack of tactical flexibility and a shortage of skilled cadres'.³⁹ In other words, the national parties were becoming reliant on the Soviet centre for their guidance; they had lost their intellectual self-sufficiency.

Bukharin's position on internationalism corresponded exactly with that of the dominant group in the KPRP. Three leaders had been at the forefront of the KPRP's new realist policies and the party's 'united

front from above' with the PPS. These were the so-called 'three W's', the leaders of what would become known as the 'national' wing of the party: Warski, Walecki and Koszutska. Warski came from the Luxemburg tradition, Walecki and Koszutska were both formerly of the PPS-Lewica. All three leaders had been dismayed by the damage wrought to the KPRP's domestic support by both the Luxemburgist version of radical internationalism and the instrumental internationalism of the Polish-Soviet war years now being represented by Zinoviev and Stalin. Just how far the new leadership had gone in its analysis of what the situation required was revealed in Warski's programmatic speech to the KPRP's Second Congress in September 1923 at Bolshevo, near Moscow. Once the party had become conscious of the sources of the Polish revolution in the conditions internal to the country and was able to tap into these sources, then, Warski told his audience which included Zinoviev, 'we do not need to look for and wait for others, or to seek help from outside forces'.⁴⁰

The new leadership's efforts to cut the KPRP's links with Luxemburg internationalism were fully supported by Zinoviev. The Polish party was to be given a firm 'Bolshevik foundation'.⁴¹ 'Bolshevisation' meant accepting the Bolshevik position on the organisational and agrarian questions. It also meant putting the party on a firmly national (self-determination) footing. It was in this light that Warski, Walecki and Koszutska wrote their party's new political programme, making a complete revision of the previous policy on state and independence. The new programme stressed the 'vital interest' to the proletariat of Polish national independence.⁴² In the course of the Congress debate, Warski suggested it would be necessary for the KPRP to publicly announce its categorical support for the independence of the Polish nation. Zinoviev spoke in support of the proposal.⁴³

In the main Congress document entitled 'For Our Freedom and Yours', the three leaders wrote: 'Bourgeois governments in Poland present a mortal danger to its independence. Only a victorious revolution can give the Polish nation permanent state independence' and a socialist Poland within its ethnic borders, free of its ethnic minorities. Ethnic minorities currently within Poland would be encouraged to create their own national workers' republics, expressed in the Congress formula: 'the right of nations to self-determination even to the extent of cession'. After a successful proletarian revolution, Poland's eastern minorities, incorporated into the Polish state following the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet war, would under this formula be reunited with their populations in the Ukrainian and Bielorussian Soviet Republics.⁴⁴

'For Our Freedom and Yours' was to provide one of the firmest planks of the Polish communists' foreign policy up to and following the Second World War. It originated in the first Congress following the Polish-Soviet war, and was drawn up by the relatively pragmatic 'national' leadership group. It was regarded by these leaders as a measured response to the eastward expansion of the Polish state which, being bourgeois, was also 'imperialist'. An independent Polish workers' republic would not limit the sovereignty of the other workers' republics around it, just as it expected these republics to respect Poland's independence. But without the creation of a community of European socialist states, this sort of scenario was considered totally unattainable.

Autumn 1923 saw another wave of revolutionary unrest in Germany, Bulgaria⁴⁵ and in Poland itself. These were optimistic days for Zinoviev, the Comintern and the KPRP. Between revolutionary Germany and revolutionary Russia, bourgeois Poland would have no future. But

so too the converse. The greatest fear for the KPRP leaders was a defeat of the German revolution and a continuation of the imperialist threat to the Soviet state. Not only Polish national independence would in this situation be threatened, but also the Polish party's independence as the Russian party saw to its own security via the auspices of the Comintern sections. In the language of the Second KPRP Congress: 'The only guarantee of Poland's independence is the victory of the revolution in Europe and the alliance of worker/peasant Poland with its neighbouring fraternal republics'. The Congress Manifesto called for Poland's independent existence to be based on a fraternal alliance of 'Free Workers/Peasants' Republics'.⁴⁵ Later in the Congress the position changed to a 'Worker/Peasant United States of Europe' in which Poland would at last find an 'unshakeable foundation for its independence'.⁴⁷

The dilemma arising from the fusion of the KPRP's internationalist hopes and the national realities surrounding it showed up clearly in the party's policies regarding the German minorities in Poland. In strengthening its position on Polish national independence, the KPRP sought to create a larger national Polish constituency for its revolutionary goals. At the same time, it could not afford to ignore the revolutionary potential of the social ferment spreading through Germany and the implications this held for the Polish revolution and position of the Polish party. The Polish uprising in Upper Silesia was branded by the Second Congress as imperialist as opposed to the revolutionary tendencies of the German masses; calls were even made to support the German minorities in Gdańsk, Silesia and the Poznań regions. In line with the KPRP's policy on ethnic minorities, Congress resolutions demanded 'full freedom for the development of the national German population'.⁴⁸ In encouraging the Germans to demand their own

national rights, the KPRP sought to undermine the bourgeois Polish state's internal security and add to the revolutionary unrest of the German masses in both Poland and Germany proper. But following over a century of German repression of the Polish population of these lands, the Congress resolution earned the KPRP few new supporters.

Nor was there to be either a Polish or a German proletarian revolution in 1923. Warski, Walecki and Koszutska had been enthusiastically following Lenin's and the Comintern's policy of presenting a united front with the PPS. On this basis, the party's Warsaw Committee had acceded to the socialist call to call off several Polish workers' strikes in the longer term interests of a continuing united front. This 'mistake', and the fact that the KPRP had made no move to widen the Cracow workers' and soldiers' rebellion of November 6, were used against the pro-Radek and Trotsky KPRP leadership by Stalin and Zinoviev. The KPRP's 'mistakes', the parallel defeat of the KPD led by the 'opportunistic' Heinrich Brandler, and the incapacitation and then death of Lenin in January 1924, combined to once again render the KPRP vulnerable to direct Soviet interference. On this occasion the outcome of the interference saw the strategic value of the Polish party for Soviet security institutionalised in the patron-client relationship that came to dominate the internationalist relationship between the two parties for the next three decades.

2.4 Bolshevisation

Even before Lenin's death, the dispute in the Russian party between the 'Bolshevik triumvirate' of Stalin, Zinoviev and Kamenev on the one hand and the 'opportunistic opposition' of Trotsky and Radek on the other, had already spilled over into the Comintern. The violence of the RKP(b) Central Committee majority's attacks on Trotsky worried the leaderships of the Polish, German and French parties, closer to Trotsky and Radek in their 'united front from above' tactics. For the Comintern's larger sections, the issue now became whether their tactical independence could be maintained in the face of the onslaught on their supporters in the Russian party. Trotsky's and Radek's demise potentially meant a Comintern *volte-face* in which the gains made in communist influence in the period following the Polish-Soviet war were in danger of being undermined. Should the Comintern policy change, so too the leadership of the various sections would have to be changed, and in such a scenario the Comintern would be in danger of losing its internationalist vitality and becoming a sterile Russian party tool. It was not only a question of the ideological direction of the Comintern but also of the organisational basis on which the further consolidation of the international movement was to be made.

The sort of behaviour now being exhibited by the majority in the RKP(b) Central Committee cast doubt on the feasibility of the KPRP leadership's trade off in accommodating its strategy to the Bolshevik model. By accepting the Bolshevik position on the nationality, agrarian and party organisation questions, the KPRP leadership expected in return to be left free to determine its own domestic tactics within the Comintern's overall policy. The KPRP leadership

were worried enough to make their views known in no uncertain terms to the Russian Central Committee. So too, in one way or another, did the Central Committees of the French and German parties. None of these protests were intended as support for Trotsky's specific policies. Trotsky's criticisms of the bureaucratisation of the Russian party and the degeneration of the revolution into consolidationist statism were not of themselves the reason for the Polish party's support. More important was the vitality of the communist idea throughout the international movement, and the principle of tactical flexibility.

On 23 December 1923, the KPRP Central Committee sent a letter to the Russian Central Committee criticising the methods being used in the dispute with Trotsky. They warned against the harm being done to the Comintern and appealed for the Bolsheviki to settle their differences in a manner worthy of communists.⁴⁹ Stalin's reply did nothing to cool the Polish Central Committee's enthusiasm. In January, immediately prior to Lenin's death, Edward Próchniak, KPRP representative to the ECCI, issued a note with the following observation:

From the time that Lenin, the greatest and most authoritative leader of the international proletariat, no longer takes part in the leadership of the Communist International, from the time that the authority of Trotsky, acknowledged by the world's revolutionary proletariat as its leader, is cast into doubt by the Russian Central Committee, a danger arises that the authority of the leadership of the Communist International may be shaken.⁵⁰

Zinoviev and Stalin did not take kindly to this type of criticism, seen as a personal affront on their own abilities. It was also understood to be a part of an orchestrated attack in support of Trotsky and Radek.⁵¹ As such, the Polish and other 'right' leaderships now became the target of the same accusation directed previously at Trotsky — that of 'opportunism'.

In the January note to the ECCI cited above, the KPRP Central Committee also had the following to say:

We consider the accusation of opportunism directed against Radek, one of the worthiest leaders of the Communist International, as being not only untrue but also harmful to the greatest degree for the authority of all of the leaders of the [Comintern] Executive Committee. We do not see any basis for this accusation since even though the question as to who was victorious in Germany in October [1932] bears great weight, nonetheless it is certain that none of the sides came to any tactically opportunistic conclusions.⁵²

In Poland, the 'three W' leadership prevented any news of the discord in the Comintern, RKP(b) Central Committee and within their own Central Committee reaching their membership. This, and the fact that they continued to receive support from Radek until his ejection from the Soviet Central Committee in May, meant that they were able to maintain their majority in the KPRP Central Committee up until the Fifth Comintern World Congress of June/July 1924, the so-called 'Bolshevisation Congress'.

The German question continued to dominate in the Fifth Congress discussion. But intimately connected to the German question was the role of the KPRP in contributing to the fiasco surrounding the 'revolutionary year of 1923'. By the time of the Congress, the 'three W' leadership had been completely isolated within the Comintern. It remained the last bastion of the 'opportunist deviation' still in power. After some days of discussion, the Congress Political Commission issued a resolution in which it supported the KPRP's Second Congress move toward 'Bolshevisation', but criticised the leadership for its lack of 'fundamental revolutionary activity' and its support for the 'opportunist' factions in the Russian and German parties. It established a Polish Commission to resolve the issue, chaired by Stalin, with Molotov as his deputy.⁵³

On the type of internationalist relationship to be encouraged within the Comintern, the debate in the Polish Commission turned on two points of view. One saw the KPRP needing to retain its independent

voice, the other considered the Polish party to be subordinate to the security interests of the Soviet state and the authority of the Russian party. Warski, Walecki, Koszutska and Próchniak, with some support from other Polish delegates, pointed to the danger of treating the Polish leadership as instrumentally as had been the case with the German and French parties: the Polish party was a complex organism made up of many different regional, national and political traditions; it had never been supported by the old-guard SDKPiL which had remained with the Bolsheviks in Moscow, and most of its most seasoned cadres were now languishing in Polish jails; a leadership change with little input from the wider membership could irrevocably distance the party from its mass constituency and even split it into its constituent parts; in other words, mechanical changes would do more harm than good to the interests of the revolution in Poland.⁵⁴

Equally detrimental, in the eyes of the 'national' leaders, were the strictures being placed on intra and inter-party debate by the latter-day equivalent of the type of internationalist relationship functioning during the Polish-Soviet war. Provoked on the third and final day of the Commission debate by an uncompromising analysis presented by Stalin, Koszutska gave eloquent witness to this position. No 'single infallible, correct, non-opportunistic method' existed for the RKP(b) to overcome the dissent of its younger members grouped around Trotsky, Koszutska exclaimed. Trotsky enjoyed a 'capital of enormous popularity' which would be squandered if the Russian party continued to create a climate of 'permanent battle, constant tension and bitterness' in its highest organs. Not Trotsky, but this climate heightened the danger to the Russian party and 'created points of concentration' for internal opposition to the party line. Trotsky needed to be accommodated into the party discussion and not excluded from it. Koszutska continued:

...there can be no talk here of some sort of single infallible, unquestionably obliging method or principle the infringement of which is opportunism...⁵⁵ ...if everyone one by one is discredited in this way, then at a decisive moment the proletariat might lack people with experience and who enjoy the trust of the masses, and the leadership of the revolution might enter the hands of "seasonal" leaders, careerists and stirrers.⁵⁶

Zinoviev had told the KPRP leadership some time ago, Koszutska remarked, that the Russians would 'break your bones' if the Poles ever went against their fraternal comrades. This highlighted the fact that KPRP conflict with the Russian party was far more dangerous than conflict with any other section. Poland occupied a particularly sensitive position for the defence of the Soviet state because of the intense anti-Bolshevik feeling generated by the Polish bourgeois leaders. In such a situation, there could be no talk of a victory or defeat in any Polish-Russian party conflict. Polish communists would always instruct their working class to follow the Russian lead. But because of this, the Russian party had a special privilege with regard to the Polish party, and the KPRP had a special responsibility in return. There were already too many broken bones in the Comintern, Koszutska complained. What she feared most was that because of the Russian party's special privilege, the greatest danger to it would not be the type of people who would be liable to have their bones broken for reasons similar to those that the Polish leadership now faced, but people who did not have any bones at all! It would be dangerous for the enormous moral authority of the Russian party to be abused, for it to deny the right to independent thought, Koszutska concluded.⁵⁷

The opposing point of view was represented in the Polish delegation by Leszczyński and L. Domski. 'The Polish Communist Party had to cease being a barrier between Russian Leninism and the West', Leszczyński told the Polish Commission. His pitch referred directly to the internal division in the Russian party where the counterpoint to

'Trotskyism' was the 'Leninism' of the 'triumvirate' and Central Committee majority. Leszczyński was implying that the KPRP leaders could no longer hold themselves aloof from the changes which were infusing the Comintern. 'Bolshevisation' needed to be implemented in the KPRP's foreign policies as well as domestically, and the pragmatic Polish leadership could no longer 'pretend' to occupy a special position in the Comintern.⁵⁸ Molotov put the issue more bluntly: the Polish party line will be the Comintern line.⁵⁹

Stalin made no bones of what was at the heart of the issue: 'The "Russian affair" has a decisive meaning for the entire revolutionary movement, in the West as in the East'. This was so since the 'opposition' in the internal Russian debate had sought to weaken through 'opportunism' the Russian party, which being the ruling party implied weakening the power of the Russian Soviet state. Any weakening in Soviet power would weaken the world revolutionary movement. The fortunes of Soviet power were, therefore, of vital interest to the KPRP as they were to every one of the Comintern's sections. The December resolution of the KPRP in support of Trotsky made the Polish leadership an 'affiliate' of the Soviet 'opposition'. 'Sad, but a fact', concluded Stalin. After the 'Russian affair', the 'German affair' was the most important. This was so since of all the European countries Germany was closest to revolution, and a victorious revolution in Germany was the guarantee of the revolution's victory in all of Europe. The revolution would begin in Germany and only Germany could take this initiative upon itself. Here again the KPRP leaders had 'sadly' erred. They were 'affiliated' to the 'opportunistic opposition' in the KPD. These facts needed to be put right. The Polish party needed to be 'rebuilt' so that its every step and every action led to the revolution.⁶⁰

The 'wedge' which had been driven between the Soviet and German parties was to be eliminated, the Polish Commission's letter to the Polish membership read. For the success of the revolution 'tight cooperation' between the Polish, German and Soviet parties was essential. In this way the KPRP could again be one of the 'leading sections of the revolution'.⁶¹ The purpose of this letter was not to initiate a wide discussion from which changes would come in the KPRP leadership, as had been the position of Warski, Walecki and Koszutska. These changes had already been decided upon in the Polish Commission's resolution. Stalin's 'rebuilding' resulted in the KPRP's Central Committee being dismissed and its Politburo and Organisational Bureau fused into a single body of five members called the 'Provisional Central Committee' or 'Fivesome'. The Provisional Central Committee was to call an extraordinary KPRP congress as soon as possible, and direct the party until a new Central Committee and Politburo could be established.⁶²

At its Extraordinary Third Congress of January and February 1925 at Minsk, the KPRP was given by the Comintern the task of 'sanctioning the existing status quo' and completing the 'Bolshevisation' of the Polish party.⁶³ The Congress launched an attack on the members of the 'rightist deviation' in the previous Central Committee, aiming the accusations mainly at what was seen to be an independence-minded school among the ex-PPS-Lewica members of the KPRP. No mention was made in Congress resolutions of an independent socialist or Soviet Republic. In his speech to the Congress, Zinoviev made plain that the threat to the security of the Soviet state was now even greater: as Soviet Russia continued to strengthen, so too did the threat of war with Poland and the other bourgeois states. But 'Poland belongs to those countries in which we cannot afford a defeat', the Comintern

General Secretary told the Congress. Thanks to its position as 'a bridge joining us with Germany and Europe', the revolutionary struggle had to be won in Poland from the outset.⁶⁴ To better reflect its unqualified solidarity with the internationalist centre, the Congress changed the party's name to the Communist Party of Poland — Section of the Communist International (KPP).

But Domski, Leszczyński, Zofia Unszlicht and the new 'ultraleftist' leadership which the Third Congress had brought to power were themselves soon to be judged unsuitable for the role the Comintern envisaged for the Polish party. Having eliminated the right from the Central Committee, the radical left began not only implementing its own 'united front from below' programme of violent revolution, encouraging violence and terror as the way toward radicalising the masses. They also began promoting their tactics within the Comintern, avoiding any conflict with the Russian party, but criticising less militant parties for their lack of revolutionary courage. By the summer of 1925 the Comintern had reconvened its Polish Commission to review the situation. The new 'ultraleftist' KPP leadership was judged to have gone too far in its policies for violent revolution in Poland. The 'ultraleftists' were accused of having alienated the KPP from the Polish proletariat, and of lessening the party's scope for action in the future. As for the Comintern, the KPP was this time deemed to have attempted to create an 'ultraleft fraction' under its leadership.⁶⁵ Polish criticism of other sections could not be tolerated; the Polish comrades had again strayed too far.

Stalin's 1925 bloc with Bukharin and Rykov saw him following a 'rightist line' in the re-named All-Union Communist Party (bolsheviks) (VKP(b)) and Comintern. In the Polish party, Warski and Koszutska supported the 'rightest line' and were thus reinstated to the KPP

leadership, replacing Donski and Zofia Unszlicht who openly supported Zinoviev. Leszczyński, who opposed the Zinoviev 'opposition', remained in the KPP leadership leaving a situation where both the two wings of the Polish party shared power in the Central Committee and Politburo. Deutscher adds further detail to this picture with the comment that while Warski and Koszutska supported the 'rightest line' they remained ideologically closer to Bukharin, even if completely loyal to Stalin. Leszczyński, on the other hand, became the leader of the 'Stalinist' nucleus within the Polish Central Committee.⁵⁶

2.5 Soviet Security

In the following years, the KPP leadership became increasingly fragmented and subject to direct policy oversight from the Comintern centre. On the domestic front, the 'Bolshevisation' of the KPP continued, with the goal being to completely root out the KPP's internationalist 'Luxemburg heritage' and purge the party of its 'Trotskyist' tendencies. KPP foreign policy followed the Comintern lead, with the notion of Polish proletarian state independence now encouraged as a measure against the increasing power of international capitalism in Poland. At the same time, the intra-Bolshevik power struggle continued to intimately influence policy and practice within the KPP leadership, making it ever more compliant and insecure. In contrast to the 'ultraleftist' exclusion of state independence as a virtue to be encouraged by the revolutionary Polish party, the 'rightist line' of Stalin and Bukharin soon helped to put independence back on the KPP's foreign policy agenda.

Considerable dismay was expressed at the KPP's Fourth National

Conference held in Moscow in November 1925 over the growing pro-British stance of official Polish foreign policy and the ever greater Polish economic dependence on Britain. The fact that on an official level Polish-Soviet diplomacy was making some progress toward an accommodation was regarded as a tactic in the Polish government's cynical game with the Western powers. Far more significant for the Polish communists was the continuing power of the large group of implacably anti-Soviet Pilsudski supporters occupying positions of influence in the government, military and diplomatic service, and intent on sabotaging any Polish move to draw closer to the Soviet Union. The assumption among Conference delegates, reflecting the current Soviet understanding, was that British economic involvement in Poland was part of a deliberate policy to strengthen the 'imperialist' wall around the Soviet Union and undermine the impact of the revolutionary forces in Poland and Germany.⁶⁷ The KPP leadership's response to this threat was to raise the issue of Polish national independence, to complain that the capitalist 'imperialism' being encouraged by the Polish government put Polish national independence at risk. In the language of the Conference resolutions, this government policy was a direct threat to the role an independent Polish state would have in the future international workers' revolution. The KPP, it was recognised, needed to 'take a step forward and stand clearly and decisively on the bedrock of an independent Poland'.⁶⁸

This U-turn in the KPP's official platform back to the position of the KPRP's Second Congress required a re-definition of what was meant by 'an independent Poland'. In line with the Leninist 'thesis of imperialism' and the threat posed by international capitalism in Poland, a majority of delegates saw Polish independence as freedom

from economic dependence on capitalist countries. Others emphasised their traditional opposition to any defence of an independent bourgeois state.⁶⁹ A formula was finally settled on, recognising defence of Polish national independence as conditional on this being understood only in a revolutionary sense:

A worker, a communist... cannot stand on the position of defence of his capitalist fatherland, cannot separate the matter of independence from the matter of revolution. For the KPP there can be no defence of Polish independence without proletarian revolution and a worker-peasant government, just as there cannot be a revolution which would not secure and consolidate the state independence of the Polish nation... Only this approach to the issue of Poland's independence by the KPP will be... understood by those workers and peasants who up till now saw in us... the enemies of whatever type of Polish independence.⁷⁰

It was hoped that the positive stand on independence would aid the KPP's broad 'united front' work among the socialist aligned workers.⁷¹ But the KPP continued to be the only political group in Poland to qualify what other political parties took as an almost sacred maxim.⁷²

Following Piłsudski's May 1926 *coup d'état*, during which the KPP Central Committee issued a series of statements exhorting the working class to support the General against his 'fascist' opponents,⁷³ the KPP leadership went through a series of traumatic post-mortems splitting it into two implacably opposed factions and again exposing it to the criticism of the Soviet party. Initially, the Soviet reaction to the Polish events remained muted as the Soviet party and Comintern focused first on their own differences. Stalin and Bukharin were engaged in a dogmatic battle with the 'Leningrad' or 'New Party Opposition', accused of failing to appreciate the value of 'alliances with the middle strata', i.e. the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie. In the Comintern, any sign of scepticism toward 'alliances with the middle strata' had been stigmatised as 'Trotskyism' and 'ultraleftist', thus encouraging the KPP's tactical support for the Piłsudski coup.⁷⁴ On this basis in July, immediately after the

Pilsudski coup, the 'New Party Opposition' charged Stalin with the responsibility for the Polish Central Committee's 'mistake'. Trotsky, aiming his criticism at Stalin, also wrote that 'one of the reasons why the Polish communist leaders (like the Germans) were unequal to their task was that they were constantly being changed, and sudden changes in the situation found them inexperienced and unprepared'.⁷⁵ But the Soviet Central Committee majority again followed Stalin's lead. The end of this next phase of manouvering came in October 1926 when Trotsky and Kamenev both lost their places in the Central Committee. A month later Zinoviev was replaced as ECCI General Secretary by Bukharin.⁷⁶

In the KPP debate on the 'May error', Bukharin tended to support the 'majority' position of Warski and Koszutska and under his leadership the Comintern endeavoured to bring about a bloodless compromise between the two factions.⁷⁷ Leszczyński and the 'minority' faction put their hopes on Stalin.⁷⁸ Stalin, under pressure from the USSR's domestic economic crisis, now began to revise his policy toward the peasantry and to prepare for its collectivisation, bringing him into sharp, although as yet unpublicised, opposition to Bukharin. Nothing could be resolved in the KPP crisis while the Soviet Central Committee did not agree to a single policy line. Instead, the KPP division began to spread down to the party cells threatening a complete split between the two rival political groups. In May 1927, under express instructions from Bukharin to try to heal the rift, the KPP held its Fourth Congress at Peterhof near Leningrad. It turned into a marathon affair lasting four months and with no firm outcome. As a result, the dispute over the 'May error' went on to dominate the Comintern's Sixth World Congress in July 1928.

'Had we not intervened there would now have been two Polish

parties', Bukharin told the Sixth Congress delegates in his opening speech.⁷⁹ But the success Bukharin claimed in mediating the Polish crisis to a successful conclusion was largely superficial. The ECCI's lack of confidence that the Polish rift had been fully healed was clearly stated in the Congress 'Theses on the International Situation':

In view of the special importance of the Polish party and the great responsibility resting on it in the event of war, the Sixth Congress categorically demands the cessation of the fractional struggle and instructs the ECCI to take on its behalf all the necessary measures....⁸⁰

No heed was paid to the ECCI demand. The 'minority' faction now found themselves with the full support of Stalin who, in contrast to Bukharin, was beginning to call for a radical left turn in Comintern policy in preparation for the perceived forthcoming revolutionary crisis in the West.⁸¹ The 'cessation' of this episode of bitter leadership wrangling within the KPP came only some months later with the defeat of the 'rightist deviation' in the Soviet party and the removal of Bukharin from the Comintern. In February 1929, a motion sponsored by Stalin recommending Bukharin's removal for 'opportunism' was accepted by the ECCI; and in April, following the publication of an 'open letter' from the ECCI, Warski, Koszutska and the rest of the 'majority' faction were expelled from the KPP Central Committee. The letter branded the 'majority' leaders as 'even more dangerous enemies than the fascists' due to their underestimating the weakness of capitalist stabilisation in Poland and the counter-revolutionary role of the reformist parties, and their support for the illusion that the Polish socialists would fight fascism.⁸² At the KPP's Central Committee Plenum in June, the 'minority' faction led by Leszczyński took over the leadership with the novelty that now for the first time the Comintern was to provide direct 'assistance' to its Polish section

through the inclusion into its Central Committee of two 'Comintern advisers' both close to Stalin — Dimitri Manuilski and Otto Kuusinen.⁸³

At the KPP's grass roots, the sectarianism which had resulted from the five and a half years of leadership division now continued to thrive regardless of the direct oversight of the Comintern's 'advisers'. On foreign policy, however, there had never been any major dispute. Indeed, at the marathon Fourth KPP Congress the only resolution on which there had been no fundamental disagreement was on foreign policy. After identifying the causes of the May *coup* as lying in Poland's international as well as domestic situation, this resolution continued:

A result of the growing British-Soviet antagonism has been an increase in the special significance of Poland for Britain. Britain has also been interested in a Polish-German settlement which would free Poland's hands in a war with the USSR. The weakened position of France, revealed with particular clarity at Locarno... has made French protection [of Poland] less valuable.

In these conditions, the resolution stated, Poland had turned to Britain instead of France for help in overcoming its internal economic crisis. Britain as a condition for aiding Poland required a change of regime as the previous government had failed to successfully carry out its role as 'the military vanguard in the anti-Soviet front'.⁸⁴ The resolution reflected the firm belief in Moscow at the time, provoked among other things by the fact that the British government had broken off diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union on May 27, that Pilsudski had acted with the support, if not under the instructions of, the British Foreign Office, and that war was indeed likely either with China or the West or both.⁸⁵ In another policy document entitled 'The Party's Main Tasks', it was stated that 'the most important task of the party is at this moment to fight against the preparations for war with the Soviet Union. The entire activity of the party should be

committed to this task'.⁸⁶

Through the following years, the KPP continued to see as its foreign policy priority and principal internationalist duty the defence of the Soviet Union. At its Central Committee Plenum in June 1929, for example, while the Western world was facing an economic downturn of catastrophic proportions and the Soviet Union in contrast had entered a period of unprecedented growth, the KPP called for a widened peace campaign to counter-act the threat of 'imperialist war'. So long as capitalist states existed, the Plenum noted, so too did the threat of aggression against the world's first socialist state.⁸⁷

Notes

1. 'Organic incorporation', first developed in Luxemburg's doctoral dissertation — *The Industrial Development of Poland* — and the basis of her later theories on internationalism, treated Polish independence as being essentially reactionary since neither the pre-socialist bourgeois revolution nor the proletarian revolution were likely to see this as their goal — the bourgeoisie because the Russian markets were too profitable, and the proletariat because of their goal of socialist internationalism. See J.P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1969, pp.45,49.
2. Isaac Deutscher, 'The tragedy of the Polish Communist Party', *The Socialist Register 1982*, The Merlin Press, p.131.
3. Henryk Cimek, Lucjan Kieszczyński, *Komunistyczna Partia Polski 1918-1938*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p.15.
4. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.50.
5. 'Sprawa Polska na V Kongresie Międzynarodówki Komunistycznej w 1924 r', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, 89 (2-3), 1982, p.350.
6. Aleksander Litwin, 'Prawda o radach robotniczych', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 24, 1973, pp.54-6.
7. Litwin, pp.62-3.
8. The inclusion of 'Workers' was admitted by Warski to be an attempt by the new Polish party to maintain an identity separate from the RKP(b). See 'Sprawa Polska', p.349.
9. *Manifest Zjazdu Zjednoczeniowego SDKPiL i PPS-Lewicy*, Lublin, Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1978, pp.29-32.
10. Cited in Antoni Czubiński, *Komunistyczna Partia Polski (1918-1938). Zarys historii*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1985, p.27.
11. Cited in Henryk Zieliński, *Historia Polski 1914-1939*, Wrocław, Ossolineum, 1986, p.63.
12. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.18.
13. Marian Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland* (2nd ed), Cambridge, Mass., Havard University Press, 1976, p.81.

14. Dziewanowski, p.85. Lenin and Luxemburg had been debating the 'national self-determination' question from well before the onset of the First World War, with Lenin among the minority in the Bolshevik party on the issue.
15. Piotr Wandycz, *Soviet-Polish Relations, 1917-1921*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1969, p.43.
16. Stephan Horak, *Poland's International Affairs 1919-1960. A Calendar of Treaties, Agreements, Conventions and Other International Acts*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1964, p.223.
17. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.59.
18. Zieliński, pp.105-6.
19. 'Projekt platformy politycznej rad delegatów robotniczych miast i wsi przygotowany przez KC KPRP w kwietniu 1919', *Dokumenty programowe polskiego ruchu robotniczego 1878-1984*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1986, p.136.
20. Cited in Jane Degras (ed.), *The Communist International 1919-1943. Documents*, volume 1, 1919-1922, London, Oxford University Press, 1956, p.171.
21. A memorandum prepared for the French government and dated 20 December 1918, put the position as follows: 'Poland is currently an essential screen between Russian bolshevism and the German revolution. She is one of the solid links in the *cordon sanitaire* which must be stretched around diseased and contagious Russia. We cannot finish with bolshevism in any other way than by relying on Poland and making use of her armies'. Cited in Zieliński, p.69.
22. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.51.
23. Marian Orzechowski, *Rewolucja, socjalizm, tradycje, w przeszłości narodowej i tradycje w myśli politycznej rewolucyjnego nurtu polskiego ruchu robotniczego*, wydanie drugie rozszerzone, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p.207.
24. Dziewanowski, p.88.
25. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.60.
26. Cited in Adam Westoby, Robin Blick, 'Early Soviet designs on Poland', *Survey*, 26 (4), Autumn 1982, p.116.
27. Czubiński, p.57.
28. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.60.
29. Cited in Norman Davies, *White Eagle, Red Star. The Polish-Soviet War, 1919-1920*, London, Macdonald, 1972, p.138.
30. Degras, volume 1, p.90.
31. Cited in Dziewanowski, p.90.
32. Czubiński, p.65.
33. Zieliński, p.135.
34. Degras, volume 1, p.224.
35. See 'Extracts from the Theses on Tactics adopted by the Third Congress of the Communist International', Degras, volume 1, pp.241-56.
36. Degras, volume 1, pp.416-25.
37. Cited in Degras, volume 1, p.433.
38. Cited in Degras, volume 1, pp.431-3.
39. Cited in Degras, volume 1, p.375.
40. Cited in Jan de Weydenthal, *The Communists of Poland*, Stanford, Calif., Hoover Institution Press, 1978, p.18.
41. Jane Degras (ed.), *The Communist International 1919-1943. Documents*, volume 2, 1923-1928, London, Frank Cass, 1971, p.104.
42. Zieliński, p.135.
43. Bogdan Kolebacz, *Komunistyczna Partia Polski 1923-1929. Problemy ideologiczne*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p.19.

44. 'Z uchwały II Zjazdu KPRP w kwestii narodowej "Za naszą i waszą wolność", przyjętej 2 października 1923', *Dokumenty programowe*, p.159.
45. Widespread unrest in Bulgaria following the June 9 fascist coup led by Alexander Tsankov culminated in a workers' uprising during which the Bulgarian Communist Party was led by Georgi Dimitrov; in Germany, workers in Hamburg mounted an armed rebellion in October.
46. 'Manifest II Zjazdu KPRP do ludu pracującego Polski uchwalony 2 października 1923', *Dokumenty programowe*, p.155.
47. Cited in Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.84.
48. Cited in Czubiński, p.95.
49. Deutscher, p.135.
50. 'Oświadczenie delegacji KPRP przy KW MK z 25/1/1924', 'Sprawa Polska', p.377.
51. See Stalin's conclusions in the discussion within the Polish Commission created by the Comintern's Fifth Congress from 1 to 3 July 1924. 'Sprawa Polska', pp.387-91.
52. 'Sprawa Polska', pp.378-9.
53. 'Sprawa Polska', p.347.
54. 'Sprawa Polska', pp.354-70.
55. To this Molotov interjected: 'You doubt this even now?' 'Sprawa Polska', p.392.
56. 'Sprawa Polska', pp.392-3.
57. 'Sprawa Polska', pp.394-5.
58. 'Sprawa Polska', pp.352-70.
59. 'Sprawa Polska', p.386.
60. 'Sprawa Polska', pp.387-9.
61. 'Do wszystkich organizacji Komunistycznej Partii Polski', 'Sprawa Polska', p.408.
62. 'Sprawa Polska', p.405n.
63. Kolebacz, p.59. See also 'Z Uchwały III Zjazdu KPP "O bolszewizacji Partii" podjętej 27 stycznia 1925', *Dokumenty programowe*, pp.173-7.
64. Kolebacz, p.63.
65. See Kolebacz, p.87.
66. Deutscher, p.138.
67. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.142.
68. Cited in Cimek & Kieszczyński, p.143.
69. Kolebacz, pp.103-4.
70. Cited in Czubiński, p.136.
71. Kolebacz, p.127.
72. Czubiński, p.136.
73. The Piłsudski camp was termed 'middle class/democratic' by the KPP, in contrast to the 'fascist' Peasant Party, National Democratic Party and Christian Democratic Party coalition. See 'Resolution of the Seventh ECCI Plenum on the Report of the ECCI', 15 December 1926, Degras, volume 2, p.332.
74. Deutscher, p.143.
75. At the Fourteenth VKP(b) Congress Shumski declared that the KPP changed its leaders like gloves, even more frequently than in Germany. Degras, volume 2, p.334.
76. Kolebacz, p.235.
77. See Degras, volume 2, pp.332-4.
78. Deutscher, p.149.
79. Degras, volume 2, pp.334,447. See also 'Theses on the International Situation and the Tasks of the Communist International', p.462.
80. Degras, volume 2, p.462.

81. See Jeff Frieden, 'The internal politics of European Communism in the Stalin era: 1934-1949', *Studies in Comparative Communism*, 14 (1), Spring 1981, p. 48.

82. Jane Degras (ed.), *The Communist International 1919-1943. Documents*, volume 3, 1929-1943, London, Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 211.

83. Degras, volume 3, p. 211. Among the new 'minority' Central Committee was a man who was to play an important role in formulating the Polish communists' future foreign policy — Alfred Lampe.

84. 'Z uchwały IV Zjazdu KPP podjętej w sierpniu 1927 w sprawie sytuacji politycznej i zadań partii', *Dokumenty programowe*, p. 179.

85. Antony Polonsky, *Politics in Independent Poland*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1972, pp. 514-7. For a firm denial of the British Foreign Office theory see Leon Grosfeld, 'Czy Anglicy rzeczywiście byli inspiratorami przewrotu majowego?' *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, 3, 1969, pp. 675-81.

86. Cited in Czubiński, p. 176.

87. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p. 222.

3. INTERNATIONALISM IN OPPOSITION

1929-1941

Prior to 1929, the Polish party had seen its organisational integrity weakened and its ideological authority undermined. Divisions amongst the Bolshevik leadership had been faithfully reflected, but while these divisions remained, the Polish Section could at least engage in serious debate. Bukharin's defeat was followed by an effort on Stalin's part to consolidate his influence throughout the Comintern and eliminate all 'Bukharinist' influence. In the ECCI, Manuilski and Kuusinen became the leading figures, and in Poland, Leszczyński, Saul Amsterdam and the rest of the 'minority' leadership not only tied their policies as closely to Stalin's lead as possible, but also began imitating the Soviet leader's methods, continuing the fight against Warski and Koszutska and creating in the Polish party all of the characteristics of what Deutscher called the 'Stalinist inner-party regime'.

3.1 'Class Against Class'

In ideological terms, Bukharin's defeat heralded the introduction of 'class against class' or 'third period' policies into the Comintern. 'Class against class' was a reaction to the failure of the 'united front'. It held that the rise of fascism and growing economic crisis in the capitalist world was evidence of an imminent revolutionary transition from capitalism to socialism. In order to win the struggle for power, the communist movement had to go onto the offensive. But the offensive should not be aimed so much against the

fascist movements as against the socialist left, since the greatest danger to the communist victory were the nationally-minded social-democratic 'splitters' of the proletariat, labelled 'social-fascists'. There could be no compromise with the socialist parties.

The KPP introduced the 'class against class' policy into its programme at the June 1929 Central Committee Plenum, announcing that 'the PPS presents the greatest danger for the communist movement', and that the socialists were in the 'service of fascism'.² The Plenum also applied this formula to the Peasant Party (SL) which was henceforth labelled 'peasant-fascist'. In its practical impact on domestic policy, the 'class against class' line vitually repeated the earlier period of 'ultraleftism', with much the same negative results.

But the Polish party's 'crucially important position' and 'great responsibility' in this 'third period' of revolutionary struggle gave particular significance to its foreign policy which took on an aggressive new forward approach. In a bid to increase the revolutionary unrest caused by the economic catastrophe into which Germany had fallen and the rise of the Nazi movement, the KPP began a campaign of provocation. The party leadership spared little thought for the state of its own domestic political health, concentrating its energies instead on disrupting the 'imperialist' status quo. The KPP should fight the anti-German campaign of the entire nationalist, bourgeois and social-fascist press, the Central Committee resolved in April 1931. It would fight also the growing repression of the German minority in Poland.³ At the party's Fifth Congress in August the same year, the slogan of 'self-determination to the extent of cession' was extended by the KPP leadership to include the German population of the western and northern Polish border lands. Only such a radical step, the Congress declared, would counter German fascism and

encourage the revolutionary forces of the Polish and German nations.⁴

The KPP's Sixth Congress (its last) was called barely a year later in October 1932 at the height of the Nazi movement's campaign in Germany. This time, the party went even further in its German policy. As well as condemning the partitions of the Ukraine and Bielorussia, the party made clear exactly what cessions it had in mind on the German border:

With regard to Upper Silesia and the Pomeranian Corridor, the victorious Polish proletariat will annul the judgement of imperialist treaties and will guarantee the people of these lands the right to self-determination even to the point of breaking away from Poland.... With regard to Danzig, the KPP fights the yoke imposed by Poland and the League of Nations, fights the annexationist policy of Polish imperialism, and recognises the right of the people of Danzig, separated from Germany by force, to once again join with Germany.⁵

Neither the Polish state's security nor its prestige were of any importance to the KPP's leaders. There seemed to be little doubt that under the conditions proposed by the KPP, all a revolution in Germany could hope to achieve was to turn Poland into a small Soviet republic with a good deal of the native population beyond its borders. In its resolutions on the national question and Polish independence throughout the 'class against class' phase, the KPP did little to dispell these fears:

The Polish Soviet Republic will conclude a fraternal alliance with the Soviet Union and with every nation which has freed itself from capitalism, on the basis of a voluntary uniting and centralization of armed and economic forces for the fight against imperialism and for the building of a socialist economy on which is based the real independence of a proletarian state with regard to capitalist states.⁶

Among the grass roots of the KPP itself, striven as it was with sectarianism, the position of the 'ultraleftist' leadership was taken to imply an 'integral merger of Poland into the framework of the Soviet Union', as Gomułka was to later complain.⁷

3-2 'Popular Front'

Through the 'class against class' period, Manuilski, by now the most influential of the ECCI secretaries, had been slowly shifting his ground. As early as July 1930 he had headed an Italian Commission which had forced a shift away from the radical sectarianism proving so ineffective against the Italian fascist movement.^e By 1933 this evolution was quickened by the Nazi victory in Germany and the impotence of the KPD. The situation was no different in Poland where Pilsudski's increasing repression, culminating in the wholesale incarceration of his political opposition in the fortress of Brześć, saw a parallel increase in the violence of the measures being taken against the communists.

Soviet foreign policy was also undergoing a tactical turn. From the time of the revolution, the Bolshevik leaders had been acutely aware of the fact that their security depended on the Western capitalist states remaining divided among themselves. Had they been united in 1917 the Soviet state could not have survived. The 1922 Treaty of Rapallo built on this premiss in allying the new Soviet state with one of the Western capitalist powers, common in its animosity toward the other Western powers and the Versailles system, and the expansionary Polish state. This situation was disrupted by Hitler's non-aggression pact with Poland in January 1934. A new, more immediate threat to Soviet security now presented itself — a German-Polish alliance aimed directly against the USSR. The Soviet Union had to find new partners for its security and for this it again looked to the West. In 1935, the USSR entered the League of Nations. Later that year it concluded a mutual assistance pact with France.

The change in the Comintern's policy coincided with the Soviet *rapprochement* with the West. Throughout 1934, Stalin, Georgi Dimitrov, Manuilski and Kuusinen engaged in a bitter polemic with the 'ultraleftists' of the Comintern's sections, preparing for the shift in policy. By October the shift had been made. The formal ratification of the policy change came at the Comintern's Seventh (and last) World Congress in August 1935.

In stark contrast to the 'class against class' policy, the 'popular front' provided for negotiation and alliance with any political party which was anti-fascist, defence of democratic parliamentarianism before fascism, support for the League of Nations, and opposition to any threat to the prevailing territorial status quo. At issue here was 'the danger of a new world war', as one of the Congress resolutions was entitled, and in such a war, Manuilski wrote, 'the interests of the USSR determine the basic line of the world proletariat'; first among the 'main tasks for communist parties' was 'the struggle for peace and the defence of the USSR'.⁹ Retreating from their revolutionary extremism, the Comintern's sections were being returned to their 'united front' emphasis on Soviet security in a policy reminiscent of the period in which the Comintern was born.

Unlike in the KPD where Walter Ulbricht replaced the 'ultraleftist' leadership, the Comintern policy change did not bring about the usual shift in KPP leadership. Leszczyński and Amsterdam made their own U-turn and began to try to repair as many of the broken bridges they had left behind them as possible. One of the most important steps in this none too easy process was a revision of the party's stand on Poland's national interests and particularly the vital issue of Polish independence. The Seventh Comintern Congress had shown the road to follow:

The Congress warns against adopting a disparaging attitude on the question of national independence and the national sentiments of the broad masses of the people, an attitude which renders it easier for fascism to develop its chauvinist campaign, and insists on a correct and concrete application of the Leninist-Stalinist national policy. While communists are irreconcilable opponents, on principle, of bourgeois nationalism of every variety, they are by no means supporters of national nihilism, of an attitude of unconcern for the fate of their own people.¹⁰

During the remainder of 1935, the KPP launched a propaganda campaign intended to give their new policies as high a public profile as possible. Declarations, appeals, open letters, as well as the regular party press were all used to publicise the party's new positive attitude toward Polish independence, and particularly, of the threat to that independence from German fascism and the 'adventurist' nature of the Polish *Sanacja* government's pro-German foreign policy.¹¹

In February 1936, the KPP Central Committee's Fourth Plenum formalised the policy turn and went as far as issuing a party Manifesto devoted to the subject of Polish independence. The Manifesto illustrated the extent of the Polish party's recantation:

In our agitation for a people's front we have paid too little attention to the matter of Polish national independence. This has made it easier for the reactionary leaders of the Peasant Party to present communists in the eyes of the masses as an element foreign to the Polish people... We — communists, pupils of Lenin and Stalin — recognise the right of every nation to self-determination and national independence; we — communists — stand on the platform of independence for the Polish nation recognised without qualification by the Great October Revolution...; fighting against the military collusion of [Polish Foreign Minister] Beck with Hitler, our Party defends not only the peace, but also national independence, since the provocative policy of the *Sanacja* clique is sentencing Poland to a vassal dependence on hitlerite Germany....¹²

The KPP's aim, the Manifesto declared, was to create a free and independent workers' homeland — the 'Polish Socialist Soviet Republic'.¹³ Soon after the Fourth Plenum, however, slogans such as 'Polish Soviet Republic' or the 'Soviet Republic of Workers', Peasants' and Soldiers' Delegates' borrowed from the Russian Revolution began appearing less and less in the KPP's propaganda and

internal documents. Other slogans such as 'Workers'-Peasants' Poland', and finally, 'People's Poland', became more frequent.

Finally, by the time of the KPP's Fifth Plenum in February 1937, the 'internationalist' leadership's official stance on Polish independence had come full circle from the time of the 'three W' leadership period. German influence on Polish diplomacy had grown enormously, and the great Soviet fear was that Poland under its military regime would find common ground with Germany in order to threaten the Soviet Union in unison. The 1935 Mutual Assistance Pact with France had been supplemented the same year with a similar Soviet agreement with Czechoslovakia, this time conditional on France fulfilling the same obligation. Thus for the KPP leaders, the Polish government had a clear option:

The fight with the policy of national treason and with the Sanacja regime giving Poland away in a pact with Hitler, the fight for peace, for joining Poland to the agreement of peaceful states created by France, Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, is today the most effective means for the defence of Poland's independence from its one and only enemy — hitlerite Germany.¹⁴

No mention was made of the right of the western Ukraine and Bielorussia to 'self-determination to the extent of secession'. Instead, the Plenum satisfied itself with talking only of 'equal rights for all national minorities'.¹⁵

The KPP leadership under the patronage of Stalin had taken the party's foreign policy from a position of extreme, even suicidal radical internationalism, to a position in 1937 where the KPP officially recognised diplomatic means for overcoming the danger to the security of the bourgeois Polish state. Warski had taken this line earlier in a debate in the Sejm on the implications for Poland of the Locarno Treaty. He had called then for an official Polish alliance with the Soviet Union as the only way to balance the new threat from Germany. A Polish-Soviet alliance would provide greater security for

both countries, he had argued.¹⁶ Warski and his 'right deviationist' colleagues had by this time been ejected from the KPP and ECCI and had gone missing in the Soviet Union. A few months later the rest of the KPP leadership were to endure the same fate. But the foreign policy which the KPP had been following in its twilight years was to prove more durable than the party leadership itself.

3.3 Dissolution

An analysis of the development of the 'national' and 'internationalist' tendencies in Polish foreign policy would not be complete without some attention being paid to the processes and reasons for the KPP's dissolution. It is not known what lay behind Stalin's decision to eliminate the KPP. A lack of hard sources means that any attempt to explain Stalin's motivation can only be circumstantial. The theory most popular among ex-KPP members is that he had anticipated the August 1939 Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and wanted to remove any obstacles to another Soviet-German *rapprochement*.¹⁷ The Polish party may have been eliminated on the same basis as its leadership had been taken over in July 1920 by a section of the Bolshevik Central Committee. Certainly the trend in the KPP's foreign policies would not weigh against this hypothesis.

By the time the 'popular front' policies began to be implemented in the KPP's foreign policy, the 'national' leadership of the party had been drastically relegated. Its grass-roots continued, however, to be active. The subsequent development in the foreign policies of the 'internationalist' wing saw the party leadership assuming many of the foreign policy positions previously associated with the 'national'

leadership, doing nothing to discourage the activity of the 'national' grass-roots which could at last claim to represent a foreign policy that addressed the realities of the time.

But crucially, it was also a foreign policy born from the tactical flexibility exhibited by the Comintern and more especially Stalin, a flexibility matched with a strategic intransigence.¹⁹ The security of the Soviet state, its territorial security, and its prestige, were strategic goals which could not be forfeited. These were the interests which Stalin embodied, the interests of the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' which the Soviet leader was still in the process of building inside the Soviet Union. Outside the territorial control of the Soviet regime, the tactical flexibility which Stalin had exhibited in his domestic rivalry with the other Bolshevik leaders became the norm for the policies of the various Comintern sections. This flexibility had been especially apparent in the foreign policy U-turn of the Polish leadership.

Whether Leszczyński and Saul Amsterdam as leaders of the KPP would have remained faithful to Stalin through the critical events of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and Soviet invasion of the summer of 1939 is a matter of speculation.¹⁹ The severity of the accusations and sentence carried out on the KPP would suggest that Stalin felt a particular animosity toward the KPP. In his capacity as head of the Bolshevik Commissariat for Nationality Affairs, Stalin had been close to the 'Polish question' since before the creation of the KPRP. During the time of the KPRP's 'Bolshevisation', he had also taken a special interest, seeing in the Polish party's Luxemburg heritage the Polish 'variety of Trotskyism' with which he was engaged in a pitched battle.²⁰ The Luxemburg threat lost none of its immediacy in the following years. At the time Stalin began setting about his

'revolution from above' in the Soviet Union, strengthening the Soviet 'dictatorship of the proletariat' in order to build 'socialism in one country', the Polish party's by then largely incurable sectarianism continued to prompt the Soviet leader's public disparagement. Immediately prior to the KPP's Sixth Congress in October 1930, at the height of the KPP's 'class against class' campaign, Stalin made a well-known public contribution to the Polish debate in a letter to the editors of *Proletarskaia Revolutsia* in which he sharply criticised Luxemburg's contribution to revolutionary theory, linking it ideologically to 'Trotskyism'.²¹ The Sixth Congress, needless to say, became a forum for much anti-Trotsky polemic. At the same time, Leszczyński and Amsterdam kept up their campaign of vilification against the 'rightist deviation', the leaders who had defied Stalin as long ago as 1923.

1933 saw a violent increase in political repression inside the Soviet Union as Stalin began implementing his collectivisation. Along with many Ukrainian communists, KPP leaders with links to the western Ukraine were also arrested and executed.²² The official explanation for this action was given in the Comintern journal *Kommunisticheskiĭ Internatsional* in June 1935: groups in the Bielorussian and Ukrainian sections of the KPP had 'fallen victim to the pressure of local counter-revolutionary nationalism'.²³ A year earlier, at the time of the Comintern policy change to the 'popular front', even wider ranging accusations had been published in *Kommunisticheskiĭ Internatsional* by a member of the KPP leadership. In its March 1934 issue, Bronkowski wrote that 'strong traces of bourgeois nationalism' remained in the Polish party; there were members of the KPP who believed that Poland was not an 'imperialist' state but bore a semi-colonial character. Bronkowski referred also to the presence in the KPP of 'police

agents', a certain Sochacki, arrested and shot in Moscow in 1932.²⁴

The violence in the Soviet Union took a new turn in 1936. At the time of the second trial of Kamenev and Zinoviev (the first had taken place in 1935), at which they were found guilty and afterwards executed, the members of the KPP 'rightist deviation', including all the communist deputies to the Sejm, were removed from their positions and sent into the Soviet Union where in most cases contact with them was lost. The assumption at the time among the rest of the party was that they had been guilty of disagreeing with Stalin or Manuilski, of defending Trotsky or later Bukharin.²⁵ Leszczyński's view was more self-interested. He had had his internal opposition eliminated, an opposition which had never been 'Stalinist', which had instead seen its interests rooted in old Polish communist traditions and prestige. Leszczyński set out his position in an article in *Kommunisticheskii Internatsional* published in April 1936. The KPP had been penetrated by the agents of Piłsudski, he wrote, referring to the PPS-Lewica tradition in the party: 'The plan of the Piłsudski clique was to gain possession of the communist party organisationally and politically, to drive it to a position of national communism, to create a political current in it hostile to the Comintern, and at the right moment, in the event of war, to stab it in the back'.²⁶

Whether or not these accusations were actually true is less important for our purposes than the perception among the 'Stalinist' KPP leadership that they were true.²⁷ In the light of Stalin's historic concern for the viability of the Polish party as a bridge between the Soviet state and the German and wider European revolution, and taking into consideration the atmosphere of ideological and physical repression prevailing within the Soviet Union as well as the international tension outside it, the existence of a section of the

KPP 'bridge' which had at least the potential to resist the conformity of the Comintern would have been sufficient to lead to its removal. But this does not explain the wholesale dissolution of the KPP.

Leszczyński concluded his April 1936 article with a reference to the way in which 'the sectarian attitude of superciliousness towards national sentiments helped the enemies of the people for a long time to present the communist party as a force which was alien to the Polish people'.²⁸ Here he was addressing the parallel danger which faced the KPP. Although the 'national communists' had been eliminated, the party could not fall back into its old sectarian habits. These were far too close to the Luxemburg tradition and as such anathema to Stalin and the Soviet leadership. Instead, Leszczyński, Bronkowski and Amsterdam tried to keep the KPP as faithful to Stalin as it could possibly have been, questioning none of the treason accusations and death sentences, increasing in their frequency since 1932. The position was that any verdict coming from Moscow had to be justified in some way even if it did sound unlikely.²⁹ This loyalty did not, however, endear the Polish leaders to Stalin.

By the spring of 1937 the entire KPP organisation was being accused by Stalin's Chief Prosecutor, Andrei Vyshinsky, of 'Trotskyist' subversion, of being an 'agency' of Polish and German military intelligence. The Vyshinsky allegations resulted in the entire KPP Politburo, Central Committee and Secretariat being called to Moscow to face the charges of treason. Those already there, members of the Polish section of the ECCI, were the first to suffer the consequences. Leszczyński and Bronkowski, both members of the ECCI, disappeared in spring 1938. The rest of the remaining leadership followed soon after.³⁰ None of these people were ever seen again. The only Central Committee member to survive in Poland was Alfred Lampe, languishing in

a Polish jail.³¹ The ECCI followed Vyshinsky in accusing its Polish section of being under the control of 'Trotskyist, Polish military and German military agents'. The only solution, the ECCI said, was for the 'agents' to be liquidated and the section temporarily dissolved.³² Later in 1938, in a move reminiscent of the accusations aimed at the KPRP leadership in 1924 and 1925, the ECCI added to its list of accusations, charging the KPP with consciously acting to isolate itself from the masses, not allowing the normalisation of Polish-Soviet relations, and compromising the idea of revolution among the Polish proletariat.³³ From mid-1938 no references in the Comintern press were made again to the KPP.³⁴

The wholesale dissolution of the Polish party must be seen in the context of the KPP's extreme instrumentalism and Stalin's domestic and foreign policies. During the 'Great Terror' in the Soviet Union between 1936 and 1938, over a million VKP(b) members had fallen victim to Stalin's domestic consolidation.³⁵ Parallel to this, in his foreign policy, the Soviet leader now put more faith in his ability to manipulate the diplomatic cut and thrust of inter-state relations, and accordingly, demoted the Comintern as an element contributing to the unity of the Anti-Comintern Pact and the distrust of the Western powers. Its headquarters was moved from the centre to the outskirts of Moscow and its organisation was almost entirely assimilated into the VKP(b) Central Committee, with policies, finances and personnel becoming the responsibility of the appropriate Soviet department. The Central Committee Polish section was given over to the wife of Felix Dzierżyński, Zofia, and their son, Jan.³⁶ Not only the Polish members disappeared from the Comintern's staff. Many of its Estonian, Latvian, Finnish, Hungarian and Yugoslavian members were also removed, including the 'ultraleftist' Bela Kun and many of the staff of the

Comintern's Lenin School.³⁷

In demoting the Comintern Stalin also demoted the traditional role played by its Polish section. In 1937 there seemed little need for a revolutionary bridge between the Soviet state and the German revolution when instead of revolution in Germany the firm belief among the Soviet leadership was that Hitler would start a war somewhere in Europe, and most likely against the Soviet Union. The KPP had reflected this fear in its constant reiteration of the need to defend the Soviet Union against the interventionary war which threatened it.³⁸ At the same time, in its foreign policy the KPP had been transformed from a revolutionary party into a submissive 'Stalinist' creation, a more or less mainstream left pressure group criticising state foreign policy from the point of view of the realities of state diplomacy; and at this it was demonstratively ineffective. While there remained considerable doubt as to the KPP's usefulness, matched by some doubt as to the party's integrity, Stalin's need for another obstacle to his European diplomacy dwindled rapidly. From the Polish communists' point of view, the party's dissolution became the ultimate reminder of the priority of the 'Russian and German Affairs', the greatest test of the Soviet party's moral authority and of their own internationalist responsibilities.

The actual dissolving of the KPP was less simple than the elimination of its leading organs. Few KPP members in Poland believed that Stalin could have resorted to such a step and instead treated the talk of dissolution as a Polish government provocation.³⁹ A provisional leadership was independently created and the party continued functioning. This was no satisfactory solution for the Soviet leadership. Several trusted ex-KPP members fighting in the Dąbrowski International Brigade in the Spanish Civil War were brought

to Paris by the ECCI; others were brought from Poland. From here they were instructed to return to Poland and inform the membership of the party that it could no longer function as a communist organisation. Resistance to this message continued, however, even after the provisional leadership had capitulated and sent instructions to dissolve the organisation down to its local cells. Faced with an impasse, and against the express instructions of the ECCI that nothing be committed to paper, the Paris messengers decided in August 1938 to issue a statement:

...anyone disobeying [the Comintern's] decision and not abandoning the party organisation will be treated as an enemy spy and a police agent...;
...anyone organising a party outside the Comintern will be treated as an *agent provocateur*.⁴⁰

The warning spelt the end of any formal Polish communist party continuing to exist. Informally, communists continued to function in the expectation that the Polish party might at some stage be reconstituted by the Comintern.

3.4 Interregnum

After the dissolution of the KPP, Polish communists operating in Paris and Moscow under the aegis of the Comintern continued directly along the same foreign policy path set for the KPP in its final years. There was no break in continuity; the Polish communists' internationalist responsibilities continued to be presented under the rubric of their previous national profile. In Moscow, the albeit downgraded Polish section in the Soviet Central Committee continued to operate under the direction of Zofia and Jan Dzierżyński; while in Paris, many of the remaining Polish communists recently fighting in

the international brigades in Spain joined their leaders in charge of completing the final dissolution of the old KPP and together with the Comintern representative Bogdanov established what was known as the 'Initiative Group'. In January, the group began publishing a gazette, the *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Information Bulletin) in which they set out their foreign policy programme.⁴¹ In the first issue of *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, the group published a policy statement entitled: 'Where is Poland Heading':

In the war against the Soviet Union, which is the main aim of hitlerism, other non-socialist nations will also fall. They will fall without a doubt if they don't in good time come out to defend their independence, if they don't in their own time decisively come out against the danger of the Tuetonic disease. In this war, if we are not able to confront it with a wall of united, free nations before it even begins, we will all become the slaves of Hitler, who wants to... destroy the freedom and fortune of socialist peoples.⁴²

The interests of Soviet diplomacy in the Polish communist propaganda were immediately apparent.

The threat posed by the Anti-Comintern Pact (which Hungary had joined in February 1939) had been increased by the Munich Agreement of 29 September 1938. Here was confirmation of the Soviet suspicion that the Western allies were not serious in their intention of preventing German aggression against the Soviet Union. The 'wall of united, free nations' to be created 'in good time' reflected the difficulties being encountered in the Soviet Union's diplomacy with France and Britain, both of which were reluctant to involve the Soviet Union in their policy decisions, and whose diplomatic efforts to offset the German threat the Soviet leaders regarded as less than satisfactory. Prior to April 1939, the option which Soviet diplomacy had been consistently favouring since 1935 was an alliance of common security with the Western powers against the German aggressor and against the threat of a Polish-German military pact. With the change in the German attitude

toward Poland, however, the British and French guarantees for Poland without Soviet participation and finally, Hitler's annulling of the January 1934 Polish-German non-aggression pact, a second Soviet option came into play. Should the war be an 'imperialist' war between the Western states and Germany, Molotov had suggested in November 1938, then the Soviet Union would not involve itself. The door to a Soviet-German *rapprochement* had been left open. It was an opportunity which Hitler took up in July and August 1939.

The Soviet leadership did not immediately commit itself to the German option. Its doors for the time being also remained open to Western collective security. On 16 May 1939, a decision was made by the ECCI to call together Zofia Dzierżyńska and several other Polish communists resident in the Soviet capital in an effort to formulate an official Polish communist response to the German threat. There is some indication that this was an attempt to recreate the Polish party.⁴³ At a meeting held a few days later, it was decided that 'in the current situation the most important, most vital task standing before the Polish proletariat and the whole nation — is the defence of Poland's independence'. Efforts toward the creation of a common security pact in Europe, as well as the basing of Poland's relations with the Soviet Union on the principles of 'friendship and neighbourly cooperation' were stated as being the most important foreign policy tasks facing Poland in its present predicament.⁴⁴

The policy established at this meeting was outstripped very shortly by events. Polish independence was tied to the wider considerations of the collective security option in Soviet foreign policy. Poland's participation in the Western alliance would have removed the threat that close Polish-German ties posed to Soviet security. In this case, a new Polish communist party continuing the independence policy — if

this is what the ECCI had intended — might have contributed to the Soviet presentation of their goodwill toward the Polish authorities. Stalin had made much of this point in his speech to the Eighteenth VKP(b) Congress on March 10. Outlining Soviet foreign policy, he had included in the Soviet list of policy priorities 'peaceful, intimate and good neighbourly relations with all neighbour countries having a common border with the USSR'.⁴⁵

During the spring and summer of 1939, talks were being held in Moscow between representatives of the British, French and Soviet General Staffs on the details of a possible anti-German military pact. Part of the Soviet position in the negotiations was that the Red Army be given transit rights across Poland to allow a forward defence in the event of a German offensive through Poland. In late May the Polish government refused its permission. The effect of this was to delay any attempt to arrange a large-scale remobilisation of the Polish communists, if indeed this had been the original intention of the Moscow May meeting. As it was, with the meeting's resolution having been made irrelevant, it, or the fact that the meeting had at ever taken place, was never communicated to the communists within Poland.⁴⁶

The continuing Western military procrastination and firm Polish refusal to allow Soviet transit in the event of German aggression made the Soviet leaders more amenable to the German request for an agreement when it came. Instead of the threat of a German attack against the Soviet Union with the tacit support of the Western states, the clear implication of the Munich Agreement for the Soviet side, the reverse was now achieved, with a guarantee that if it finally came to war with Germany, the Western states would already be involved, and the full force of the attack would not fall on the Soviet Union.⁴⁷

On August 23, Molotov⁴⁸ and Ribbentrop signed the Soviet-German

non-aggression pact. Article two of the secret protocol to this pact read as follows:

In the event of a territorial and political rearrangement of the areas belonging to the Polish State, the spheres of influence of Germany and the USSR will be bounded approximately by the line of the rivers Narev, Vistula and San. The questions, whether the interests of both parties make desirable the maintenance of an independent Polish State, and how such a State should be bounded, can only be definitely determined in the course of further political developments. In the event, both Governments will resolve this question by means of a friendly agreement.⁴⁹

Poland was to be once again split, with about 80,000 square miles falling to the Soviet Union. For the Red Army to have established a Soviet territory reaching the Narwa, Vistula and San rivers as stipulated in the pact, however, would have meant the possibility of the Soviet Union coming immediately into conflict with Poland's Western allies, something Stalin did not want. Instead of taking up the agreed positions, Soviet troops pulled back to a line approximating the proposed Curzon armistice line in the 1920 Polish-Soviet war. Stalin in this way retained the argument that he was looking after the national interests of the Bielorussian and Ukraine peoples. This quickly became the official line of the Comintern.⁵⁰

The onset of the real war also brought a change in Comintern policy. The 'imperialist rivalry' theory having proven correct, the extension of the theory called for communist parties to once again take the lead in the fight against social-democracy, and unite the working class for a revolutionary outcome to the capitalist conflict. In an article in *Kommunisticheskiĭ Internatsional* in November, Dimitrov, General Secretary of the ECCI, codified this new 'proletarian front' policy. Dimitrov characterised the 'imperialist war' as 'a straightforward continuation of the battle between the capitalist powers over a new division of the world, over domination of the world'. The new policy was seen as a direct antecedent of the

model established by the First World War, following which civil war had become the road to power for the Bolsheviks. Poland was seen as the state 'which the British and French imperialists had established as an outpost against the land of the Soviets, and by whose hand they wanted in 1920 to strangle the young Soviet Republic'. Dimitrov then explained the 'Germano-Soviet Amity and Frontier Treaty': 'In these conditions, the Soviet Union, pursuing its own independent policy, a policy dictated by the interests of socialism, which coincide with the interests of the working people of all lands, undertook resolute measures to ensure peace throughout the East of Europe'. As the 'impregnable fortress' and 'vanguard' of socialism, Dimitrov wrote, the USSR called for the creation of the 'proletarian united fighting front from below' in the knowledge that its own power strengthened the confidence of the proletariat of all the capitalist countries.⁵¹

For the Polish communists who now found themselves on land occupied either by the Soviet or German authorities, the significance of the new Comintern policy was minimal. The KPP remained an officially proscribed organisation in Soviet eyes. Those communists already in the regions occupied by the Red Army after September 17 were treated as part of the potential dissident section of the population and deported along with the remaining 'anti-Soviet element'; those who at the time of the German invasion had been in Polish jails and had fled eastward into the Soviet zone, were regarded with equal distrust and suspicion and had no influence whatsoever.⁵² The organisation of the newly occupied regions relied solely on Red Army commanders, Soviet security personnel and political workers brought in from outside.⁵³ The attitude toward Poles in general was one of contempt and suspicion, and this included the communists whose reputation was well remembered by the purged Soviet military and security apparatus. On

the German side, the communists were scattered among a small number of organisationally and ideologically diverse groups often including radical peasant or socialist activists. Not until the summer of 1940, and the fall of France, were the communists in either the Soviet or German zones given any internationalist encouragement from the Soviet leadership.

3.5 Reconstruction

The centres of activity of those recently freed from Polish prisons were in Lwów, Wilno, Białystok and Minsk.⁵⁴ From here they sent letters to Stalin and Dimitrov calling for a revival of the Polish party; the letters were left unanswered and all political activity was discouraged.⁵⁵ Any intention the Soviet leadership had of re-establishing the Polish party from the Initiative Group in Paris was for the time being abandoned and in early 1940 the leaders of the group were brought to Moscow. The only person accepted by the Soviet authorities was not even a KPP member but a communist aligned member of the PPS, a writer and wife of the Ukrainian dramatist and party official Alexander Korniejchuk — Wanda Wasilewska.⁵⁶ Wasilewska met for the first time with Stalin in March 1940. She was then deputised to the Supreme Soviet. Another appeal by Wasilewska and Alfred Lampe directly to Stalin in the autumn of 1940 brought more concrete results. Teams of Soviet officials representing the Comintern⁵⁷ began to vet the Polish communists in the four main cities, eventually bringing a number of them to a Comintern school at Pushkino near Moscow. These included Marcełi Nowotko, Paweł Finder and Bolesław Mołojec, commander of the Dąbrowski International Brigade in Spain and

leader of the Paris Initiative Group. Director of the Polish section at the Pushkino school was Jakub Berman. In the spring of 1941 the ex-KPP members who had passed the vetting commissions began to be accepted into the VKP(b). By June, about a dozen had been accepted.⁵⁸ At the same time, regular publications issued by the communists began to appear in Lwów, the most important under the editorial direction of Wasilewska, *Nowe Widnokreghi* (New Horizons).⁵⁹

On the German side, without Comintern support and operating in an atmosphere of deep suspicion and fear of penetration by the Gestapo, the sectarianism resulting from the 'national'/'internationalist' leadership split continued unabated. 'Ultraleftist' internationalism remained tightly bound to the idea of a Polish Soviet Socialist Republic. 'National' policies were much closer to the 'national communism' of Warski and Koszutska.

A good example of the latter was the earliest published document issued by a communist-aligned group in the German zone, produced in February 1940 and written by ex-KPP members who had returned from the occupied Soviet zone. They formed the communist leadership of an 'anti-fascist group' operating in Cracow known by the name of its underground publication *People's Poland*.⁶⁰ The declaration began with the group's principal goal of attaining a Polish Socialist Republic based on undisputed ethnic territories. Such a republic would be allied to the other 'people's republics' of Europe, particularly with its Slavic neighbours. Real Polish independence could only be achieved, the declaration continued, by a social revolution in all the capitalist states; a return to Poland's pre-war capitalist system would see Poland again a central European colony of one or other imperialist power.⁶¹ The declaration based itself firmly on the line of the KPRP's Second Congress. Poland's position in Europe led

People's Poland to assume a colonial future, or at least imperfect independence, in any situation where socialist revolution failed to be comprehensive, including in its momentum all the European capitalist states. Without this type of comprehensive working class internationalism, reminiscent of Trotsky's ideological dispute with Stalin, Poland would again be stuck between one system in the west and another in the east, caught in its traditional pattern of geopolitical impotence. Alliance with the central European Slavic nations, in their new incarnations as 'people's states', would go some way toward overcoming this effect. No mention is made in the declaration of alliance with the Soviet Union. Instead, emphasis is placed on 'the principle of national equality and self-determination'.⁶²

In contrast, the 'internationalist' wing of the old party continued to demand strict allegiance to the 'vanguard detachment' of the international proletariat — the USSR. Even here, however, the attitudes of the Polish communists were by no means uniform. One group gathered around the publication *Czyn Chłopsko-Robotniczy* (Peasant and Workers' Action), in March 1941 printed an article in which it called for the Polish socialist masses to support the capitalist states fighting against Germany, as 'from a general point of view, a victory by Hitler would mean catastrophe for our civilisation and would be the beginning of a barbaric decline in all areas of social life'.⁶³ Another of the main Warsaw groups, Union of Workers' and Peasants' Councils, better known by the title of its publication *Młot i Sierp* (Hammer and Sickle), interpreted the Comintern 'proletarian front' policy as intending to create a 'Polish Soviet Republic' within a larger 'International Soviet Republic'.⁶⁴

Amongst all the groups, a widespread belief was that Moscow would take the initiative and enter the war with Germany at a decisive

moment thereby predetermining its revolutionary outcome and heralding the revival of the Polish party. Hitler's invasion in June 1941 reversed the initial prognosis but many Polish communists now saw their long-term hopes being fulfilled. Prior to the invasion, the underground publishing activity of the Polish communist groups had increased dramatically. Now this press was unanimous in its condemnation of the fascist attack against the 'impregnable fortress of socialism'.

The impact of the German invasion on the programmatic positions of the Polish communists in the Soviet Union was almost immediate. The Comintern was forced to yet again change its strategy; survival now became far more important than the overthrow of capitalism. The 'proletarian front' policy was changed to the 'broadest national united front', the 'national front' for short.⁶⁵ In Lwów, the Polish language newspaper of the local Ukrainian Communist Party, *Czerwony Sztandar* (The Red Banner), the day before it ceased publication, published an article on June 26 written by Władysław Bieńkowski, under the title: 'There is only one road'. Later close to the 'national' Gomulka wing of the PPR, Bieńkowski appealed to the one hundred and fifty year old Polish tradition of not only fighting for the nation's own independence but also for the freedom of others, the 'For Our Freedom and Yours' slogan of the KPRP's resolution on the national question ratified at the party's Second Congress.⁶⁶ Patriotism now became the key to the Polish communist movement's revival.

In September 1941, three Warsaw groups, including a radical socialist group, joined forces to create the Union of the Liberation Struggle (ZWW).⁶⁷ One of the leading groups of its time, and with leaders who would soon become prominent in the PPR, the ZWW represented a policy of complete adherence to the new Comintern line.

Its propaganda was based on the programmes transmitted from Moscow via a Polish language radio station established in August calling itself 'Tadeusz Kościuszko', and staffed by the Moscow based Polish communists and radical intelligentsia.⁶⁸

The most often repeated formula of the Kościuszko radio station was the call for the onset of a partisan campaign behind German lines for the liberation of an independent Polish state and to aid the Red Army.⁶⁹ The partisan struggle was to take place within a broad national front incorporating the socialist left with the objective of resurrecting an independent and democratic Poland; no mention was made in the radio station's propaganda or the ZWW's policies, of a Soviet Poland.⁷⁰ On the matter of Poland's eastern borders, the ZWW press organ, *Zwycięzimy* (We Will Win), continued the policy established in Dimitrov's November 1939 article explaining the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, that the pre-1939 borders had been imposed on the Soviet Union by Poland during the 'imperialist war' of 1920. The changes which had taken place since 1939, therefore, were nothing other than the return of non-Polish lands to their rightful occupants. This would allow, *Zwycięzimy* continued, relations between Poland and its eastern neighbours to be maintained in the future on the basis of 'free with free and equal with equal'.⁷¹

In December 1941, the ZWW held a conference in Warsaw at which it ratified a resolution calling for 'all existing groups and organisations of workers, peasants and intelligentsia standing on the basis of the carrying out of the Polish-Soviet Agreement to gather around the ZWW' in a united front undisturbed by leadership ambitions. Total support, indeed 'adoration', for the efforts of the Red Army was expressed in the resolution. Lastly, the resolution called on Britain and America to open a second front against Germany as soon as

possible.⁷²

Polish communist support for the Soviet Union could at last claim a measure of legitimacy once the Polish government in London led by General Sikorski on 30 July signed an agreement with the Soviet government re-establishing diplomatic links broken following the Soviet entry into Poland in September 1939. Up till that time, Polish communists had opposed the Polish government's policy of considering itself at war not only with Germany, but also with the Soviet Union. Poland's 'two enemies' had become the slogan for the mass Polish underground with only the communists taking an actively contrary position.

The first article of the agreement annulled all Soviet-German treaties from 1939 relating to territorial changes in Poland, but a good deal of ambiguity remained in the light of the western Ukraine and Bielorussia having already been 'democratically' incorporated into the Soviet state. In response to this ambiguity, Eden refused to give any guarantee for Poland's future borders, signalling his tacit understanding of the Soviet position and leaving the question open, presumably to be decided by the course of the war. And indeed, this was Stalin's intention also. While Soviet foreign policy worked toward the creation of a string of alliances strengthening the Soviet position in the war with Germany, the Soviet leadership at the same time took concrete steps in anticipation of a German defeat and a new realignment of power in Europe.

While the negotiations with the Polish government were being conducted in London, measures were being undertaken in the Soviet Union to recreate a Polish communist party. In July 1941, through the auspices of Zofia and Jan Dzierżyński, Dimitrov established a new 'Initiative Group' from the Polish communists gathered in the

Comintern's Pushkino school, prior to its transferal to Ufa.⁷³ As one Polish writer puts it, 'their task was to be to create a new Marxist-Leninist party in occupied Poland'.⁷⁴ What was meant by 'Marxist-Leninist party' soon became clear. In line with the Comintern's 'national front' policy, the new party was to be presented as a patriotic organisation bringing together under communist leadership as many left radical groups as possible. There was to be no return to the sectarian profile of the old KPP, nor indeed could there be in the light of the charges which had ended the KPP's political life. Instead, the party took a new name intended to emphasise its links with the Polish working class; just as important was the need to distance itself from the national and international stigma attached to the worst Soviet abuses of the Comintern's section system. The new party was to be called the Polish Workers' Party (PPR).⁷⁵

The leaders of the new party were three ex-KPP members: Marcell Nowotko, ten years in Polish jails; Bolesław Molojec; and Pawel Finder, an intellectual with several years of work with the Austrian and French communist parties. The first two attempts to fly the eleven members of the Initiative Group into Poland in September failed, and the group moved to Ufa out of reach of the German advance. On 28 December a second flight was attempted, this time successfully. Another group was flown in a few days later, and a third in June 1942.⁷⁶

In establishing official relations with the Polish government in London, and at the same time recreating the Polish communist party and sending to Poland the leaders of the PPR, Stalin was operating a dual track Polish policy. On the one hand good official relations with the Western powers and the Polish government needed to be maintained for the sake of the anti-German war effort. These good relations would

inevitably mean that Poland as a national state would have to be reconstituted at the conclusion of the war. The British and French had, after all, preferred to go to war with Germany with Poland as their ally rather than with the Soviet Union, and if their support was to be ensured through the years of struggle then the Polish cause needed to be favoured. At the same time, there was every reason why the Polish state to be re-created following the war should be particularly influenced by the policy of the 'national front'. Only a government dominated by a party or parties willing to do business with the Soviet Union would accept the territorial changes which the Soviet leadership had already indicated it took almost for granted. It was most unlikely, on their past form, that the leaders of the Polish government in London would be so inclined.

In the period from July 1941 when the PPR Initiative Group was created, to December when the group was successfully flown to Poland, official relations between Poland and the Soviet Union deteriorated significantly. Across the Soviet Union hundreds of thousands of Poles began to migrate southward on the news that a Polish army was to be formed and an 'amnesty' had been issued by the Supreme Soviet for all Poles in the USSR.⁷⁷ Administering this migration proved to be almost impossible. The Soviet authorities were not able to provide adequate records of the Poles deported into the interior of the country, and to complicate matters the population of the territories incorporated into Soviet Ukraine and Bielorussia was no longer being regarded as citizens of the Polish state. Many of the Polish army officers listed as missing by the Polish authorities had already been eliminated and could not be accounted for by Moscow; and to cap matters off, very little responsibility was accepted on the Soviet side for equipping or quartering the Polish soldiers forming themselves into combat units.

Already by August 1941 relations had become brittle and only got worse in the following months. By November it had been decided that Sikorski would go to Moscow for direct talks with Stalin on the whole range of issues, but particularly on the subject of the Polish military formations whose plight was becoming desperate. Three days prior to his arrival the Soviet side provided some added pressure.

On November 27 in Saratov, a meeting of Polish communists was broadcast by Kościuszko and Soviet radio. Taking part were Wasilewska, Stefan Jędrychowski, Jerzy Putrament, Wiktor Grosz and others from the communist community previously gathered in Lwów. During the course of the broadcast, Wasilewska and the others presented an alternative political programme to that represented by the London government, one of firm friendship and cooperation with the Soviet authorities and of enthusiastic participation in the war on the Soviet front. The speakers also foresaw the creation of an organisation representing the left orientation among the Polish 'emigration' in the USSR, in direct competition with the consular posts of the Polish government.⁷⁹ This was the first time that the Polish communist group represented by these participants had been given such a high profile by the Soviet authorities. The actual creation of the left organisation mentioned would not come until 1943 but it was clear from this meeting that Stalin's official relationship with the Polish government now had an alternative which could be activated at any time, an alternative which represented the culmination of the Polish communists' internationalist development: their reincarnation as a political force representing the Polish national state.

Notes

1. Isaac Deutscher, 'The tragedy of the Polish Communist Party', *The Socialist Register 1982*, The Merlin Press, pp. 151, 153. At the KPP's Sixth Congress at Mogilev in October 1930, Leszczyński made the following characterisation of the recent 'majority': 'Right opportunism has fused with Trotskyism on a programme calling for a compromise with the social-democrats and a joint struggle against fascism... The moral and political responsibility for the existence of this group lies with Warski and Kostrzewa'. Cited in Jane Degras (ed.), *The Communist International 1919-1943. Documents*, volume 3, 1929-1943, London, Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 212.
2. Cited in Henryk Cimek, Lucjan Kieszczyński, *Komunistyczna Partia Polski 1918-1938*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p. 223.
3. Degras, volume 3, p. 212.
4. 'Wyjaśnienie Sekretarza Generalnego KC PPR Władysława Gomułka w związku z jego referatem i projektem rezolucji Biura Politycznego', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 34, 1975, p. 79. At its Third Congress, the KPRP had extended its 'self-determination' slogan to include Lithuania, but had excluded the Jewish and German nations as peoples spread throughout the Polish population. Cimek & Kieszczyński, p. 112.
5. Cited in Antoni Czubiński, *Komunistyczna Partia Polski (1918-1938). Zarys historii*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1985, p. 221.
6. Cited in 'Wyjaśnienie', p. 80.
7. 'Wyjaśnienie', p. 80.
8. Jeff Frieden, 'The internal politics of European Communism in the Stalin era: 1934-1949', *Studies in Comparative Communism*, 14 (1), Spring 1981, p. 53.
9. 'Extracts from a resolution of the Seventh Comintern Congress on the danger of a new world war', Degras, volume 3, pp. 370-5.
10. 'Extracts from the resolution of the Seventh Congress on fascism, working-class unity and the tasks of the Comintern', Degras, volume 3, p. 366.
11. Józef Kowalski, *Komunistyczna Partia Polski 1935-1938. Studium historyczne*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1975, pp. 291-4. See also Maria Meglicka, 'Prasa Komunistycznej Partii Polski w latach 1918-1938', *Z dziejów polskiej prasy robotniczej 1879-1948*, Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1983, pp. 140-1.
12. Cited in Czubiński, p. 244.
13. Czubiński, p. 244.
14. Cited in 'Wyjaśnienie', p. 81.
15. Kowalski, *Komunistyczna Partia*, p. 337.
16. See Cimek & Kieszczyński, p. 140, on this point.
17. Deutscher, p. 157. Contemporary Polish histories of the KPP do not enter into this area in any depth. Even though Cimek and Kieszczyński break a lot of new ground in providing information on the KPP's links with the Comintern, they do not present any analysis of the party's dissolution; Czubiński ignores the area altogether; and J. Kowalski cites only the official positions of the Twentieth CPSU Congress and 1956 PZPR Congress rehabilitating the party.
18. See Frieden, pp. 66-7, for an expression of this point.
19. Deutscher thinks Leszczyński and Amsterdam would have remained faithful in the same way as the leaders of the French and German parties had. Deutscher, pp. 157-8.
20. Deutscher, p. 158.

21. 'Some questions concerning the history of bolshevism. Letter to the Editorial Board of the Magazine "Proletarskaia Revolutsia", *J. V. Stalin. Works*, volume 13, July 1930-January 1934, Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1955, pp.93-103.

22. At this time the Polish autonomous region within the Soviet Ukraine, Marchlevsk, was eliminated and its population deported to a region in the Soviet Far East. Cezary Baryka, 'Polish Communists, 1937-1944', *Survey*, 26 (4), Autumn 1982, p. 132.

23. Cited in Degras, volume 3, p. 317.

24. Degras, volume 3, p. 317.

25. Baryka, p. 133.

26. Degras, volume 3, p. 387.

27. In his ECCI report to the Eighteenth VKP(b) Congress in March 1939, Manuilski explained the decision in the following way: 'Agents of Polish fascism had succeeded in gaining positions of leadership in the [Polish] Communist Party. These scoundrels had tried to drag the party into supporting Pilsudski's fascist *coup d'état* in May 1926. After they had failed in this, they pretended to repent of their error, made a show of self-criticism, deceived the Comintern.... It was the fault of the Comintern workers that they allowed themselves to be deceived by class enemies'. Degras, volume 3, p. 418.

28. Degras, volume 3, p. 387.

29. Czubiński, p. 264.

30. Degras, volume 3, p. 418.

31. Julian Brun also survived in Paris where the KPP Politburo had been based. See Andrzej Korboński, 'The Polish Communist Party 1938-1942', *The American Slavic and East European Review*, 26 (3), September 1967, p. 431.

32. Czubiński, p. 264. See also Kowalski, *Komunistyczna Partia*, pp. 381-2. In fact, the ECCI resolution abolishing the KPP was never published and no specific date for the dissolution has ever been established. Korboński, p. 431.

33. Czubiński, p. 267.

34. Degras, volume 3, p. 418.

35. Roy Medvedev, *On Stalin and Stalinism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1979, p. 102.

36. Degras, volume 3, p. 418.

37. Degras, volume 3, p. 418.

38. See E. H. Carr, 'From Munich to Moscow', *Soviet Studies*, 1 (1), June 1949, p. 11, on this point. See also Juliusz Bardach, 'Trudne lata KPP', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, 64 (3), 1967, p. 713.

39. Korboński, p. 431.

40. Cited in Baryka, p. 138. See also Marian Malinowski, 'Grupa Inicjatywna Polskiej Partii Robotniczej', *Z Pola Walki*, 4, 1965, p. 57.

41. Marian Malinowski, 'Kształtowanie się założeń programowych polskiego ruchu komunistycznego w latach 1939-1942', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, pp. 20-1.

42. *Biuletyn Informacyjny* (Paris), 1, 1939, in Antoni Przygoński, *Z zagadnień strategii frontu narodowego PPR, 1942-1945*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1976, p. 15.

43. See Malinowski, 'Kształtowanie', p. 22. See also Przygoński, p. 15. In a secret resolution on 26 May 1939, the ECCI indicated that it favoured creating a new Polish section purged of all its suspect members. Korboński, p. 432.

44. 'Rezolucja narady', Przygoński, pp. 15-6.

45. 'Report to the Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolshevik) on the work of the Central Committee (March 10, 1939)', Bruce Franklin (ed.), *The Essential Stalin. Major Theoretical Writings 1905-52*, London, Croom Helm, 1973, p.345.
46. Przygoński, p.16.
47. For an expression of this point, see E.H.Carr, 'From Munich to Moscow — II', *Soviet Studies*, 1 (2), October 1949, p.103.
48. Litvinov, a supporter of the collective security option, had resigned on May 3 and was succeeded as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs by Molotov.
49. Cited in Bronisław Kuśnierz, *Stalin and the Poles*, London, Hollis and Carter, 1949, pp.30-1.
50. See 'Extracts from the ECCI Manifesto on the 22nd anniversary of the Russian Revolution', Degras, volume 3, p.445.
51. 'Extracts from an article by Georgi Dimitrov on the tasks of the working class in the war', Degras, volume 3, pp.448-57.
52. Czesław Lewandowski, *Koncepcja jedności narodowej i frontu narodowego w myśli politycznej komunistów polskich w okresie II Wojny Światowej*, Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis, no.429. Nauki polityczne 15. Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1979, p.36. See also Maria Turlejska, 'Za Bugiem', *Polityka*, 21 May 1964.
53. Wiktor Sukiennicki, 'The establishment of the Soviet regime in Eastern Poland in 1939', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 23, July 1963, p.199.
54. Marian Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland* (2nd ed), Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1976, p.158. See also Fryderyk Zbiniewicz, 'Rola komunistów polskich w organizowaniu i działalności Związku Patriotów Polskich oraz Polskich Sił Zbrojnych w ZSRR (maj 1942-lipiec 1944r)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, pp.88-9.
55. Rozalia Lampe, 'Do redakcji "Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego"', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, pp.355,359.
56. See Rozalia Lampe, p.359. Also in the main areas of communist activity were many radical Polish intellectuals, artists, writers and actors, not necessarily keeping any contact with the old KPP activ, but providing the radical atmosphere in which the communists were to regain their influence.
57. According to an Italian member of the ECCI, the Comintern after April 1940 was 'merely a building, a name, and a few hundred employees who move papers around, nothing more'. Degras, volume 3, p.471.
58. Rozalia Lampe, pp.356-7. See also Maria Turlejska, 'Komuniści polscy w ZSRR a powstanie PPR', *Polityka*, 15 May 1965.
59. Lewandowski, pp.36-7. See also Zbiniewicz, p.89.
60. *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, pp.450-1n. See also Lewandowski, p.35.
61. 'Deklaracja', February 1940, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, pp.449-50.
62. 'Deklaracja', p.449.
63. 'Drogi do Zwycięstwa', *Czyn Chłopsko-Robotniczy*, 18 (1), March 1941, in *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, pp.454-5.
64. 'Do robotników i chłopów Polski. Odezwa programowa Centralnego Komitetu Rewolucyjnych Rad Robotniczo-Chłopskich Polski', *Młot i Sierp*, February 1941, in *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, p.452.
65. Degras, volume 3, p.472.
66. Cited in Lewandowski, p.39. *Czerwony Sztandar* had on its editorial team such figures as Wasilewska, Roman Werfel, Marian Naszkowski and Wiktor Grosz.

67. PPR. *Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, p. 468n. The name and acronym was very close to that of the predecessor of the Polish underground Home Army — the Union of Armed Struggle or ZWZ.

68. With the advance of the German army, Comintern headquarters moved to Ufa where it became known as 'Scientific Institute no. 205'. Degras, volume 3, p. 472. The Polish communists, retreating along with the Comintern, went either to Ufa, or to Saratov or Kuibyshev. The radio station retreated with them. See Turlejska, 'Komuniści polscy'. See also Józef Kowalski, 'Rozgłośnia im. Tadeusza Kościuszki', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, p. 327n.

69. Lewandowski, p. 40.

70. See Malinowski, 'Kształtowanie się', pp. 37-9.

71. Cited in Lewandowski, p. 45.

72. 'Uchwała okręgowej konferencji ZWW w Warszawie', *Zwyciężymy*, 1 January 1942, in PPR. *Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, pp. 470-1.

73. Malinowski, 'Kształtowanie się', p. 40.

74. Przygoński, p. 43.

75. The naming of the new party gave rise to a dispute among the members of the Initiative Group, several of whom preferred the new party to bear the slogan of the latter period of the KPP's activity — the 'Polish Worker-Peasant Party'. In the event, the deadlock was broken by Dimitrov who favoured the PPR label. Korboński, p. 440.

76. Baryka, p. 146. See also Korboński, pp. 440-1.

77. Article 4 of the July 30 Polish-Soviet Agreement read: 'The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics expresses its consent to the formation on the territory of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of a Polish Army under a commander appointed by the Government of the Republic of Poland, in agreement with the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics'. Horak, p. 175.

78. Jacek Ślusarczyk, *Polityka rządu generała Wł. Sikorskiego wobec ZSRR*, Warszawa, Instytut Krajów Socjalistycznych PAN, 1985, pp. 78-9.

4. PATRIOTISM AND THE POLISH WORKERS' PARTY

From January 1942 until July 1944, the PPR established a foreign policy climate which sought to marry the two tendencies in its political heritage. It had been given a high level patriotic profile which encouraged the development of policies previously seen in the 'national' positions of the KPP; at the same time, its *raison d'être* was to provide for an internationalist alternative in domestic Polish politics, and help to establish a Soviet aligned government following the allied victory over Germany. The PPR's balance between these tendencies was to become the same as had earlier been fought for by the 'national' leaders of the KPRP. Organisationally, the new party was built along classic communist lines, with its greatest 'national' input eventually to be seen in its domestic tactics. On foreign policy there was no question as to the internationalist priority.

PPR foreign policy had no alternative to the internationalist tendency. The 'national' position of the KPRP had been a higher profile concern for Polish independence and national interests, a reaction against the radical internationalism which identified the Polish proletarian revolution with a Soviet Republic and incorporation into the Soviet Union. Now Polish national interests had been brought into the post-'popular front' internationalist mainstream and was taken for granted in Polish communist foreign policy. The future Polish state's security was to be reliant on an alliance with the USSR, a position the KPP had made its own prior to dissolution. Territorial security was now to be based on an acceptance of the status quo established by the USSR after 17 September 1939. And so the issue which the PPR saw as its earliest challenge was that of the new

party's prestige and the credibility of the internationalist option being offered.

4.1 Comintern and Credibility

At the beginning of 1942, the indications were that cooperation between the Polish government in London and the Soviet Union would continue at least as long as the Soviet alliance with Britain and the United States continued. It was important, therefore, that the reconstituted Polish party appear homegrown, a creation of domestic forces, able to legitimately enter a post-war coalition 'national front' government. The party was needed to create a domestic constituency wider than the KPP had ever enjoyed and on this basis represent a foreign policy alternative which had no precedent in Polish political culture other than in the Comintern led KPP.

Herein lay the PPR's dilemma. Its credibility depended on its being able to present a legitimate and attractive policy programme. But the programme for an anti-German 'national front' in order to fight for a 'free and independent Poland' received its inspiration from the Comintern's policy and the 'popular front' position of the Paris Initiative Group. Its initial policies for future reform remained very vague in order not to alienate the wider left in the Polish underground, seeing the need for a socio-economic reconstruction of the country in essentially evolutionary and reformist terms. But this vagueness succeeded only in alienating many of the old KPP cadres, without overcoming the instinctual suspicion of the left socialists or peasant activists.

Many communists approached by the PPR leaders initially refused to

accept the authority of the new party. This was not the programme they had been waiting for; the new name certainly did not reflect any continuity with the KPP past. Neither Nowotko, the new First Secretary, nor Finder, in charge of recruitment and organisation, both low ranking in the pre-war organisation, were at all well known within the old KPP community; and Mołojec, in charge of organising the PPR's armed cadres, the People's Guard, was saddled with an odious reputation for his role in the final elimination of the KPP organisation in Poland. The PPR needed the support of the old KPP cadres if it was to regain its organisational strength. Reporting to Dimitrov in Moscow in June, Nowotko complained that 'the greatest difficulty is in breaking down the factional feelings, particularly among the former KPP members for whom everybody who is not a communist is an enemy'.²

The question of whether or not the party was communist needed to be addressed early in its career. But it needed to be addressed for contrasting reasons. On the one hand, linkages with the Comintern were being kept out of the public eye in support of the party's patriotic profile and appeal to the non-communist left. On the other hand, old communists needed to be reassured that in reality nothing had changed, and the old internationalism had indeed been inherited by the new creation. Privately, Nowotko, Finder, Mołojec and the remainder of the teams flown in from the Soviet Union were under no illusions regarding the party's true nature. The balance now being cultivated between the 'national' and 'internationalist' tendencies in the party had been spelt out in an internal circular prepared by the director of the Polish section of the Comintern's school, Jakub Berman:

...the party was not called communist for the following reasons: (1) So the enemies would not be able to use the scarecrow of communism; (2) There are still numerous elements, even in the working class, which do not trust the communists as a result of past mistakes and erroneous policies of the former KPP; (3) After

what happened [with the KPP] the party, as was pointed out by Dimitrov, must earn the right to call itself communist; (4) it is necessary that the masses look at our party as an organisation closely linked with the Polish nation and its vital interests; in this way, the enemies will not be able to call it an agency of a foreign country; (5) Under this name it will be easier to attract to the party large masses of workers, peasants, and the intelligentsia, and then to organise, under the leadership of the party, a united national front for the struggle against the German-fascist occupiers.... Although our party will not be called communist and will not formally belong to the Comintern, it will be a truly revolutionary party of the Polish proletariat.... It will conduct propaganda in the spirit of communism and will follow the line of the Comintern.³

National interests were to be presented as the public face of the PPR; internationalism would continue to inspire its soul.

In its presentation of these points for the old KPP members as well as its new membership at the end of February, the PPR leadership gave a broad hint that it was to be trusted to do what was best for the communist movement in Poland. The impression made was unmistakable. The working class had historically lead the struggle for national liberation in Poland, the intra-party circular stated, and the new party represented this class: 'Its organisers, the most conscious representatives of the working class, have taken into account in all their dimensions the distinct political conditions in which the Polish lands under occupation find themselves'. 'The PPR is not a section of the Communist International or any other international organisation', the circular stated unequivocally. International links had no practical meaning at this stage of the battle and were to be left until the enemy had been defeated, when the issue was to be democratically decided at the party's First Congress:

The PPR stands, however, on the basis of Marxist-Leninist principles, which hold that total national liberation is possible only if together with it comes social liberation. We must remember about the fact that if the PPR succeeds in leading the working masses through the current stage of the historical fight for national liberation, and remains as closely as possible linked with these masses, then without any doubt it will be capable of leading them also through the next stage toward a new Poland.⁴

The leadership had no doubt at all as to what the new party represented, and what its priorities were; but the issue of internationalism was to be kept off the policy agenda until more propitious times. In claiming to lead the working classes, the party leadership made clear its strategic affiliation; its 'Marxist-Leninist principles' announced its ideological affiliation. But for all intents and purposes, its public profile was to remain patriotic, pitched for its greatest effect on the 'national front' policy.

During its early life, PPR foreign policy tended to remain general, dealing with strategic goals and priorities, and always remaining close to Soviet positions. On July 15, Nowotko even sent a message to Dimitrov suggesting that Radio Kościuszko be renamed as 'the radio of the Workers' Party'.⁵ So long as diplomatic relations between the Polish government in London and the USSR at least existed, the PPR could tie its support for the Soviet Union with that of the official Polish government, in effect giving its foreign policy position a measure of credibility it would otherwise have lacked from the outset. But even this measure was meagre indeed. The rest of the national underground continued to regard the USSR as 'enemy number 2' and the PPR as an agency of the Soviet Union.⁶ In order to overcome this obstacle, the leadership of the party began a serious attempt in the winter of 1942-1943 to engage the Home Army (AK), and London government's administrative executive in the Polish underground — the Delegatura — in direct negotiations. For its part, the Delegatura saw these talks as a way of uncovering the PPR's patriotic face and exposing the pre-war KPP clientilism which had sought the 'sovietisation' of Poland.⁷

Once the Soviet break with the Polish government came in April 1943, the PPR was no longer obliged to try to augment what little

credibility it could garner from the tenuous linkage with the foreign policies of the Polish government. It embarked instead on a campaign designed to establish the party's foreign policy credibility in its own right, and in this it was aided by moves in Moscow for the ECCI to abolish itself. The PPR in its propaganda had consistently identified itself with what it called the 'workers' movement', and was now included in the ECCI's mailing list for advice. The PPR's reply in May was that the ECCI's proposal was in line with the strategy of the 'workers' movement' and the needs of the international situation, ie. it would contribute to the consolidation of the anti-Hitler bloc, being the main task of the moment. It would also make it easier for 'communist patriots' to create unity within the 'workers' movement' of each country and be conducive to the consolidation of 'anti-fascist national fronts'.²

On June 1, the PPR published a 'Declaration' explaining the ECCI decision, and as an introduction quoted the ECCI itself: '...this international, centralised, organisational form for uniting the workers' movement has ceased to fulfill the needs for the further development of the communist parties of individual countries as national workers' parties, and even stands as an obstacle to their development'. In their comments on this decision, the PPR leaders did not hide their enthusiasm for the 'national workers' party' development. They were highly optimistic that this was not to be a 'five minute' disbanding, but one which would last years, for the period of the war and beyond. It would encourage the creation of a 'national front', since other anti-fascist, pro-Soviet groups would now be more willing to join with the PPR in their common policies for a post-war socialist Poland. After the war, a new international organisation was to arise, one which had its base in the 'great

alliance between socialism and bourgeois democracy manifested in the Anglo-American-Soviet bloc', and which would be governed by the principles of mutual respect for differences in socio-political systems and noninterference in internal affairs. The leaders poured scorn on ideas for a third war current among both radical Marxists calling for a world victory of socialism and anti-Soviet groups:

We categorically state that: 1) such a war lies neither in the interests of a socialist state, nor in the interests of a bourgeois democracy, the workers' movement, or the Polish nation as a whole. 2) War between Britain and America, and the Soviets, would be a catastrophe for humanity, would lead the world to complete destruction and chaos, and would take us back in time a thousand years. For this reason such a war should never be allowed to come about.⁹

The optimism evident in these strategic foreign policy goals was based on the views of Stalin himself, who in an interview with Reuter's correspondent in Moscow made many of the same points now being repeated by the PPR. According to Stalin, the Comintern was dissolved for the following reasons:

- (a) It exposes the lie of the Hitlerites to the effect that "Moscow" allegedly intends to intervene in the life of other nations and to "Bolshevise" them....
- (b) It exposes the calumny of the adversaries of communism within the Labour movement to the effect that communist parties in various countries are allegedly acting not in the interests of their people but on orders from outside....
- (c) It facilitates the work of patriots of all countries for uniting the progressive forces of their respective countries, regardless of party or religious faith, into a single camp of national liberation....
- (d) It facilitates the work of patriots of all countries for uniting all freedom-loving peoples into a single international camp for the fight against the menace of world domination by Hilerism, thus clearing the way to the future organisation of a companionship of nations based on their equality.¹⁰

Within the PPR councils, the PPR leaders held Stalin in the highest esteem, referring to him as 'the host'.¹¹ Their foreign policy relied for whatever credibility it had on the continuing good relations between the Soviet Union and the Western powers, but more especially, on the Soviet Union's and Stalin's own claims to be ready to play a

positive role in post-war Poland. This was the line being broadcast by Kościuszko radio, now with its staff augmented by recent members of the Polish section of the Comintern. This was the Soviet alternative which the party was offering the Polish public, an alternative which had to be divorced from the internationalist excesses of the KPP's past for it to gain any wider credibility, which represented a new enlightened version of internationalism. The new Polish communist foreign policy promised the greatest regard for Polish national interests, its post-war security and prestige. But at the same time, it looked for its strength and influence to the Soviet Union.

4.2 The 'Internationalist' Soviet Alternative

The new party's foreign policy had one fundamental policy plank: support for the Red Army and for the diplomatic efforts of the Soviet Union in winning the war and liberating Poland. Within the underground, the PPR rationalised the Soviet Union's previously unpopular positions, and emphasised the guarantee for Polish independence which the Soviet Union could provide. Within the PPR itself, the debate on foreign policy centred on how much the party could rely on the Red Army and Soviet diplomacy to establish it in power, and how much would it have to rely on its own political strength. Those recently arrived from the Soviet Union had no doubt as to the commitment of the Soviet leadership to the new Polish party.

Almost immediately upon arriving in Poland, the Initiative Group released a manifesto which was to stand as the party's most important foreign policy declaration for the first twelve months of its existence. Written at the Comintern school prior to the group's first

two abortive attempts at flying to Poland,¹² it was given the seal of local approval by ZWW and other Warsaw representatives at a meeting on 5 January¹³ and issued by the underground press five days later.

Entitled 'To Workers, Peasants and Intelligentsia, To All Polish Patriots!', the document's first words established an unmistakable continuity with the pre-war KPP position. The reason for Poland's current plight, the declaration began, was the 'false and treacherous' policy of the *Sanacja* government. Now the nation's predicament was that it once again found itself 'enslaved by the eternal enemy... modern Teutonic knights'. The document's imagery is full of bitterness and deep anger, the stuff of much of the underground press. But its message was unmistakable: only together with the Red Army could the fight for a 'free and independent Poland' be successful. A number of Poland's heroic independence fighters were listed, ending with the name of Ludwik Waryński, leader of the first Polish revolutionary party — the Proletariat, linking its revolutionary cause with that of the historic Polish fight for national liberation. Poland, the document continued, was not alone in its fight for freedom. It stood in a common front with all Slavic nations: 'Together with the great Russian nation, we stand united in the holy war for the liberation of the Slavs from Teutonic slavery'. These were Slavophile sentiments current in Moscow which in a Polish context were less well appreciated. In its next paragraph, the document emphasised Soviet invincibility and the Red Army's overpowering might. At last, it announced, the Germans had encountered the insurmountable barrier of the Red Army's weapons:

...the heroic Red Army has sown the routes of the Germanic hordes with millions of German corpses. This is history's greatest battle between the world of culture and the world of barbarianism. The great anti-fascist coalition will be victorious, and will wipe accursed hitlerism from the face of the earth.

This battle will decide about the fate of the world. In this

battle also, Poland's fate will be decided, our own fate.

The historic agreement between the Polish and Soviet governments on the common fight against the hitlerite Germans, creates for us Poles, new, huge possibilities. One of the fundamental results of this agreement is the creation of the Polish armed forces on the territory of the Soviet Union, fighting together arm in arm with the Red Army. This common fight together with the nations of the great Soviet Union wakens new hope and adds strength to the Polish nation.¹⁴

It was a highly optimistic approach to the dilemmas facing the nation and the new party. A fundamental appreciation of the opportunities opening up for the Polish communists was apparent. Talk of 'Poland's fate', 'huge possibilities', support for 'the heroic Red Army' which at the time the document had been written was still reeling under the advance of the *Wehrmacht*, left little doubt that the PPR had every intention of being in the forefront of whatever possibilities did arise. Like the meeting in Saratov, this declaration put emphasis on the need for the Polish government in London to accept the Soviet *fait accompli* in the matters dividing their two sides and to work with the Red Army in the 'common fight'. It also recognised that the support of the Western powers was indispensable to the ultimate victory. But where Poland was concerned, the message ran, the role of the Soviet Union would be decisive; the PPR as the party which was now able to represent that reality on the domestic Polish political stage, should be given the support it needed to better fulfill its historic mission.

One of the greatest obstacles encountered by the PPR in its wider recruitment campaign was squaring its support for the Red Army with its patriotic emphasis on Polish 'freedom and independence' in the light of what had happened on 17 September 1939. Many communists at the time had been shocked by the entry of the Red Army into Poland, let alone socialists and peasant activists totally committed to the Polish defence and now being wooed into the new 'national front' party.¹⁵ This became the propaganda issue on which the PPR cut its

teeth, first on the agenda of foreign policy questions to be answered for the new membership.

On February 1, the PPR issued the first mimeographed copy of its Central Committee newspaper, *Trybuna Wolności* (Tribune of Freedom). In it, an article entitled 'Order of the Moment' presented the party's position on the Soviet invasion of September 17. In the estimation of the PPR Central Committee, the USSR had entered to prevent the German *Blitzkrieg* from going further east than Lwów, Brześć and Białystok, into the Soviet Union itself. In fact, the article said, it was the Red Army which had pushed the German war machine back to the San-Bug line, and had achieved for the first time a German retreat from areas already occupied. In the absence of any Polish military power, the USSR had been forced to create a barrier between itself and the German advance. Nor could the Soviet Union have come to the aid of the Polish army any earlier, this possibility having been put out of the question by the attitude of the Polish leadership which preferred not to have any Soviet help. The obvious fiction created in order to justify the Soviet position clearly emphasised the geo-strategic effect of Poland's isolation between its two powerful neighbours. It was a position which the party only too gladly contrasted with their own alternative, that of a Soviet guarantee for the integrity of the future Polish state and its borders: 'the historical task of the Polish nation and the condition for its liberation is alliance with the Soviet Union.... ...the lasting nature of our independence will depend on this alliance'.¹⁶

In its first year of existence, the PPR presented the case for the Soviet alliance largely without effect. Its first priority was to establish itself as an effective organisation, and here, after twelve months of activity, its organisational or political strength remained

insignificant relative to the strength on the ground of the AK and popular acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the Delegatura.

Internally, the party went through a leadership crisis with its nominal 'national' wing represented by Mołojec attempting to gain control from the 'internationalist' wing led by Nowotko and Finder.¹⁷ This dispute had no more effect on the party's foreign policy than the 'minority'/'majority' dispute had had on the positions of the Fourth KPP Congress in 1927. Mołojec represented a 'national' option for the military cadres of the People's Guard, many of whom were not communists, but who had been attracted to the party by its patriotic slogans of active resistance to the Germans. Pressure from this element in the party was being put on the PPR leadership for it to better coordinate military activities with the AK, a move which had already been agreed to by Nowotko and the Central Committee. But on 28 November, Nowotko was killed on Mołojec's instructions. Facts and interpretations relating to these events vary,¹⁸ but for our purposes there could have been no changes in the PPR's foreign policy even had Mołojec not been executed a month later. Notwithstanding his 'national' profile, Mołojec represented the new party's internationalism as firmly as any other member of the Initiative Group. His role in dissolving the KPP and leadership of the Paris Initiative Group indicated that here the Soviet side would have anticipated little threat to their policies.

Worse than the internal 'sectarianism' for the PPR's foreign policy programme, was the summer 1942 German campaign on the eastern front which had given little cause to hope for an advantageous outcome to the war. But by January 1943, the tone of the PPR's foreign policy propaganda took on a dramatic new note of confidence. It had been plain to many observers, not least the PPR leadership now represented

by a new 'triumvirate' of Finder, Gomułka and Józwiak,¹⁹ that the defeat suffered by the German armies under Stalingrad on January 31 had been impending since the late autumn. Now that it had come, the German defeat signalled a radical change in the balance of power on the eastern front, and caused considerable agitation within the Polish government in London. The PPR leaders made the most of the opportunity.

On February 1, they announced that they accepted the legitimacy of the Polish government for the period Poland remained occupied, seeing it as a necessary institution for maintaining relations with allied states and organising the Polish armed forces abroad. But at the same time the leaders made clear that no longer could the authority of the Polish government be taken for granted. It could no longer claim to represent the whole of the Polish nation; only the party which represented the Polish working class could provide that mass unity.²⁰ In the context in which the PPR was operating, this assessment of its own importance in the Polish political scene was indicative of its ambitions. Its pretensions to power were not in the least concealed. With the change in fortunes on the eastern front, the party's *raison d'être* came into its own; the Soviet alternative for Polish foreign policy was the only option being offered other than that represented by the Polish government, and this government was having its common ground with the Soviet Union rapidly reduced. In late 1942, the Soviet authorities closed down the entire network of Polish consular offices in the USSR provoking an outburst of anti-Soviet polemic from the London government and underground. And as the Soviet Union reduced the common ground with the Polish government, it expanded by implication the viability of the PPR. This process was not lost on the party's leaders.

In its February policy document, the leadership established the fundamental rationalisation for the PPR's claim to power in Poland. The national interests of the nation required a better defence than that afforded them before the war. This defence now had the opportunity to be on the basis of a 'natural' alliance rooted in an ideology 'inherently' positive toward such concepts as independence and democracy — socialism. No longer could the old military regime in Poland claim an unchallenged right to dominate the country's political scene, the PPR leaders announced; it had been found wanting on the most elemental of Polish needs — defence of the Poland's national independence. Poland had been not so much attacked by Germany as by fascism. The blame lay with the pre-war regime's close connections with fascism and a dire lack of appreciation of the nature of fascism as inherently antagonistic toward independence, democracy, and above all, socialism. The old government had therefore forfeited its mandate and needed to accept the legitimate alternative presented by the PPR. Instead, fixed in their ways, the old political parties continued to focus on the ideological threat to the *ancien régime* posed by the inevitable expansion of socialism throughout Europe following the defeat of international fascism once and for all. Regardless of this, henceforth, defence of Poland's national independence would be achieved by way of the most natural alliance a country could hope for: that with an empathetic and powerful neighbour — the USSR.²¹

This mix of national interests and ideology was what the PPR regarded as Poland's 'true national interests'. The empathy solidifying the future Polish-Soviet alliance could only come from an ideological common ground. Socialism was to be the cement in the relationship, since between fascist Germany and socialist Russia, Poland had a simple choice; and now that the military balance had

moved toward the Soviet Union, this choice had been narrowed to leave only one option. Any negotiation the PPR initiated with other groups in pursuit of either the 'national front' or later its own 'democratic front' was conducted on this basis: support for the Soviet Union immediately in its strategy of high profile partisan activity behind enemy lines, and in the future as an enduring socialist alliance. Unremarkably, little room was left for the non-socialist participants in the Polish underground. Whether or not they could accept a position of support for the USSR as an ally against Germany, for this support to imply a future socialist Polish state based on terms established by the Soviet Union meant their total alienation from what the PPR was suggesting. Indeed, it meant the alienation of the entire political spectrum, including the left of the PPS, eventually leaving only a PPR aligned left PPS splinter group.

On March 15, prior to the Soviet break with the Polish government and immediately after the PPR's series of negotiations with the Delegatura, the PPR leaders published a short political declaration: 'For What Are We Fighting?'. Continuing the themes established from the beginning of 1943, this policy document was phrased in such a way as to be taken for the political platform of a party seeking to form a legitimate government, or the majority in such a government, following the successful conclusion of the war. Like the earlier party statements, it was optimistic in its tone and confident of the future. On foreign policy it called for the establishment of 'good neighbourly and alliance-like relations with all European nations', and 'a foreign policy based on alliance with the Soviet Union'.²²

In themselves, these formulae need not have presented great problems for a Polish state recovering from the ravages of war with Germany. In the context in which the declaration was made, however,

they took on a completely different meaning for the PPR as well as for the other political groups in the underground. From the Soviet point of view, the 'For What Are We Fighting?' statement was too radical. Dimitrov was paying particular attention to the Polish issue and closely involving himself in the progress of the PPR. He now criticised the leadership for the insufficient attention they had paid to presenting the PPR's 'national front' democratic credentials in the declaration. His advice was that the party keep at the forefront of its attention the principles of a 'free and independent Poland', a policy of friendship with the Soviet Union and real democratic socio-economic changes for the future.²³ The Comintern objective was for the party to gain as much credibility as possible for it to use in entering a coalition of established 'democratic' parties after the war. This was the tactic the PPR had been following in its negotiations with the Delegatura. But with the break in the USSR's relations with the Polish government, the PPR seized on the opportunity to unilaterally establish its credibility and democratic credentials by claiming the Soviet alternative as its greatest link with 'the Polish nation'.

On May 1, the PPR went onto the attack. Together with a May Day 'Proclamation' addressed to 'workers, peasants, intelligentsia and all Polish patriots', the party published a parallel proclamation addressed to the Polish nation. In this latter document, it condemned Poland's pre-war foreign policy, and accused the inheritors of that policy in London of having sold out the country in its most vital interest — not defence of Polish security, but its most important determinant — relations with the Soviet Union. The Sikorski government, the PPR announced, even if it had begun with credit, had fallen victim to traditional paranoia and now justified 'its enmity

toward the USSR by its so-called anxiety over a strong and great Poland. Let us not forget', the proclamation continued, 'that these same arguments were used by the Sanacja camp in its anti-Soviet campaign and — it lost Poland'. The PPR was now able to apply the same criteria to the Polish government as it had been applying and continued to apply in its negotiations for a 'national front'. In the government's case, an immediate association was made with the KPP's criticism of the *Sanacja* policy of the pre-war government. And in contrast to the isolation from the proletariat for which the KPP in 1925 and 1938 had been so harshly condemned by the Comintern, now the new party enjoyed the opportunity to turn that same barb against its greatest rival: the government which had so incurred the displeasure of the USSR could no longer represent the Polish nation since the nation, according to the proclamation, was still very much allied with the efforts of the USSR against Germany, and only the entrenchment of this alliance could lead to a 'strong, free and independent Poland'.²⁴

4.3 The 'National' Soviet Alternative

From the late summer of 1943, the Soviet alternative as presented by the PPR took on a new subtlety. With the break in Polish-Soviet relations, the situation became much more complicated for the PPR leadership. At the same time as the break, moves had been made in the Soviet Union to activate the alternative 'left emigration' organisation and to create Polish military units directly under Red Army command. Through the summer, this activity picked up momentum. Within the country there was no wholesale turn away from the Delegatura and Polish government by the PPR, but within the parameters

of the 'national front' it began to look around for other options. Its May Day proclamation indicated that the change was to involve a narrowing of these parameters to an 'anti-fascist national front'. This was a slogan in use with the Jugoslavian Communist Party (KPJ). Its application in the Polish context meant a narrowing of the 'wide national front' of the type being pursued in France or Czechoslovakia, to include only pro-Soviet groups.²⁵

Eventually to become known as the 'anti-fascist democratic front', the PPR's new policy did not meet with early success. The left PPS fraction, the Workers' Party of Polish Socialists (RPPS) regarded the PPR as a 'Soviet party' and saw the USSR as an 'imperialist state'.²⁶ Other groups invited to work with the PPR were the pro-Soviet wing of the peasant movement, radical trade unionists, and a group of pro-Soviet intellectuals forming themselves at the time of the PPR's 'democratic front' policy change into the Committee for National Initiative. All other parties continued to focus on the PPR's relationship with the Soviet Union and brand it with the label of 'agent'. Nonetheless, with the increasing importance of Gomułka in the leadership, the Soviet alternative began to be given a more practical profile in the PPR's policy platform.

In response to a decision of the major underground political parties to establish a representative organ, the PPR, on Gomułka's initiative, began to plan for the establishment of its own 'national' organ. The goal here was to reinforce the party's claim to represent a broad domestic base.²⁷ Gomułka's initiative did not generate much enthusiasm among the other party leadership. Already the PPR had had to overcome further 'sectarianism' within its ranks as the unsatisfactory outcome of the talks with the AK had created a split between, on the one hand, the newly recruited members of the People's

Guard concerned with the inapplicability of 'Leninism' and the Soviet political experience to Polish conditions and looking toward the establishment of a 'national brand' of communism, and on the other, old KPP members now predominantly in leadership positions who considered this national element 'insufficiently steeped in proletarian internationalism'.²⁹ Finder gave the concept no support, preferring to wait for Dimitrov, now in charge of the Polish section in the VKP(b) Central Committee, to make his position clear. At the same time, Bolesław Bierut, previously a middle-ranking Comintern official, was sent from German occupied Minsk and immediately coopted into the Central Committee.²⁹ Following the arrest of Finder and Małgorzata Fornalska by the Gestapo in November,³⁰ Bierut was brought into the executive 'trio' and Gomułka was chosen as First Secretary.

Even before Finder's demise, the increasing importance of Gomułka within the leadership group quickly made itself apparent in the new sophistication of the PPR's presentation of its Soviet alternative. Instead of focusing on the ideological significance of the Soviet alternative or its great power implications, Gomułka began a campaign designed to bring the PPR's foreign policy into the political mainstream. He began emphasising the same points as has earlier been made by Sikorski in his efforts to generate support for the Polish government's *rapprochement* with the USSR in 1941.³¹ Sikorski had died on 4 July 1943 at Gibraltar with the result that the anti-Soviet lobby in both the Polish government and the AK had been strengthened. The PPR position was that the high profile anti-Soviet position that had resulted from the diplomatic break in April and now Sikorski's death threatened to weaken Poland's positions among the allied powers and deprive the country of political representation at the critical moment of liberation by the Red Army. Gomułka now sought to establish the

PPR's credentials as a legitimate, and responsible contender to provide this representation. On September 1, he began his campaign with an article published in *Trybuna Wolności* entitled: 'On the Political Thought of the Polish Democracy'.

The time had come, Gomułka wrote, for the united forces of the 'Polish democracy' to take independent action. He then quoted the new Polish Premier, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, in his inaugural address, as saying that Polish-Soviet relations were 'the primary issue of our foreign policy', that Polish-Soviet agreement was for both countries as well as for Europe as a whole, 'a historic necessity'. The PPR, Gomułka wrote, agrees with this position entirely, which was why the party was called by the Delegatura and others 'the agents of Moscow'. Unofficially, however, Gomułka observed, all the organs of the Polish government were calling for war with the Soviet Union, and both official and unofficial political thought represented by all political parties other than the PPR, saw the USSR as the enemy. It was thus the PPR's sole responsibility to take the historic step required of it, and oppose the policy of war with one of 'peace, cooperation and neighbourly understanding'. Such 'neighbourly understanding', Gomułka concluded, was to be on the basis of 'a recognition of the rights of nations to determine for themselves their own fate'.³²

This last assertion had been a regular PPR slogan with regard to the Soviet claim to the territories it had occupied after 17 September 1939. In Gomułka's article, it was for the first time applied to Poland's future relations with the USSR. Gomułka's influence now dominated in the preparation of the PPR's official political programme published in November. The programme set up the basis for the PPR's assumption of a higher political profile and open bid for post-war power. It prepared the ground for the creation of the PPR's domestic

representative organ. Three versions of the programme were produced for discussion among the membership — in July/August, September, and October, immediately preceding the final version. Gomułka collaborated on the first two versions with his Central Committee colleagues Finder, Zenon Kliszko and Władysław Kowalski. But the third version he wrote on his own, and after editorial changes made by the Central Committee this last version was published as the authoritative text.³³ With the arrest of Finder, Gomułka's influence on the style in which the new party's foreign policy was being presented was uncontested.

In the introduction to the programme, Gomułka established his communist credentials and affinity with the previous Comintern policy. He began with an orthodox Comintern analysis of the origins of the war, as having being rooted in the contradictions on which the production relations of the capitalist system were based. But as a result of the growth of huge mass movements caused by the First World War, the creation of an enormous new socialist state and 'the degeneration of the most rotten layers of the imperialist oligarchy into fascism', the war had inevitably developed into a huge historic battle between opposite social trends: 'between reaction and progress, degeneration and humanitarianism, fascism and democracy'. Victory over German fascism would give birth to a 'free and independent Poland', the slogan of the Comintern 'national front'. Out of the rubble of fascism, Gomułka continued, a 'democratic people's power' would establish itself across Europe, and Poland needed to take its prominent place in this new world. The future Poland would become an element for peace amongst the world's nations, live in peace and friendship with its neighbours, and on the basis of its geographic position, form a bridge joining East and West in fraternal cooperation among the European nations.³⁴

Gomułka's foreign policy design coincided closely to that of the interregnum *People's Poland* group, and even further back, to the positions of the KPRP's Second Congress. The PPR leader was unequivocal regarding the ideological nature of the coming changes. The PPR was not made out to be an opportunistic political party. It was communist to the core and determined to make the most of its 'objective' historical opportunity. But at the same time the coming changes were not to be on the basis of the KPP's internationalist slogan of a Polish Soviet Republic. Gomułka's concept of 'people's democracy' was tied inextricably to the idea of a European wide 'democratic people's power'. It was a concept which turned the KPP's internationalist perception of Poland as bridge between the Russian and German revolutions into a significantly different type of bridge: a bridge of 'peace and friendship' between the USSR and Europe, contributing to the fraternal acceptance of the Soviet Union into the European family of socialist nations.

In the document's 'resolution' on foreign policy, Gomułka wrote the following:

We are fighting for the complete independence and sovereignty of the Polish state. With the aim of guaranteeing this independence and sovereignty, the Polish nation, fighting at the side of the three allied powers — Britain, the USSR and the United States — against the common enemy, will create with them in the post-war period ties of alliance and cooperation and will take part in organising the security and economic rebuilding of Europe.

The establishment of good neighbourly and alliance relations with the USSR will become an important and deciding factor strengthening our defences, economic potential and position in Europe. Similar close ties of friendship and cooperation should be established also with other fraternal Slavic nations.³⁵

Under Gomułka's influence, the PPR's foreign policy had taken the form which it was to continue until the internationalist consolidation in 1947/1948. It was a form which had been encouraged by the international position and foreign policy of the USSR, and the PPR's

search for greater credibility. Nothing in the above foreign policy resolution pointed to the composers of the document being communist. This was a position which equally well characterised the foreign policy of the Sikorski government, and now Gomułka and the PPR had taken it for their own. Gomułka's presentation of the Soviet alternative showed a great deal more sophistication than the policy statements of the PPR's first Comintern trained leaders. The emphasis on the internationalist commitment was toned down and in its place came a realistic appraisal of the war-time and post-war strategies of the three allied powers, of the Western powers as much as of the USSR. At stake was the continued unity of the great powers, of the favourable conditions for the development of the 'national workers' party' created by that unity. Post-war Poland would ally itself with the three great powers in their efforts to provide for international security and on this basis see to its 'important and deciding' relationship with the USSR. To balance this relationship it would also establish 'similar close ties' with its other neighbours.

This conception, like the earlier PPR positions in the negotiations with the Delegatura, could be taken either as clever camouflage, or indicative of a real trend in PPR policy. Gomułka had little room to move on the issue of Poland's post-war security links with the Soviet Union as it was. The internationalist relationship that had developed into wartime had continued the dominant elements of the pre-war relationship: the moral authority of the USSR and Stalin, and the practical Soviet role in establishing and supporting the PPR. But at the same time, the effort to establish the PPR as a credible 'national front' participant with, or alternative to, the other main political parties in the underground presented Gomułka with a great opportunity. Gomułka was not content to sit and wait for the Red Army to liberate

Poland. Even when it had done so, there would still be a need for the communists to claim an element of legitimacy for the party to be at all effective in maintaining its power. It was this legitimacy, based on a healthy dose of realism, that Gomułka began now to build.

From a rather unconvincing emphasis on the Soviet concern for Poland's state security and independence, the PPR under Gomułka began to emphasise the similarity of views held on this question by all of the three great powers. The limit to which the PPR leader could go was set by the limit of cooperation the Western allies were themselves prepared to countenance with the USSR. As it turned out, this limit was considerable indeed. Its most visible feature was not so much the issue of the Soviet guarantee for post-war Poland's state security, as the question of Poland's territorial security, and the Polish-Soviet border.

4.4 The Polish-Soviet Border

In December 1941, before the formal constitution of the PPR, Stalin had told Eden in Moscow that the western borders of the USSR were for him 'the main question in the war'.³⁶ As the party created to provide the USSR with an agreeable domestic Polish alternative to the hostile Polish government on this very issue, the PPR consistently based its policy on the Soviet lead. From the initial Soviet reluctance to air the nature of the dispute while the Polish-Soviet treaty still held good, to the later demands for German territory to compensate for the eastern lands, the PPR tracked Soviet policy and reflected it in their own statements.

Nothing was mentioned about the Polish-Soviet border in the PPR's

inaugural statement of 10 January 1942. Even the *Trybuna Wolności* article of 1 February 1942 explaining the Soviet invasion of 17 September 1939 avoided taking a position, mentioning only that any repetition of the 'old stupidities about the invasion being "a knife in the back" is a knife in the back of the anti-Hitler front of the three great allies'.³⁷ The urgency with which the Soviet Union regarded its alliance with Britain and the United States at this stage left little room for such a divisive issue to be raised. Never again was the question of the Soviet invasion treated at such length in the PPR press. Reference to the eastern borders appeared most often in conjunction with articles dealing with the right of nations to self-determination. Throughout 1942, no mention was made at all of what the borders of 'free and independent Poland' were to be. Only in its 1942 May Day statement did the PPR state that the 'empty discussions regarding future borders will not contribute to increasing the authority of the Polish government'.³⁸ Even so, within the Central Committee the party's position on the eastern border was not at issue: the integration of the western Ukraine and Bielorussia with their Soviet neighbours had already been determined and was irreversible; it had been justified on the basis of 'objective historical processes' and it was no more and no less than the 'For Our Freedom and Yours' policy line established by the KPRP at its Second Congress in 1923.³⁹

Even though by February 1943 the Soviet press had stepped up its campaign of attacks over the integrity of the Polish government on the question of Poland's border with the USSR, in its February 1943 statement the PPR leadership refrained from copying these attacks as part of its effort to gain credibility through its negotiations with the Delegatura. The party's underground press was not so reticent. Here the polemic was based on positions broadcast by the Kościuszko

radio station. In the negotiations themselves, Gomułka and the leadership did not commit themselves to any position, leaving the issue to be decided in talks between the Soviet and post-war Polish governments on the basis of the Atlantic Charter and the right of nations to self-determination.⁴⁰ This was a formula established by Stalin, the latter part of which had been used in the October 1939 programme integrating eastern Poland into the Soviet Union. It was a formula which, not surprisingly, found little favour with the Delegatura negotiators, but was neither accepted by much of the PPR grass-roots. According to the AK intelligence service, a great deal of dissatisfaction was being expressed by the younger more nationally minded members of the PPR in their internal debates. Much of this dissatisfaction related to the party's implicit position on the eastern border and the necessity of having to accept the 1939 German-Soviet demarcation line as the future frontier.⁴¹

The leadership's position changed dramatically following an official Soviet statement issued by TASS on March 1 attacking the Polish government's position on the eastern border. Trying to maintain its soft-peddling approach while any chance of gaining some credibility from the negotiations with the Delegatura remained, and at the same time reacting to the signal sent from Moscow, *Trybuna Wolności* carried simultaneously on March 15 both the 'For What Are We Fighting?' statement which reiterated the 'self-determination' and 'will of the people' line, and a stinging attack on the Polish government using information taken directly from the TASS statement.⁴²

By the time of its 1943 May Day statement, the party leadership was giving the eastern border issue its full attention:

The entire united opinion of the Polish nation considers that Poland must be strong and must be great.... But the Polish nation understands also that the freedom and strength of Poland cannot be based on the imprisonment of other nations.... The assertion that Poland without enslaving several million Ukrainians and

Bielorussians will be a small and weak country is an insult thrown into the face of the Polish nation.⁴³

In this statement also, the PPR for the first time turned its attention to the issue of the German territories raised by Alfred Lampe in his seminal article 'Poland's Place in Europe', published in the USSR a week earlier than the Polish-Soviet break in diplomatic relations: 'The campaign unleashed around the eastern lands inflames Polish-Soviet relations and turns attention away from our western lands where with fire and sword for generations and today, all traces of Polishness are being burnt out'.⁴⁴

From this period on, the signals being reflected in PPR policy on the Polish borders, and particularly the border with Germany, came as much from the propaganda work of the Polish communists in the Soviet Union as from the Soviet side itself. On the Polish-Soviet border, the Soviet press began presenting numerous articles on Poland's 'imperialistic' ambitions to Bielorussia and the Ukraine. In return, the London based Polish press and underground organs within Poland responded with a wave of anti-Soviet polemic. PPR propaganda on the eastern border similarly took on a new aggressiveness.⁴⁵

The border issue dominated the foreign policy 'resolution' of Gomułka's November programmatic statement. The 'ethnic Polish lands' to be returned in the west, together with the 'self-determination' of the Ukrainian and Bielorussian nations would 'secure for us peace in the east and will strengthen our position in the west and on the Baltic'.⁴⁶ Parallels were drawn by Gomułka between the 'anti-Bolshevik' feeling being generated by the polemic issuing from the Polish government and underground, and the wave of patriotism which led to the defeat of the Red Army under Warsaw in 1920. The government and underground would not succeed in their tactic, Gomułka assured his readers, since from the time the Red Army entered the eastern regions

of old Poland in order to strengthen its defensive positions against the expected German onslaught, 'the matter of the eastern lands entered a new phase'.⁴⁷

Much the same positions were being established by the Polish communists in the Soviet Union. And neither they nor the PPR were having any difficulty matching their pronouncements on Poland's future territorial security with those of the Western allies. Here also, the appreciation of Poland's borders having 'entered a new phase' was acute. Only the Polish government continued to resist the Soviet pressure, insisting that any changes in Poland's pre-1939 borders could only be contemplated once the war had ended and a newly elected government had been installed. Thus, the complementary nature of Soviet and Western policy on this issue enabled Gomułka to present the PPR's inherently internationalist position not only as fundamentally realistic, but also its natural inheritance by right of the exclusion from the common allied policy of the Polish government.

4.5 National Council of the Homeland

Gomułka was paying very close attention to the positions of the Western powers vis-a-vis the USSR. By the winter of 1943 it had become clear that the Western allies would be providing their full support for the Soviet advance westward across Poland toward Berlin. In Poland, the October Moscow Conference of the three allied Foreign Ministers gave the PPR a considerable boost in its search for domestic credibility. Under the headline 'Historic resolutions', *Trybuna Wolności* in November asserted that 'the ideological basis of the conference can and should become also the ideological foundation for

socio-political change in Poland'.⁴⁸ Just as the Western powers and the Soviet Union had agreed to lay aside their ideological differences and coordinate their military strategies, so too in Poland, the *Trybuna Wolności* message ran, cooperation in an anti-German 'national front' should be the goal of the underground.

Similarly with regard to the Teheran summit of the three allied leaders in November/December, while the details could not yet be used to support the PPR position on the eastern border, it was very obvious to the communists in Poland that the credibility of the Polish government had been still further undermined. In making his pitch for the creation of a PPR based underground representative body, Gomułka on December 15 released a 'manifesto' in which he wrote that 'the race [for Poland] to achieve a prominent place in the world' had well and truly begun, and 'at the moment when at the Polish borders stands the most powerful army of one of the states united in the allied bloc — the Red Army of the USSR', Poland lacked diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The hope of the Polish government, Gomułka continued, was that 'the two enemies would bleed to death'. These hopes had been cancelled by the conference of the three powers at Moscow, and by the meeting between Churchill, Stalin and Roosevelt at Teheran.⁴⁹

Gomułka's initiative to establish an organ representing the PPR's 'democratic national front' to go some way toward providing these diplomatic relations, made rapid progress once the radio link with Moscow was broken in mid-November and Gomułka himself became First Secretary. Work on the political programme of what was to become known as the National Council of the Homeland (KRN) had already progressed some way before the arrests of Finder and Fornalska, and it is likely that some of the foreign policy work of the Polish communists in Moscow was incorporated at this stage. Various similarities are

noticable between the KRN programme and the writings of Alfred Lampe. Still, the addition of the phrase 'of the Homeland' is seen as an indication that Gomułka wanted to emphasise its home-grown position vis-a-vis the attempts of the Soviet based Polish communists to set up their own institution representing the Polish 'democratic camp'.⁵⁰ Gomułka's initiative was not at all treated sympathetically by Stalin and Dimitrov once communications had been re-established in the new year. They were evidently caught unawares by the development. But for the moment, without their radio link with Moscow, Gomułka had the full support of Bierut and the other 'internationalist' members of the party's Central Committee. Bierut was made the KRN's Chairman with Gomułka's support.

The foreign policy aspects of the KRN's Programmatic Declaration, ratified at its first sitting on 31 December 1943, bear all the hallmarks of Gomułka's pragmatic influence. On Poland's borders the internationalist position could not be questioned and the November 'For What Are We Fighting?' position was simply confirmed. In its general foreign policy, the declaration reiterated the by now standard formula of maintaining 'friendly and good-neighbourly relations' with all nations allied against 'Hitlerism', seen as a necessary condition for Poland's strength and influence.

On more specific issues, the declaration set out three goals:

- a) the quickest possible establishment of the greatest possible friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, on the model of the relations already existing between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia;
- b) the inclusion of Poland as the third state for which provision had been made in the protocol to the treaty established in December 1943 between the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia;
- c) the consolidation of links of the greatest possible friendship and cooperation with the rest of the allies, and especially with Czechoslovakia, Britain and America.⁵¹

Poland's post-war 'national front' coalition was to establish its relations with the Soviet Union on the same conditions as had in the

very same month been negotiated between Beneš and Stalin in Moscow. Gomułka was responding to the opportunity presented him by Stalin to develop the 'friendly and good-neighbourly' formula and more importantly, the Soviet alternative's credibility, by establishing the PPR as the only party able to provide for the provision of post-war Polish-Soviet relations on a regular diplomatic basis. In the negotiation of the Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty, provision had been made for the accession of a third party to the protocol, this third party implicitly being Poland. Stalin was providing the institutional arrangements into which a Polish 'national front' coalition government could easily fit at the conclusion of the war, a strategy which Gomułka's 'national' foreign policy tendencies fitted very well. Whether or not the decision to proceed with the KRN had been approved by the Soviet leadership, on the foreign policy programme established in the KRN's declaration there was no dissension from Moscow once communication had been re-established.

In contrast with the KRN declaration, Bierut's speech at the inaugural KRN meeting on behalf of the PPR (Gomułka did not attend) bore all the hallmarks of the party's internationalist tradition. Most certainly the greatest single international action to return Poland its freedom, Bierut reminded his audience of fourteen,⁵² was the 'invincible offensive' of the Red Army in the east. From the very beginning of its existence, Bierut continued, the position of the PPR had been characterised by the fact that the party had understood what the role of the Soviet Union in the war and in the post-war world would be, and had based its actions on this understanding. As a result, one of the PPR's major domestic action programmes would be:

...the announcing clearly and openly of the position that Poland's foreign policy must be based on alliance and sincere friendship with all the countries allied in the fight with fascism, and in the first instance on alliance and friendship with the USSR as a state which has not only taken the leading

position in the present war, but which will, in the nature of things, also take a leading role in the rebuilding of the post-war world. Above all, this state is our direct neighbour with whom friendly cooperation is a condition for our economic development and at the same time a condition for the lasting nature of our independent existence.⁵³

This would be the PPR line in the KRN, Bierut concluded. It was a line Gomułka fully supported, but which he applied with a great deal more consideration for domestic Polish conditions. As well as appreciating the possibilities of the Red Army's advance on Poland, from January 1944 operating west of the pre-1939 Polish-Soviet border, Gomułka was prepared to interpret Stalin's international policies quite literally, applying them as best he could to the national Polish setting.

In January, with radio communication still not having been re-established, Gomułka sent the KRN programme and resolutions ratified at its first sitting to Moscow, along with a letter to the Polish communists gathered in Moscow explaining the party's position with regard to the creation of the KRN and describing the political situation within Poland. In general, Gomułka wrote, relations with the Soviet Union, along with the every day fact of German mass terror, had become the most important issue in Polish life. On the one hand he estimated that attitudes toward the Soviet Union were getting progressively more positive, that the population was waiting for liberation from the east and not from the west. The Moscow and Teheran conferences had had a major positive influence in this regard. On the other hand, Gomułka wrote, negative attitudes toward the USSR were still very strong even among the working class. The Delegatura had become more sophisticated in its attacks on the Soviet Union so as not to be identified with the ultra-nationalist 'fascist' groups already alienated from the mass working class.⁵⁴

In the KRN programme the PPR leadership had indicated that from its inception it had accepted the task of converting its own appreciation

of the Soviet position in the war into mass appreciation. Now Gomułka was writing that this goal was in fact being successfully achieved by the diplomatic strategy of the USSR as seen in the Moscow and Teheran conferences, its military strategy, and by the PPR itself through its internal activity. This was an important assertion. It sought to justify the tactics of the PPR leadership as being part and parcel of wider Soviet foreign policy. On the other hand, much work remained to be done among the working class, and this work needed to be at least as sophisticated as that of the main opposition to PPR influence — the government's Delegatura.

As has already been mentioned, Gomułka's attempts to choreograph the PPR's official foreign policies according to the pattern established by the Soviet Union were not discouraged. What did create concern in Moscow was his tactical turn away from what had previously been the Comintern's 'national front' policy, toward a national Polish solution to the problem of the PPR's restricted influence and credibility. After Teheran, Stalin could not rule out a future *rapprochement* with the Polish government should it accede to his demands that it reorganise on a pro-Soviet basis. Gomułka, on the other hand, considered the Polish government completely discredited, and was intent on preparing a rationalisation for the PPR's entry into a post-war coalition. There was little dispute in Moscow that, as had been provided for under the 'national front' policy, domestic Polish matters would be left for domestic Polish elements to dominate. However, the KRN membership was considered far too limited and the PPR policy of the 'democratic front' was branded as 'sectarian'. Instead of a 'democratic front', it was suggested that the PPR continue a 'wide national front' policy, toning down its more radical domestic goals and concealing any aspirations to national power. The Soviet

authorities regarded the KRN as a political representation, and not the 'embryo' of a future government as was intended by Gomułka.⁵⁵

As a result, Gomułka changed tack and now began efforts to widen the 'democratic' profile of the KRN's membership. In this he was none too successful. His main efforts were directed firstly at a coalition of small syndicalist, anarchist and radical socialist groups including the main group of left socialists, the RPPS,⁵⁶ operating under the title of the Central People's Committee, and secondly, at the mainstream Peasant Party. In the course of these discussions, one proposition put forward by the Central People's Committee was for the KRN to join with it in forming a 'united opposition' together with the mainstream underground Council of National Unity. This proposal was rejected from Moscow, but Gomułka insisted on continuing with his efforts to come to some arrangement with the Central People's Committee, even to the extent of on June 18 being ready to resign from the name KRN and merge with the organisation he had previously branded as 'Trotskyist'. By this stage, the only difference in policy Gomułka saw between the KRN and the Central People's Committee was regarding the Polish-Soviet border, with the Central People's Committee insisting that the issue be addressed only after the war had been concluded.⁵⁷

At the same time in Moscow, Stalin finally announced that he could not recognise the Polish government 'in its current composition', and with the impending arrival of the Red Army at the Curzon Line, now recognised the KRN as a new element in his diplomacy with the Western powers. By his tactical faithfulness to what he saw as being the USSR's international policy line, Gomułka was now left stranded in a highly compromising position, entirely exposed to the attacks of his 'internationalist' colleagues.

By May 1944, the internationalist pressure on the PPR's Central Committee had split it into two distinct factions led respectively by Gomułka and Bierut. In a letter to the editorial board of *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego* in 1977, Gomułka defended his spring 1944 policy of trying to broaden the 'democratic' membership of the KRN. He had been guided by two speeches made by Churchill in the Commons, in February and May, encouraging the Polish government to renew its relations with the USSR. Should this have happened, he had wanted the PPR to be in the strongest possible position to take its place as a legitimate coalition partner in a post war 'national front' government. The point of view held by the 'Stalinist' faction within the Central Committee, Gomułka wrote, was that he had not appreciated the 'possibilities' that the liberation of Poland by the Red Army would create for the PPR. These possibilities were such that the party would be able to solve the problem of the government in Poland in any way it wanted to. Bierut and Józwiak had further accused Gomułka of not appreciating the strength of the PPR, which, in the new conditions created by the liberation of Poland by the Red Army, would itself become the object of advances from other parties trying to establish cooperation with it and the KRN.⁵⁸

On June 10, unbeknown to Gomułka, Bierut sent a letter to Dimitrov, accusing the PPR First Secretary of exhibiting 'dictatorial urges', of pursuing a 'zig-zag' policy line from 'sectarianism to extreme opportunism', of 'dogmatism and ultraleftism', 'right and nationalist tendencies', of reluctance to send representatives of the PPR Central Committee to Moscow, and finally, of forming a group under his leadership which was prepared to tie itself with one of the pro-London groups.⁵⁹

In his literal interpretation of Soviet explanations for the

dissolution of the Comintern and the creation of 'national workers' parties', Gomułka had seen the logical continuation of the PPR's creation as a patriotic communist party. His tactical flexibility had always based itself on this understanding: the PPR needed to provide a national alternative to the dilemma presented by the communist heritage in Poland. But this heritage had deeper roots than simply an ideological alternative to capitalism. The real alternative that Polish communism had always represented was the Soviet alternative; Gomułka and the PPR had recognised this in the party's policies for Poland's future state and territorial security. Gomułka's 'national' communism could provide no new answer to these issues. He instead sought to maintain the PPR's 'national/patriotic' position as the dominant option for Soviet policy as against the increasing influence of the Polish communists in the USSR by following the tactical turns in Soviet international policy as closely as possible. As it turned out, he was left out of step and exposed to the harsh criticism of the traditional 'internationalists' by nature closer to Soviet strategic interests in Poland and less impressed with their tactical manifestations.

The PPR leadership was virtually paralysed by the extent of the split within its Central Committee and as in the period of the 'majority'/'minority' split in the KPP, it was left to the Soviet leadership to resolve the impasse. On June 23, the Red Army began its offensive toward the Bug river and the 1939 German-Soviet demarcation line. Stalin had little other choice but to rely on the KRN in its current composition as the domestic representative body from which the Polish version of the 'national front' government was to be formed. Notwithstanding Bierut's letter of June 10, as the main instigator of the KRN and representative of the patriotic voice of the PPR, Gomułka

continued to represent the principal elements of Soviet policy in Poland. But the balance of communist power within Poland was about to shift decisively away from Gomułka and the 'national' PPR. With the entry of the Red Army came also the Moscow based Polish communists. Their views of the 'sectarian' PPR were to ensure that the expanded party leadership would in future maintain the proper balance between its 'national' and 'internationalist' wings. From July 1944, the new party Politburo was made up of five members: three from Moscow, two from the PPR — Gomułka and Bierut.

Notes

1. 'Do robotników, chłopów i inteligencji, do wszystkich patriotów polskich', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, pp.51-5.

2. Cited in Tadeusz Żenczykowski, 'Rozmowy Delegatura Rządu-PPR w 1943 roku w świetle faktów', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 27, 1974, p.105.

3. Cited in Jan de Weydenthal, *The Communists of Poland*, Stanford, Calif., Hoover Institution Press, 1978, p.37.

4. 'Okólnik, [luty-marzec]', Warszawa 1942, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, p.57.

5. Czesław Lewandowski, *Koncepcja jedności narodowej i frontu narodowego w myśli politycznej komunistów polskich w okresie II Wojny Światowej*, *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis*, no.429, Nauki polityczne 15, Wrocław, 1979, p.81. Although Nowotko's suggestion was not acted upon, by the end of 1942 there was little doubt that the Kościuszko radio station was having a significant impact in supporting the PPR's positions. In a despatch to the Polish government in March 1943, the Commander of the AK, General Rowecki, made the following comments: 'Radio broadcasts (radiostation Kościuszko) and the PPR press present the same propaganda slogans and information, pointing to close cooperation between the USSR and PPR.... Our own propaganda possibilities are, however, minimal, and we cannot compete with the radio propaganda of Kościuszko radiostation'. Cited in Żenczykowski, 'Rozmowy', pp.123-4.

6. The 26 March 1942 edition of the AK publication *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, stated the following: 'We consider the PPR and its press organs as foreign agents'; and in the 17 December 1942 edition: 'the responsibility of every Pole is to actively oppose the propaganda of the communists'. Cited in Jan Ptański, *Pierwszy z trzech zwrotów czyli rzecz o Władysławie Gomułce*, Warszawa, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1984, p.48.

7. Żenczykowski, 'Rozmowy', pp.112-5.

8. 'Oświadczenie KC PPR w związku z propozycją KW MK rozwiązanie Międzynarodówki Komunistycznej', *Komunisticheskiy Internatsional*, 5-6, May 1943, in *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, p.136.

9. 'Rozwiązanie Kominternu, Okólnik', 1 June 1943, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp. 137-8.

10. Jane Degras (ed.), *The Communist International 1919-1943. Documents. Volume 3, 1929-1943*, London, Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 476.

11. Krystyna Kersten, *Narodziny systemu władzy. Polska 1943-1948*, Paris, Libella, 1986, p. 20.

12. Jadwiga Ludwińska, 'Narodziny PPR (wspomnienie)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, pp. 296-7.

13. Reservations were expressed over the ignorance on some issues shown in the document; e.g. the document mentioned that massive unemployment existed in Poland, and when the ZWW representative made the point that this was not true, Finder explained that another copy of the document was to be immediately published in Moscow on the information that the PPR had been created. Major editorial changes could not, therefore, be made. See Włodzimierz Dąbrowski, 'Wspomnienie działacza PPR', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, p. 262. The document was, however, issued with several changes. An optimistic passage referring to the Polish-Soviet treaty and Polish army in the Soviet Union was omitted. See Marian Malinowski, 'Kształtowanie się założeń programowych polskiego ruchu komunistycznego w latach 1939-1942', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, p. 43.

14. 'Do robotników, chłopów i inteligencji, do wszystkich patriotów polskich', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp. 52-3.

15. See on this point, 'Wspomnienia Wandy Wasilewskiej (1939-1944)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 7, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1982, pp. 343-4.

16. 'Nakaz chwili', *Trybuna Wolności*, 1 February 1942, in *Kształtowanie się podstaw programowych PPR w latach 1942-1945*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1958, pp. 20-7.

17. See Natalia Naruszewicz, 'Zarys historii PRL. Zeszyt I', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 42, 1977, pp. 17-8.

18. See *Nowotko-Mołojec. Z początków PPR. Nieznane relacje Władysława Gomułki i Franciszka Jóźwiaka*, London, Puls Publications, 1986, pp. 35-60. Mołojec evidently represented an ideological current in the new party that advocated a greater emphasis on the military organisation; Nowotko represented a party first position. According to Gomułka, Mołojec was driven by personal ambition, openly putting himself forward as a candidate for the leadership of the Initiative Group while still in the USSR. Another theory is that the ideological conflict in the PPR reflected a parallel conflict within the Soviet political/intelligence /political apparatus. The mystery surrounding these events continues to excite controversy among PZPR circles in Poland. See P. T. 'O tajemniczej śmierci M. Nowotki i B. Mołojca', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 59, 1982, pp. 210-20.

19. In May 1942, Gomułka had been brought from south-east Poland, where he had been inducted into the PPR by one of the members of the later 'Initiative Groups', and appointed Secretary of the PPR's Warsaw Committee with the support of Finder with whom he had been acquainted in the pre-war KPP. His rise could be attributed to his forceful personality, organisational skills and ability to generate support for the patriotic slogans of the 'national front'. Jóźwiak had been brought to Poland in April 1942, from a partisan unit operating in the Soviet Union. This had been done on the request of Nowotko and was intended to strengthen the First Secretary's position against Mołojec and his ex-International Brigade soldiers occupying the leading positions in the People's Guard. See Ptasiński, p. 45, Kersten, pp. 21-2, *Nowotko-Mołojec*.

20. 'Uchwały Plenum KC PPR na progu 1943 roku', *Trybuna Wolności*, 1 February 1943, in *Kształtowanie się podstaw*, p. 70.
21. 'Uchwały Plenum KC PPR na progu 1943 roku', p. 70.
22. 'O co walczymy? (deklaracja Polskiej Partii Robotniczej)', 15 March 1943, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, p. 122.
23. Płasiński, p. 50.
24. 'Do narodu polskiego. Odezwa KC PPR', 1 May 1943, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp. 129-33.
25. See Lewandowski, p. 62.
26. Cited in D.K., 'Na marginesie polemiki Gomułki', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 43, 1978, p. 215.
27. See D.K., p. 214, for the argument that in fact Gomułka's claim to being the initiator behind the national representative organ is not borne out by the recollections of other communists involved.
28. D.K., p. 216.
29. Kersten, pp. 27, 40.
30. The arrests apparently occurred in suspicious circumstances in which none of the other communist leaders at the same venue were arrested. Finder and Fornalska were the only PPR members able to operate the radio link with Dimitrov; as a consequence all communication was lost for some months. See Naruszewicz, p. 19.
31. Sikorski's policies rested on four planks: 'East-European mindedness', i.e. the possibility of federation with Czechoslovakia; peace with the USSR; cooperation with the US and UK; and the subordination of European security to the UN system. See Feliks Gross, 'The fate of Poland', *Journal of Central European Affairs*, 8 (3), October 1948, p. 247-8.
32. 'O myśl polityczną polskiej demokracji', *Trybuna Wolności*, 1 September 1943, in *Kształtowanie się podstaw*, pp. 121-7.
33. Maria Wilusz (red.), 'Z historii powstania deklaracji programowej PPR "O co walczymy?" (projekty wstępne z lipca-października 1943 roku)' *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 1, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1973, pp. 221-3.
34. 'O co walczymy? Deklaracja programowa PPR', November 1943, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp. 148-51.
35. 'O co walczymy?', pp. 152-3.
36. Eden memorandum to War Cabinet, 'Western frontiers of the USSR', cited in Keith Eubank, *Summit at Teheran*, New York, William Morrow & Co. Inc., 1985, p. 446.
37. 'Nakaz chwili', p. 27.
38. 'Odezwa KC PPR', 1 May 1942, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, p. 61.
39. See Lewandowski, p. 58 on this point.
40. Żenczykowski, 'Rozmowy', pp. 117-8.
41. Marian Dziewanowski, *The Communist Party of Poland* (2nd ed), Cambridge Mass., Harvard University Press, 1976, p. 169.
42. See Żenczykowski, 'Rozmowy', p. 121.
43. 'Do narodu polskiego. Odezwa KC PPR', 1 May 1943, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, p. 132.
44. 'Do narodu polskiego', p. 132.
45. The events surrounding the propaganda battle are reported in D.S. Clemens, *Yalta*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 15.
46. 'O co walczymy?', p. 153.
47. 'O co walczymy?', p. 167.
48. 'Historyczne uchwały', *Trybuna Wolności*, 22 November 1943, cited in Jerzy Pawłowicz, 'Polityka PPR w sprawie utworzenia demokratycznej reprezentacji narodu (marzec-grudzień 1943 roku)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, p. 55.

49. 'Manifest demokratycznych organizacji społeczno-politycznych i wojskowych w Polsce', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp.521-4.
50. See D.K., p.216 on this point.
51. *Protokół z pierwszego posiedzenia KRN w dniach 31 grudnia 1943 roku i 1 stycznia 1944 roku*, Warszawa, Kancelaria Sejmu, 1983, p.59.
52. Only those representing the PPR signed their pseudonyms as members of a political party; the rest referred to themselves as members of committees or groups. See Pawłowicz, 'Polityka PPR', pp.61-70.
53. 'Obywatele! Członkowie Rady Narodowej! Przemówienie przedstawiciela KC PPR na inauguracyjnym posiedzeniu podziemnej KRN', 31 December 1943, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp.184-8.
54. 'Układ sił politycznych. Pismo KC PPR do CKBP w ZSRR', 12 January 1944, *Kształtowanie się podstaw*, pp.205-15.
55. See D.K., p.219.
56. A small minority of pro-Soviet RPPS members led by Edward Osóbka-Morawski split from the main party at its Congress in September 1943 to form the 'New RPPS', later to cooperate with the PPR in the KRN.
57. Ptasieński, pp.55-6.
58. Władysław Gomułka, 'List do redakcji "Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego" w sprawie "Protokołu pierwszego posiedzenia KRN" i "Dyskusji w PPR w sprawie zjednoczenia sił demokratycznych (notatki protokólne z posiedzeń KC PPR maj-czerwiec 1944r)"', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 4, Książka i Wiedza, 1977, pp.247-9.
59. Ptasieński, pp.38,41.

5. POLISH COMMUNISTS IN THE SOVIET UNION

Gomułka's efforts in Poland to implement what seemed to be a flexible Soviet policy line were complemented by the theoretical work of the Polish communists in the Soviet Union. The fact that those in the USSR were physically closer to the Soviet leadership did not mean that their domestic policies were any more uniform than the options being debated among the PPR. If anything, the 'national' and 'international' options among the Soviet based communists were defended with even greater vigour, something the PPR, in conditions of conspiracy and terror, could ill afford. That the debate on domestic tactics at all took place in the USSR or Poland was entirely due to Stalin's personal flexibility in his Polish policy. The Polish communists in the Soviet Union were not discouraged from presenting a patriotic profile similar to the PPR; instead, they were positively encouraged. Those who favoured waiting on the Red Army to provide the solution to the communist dilemma in Poland was afforded short shrift by Molotov and Stalin.'

Proximity to the Soviet centre did mean, on the other hand, that however far the debate on domestic tactics ventured, unlike with the 'national' PPR, it remained entirely within the bounds of the internationalist relationship created through the previous decade, and the Comintern's 'national front' policy. And just as with the PPR and earlier the KPP, the debate on domestic tactics among the Soviet based communists had little impact on the axioms of Polish communist foreign, axioms entrenched by the KPP's internationalist past and now continually reinforced by Soviet war strategy. The greatest contrast with the past was that the common German foe, and emphasis given to cooperation with the Western allies in this strategy, now afforded

Polish communist foreign policy a degree of political realism and thence international legitimacy it had previously sorely lacked.

Immediately following the outbreak of the German-Soviet war, Stalin's Polish policy turned from giving active encouragement to Polish communist activity in the USSR, to seeking an accommodation with the Polish government in London. Earlier, following the German occupation of Rumania in October 1940, a group of fifteen Polish officers, including Colonel Zygmunt Berling, had been gathered by Lavrenti Beria and quartered at Malakhovka near Moscow, with the task of establishing the feasibility of organising a future Polish army division along Red Army lines.² Once the Polish-Soviet agreement had been negotiated and agreement granted for General Władysław Anders to build a regular Polish army, this alternative military centre was eliminated. At the same time, the Initiative Group at the Pushkino school was given a much lower profile, and several of the Polish communists with Soviet party cards were assigned to the Red Army as political officers. In Lwów, *Nowe Widnokreği* was closed down.³

Through the spring and summer of 1942, the marked improvement in the position of the Red Army brought an increase in Soviet pressure on the Polish government and its independent armed forces in the USSR. In March, the numbers of the Polish army under General Anders acceptable to the Soviet side was limited to 44,000 men, leaving 30,000 recruits without supplies. Taking up the British offer of help, and following on the suggestion made to him by Sikorski in December 1941, Stalin agreed that these 30,000 men be evacuated to the British Middle East. Three months later he agreed to the remainder of the Polish army going the same way. By August 30, all three Polish divisions had been evacuated. At the same time, the Soviet authorities began to limit the activity of the Polish consulates and refugee centres across the USSR,

accusing them of espionage in their efforts to locate the numerous Poles still being detained.

The activity of the Polish communists was reactivated on May 5 with the relaunching of *Nowe Widnokreği*, this time in Kuibyshev, where the Soviet government had relocated from Moscow in December 1941.⁴ From the periodical presenting cultural and social items it had earlier been, it was now turned into 'the political tribunal of the progressive, anti-fascist Polish emigration'.⁵ No political organisation was established alongside the new newspaper, but the line taken was consistent and coherent, and overtly hostile toward the Polish government's representatives in the USSR. Chief editor was again Wasilewska, but the real organiser and editor became Alfred Lampe.⁶

Nowe Widnokreği was consciously modelled on the patriotic stance of the newly established PPR in Poland and Kościuszko radio station operating from Ufa under the guidance of the Comintern.⁷ It saw its primary strategic task as the propagation of the idea that since Poland could realistically only be liberated from German occupation by the Soviet Union, the responsibility for this liberty would then continue to rest with the USSR for the foreseeable future. Its immediate goal was to generate active support for the Red Army: 'Poland's place in Western Europe will not so much be decided by its participation in the suffering, as by its participation in the victory', Lampe wrote in the first edition of the new newspaper.⁸ The need of the moment, therefore, was for all Poles to take up the partisan struggle against the Germans on the eastern front and fight alongside their greatest ally for a victory and strong position in Europe.

Official Polish-Soviet relations were further dramatically worsened

by a Soviet note to the Polish government on 16 January 1943, confirming that all inhabitants of the territories occupied by the USSR after 17 September 1939 would continue to be regarded as Soviet, and not Polish, citizens. Soon afterward, the Soviet military position was given a dramatic boost with the February 2 German capitulation under Stalingrad. Twelve days later, at a personal meeting with Stalin, Berling was given the go-ahead to prepare for the creation of another Polish army, this time fighting under the integral command of the Red Army.⁹ At the same time, the organisation which had been heralded at the November 1941 Saratov broadcast, was also to be finally established. It was named the Union of Polish Patriots in the USSR (ZPP), with the intention being to group together socialists, peasant activists and left intellectuals of every hue in a patriotic 'wide national front' movement. A weekly, *Wolna Polska* (Free Poland), was created to serve as the ZPP press organ with Wasilewska again as editor, and Lampe her deputy.

The first edition of *Wolna Polska* was published on March 1, on the same day as TASS published its communiqué attacking the Polish government position on the Polish-Soviet border. *Wolna Polska* put its message simply. The new Polish organisation wanted to draw the appropriate conclusions from the terrible lesson of history that had been the national defeat of 1939: fear of the Soviet Union had pushed the pre-war Polish government toward cooperation with Germany when in fact only alliance with the Soviet Union could have prevented the 'victorious development of Hitlerism in Germany and the European catastrophe'.¹⁰

Through the spring and summer of 1943, *Wolna Polska* and *Nowe Widnokreęgi* formulated the principal ideological and political positions of the ZPP, with the former covering current political

issues (from June 1943 its editor was Jerzy Borejsza), and the latter becoming the ideological/theoretical organ of the new movement. But if the ZPP recruited from the entire range of 'patriotic elements' in the USSR, the content of its press organs remained firmly under communist control and was relayed to the PPR via Kościuszko radio.¹¹ As well as Wasilewska and Lampe, other contributors included Roman Werfel, Hilary Minc, Stefan Wierbliński and Włodzimierz Sokorski.¹²

5.1 Alfred Lampe

By far and away the dominant influence on the development of the ZPP's foreign policy positions was Alfred Lampe. Already in the summer of 1941, immediately after the outbreak of the German-Soviet conflict, Lampe had been approached by the editors of the VKP(b) theoretical organ *Bolshevik* for an article on Poland.¹³ Not able to publish it due to the downgrading of the Polish communist option by Stalin, he continued to work on the article, and in the summer of 1942 attempted to have it published in *Nowe Widnokreghi*. After consulting with the deputy head of the Soviet Information Bureau, he was again told that though the article was fine, it was still too early to air its proposals.¹⁴ This was the article published with several minor changes under the pseudonym of Andrzej Marek in *Wolna Polska* on 16 April 1943. In it, Lampe presented what would become the definitive statement of ZPP and later Polish communist foreign policy. It was the statement of an old KPP leader, one who had seen the extremes to which the internationalist relationship could go, and who, in his deliberations, had also come to understand the value of the security and prestige interests for the Polish national state. His ability to marry these

two sets of interests in the climate of patriotism that had been generated by the war, established his theoretical preeminence in the Polish communist community in the USSR.

In the April 16 article, Lampe for the first time addressed the question of the post-war Polish state's western borders. This was the third and final element of the foreign policy triad — a premiss and two conclusions — he had been developing in his articles in *Nowe Widnokreği* and *Wolna Polska* since May 1942. Lampe took the PPR foreign policy goals of justifying the Soviet alternative and the new Polish-Soviet border, and gave them the best of all possible rationalisations — the premiss that Poland should never again be threatened by a rampant Germany. Polish foreign policy on this basis had two necessary goals to fulfill: to provide the conditions to ensure a powerful and totally committed Soviet ally; and to match this alliance with one involving other states lying to the east of Germany, basing the common security of this alliance system on the carrying out of suitable territorial changes in the geography of post-war Germany.

Lampe's foreign policy articles from between May 1942 and August 1943 were published in 1944 as a compilation under the same title as his groundbreaking 'Poland's place in Europe' article. The volume was to become the standard work for Poland's 'new' post-war foreign policy.

In Lampe's conception, like the Polish gentry, Germany had built its power on conquests to the east. So much so, that the German claim to great power status had always implicitly implied the negation of Poland's right to its independent existence. This implication had been made explicit with the onset of the war. Yet pre-war Polish governments had not only negotiated with Germany, they had made quite plain their attempts to placate Hitler, balancing him off against

Western promises of support, and the greater threat of Bolshevik expansion from the east. Lampe makes the point that the existence of an independent Poland had from the time of Field Marshall Hindenburg been seen as one of the greatest threats to German security. This failed to give rise to its converse: an appreciation on the part of Polish leaders that there existed no greater danger than German imperialism, and the enthroneing of this position as one of the axioms of Polish foreign policy.¹⁵

The fight to change Polish foreign policy's official blindness to the extremity of the threat from Germany once and for all, and the more immediate fight for liberation from German occupation, in Lampe's mind, could not be separated from the fight for an 'anti-fascist democracy' and an 'anti-fascist democratic foreign policy' — a socialist Poland. The option Poland had to face had not changed over time. It was determined by the country's geographical position: in the modern world, Poland had to seek support from either fascist Germany or the Soviet Union. The choice was clearer than it had ever been. Lampe's understanding of the pre-war Polish regime, was of a system conditioning Poles to treat the Soviet Union with contempt and fear:

... reactionary Polish ruling circles never based the existence of the Polish state on a democratic foreign policy; they fostered the closest relations with ultra-reactionary Hungary, not less with backward Rumania, orientating themselves on fascist Rome and Hitler's Berlin, endeavouring at the same time to inculcate into the Polish nation a reluctance for Europe's progressive and democratic forces, particularly for the Soviet Union.¹⁶

This process had been highly destructive for Polish security. From the time Polish independence had become possible as a result of the Russian revolution, the Soviet Union had been intent on facilitating this Polish aspiration, Lampe wrote. The USSR's main priority had been the preservation of peace in Europe and securing the possibility of building socialism domestically. In contrast to Polish foreign

policy, the USSR had conducted a foreign policy designed to thwart an intrinsically hostile fascism and its aggressive intent on the Soviet Union's western borders.¹⁷

Poland had conducted a foreign policy based on a fixation with the past and grandiose dreams of the nation's rightful place as a major power in central Europe. Reality, according to Lampe, had been vastly at odds with these dreams:

As a result of the selfishness and narrow-mindedness of the Polish gentry of the 17th and 18th centuries, as a result of the partitions and policies of the partitioning powers in the 19th century, as a result of the destruction during the war of 1914-1918, independent Poland began as a poor state, backward in its economy and therefore weak politically. This backwardness was not put right by the twenty years of independence, something which everybody except for the Poles were aware of.... One can conclude from this that what Poland needed then, and needs now, is a policy guaranteeing it a long term peace and the possibility of unthreatened and unhindered development.¹⁸

Such a policy could only be put into place by the Polish communists and their goal of social and political 'real democracy', Lampe wrote. The communists were to initiate an 'unchangeable course' based on a lasting alliance with the Soviet Union. This course could be the only real guarantee for Polish independence. 'Democratic Poland' would never again allow the mistakes of Polish foreign policy from the period between November 1918 and September 1939; the future communist government would not 'speculate on the tactics of foreign imperialisms'; it would not 'balance itself on the antagonisms among great powers'; it would never again base its existence on the 'unsteady balance of incompatible powers in Europe'.¹⁹ Instead, it would anchor itself firmly to one great power, the closest geographically, and the closest to the principles of what would be the new Polish government.

Lampe developed the linkage between 'democratic Poland' and the Soviet alternative further in another context, this time not intended

for widespread publication. In the summer of 1943, at the same time as the PPR was re-defining its political strategy within Poland following the break in official Polish-Soviet relations and the Delegatura's rejection of cooperation, the debate on domestic tactics among the ZPP leadership centred around the idea of creating a representative organ able to form the nucleus of the new communist government following the entry into Poland of the Red Army. Lampe's attitude on this issue, formulated in a document written in August known as 'The Lampe Theses', was not known outside a very small group of ZPP communist leaders.²⁰ His thesis was that a new programme of social development needed to be introduced into post-war Poland, one neither beholden to the processes of liberal-capitalist development nor to the road taken by Russia since 1917.²¹ This did not at all mean that the communists should share their control with other radical elements in a 'national front' neither Soviet aligned nor capitalist. Only the communists would be in a position to choose the new social development programme, since the Soviet Union for all its readiness to see Poland differing in a socio-political sense, could not allow a Poland to exist after the war which conducted a foreign policy unfriendly toward it.²²

Only the communists could guarantee a Polish state not intrinsically anti-Soviet. With the exception of the communists, Lampe wrote, all Polish political tendencies had been and remained anti-Soviet. If they had no tradition of anti-Sovietism, then they played an anti-Soviet role in a systemic sense. Lampe cited Czechoslovakia as an example where the Soviet Union was prepared to allow an alternative socio-political conception to develop in a neighbouring country. But an attitude toward the USSR such as existed in Czechoslovakia had never existed in Poland; and it could not exist. Even should attitudes radically change as a result of the liberation of the country by the

Red Army, and even should a capitalist government be created which based itself on cooperation with the Soviet Union, such a situation would, by nature, be shortlived. The return of the anti-Soviet emigration to Poland from the West and those deported into the Soviet Union, the matter of the eastern border, and the dependence of the Polish economy on foreign trade and credits, would all push the country back into the orbit of the 'great-capitalist Western orientation' and strengthen anti-Soviet tendencies.²³

These reactionary tendencies could not be allowed, Lampe reasoned, even more-so since after the war Poland would not be alone in its new intermediate 'democratic' form. The second foreign policy goal which was to ensure long-term security was for Poland to join in a powerful alliance of 'democratic' states together with the Soviet Union, forming a barrier to Germany's eastward expansion. The first line of defence in this barrier would lie with Poland and Czechoslovakia, and the strategic boundary on the Oder River:

Just like the Soviet Union, we are interested in the point that to the east of the Oder River no enemy military force will ever be able to find an invasion base against whichever of the eastern European nations.... Preventing another German invasion is a matter of life and death. This is also the measure of our friendship with the Soviet Union.²⁴

Already at this stage, immediately prior to the break in official Polish-Soviet relations, Lampe was confident that the Polish communists would secure the full support of Soviet diplomacy in the international negotiations needed to settle the German-Polish border issue. This proposal should also receive, he insisted, the approval of the great Western democracies, Britain and the United States, 'as one of the guarantees of peace in this part of the world'.²⁵

But Poland had also to deserve these territories; she had to fight for them and occupy them herself:

Our participation in the fight with hitlerism, the creative function of the reborn Polish state in the post-war system of European states, the extent of our reach in terms of population, will establish Poland's place in Europe, and will be the starting point for determining the territorial shape of our state.²⁶

Poland had to go forward, not back. The issue of what would be Poland's new borders lay in the west, not in the east, where 'the ordinary restitution of the pre-September 1939 borders is not in our interest, nor would it serve the matter of our independence or peace in Europe'.²⁷

Poland's old eastern border no longer existed for Lampe. It had been a border established at a time when the USSR had been severely weakened by civil war and foreign intervention. It had served a state which had been 'a bastion of imperialism against the Soviet Union'; the new Poland would not allow itself to be forced into the role of a 'barbed wire fence' surrounding the Soviet Union. Efforts to have this border reinstated were attempts to reinstate Poland's fatal weakness and repeat the same mistakes of Poland's eastern policy all over again.²⁸

There was no preordained truth for which Poland had to establish itself as Europe's defender from Russia, Lampe wrote, and there was one very good reason why Poland and Europe needed to be open to the presence of the Soviet Union. 'The borders of the re-born Polish state must be demarcated differently to the pre-war borders, just as Poland will be different with regard to its internal character as to its international role'.²⁹ Internally Poland would be 'democratic'; externally, Lampe saw Poland as the guardian of European peace. But this peace could not be organised without the participation of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union would not only guarantee the new Poland's security and independence; it would also ensure European peace, and as such the closest cooperation with it would be in

Europe's as well as Poland's interest: 'This salutary role the USSR will be able to perform all the better, the closer our cooperation with it'.³⁰

Lampe's theoretical synthesis was vetted by the Soviet authorities and undoubtedly reflected the hopes of the other European communist leaders gathered with the Comintern at Ufa. But where the strength of Lampe's analysis lay was in his ability to take the Soviet and Comintern positions, and explore the advantages for the Polish state inherent in them (few of the disadvantages were ever reviewed). These advantages revolved around Poland's future security and prestige, its national interests. 'Democratic Poland's' national interests were to be internally integrated and internationally guaranteed; European peace and the integrity of Polish borders would be synonymous. Since 'democratic Poland' and the Soviet Union shared a common interest in security from German eastward expansion, they could not also share a border that was the source of friction. The new eastern border was therefore to become 'a transmission belt' between the two states. It would be the 'source of strength and not weakness of the Polish state'.³¹ The same applied to Poland's other neighbours. Border disputes were to be settled on the basis of common interests.

This was the theme Lampe continued in the ZPP's programmatic 'Ideological Declaration' ratified at its First Congress in June 1943. The strengthening of Polish-Soviet and Polish-Czechoslovak relations were to be the new organisation's foremost foreign policy goals. The ZPP would work 'so that between Poland and Czechoslovakia arguments and disputes would end once and for all', and political and economic cooperation would become a reality. From this position Poland could confidently look forward to establishing itself on the Baltic and Oder as the border in the interest of all the Slavic nations, defending

themselves from the threat of a renewed German invasion: '...secured from the east and south by the strong support of our allies, we will be able to take on ourselves the burden of the common responsibility for establishing the guard for peace on the Oder'.³² This last slogan continues to be used by the Polish government to this day.

The importance of Lampe's work for the foreign policy of the new Polish communist state cannot be overestimated. He was the 'oldest and most experienced communist in the organising committee of the ZPP',³³ a member (even if in prison) of the pre-1938 KPP Politburo and Central Committee Secretariat. His theoretical work had its greatest impact among the ZPP Presidium and other Moscow based Polish communists engaged at that time in developing Poland's post-war policy positions. As regards the policy of a 'wide national front of the Polish emigration in the Soviet Union', represented by the ZPP, Lampe was often considered to be cynical, promoting the slogan on its tactical merits and little else. This resulted in considerable disagreement among the ZPP leadership, and especially between Lampe and Wasilewska, who also considered Lampe to be coveting her position as leader of the Polish communists in the Soviet Union and principal liaison with Stalin.³⁴ Had he not died from a heart attack on 10 December 1943, Lampe would have undoubtedly continued on to dominate the development of 'democratic Poland's' foreign policy climate.

5.2 Other Policy 'Theses'

As it was, other communist leaders came to dominate this climate instead. Those on the 'national' side of the leadership of the post-war Polish communist state had no hesitation in using Lampe's national interest formulations in their own speeches, Gomułka foremost among them. But neither did those on the 'internationalist' side. Lampe's synthesis satisfied the priorities of both sides; at the same time, it did little to narrow the differences between them. The 'national front' policy had been deliberately established as a means of creating a broad church grouping on the left of the political spectrum. It was not intended to discourage the introduction of national imperatives into the policies of the European communist parties. In the summer and autumn of 1943, the PPR under Gomułka began to proceed down this 'national' road. In the USSR, much the same phenomenon took place among the communist leaders of the new Polish army division established in May under the patronage of a ZPP Special Commission staffed by Wasilewska, Lampe, Minc and Jędrychowski. The division's commanding officer was Colonel Berling, promoted by Stalin to General for the occasion. Just as Gomułka's 'national' policies showed significant variations on the original PPR design brought from the USSR by the Initiative Group leaders, so too, for much the same 'national' reasons, did the initial policies put forward by the new communist military leaders.

In order to create a cohesive fighting force able to fight for a 'new, democratic Poland', the new Polish division was given a patriotic Polish character, symbolised by its designation as the Tadeusz Kościuszko Division. Its military officers were largely Red

Army staff, while its Polish officer corps was made up of a large number of Polish communists assigned to the division's 'political-educational' sections. Apart from the communists involved with the ZPP organisation, the majority of ex-KPP members found themselves within this newly created 'educational' apparatus, and it was from here that the first differences in opinion on the nature of the changes coming to Poland emerged.

The main task of the Kościuszko Division's educational section was to 'build from the beginning many beliefs and attitudes, mainly in areas such as attitudes toward the socialist Soviet state and Russian nation, toward the democratic changes due to take place in Poland as well as a new way of looking at the history of the fatherland'.³⁵ But it also was important that the division present a coherent political and economic programme for its soldiers, so many of whom had been displaced from their homes in eastern Poland by the Soviet authorities in 1939 and 1940. The ZPP ideological declaration did not fulfill this purpose. On the 'internationalist' side, it was seen by the communists within the educational apparatus as not going far enough in pointing toward a radical change in post-war Poland away from the capitalist system. On the 'national' side, it was considered by those who found themselves close to the military leadership as being imprecise and impractical.³⁶

The first attempt at a programme specifically aimed at the new political melting-pot within the Kościuszko Division was undertaken at the same time as Lampe was preparing his 'Theses' and only a few months after the division had been created. It was issued under the name of the division's 'educational' second-in-command and ex-KPP member, Jakób Prawin. But what was commonly called 'Theses no.1' was understood to have been the initiative of Berling's 'political' deputy

and ex-KPP member Włodzimierz Sokorski, and indeed, of Berling himself. The Prawin programme was given the title of the March 1943 PPR release: 'For What Are We Fighting?'.

Prawin's programme postulated the creation in post-war Poland of a political system known as 'organised democracy': 'political life will be directed by one political camp, whose expression will be a strong government'. Both pre-war fascism, and pre-war political fragmentation ('pseudo-democracy') would be eliminated, in effect a form of left wing *Sanacja*. Prawin avoided using the phrase 'working class' and instead talked of 'the whole nation'. The Soviet Union, 'our enduring ally', he wrote, would support Poland in its 'independent state existence', and secure it from any future threat from Germany. In the west, the Germans had to have their 'barbs' removed, with the 'age-old Polish lands up to the Oder and Baltic joined to Poland'. In the east, just as Poland 'demanded political independence for itself', so it had to respect the same right with regard to its 'related' neighbours. Finally, Poland had considerable trading potential, situated as it was on 'the cross-roads between east and west, north and south'.³⁷

Not surprisingly, Prawin's programme generated a great deal of sharp criticism from within ZPP and army circles. Much of it concerned the fact that he had ignored the existence within Poland of the PPR and wanted to present the division as 'the only organised political force' to have any power following the liberation of Poland. Prawin was branded a 'careerist', and 'foreign to our movement'. Lampe wrote that the fact that the programme was at all published was 'very sad'.³⁸

On foreign policy, Prawin had payed lip service to the Soviet alternative and the new borders in the west. He had also emphasised the prestige goal which Poland 'demanded' — independence. It was an emphasis designed to appeal to the ranks of patriotic soldiers finding

themselves in the Polish division. As such, it was an emphasis continued in the next programme produced, this time by communists counting themselves part of the 'internationalist' mainstream.

The next programme was written at the end of October in the course of the debate on 'Theses no.1' by two political officers in what was now the Polish Army Corps, Roman Zambrowski and Hilary Minc. Addressed to the Presidium of the ZPP, it suggested the creation of a strong political centre which would unite the 'democratic movement' in both the Soviet Union and Poland under one leadership in the most vital days before Poland's liberation by the Red Army. Unlike the Prawin programme, the Zambrowski/Minc programme, referred to as 'Theses no.2', owed much more to the theoretical work of Lampe and came much closer to the general discussion within the ZPP in both its aspirations and its terminology:

We are a democratic-independence movement. We are fighting for an independent, strong and democratic Poland. Polish independence, Polish strength and Polish democracy are joined for us inextricably. We know ... that Poland will not be independent and strong, so long as Poland is not democratic.³⁹

At the beginning of May, Stalin had announced in an interview with the Moscow correspondent for *The Times* that in breaking diplomatic relations with the Polish government, he had no intention in seeing Poland after the war anything other than 'strong and independent'. Since then, this slogan had been incorporated into the ZPP lexicon, figuring prominently in Lampe's foreign policy writing.

Reading the Zambrowski/Minc programme further, it soon becomes clear that the authors had taken the Prawin programme, with its emphasis on attracting non-communist patriotic support for the ZPP and Polish Army Corps, and added a 'democratic' dimension. In its general outline it was also similar to the original PPR Initiative Group programme. It identified with the national insurrectionary tradition

and stated its goals as being 'wide political democracy, wide economic democracy, democratic peaceful foreign policy'.⁴⁰ Prawin's theme of a strong government was continued, this time for the purpose of implementing a 'long-term foreign policy' and carrying out a wide programme of social reform. On the other hand, 'totalist temptations' and attempts at 'exclusiveness and dictatorship' were condemned in a direct attack on the authors of 'Theses no.1'. Trade with east, west, north and south, became instead cooperation with the 'huge economic organism' of the Soviet Union .

The immediate impression one has on reading the foreign policy section of the Zambrowski/Minc programme, is of how far the Polish communists had come from the days of the internationalist KPP. Included in it is a clear statement of the worth of national independence, not even qualified by the standard 'democratic' rhetoric:

Foreign policy must ensure a lasting and essential, and not only formal, independence for Poland. Externally, Poland cannot be a tool of foreign interests, cannot perform as whoever's satellite, but must determine its policies by its own, and not foreign interests. Externally, Poland must move on its own roads, must achieve transformations with its own Polish methods relevant to the traditions and aspirations of the nation, must not submit to whoever's dictates. Poland's alliances must be based on the links Polish interests have with the interests of the states allied to it and on unlimited respect for the principles of independence.⁴¹

The attitudes expressed in this statement bore eloquent witness to the impact Stalin's diplomatic views on the Polish question were having on the Polish communists. Lampe's thesis of a new programme of social development for Poland neither liberal-capitalist nor Bolshevik, had been echoed in the Prawin programme and was now being extended further in the foreign policy field than anything Lampe had been prepared to commit to paper. The attitudes being expressed here appeared, as a result, rather cynical in their design.

The Zambrowski/Minc programme went on to take the Soviet line and

Lampe's work to their programmatic conclusions. Poland was to become the bastion of peace in central and eastern Europe. But the only way to ensure that this came about was for Poland to guarantee the security of its eastern backyard; the opportunity to do this had arisen with Stalin's support for a 'strong and independent Poland' on the one hand, and the elimination of the political forces which had traditionally pushed Poland into eastward expansion on the other. The deep common interest on which a future Polish-Soviet alliance would be built was the need to defend against future German aggression; and to make such aggression still less likely East Prussia would be eliminated, removing Germany's most imperialist bastion, at the same time giving Poland wide access to the Baltic. With the country's new western borders incorporating the 'age-old' Polish lands of Silesia and Warmia, Poland would stand guard on the Oder, 'vigilantly looking westward'. Slavic Poland would ally itself with Slavic Czechoslovakia, and as with the dispute over the eastern border, the Polish-Czechoslovak border dispute would be solved on the basis of 'the self-determination of nations'.

Last but not least came a declaration of intent with regard to the Western allies, echoing the Soviet diplomatic line, and later to form a post-war Polish foreign policy standard:

Poland's foreign policy will endeavour simultaneously to maintain sincere relations with Britain, the United States and France, and will participate in the great task of maintaining and expanding the international cooperation and solidarity of nations united by ... the fight with hitlerite Germany.⁴²

The Zambrowski/Minc programme was not intended for release as an official document. Like the Prawin document, it was meant for limited internal discussion. But unlike the Prawin document which had shown the effect of many hours of discussions with non-communist Kościuszko Division soldiers, Zambrowski and Minc intended their work to meet the

specific needs of the communist community. They considered themselves sufficiently authoritative to recommend such measures as eliminating all propaganda contrary to the principle of parliamentary democracy, particularly 'monoparty accents', emphasising a positive attitude toward private enterprise, and discarding rural collectivisation as a political option.⁴³ While their efforts did not escape the criticism of Lampe and the ZPP leadership, an indication of the general acceptability of the programme might be the various personnel changes brought about in the late autumn of 1943. In October, Zambrowski succeeded Prawin as head of the now reorganised political-educational section of the Kościuszko Division, while a month later, Sokorski was transferred out of the army and brought to Moscow to the ZPP head office.⁴⁴ At the same time, the position of the communists within the army political apparatus was strengthened, and moves were made to consolidate this control throughout the ZPP organisation. The initiative for these changes came from Lampe and communists gathered within the ZPP Presidium who had come to the conclusion that some sort of overall coordinating body was needed to maintain a stricter central control over the activity of the Polish communists in the army and ZPP, and to tie this activity more intimately with that of the PPR in Poland.

5.3 Polish National Committee

In his August 'Theses' proposals, Lampe had written about the 'ideological chaos' the Soviet based Polish communists found themselves in: their 'narrow practicisim [and] lack of perspectives which all too often equate with a lack of principles and covers many different views, from the false course of socialist revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat to a slipping into liberal-bourgeois positions'.⁴⁵ He doubted whether the PPR would constitute a power notwithstanding the optimistic reports being received from Poland. Lampe's reasoning shows the essential realism of the man: the PPR had not existed in Poland in the decisive years of 1938-1942; even as the direct continuator of the KPP, the PPR had only been created after the outbreak of the Soviet-German war; it was still subject to its traditional 'sectarianism' and lacked 'great ideas and outstanding activists'.⁴⁵

Lampe also considered that the external intervention of the USSR on the Polish communists' behalf in the form of the Red Army 'liberation', would have an enormously negative effect on the power of the PPR since the massive domestic opposition such intervention would inevitably create would require even greater and more permanent Soviet intervention well into the future. Nor was the international climate after the war likely to offer any comfort to the communists:

Taking into consideration the fact that the overall European situation will not make revolution a current issue, and also that the Polish situation does not contain any elements which would push toward solutions on the pattern of the conclusion of the last war, there must be a new outcome to the war, a new perspective for development. The slogans of democracy and liberalism do not constitute a great dynamic force in Poland. In our ranks, and even more so beyond our ranks, [these slogans] are treated as something temporary and do not awaken enthusiasm in anybody.⁴⁷

Lampe's answer to the dilemma he had exposed was to advocate the introduction of 'new great ideological currents'. These would bring the population together in a common effort to rebuild the country on the basis of its own 'developmental road'. There would be no 'aping of patterns from the West or from the East'. Instead, all large scale industry would be nationalised and rural reform carried out, while at the same time private ownership would be upheld and encouraged as a way of proving that 'the revolutionary road had been rejected'.⁴⁸

But nowhere did Lampe state clearly how, without the help of the Red Army, the communists were to establish themselves in a position of power and authority where they could prove anything to anybody, let alone implement the new Polish 'developmental road'. Prawin had talked of the need for a 'strong government', but nothing more substantial than that. It was left to Zambrowski and Minc to suggest more concrete measures. In their programme, they included a final section entitled 'Tactical Lines'.

The Zambrowski/Minc analysis of domestic tactics was none too dissimilar to that of Gomulka, suggesting that indeed Gomulka's initiative to form the 'democratic national front' and KRN in Poland was an attempt to pre-empt the establishment of a similar body in the USSR which would in effect weaken the influence of the PPR. According to Zambrowski and Minc, the old political parties opposed to the 'democratic-independence movement', although internally fragmented, still had a decisive influence on the politically active section of the Polish population; since, however, they remained anti-Soviet there could be no part for them in an alliance with the 'communist camp' (ZPP, Polish armed forces in the USSR, PPR and People's Guard). On this basis there was little possibility of creating a broad political coalition in Poland similar to those already operating in France (the

French Liberation Committee) or Italy (the Coordinating Committee). The 'communist camp' clearly did not constitute a majority in the nation; on the other hand, three factors gave it a chance to become a mass political movement: its 'heroic fight with the invader within Poland'; its economic and political reform programme; and its armed forces. None of these, it was understood, would enable the camp to attain power in the first place; but they would be crucial to the 'future successful development' of 'democratic Poland' after the 'communist camp' had gained its power.

Like the Lampe 'Theses', nowhere was it stated how this power was to be attained. Once it had been attained, a Provisional Government would be established to carry out the economic and political reforms which were to legitimise the 'camp's' programme *de facto*. In preparation for this move, Zambrowski and Minc wrote, the 'camp' had to strengthen its political activity, and create a National Committee which would gather economic data for the coming reform and prepare the administrative personnel of the future 'ruling apparatus'. The most immediate task of the National Committee, according to the Zambrowski/Minc programme, was to establish a common leadership for both the Polish army in the Soviet Union and the communist partisans within Poland, giving these latter as much help as possible.⁴⁹

Zambrowski's and Minc's proposals began to be realised in December 1943. At this time the offensive of the Red Army together with the outcome of the October Foreign Ministers' Conference in Moscow and the allied leaders' Conference in Teheran in the last days of November had added significantly to the diplomatic impetus Stalin was able to gain for his own security policies in eastern Europe. The Polish communists could not but be optimistic about the success of their policies in the near future.

On December 24, Stalin met with several of the figures involved with the ZPP, including Andrzej Witos from the Peasant Party and Bolesław Drobner of the pre-war PPS. The Soviet leader made it clear that any move to 'communize' Poland would be too risky; land reform should distribute rural land among the peasants rather than creating state communes, and the majority of large scale industries should remain privately owned. He also, according to *The Times* correspondent in Moscow, indicated to the participants that the time was ripe for the creation of an alternative power centre, an 'embryo' of a government within which leaders from the Polish communities in the Soviet Union, Britain and America could cooperate.⁵⁰ In Teheran, Stalin had been able to gain the agreement of his Western allies to bring pressure to bear on the anti-Soviet members of the Polish government. Now he moved to heighten the 'unfriendly' profile of the Polish government, weaken further its position with the Western allies, and prepare for yet another *fait accompli* in Poland.

The Organising Commission of what was being called the Polish National Committee (PKN) sat for the first time the day after this meeting with Stalin. Wasilewska took the Chair with Berman acting as rapporteur. It was envisaged that the PKN would consist of seven to nine representatives from the ZPP, five representatives from within Poland to be recommended by Berman, two representatives of the Polish emigration in America, two from London,⁵¹ and one from the Middle East.⁵² Oskar Lange, professor of economics at Chicago University, one of the suggested representatives of the American emigration, was recommended to take charge of the foreign affairs portfolio.⁵³

At the second meeting of the Commission, the PKN programmatic declaration was discussed. Drobner, not happy with Lampe's 'journalistic' draft, presented his own programme, far more specific

with regard to the actual means by which power was to be attained in Poland: a 'Provisional People's Government' was to be created to oversee the creation of a people's militia in 'every liberated town and every village'. Drobner's foreign policy section, however, relied heavily on the Lampe draft. Drobner's declaration was distributed to all the commission members but work on Lampe's draft carried on as the definitive PKN programme.⁵⁴

Lampe had begun work on the PKN programme in late November, several weeks prior to his death. In the course of the Organising Commission's meetings, his draft was extensively revised and finally accepted on 4 January 1944.⁵⁵ The aim of this revision was to implement Stalin's advice and give the programme a broadly Polish national character, avoiding formulations which could be identified as purely communist. Under the sub-heading 'Democratic and peaceful foreign policy', the editors retained many of Lampe's original formulations, refining them into an integrated programmatic and less polemical form. Ideas set out in Lampe's 'Poland's place in Europe' series of articles, as well as in his 'Theses' work, featured prominently. But as with that work, in both Lampe's original PKN programme and in the revised edition the question of how the communists would achieve their power was once again avoided; the war would simply be won by the Soviet Union, and 'Poland must win the peace' which was to follow. This was Lampe's all-encompassing policy goal, the first statement of his original and the revised version's foreign policy programme.⁵⁶

The PKN's foreign policy was to be essentially realist, parallel to its pragmatic domestic policies. It was to cater above all to Poland's security interest: 'The matter of securing [Poland's] national existence before the possibility of a new threat from German imperialism is the most important issue of Poland's policy', Lampe

wrote. The editors added that history taught that Poland's expansion eastward simply weakened the Polish state and encouraged German expansion in the same direction. Rather than consolidating Polish power on Polish lands, the trend had been to invade other nations in the east and leave the nation weakened and unprotected in its western regions. Such had been the result of the Treaty of Riga (a Berman formulation). Now, the editors wrote, the experience of this last war had taught that the only way to defend Poland from German expansion was to build a 'great Slavic dam', a slogan also used by Lampe; its basis, and the basis of Poland's foreign policy, would be a Polish-Soviet-Czechoslovak alliance. To the east, the editors wrote, 'a turn' in Poland's relations with Lithuania, Bielorussia and the Ukraine was necessary (another Berman formulation); these relations should be established on the basis of mutual interests. The eastern border needed to be turned into a transmission mechanism and not a barrier, Lampe declared, and cooperation between the Polish armed forces in the Soviet Union and the Red Army should be transformed after the war into 'lasting alliance and neighbourly cooperation'.⁵⁷

Polish foreign policy should consolidate the best possible political, economic and cultural relations with Britain and the United States, and support the rebuilding of France on the basis of its traditional links with Poland, Lampe wrote. Drobner and Wasilewska added all the 'anti-Hitler democracies of the world' to this list. Poland's geographical strength needed to be consolidated on the territories taken from Germany, while its future prosperity and power depended on this altered political and geographical status quo in East-Central Europe being legitimised by the international community:

We want to defend the dearly bought peace in accordance with the principles established at the Moscow and Teheran Conferences, through the development of mutual aid in relations between states, through the practical implementation of the principles of common security and our participation in its international

organisation.⁵⁹

The reference to the Moscow and Teheran Conferences was added by the editors.

In the PKN statute accepted on January 4, provision was made for a PKN Presidium with the power to agree to international agreements involving Poland. Any agreements which affected the borders of the new Polish state would need to be ratified by the future Polish parliament.⁵⁹

The work done on the PKN programme was not made redundant by Stalin's later move to recognise the KRN in Poland as the body representing the Polish 'democratic camp'. Polish communists in Moscow continued to embody the executive interests of this 'camp'. In this capacity, the PKN programme went on to provide the basis for the manifesto of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN) in July 1944.

By December 1943, the detail of a comprehensive Polish communist foreign policy platform had become quite distinct. These positions had been continuously broadcast into Poland, hence the obvious parallels between the PKN and KRN programmes. Many of the formulations first appearing in the PKN programme or in Lampe's earlier articles were later extensively used by Gomułka and other Polish communist leaders in their own speeches and foreign policy publications.

On December 20 an article was published in *Nowe Widnokreği* presenting posthumously what was intended to be seen as the culmination of Lampe's work. It was entitled 'Poland's place in the world'. The article set out what was seen as the favourable external conditions in which 'democratic Poland' could now expect to be recognised by the Western powers and greater international community. These conditions included the political climate established by the

Moscow and Teheran conferences; the treaty between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union signed on 12 December 1943 with its protocol foreseeing the possibility of a third neighbouring state being eventually included;⁶⁰ and the recognition by the United States, British and Soviet governments of Tito's Jugoslavian National Liberation Committee. These conditions all contributed to what the article called 'the premises of the new system in Europe: the unity of Slavic democracy within a system of common security'.⁶¹

5.4 Central Bureau of Polish Communists

In the PKN conception, the PPR were relegated to one of a number of elements of the 'democratic camp' indicating that there was some doubt as to the utility of the new 'Marxist-Leninist' party. From the middle of November no contact had been had with the PPR, and the news that Finder and Fornalska had been arrested led Dimitrov and the Polish communist leaders in Moscow to believe that in fact the PPR Central Committee no longer existed.⁶² This situation exacerbated the dilemma in which the Moscow based Polish communists now found themselves. At the same time as the USSR's international diplomacy was beginning to bear fruit, no organisation existed in the Soviet Union which represented the interests of the communists alone. Furthermore, the ideological fragmentation within the ranks of the ex-KPP members had to be overcome, since the Polish armed forces in the Soviet Union were continuing to expand and the ZPP was reaching ever wider centres of displaced Polish people. And now the PKN was to continue the 'national front' character of the old Comintern policy. This policy had always been predicated on the 'front' remaining under the control of the

communists, something that could not be guaranteed in these conditions. Most importantly, every day the Red Army was drawing closer to the pre-1939 borders of German occupied Poland.

By the end of December, Dimitrov, now director of the External Information section of the Soviet Central Committee, and Manuilski, overseeing Polish policy for the Central Committee, called together a series of meetings of the communists within the ZPP and Polish Army Corps. In the course of these meetings it was decided to create the Central Bureau of Polish Communists (CBKP). On 10 January 1944, Berman, Minc and Wierbłowski presented the constitutional document of the new communist organisation to Molotov.⁶³

Knowledge of the existence of the Bureau was limited even among the Moscow Polish communist community since only communists 'entirely worthy of trust', and not necessarily ex-members of the KPP (Wasilewska), were deemed fit for membership.⁶⁴ Its organisation resembled the Political Bureau of a conventional communist party.

The CBKP consisted of seven members all of whom worked closely with Dimitrov and Manuilski: Aleksander Zawadzki, Chairman, and in charge of liaison with the Soviet Central Committee, was also responsible with Karol Świerczewski (General Walter of the Spanish International Brigades) for the political apparatus of the Polish armed forces in the Soviet Union; Berman was in charge of internal Polish affairs and with Stanisław Radkiewicz, the Bureau's rapporteur, responsible for the new organisation's administration; Wasilewska oversaw the activity of the ZPP; Minc was given the task of producing the various social and economic projects to be implemented in Poland; and Wierbłowski was in charge of the CBKP's propaganda through the ZPP and Kościuszkó radio station.⁶⁵ Zambrowski also took part in the Bureau's first meeting on February 2.

The CBKP was created officially as the 'external organisation of the PPR on the territory of the USSR', to ensure close cooperation with domestic communists especially on the Polish territories liberated by the Red Army. It has been suggested, however, that members of the Bureau intended it to be the controlling body particularly with regard to the PPR.⁶⁶ Gomułka himself suspected it to have been intended as a substitute Central Committee for the one which had been presumably destroyed by the Gestapo.⁶⁷ The first contact between the two groups came in January 1944 when Leon Kasman arrived in eastern Poland with instructions from Dimitrov to make contact with the presumably leaderless PPR and People's Army organisation. Kasman was met with a considerable degree of hostility and mistrust from the Polish based communists, personified in the leader of the People's Army in the Lublin region, Mieczysław Moczar.⁶⁸ This situation did nothing to alleviate the confusion among the PPR Central Committee as to the intentions of Dimitrov and Stalin. It soon became evident from the correspondence between the two centres that the CBKP regarded the leadership of the PPR as rather inept in dealing with the sophisticated problems of the USSR's international political strategy as they related to Poland. The Bureau considered the 'naive' and 'young' PPR leadership 'impatient', 'avant guardist' and 'brash';⁶⁹ and if the CBKP was intended as the 'external organisation of the PPR', it did not even deign to inform the PPR leadership of its existence. Gomułka only learned of the Bureau's existence when he met with its members in Lublin in July 1944. His letters, and from February 1944 radio messages, were addressed to Dimitrov who relayed the information on to the CBKP. Dimitrov then acted as the conduit in the opposite direction, referring to the CBKP only as 'circles connected to the ZPP'.⁷⁰

On hearing from Kasman of the existence of the PPR Central Committee now headed by Gomułka (about whom not a great deal was known) and the creation of the KRN, Dimitrov immediately demanded that the KRN Manifesto be transmitted by Morse to Moscow.⁷¹ The result of this development was two-fold: the PKN was downgraded; and the PPR began to come under strong pressure from Moscow to bring what were perceived to be its compromising radical KRN proposals for domestic reform in Poland into line with the policies established by Zambrowski, Minc and the PKN. Eligibility for entry into the 'national front' coalition government, still the favoured Soviet option, required a broad domestic policy approach.

In foreign policy, Gomułka's brand of activism with its emphasis on Polish security and prestige came close to the PKN approach and was not directly criticised. But the contrast with the line of the Soviet based Polish communists, now that Lampe no longer dominated, was quite significant. Being closer to the mechanisms of Soviet power, and now more than ever intimately aware of their reliance on this power, the Soviet based Polish communists began again to rationalise this reliance in a similar if rather more sophisticated manner to that of the original PPR Initiative Group leaders. Writing in February 1944, Jerzy Borejsza developed this theme in *Nowe Widnokreęgi*: 'The development of foreign policy must be based on a familiarity with the real balance of international power'. Poland had as its eastern neighbour 'the most powerful great power in today's world', but 'this does not make us uneasy'. Fortunately, this 'great power bases its policies on deeply democratic principles', and since 1918 'has always had a consistent line toward Poland'. Stalin, Borejsza continued, had clearly stated 'that he would like to see Poland as a strong and independent state'.⁷²

The Soviet leadership continued to favour the Moscow centre of Polish communist activity, while at the same time officially supporting the domestic communist elements in Poland. From March, the CBKP officially recognised the primacy of the PPR as the successor to the KPP, but continued its dispute with the 'brash' PPR leadership. Little active support for the PPR was forthcoming. In one despatch to Poland, Dimitrov stated that there would be no more arms supplies for the People's Army until such time as a PPR/KRN delegation came to Moscow and explained their position.⁷³ While waiting for this delegation, the PKN proposals were postponed and the efforts of the CBKP to create a PKN type executive to take power in the wake of the Red Army advance were kept on the back-burner.⁷⁴ With the arrival in May of the requested delegation led by Marian Spychalski, previously of the KPP and ZWW and now a member of the PPR Central Committee and head of the People's Army intelligence service, and Edward Osóbka-Morawski, leader of the RPPS fraction in the KRN, the KRN option was confirmed in Moscow. So too were the CBKP's domestic proposals.

5.5 Polish Committee of National Liberation

On June 22 at a reception in the Kremlin for the PPR/KRN delegation, Stalin told those present that the time for creating a Polish administration based on the KRN was drawing near. The Red Army, Stalin said, would soon be crossing the Bug River, and the Poles should prepare themselves for assuming the responsibility of administering these 'liberated' lands.⁷⁵ Meeting two days later, the ZPP executive passed a resolution finally recognising the primacy of the KRN, and accepting the KRN's authority to establish a provisional

government.⁷⁶ The KRN was now being made preeminent in an effort to give domestic Polish elements a higher international profile and prepare for the creation of an executive body intended to represent these domestic elements. In the first days of July, a second KRN delegation led by the commander of the People's Army, General Żymierski and including two members of the PPR aligned peasant group in the KRN, were brought to Moscow by the Soviet air force. Following the arrival of this second delegation, a series of meetings were held between all the KRN delegates and the executive of the ZPP.

On July 15, Wasilewska, Chairwoman of the ZPP Presidium, and Osóbka-Morawski, Vice-President of the KRN, sent a letter written by the CBKP's Polish affairs specialist, Jakub Berman, to Stalin, recommending the immediate creation of a provisional Polish government as the executive organ of the KRN 'legislature'. Berman's letter asserted that the political situation within Poland had matured sufficiently for the creation of a communist based administration, since no other national representative organ existed. This fact, Berman wrote, was being exploited by rival elements both within Poland and outside, who were putting forward the possibility of a Russian occupation. The creation of such an administration, the letter said, would quicken the disintegration of opposition forces in Poland, and bring about the consolidation of communist power.⁷⁷

In talks with General Żymierski that same day, Stalin made it plain he was favourably disposed to the proposition contained in the Berman letter, but of the opinion that the administration created by the KRN should not yet be called a government. Instead, in consideration for allied sensitivities, Stalin suggested that it carry the title of 'National Liberation Committee'.⁷⁸ Two days later on July 17, the KRN delegates met with Stalin and agreed it was imperative a National

Liberation Committee be formed. In the light of the most recent developments on the eastern front, the matter of an administration over the soon to be liberated areas west of the Curzon Line needed to be rapidly settled.

At a special meeting the next day of an expanded ZPP Presidium, including all the KRN delegates and members of the CBKP, a committee of three, Osóbka-Morawski, Witos and Berman, was chosen to determine the list of candidates for the new administration. Its name had been changed and it was now being called the 'KRN Delegatura for the Liberated Territories', a clear challenge to the authority of the Polish government's Delegatura in the rest of Poland.⁷⁹

During this meeting, Berman and the CBKP decided on sending a letter to the PPR in Poland, advising the Central Committee of the creation of the KRN Delegatura and of the PPR's obligations in this regard. Two conditions were stipulated for the PPR if it was to successfully fulfill its task of providing the organisation on the ground in support of the new administration. Firstly, the policy of the 'national front', even though it had been delayed, now needed to be implemented *consistently*. The 'national front' could only be created by inducing fundamental changes in the old parties, and toward this end, a 'series of concessions and compromises' were needed, 'introducing disunity into the camp of the [bourgeois] enemy without at the same time resigning from basic principles', and 'establishing a suitable exit position for the future'. The second condition was for the PPR to conduct the sorts of domestic and foreign policies which would contribute to the maintenance of the unity of the three great powers in 'the spirit of Teheran'. Any moves which might establish Poland as a 'bone of contention' among the 'Teheran states' would, without doubt, be 'contrary to the goals of the Soviet Union', and the

'KRN as the basis of power would be left hanging'. Examples of policies with this disruptive potential and which would be subject to the 'concessions and compromises' necessary to strengthen the 'national front', were nationalisation, rural reform and the slogan of 'People's Poland'.⁸⁰

At a meeting the next day with Stalin, Molotov and General Zhukov, NKWD adviser on Poland, the list of KRN Delegatura members was presented to Stalin, at which stage he gave his final approval for its creation. On July 20, the same day as the Red Army crossed the Bug River, the KRN Delegatura began its activity. It held three meetings and also met at different times with Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Vyshinsky, Molotov and Stalin.⁸¹

The third meeting dealt with the manifesto for what was now again being referred to as the Polish National Liberation Committee (PKWN). Immediately before this third meeting, Molotov had approached the participants with the proposal that they change their title. 'Delegatura' was evidently too modest, where the title 'National Liberation Committee' would put the Polish administration on an equal footing with other such committees in France and Yugoslavia, Stalin's original conception. At a meeting later in the evening, Stalin suggested Lublin as the temporary seat of the Liberation Committee and gave the go-ahead for the immediate release of the manifesto. It was published in Poland on July 22.⁸²

The basis for the PKWN Manifesto became the previously prepared PKN programme, now given greater declaratory style. Lampe's argumentation was cut down considerably. Gone were his rather imprecise references to a foreign policy for the winning of the peace after the war. Gone also were the sensitive references to the Riga Treaty of 1921 and the previous Polish-Soviet borders as being contrary to Poland's national

interests. Following on from the call to support the Red Army entering Poland, the PKWN Manifesto provided for:

- * the 'return' to Poland of the 'old Polish lands' of Pomerania, Lower Silesia and East Prussia, wide access to the Baltic and a Polish-German border on the Oder;

- * the creation of a 'great Slavic dam' based on an alliance between Poland, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, to prevent any further eastward German imperialism, this alliance being the cornerstone of the PKWN's foreign policy;

- * an historic turn in Poland's eastern policies, from conflict to cooperation with the Soviet Union and its nations, determined by mutual interest and recognition of the right of the Ukrainian, Bielorussian and Lithuanian Soviet states to their ethnic lands as the basis for a settlement of the eastern border question;

- * deepened friendship and alliance with Great Britain and the United States as a result of the mutual wartime experience, with France on the basis of tradition, and cooperation with all democratic states;

- * a declaration to the effect that the new Polish foreign policy would be democratic and based on the principles of common security;

- * a demand for war reparations from Germany.⁸³

The manifesto effectively combined all the previous PPR and ZPP formulae into a single platform of policies, with a simple message: the new administration wanted to be seen to be a conventional government, the continuator of a realistic and pragmatic foreign policy based firmly on national interests. It counted on its foreign policy to provide international legitimacy in the same way as its domestic policies were designed to be as least offensive to the Polish population as possible. The foundation of the new Soviet alternative

in Poland would be not simply alliance with the Soviet Union but rather 'common security', and more specifically, a Slavic alliance, a three way tie between Poland, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, with a conventional external security focus — defence against Germany. Poland's new foreign policy would be 'democratic'; the 'turn' in its eastern policies was labeled 'historic', but Poland's western policies would continue 'on the basis of tradition and cooperation'. Here was a mix of new and old, revolutionary and establishment ideas which were brought together to give the new administration the firmest possible base from which to begin its international activity.

But the mainstay of this base continued to be the military and diplomatic power of the USSR. The mix of old and new was a mix of national interest with the internationalist interest, and in the conditions in which the PKWN was created the internationalist interest inevitably remained paramount. Created as part of the Soviet leadership's Polish policy, the Polish National Liberation Committee could now look forward to the internal security of the Polish state it was to establish being inextricably linked to that of the Soviet state. This linkage applied just as firmly to the question of the new Poland's territorial security. The policy issue of the eastern borders had been settled some time previously by the KPRP at its Second Congress in 1923. Since then, policy had changed little other than a change of tack once the Soviet Union had made good its strategic intentions in September 1939. After that date ZPP policy followed closely the signals received from Soviet diplomacy.

5.6 Soviet Diplomacy and the Polish Borders

The ZPP had been under no illusions as to the ease with which the border changes in the east would be accepted by the Polish population: 'We cannot allow these borders to be forced upon us', Lampe had written in his April 1943 article. The new eastern borders needed to be 'proclaimed' by the Poles, and 'accepted willingly'.⁸⁴ Soviet policy was to work toward establishing a Polish post-war government which could undertake this role on the USSR's behalf. Both the Polish communists' task, and that of Soviet security policy, were immeasurably helped by the positive attitudes taken in this regard by the two Western powers, Britain and the United States. Faced with a common enemy, the Soviet goal of securing its new western borders seemed essentially realistic to the Western allies.

The ZPP, unlike the PPR, did not attempt to explain away the events of September 1939. Instead, their policy was to take the new territorial situation as given, and to explain why it needed to be the way the Soviet Union wanted it in terms of Poland's national interests.⁸⁵ Lampe's publicity work formed the bedrock of this policy. But the fact that Lampe was rationalising the Polish communist position from the standpoint of Polish national interests made the position no less reliant on signals from the Soviet leadership. Nine days after 'Poland's place in Europe' was published, the Soviet Union broke diplomatic relations with the Polish government in London; ten days after that, Stalin told the correspondent of *The Times* that he 'unquestionably' wanted to see Poland 'strong and independent'.⁸⁶ Whether or not Stalin had already made this view known to Wasilewska and Lampe or any other of the Polish communists in Moscow, after this

date, Polish strength and Polish independence became the repeated slogans of ZPP propaganda.

As Lampe had written, the old eastern border of Poland 'no longer existed'. It had been incorporated into the Ukrainian and Bielorussian Soviet Republics. No mention was made in his article, however, of what was to be the new eastern border. It was left to the reader to assume that this would be the German-Soviet demarcation line of 1939. In all the propaganda and publicity given this issue by the ZPP, the border line was never clarified. The ZPP ideological declaration, for example, stated only that 'we demand not one inch of Ukrainian, Bielorussian or Lithuanian soil for ourselves'.⁸⁷ No signal had yet been given by Stalin on the precise nature of the eastern border in the way that the Oder and Baltic had been indicated in the west and north. The PKN programme in December 1943 simply said that 'a turn' in Poland's relations with Lithuania, Bielorussia and Ukraine was needed, nothing more. As a result, the task of the communist educational officers in the Polish army in the Soviet Union was made all the more difficult. That Poland's eastern border had to change was one matter; that it had to be the Soviet-German demarcation line of September 1939 meant something altogether different for the soldiers who had been directly affected by the events surrounding that demarcation.

In the months immediately following the allied leaders' summit at Teheran, the ZPP increased its press coverage of issues relating to the border question. It was a period of intense political activity not only for the Polish communists in Moscow with the creation of the PKN and moves toward the establishment of the CBKP, but also for the PPR and its own creation of the KRN. The source of all this activity was the imminent arrival of the Red Army at the borders which it had already once crossed in 1939, with all that this implied for the

settlement of the border issue. It was important that the ZPP present its policies as comprehensively as possible to prepare the ground for the alternative territorial conception to be accepted by the Polish population under the new communist administration. It also had to try to offset the personal feelings of the soldiers of the Polish armed forces under Soviet command, now returning to the regions from which they had been deported in 1939. The tenor of the argumentation presented in the press changed from a traditional internationalist emphasis on the general question of ethnicity and self-determination, to one of arguing the specific merits of the strategic benefits to be gained by Poland.⁸⁸ On New Year's Eve 1943, *Wolna Polska* carried a lead article calling for 'the liquidation of border disputes once and for all and the subordination of sentiments, even personal interests, to the matter of the future of the country'.⁸⁹

On January 3, the Red Army crossed the old 1939 border. The ZPP celebrated this event with a lengthy article in *Wolna Polska* referring only to the anticipated western borders of Poland as part of the obligation all the allied powers had of ensuring that Poland was fully compensated for the injustices brought on her by Germany. Poland's right, Leon Chwistek wrote, was to be guaranteed lasting security in borders which included Poland's 'centuries old land', in borders which were justified historically, economically and strategically. But above all, justice had to be done on moral grounds: the 'criminal theft of these lands' from Poland had to be rectified.⁹⁰

Soviet support for the ZPP's propaganda campaign on the Polish borders came soon into the new year. On January 5, a declaration by the Polish government was issued on the occasion of the Red Army crossing into pre-war Poland. It called for the USSR to respect Polish sovereignty and the rights and interests of the Polish Republic's

citizens in the liberated areas.⁹¹ This brought an angry reaction from Stalin who had expected Churchill to have a greater impact on the official Polish position after the British leader's conciliatory assertions at Teheran. The January 5 statement was no Polish concession to British pressure. Just the reverse. It restated the Polish government's position 'as the only legal steward and spokesman of the Polish nation recognised by Poles at home and abroad, as well as by the Allied and Free Governments'.⁹² Stalin understood that he could not rely on the British to do his work for him. His reaction was to publicise the Soviet position on the Polish borders, naming the Curzon Line, and linking this to the cause of allied unity, leaving little doubt in the process as to the as yet unpublicised position of the British and American leaders on the issue. The ZPP and PPR both immediately reacted to this signal, the former intensifying its educational work among the soldiers of the Polish army in the USSR, the latter giving the Soviet policy a stamp of approval by way of a KRN resolution. The Polish communists were at last able to go further in their press treatment of the eastern border than their previous generalities.

The Soviet response to the Polish government declaration merits a brief review. On January 11, the American ambassador, Averill Harriman, was summoned to the Kremlin to receive the declaration from Molotov who hoped it 'would be found to conform to the spirit of the conversations at Teheran with President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill'.⁹³ It set out, Molotov said, to correct a number of assertions in the Polish document, among other things, on the Polish-Soviet border: 'As is known, the Soviet Constitution established the Soviet-Polish border in accordance with the will of the population of the Western Ukraine and Western Bielorussia, expressed in a plebiscite

which was carried out on a wide democratic basis in 1939'. In this way, the declaration stated, the injustice of the Riga Treaty imposed on the Soviet Union in 1921 was rectified. After talking of the 'reliable basis for a solid and permanent friendship' between Poland and her eastern neighbours, the declaration mentions the ZPP and Polish Army Corps formed by the ZPP which was fighting alongside the Red Army in the liberation of Poland. In the next line we read: 'There opens up at present the possibility of the regeneration of Poland as a strong and independent state', and that 'Poland must be reborn not by means of the seizure of Ukrainian and Bielorussian lands, but through the restoration to Poland of lands which belonged to her from time immemorial and which were wrested from Poland by the Germans'.⁹⁴

This phraseology, very close to the ZPP's own statements, provided a clear reaffirmation of the role intended for the Polish communists in Moscow: Poland's 'regeneration' and 'rebirth' could not take place without eliminating the political as well as territorial baggage of the past. The ZPP reacted with satisfaction to this public show of support. And in Poland, informed of the Soviet statement by way of TASS and Kościuszko radio, the KRN at its second sitting on January 20, passed a resolution supporting the Soviet position as 'objectively correct'.⁹⁵

On January 15, in a lengthy article by Jerzy Borejsza, now editor of *Nowe Widnokreghi*, the case for the new Polish eastern border was put. Restating the position announced in the Soviet statement, Borejsza integrated the new, more specific policy into what had already been written on the issue. He sought to justify the Soviet territorial *fait accompli* on the grounds of *de facto* legality, emphasising the flexibility which the Soviet position seemingly displayed.⁹⁶ A week later, Hilary Minc, now considered the ZPP's (and

CBKP's) foremost economic spokesman, published an article outlining the economic benefits for the Polish state from being physically shifted to the west. Minc's case was based on the argument that such a shift would enable Poland to move from an agricultural base to an industrial base, thereby creating the potential for Poland to become a major force in East-Central Europe.⁹⁷

At the same time as Churchill and the Soviet ambassador to the Polish government, Victor Lebediev, increased their pressure on the government to accept the Soviet terms — the acceptance of the Curzon Line and the removal of four anti-Soviet members of the Polish cabinet — without success, ZPP foreign policy was being developed further, and on the issue of the future Polish-Soviet border in particular. In May, *Nowe Widnokreği* published a lengthy article presenting a history of the pre-war border, its basis in the political nature of the inter-war Polish regime, and the need for it to change.⁹⁸ By June 1944 the Red Army had recaptured virtually the entire expanse of territory lost to it in the German invasion and was preparing to enter territory recognised as Polish.

In this situation, the way was clear for the communists in Moscow to push their alternative policies. In his July 15 letter to Stalin recommending the creation of a provisional Polish government, Berman wrote that not only would such a body quicken the consolidation of communist power in Poland, it would also make it possible for Polish-Soviet relations to be brought back into the realm of inter-governmental diplomacy, and enable an international agreement on the Polish-Soviet border to be signed:

The most urgent task is the acceptance by the Provisional Polish Government of the Curzon Line as the basis on which to settle the border between Poland and the Soviet Union, and also as the demarcation line between the Soviet and Polish administrations.⁹⁹

Soon afterward, at the July 20 meeting with Stalin, Molotov and the

General Zhukov, Stalin set out the priority goal of the new Polish administration:

As soon as it is made public that the [KRN] Delegatura has organised itself, an agreement will be reached between it and the Soviet Union regarding the demarcation line with the Soviet administration and the Polish administration.¹⁰⁰

Preparatory talks on this agreement began on the same day as Stalin's instruction were received. A KRN Delegatura sub-committee established at the first of the meetings on July 20, dealt specifically with this issue, staying in constant touch with Molotov and the Soviet military authorities. As well as establishing the demarcation line, the agreement was to regulate the status of the Red Army on Polish soil. The details, therefore, depended very much on the operational requirements of the Soviet military. The earlier December 1943 agreement reached between Beneš and Stalin provided the model from which the Delegatura sub-committee now proceeded. On July 23, after the creation of what was now the Polish Committee of National Liberation had been announced by Moscow radio, the now official negotiations between the PKWN and Soviet government on the subject of the Polish-Soviet demarcation line began in earnest. Stalin, Molotov and Zhukov conducted the Soviet brief personally.

The PKWN position continued the traditional Polish communist policy of an 'ethnographic' border running along the Curzon Line, now with agreement from the Soviet side that adjustments were to be made where possible to the benefit of Poland. The Soviet negotiating position was that the entire eastern Polish border was a crucial element in Soviet strategic defence considerations. Concessions would, however, be allowed where these considerations were not pressing. So, for example, concessions were made to the Poles in the Białowieska Forest (with Osóbka-Morawski threatening to resign as Chairman of the PKWN if these were not made) and in the south-east near Suwałki. Taking advantage of

this seeming flexibility in the Soviet position, the PKWN negotiators went on to 'postulate' the inclusion of the whole of East Prussia into Poland.¹⁰¹ On this issue the sides finally settled on the 'Teheran formula' with Stalin reiterating the need for a Soviet clear water northern port in Königsberg.¹⁰²

The negotiations did little to change what had already been decided in the Soviet interest. The Polish side satisfied themselves with the small gains given at the behest of Stalin, while on the major issues of the oil fields in south-eastern Galicia they made very little impact. On the other hand, within the little room to manouver granted them by the Soviet position, the Polish side did stress its interest, even if unsuccessfully, in gaining as much territory as possible. Drobner wrote in his memoirs of the 'heated defence' of the Polish position.¹⁰³

Where the PKWN negotiators saw their major *quid pro quo* was on the position of Poland's western borders. Osóbka-Morawski wrote in his memoirs that the PKWN position was very much to 'resign from the lands in the east', and to direct every effort into gaining the western territories from Germany.¹⁰⁴ Most of the western territories had already been gained for Poland through the agreement of the allied leaders at Teheran. The line of the Oder River had been well established in ZPP foreign policy and there was no reason to believe that the Soviet side would change its position on this important question. What had not yet been decided was to what extent the Oder would be a wholly Polish river what would be the Polish-German border in Upper Silesia. On this question the PKWN negotiators sought their greatest success.

In their discussions on the issue of Poland's western borders, the allied leaders had consistently opted for a line running from the

Baltic along the Oder to its junction with the Neisse River, then along the eastern Neisse to the Czechoslovak border, thereby leaving a large area of Silesia still within Germany. It was now suggested by the PKWN that the border run along the western Neisse, bringing the entire Silesian area into Poland. This suggestion had first been made at the July 15 meeting with Stalin who, being 'convinced of the rightness' of the Polish case, undertook to take up the matter with the rest of the Soviet leadership.¹⁰⁵ On the second day of the negotiations, the PKWN representatives put the case for the Oder-western Neisse line, arguing that this would shorten the Polish-German border to the greatest possible extent. The Soviet side immediately accepted the argument and wrote a guarantee of support for this PKWN position at future international negotiations on the German borders into the final agreement. This immediate Soviet approval, according to Włodzimierz Kowalski, counted as an 'unusually significant political and diplomatic success' for the PKWN delegation.¹⁰⁶ It was undoubtedly a success in terms of the use to which the PKWN negotiators had put their special relationship with the Soviet leadership. The new Polish-German border, the PKWN had argued, would strengthen new Poland's political and economic interests. So too, this argument assumed, would it strengthen Soviet security interests.

On July 26, the 'Agreement between the USSR and the Polish Committee of National Liberation' which was publicly signed did not include the agreement on the Polish borders. The signing ceremony was restricted to the administrative arrangements relating to the active military presence of the Red Army on Polish territory.¹⁰⁷ Immediately afterward, however, Molotov made plain that some sort of agreement demarcating the extent of this administrative arrangement had been reached. The Red Army had reached the 'State border' between Poland

and the Soviet Union, he declared. Poland was now regarded by the USSR as a 'sovereign, friendly and Allied State'.¹⁰⁸

Churchill and Roosevelt had been insistent on the need for post-war Poland to be friendly toward the USSR in the interests of continuing allied cooperation and goodwill. It was from this position that they had been prepared to countenance the Soviet demands both for changes in the make-up of the Polish cabinet, and for greater security on the western Soviet border. For the two Western leaders, the issue of Poland's border with the USSR had been settled at Teheran. After the creation of the PKWN, it became the compositional aspect of the new 'friendly' Polish administration which loomed largest, and even here, the 'friendly' administration established in Moscow began to receive their tacit support.

The efforts of the Polish communists to match their policy positions with those of the USSR were now paying off. The Soviet alternative which they represented, in the conditions of the war against Germany, contained an essential realism: there was no other alternative. The PKWN leaders were later able to argue that no valid alternative to the Polish-Soviet border agreement they had negotiated had presented itself; nor, in the circumstances, could they have been reasonably expected to do anything other than to tie Poland to a security guarantee provided by the USSR as one of the principal members of the anti-German alliance and immediate neighbour of the Polish state. That this security guarantee contained a fundamental political commitment increased the viability of the 'friendly' new administration in the short term war strategies of the Western allies.

But the Polish communists had no intention of being only a short-term phenomenon. Once in power, the 'national front' dominated

domestic politics; in their foreign policies, the Polish communists began entrenching their political commitment to the USSR.

Notes

1. See 'List Berlinga do Gomułki z dnia 20 XI 1956', in Jan Nowak, 'Sprawa generała Berlinga', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 37, 1976, p. 42.
2. See Nowak, pp. 47-52.
3. Fryderyk Zbiniewicz, 'Rola komunistów polskich w organizowaniu i działalności Związku Patriotów Polskich oraz Polskich Sił Zbrojnych w ZSRR (maj 1942-lipiec 1944 roku)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, p. 90.
4. Rozalia Lampe, 'Do redakcji "Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego"', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p. 356.
5. Cited in Zbiniewicz, p. 90.
6. Rozalia Lampe, p. 356.
7. The Polish communists in Ufa coordinated with the Comintern offices through the services of Zofia and Jan Dzierżyński, and Leon Kasman. Zofia Dzierżyńska also played a prominent role in the editorial work of the Kościuszko radio station. Józef Kowalski, 'Rozgłosnia im. Tadeusza Kościuszki', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (16), 1961, pp. 340-7.
8. 'Warunki zwycięstwa', *Nowe Widnokreśli*, 5 May 1942, cited in Antoni Przygoński, *Alfred Lampe*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1976, p. 48.
9. Nowak, p. 57.
10. *Wolna Polska*, 1 March, 1943, in *Publicystyka ZPP 1943-1944. Wybór*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1967, pp. 17-8.
11. Kowalski, 'Rozgłosnia', p. 356.
12. Zbiniewicz, p. 95.
13. Kowalski, 'Rozgłosnia', p. 339.
14. Rozalia Lampe, p. 357.
15. Alfred Lampe, *Miejsce Polski w Europie*, Moskwa, Nakładem ZPP w ZSRR, 1944, p. 22.
16. Lampe, p. 8.
17. Lampe, p. 11.
18. Lampe, p. 24.
19. Lampe, p. 46.
20. 'Notatki Alfreda Lampego dotyczące zagadnień programowych', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p. 26.
21. 'Notatki', p. 33.
22. 'Notatki', p. 30.
23. 'Notatki', p. 30.
24. 'Miejsce Polski w Europie', *Wolna Polska*, 16 April 1943, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, pp. 71-2.
25. Lampe, p. 51.
26. 'Miejsce Polski w Europie', p. 67.
27. Lampe, p. 46.
28. Lampe, p. 47.
29. Lampe, p. 46.
30. Lampe, pp. 52, 68.
31. Lampe, p. 68.

32. 'Deklaracja ideowa ZPP w ZSRR', *Wolna Polska*, 16 June 1943, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, pp. 402-3.
33. Z. Kumos, *ZPP. Założenia programowo-ideowe*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1983, p. 9.
34. See Rozalia Lampe, p. 360.
35. Zbiniewicz, pp. 101-4.
36. See Czesław Lewandowski, *Koncepcja jedności narodowej i frontu narodowego w myśli politycznej komunistów polskich w okresie II Wojny Światowej*, *Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis*, no. 429. *Nauki polityczne* 15, Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1979, p. 108.
37. 'O co walczymy?', August-September 1943, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, pp. 497-500.
38. Zbiniewicz, pp. 108-9.
39. 'Zarys programu: Szkic', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp. 505-6.
40. 'Zarys programu: Szkic', p. 506.
41. 'Zarys programu: Szkic', pp. 513-4.
42. 'Zarys programu: Szkic', pp. 514-5.
43. 'Zarys programu: Szkic', p. 518.
44. Zbiniewicz, p. 110.
45. 'Notatki', p. 32.
46. 'Notatki', pp. 30-1.
47. 'Notatki', p. 32.
48. 'Notatki', pp. 32-4.
49. 'Zarys programu: Szkic', pp. 516-9.
50. Tadeusz Żenczykowski, *Dwa komitety, 1920 1944*, Paris, Spotkania, 1983, p. 74.
51. Wasilewska who was throughout this stage in direct contact with Molotov proposed Mikołajczyk. See Berman's account of the proceedings in 'Sprawa powołania Polskiego Komitetu Narodowego w Moskwie (grudzień 1943-styczeń 1944)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, pp. 89, 91, 93.
52. 'Sprawa powołania', pp. 47-9.
53. 'Sprawa powołania', p. 52.
54. See 'Sprawa powołania', pp. 52-61.
55. See 'Sprawa powołaniu', pp. 39-46, 65-72.
56. 'Sprawa powołaniu', pp. 43, 79.
57. 'Sprawa powołania', pp. 43-4, 65, 79-80.
58. 'Sprawa powołania', pp. 65, 80-1.
59. 'Sprawa powołania', p. 75.
60. See 'Sprawa powołania', p. 89n for the text of the 'Polish clause'.
61. 'Miejsce Polski w świecie', *Nowe Widnokreśli*, 20 December 1943, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, p. 224.
62. Leon Kasman, 'Konflikt z Moczarem', *Aneks. Kwartalnik polityczny*, 39, p. 86.
63. 'Sprawa powołania', pp. 93-4 for Berman's account; Kumos, p. 143.
64. Jan Ptasiński, *Pierwszy z trzech zwrotów czyli rzecz o Władysławie Gomułce*, Warszawa, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza, 1984, p. 71.
65. Żenczykowski, *Dwa komitety*, p. 78.
66. Kumos, p. 145.
67. Ptasiński, pp. 38, 76.
68. See Kasman, pp. 86-110.
69. Kumos, pp. 145, 149.
70. Ptasiński, pp. 38, 71, 76.
71. Kasman, pp. 89-90.
72. 'Wobec Rosji', *Nowe Widnokreśli*, 15 February 1944, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, pp. 273-80.

73. Kasman, p. 101.
74. One CBKP note to Molotov on May 11 called for the establishment of the PKN or a Provisional Government on the liberated Polish lands, followed by the appointment of regional PKN representatives, the creation of regional soviets and the replacement of the regular police with a people's militia. Kumos, p. 149.
75. Antoni Przygoński, *Z zagadnień strategii frontu narodowego PPR, 1942-1945*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1976, p. 283.
76. This ZPP resolution was criticised by Stalin for not going far enough, and so on July 18, the ZPP executive made a further announcement to the effect that it had completely amalgamated with the KRN and had made its entire organisation subject to the KRN's authority, including particularly the Polish armed forces in the USSR. Ptasieński, p. 69.
77. See Kumos, p. 207.
78. Kumos, p. 208.
79. Maria Wilusz (red.), 'Protokoły prezydium Zarządu Głównego ZPP w ZSRR (czerwiec 1943-1944)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 2, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1975, pp. 146, 148.
80. 'List Biura Komunistów Polskich w ZSRR do KC PPR z dnia 18 VII 1944', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 26, 1973, pp. 191-4.
81. See Żenczykowski, *Dwa komitety*, pp. 111-3.
82. Kumos, p. 219.
83. 'Manifest PKWN', 22 July 1944, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, pp. 556-7.
84. 'Miejsce Polski w Europie', p. 67.
85. See Lewandowski, p. 91 on this point.
86. *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations 1939-1945. Volume II. 1943-1945*, General Sikorski Historical Institute, London, Heinmann, 1967, p. 2.
87. 'Deklaracja ideowa', p. 485.
88. See Lewandowski, p. 104 on this point.
89. 'Rok zwycięstwa 1943-1944', *Wolna Polska*, 31 December 1943, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, p. 238.
90. Leon Chwistek, 'Sprawa zachodnich granic', *Wolna Polska*, 8 January 1944, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, pp. 244-5.
91. *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations*, pp. 123-4.
92. *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations*, pp. 123-4.
93. Cited in Keith Eubank, *Summit at Teheran*, New York, William Morrow & Co. Inc., 1985, p. 450.
94. *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations*, pp. 132-4.
95. 'Sprawozdanie z obrad Krajowej Rady Narodowej (styczeń-wrzesień 1944 r)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 10, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1986, p. 48.
96. Jerzy Borejsza, 'Granice legalności', *Nowe Widnokreśli*, 15 January 1944, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, pp. 246-55.
97. Hilary Minc, 'Nie marnować okazji', *Wolna Polska*, 24 January 1944, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, pp. 267-70.
98. 'W sprawie granic wschodnich', *Nowe Widnokreśli*, 15 May 1944, in *Publicystyka ZPP*, pp. 354-65.
99. Cited in Kumos, p. 207.
100. Cited in Jerzy Pawłowicz, *Strategia frontu narodowego PPR marzec 1943-kwiecień 1944*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1965, p. 264.
101. Edward Puacz, 'Sprawa granic Polski w układach między PKWN i ZSSR', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 15, 1969, pp. 202, 204.
102. Puacz, p. 202.
103. Cited in Włodzimierz Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP 1944-1947*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1971, p. 361n.

104. Cited in Kumos, p.226.
105. Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, p.4.
106. Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, p.4.
107. See Stephan Horak, *Poland's International Affairs 1919-1960*, pp. 179-81.
108. *Documents on Polish-Soviet Relations*, p.301.

6. LEGITIMIZING 'NEW' STATE SECURITY

The manner of realism shown by the Polish communists in establishing the PKWN owed as much to the tactical oversight of the Soviet leadership as to the Poles' own ideological instincts. The internationalist obligation in the conditions of the war after the German invasion placed control of the Polish communist movement firmly with Stalin and the remnants of the Comintern leadership, now shown to have been justified in the decisions of 1938 and 1943 to put greater reliance on Soviet diplomacy and less on Comintern solidarity. Stalin's war goals in Poland could now claim the support of the Western allies, where prior to the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact these allies had been none too forthcoming in their pressure on a rather more anti-Soviet Polish regime. For the Polish communists, both from the PPR and KRN, and the CBKP and ZPP, joined in an executive formed as an element of the Soviet diplomatic effort, there could be little fear of once again being deserted by their Soviet ally. The PKWN owed far more to integral Soviet guidance than the KPP had ever owed; even its socialist and peasant activist members remained firmly under the influence of Soviet presence and power. Where the KPP, subject in its latter years to direct Comintern oversight, had remained ineffective and ideologically split, the PKWN, because of its non-communist appeal and its complete affinity with the Soviet diplomatic line, had the potential to be greatly more effective. Gomulka's brand of pragmatic 'national' communism fitted these needs very well.

The first goal of Soviet policy in Poland was to establish the security of its western border. Stalin's internationalist demands on the Polish communists were to provide the sort of administration which

would rationalise this Soviet goal in terms of Poland's own security needs. Polish state security and Polish territorial security were to be fully catered for by the PKWN and presented as a legitimate element of the communist state's national interests. The traditional debate among the communists on the definition of state independence did not intrude on these fundamental policy goals. Only later, once the security goal had been achieved, would the conflict between the 'national' and 'internationalist' interpretations of state independence again come to dominate policy. On neither wing of the expanded PPR was there any dispute as to the urgency of the security goal, and the integral place of this security to Soviet policy goals.

It was state rather than territorial security that became the overriding goal of Polish communist foreign policy once the PKWN had been installed in power in Lublin in July 1944. The equivalence between state and regime security was largely undisguised as the 'democratic' regime sought to consolidate its newly received power. And in the conditions of the German retreat and Soviet advance across Poland, Poland's historical *Primat der Aussenpolitik* took on renewed force. The PKWN, a body with a limited natural domestic constituency, sought its authority through a foreign policy explanation of security — the linkage between its brand of political realism and the Soviet alternative it offered. The most straightforward means of enhancing the new regime's security — the international legitimacy which Soviet diplomacy could provide — was also the only realistic road toward ensuring the security of the 'democratic' Polish state. This internationalist interpretation of the state security interest remains a foundation of the Polish communist state's authority to the present day.

The first step in this foreign policy process was the practical

matter of establishing the mechanisms of policy; the next step was to give the new Polish-Soviet relationship an official basis; and the third step was to gain Western recognition by relying on a Soviet policy of total diplomatic support.

6.1 Policy Mechanisms

Very little indeed has been published in Poland on the actual creation of the PKWN's foreign policy administration.¹ The following brief section is not intended to fill any gaps in this research. Rather, its theme is the continuity and practice of the traditional internationalist relationship in the earliest days of what had now become state Polish communist foreign policy.

With the arrival in Poland of the Red Army, along with the PKWN came the remainder of the previously secret Central Bureau of Polish Communists. All its members were immediately coopted into the PPR Central Committee, expanding this body to some eighteen members, approximately half of whom were the recent arrivals. In Moscow, the CBKP had succeeded in marrying the two domestic PPR approaches — Bierut's faith in Soviet power and Gomułka's tactical pragmatism. The PKWN Manifesto reflected the Moscow based communists' intention of wanting to appear realistic and conventional. At the same time, this policy took for granted the fact that the PKWN programme would only need to be accepted by the Polish population and international opinion *de facto*. It was to be implemented regardless of the opposition, and legitimised *post facto* by the institutions of the new state set up under PPR superintendence.

For this reason Gomułka was kept on as PPR First Secretary

notwithstanding the accusations made by Bierut and criticisms of the CBKP. His organisational and communication skills were highly valued and considered most necessary for the party's success in the new Poland. Bierut's loyalty to the USSR meant his views were instinctively close to those of the CBKP. As Chairman of the KRN, Bierut had the potential to play a preeminent state role in the new Poland. This was recognised early on. Officially Bierut maintained his distance from the PPR (in January 1945 during a KRN sitting, Bierut declared: 'I am not tied to any party or political group'). This did not prevent both him and Gomułka entering the new Politburo as members of the wartime PPR. Jakub Berman, Hilary Minc and Aleksander Zawadzki were coopted from the CBKP giving this group clear superiority in the highest party body.

The Polish Committee of National Liberation was met with a great deal of hostility by the Polish government's Delegatura and wider population. Its leading members were little known and its political programme created distrust for its over-optimistic domestic policy goals. Only three PPR members headed resorts in the PKWN, all of them ex-KPP members and recently arrived from the USSR: Stanisław Radkiewicz began his long career in charge of Polish internal security, Stanisław Skrzyszewski was in charge of the education resort, and Stefan Jędrzychowski became director of the information and propaganda resort. The intention was for the party to maintain a low profile and pursue its 'national front' policies by encouraging non-communist support for the coalition executive.

At the PPR's first meeting in Lublin on August 5, Gomułka stressed that the party would not be keeping to the forms of communism, that it was not able in the circumstances to take a classic revolutionary path to power. The PPR, he announced, would be sharing its power and

responsibilities with other parties and in this way work toward winning the support of the majority of the population. At the same time the PPR leader reminded his listeners that Poland needed to 'live in good relations with the Soviet Union' if it wanted to be 'strong and democratic'.² This PPR strategy was not original. It was being applied by communist parties across eastern Europe. At a meeting in early October with a group of PPR leaders in Moscow, Stalin made the point that the PKWN was not to apply revolutionary techniques, but was to proceed softly for fear of their very lives once the Red Army had advanced further to the west and left the Polish communists to consolidate their own power.³

While still in Moscow, the PKWN had based its organisation on the administrative apparatus set up for the Union of Polish Patriots. In Poland from July 28, it was cast onto its own resources and for the first month proceeded in a rather disorganised *ad hoc* manner.⁴ The original discussions in Moscow establishing the PKWN had foreseen the appointment of Oskar Lange as director of the foreign affairs resort, continuing the position of the earlier discontinued PKN discussions. Stalin took up this matter with Roosevelt as late as 9 August 1944, and three days later received a negative reply. As an American citizen, Lange was obliged to obtain the authority of the United States government for his return to Poland. The US government, the President wrote, wanted to have nothing to do with providing personnel for the foreign affairs section of the Polish Liberation Committee which it did not recognise.⁵ Osóbka-Morawski, socialist leader of the PKWN, instead took on the foreign affairs portfolio himself. Berman was his deputy. In total, the PKWN foreign affairs resort at the outset consisted of six members: Osóbka-Morawski, Berman, a principal representative, secretary and two executive officers. Its expansion

followed the gradual increase in the Committee's international contacts so that by the end of 1944 it could boast a staff of around fifteen.⁶

On August 2 the PKWN was advised from Moscow that an official exchange of representatives was required. The Committee met immediately and without a great deal of discussion assigned the position to Wincenty Rzymowski, leader of the small Democratic Party participant in the 'national front' coalition. Rzymowski objected to his appointment among other things on the grounds of his poor health, and nine days later his place was taken by a person better known to the Soviet leadership, Jędrychowski.⁷

The Moscow post came to play a crucial role in this earliest stage of Polish communist foreign policy. For some months it remained the Liberation Committee's sole foreign post. It formed, in effect, an 'affiliate' of the office in Lublin and later Warsaw, rather than a subordinate organ.⁸ Nearly all of the PKWN's diplomacy was being directed through Moscow. Its initial contacts with Western governments were through their embassies in the Soviet capital. The Moscow post was also the base from which delegations from Lublin and then Warsaw could discuss policy with their Soviet counterparts.

Such discussions took place frequently at the highest level. Issues such as the status of the Red Army as an occupying power in Poland, war reparations from East Prussia, the creation of further Polish military units in the USSR, were all of sufficient importance to require the presence of Bierut, Osóbka-Morawski and Żymierski, now Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Army, in Moscow. These talks would be not only with Molotov or Vyshinsky, but often also with Stalin. As related by Osóbka-Morawski, Stalin 'was personally interested and himself decided on many details in the area of Soviet cooperation with

Poland'.⁹

On their return to Poland, the PKWN leaders rarely left the detail of such discussions to the executive authority of their subordinates. They themselves would see to the implementation of the Soviet 'advice'. The Committee's various resorts were not yet very large and relied a great deal on the presence of Soviet personnel for their wider effectiveness; but the frequency of the high level contact with Moscow made it unnecessary for any Soviet 'adviser' to be directly appointed to the PKWN foreign affairs resort.

Berman, while deputy to Osóbka-Morawski, dominated the policy process. His presence spoke of the weight attached to the direct Soviet input into Polish foreign policy and the control the Polish communists wanted to retain over that policy. His was a role long ago established in the USSR, as instructor of the new Polish communist cadres and go-between for the Soviet party leadership. Now he was installed as the prime mover behind the new Polish foreign policy. As one observer recalls it:

Jakub Berman was the principal figure in the foreign affairs resort.... Lasting days and nights at the telephone connected directly with the Kremlin [he] was a meticulous executor of instructions received without even a margin of interpretation in the Polish interest.¹⁰

Berman's attitudes were not too far distant at this early stage to those of Gomułka. It was essential for the security of the new regime that this 'cooperation' with the USSR be institutionalised as quickly as possible. This could best be achieved from the Polish side by staffing the administration with PPR members, people who would accept the new reality and work with it, explaining their decisions with reference to the greater Polish 'democratic' interest. It was in this sense that Gomułka made the following remarks at a Lublin party conference in November 1944:

The battle for democratic Poland is today above all a battle for the state apparatus.... All the leading positions in the state administrative apparatus, all the units of the nation's armed forces, also the judiciary, must be filled with people tied with all their fibre to the Polish democratic camp, who think in the same categories as the democratic government.¹¹

For Gomułka, Berman and the leaders of the Liberation Committee, everything could be justified in the fight for their new 'national front' regime to be established and secured.¹² Without the aid of the Red Army or the Soviet 'advisers', particularly in the security services, this goal could not have been so quickly achieved.

In public the argument was reversed. Rather than the Red Army and Soviet security forces helping the Polish communists come to power, it was the new Polish authorities who were preventing the Red Army implementing an even worse alternative. This was Gomułka's 'national' communist perspective, the alternative to the traditional spectre of communism in Poland as leading inevitably to a Polish Soviet Republic and integral incorporation into the USSR. But the definitive declaration of this position was made not by Gomułka in Poland, but by Bierut and Wasilewska in Moscow.

On August 7, a Polish government delegation led by Mikołajczyk met with representatives of the PKWN in an attempt to narrow their differences. It was far better for the Poles to retain their own control over internal affairs during the period of liberation than it was for the Red Army to come in as an occupying army, Wasilewska advised the London delegation: 'The Soviet authorities will not be interfering with our internal affairs', she concluded. On the second day of talks, she continued in much the same vein: if a 'democratic' system was established in Poland, if the Soviet government saw that there was no activity against it in Poland, then certain concessions were sure to be gained at a later stage.¹³ Bierut added his more equivocal support to the 'national' position:

We are not Soviet agents. We do not want to sovietise Poland. All we want is a democratic Poland and the destruction of the reactionaries.¹⁴

Most important for both he and Wasilewska was that the entry of the Red Army into Poland be on the basis of international norms, specifically, an agreement negotiated between sovereign governments.

6.2 Institutionalising Polish-Soviet Relations

Externally, the PKWN was not presented as a formal government; its form remained that of a National Liberation Committee willing to accept other political groups as partners toward the goal of forming a coalition government in the future. The impression being created was that the Polish state would be represented by a wider domestic constituency in its institutions than only the communists and their allies.

But there was little concern on the part of the PPR or PKWN leaders that the international diplomacy of the USSR would allow a fundamental reorganisation of the political institutions now being installed. In its formal recognition of the PKWN on August 1, the Soviet side had stressed the new authorities' nature as a provisional national liberation committee;¹⁵ the reality was that the Soviet leadership had already recognised the PKWN as a *de facto* government in its agreement on administrative demarcation signed on July 26. The statements made by Molotov recognising the advance of the Red Army onto the territory of an allied state served to confirm this status.¹⁶

The Soviet side went further still. On August 2, the PKWN was advised of the appointment of General Bulganin, member of the VKP(b) Central Committee, as Soviet representative to the PKWN. At the same

time the Kremlin removed the right of the Polish government in London to be represented in the USSR by the Australian Embassy. Bulganin was received two days later at Lublin airport with full state ceremonial. At the same time Soviet tactics with regard to the Warsaw Uprising made it plain that talk of a wider popular political concensus would be limited to Soviet aligned groups. In September, Bulganin chose the congress of the PPR aligned Peasant Party to make the point that the PKWN could count on the Soviet government to support it against its enemies, particularly those in London. The USSR, he said, trusted the PKWN completely. There was no question of it ever losing that support.¹⁷ Nothing in Stalin's public statements or in his private assurances to the PKWN leadership gave any reason to contradict this understanding. Soviet diplomatic actions added further to the PPR and PKWN leaders' confidence. Soviet diplomacy in Moscow and in the West worked wholeheartedly for the recognition of the PKWN, and in the absence of their own facilities the Liberation Committee made use of the Soviet Foreign Service network as often as it was made available.

In return, the PKWN began the creation of the new foreign policy climate within Poland, the perceptual institutionalisation of the Soviet alternative. The old enmity traditionally shown by the Poles toward their eastern neighbours was to be changed to an enduring friendship. Osóbka-Morawski announced the new policy in one of his first speeches as leader of the PKWN. Speaking in Lublin on August 27, he sought to define the change in terms of the difference made by the regime in power:

If through whole centuries there has not been agreement between the Poles and the nations of the Soviet Union, then the reason did not lie in objective conditions, nor in the explanation that the fraternal Slavic nations cannot find a common language with which to come to an agreement. The fault for this lack of agreement lay solely on the side of the imperialist governments, not with our nations.¹⁸

Over the next few months, this theme was repeated many times by the PKWN Office of Information and Propaganda directed by Jędrychowski, at the same time acting as Polish representative to the Kremlin.¹⁹ From September 1944, this office was given 'foreign propaganda' as one of its responsibilities by the Central Committee. Until the expansion of the new administration's international contacts from the summer of 1945, 'foreign propaganda' came to mean a campaign for re-aligning the common Polish perception of the USSR from traditional foe to new-found friend.²⁰

Externally, institutionalising the intense Soviet political support was important for more immediate reasons. If wider international recognition for the new Polish authorities was to be gained, it had to be on the basis of mutuality. For the PKWN this meant being seen as more than an appendage of Soviet power in Poland. The Committee's leaders were concerned with projecting their image as competent representatives of Polish national interests. Therefore, they needed to establish a footing with the USSR which would allow them a distinctly Polish voice in international affairs while at the same time taking for granted the political responsibilities of communist internationalism.

Polish-Soviet relations had already been taken some distance down this road by the administrative agreement of July 26. Its publicity value for the Polish side lay in its close relation to the agreement reached between the Czechoslovak government in London and the USSR in December 1943. Osóbka-Morawski was to later write in his memoirs:

As was known, the Czechoslovak government under the presidency of Beneš was based in London. The contents of the Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement were endorsed by the Western powers; therefore there was no conflict with their understanding of the conditions of cooperation between allied countries. This meant that nobody could accuse us of establishing an agreement which would hamper the recognition of the PKWN by the Western powers as the provisional Polish government. If an analogical agreement with the Czechoslovak government located at that time still in London

did not collide with the interests of the Western powers, then with regard to Poland the issue was the same and there could not be any talk of a one-sided agreement targeted against the interests and policies of the Western powers in this part of Europe.²¹

The Czechoslovak treaty provided for administration to be taken over by the local Czechoslovak authorities immediately the Red Army had freed the area from German occupation. Osóbka-Morawski saw it as essential that the new Polish authorities be accorded equally positive terms in practice as well as theory.

From the internationalist point of view, the July 26 agreement set up the mechanisms for preparing the conversion of Poland from a bourgeois enemy into a 'democratic' ally. Supreme power on Polish territory for the duration of the war was vested in Stalin as Soviet Commander-in-Chief, while the PKWN was given sole responsibility for establishing civil administration within the country. Article 7 rendered the Polish civilian population subject to Polish military law and executive regulation, with article 8 subordinating the Polish military to the Soviet Commander-in-Chief as long as active military operations continued. In the immediate zone of such operations, offences against Soviet troops by Polish civilians were made directly subject to the authority of the Soviet Commander-in-Chief.²²

The July 26 agreement created a pseudo-legal status for the anti-Home Army operations of the regular Red Army and NKWD troops. Since February 1944 and the onset of the 'Tempest' operations of the AK in eastern Poland, the Soviet military had been systematically disarming AK units, imprisoning their officers, enlisting the soldiers in the Polish Army Corp under Red Army command, or simply allowing them to disperse. Along with the AK, members of the Delegatura administration were also arrested, leaving the way clear for the return of the Soviet officials in office prior to June 1941. These methods continued after

July 1944 into the areas deemed by the demarcation agreement to be under the administration of the PKWN.

But the agreement's official status, as suggested by Osóbka-Morawski, relied to a large extent on the acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the PKWN-Soviet relationship by the Western allies. This acknowledgement the allies were unwilling to give. While the Committee had not yet been transformed into a government, it remained difficult for the PKWN to generate anything other than sympathy from even the most pragmatic Western governments. The Western allies were finding it exceedingly difficult to countenance the idea of exchanging recognition of the Polish government in London, notwithstanding its political intransigence, with that of an unknown liberation committee.

In fact, the agreement's status owed more to the success of Stalin and the Soviet leadership in executing their their policy of *fait accompli* in Poland, presenting the Western allies with little option but to accept the Soviet endorsed status quo. The Soviet side had not deemed it wise to confront the Western allies with the border agreement settled at the same time as the administrative demarcation. Its publication would have jeopardised Churchill's efforts to extract concessions from the Polish government in London on Stalin's behalf. The ratification of this protocol came only (if almost immediately) after the new Polish government had been recognised by the Western powers in July 1945.

In contrast to Osóbka-Morawski's concern for Western sensibilities, the primary role of the USSR in determining the facts on the ground presented few difficulties for the Polish communists. The wide powers deeded the PKWN were testimony to the unspoken intention incorporated in the administrative agreement that as soon as the international situation permitted, the Committee would be formally transformed into

a fully fledged government with the recognition of the USSR. Indeed, Gomulka and other communist leaders were already referring to themselves as 'the government'.

Towards the end of 1944, the international situation had developed sufficiently in the Soviet favour for the change to be made. Both Churchill and Roosevelt (re-elected for a fourth term) had given clear indications of their support for the position of the PKWN on the question of the Polish-Soviet borders, the issue most at odds with the policies of the Polish government in London. On December 15, Tomasz Arciszewski, Mikołajczyk's successor as Premier in London, and Churchill, both held press conferences where they expressed diametrically opposed views on this issue.²³ The Western allies were less prepared to accept the Soviet leader's demands over the composition of the new Polish administration. But with the military situation in Europe stabilising, the need for Stalin to continue appeasing his Western allies was diminishing. Little progress had been made in Moscow in discussions between Stalin and Churchill, and between representatives of the Polish government and members of the PKWN. The Soviet side, as a result, was left with the clear alternative of 'upping the ante', and proceeded to consolidate still further the diplomatic position of the Polish communists.

In reply to a message from Roosevelt on December 20 requesting that the Soviet government refrain from recognising the 'Lublin Committee as the Polish government', Stalin replied seven days later that he could no longer delay in recognising the change since 'the Soviet Union is interested more than any other state in strengthening Poland's socialist and democratic rights'.²⁴ Stalin also issued another message to the Western media insisting that he wished to see Poland 'strong and independent', and with allies not only in its

eastern neighbours, but also with the great powers of the West — France, Great Britain and the United States.²⁵

At the same time, the PKWN information and propaganda resort began its first full-scale propaganda campaign. Its goal was to generate the impression of overwhelming public support for the move from National Liberation Committee to Provisional Government. Unlike what was labelled as the 'secret and undemocratic' policies leading to the September 1939 defeat, the new Polish foreign policy was to be open and 'democratic': the PKWN's policies were in agreement with the will and interests of the nation, Osóbka-Morawski wrote in December.²⁶ From the beginning of December the PPR and its aligned press reported daily on the surge of meetings and mass rallies across Poland. The communist and socialist press printed calls of support from various political and social groups, and statements from individuals backing the change. The change in form, according to the PPR, was necessary above all for foreign policy reasons: 'Our society, our nation, understands that Poland's international position needs to be strengthened....' The new administration in Poland needed to be able to put its demands regarding Germany and the new western borders not only as the 'factual government, but also as the formal government'.²⁷

As the formal government, it could also proceed to finally, and legitimately, institutionalise Poland's new foreign policy. On 2 January 1945, the second day of the KRN sitting which formally changed the title of the administration to Provisional Government, Osóbka-Morawski, now Premier and Foreign Minister, announced that following the precedent set by the PKWN, the new government would be 'directing Poland's foreign policy onto new tracks'.²⁸

The decisive character of these 'new tracks' became apparent later that day. Osóbka-Morawski officially informed the Soviet government of

the creation of the Polish Provisional Government and proposed that diplomatic relations be established with a formal exchange of ambassadors. The symbolism contained in the speed and diplomatic precision with which the new government now sought to establish its relations with the Soviet Union suggested a deeper reality. Three days later, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet replied that in the interests of maintaining and strengthening relations with 'democratic Poland', it recognised the new government and appointed Victor Lebediev ambassador to Poland. After Bulganin's return to Moscow on 20 November 1944, Lebediev had already been made the Soviet representative to the PKWN. This Soviet move added further symbolic meaning to the 'new tracks' policy. From the Polish side, Bierut, now officially President of the KRN, appointed Zygmunt Modzelewski, formerly of the KPP and ZPP, to replace Jędrychowski as Polish ambassador in Moscow.²⁹

Two weeks later, the first foreign policy move of the new Provisional Government was to send a delegation to Moscow for general discussions on Polish-Soviet relations. Unlike the less formal visits of Bierut, Berman and other PKWN leaders, this visit was given wide publicity and touted as the logical result of the new government's excellent relations with its eastern neighbour. In the course of the visit, it was announced, the Polish side had taken the opportunity to express its willingness to establish a Polish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, on the model of the earlier December 1943 Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty and more recent December 1944 French-Soviet treaty. It was agreed that negotiations toward this goal would be conducted through normal diplomatic channels.³⁰

Evident here was the desire of the Polish side to be seen as (and the willingness of the Soviet side to show) a bone fide government

acting according to established procedures of international discourse. It was important for both sides that the Polish authorities now, more than ever, present a professional image. Plans for the next allied summit to be held in the Soviet Crimea were well advanced, and Stalin would be putting the Polish case on the basis of what the new administration had already achieved in its domestic and foreign policies. Indeed, it had achieved a considerable amount.

During the course of the Yalta summit in February 1945, the PPR held a Central Committee Plenum in newly liberated Warsaw, to which were also invited around 150 regional First Secretaries and party administrators. This was an important meeting, at which the ground rules for the implementation of the rural reform and nationalisation programme were to be established. It also dwelt for some time on foreign policy. The timing of the Plenum shows the confidence with which the party was now treating its domestic and international policies. Domestically, there would be no turning back from the course set out by the PKWN; internationally, Soviet diplomatic strength could be relied on to put the Polish communist case.

The PPR was setting its sight on the future. The party was dominant in setting the agenda for Poland's foreign policy, Gomułka declared. It could be proud of this fact, and needed to entrench this position for the long-term good of the country and of the party. This was so, since the PPR was the only political party in Poland with a tradition of representing 'sincere and friendly Polish cooperation with the Soviet Union'. Every other Polish political tradition was opposed to the PPR tradition:

And since the issue of friendly relations between Poland and the Soviet Union has been and is the corner stone of a correct Polish foreign policy, so the traditions of which the PPR is the heir have become a factor conducive to our taking a foremost role in the democratic front in Poland.³¹

Friendly relations with the USSR were most importantly justified in terms of the security guarantee provided by Soviet power against another German invasion. Friendly relations were also the strategic goal established by the Western allies, determined to secure long-term peace in Europe. On this basis the PPR were not to be disappointed by the outcome of the Crimean Conference. The Soviet leaders showed yet again their ability to deliver on their promises of international support.

One last important step remained for the 'new tracks' of Polish foreign policy to be fully institutionalised. From the time that the Provisional Government had been recognised by the Soviet government, another propaganda campaign had been launched, this time to create the impression of public support for the signing of a Polish-Soviet Treaty of Friendship. In the weeks following the conclusion of the Yalta summit, this press campaign intensified. Gomułka contributed to the array of articles under a headline which ran: 'Eternal friendship and eternal alliance with the USSR the only guarantee of our independence and the foundation for international peace'. In the article, he called for an alliance of all the Slavic states which would form 'the most enduring basis for peace among all the nations of ther world'.³²

On the day after the Yugoslav-Soviet treaty had been signed in Moscow on April 13, the press again reported a series of meetings across the country demanding a similar treaty for Poland.³³ And for the next week a highly charged media atmosphere was maintained up to and beyond the day the Polish leadership signed their own treaty in Moscow.³⁴ The Polish delegation had arrived in Moscow on April 19, but the press first reported its presence two days later, the day the signing ceremony took place. On this day, April 21, the PPR Central Committee newspaper *Głos Ludu* (Voice of the People) was issued with a

banner headline that ran: 'The entire country demands a pact of friendship and cooperation with the USSR as the basic principle of our security'.³⁵ In the next days, the PPR newspaper reported an apparently spontaneous outburst of joy over the new accord: 'Polish society heartily greets the pact of friendship and cooperation with the USSR'; 'The country manifests its joy'; and 'Entire Poland greets [the treaty] with joy'.³⁶

Whether this campaign was intended to impress in the Soviet capital and abroad, or meant for the domestic audience, it served to highlight the lengths the PPR was prepared to go in order to show its own enthusiasm for Poland's 'new track' foreign policy. None of the principal Polish foreign policy makers were at all experienced in the mechanisms of government; their primary qualification was their willingness to accept the new reality and work within its parameters.³⁷ In preparing for the final step of committing Poland to an alliance with the old enemy, the PPR and government leaders doubtless looked to the propaganda campaign for their own reassurance. These were arguments designed not for their appeal to the reason of the wider Polish population. Rather, they were to create a certain perceptual momentum, an emotive foreign policy climate that would seem to leave little doubt, if only due to the vigour of the argument, that the treaty with the USSR was in the Polish national interest.

Modzelewski had steered the Polish brief in the Moscow discussions through the previous two months, and on the arrival of Bierut and Osóbka-Morawski there was little if any negotiating left to do. The form of the treaty was based on those already agreed to between the USSR and its other allies. Its content applied to the specific nature of the new Polish-Soviet relationship.

The intentions of the contracting parties were made clear in the

treaty preamble. The two parties wanted to 'consummate the radical turn in the history of Soviet-Polish relations toward friendly, allied collaboration', and facilitate 'the further consolidation of relations between the Soviet Union and contiguous Poland'. As its focal point, the treaty took the 'complete and final victory' over Germany, and provided for the two parties to 'render each other military and other assistance in this struggle'. Following the victory, the parties would 'take jointly all the measures at their disposal in order to eliminate every threat of a repetition of aggression on the part of Germany or any other State which would unite with Germany directly or in any other form'. Collaboration between the two countries would be 'in conformity with the principles of mutual respect for their independence and sovereignty as well as non-intervention in the internal affairs of the other state'.³⁸

Poland was part of the 'dam' he was building against Germany, Stalin declared at the signing ceremony. Poland, especially, provided a crucial foundation stone for this dam. Casting his mind back to his time as Commissar in the Bolshevik administration, Stalin reminded his audience that twice in the last twenty-five to thirty years Germany had been able to utilise Poland as the launching point for an attack on the Soviet Union. This had been possible as previous Polish governments had refused to establish allied relations with the USSR. No longer would this be the case: 'The meaning of this treaty relies on the fact that it liquidates the old, disastrous policy of playing Germany off against the USSR'. The new Polish government was a guarantee to the Soviet Union that no longer would Poland jeopardise Soviet security by attempting to balance between the two great European powers.³⁹

From the Polish communist point of view, the treaty provided the

new government with a diplomatic boost at a time when the lack of an invitation to the inaugural San Francisco United Nations Conference had undermined its international prestige somewhat. It also served to strengthen the Provisional Government's position with regard to the Yalta sponsored Committee of Three negotiations going on in Moscow to resolve the question of the future expanded composition of the Polish government. But above all, the Polish-Soviet treaty cemented into place the 'new track' Polish foreign policy, the momentous turn from conflict to 'friendly, allied cooperation'. The cement was provided by the common 'vital interests of the Soviet and Polish peoples' in their defence before Germany. Polish security on this issue was Soviet security and vice versa. This 'vital interest' effectively gave notice that any international or domestic moves against the new political status quo in Poland were doomed to failure.

The Soviet successes at Yalta and the signing of the Polish-Soviet treaty not surprisingly gave the PKWN leaders a welcome feeling of their own success. They treated these international events as justification of their attitude that reliance on Soviet strength and diplomatic support was the only realistic policy for the new Polish state. The PPR, particularly, considered its role as the party in power to have been vindicated. In the words of one of the party's foreign policy spokesmen: 'The PPR from the first moments appreciated in full the role of the Soviet Union in these great historical struggles'.⁴⁰

6.3 Western Recognition and Soviet Diplomacy

It was in working for the Polish administration's international recognition that Soviet diplomatic support most shined. Only with the recognition of the Western allies could the status quo embodied in the agreements reached between the USSR and new Polish authorities be understood to have valid international force. The three allies together were to determine the shape of the post-war settlement, and Stalin was concerned to establish the territorial gains resulting from the Red Army's advance westward as integral to that settlement. Soon after the arrival of the PKWN in Lublin, Minc made it clear that the building of socialism was to be postponed in the interests of having the 'government's' policies recognised not only by the Soviet Union but also by Britain and America: '...any other policy would not be accepted by Russia'.⁴¹

It was entirely due to the pressure brought to bear by Soviet diplomacy that the new Polish administration could boast any wider international recognition at all. Soon after the constitution of the PKWN, it became plain to the PKWN leaders that they would not be able to take the support of the Western allies for granted. On 25 July 1944, notes had been sent by Osóbka-Morawski to the Moscow embassies of Britain, the United States, Czechoslovakia, France and Yugoslavia, informing them of the creation of the Polish Liberation Committee. Neither the British nor the Americans replied to the Polish message. The French and Czechoslovak representatives acknowledged the note and congratulated the Committee on the liberation of part of Poland. And in a personal reply from the Yugoslavian leader, Tito congratulated the Committee leaders and indicated that he would be prepared to

recognise the Polish Liberation Committee in the future.⁴²

While not avoiding further approaches to Britain⁴³ or other capitalist states (for example Sweden in October), it was clear to the new Polish authorities that the greatest sympathy could be expected from other governments or authorities in a similar political situation to themselves.

In the negotiations leading toward the establishment of a French-Soviet treaty, the Soviet side late in the discussions tied its final agreement to French recognition of the PKWN. Stalin made it plain that he was motivated by a wish to see Poland a firm Soviet ally, and recognised as such by the Western powers. France needed to understand 'how fundamentally interested Russia is in the Polish issue', Stalin told de Gaulle:

We cannot agree to a Poland which will at one time move against Moscow and another time against Germany. We want a Poland toward which its allies can feel real sympathy, as well as one which is decidedly anti-German. This would not be possible with the London government. It represents the soul of anti-Russianism which has always existed in Poland. On the other hand, we could come to an understanding with another Poland, one great, powerful, friendly toward France and the Soviet Union because it would be democratic.⁴⁴

De Gaulle resisted the Soviet pressure and continued to refuse to recognise the PKWN on the grounds that he lacked information regarding the situation within Poland, needed to take into consideration the British and American positions, and continued to recognise the Polish government in London. But faced with an altered Soviet position that reduced full recognition to a provisional exchange of representatives with the PKWN, de Gaulle finally agreed to the Soviet proposal. His relations with the Polish government in London could in this way continue to be maintained.⁴⁵ Following the change in status of the Polish authorities from Liberation Committee to Provisional Government, no change was made to the status of the French

representative in Poland, however. Stalin no longer had a lever with which to influence the French, and de Gaulle was not yet prepared to be seen to be out of step with the Western allies.

The Soviet leadership did have the necessary levers to convince the Czechoslovak and Jugoslavian governments of the need to officially recognise the Polish Provisional Government. The Czechoslovak position was that recognition could only come once the Polish side had made its position clear on the matter of the Polish-Czechoslovak border, and the disputed territory of Silesian Zaolzia in particular. This hardly satisfied the Soviet side which was able to call upon the firm obligation entered into by Beneš at the time the Czechoslovak-Soviet treaty had been agreed to, that Czechoslovakia would recognise the Polish government immediately following the same action by the Soviet Union. The Czechoslovak authorities yielded. On 30 January 1945 they became the second government after the USSR to recognise the Polish Provisional Government. Jugoslavia became the third on March 30. The Jugoslavian recognition followed three months of negotiations in Moscow with Modzelewski, and a good deal of Soviet participation.⁴⁶ No other countries followed the Czechoslovak and Jugoslav example.

Little immediate impression was made on this situation by the Crimean Conference in February. But for the Polish side, the fact that the Yalta talks were to include the Polish question was in itself a significant success. Soviet recognition of the Provisional Government had created another *fait accompli* position forcing the Western allies to debate the Polish issue on Soviet terms.⁴⁷ Stalin's goals going into the Conference were consistent with his previous strategy over Poland: to strengthen the Provisional Government's domestic position and make it possible for the Western allies to legitimise this position with their official recognition.⁴⁸ He succeeded admirably. He

had informed Bierut and Osóbka-Morawski earlier in Moscow of his intentions, and was able to assure them that there would be no changes at all in his policy.⁴⁹

Nor did the outcome of the Conference require any changes in the PPR's policies. The statement of the three leaders at the conclusion of the Conference referred to 'a strong, free, independent and democratic Poland'. These same words were in common use by the PPR press. In pursuing its 'democratic national front' policy, the PPR also accepted that the Provisional Government was less 'broadly based' than was possible, and since 'the recent liberation of western Poland' should be 'reorganised on a broader democratic basis with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad'. This Stalin had for some time been consistently working toward in his diplomacy with the Western allies; little, if any, Western influence, pushing the previous Soviet position on reorganisation into unchartered territory, was visible in this Conference statement.

Having effectively achieved his purpose, there could be little doubt that Stalin went on to agree to include the reference to free elections ('This Polish Provisional Government of National Unity shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot') in the knowledge that these could never undo what had already been put in place in Poland. No mention was made in the statement of the Polish government in London; by implication, the allied leaders were content to see the reorganisation start from the 'Lublin Poles' rather than London. On this basis, Western recognition was only a matter of time. Indeed explicitly so. Once the reorganisation had taken place and a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity created, the Western

allies declared their intentions of establishing full diplomatic relations with this government.⁵⁰

At a Łódź conference of the PPR on February 18, Gomułka termed the results of the Crimean Conference 'a big success for our party and the party line for a broad democratic front'.⁵¹ The negotiations to determine the non-communist aligned individuals to be invited to participate with the Provisional Government in forming the new Provisional Government of National Unity, were treated by the PPR as the continuation of previous negotiations between Mikołajczyk and PKWN in August and October 1944. The difference for the PPR was that these next negotiations were now within the framework of an agreement in principle largely on the PPR's own (and Soviet) terms.⁵² Throughout the discussions of the Committee of Three set up by the allied leaders to discuss the issue, from February to June 1945, Molotov remained in direct contact with the Provisional Government authorities, advising them of the conduct of the negotiations and the positions of the British and American ambassadors. Most importantly, Molotov provided the opportunity for his Polish counterparts to verify the credentials of the individuals suggested by the British and Americans for positions in the new Polish Government of National Unity.⁵³

Officially, the leadership of the Provisional Government could afford to be highly optimistic as to the outcome of the international talks to determine the future of the Polish administration. In his keynote speech to the seventh sitting of the KRN at the beginning of May, Osóbka-Morawski commented on what the Provisional Government saw as being its foreign policy success's so far:

* the recognition of the Provisional Government, and with it the 'democratic camp and its political programme', by Poland's allies in the east and west;

* the agreement reached by the three great powers at Yalta which accepted the legitimacy of the Provisional Government in Warsaw demanded by the majority of Polish people, and rejected the Polish government in London;

* Poland's acceptance at the United Nations, being a recognition of the country's 'material and moral' weight in matters of European peace and security;

* the Polish-Soviet treaty.⁵⁴

The Premier's enthusiasm for his government's foreign policy record ran somewhat ahead of the facts. Yalta could, of course, be counted as a resounding foreign policy success, but the Yalta decisions had yet to be implemented. The only countries marginally west of Poland to have formally announced their recognition of the Provisional Government had been Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. Italy had been persuaded from following this course by the British, and the Western allies of the Soviet Union were in no way inclined to pre-empt the agreement reached on this issue at Yalta for the reason that 'the democratic camp and its political programme' had had so little competition in contributing to its own success.

On April 12, President Roosevelt's death brought Harry Truman to office. Immediately the tone of the exchanges between the Western allies and the Soviet Union over the Moscow negotiations for a new Polish Government of National Unity grew sharper. Should there be no understanding in this matter on terms amenable to the Western partners, the new US President informed Stalin, then the unity of the three allies and their cooperation in the future would be seriously set back.⁵⁵

The Soviet response was to increase its diplomatic activity on behalf of the Provisional Government. The first and most important

move was the signing of the Polish-Soviet treaty, a powerful symbol of Soviet support. Another area of activity was with regard to the inaugural United Nations Conference to be held in San Francisco in April. Poland was not included on the list of states invited on 5 March by the four powers, Britain, the United States, China and the Soviet Union. Although the Polish government in London had signed the United Nations Declaration on 1 January 1942, Britain and the United States no longer considered this government to be representative; yet the Polish government in Warsaw was clearly no more representative. Only a government arising from the reorganisation negotiations in Moscow would be recognised by the Western powers and until such time Poland could not be represented at the UN Conference. This Western position met with an official Polish protest:

The fact that the commission created at the Crimean Conference for consultations regarding Poland has not yet concluded its work can form neither the basis for omitting Poland nor an obstacle to inviting the Government of the Republic to San Francisco....⁵⁶

This note, sent on March 22, made little impact on the Western powers and China, just as at the time the invitations had been discussed among the inviting powers, the Soviet Union's argument that Poland should be included since the Provisional Government held real power throughout the country and had the support of the population, had also been dismissed.⁵⁷

Osóbka-Morawski's official optimism also contrasted with the assessment being made at this time within the PPR leadership. At the same time as difficulties were beginning to be encountered with the Western attitude to the new Polish reality, within the PPR, groups opposing the official policy line were beginning to coalesce under the pressure of the growing wave of domestic antagonism and violence sweeping the country in the wake of the Red Army's advance. Old guard members of the KPP and young radical PPR activists branded the

'national front' policy of political alliance with other political groups, either communist aligned such as the PPS or independent as was being proposed by the negotiations going on in Moscow, as collusionist on the grounds that it underestimated the PPR's true strength within Poland. At the other extreme was the appearance of 'opportunistic tendencies, ideological irresolutness and a lack of resistance toward foreign, often clerical influences, ignoring class criteria and obfuscating the ideological face of the PPR'.⁵³

Gomułka's preoccupation at this time was with the consolidation of the PPR's domestic power. From the outset, however, domestic consolidation and the international environment had been inextricably intertwined, and PPR leader's attitudes to the regime/state security issue differed not at all from the position of the CBKP dominated Politburo. The Politburo now felt it had to provide an analysis which showed the correctness of its pragmatic policy line, an analysis which like the party's early war-time propaganda, would appeal to both wings of the PPR at the same time.

The forum chosen for the presentation of these arguments was the PPR's Central Committee Plenum in May. A week prior to the Plenum, on May 12, the city of Berlin had capitulated to the Red Army. While the allied powers enjoyed their victory, in Poland the PPR leadership now for the first time expressed its concern that all was not well with the international system. Confidence in the victory of the Soviet Union over fascism now turned to an appreciation of the difficulties arising as the great powers of world capitalism came to terms with the new found strength of European communism. 'Democracy' had won over fascism, the Plenum Resolution on Political Affairs stated, and now had the opportunity to establish international relations on the basis of 'mutual trust and understanding'. Unfortunately, 'democracy' was

being undermined by 'the forces of reactionary tendencies'. This did not mean that different social systems could not coexist with each other. On the contrary. For the sake of an enduring world peace and the development of 'democracy' within Poland it was imperative that the three great powers did coexist. Such coexistence would, the resolution pointed out, 'hamper and delay backward and reactionary elements active within the group of allied nations'. The resolution continued:

In connection with the end of the war in Europe, these elements are activating themselves toward the goal of reinstating the bankrupt Munich policies, aimed against the growing wave of the democratic movement in the world, and the Soviet Union. Acting often under the mask of guaranteeing democratic rights to other nations, these elements are working to halt the process of removing from power the reactionary forces of various countries, towards splitting the unity of the bloc of allied states by isolating the Soviet Union, and as a result — against all realistic premises and dominant tendencies amongst the allied nations — they are speculating on the unleashing of a third world war, that is, a war against the Soviet Union.⁵⁹

The ideological backlash resulting from the end of the war in Europe in the PPR's view was due to 'objective' forces and as such unavoidable. What was important was that the process could be dampened by the forces of reason still very active among the Western allies. Even though the war against Germany had ended, the three great allies could not afford to fall out of each others' graces. Peace in Europe relied on their cooperation and while this situation continued Western reaction could only 'speculate'. Worrying for the PPR, however, was what would happen once the post-war unifying power of the common German foe had ceased to be effective. Particularly worrying were the intimate connections between the wider international reactionary forces and what was being called the 'Polish Reaction' led by the Polish government in London:

This theory of a third world war is especially propagated by the Polish Reaction as a provocation with which to undermine the Provisional Government which sees its alliance with the world's democratic forces and especially its friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union as the cornerstone of the security and independence of Poland. The dispute within the Soviet-British-American commission set up by the Crimean Conference for looking into the membership of the Provisional Government is a result of the work of the Polish Reaction and supporting them the forces of reaction in other countries which would like to strengthen their own positions with the help of the Polish Reaction.

An objective analysis of the situation leads to the conclusion that the policy of reactionary and anti-Soviet elements tying their hopes to a third war, is unreal. All allied nations are aiming to organise a lasting peace, not a new war. An expression of this is above all the massive increase in the democratic forces of all countries, expressed in elections to self-governing and parliamentary bodies, the deep sympathy which the world's democratic masses feel toward the Soviet Union in thanks for its decisive participation in defeating Germany, as well as the policy of cooperation of all democratic parties with the communist and workers' parties in countries freed from German occupation. ^{EO}

Indeed, the PPR leadership was reading the international situation very well. The diplomatic support they were receiving from the Soviet Union enabled an analysis based on a position of strength vis-a-vis their external enemies. Any talk of a third war, designed to sow the seeds of doubt as to the permanence of the Provisional Government's power, could be refuted by reference to the clear American and British wish not to disturb great power relations, in part signalled by the Yalta statement and the Western allies' intention to respect predominant Soviet influence in Poland.

Furthermore, it was a fact that much of Europe was experiencing a surge of antipathy toward the defeated fascist and fellow-travelling regimes of inter-war European politics. This antipathy was manifested in a political swing toward the left all over the continent. Domestically, the PPR could associate its power and policies with those of a dozen other social-democratic, socialist or communist parties in power or close to power in Europe. The final assertion in the extract quoted above refers to the cooperation accorded the

communist parties in these countries by other anti-fascist parties. This lent an air of European respectability to the PPR's 'democratic national front' policies, the ability to associate the changes taking place in Poland with changes or projected changes in such countries as France, Denmark, Belgium or Italy.

On the one hand, the Plenum analysis was pitched at the radical wing of the party, leaving no doubt as to the intention of the PPR to continue to dominate the domestic and foreign policy agenda with its 'democratic' goals. On the other, it identified the policies of the pragmatic CBKP dominated Politburo with the 'democratic forces of all countries' and above all the Soviet Union. In 'aiming to organise a lasting peace', the allied powers could not allow continuing disturbances in Poland. Superimposed on this hard geopolitical fact was the immediate reality of the Polish-Soviet treaty and the real diplomatic support being received from the Soviet leadership. In such circumstances, there was little doubt that the PPR could rely on the Soviet Union to prevent any concrete external threat to the new regime, and by the same token, any internal threat as well.

The final step toward international recognition involved acceding to the wishes of the three great powers at the Yalta summit and agreeing to the formation of a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity. This the PPR Politburo had every intention of proceeding with, but on their own terms, and the terms of the Soviet government. There could be no compromising in the foreign policy goals of the new regime. The negotiations in Moscow among Provisional Government and independent Polish representatives, from June 17 to 21, were conducted on the principles established in the policy programme first presented by the PKWN, then continued by the Provisional Government. This was to be an agreement between parties which had

already accepted the political status quo; policy was not in question.⁶¹

Increasing the pressure on the independent representatives dramatically was the Soviet decision to bring to trial sixteen principal leaders of the Polish Home Army and Delegatura arrested in March 1945 for anti-Red Army activity. Several of these men had been among those suggested by the British and American sides in the Committee of Three talks as prime candidates for participation in the new Government of National Unity. Their trial in Moscow from June 18 to 21, ran simultaneously with the Polish negotiations. It was a clear signal not only to the participants in the Moscow discussions, but also to the Western allies, that if anything was open to negotiation, it was only the composition of the new government to be recognised, not its policies.

From the PPR point of view even this flexibility was limited. The Polish communists were not about to relinquish the power they had successfully built up in the new administration. Gomułka made this very clear in a memorable speech delivered to the independent representatives at the beginning of their talks:

Do not get upset that we are only offering you places in the government which we will decide are possible. We are after all the hosts.... The power we have achieved we will never return.... We will not give back this power in order to ensure that Poland does not meet the new defeat which threatens it in the false political line which the reaction is attempting to force on the nation.... You can shout that the nation is bleeding, that the NKWD rules Poland, but this will not turn us from our path.⁶²

Mikołajczyk countered the dominant communist position by playing on the PPR and Soviet wish for the Polish political status quo to be recognised by the United States and Britain. The final agreement reached between the parties, gave Mikołajczyk's Peasant Party equal one third representation in diplomatic and consular positions abroad as well as in national government organs. It was the best arrangement

the ex-Premier could hope to achieve.

The foreign policy of the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, as established in what was called the Moscow Agreement, continued unchanged the pragmatic line of the PKWN and the Provisional Government:

Friendship, cooperation and alliance with democratic states, especially with the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France and the United States; Poland will be an active member of the Slavic and anti-German front, and will work for an alliance with Czechoslovakia; Poland will take part in the work of the United Nations; Poland's western borders should be determined as soon as possible.⁶³

Ambassadors Clark-Kerr and Harriman confirmed that the Government of National Unity would be recognised by Britain and the United States as soon as it was constituted.

On June 28, with all the participants in the Moscow negotiations now in Poland, Bierut announced the formal establishment of the Provisional Government of National Unity. Osóbka-Morawski, referred to by Stalin at a function given in honour of the new Government of National Unity as a non-communist 'symbol of the new people who have found themselves in Poland and have come to an agreement with the new people in Russia',⁶⁴ retained his position as Premier. Mikołajczyk and Gomulka, leaders of two implacably opposed political parties, became joint Deputy-Premiers. Rzymowski, another non-communist 'symbol', continued in the post of Foreign Minister he had inherited from Osóbka-Morawski in April 1945. The next day, the new government was recognised by France and Sweden, a week later by the United States and Britain. In the following weeks most of the rest of Europe followed suit, the exceptions being Spain and Ireland which continued to recognise the Polish government in London.⁶⁵

Western recognition set the seal on the new 'democratic' regime's domestic security: its physical power in Poland had been established;

its relationship with the Soviet Union had been effectively institutionalised; and both these facts had been legitimised by the recognition of the Western allies. Polish communist foreign policy moved into a new phase.

On July 21, at the eighth session of the KRN, for the first time with the participation of political figures from outside the 'democratic national front', Osóbka-Morawski set the tone for the new phase. The Government of National Unity, he said, greeted with enormous enthusiasm by the entire Polish nation, had had this legitimacy reflected in the speed with which it had also been recognised internationally. Poland in this way found itself back in its 'deserved place in the family of free nations of the world'. But the recognition by the great powers of Poland's government needed now to be matched by their recognition of its need for secure borders:

One of the conditions for European and world peace is a strong and independent Poland. And one of the roads to a strong and independent Poland is the quickest possible settlement of our justified western borders on the western Neisse, Oder with Szczecin and the Baltic, as well as a sound and justified foreign policy.⁵⁶

The 'sound and justified foreign policy' to which territorial security was to be matched in order to provide for a 'strong and independent Poland', was defined by the Premier as alliance and close cooperation with all of Poland's neighbours and other states in whose interest lay a common defence before German imperialism. The overriding goal of this foreign policy, therefore, was Poland's state security; and the fundamental element in this foreign policy was to remain the Polish treaty with the Soviet Union: 'We will consistently strive to see that this historic turn in Soviet-Polish relations is deeply understood by our entire nation... in the interest of our mutual security and the consolidation of Poland's independence'.⁵⁷

This was the realism that suffused the policy makers of Poland's

nouveau régime. This reasoning had brought them to power and was the guarantee for the success of their ambitions in the future. Poland's territorial security had been notoriously unstable over the past centuries. Its national prestige had waxed and waned with the power of its neighbouring states. Now a situation had arisen which enabled the Polish state to be secured closely to the great power of the Soviet Union. As long as this great power remained, the Polish leaders who had helped achieve this new relationship could look ahead into the future with confidence. Poland's territorial security could now be secured on the same basis; and the new Polish state's prestige would to be inextricably linked to the great prestige of Soviet world power. The power of the new Polish leadership was vested in the greater power of the Soviet Union, and it would be through this greater power that, they were confident, they could achieve their foreign policy goals.

Notes

1. The two most useful works are Bolesław Styrnik, 'Formowanie polskiej służby dyplomatycznej w latach 1944-1948', *Zeszyty Naukowe Wojskowej Akademii Politycznej*, 75, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski*, 1973, pp. 69-87, and Edward Pałyga, *Dyplomacja Polski Ludowej 1944-1984*, Warszawa, Instytut Wydawniczy Związków Zawodowych, 1986.

2. Józef Jakubowski, Jan Szczeblewski, 'Pierwsze kroki PPR na wyzwolonych ziemiach polskich. Dokumenty (1944-1945)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 1, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1973, p. 360.

3. Antony Polonsky, Bolesław Drukier, *The Beginnings of Communist Rule in Poland*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980, p. 45.

4. See Edward Puacz, 'Powstanie warszawskie w protokołach PKWN', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 10, 1966, p. 177.

5. Cited in Stanisław Zabiello, *O rząd i granice. Walka dyplomatyczna o sprawę Polską w II Wojnie Światowej*, wydanie IV poprawione i rozszerzone, Warszawa, Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1986, p. 178.

6. Styrnik, p. 80.

7. Styrnik, p. 76.

8. Styrnik, p. 80.

9. Cited in Włodzimierz Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP 1944-1947*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1971, p. 11.

10. Feliks Mantel, 'Szkice pamiętnikarskie', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 7, 1965, p. 122.

11. Władysław Gomułka, *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1943-grudzień 1945*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1962, pp. 125-6.

12. For others, this was not so easy. General Berling, sent from the battle front to join the PKWN in Lublin for his refusal to prevent his Polish soldiers going to the aid of the beleaguered Warsaw insurgents in August, sent a telegram to Stalin expressing his despair at the suffering and devastation being caused by 'Beria's soldiers from the NKWD army' together with the 'criminal elements from the apparatus of Radkiewicz'. See 'List Berlinga do Gomułki z dnia 20 XI 1956', in Jan Nowak, 'Sprawa generała Berlinga', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 37, 1976, p. 43.

13. 'Rozmowy delegacji PKWN i KRN z przedstawicielami rządu RP na emigracji (sierpień 1944)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (108), 1984, pp. 125, 143.

14. 'Rozmowy delegacji', p. 142.

15. See Pałyga p. 28, for the point that the form this Soviet recognition took was purely tactical in order to make it easier for the London based Polish groups to come to an agreement to form a Government of National Unity with the PKWN.

16. Włodzimierz Kowalski, 'Polityka zagraniczna Polski w latach 1944-1945', *Sprawy Międzynarodowe*, 10, 1965, p. 58.

17. Cited in Marek Łatyński, *Nie paść na kolana. Szkice o opozycji lat czterdziestych*, London, Polonia, 1985, p. 59.

18. Cited in Zabiello, p. 179.

19. Pałyga, p. 29.

20. See Stanisław Kuśnierski, *Propaganda polityczna PPR w latach 1944-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1976, pp. 58-81. For an account of the censorship in this period of references to the USSR that could be construed in a negative light see also Kazimierz Bagiński, 'Cenzura w Polsce', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 8, 1965, pp. 134-5.

21. Cited in Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, p. 3.

22. 'Agreement between the USSR and the Polish Committee of National Liberation of July 26, 1944', Stephan Horak, *Poland's International Affairs 1919-1960*, Bloomington, Indiana University, 1964, pp. 179-81.

23. See Euzebiusz Basiński, *Polska-ZSRR. Kronika faktów i wydarzeń 1944-1971*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1973, p. 32.

24. Cited in Pałyga, p. 39.

25. 'Marszałek Stalin o Polsce i ZSRR', *Głos Ludu*, 21 November 1944, p. 2.

26. 'Nasze osiągnięcia w polityce zagranicznej', *Robotnik*, 5 December 1944, p. 1.

27. 'Polska na arenie międzynarodowej', *Głos Ludu*, 7 December 1944, p. 1.

28. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniu 31 XII 1944 i 2-3 I 1945*, sesja VI, Warszawa, 1946, p. 76.

29. Pałyga, p. 40.

30. See Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, p. 20.

31. 'Nowa sytuacja, nowe zadanie. Z referatu I Sekretarza KC PPR', 6 February 1945, *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p. 280.

32. Władysław Gomułka, 'Wieczysta przyjaźń i wieczysty sojusz z ZSRR jedyną gwarancją naszej niepodległości i fundamentem pokoju międzynarodowego', *Głos Ludu*, 5 April 1945, p. 3.

33. See for example 'Społeczeństwo polskie żąda zawarcie układu o przyjaźni z ZSRR', *Głos Ludu*, 14 April 1945, p. 4.

34. For an example from the socialist press, see 'Pragniemy paktu przyjaźni polsko-radzieckiej', *Robotnik*, 15 April 1945, p. 1.

35. 'Cały kraj żąda paktu przyjaźni i współpracy z ZSRR jako podstawowej rękojmi naszego bezpieczeństwa', *Głos Ludu*, 21 April 1945, p. 1.

36. 'Społeczeństwo polskie gorąco wita paktu przyjaźni i współpracy z ZSRR', *Głos Ludu*, 23 April 1945, p. 1; 'Kraj manifestuje swą radość', *Głos Ludu*, 24 April 1945, p. 1; 'Cała Polska wita radośnie', *Głos Ludu*, 25 April 1945, p. 1.

37. Osóbka-Morawski, when confronted with Democratic Party leader Leon Chajm's doubts as to his qualifications on being appointed director of the PKWN's education resort (after Skrzyszewski), retorted: 'And you reckon that since I was an instructor in a cooperative... I have learnt how to direct a state?... We're all in the same situation. We'll learn....' Cited in Łatyński, p. 58.

38. 'Treaty of Friendship, Mutual Aid and Cooperation between Poland and the Soviet Union of April 21, 1945', Horak, pp. 181-4.

39. 'Przemówienie Towarzysza J.W. Stalina w związku z podpisaniem układu o przyjaźni, wzajemnej pomocy i współpracy powojennej między Związkiem Radzieckim a Rzeczpospolitą Polską w dniu 21 kwietnia 1945 roku', *W dziesiątą rocznicę powstania PPR. Materiały i dokumenty, styczeń 1942-grudzień 1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1952, p. 427.

40. Zenon Kliszko, *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniach 3-6 V 1945, sesja VII*, Warszawa, 1945, p. 218.

41. Cited in Jakubowski & Szczepkowski, p. 359.

42. Palyga, p. 26.

43. A PKWN mission was sent to the UK in the autumn in the hope that through its activity there the British government would come to gradually recognise the Polish Committee *de facto*. See Palyga, p. 36.

44. Cited in Włodzimierz Kowalski, 'Walka ZSRR o uznanie ludowego państwa polskiego', *Z Dziejów Stosunków Polsko-Radzieckich. Studia i materiały*, volume 2, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1966, p. 64.

45. Palyga, pp. 32-3.

46. Palyga, pp. 42-3.

47. On this point see Władysław Góra, Aleksander Kochański (red.), 'Rozmowy polityczne w sprawie utworzenia Tymczasowego Rządu Jedności Narodowej (czerwiec 1945)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p. 95.

48. See Zabiełło, p. 207.

49. Zabiełło, p. 207.

50. All citations from 'Report of the Crimea Conference, Yalta, 11 February 1945', Zygmunt Szkopiak, *The Yalta Agreements. Documents prior to, during and after the Crimea Conference 1945*, London, Polish Government in Exile, March 1986, pp. 21-2.

51. 'Klasa robotnicza — filar frontu narodowego', *Głos Ludu*, 25 February 1945, p. 3.

52. See Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, p. 28 for an expression of this point.

53. Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, p. 28.

54. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne, sesja VII*, p. 19.

55. Cited in Kowalski, 'Walka ZSSR', p. 73.

56. Cited in Palyga, p. 118.

57. Kowalski, 'Walka ZSSR', pp. 73-4.

58. Cited in Bolesław Drukier, 'Sytuacja polityczna w kraju w okresie Rządu Tymczasowego (styczeń-czerwiec 1945 roku)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (12), 1960, p. 24.

59. 'Uchwały Plenum KC PPR', 26 May 1945, *Kształtowanie się podstaw programowych PPR w latach 1942-1945*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1958, p. 354. Gomułka's assessment of post-war Europe was of a new balance of power having been created between Britain and the USSR, with Britain now no longer prepared to compromise. The battle for the support of Germany had been joined. See 'Referat Władysława Gomułki na plenarnym posiedzeniu Komitetu Centralnego PPR w Warszawie, 20 maja 1945 r', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 7, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1982, pp. 9-10.

60. 'Uchwały Plenum KC PPR', 26 May 1945, pp. 355-6.

61. On 15 April 1945 Mikołajczyk, under pressure from Churchill, had declared publicly that he accepted 'the Crimean decisions regarding Poland's future, its sovereign and independent position and on the matter of forming a representative Provisional Government of National Unity'. Cited in Krystyna Kersten, *Narodziny systemu władzy. Polska 1944-1948*, Paris, Libella, 1986, p. 119.

62. Władysław Gomułka, 'Przemówienie wygłoszone w Moskwie do przedstawicieli polskich', 18 June 1945. Cited in Kersten, p. 97.

63. Cited in Edward Rozek, *Allied Wartime Diplomacy. A Pattern in Poland*, New York, John Wiley & Sons Inc., 1958, pp. 394-5.

64. Cited in Góra & Kochański, p. 134.

65. Pałyga, pp. 333-4.

66. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniach 21-23 VII 1945*, Warszawa, 1945, sesja VIII, p. 12.

67. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne*, sesja VIII, p. 12.

7. TERRITORIAL SECURITY AND THE NEW FOREIGN POLICY CONSENSUS

'The main question in the war' for the Soviet Union — its western border — had been settled in principle by the three allied powers at their first summit meeting at Teheran. This was the issue which the Polish communists now made their own. It was the issue on which they, with the aid of Soviet diplomacy, sought to split the old foreign policy consensus represented by the Polish politicians in London, and forge a new political alignment based first and foremost on consideration for Soviet political interests. The force of the argument was undeniable: Poland's new territorial expanse would have its security guaranteed by the Soviet interest in maintaining the favourable status quo. Appreciation of both this Soviet interest and the advantages accruing to Polish security as a result, became the test of political realism on which the PPR founded its new foreign policy consensus.

At Yalta, the new Polish-Soviet border was given official allied recognition. Yalta also institutionalised the international conditions that brought about the final break-down of the old Polish foreign policy consensus. After Yalta, the Polish politicians in London were caught on the horns of a dilemma. They could continue to occupy the political stage in Poland, in which case they had to come to terms with the Yalta decisions; or, they could resist any accommodation with the new political status quo and, as a result, reduce their position to purely moral considerations.

Five months after Yalta, the allied summit at Potsdam brought great power recognition of Poland's new northern and western territories. Here, however, the issue of the shape of post-war Germany gave the Western allies a direct interest in the final settlement. Potsdam

provided the first test both for the international conditions underpinning the new Polish foreign policy consensus, and for that consensus itself.

Territorial security for Poland meant above all the ability to defend against German revanchism. By being given East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia by the Soviet Union, Poland was also being given the responsibility for dealing with the inevitable German attempts to win back if not their land then their pride, by making life as unpleasant as possible for the new masters on the Oder. Mikołajczyk and others of the London politicians who had accepted the new international conditions, understood the need for security in the west as well as any Polish communist leader. Thus at Potsdam, the issue of territorial security was established as the firmest support for the new common foreign policy.

Foreign policies common to both Mikołajczyk's Polish Peasant Party (PSL) and the PPR were soon, however, matched with political priorities which placed the two political groups in direct opposition. Reacting to the unsubdued national imperative of the PSL, the internationalist response of the PPR was to highlight the unnatural role of the PSL in its new-found appreciation of Soviet political interests. For its part, the PSL could do little other than profess its commitment to the new territorial security status quo.

The PSL was soon coming under extreme pressure not only from the PPR, but from an entirely unexpected quarter — their putative allies, the Western powers. In their support for Germany and criticism of the Polish territorial expansion westward, the Western allies left the PSL no room for political manouvre. Guided by its national imperative, the PSL had no alternative but to harden its public commitment to the post-war territorial status quo. This hardening unavoidably

exacerbated still further the contradiction between the policies of the new foreign policy consensus and the PSL's natural, national priorities, something the PPR took full advantage of.

7.1 The Soviet Security Foundation

The PKWN leaders had been acutely aware of the intimate linkage between Poland's new borders and the issue of Soviet security:

The matter of the borders is not open to choice and we did not make a choice.... If we had approached this matter categorically, we would have harmed ourselves. We must be a force, we must think about expanding the army which is impossible without the help of the Soviet Union.¹

This comment by Andrzej Witos, addressed at Mikołajczyk and the other representatives of the London government in August 1944, illustrated an argument which had particular force in the light of the ravages being wrought in Poland by the German occupiers. Poland, regardless of its political system, needed to be strong enough to withstand any repetition of the German invasion of 1939. Such immediate strength could only come from Poland's other powerful neighbour, the Soviet Union. Another appeal to realism was put by General Żymierski who saw the situation quite simply:

The fact that in the present circumstances it will not be our side which dictates the borders, as it was in 1920, is clear and understandable. Other forces and values have come into being, and we must take account of this... we are in the weaker position and we cannot argue on the basis of sentiments.²

A matter of fact assessment from the PPR military leader.

In explaining his position with regard to the western borders on the second day of these discussions in Moscow, Osóbka-Morawski highlighted the PKWN's reliance on Soviet diplomacy. A month earlier, the July 25 agreement on Polish borders had made this reliance

explicit. Article 4 of the border agreement established the Polish-German border along the Oder and Neisse rivers. It also contained the following assertion: 'The Soviet Government takes upon itself an obligation to, while settling the state border between Poland and Germany, support the demand for this border to be settled along the line given above'.³ Now Osóbka-Morawski was able to assert confidently that Poland's position on its western borders would not be affected by the activity of 'certain circles' in the West intending to make relations with the Western allies difficult; good relations with the Western allies could be guaranteed via the diplomatic support of the Soviet Union and the allied wish for continued unity.

On the borders themselves, Osóbka-Morawski insisted that the PKWN was in no position to gain more than the Soviet Union had given it in the east, and had to, therefore, try for the best possible position in the west. It needed to do this without forfeiting either the allegiance of the Polish nation, or the support of the Western allies. But neither could the PKWN sacrifice so much in the east, and not secure its gains in the west. Stalin himself, said Osóbka-Morawski, had conceded that the Soviet Union owed Poland a debt for sins committed against the Polish nation. In repayment of this debt, according to the PKWN leader, Poland would receive unequivocal and, as important, self-interested Soviet support for the country's new western borders.⁴

Osóbka-Morawski was not the only non-communist to rationalise the PKWN position in this way. Witos used an almost identical argument: 'I base my position on the principle that Marshall Stalin has shown an impressive understanding in relation to Poland, in ensuring that our relations are completely friendly'.⁵ The Soviet Union had it in its interest to ensure Poland was left strong enough to withstand the

possibility of another German invasion, Osóbka-Morawski told Mikołajczyk. Stalin wanted once and for all to secure the Soviet Union from German invasion: 'The Russian thesis is to build a great wall of Slavic nations, Czechoslovakia, Poland'.⁶

The wall Stalin was building was to have a foundation so deep that it could not be painlessly removed. To successfully achieve this goal, the Soviet leader needed the understanding and agreement of the Western allies. At Yalta, Stalin was accorded this agreement.

On 6 February 1945, at the first session of the Crimean Conference to deal with the Polish question, according to the notes of the American Secretary of State, Edward Stettinius, Stalin began his presentation in the following manner:

He commenced by saying that he could understand Mr Churchill's statement that Poland was a question of honour for Great Britain, but for the Russians it was a question of both honour and security. It was a question of honour for Russia, he pointed out, because Russia had many grievances against Poland and wanted to eliminate these grievances. It was a question of strategic security not only because Poland was a neighbour but also because Poland throughout history had been the corridor for attacks on Russia. Twice during the last thirty years, Stalin observed, with great emphasis in his voice and with a determined gesture of his hand, Germany had passed through this corridor as it marched on to Russian soil.

The USSR desired a strong, independent and democratic Poland, Stalin declared, to help protect the Soviet Union, since the Soviet armies alone could not close this corridor from the outside. It was not only a question of honour for the Soviets, he again stated, but one of absolute necessity, to have Poland independent, strong, and democratic.⁷

Apparently reassured by Stalin's emphasis on wanting an independent Poland, this pitch was allowed to pass without comment by Churchill and Roosevelt. But Stalin's use of the word 'democratic' in tandem with 'independent' betrayed his deeper understanding of the Polish issue. Only because the new Polish administration was 'democratic', Stalin added, had 'the Soviet Government...made a great change from the Tsarist nineteenth-century policy of suppressing and assimilating Poland'.⁸ Poland was now governed by 'new people', the Soviet leader

remarked. The 'old people' were attacking the Red Army's rear, and this was unforgivable. ²

Not surprisingly in this atmosphere of Western 'appeasement', as it was termed by the American ambassador in Poland, Arthur Bliss Lane, 10 the results of the Crimean Conference as they applied to the Polish borders were completely in line with PKWN and Provisional Government policy. If the final report issued by the three leaders on February 11 did not specify Poland's northern and western borders, it did specify the eastern border ('the eastern frontier of Poland should follow the Curzon Line with digressions from it in some regions of five to eight kilometres in favour of Poland') and allude to the Teheran position on the border with Germany ('Poland must receive substantial accessions of territory in the north and west'). Nothing had changed. The 'final delineation of the western frontier' was deferred until a Peace Conference could be convened, and in the meantime, the newly to be established Polish Provisional Government of National Unity was to be asked for its 'opinion'.

It was highly unlikely that the territorial policies of the new Government of National Unity would be much different from those of the Provisional Government, judging by the willingness of the Western allies to accept the Soviet position in principle. As well as officially recognising the Soviet position on its western border, therefore, the Crimean Conference left the Provisional Government and Soviet Union in a position of superiority on the question of the Polish-German border: the opinion of the Provisional Government, and more importantly, the PKWN's border agreement with Stalin and Molotov, was soon to be put into effect by the advance of the Red Army toward Berlin. The July 25 PKWN-Soviet agreement guaranteed that this position would then be defended unreservedly by the Soviet side at the

upcoming Peace Conference.

Soon after the Crimean Conference, the Soviet side took steps to again strengthen the Provisional Government position. On February 20, the State Committee for the Defence of the USSR¹¹ decreed that all land within the borders bounded by the agreed Polish-Soviet border in the east and the Oder and western Neisse in the west should be considered by the Red Army High Command to be under the administration of the Polish Provisional Government. Supporting the Red Army's military role, the Polish side were given the following responsibilities:

...public security and order; the fight against German agents... and intelligence organs under German command; the fight against banditism, armed enemy activity and the harmful acts of elements opposing the Polish Provisional Government as well as the liberatory activity of the Red Army.¹²

The decree coincided with a visit to Moscow of a Provisional Government delegation familiarising themselves with the results of the Yalta summit. Stalin told this delegation of the British resistance to the new Polish western borders, saying that in his opinion, it was the influence of the Polish government in London which had caused this resistance.¹³ In contrast to Roosevelt,¹⁴ Churchill had been relatively firm in his opposition to Soviet policy in Poland. Churchill's concern was with a European continent dominated following the conclusion of the war and withdrawal of American troops, by the Soviet Union. At Yalta he made it clear that he wanted to see a fully sovereign Polish government. Earlier in 1944, he had tried repeatedly to convince Mikołajczyk to accept the Soviet terms for a Polish border settlement as the basis from which to work for an independent Polish state.

Churchill had opposed Stalin's position on the western Neisse at Yalta, arguing instead for the eastern Neisse on the grounds that

Poland would find it difficult to absorb so much extra land. The whole question, as a result of this British opposition, was deferred for consideration to the Peace Conference which was to follow the German defeat. This deferral left the British with a bargaining lever with which to attempt to redress the political balance in Poland. It was this bargaining lever which Stalin now sought to decisively undermine.

The February 20 decree of the State Committee for the Defence of the USSR not only emphasised the Polish and Soviet positions on the western Polish border by including a concrete reference to the western Neisse River. Crucially, it served also to give allied legitimacy to the internal security role of the Provisional Government. During the time the Provisional Government delegation was in Moscow, the Red Army had moved steadily into Lower Silesia, encircling Wrocław and laying seige to Poznań. According to the Soviet decree, the Red Army and NKWD were to be directly responsible for security within a band sixty to one hundred kilometres behind this front line. This left a good deal of Poland (including large areas of East Prussia and Pomerania) for the Polish administration to deal with. And while the Soviet presence was not at all eliminated from these areas (the official responsibility of the Polish administration for internal Polish security out of the war zone did not prevent the NKWD from luring the sixteen Polish underground leaders into a trap in late March), the decree did highlight the official responsibility with which the Provisional Government had now been endowed by its Soviet ally, and the confidence vested in it by the Soviet leadership.

7.2 Potsdam: The Beginnings of Concensus

In the months after Yalta, the issue of the moment in Polish affairs became the reorganisation of the Provisional Government and inclusion of 'independent' members into its ranks. In Moscow, the perturbations surrounding the Committee of Three discussions quietened somewhat following the arrival of Harry Hopkins toward the end of May, on a special mission from President Truman. The purpose of the mission was to persuade Stalin to take part in yet another allied summit, this time on all the issues arising out of the conclusion of the war with Germany. Stalin, without too much trouble, agreed to the American proposition. At the same time, the Committee of Three agreed to call to Moscow the Polish representatives they had decided would discuss the matter of forming a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity.

From the beginning of the discussions among the various Polish representatives, it became clear that the Provisional Government side were looking to Mikołajczyk for further signs of his support on the issue of the western border. They were not to be disappointed. Mikołajczyk's conversion to the foreign policy axioms of the Provisional Government appeared to be complete. He had come to Moscow with no alternative concept on the Polish borders and its territorial security. On being challenged by Gomułka at the first meeting of the Polish representatives, Mikołajczyk seemed more determined to see the Provisional Government position succeed than the communists themselves. He was a supporter of the borders being pushed as far west as possible, and was amazed that Szczecin was not yet under Polish administration (it was still in the front line zone and although a

Polish administration was active there, it remained formally under the authority of the Red Army command). He stood on the position that the western borders should be settled even before the Peace Conference had been convened.¹⁵

But there remained considerable doubt in the minds of the Provisional Government leaders as to the integrity of Mikołajczyk's new found support. They still identified him strongly with the actions of the Polish government in London which, following Mikołajczyk's departure, had become even more vocal over the injustices of the Soviet sponsored Polish territorial settlement. For his part, Stalin placed little faith in Mikołajczyk's strong assurances of support. Stalin considered Mikołajczyk to be under the influence of Churchill and working closely with British policy in the great power negotiations. 'Check him once again', the Soviet leader told several of the leaders of the Provisional Government on June 27 prior to their return to Poland:

Agree to a resolution about the fact that you have reached an introductory agreement with us regarding the eastern borders and at the same time a resolution regarding your territorial demands in the west... with Mikołajczyk's participation. The Government should then turn to us with an official note in this regard. We'll see if Mikołajczyk does not withdraw with regard to the British position.¹⁶

Mikołajczyk did no such thing. On July 10, in preparation for the allied summit due to begin in Potsdam seven days later, the new Provisional Government of National Unity with Mikołajczyk now one of its Deputy-Premiers, sent a weighty memorandum to the three allied leaders demanding that the western Polish border be based on the Oder and western Neisse rivers. The document put forward a whole range of arguments based variously on moral, historical, economic and political criteria. A further note was sent by Bierut and Osóbka-Morawski on the day prior to the Polish question being discussed at Potsdam. This

time, the letter was short and to the point: only the Oder and western Neisse border line, with Świnoujście and Szczecin on the Polish side, could 'guarantee the satisfactory development of the Polish nation, European security and a lasting peace in the world', the note asserted.¹⁷

At Potsdam, only Stalin and Molotov were prepared to support the Polish case. Truman preferred to defer consideration of the western Polish border to the Peace Conference. His principal concern was with leaving the territory demanded by Poland in the Soviet zone of occupation for the purposes of establishing German reparation from each of the four power occupation zones agreed to at Yalta.¹⁸

For his part, Churchill was categorical in his rejection of the Polish position. But unlike Truman, he wanted to decide on the future of the western Polish territories as soon as possible in order to prevent the Polish administration consolidating its position in the regions granted them by the Soviet Union. Churchill's compromise solution was to propose 'the establishment of a provisional line, to the east of which the territory would be taken over by the Poles, as a part of Poland, until the final decision on this question could be taken at the Peace Conference'.¹⁹ The provisional line Churchill had in mind was the Oder and eastern Neisse, with Szczecin and Wrocław on the German side. This would leave a large area of Silesia and Pomerania in German hands for the purpose of providing the German coal and food which the British occupation zone would otherwise have to supply.²⁰

Not surprisingly, Stalin rejected this position saying that it was the Polish border, not a provisional line, which was being considered. In line with his July 25 agreement with the PKWN, Stalin consistently defended the Polish position, trading statistics with Churchill on how

many Germans were left in the region east of the Oder. Finally, notwithstanding the earlier Polish memorandums to the allied leaders, the Soviet leader suggested that representatives of the new Polish Government of National Unity be invited to Potsdam to put their own case, following which it might be possible to come to some agreement.²¹

On July 23, the Polish delegation which included Bierut, Osóbka-Morawski, Mikołajczyk, Gomułka, Rzymowski and Modzelewski, along with their advisers, arrived in Potsdam. In the next nine days, the delegation met with all the three allied leaders, their foreign ministers and their advisers, to discuss a whole range of issues starting with the western borders and ending with Western trade and aid.

From the outset, Mikołajczyk was put into a privileged position by the Western delegations. He was acquainted personally with Churchill and several of the President's advisers, and he was treated by the Western leaders as the person in the Polish delegation who should be most listened to. He was able to communicate easily in English and made full use of this facility in his meetings with the lower level delegations. In his official statements, Mikołajczyk's arguments supported those of the rest of the delegation. He particularly stressed the need to remove the war industry capacity Germany had in the resources of Silesia and the economic advantage it enjoyed by controlling the trade route along the Oder and into the Baltic through Szczecin. On being asked directly by Eden why the Poles wanted their borders to be so far west, Mikołajczyk replied that he had previously frequently reminded the British government that too large 'cuts' in Polish territory in the east would create a need for replacing these regions which had been essential for the nation's economic well-being

with new territory in the west.²²

For the British delegation, and particularly once Churchill and Eden had been replaced with Clement Attlee and Ernest Bevin, the issue boiled down to a trade off: guaranteed free elections in the near term in Poland for British support on the Polish border demands. After having invited Mikołajczyk to provide the Polish delegation with a list of questions, the answers to which would determine Britain's position in the final round of summit talks, Bevin was finally satisfied by a series of vague assurances given by Bierut that the elections would be universal, secret, direct, proportional and on the basis of one person one vote, and that the term of the elections depended on the return of the Polish armed forces in the West. Bevin assured the Poles that he and Attlee would support the Polish case.²³

For the American side, even more-so than for the British, Mikołajczyk's personal influence was a major factor in the decision to finally back the Polish demands.²⁴ And for his part, Stalin understood the significance of Mikołajczyk's presence in the Polish delegation and did nothing to discourage him from taking the initiative in the debate with the Western allies. During a function given by the Soviet leader for the Polish delegation on July 27, Grabski, drinking to the health of Molotov, spoke of 'the Slavic nations which no longer by way of the old Tsarist pan-Slavism, but by the cooperation of free, independent and sovereign nations, will cooperate under Stalin's leadership'. Stalin immediately rose to drink the health of Mikołajczyk, saying that Grabski had it wrong 'on one point'. Namely, that 'a Slav does not know how to submit to someone's leadership. Cooperation among the Slavic nations must therefore be based on full sovereignty and independence, and for this reason they can only cooperate as equals among equals, and he was not the right person to

be leader of the Slavic nations'.²⁵

The other Provisional Government leaders supported unreservedly the national interest arguments being presented by the Polish delegation. Bierut and Rzymowski spoke of the unfavourable population density in the Polish lands prior to the war and the need to distribute the Poles who would not be able to return to their previous homes in the east; of the justice of Germany giving back to Poland the lands which had been the basis of its eastern aggression, lands which had once been Polish; of the border being the shortest possible and therefore the most rational strategically. Within Poland, however, the PPR was presenting the national interest case in a rather more political manner.

7.3 Political Priorities and the Common Foreign Policy

In an article published by *Głos Ludu* to coincide with the opening of the Potsdam summit, Roman Werfel presented the philosophy underlying the party's foreign policy principles. Werfel made three points. The first was that Poland's new foreign policy meant returning Poland to the Baltic shore, and fighting for access to the mineral riches of Silesia. Lampe had first put this argument in his famous article on Poland's place in Europe, and since then it had become fundamental to the Polish post-war settlement. As a national interest argument it had particular force, highlighted by Mikołajczyk's presentation at Potsdam. But it also had powerful political connotations, as Werfel strove to point out.

Poland's geographical position gave it few options for conducting an expansionist foreign policy, Werfel wrote. Either the state spread

east, traditionally the policy of the 'great age' of Polish history, and the power of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth identified with the Jagiellonian monarchs, or it had endeavoured to protect its western territories, as it had done prior to the Commonwealth under the Piast dynasty. Eastward expansion had meant coming into conflict consecutively with the Grand Duchy of Moscow, the Tsarist Russian Empire, and during the Second Polish Republic, the Soviet Union. This had been the Polish nobles' own *Drang nach Osten*, making the most of the open and sparsely populated territory of western Bielorussia and the Ukraine to establish their huge estates using non-Polish serfs for labour. Prior to the 1917 revolution, the estates and their owners had been left untouched. Only with the advent of Soviet communism had the Polish estate owners been disenfranchised. The result was to earn the Soviet Union the undying hatred of the Polish nobility. The foreign policy of the pre-war *Sanacja* government, wrote Werfel, revolved around protecting these eastern estates from the threat of 'communisation'.

Re-focusing Poland's foreign policy away from the ill-fated expansion toward the east would no longer be in the interests of the nobility as in the Piast period, but in the interests of the working class. This was Werfel's second point: Poland would be able to at last reach a state of high industrialisation based on the economic potential of Silesia and the huge Soviet market, eliminating worker unemployment and rural hunger by giving all Polish peasants their own land. Poland's future was as an economic power in Europe, boasting a working class as powerful as any in Europe but for the Soviet Union. Poland would become one of the most important European workers' states in a post-war Europe orientated toward the left.

Werfel's third point was that the Polish alliance with the Soviet

Union had been 'dictated by the Polish *racja stanu*, by a sober estimation of historical necessity, and the practical reality of post-war Europe'. The 'practical reality' of post-war Europe was the new dominance of 'democratic' regimes on the continent and the new found international power of the Soviet Union; Poland's *racja stanu* was the fact that only Polish 'democracy' could guarantee the Soviet Union the security it sought on the terms it had established; on this basis, the PPR's 'sober estimation' of these facts leading to the institution of Poland's new foreign policy needed to be understood not in terms of political self-interest, but as having had the interests of the modern nation at heart.²⁶

The 'practical reality' in which Mikołajczyk and other political leaders who were intending to present an internal opposition to the communist regime now found themselves, gave them very little room to manouver on issues of foreign policy. In terms of the Polish national interest, alliance with the Soviet Union had to be a given. Just as there had been no choice in this matter for the PKWN politicians, there was no choice for those politicians who had since joined the Government of National Unity on the basis of the Moscow Agreement. Their accession to this agreement meant a firm appreciation of the realities of the new post-war geo-strategic situation, and a decision to work within these realities. After Potsdam this was particularly the case with Poland's new western borders and the problem of containing German revanchism. The difference Mikołajczyk sought to bring to his PSL foreign policy was to speak constantly of non-interference in Poland's internal affairs and to tie the Soviet alliance very closely with alliance to the Western powers.

On 22 August, the PSL was formally legalised by the KRN, but not until October was it able to begin publishing its own political press,

this despite, or because of, the fact that it was rapidly becoming a mass political party rivalling the PPR in membership numbers.²⁷

The first PSL newspaper to begin publishing was the weekly *Chłopski Sztandar* (Peasants' Banner). Its first page carried a statement announcing the change of name from Peasant Party to Polish Peasant Party. This was in order to distinguish between the party of Mikołajczyk which had been active in the Polish government in London and Delegatura, and that of the PPR ally and long-time participant in the KRN. The statement continued with an outline of the party's policy programme. On foreign policy it had this to say:

...freeing Poland would have been impossible without the huge sacrifices and magnificent victories of the Red Army and Western Democracies. This fact, as well as the decisions of the Crimean Conference, has created new foundations for Poland's international policy, in line, for that matter, with the programmatic points of our old Peasant Party which always demanded the basing of this policy on one side on sincere agreement and alliance with our great eastern neighbour, the Soviet Union, as well as on the close cooperation of the Slavic Nations, and from the other side, on alliance and friendship with the democratic Western states, Britain, France and the United States of America.²⁸

The party had decided to join the discussions in Moscow, the statement explained, in order to defend 'the most vital Polish interests' which were being threatened by the existence of two alternative Polish governments. Poland, as a result, might well have been absent at the forums which were 'resolving the most important matters regarding the future international organisation of peace and security'. The result of the Moscow discussions had been an agreement to work for the 'earliest possible free and unfettered elections'. The statement continued as follows:

In line with the decisions of the Crimean Conference, the settlement of Poland's eastern borders has been consolidated by the treaty agreed to with the Soviet Union regarding friendship, cooperation and alliance, as well as regarding a mutual respect for the sovereignty of, and non-interference in, the internal affairs of each state.²⁹

The authors of the statement were optimistic that the Yalta settlement would remove once and for all the 'centuries old disputes and mistrust between us and the nations of the Soviet Union'. Poland could once again be really great and strong particularly since the declaration by the three powers guaranteed Poland freedom and independence. And finally: 'In alliance with the Soviet Union as well as with the Western democracies, we want to create once and for all an unshakeable rampart against German imperialism....' The statement was signed by Wincenty Witos, President of the party's Presidium, by the members of the Presidium, and by the members of the PSL Executive Committee.³⁰

The PSL's 'practical reality' was being presented here rather differently to that of Werfel and the PPR. Territorial security was the key to both parties' perception of that reality. But in the PSL's case, the reality of alliance with the Soviet Union was strongly qualified by the guarantees of Polish independence incorporated in the agreements establishing and consolidating the alliance.

The first of these guarantees was to be the balancing influence of the Western powers. The cement which could properly bind Poland and the Soviet Union together in a mutually dependent relationship of equals was the threat of renewed German aggression. It had been German aggression which had changed the face of Europe, which had brought about the alliance among the three great powers, and had changed the face of Polish politics. But it was the three powers together at Yalta that had achieved this latter result. Unlike the PPR emphasis on the power of the Red Army and role of the Soviet Union alone in liberating Poland, the PSL never lost sight of Britain, France and the United States. The defence against Germany needed to be not only based on Polish alliance with the Soviet Union and the other Slavic states. As Mikołajczyk put it in another article in the same first issue:

By a straight calculation, when from the other side France, Britain and America will be ensuring that the German hydra is not reborn, and we together with Russia will be ensuring the same in the east... we will secure peace for ourselves and for others for ever.³¹

The second guarantee of independence was written into the Polish-Soviet treaty of 21 April. Here the PSL showed that it was intent on using the assurances given by Stalin in its own domestic battle with the PPR. Mikołajczyk appeared publicly optimistic that the Soviet Union would honour the obligations it had entered into. He missed few occasions to comment on these assurances. Polish-Soviet relations had to be based on 'state sovereignty and mutual noninterference in internal affairs', he wrote in this first issue of *Chłopski Sztandar*. Supporting this official position, Mikołajczyk wrote, was the good will among the highest ranks of the Soviet leadership. The Soviet Union needed to accept that 'cooperation and friendship between Poland and the Soviet Union cannot rest on one or two parties in power, but on the widest possible social support', he continued.³² The PSL held this wide support, therefore the PSL could provide the influence among the Polish peasantry and wider public to ensure that the 'new track' in Polish foreign policy was understood and supported. This was the offer to the Soviet Union implicit in Mikołajczyk's position: Soviet non-interference in return for the PSL delivering mass popular understanding and support for the 'practical reality' of Poland's new foreign policy consensus.

The third guarantee of independence for Poland identified by the PSL was the explicit promise of the three great powers together. These powers had created the Yalta settlement amongst themselves, and it was their bounden duty to keep to their word. The PSL leaders trusted not so much in the promises of the Soviet Union, but in those of the Western powers, and the effect these would hopefully have on keeping

the Soviet Union to its word.

Mikołajczyk's strategy relied on the East-West political balance to underwrite the PSL's domestic campaign for political pluralism and peasant power in Poland. So long as there was cooperation among the three great powers, Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union, the East-West balance served to ensure that Germany could not threaten Poland's territorial interests. A common allied voice on Germany meant Germany's continued subjugation; the Soviet Union would allow no other alternative. Continued unity would, therefore, afford the PSL greater room for domestic manouver outside the common foreign policy.

For its part, the PPR from the birth of the Government of National Unity set about trying to destroy the PSL's foreign policy credibility. The 'new tracks' foreign policy consensus created in the Moscow Agreement and Potsdam negotiations was made hostage to the PPR's goal of consolidating its domestic power. It was obvious to the communists, able to extrapolate from their own political patronage, that the PSL's commitment to the unity of the great powers was pitched for its greatest effect on the PSL's domestic political priorities. This the PPR translated in the public arena into accusations that the PSL was not at all sincere in its expressions of support for the Polish-Soviet alliance and defence from German revanchism. In this way also, the PPR tackled head-on the trade-off Mikołajczyk had posed for the Soviet Union. The PSL had begun its public campaign to support the new foreign policy consensus by examining openly all the disputes and antagonisms which had arisen between the two states, not only in history, but more importantly, in the most recent past. According to *Głos Ludu*, however, this PSL exercise amounted to the worst type of 'Jesuit prevarication'.³³ The PPR's equivalent campaign for 'strengthening Polish-Soviet friendship' had been continued through

the government's propaganda ministry since the signing of the Polish-Soviet treaty.³⁴

In the article which set off this round of polemic, *Gazeta Ludowa* (The People's Newspaper), the PSL daily, made the point that Poland was physically weak and needed to rely on its policies rather than its power for its security. Its policies could be successful, the daily explained, since fortunately for Poland the United Nations was to guarantee all nations freedom and security. Poland needed to tie its policies closely to this 'great task'. One of the policies it had already instituted in this direction was the 'important milestone' which was the Polish-Soviet alliance. This alliance was a 'historical necessity', but it was not enough. Friendship was needed as well as alliance, and friendship was harder to attain. Herein lay the greatest difficulty in Polish-Soviet relations. Particularly so since it was the friendship of nations that counted, not that of individuals or parties. The statements of the PPR suggesting that it held a monopoly on good relations with the Soviet Union were not good enough either for Poland or the Soviet Union.

The *Gazeta Ludowa* article then addressed itself to the Soviet Union directly: Poland could not trade off its desire to end the 'tragic dance of many centuries between the enmity of Russia and the enmity of Germany and once and for all establish peace... on the eastern border so as to win the historic battle on the western border', in return for its sovereignty and independence. A sovereign state needed to be able to conduct independent policies; and policies which were in line with the interests of an allied power did not mean 'silence':

Of course, for all of this the goodwill of Russia is needed. It is necessary for her to speak with us on a platform of moral equality; that she leaves us always freedom of action and freedom to organise the building of our system; that — through actions — she tries as quickly as possible to create an atmosphere of trust.³⁵

In conclusion the article asserted: 'Only on the background of [the Soviet] alliance will the alliances with our Western allies, Great Britain, France and the United States [sic], take on particular value'.³⁵ What this 'particular value' implied depended on the position of the reader. For the PSL, it meant a better defence against Germany and greater political receptiveness to Western political ideas. Jan Dec writing in *Chłopski Sztandar*, for example, explained that the 'Western complex' with which the PSL was being labelled by the PPR, was nothing for which the party needed to be ashamed. The PSL, like Poland, was intimately, even spiritually linked with Europe, and it wanted to maintain these links. Furthermore, the party wanted to recognise and encourage the introduction into Polish political life of the best the West had to offer, not uncritically, but so that Polish democracy was the best it could possibly be. One such example was that of Churchill and the Conservative Party's departure from office following their election defeat. This principle was fundamental to any understanding of democracy, Dec wrote.³⁷

But to the PPR, 'particular value' meant something completely different. These were all examples of 'weathered models', of old thinking, of political categories which the PPR had embarked on destroying. 'Democracy' for the PPR could only be understood in terms of its class connotations;³⁸ the PSL represented the type of class interests which the PPR by its nature was committed to destroying.

The PPR view of the PSL strategy of calling for close alliance with the Western states was limited, therefore, to a strict political interpretation. No account was taken of the PSL desire to strengthen the Polish defence against Germany. For the PPR, the territorial guarantee of the Soviet Union sufficed in this regard. The communists accused the PSL of a lack of patriotism, of misunderstanding the true

Polish interest in the post-war world — the interest which saw the alliance with the Soviet Union as the priority above all other priorities. It was on this interest that Poland's independent state existence counted, not on the balancing effect of the Western powers, or for that matter, the noninterference of Soviet 'advisers'. Balancing harked back to the policies of the pre-war Polish regime with its pretensions of grandeur and a pivotal role as the Western bastion of anti-communism.

In the PPR's eyes, the PSL call for Western alliance stemmed from the PSL's domestic need for concrete Western political support. In July, Edward Ochab had announced in the KRN that 'the PPR caucus would like to emphasise with particular force that we see our national aspirations only being able to be realised in the course of the tough battle that awaits us with the remains of the Polish reaction'.³⁹ The PSL had been categorised by the PPR as reactionary from the outset. Now the PSL was seen to be calling for the help of Western reactionary forces, the forces which the PPR had always been conscious of and against which it relied on the international power of the Soviet Union.

At a meeting of the PPR's Warsaw membership in October 1945, Gomulka set the tone for the 'battle for Poland', as the article reporting his speech was entitled. The 'Western complex', Gomulka advised his members, was the result of anti-Soviet propaganda and attitudes from the inter-war period. The spirit of Munich was afoot abroad, he said, and the 'old and trampled' anti-Comintern idea of a 'Western bloc' was being revived. Supporters of the 'Western orientation' wanted to tie Poland's foreign and domestic policies with the concept of the Western bloc, to sow the seeds of Western democracy in Polish soil. The goal of this strategy, according to Gomulka, was

to use the principles of Western democracy to clear the way for the return to power of reactionary forces.⁴⁰ There could be no compromises with the PSL on these terms. Nor was there.

The PSL insisted that the PPR had it all wrong. They had no intention of reintroducing Western capitalism into Poland; they had no desire for blocs of any kind. Poland could never find itself in a bloc directed against the Soviet Union. This would be suicidal.⁴¹ The PSL prided itself on its solid realism. Their's was more a holding strategy, to bring Poland through to better times when the country could use the best both East and West had to offer. For the moment, the Red Army was placed far to the west in Europe, and Poland's *racja stanu* dictated that only 'hard reality' could be the policy of the moment.⁴²

In late September 1945, the PPR Central Committee together with its PPS ally proposed the formation of an election bloc made up of all the legal political parties in Poland. Elections in re-born Poland, Gomułka told his party members a month later, would be 'democracy's great act of battle with the reaction'.⁴³ At the party Congress in December, Gomułka made this the principal issue of his key-note speech. Together, the legal parties would be able to manifest their support for a democratic republic: '...as a result of the election campaign, Poland would stand with both its feet on the firm and already well-trodden democratic road onto which it set out on 22 July 1944'.⁴⁴

Through January and February 1946, discussions between the PSL on the one hand, and PPR and PPS on the other, continued with little result. Maintaining the domestic political status quo was not the PSL intention, as it was the PPR's. The PSL had too much to lose, the PPR too much to gain. By late February, Gomułka was openly linking the PSL

with the armed underground 'reaction' active in Poland.

In March, the PPR with its political allies made a final attempt to bring the PSL into a common election bloc. As reported in the PSL press, the election bloc proposed by the PPR would ensure the continuation of the principles of the PKWN manifesto; it would strengthen Poland's external position; and it would enable the PSL to sever its links with the underground political opposition which was creating hatred of the Soviet Union. Bloc foreign policies would be five-fold: territorial security; opposition to any international attempts to rebuild Germany; the unshakeable principle of Polish-Soviet alliance; alliance with the other Slavic nations; alliance with France, and friendship and cooperation with Britain and the United States. The PSL, in response to these PPR proposals, complained that the government was eliminating its members from the diplomatic service even though there were absolutely no differences in the two parties' foreign policies. It rejected the PPR proposal.⁴⁵

It was a fact that there were no differences in foreign policy. This was particularly the case with regard to the new western borders, and 'recovered territories' east of the Oder and western Neisse rivers. What was different was the emphasis placed on the implications of the different Polish alliances, with the Soviet Union, with France, with Britain, and the relationship with the United States. The PSL looked to the West for its natural support in the same way as the PPR looked eastward. On Germany, the Soviet Union's support for the position of its Polish client had already been proven. The PSL, on the other hand, could not expect the same uncompromising backing from the British or Americans. The fact that this linkage even existed brought upon the PSL the full weight of the PPR's negative propaganda; and once Western policies drew back from their support of the post-war

territorial settlement in east-central Europe, the PSL was left entirely exposed.

The PPR treated the issue of the 'recovered territories' as its first opportunity to show the party's virility as a national Polish force acting on the international stage. Symbolising its priority, a Ministry of the Recovered Territories was created with Gomulka himself as Minister.

Gomulka made it plain he would brook no compromises when it came to the 'recovered territories'. His main task he saw as being the speedy integration of the Silesian, Pomeranian and East Prussian economies into a united Polish economy. A principal argument of the British at Potsdam against the Soviet proposal to incorporate these territories into Poland, had been that Poland had no means of exploiting the lands economically, and that the German population would never be replaced. Gomulka had no illusions regarding the international significance of proving these claims wrong.

In his first speech to the KRN as Minister on 31 December 1945, the PPR leader anticipated later British and American efforts to undermine the European position of the Soviet Union via their questioning of the Polish right to the new western lands. This, he warned, would be unacceptable to Poland:

Anyone who attempts to cast doubt on the right of Poland to its current western borders, anyone who conducts policies designed to weaken our borders attacks Poland's most vital interests, weakens the permanence of peace in Europe and in the world, and cannot be treated by us as anything other than an enemy of Poland and an enemy of peace.⁴⁶

Poland's power and position in the world was not strong enough to counter those who would like to push back the border on the Oder and Neisse rivers, Gomulka continued. The country needed powerful and influential allies, and one such ally was the Soviet Union. Without Soviet help at Potsdam, the conference would not have made the

decision it did on Poland's western border.⁴⁷ At the same time, government propaganda began to increase its efforts to identify the new territories as having been 'recovered', as having been historically part of the Polish 'motherland'.

The PSL was no less categorical on the issue of the western border and Germany. Speaking to a PSL rally in December, Mikołajczyk did not equivocate:

...we must not be cut off from the mouth of the Oder. Szczecin must remain Polish for ever. I am telling you this today, in order that it is not thought in the world that perhaps this is the will of Soviet Russia dictated to us, as some people want it to be presented, or [that this policy] is only in the programme of one party.⁴⁸

In the PSL's January 1946 Congress resolutions on foreign policy, the new western border was described as 'a final and just demarcation returning ancient Polish regions robbed from us in the past'. On Germany, PSL foreign policy pulled no punches. Germany needed to have its 'excessively exuberant' standard of living, based on war-time exploitation, lowered to its 'normal level' in relation to that of its neighbours, and the possibilities for future economic penetration eliminated. At the same time, those states most destroyed by Germany needed to have their standards of living quickly raised in order to 'strengthen their resistance' and 'consolidate their independence from Germany'. German society needed to be carefully 're-educated', and the 'militarist German soul completely morally disarmed'.⁴⁹

Unfortunately, the new political balance in Europe the PSL hoped to encourage with its German policy was rapidly becoming to be seen in the West not as an element of a wider Polish foreign policy consensus, but as a function of a Soviet sponsored policy intended to leave the Soviet Union as the dominant power in Europe. And when it was confronted with a Western policy which appeared to directly challenge this by now conventional Polish wisdom, the PSL were left stranded on

a contradictory policy platform which on the one hand called for close relations with Britain and the United States, and on the other for a totally subordinated Germany.

7.4 Western Pressure

On March 5, Churchill, in the presence of President Truman, gave his 'iron curtain' speech in Fulton, Missouri. Of most importance to us here were the references he made to Soviet encouragement for the Polish communist government to expand its control over a huge area of Germany, and to expell millions of Germans from their homes. Within Poland the reaction was immediate: the PPR and PPS organised official demonstrations against the 'British provocation', while rumours of war, of large scale Soviet troop movements, and of general mobilisation swept the country. Official Polish protests at the accusations made in the speech were several days later strongly supported by the Soviet Union. *Pravda* called Churchill a 'warmonger', while *Izvestia* considered his speech a threat to European and world peace. Stalin himself joined the fray to take issue with Churchill's 'lack of tact'. How could the Soviet desire to prevent another situation like that which had developed prior to the outbreak of war, by ensuring that governments surrounding the Soviet Union were friendly to it, be called by Churchill 'a tendency toward expansion', the Soviet leader complained.⁵⁰

The PSL was optimistic that Churchill did not represent the policies of the British government, that his speech had not reflected the realities of the international situation which the British authorities were intimately aware of. The speech would certainly not

contribute to the harmonious cooperation of the three great powers on which PSL hopes for the future were based, a party press editorial exclaimed.⁵¹ The PSL could not afford to compromise on its German policy. It hoped that the Western states, like the Soviet Union, also would not compromise. Władysław Kiernik, PSL Minister of Education in the Government of National Unity, put the case in the following way:

Among Poles there can be different opinions concerning how to best organise Poland domestically, how to make her satisfied, strong, free and independent; but as to our relations with Germany and our rights to the old Piast borders, there is not, in Poland, any difference in opinion. In this matter we form one solid bloc, a bloc harder than rock, a bloc not of one or other parties, but of the entire nation....⁵²

Germany should not hope that Churchill's 'unfriendly' speech would drive a wedge between the Slavic nations, and particularly between Poland and the Soviet Union. Not only would these countries all continue their policies as before, but so too, Kiernik insisted, would the United States, France and Britain, which had not gone to war with Germany in order to see a new round of German conquest begin immediately afterward.⁵³

As time passed, however, it became increasingly obvious that these hopes would have to be adjusted and brought into line with the reality of an increasingly tense international situation. The political differences between the Soviet Union and the Western powers were sourced precisely in the most sensitive area of Poland's foreign policy. The PSL needed to make a decision where it stood, a decision not made any easier by the PPR pressure being constantly applied.

For the PPR, the growing international discord confirmed the party's class analysis of the international situation, and its implications for Poland's domestic politics. Regardless of the PSL's best attempts to call for national unity on the German question, the PPR continued to place Mikołajczyk's party, the domestic underground

and international 'reaction', all in the same political bloc. Calling for party unity over Polish foreign policy in the KRN in April, PSL deputy Wójcik was heartily booed by the PPR and PPR aligned Peasant Party deputies.⁵⁴ There was a great difference in PPR and PSL foreign policies, PPR deputy Bieńkowski retorted. The PPR was conducting a 'positive and creative' foreign policy, while the PSL was playing the role of 'agent' of the forces which attacked Poland and defended Germany. The PSL was 'on the corner of that which is commonly called treachery', Bieńkowski railed, and 'the smoke screen of talk about friendship with the Soviet Union will not help'.⁵⁵ The Churchill speech yet again confirmed the truth that those who were for Germany, were against Poland, and against the whole of Slavdom, Ochab concluded.⁵⁶

Having unsuccessfully concluded their negotiations with the PSL for a one ticket election bloc, it had been decided within the PPR leadership that a referendum should be called for June 30. More time was needed before an election could be held. The PPR was not at all confident over its ability to take a majority of the votes with the PSL becoming increasingly popular and active in its opposition. Economic conditions had not yet stabilised, and a huge number of Poles were still on the move, from the west to their old homes in the east, or from the east to new homes in the west. It was felt that a massive demonstration of public support for the PPR bloc's policies was needed to stimulate its chances in an election ballot. Such a demonstration would also serve to counter the gains in popularity being made by the domestic and international opposition groups, becoming ever more pointed in their protests over the consolidation of communist power in Poland. The referendum proposal was presented by the PPR bloc as an

exercise in pre-election democracy.

Three issues were to be addressed in the referendum: constitutional reform, economic reform, and Poland's new western borders. All the questions were phrased in such a way as to make them difficult for the PSL to oppose. Question three asked whether the voter supported the consolidation of the Polish state's western borders on the Baltic, the Oder and western Neisse rivers. Belying the booes in the KRN, the PPR's primary objective in posing this last question was to demonstrate Polish unity on the issue of Poland's territorial integrity, and to isolate the domestic 'reaction' which still insisted on returning the Polish land taken by the Soviet Union to Poland and German land to Germany. In the light of the growing criticism coming from Western leaders, and the upcoming Paris Peace Conference which was to settle the issue once and for all, this was seen as a crucial step providing an extra-electoral mandate for the government's foreign policy position.⁵⁷

The PPR's sustained propaganda pressure, together with the international criticism of men such as Churchill, Bevin and Senator Vandenberg, forced the PSL into taking an unambiguous stand on the western border and Poland's territorial security. This it did on May 27, at a meeting of the party's Executive Council.

It could not condone talk of an East-West conflict, the Executive Council resolution began; only in the unity of the three great powers and the development of the United Nations was there hope for the world and for Poland. But for Poland, the basic principle of foreign policy could only be alliance with the Soviet Union. Only such an alliance provided Poland with the security it needed from renewed German aggression. The council 'most energetically' protested against the doubts being expressed by 'certain foreign elements' regarding

Poland's 'holy rights' to its new territories. For Poland, 'the German problem' was the main problem, and would be finally settled only after relations among the three great powers had clarified. 'The German problem' was basically dependent on Russian-British relations since between them, Britain and Soviet Union had divided the political, geographic and spiritual heart of Germany.

British policy in Germany 'threatened our most vital interests', the PSL Executive Council stated bluntly. Britain was conducting its classic balance of power policies on the continent, and in its modern variant had decided to use Germany to balance Soviet power in Europe. The problem with this policy was that Poland was between the powers which Britain intended balancing. In any German-Soviet war, Poland would again be the battlefield, and the first task of a freed Germany would be the revision of its eastern borders. Poland did not have a choice between Britain or the Soviet Union the way some people in London seemed to think, the Executive Council complained. The Western choice was between Germany and the Soviet Union, and was therefore no choice for Poland. In the future, the German threat would be greater than ever before in Polish history. The new western Polish border was 'no joke'. It focused Germany's attention on Poland and in this Germany would have only one goal: to destroy Poland. Every friend of Germany was an enemy of Poland since 'Poland could only have one foreign policy — against Germany, and only one alliance — against Germany'.⁵⁰

The PSL were beginning to sound very much like the PPR with their uncompromising polemic. But the PSL did not match this rebuke for the British government with an accompanying change in the party's overall political strategy. In the pre-referendum propaganda battle, at the same time as the party organs pressed the harder Executive Committee

line on the western territories and Polish-Soviet alliance, articles continued to stress that the Polish-Soviet alliance had to be on the basis of 'free with free', and that Polish-Soviet friendship relied on the support of the entire nation and not one small group.⁵⁹

The referendum campaign also encouraged the PPR to press its foreign policy priorities: a vote for the consolidation of the western borders was a vote for the foreign policy of the government, Gomułka now told his listeners. Everyone who sincerely wanted the new western lands to be fully integrated into the Polish state had to support the government in its foreign policy, and had to support the bloc of parties which supported the government in this work. Such a person 'must be a sincere and wholehearted supporter of Polish-Soviet friendship and alliance', since without this alliance Poland would not be in a position to defend itself for long against a reborn German eastward imperialism.⁶⁰

Without this alliance, Gomułka's message ran, Poland would also not be in a position to offset the political and economic aid given Germany by the West which would lead to the rebirth of this imperialism. It was becoming obvious to all concerned that Germany was the prize which the West was playing for. Churchill's speech in March had been nothing if not a pitch designed to heighten the awareness of the West of the importance of wooing Germany as the bastion against Soviet influence in east-central Europe. For the PPR, then, the alliance with the Soviet Union was needed not only to protect Poland's new territories from German revanchism, but more importantly for the party's immediate future, from the threat of Western encroachment on East European communist power itself, that power being guaranteed by the presence of the Red Army.

The PPR's main propaganda weapon in its attempts to offset this

threat was to dangle the spectre of September 1939 before the eyes of the Polish public. As Gomułka put it, the person who worked to split Poland from the Soviet Union was working to weaken Poland's western border; and the person who cast doubt on the legitimacy of that border was encouraging German imperialists to new aggression against Poland.⁶¹ On the day of the referendum, Gomułka expanded this theme to include not only the third question on foreign policy, but also the previous two. Under a banner headline in *Głos Ludu* which read: 'The three questions of the referendum consist of one whole; the person who votes "no" is helping the Germans against Poland', Gomułka wrote that the new borders were the work of the Polish working class: no land owners or capitalists would protect these borders; nor would the senate, which was a synonym for capitalist power.⁶² As it turned out, according to the official results, almost one million people voted against question three, with areas such as Lower and Upper Silesia, and the former East Prussian lands returning a higher than average negative vote for all three questions.⁶³

Gomułka's acute concern over the large negative vote reflected the growing international pressure being put on Poland's new western border and the steady increase in Western support for defeated Germany. Many German politicians had gained heart from Churchill's Fulton speech. The opportunities to use the disagreements among the great powers for their own interests gave these German leaders hope for the future. And as one of the major sticking points between the Soviet Union and the Western powers, Poland drew a good deal of their attention. In the following weeks, the debate in the German and Western press focused on Poland's new role as Soviet satellite. A common suggestion being made was that the Soviet Union in its negotiations with the Western allies over Germany could quickly change

its position on the new Polish-German border with the Poles having little say in the matter. Unequivocal Soviet denials that this was the case made no difference. British and American spokesmen continued to question the finality of the Polish-German border as a way of keeping the pressure on the Soviet Union over Germany.

The crunch came on September 6 with a speech in Stuttgart by US Secretary of State James Byrnes. His statement was intended as a reply to a Soviet policy statement made by Molotov in Paris in July, opposing the Western attempts to reopen the issue of Germany's eastern border. The Byrnes speech marked the onset of a new phase in American policy in Europe. Two points were made very clear: US troops would be staying in Europe so long as the armies of the other allies also remained; and Germany was to be rebuilt as soon as possible. Both points were directed squarely against Soviet policy in eastern Europe. Poland, along with the other states of eastern Europe, was caught on the middle.

Stuttgart confirmed the ideological prognoses of the PPR leaders: 'reaction' was inbuilt into the Western capitalist system. It was spreading from groups close to the Western governments into the governments themselves, and was now visible at the highest levels. The consolidation of the communist system in Poland could not rely on the aid and support of the capitalist West. *Głos Ludu* on September 7 replied to Byrnes's speech with confidence. It changed nothing, the newspaper said. There would be no discussion on the recovered territories. Poland was an independent state; as such, America could dictate its will in the Phillipines or in Hawaii, but it could not do so in Poland.⁶⁴ At a mass rally organised by the PPR and PPS the next day, Gomułka continued in the same vein: Germany had been able to be victorious over Poland so often in the past because Poland had been

backward and weak. Now, thanks to the alliance and friendship with the Soviet Union, Poland was more powerful than it had ever been. The borders had been set in Potsdam and had been cemented by the close to four million Poles who had resettled there; the situation was irrevocable. Furthermore, these borders were more than Polish; they were now the western borders of Slavdom.

For Gomułka, the most important objective in the heightened Western propaganda campaign against the Polish borders was not to sow the seeds of a new war which might result in a territorial realignment as was being widely rumoured by the anti-communist underground. He had earlier concluded that it was intended rather to destabilise domestic conditions in the new 'people's democratic' states. In this it was succeeding. The Byrnes speech had caused panic among the settlers in the new western territories and a good deal of animosity toward the United States. Poland would reach the appropriate conclusion from this Western objective, announced Gomułka. In foreign policy terms this would mean 'greater Polish reliance on its sincere and real friends... above all the Soviet Union with Generalissimus Stalin at its head'.⁶⁵

Bierut, in opening the eleventh session of the KRN on September 20, approached the issue from the point of view of a statesman protecting the interests of a small power against the bullying of two imperial powers: Britain had as much to answer for as America; it was Britain, after all, which was providing the more open support for Mikołajczyk and the PSL. It was only right that Poland was recompensated by the great powers for the land it had ceded in the east with land historically Polish in the west. It seemed that imperial powers thought it quite all right not to respect the rights of smaller powers, Bierut complained:

Historical experience should teach in a convincing way that changes in the borders of states have always presented the most difficult and most tragic problem in the international relations

as in the domestic relations of a state which is subject to these changes.... ...if certain politicians think that these sorts of changes can be rethought and altered at will according to the occasion or on the basis of whatever different opinion, there remains nothing more to be said except that they are deeply and fatally wrong.⁶⁶

Mikołajczyk's response to Byrnes's speech was to roundly condemn this new violation of Poland's right to territorial inviolability. For Poland the recovered territories were a matter of 'life or death'. He went on to phrase his reproach in a way he hoped would be understandable: 'Unless the great powers want a new revolutionary upheaval in the Polish organism, they will recognise Poland's border on the Oder and Neisse as inviolable'.⁶⁷ But there was still a note of hope in the PSL reaction: 'Despite the unpleasant reflections which Minister Byrnes's speech awakens in us, we look with trust to the future', wrote Czesław Wycech.⁶⁸

Far too much was yet at stake among the great powers, and while Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union continued negotiating over the future of Europe, over the peace agreements with Germany's wartime allies, there was still hope for the PSL. At the same time as its policy initiatives began to show the effect of the Western bruising,⁶⁹ the PSL continued to insist that the Western allies should not be rejected, but rather encouraged to understand that a secure defence against Germany required alliances on both its eastern and western borders.⁷⁰

But time was quickly running out for the PSL. Its foreign policies, hostage to the PPR's domestic ambitions, had never been allowed to rest easy in the 'democratic' Polish state's foreign policy consensus. In response to the PPR's bitter accusations of their reactionary intent, PSL policy makers continued to straddle the ever widening chasm between Western support and the Soviet commitment to Polish territorial security. Their other option of politically joining with

the PPR threatened to leave the party bereft of its independent identity and entirely subject to the internationalist obligations which the PPR took for granted. This the PSL could never accept. Its foremost political goal governing all its foreign and domestic policies, was Poland's right to an 'independent sovereign existence'. It never ceased to remind the PPR that at the basis of Poland's equal relations with the Soviet Union should be a free choice of democratic system best suited to the particular national characteristics of both Poland and the Soviet Union.⁷¹

The PPR were in no mood to listen. Prior to the January 1947 election, the widespread PSL organisation was ruthlessly repressed and many of its parliamentary candidates imprisoned. The election outcome, as a result, was never in any doubt. A massive 380 seats was won for the PPR bloc in the new Sejm, and only 27 for the PSL.⁷² From this point onward, the PSL was no longer able to have any influence in the domestic foreign policy debate.

In foreign policy terms, there was little immediate change as a result of the PSL defeat. The consensus which had characterised Polish foreign policy from the creation of the Provisional Government of National Unity continued to dominate as it had previously. The elimination of the PSL did, on the other hand, remove a valuable balancing voice from the domestic debate. Without the PSL to provide a legitimate home for the constituency naturally sympathetic to the government's pragmatic foreign policies, these policies were deprived of an essential source of continuity. The responsibility for Polish foreign policy was now left entirely with the PPR, with the result that it was not long before the conflict between pragmatic policy and the PPR's ideological *raison d'être* was being exacerbated in direct

proportion to the growing international tension between the Soviet Union and the Western allies.

Notes

1. 'Rozmowy delegacji PKWN i KRN z przedstawicielami rządu RP na emigracji (sierpień 1944 r)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (108), 1984, p. 122.
2. 'Rozmowy', p. 124.
3. 'Porozumienie między Polskim Komitetem Wyzwolenia Narodowego a rządem Związku Socjalistycznych Republik Radzieckich o polskich granicach państwowych. 1944, lipiec, 27, Moskwa', Euzebiusz Basiński, Ryszard Nazarewicz, *Sojusz polsko-radziecki a zachodnia granica Polski*, Warszawa, Wydawnictwo TPPR 'Współpraca', 1987, p. 68.
4. 'Rozmowy', p. 142.
5. 'Rozmowy', p. 144.
6. 'Rozmowy', pp. 118-9.
7. 'Edward Stettinius's notes on the Polish question at the Yalta Conference', Zygmunt Szkopiak, *The Yalta Agreements. Documents prior to, during and after the Crimean Conference 1945*, London, Polish Government in Exile, 1986, p. 100.
8. Stettinius, p. 100.
9. Stettinius, p. 101.
10. Arthur Bliss Lane, *I Saw Poland Betrayed. An American Ambassador Reports to the American People*, New York, The Bobs-Merrill Company, 1948, p. 79.
11. Under the chairmanship of Stalin from 30 June 1941 to 4 September 1945, the State Committee for the Defence of the USSR functioned as the Soviet war cabinet.
12. 'Postanowienie Państwowego Komitetu Obrony ZSRR nr 7558. 1945, luty, 20, Moskwa', Basiński & Nazarewicz, p. 86.
13. Włodzimierz Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP 1944-1947*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1971, p. 367.
14. Roosevelt, in a private letter to Stalin at the Yalta Conference, wrote: 'I hope I do not have to assure you that the United States will never lend its support in any way to any provisional government in Poland that would be inimical to your interests'. Stettinius, p. 103.
15. 'Protokół z pierwszego plenarnego posiedzenia przedstawicieli Rządu Tymczasowego RP i wszystkich konsultantów z kraju i z zagranicy, odbytego dnia 16 czerwca 1945 r', in Władysław Góra, Aleksander Kochański (red.), 'Rozmowy polityczne w sprawie utworzenia Tymczasowego Rządu Jedności Narodowej (czerwiec 1945 r)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p. 106.
16. Cited in Góra & Kochański, p. 134n.
17. Cited in Roman Buczek, 'Udział delegacji polskiej w Konferencji Poczdamskiej w 1945 roku', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 34, 1975, p. 90.
18. See 'Z protokołu piątego plenarnego posiedzenia szefów rządów ZSRR, USA i Wielkiej Brytanii. 1945, lipiec, 21, Poczdam', Basiński & Nazarewicz, pp. 109-13.
19. 'Z protokołu szóstego plenarnego posiedzenia konferencji szefów rządów ZSRR, USA i Wielkiej Brytanii. 1945, lipiec 22, Poczdam', Basiński & Nazarewicz, p. 121.
20. 'Z protokołu szóstego plenarnego posiedzenia', p. 121.
21. 'Z protokołu szóstego plenarnego posiedzenia', pp. 123-4.

22. Buczek, p. 101.
23. Buczek, p. 122.
24. Buczek, p. 123.
25. Cited in Buczek, p. 105.
26. 'Na piastowskie tory wraca polityka zagraniczna nowej Polski', *Głos Ludu*, 17 July 1945, p. 5.
27. The PPR in April 1945 could boast some 300,000 members. As a result of a series of verification procedures, this number fell to around 189,000 in July. At the time of the PPR's First Congress in December 1945, membership had risen once again to 235,000. The PSL had already acquired some 200,000 members by November 1945; in January 1946 this number was over 500,000 and by the end of May 1946, incredibly, over 800,000. Krystyna Kersten, *Narodziny systemu władzy. Polska 1943-1948*, Paris, Libella, 1986, pp. 137, 152.
28. *Chłopski Sztandar*, 14 October 1945, p. 1.
29. *Chłopski Sztandar*, 14 October 1945, p. 1.
30. *Chłopski Sztandar*, 14 October 1945, pp. 1-2.
31. Stanisław Mikołajczyk, 'My a państwo', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 14 October 1945, p. 3.
32. 'My a państwo'.
33. 'Szkodnictwo partyjników "Głosowi Ludu" w odpowiedzi', *Gazeta Ludowa*, 25 November 1945, p. 3.
34. See Stanisław Kuśnierski, *Propaganda polityczna PPR w latach 1944-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1976, p. 114.
35. 'Na szlaku Warszawa-Moskwa', *Gazeta Ludowa*, 17 November 1945, p. 2.
36. 'Na szlaku Warszawa-Moskwa'.
37. Jan Dec, 'Kompleks zachodni', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 16 December 1945, p. 3.
38. Kuśnierski, p. 32.
39. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniach 21-23 VII 1945*, sesja VIII, Warszawa, 1945, p. 30.
40. Gomułka then went on to explain why, in the battle with reactionary forces, the power of the state needed to be strengthened: 'The wider the democratic freedoms we allow to operate without harm for democracy itself, the more these freedoms must be limited for the reaction, as the greater is the danger to progressive forces and the nation'. 'Walka o Polskę trwa', *Głos Ludu*, 22 October 1945, pp. 1, 3-4.
41. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniach 29-31 XII 1945 i 2-3 I 1946*, sesja IX, Warszawa, 1946, p. 141.
42. See 'Rozmyślenia noworoczne', *Piast*, 6 January 1946, pp. 2-3 on this point.
43. 'Walka o Polskę trwa', p. 1.
44. Władysław Gomułka, 'Droga do nowej Polski', *Głos Ludu*, 8 December 1945, p. 1.
45. See 'Dokumenty z rozmów o blok wyborczy', *Gazeta Ludowa*, 4 March 1946, pp. 2-3.
46. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne*, sesja IX, p. 246.
47. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne*, sesja IX, p. 247.
48. 'Sprawy ważne a prawdziwe', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 9 December 1945, p. 2.
49. 'Tezy polityki zagranicznej PSL', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 27 January 1946, p. 8.
50. Cited in Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, pp. 146-7.
51. *Chłopski Sztandar*, 17 March 1946, p. 2.
52. Władysław Kiernik, 'Zwarty blok całego narodu', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 21 April 1946, p. 8.
53. 'Zwarty blok całego narodu'.

54. *Gazeta Ludowa*, 29 April 1946, p. 2.
55. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniach 26-28 IV 1946*, sesja X, Warszawa 1946, pp. 156-64.
56. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne*, sesja X, p. 380.
57. See 'Uchwała plenum KC PPR w sprawie referendum. 2 VI 1946', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, p. 336.
58. 'Jedno "nie" — dwa "tak"', *Gazeta Ludowa*, 30 May 1946, pp. 1, 3.
59. 'PSL a sojusz polsko-radziecki', *Piast*, 2 June 1946, pp. 1-2; also Józef Krzyczkowski, 'Z Rosją czy z Niemcami', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 23 June 1946, p. 10.
60. 'Obóz demokratyczny buduje Polskę z woli narodu. Przemówienie na akademii pierwszomajowej w Warszawie 30 kwietnia 1946 r', Władysław Gomułka, *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1946-kwiecień 1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1964, p. 82.
61. 'Obóz demokratyczny', p. 82.
62. 'Trzy pytania referendum stanowią jedną całość. Kto głosuje "nie", pomaga Niemcom przeciw Polsce', *Głos Ludu*, 30 June 1946, p. 1.
63. See Tadeusz Marczak, *Propaganda polityczna stronnictw przed referendum z 30 VI 1946 roku*, Acta Universitatis Wratislaviensis nr 682. Historia XLI, Wrocław, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Wrocławskiego, 1986, for a detailed account of PPR and PSL propaganda during the referendum campaign, especially p. 204 for Gomułka's reaction to the negative question 3 vote.
64. *Głos Ludu*, 7 September 1946, p. 1.
65. 'Odpowiedź pana Byrnesowi', *Głos Ludu*, 9 September 1946, p. 1.
66. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniach 20-23 IX 1946*, sesja XI, Warszawa, 1946, pp. 10-3.
67. 'Granica Odry i Nysy Łużyckiej', *Piast*, 15 September 1946, p. 4.
68. Czesław Wycech, 'Solidarność całego narodu w obronie granic Polski na zachodzie', *Gazeta Ludowa*, 9 September 1946, pp. 1-2.
69. The PSL began supporting the idea of a Slavic bloc made up of alliances between Poland, the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia and Jugoslavia, to offset the pressure being applied by the 'Anglo-Saxon and German offensive'. Stanisław Jagusz, 'O sojusz Polsko-Czeski', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 3 November 1946, p. 3.
70. Jerzy Świrski, 'Nasza podstawa i nasze oblicze', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 22 December 1946, p. 7.
71. See for example, 'O sojusz polsko-radziecki', *Chłopski Sztandar*, 10 November 1946, p. 1.
72. See Kersten, p. 262.

8. NATIONAL PRESTIGE: IDEOLOGY VS PRAGMATISM

In responding to the foreign policy demands placed on them, Poland's communist policy makers found themselves in much the same uncomfortable position as the PSL. On the one hand, their role as the nation's new masters made them acutely conscious of their responsibility for representing the nation's ambitions abroad. On the other, they were equally aware of their ideological responsibilities. Where the PSL had sought to marry its commitment to a Western orientated policy platform with the reality of Soviet influence in Poland, PPR foreign policy matched an internationalist commitment to Soviet security with a need to pursue active, and unambiguously Polish policies toward the Western states. Soon after this match began to be implemented as the country's new foreign policy concensus, the division between the party's 'national' and 'internationalist' wings once again became publicly noticable.

For men like Gomułka, the match between the internationalist commitment to Soviet security and Poland's need for Western trade and aid was symbolised in the relationship between Poland's security interests and its national prestige. This relationship had been formed from the configuration of historical, political and geographical elements that had brought the PPR to power and given it the character it had. Security was fixed and non-negotiable; prestige was rather more intangible. Polish prestige provided the 'democratic' state with room to manouver, where its security allowed none at all. As long as the unity of the great powers held firm, there was no reason why Poland should not look westward as well as east to fulfill its ambitions. These ambitions could hardly threaten Soviet security; and indeed, while the Soviet leadership sought to ensure its own security

through continuing good relations with its war-time allies, Poland's own self-interested efforts could only complement this cause rather than damage it.

Gomułka's focus on the pragmatic possibilities inherent in the post-war international environment was throughout this period paralleled by a more subdued but readily apparent current in the PPR. Led by Bierut and Berman, the 'internationalist' wing of the party had no qualms in providing Polish national prestige with an exclusively ideological interpretation. For these PPR leaders, Polish prestige was part and parcel of the country's new ideological incarnation, an ideological rationale for Poland's new physical and political position in Europe. But so long as the Soviet Union encouraged the external focus westward, this current remained muted.

The first signs of public opposition to Western policies came from Gomułka, and not from the 'internationalist' wing. The PPR leader had invested a great deal of his own high profile credibility in the West's continued opposition to the restoration of Germany. When Western attitudes sympathetic toward defeated Germany began to translate into concrete policy actions, Gomułka's public dismay heralded a process of re-assessment in the party which only later came to receive the full support of the Soviet Union. Right through this period of re-assessment, lasting until the summer of 1947, Gomułka and the PPR continued to call for trade with the West. But by the early autumn, when Soviet and Polish assessments of the international situation had converged, Polish national prestige henceforth took on an unremitting eastward focus.

8.1 Open Door to the West

It would be wrong to assume that Gomułka and his supporters represented an explicit foreign policy opposition to the 'internationalist' current in the PPR. While the Soviet Union sought policy advantages from the continuing good relations with the Western allies, Poland's communist policy makers could guiltlessly set out to build the 'democratic' state's prestige on both ideological and pragmatic grounds. Gomułka, along with the rest of the PPR leadership, knew exactly where 'democratic' Poland's place was in Europe. At the same time, the practical opportunities to make the most of this position had never been better. Gomułka's strength as party leader was his sensitivity to a wider domestic constituency than the communists could naturally command. It was with the encouragement of the rest of the PPR leadership, therefore, that Gomułka undertook to bring the rest of the nation to accept this largely pragmatic policy consensus — on the PPR's terms, not those of the PSL.

Still, the contrast between the two orientations remained. Bierut cast himself as shepherd of the nation's prestige in consciously ideological terms: 'An increase in the importance of democratic Poland in the new system of European relations is one of the conditions of a lasting peace in Europe', he told the KRN on the day the PKWN was transformed into the Provisional Government.' In Bierut's conception, Poland was to occupy point position in the European alliance against Germany; as Germany regained its strength, so too Poland would need to increase in importance and power to prevent a repeat of the German aggression. Bierut's 'new system of European relations' was one where the Soviet Union was no longer consigned to enforced isolation, but

where it was able instead to have a determining influence in European affairs. Bierut's ambition was for Poland to become the Soviet Union's number one ally in this new European system.

Such a role required accepting the Soviet Union as ethnic and ideological patron of Poland. Poland's natural inclinations in this direction had, according to Bierut, been artificially stymied by the pre-war ideologically anti-Soviet governments; with this unnatural barrier no longer present, Poland would be able to at last play out its destiny as an important state in central Europe. Poland in its post-war guise would be only slightly more modest in its aspirations to those of the pre-war republic with its pretensions to great-power status in Europe. Poland under communist rule would be more sensitive to geo-political realities, Bierut made clear. Pre-war governments had had their tragic misperceptions of these realities proven in the defeat of September 1939. Notwithstanding this tragic event, prestige was Poland's by right: the nation's destiny had been determined by its location. Now it was up to the population and its leaders to make full use of the opportunity presented by the outcome of the war.²

In contrast, Gomułka sought to reassure the Polish population that the communists had no intention of cutting Poland off from its past close relations with Western Europe, or of 'communising' the country Soviet style. At a speech he gave at a Warsaw rally celebrating the creation of the Provisional Government of National Unity, the PPR leader declared that Poland had much to gain from the example of the Western states, as well as from the Soviet Union: Poland 'can become a nation really free and really great only then when we will be able to learn from other nations and states their best characteristics and at the same time lose our own worst national characteristics'. From America, Poland could learn how to work; from Britain, Poland could

learn thrift and a care for state and national interests; and from the Soviet Union, Poland could learn patriotism and love of one's country.³

At the same time, Gomułka, like Bierut, understood that Poland's position as potentially a great European power was linked fundamentally to Germany, to ensuring that Germany would never again occupy a dominant position in central Europe. Poland would now benefit at Germany's expense. Germany, which had in the past dominated politically and economically in central Europe, had been crushed by the allies. Poland, on the other hand, had been shifted bodily westward, even further into the European heartland. Potsdam and the official recognition of Poland's new borders had immensely strengthened Poland's international position, Gomułka wrote optimistically in *Głos Ludu*:

We have every reason to believe that very soon we will become a great economic and political power in Europe.... Poland has the greatest potential power in central Europe; its shifting must have a serious influence on the development of political and economic relations in Europe, and even in the world.⁴

Everything that contributed to a weakened Germany, wrote Gomułka, contributed to a lasting international peace, and as a logical extension, to a powerful Poland. And notwithstanding the PPR's unremitting criticism of the PSL on this very same point, Poland, according to Gomułka, needed to be sure of its defence against a new German threat by maintaining and improving its good relations with the Western allies as well as with the Soviet Union.⁵

In his Central Committee report to the PPR's First Congress in December 1945, Gomułka left no doubt as to the major Polish foreign policy pre-occupation:

What threatens us, and in perspective the only threat, is the German danger.... Various ideas of a Western bloc most certainly would not remain indifferent both for Germany and regarding Germany. There is no need to prove what danger for Poland, for

peace in Europe, is hidden in these sorts of ideas.⁶

Talk of a Western bloc to counterbalance the encroachment of Soviet power into east-central Europe, was seen by the PPR leadership as an attempt to return to the pre-war days of building a Western bastion against communism. Of most immediate threat was the use such a bloc could make of Germany. Germany would, in effect, be granted Poland's pre-war mantle of bulwark against communism; it would gain favoured status within the Western bloc and would need to be re-armed, constituting an immediate threat to Polish security.

The PPR under Gomułka's guidance had no wish to exile Poland to a political 'Eastern Europe' behind a Soviet-Slavic shield: '...shutting ourselves off from the countries of the West would be contrary to our interests', Deputy Foreign Minister Modzelewski announced soon after the PPR Congress had ended.⁷ In his report to the Congress, Gomułka had emphasised Poland's commitment to the Soviet Union and friendship with the other Slavic countries. But at the same time, he had also stressed Poland's openness to Western input, to 'peace, agreement and friendship' with the great powers of the West. In Polish communist perceptions, Poland had been given the opportunity to enter on its 'new track' foreign policy as an inevitability of history dictated by the social forces unleashed by German and European fascism; the Polish alliance with the Soviet Union was therefore a historical as much as an ideological necessity. But the last thing intended by Polish foreign policy at this stage after the war was for 'democratic' Poland's new relationship with the Soviet Union to become an obstacle to good Polish relations with the West. In terms of trade and aid, Poland relied heavily on these good relations to see it through the reconstruction programme getting under way in the country. On the domestic political front, Gomułka's priority was the consolidation of

communist power, and here the PPR leader certainly had premonitions as to the likely response of domestic and international 'reaction' to this intention. But in foreign policy, the most important priority was to finally put an end to the German danger and to build a strong Polish state, and an important part of this goal depended on the cooperation of the Western allies.

Stalin had often assured the Polish leaders that they had the full cooperation of the Soviet Union in this goal: 'Germany needs only twenty years to regain its power and threaten a new war', the Soviet leader had warned.²³ For this reason the USSR continued to make unity among the three great powers a priority goal of its own foreign policy. Unity was also a way of ensuring if only tacit Western approval for the consolidation of Soviet influence in east-central Europe. But within the framework of this larger Soviet policy, the PPR was not reticent in making the most of the green light showing from Moscow. The party's efforts to build on the Soviet grand strategy were definitely self-interested to the extent that they sought greater room for manouver for the future, for a Poland established as a regional leader within the Slavic alliance network, serving as bridge between the Soviet Union and a politically progressive Western Europe. This was to be in the future. For the present, Gomułka's characteristically independent policies were put into stark relief by those advocated by the hardline 'internationalist' group of Central Committee communists led by Berman.

Berman's contribution to the PPR Congress debate on Gomułka's Central Committee report, the only one to put its emphasis on foreign policy, was published by *Głos Ludu* three days before the end of the Congress proceedings. Its centre-piece was a programme listing four points differing from the official Central Committee report less in form than in content:

1. relentless action against all attempts to reactivate German imperialism;
2. fraternal alliance with the Soviet Union as the guarantee of Polish independence, the bedrock of the development of democracy and antifascist forces in Europe and in the whole world, the inexhaustable source and hope for all progressive forces of all humanity;
3. cooperation with all those European countries which represent people's democracy; finally:
4. support for all efforts aiming to strengthen the Anglo-Soviet-American alliance, and on this basis shaping the friendship with the Anglo-Saxon democracies.⁹

Unlike Gomułka, Berman had little regard for popular attitudes or for the unprecedented possibilities of Poland's international situation. While he did ensure that his programme fitted the list of Polish foreign policy priorities by dealing in turn with the same issues as the Central Committee report, Berman's approach was aggressively ideological; politically, he sought a far more intimate identification with Soviet foreign policy than did Gomułka.

Berman's reaction to Gomułka's treatment of the danger of the ideas being discussed in the West was to point out that the struggle against German aggression was a class struggle and would continue so long as Germany retained its pre-war imperialist/capitalist character. Where Gomułka made it plain he sought Soviet friendship and alliance as a guarantee for Poland's national security, Berman couched his counter-policy in uncompromising internationalist language. And rather than accept any attempt to broaden Poland's international appeal, Berman's answer was to have Poland deal only with other communist states as a guarantee of Poland's commitment to Soviet leadership in what Berman saw not so much as a Slavic bloc, but a communist bloc. His last point bears this analysis out: Poland's relations with the West needed to be based on a total commitment to Soviet foreign policy in its goal of maintaining the anti-Hitler alliance and Soviet dominance in east-central Europe as the consequence of that alliance. No room was left in this policy programme for any national Polish self-interest.

The Congress result was never in any doubt, however. Gomułka's 'national' communists were able to hold sway and have 'the validity and correctness' of their views as represented by the Central Committee report confirmed in the final ideological-political resolution.¹⁰

In an interesting parallel to the trade-off between mass support for the new foreign policy consensus and Soviet respect for Polish sovereignty postulated by the PSL in their domestic campaign, Gomułka's quid pro quo for supporting a relatively less ideological 'national' foreign policy, was to assure the Soviet Union of his, and the PPR's intentions of carrying out a revolution in the Polish population's popular attitudes toward its traditional eastern enemy. In a list of twelve 'principal tasks' set out for the party in the Central Committee report, the first half of task eleven, the only task dealing directly with foreign policy issues, was to 'deepen within the Polish nation an appreciation of the new friendship and alliance with the Soviet Union which is synonymous with strengthened security for the Polish borders and peace in Europe'. Presented as being integral to Poland's foreign policy, this was reassurance for the Soviet Union that whatever the policies of the Gomułka led Polish communist state, there would never be any attempt to threaten Soviet interests now or in the future. The guarantee would be a population which had accepted wholeheartedly the new direction of state policy and acceded readily to the propaganda of the new regime. The second part of this party task was to 'carry out friendly and alliance like policies toward all states friendly with Poland, particularly toward the Slavic and Western nations'.¹¹ Yet again, Gomułka seemed to be reaffirming his intention of supporting a refreshingly open foreign policy.

These signals to the West not to limit the little room Poland had

to manouver by supporting Germany in any measures threatening Poland's right to secure borders, had little effect on Western policy makers. To men like Bevin, Gomułka was nothing if not the archetypal communist leader, propogandising about good relations with the West while at the same time proceeding rapidly to 'communize' Poland. Not surprisingly, Gomułka took strong issue with the British Foreign Minister when, in a speech to the Commons, he had called Poland a police state. Categorically denying this allegation, and remarking that British democracy in India was hardly better, Gomułka called for the British to be honest in their attitudes toward Poland, to look at Poland through clear rather than coloured glasses.¹²

PPR claims to be conducting an independent foreign policy were strongly put by Zenon Kliszko in the KRN in April. Kliszko expressed the PPR's official support for Poland's diplomatic effort. Of particular note for Kliszko was the heightened and successful activity of Polish diplomacy in securing a treaty with Yugoslavia in March, in the continuing negotiations with France,¹³ in securing Britain's announcement of the demobilisation of the Polish armed forces abroad, and in maintaining a high profile action in the UN against Franco's Spain. All these initiatives pointed to Poland's growing participation in world affairs. The only rule for Polish actions, Kliszko declared, was the Polish national interest and world peace.¹⁴

In the eyes of Poland's leaders, it was not the practical efforts of the 'democratic' regime to ensure its domestic security, or the Soviet guarantee to provide for Poland's territorial security that was undermining Poland's good relations with the West; the fault lay with the poor showing of the West itself, and its ideological distrust of the new Polish regime. In a speech given as part of the referendum campaign in May 1946, Gomułka made much of this point. While the

Germans were receiving hundreds of thousands of tons of grain from the UN relief agency UNRRA, the Italians likewise, and Greece with a much smaller population had been allocated around 500,000 tons, Poland was being sent a meagre 70,000 tons. The obvious conclusion was that in Greece and Italy where elections were imminent, the voters needed to be kept happy. In Poland the strategy seemed to be to increase the hardship prior to elections. Gomulka ended this reference to Western inequity with a proverb: 'real friends are recognised in need'.¹⁵

In contrast to the anti-PSL rhetoric of the referendum propaganda campaign, in their foreign policy the PPR and government were not at all looking to break with the West. Quite the contrary. But nor did the PPR intend compromising on its domestic policy. The party's June Central Committee Plenum issued the following statement:

Polish foreign policy, based on alliance and sincere friendship with the Soviet Union, on solidarity with the Slavic nations, and with its goal the tightening of its relations with all nations, in the first instance with France, Great Britain and the United States, on the basis of sovereignty and mutual respect for national interests, is inextricably tied with the domestic policy of people's democracy, with the policies of reform and social reconstruction.¹⁶

If Britain and the United States continued criticising Poland's domestic policies, it would be difficult for Poland to maintain the good relations it desired, the Plenum noted. The closer Western governments drew to the line of 'international reaction', the closer they identified with the domestic enemies of the PPR and this was unforgivable. Polish pride could not allow a double standard of such magnitude; PPR ideological resoluteness was unshakeable.

At the same time, the PPR leadership continued to keep its bridges to the West well supported. Following the massive Soviet exploitation of the lands 'recovered' by Poland up to at least August 1945, the proportion of Polish trade with the Soviet Union had decreased substantially. Poland's demand for heavy equipment and raw materials

needed in the country's reconstruction could not be met by the Soviet Union which, under the post-war programme announced by Stalin in February, was intensifying its own economic reconstruction. As a result, Western markets were by 1947 providing over 60% of Polish needs.¹⁷

The importance of these Western trade links had been consistently emphasised by Osóbka-Morawski in all of his KRN speeches since the establishment of the Government of National Unity. In late July 1945, his pitch was full of enthusiasm and pride:

Our natural alliances give us a perspective for economic cooperation leading to a rapid reconstruction of the country, increasing Polish wealth and power.... Poland is entering the world arena not only as a newly reborn organism and important political factor, but also as a serious partner in economic cooperation....¹⁸

By December 1945, an element of defensiveness had entered his delivery. Poland, Osóbka-Morawski asserted, stood on the position that there was a need to develop economic cooperation with 'leading countries', above all with the United States. This would enable Poland to take advantage of American experience and resources for the reconstruction of Polish industry, agriculture and communication. But the Premier could no longer afford to ignore the ideological consequences of Poland's 'natural alliances':

Poland reckons that by joining economic cooperation with other countries, with care for its own economic and political independence and sovereignty, it will best contribute to the inculcation of principles of international cooperation serving the issue of peace advocated as well by the United States.¹⁹

'Economic and political independence and sovereignty' were becoming sensitive issues for the PPR. Trade with the West inevitably meant dealing with the capitalist cartels and trusts of communist folk-lore. Men like Berman had no wish for this trade to develop to any great extent, and their influence on policy was becoming greater the more the West was seen to be undermining Poland's territorial and regime

security. Evident in Osóbka-Morawski's delivery was the advantage which the government and pragmatic side of the PPR wished to gain by their Western policy: if the United States, the most powerful capitalist state, cooperated with Poland while at the same time respecting Poland's economic and political sovereignty, then the capitalist/reactionary threat to the gains of socialism in Poland would be lessened. Instead, economic cooperation with America would help strengthen the new Polish socialist economy, and the position of the PPR in the Polish state.

As the year 1946 progressed, this position became increasingly unsustainable. Western governments had no wish to support what they saw as a grand strategy to entrench Soviet control in the centre of Europe. Trying to keep the door to the West, left open by the Soviet Union, as far ajar as possible, the Polish government was not finding this an easy task. Building on pre-war and wartime empathetic Polish relations with the West, the new government frequently found itself up against the continued influence of the earlier Polish representatives in Western capitals. Particularly with Britain, matters were complicated by the continued presence in London of many members of the still constituted, although no longer recognised internationally, Polish government in London.

Parallel to the growing Western hostility being felt by Polish foreign policy makers, the Soviet Union was making it obvious who had Poland's best interests at heart. In May 1946, a top level Polish delegation was again in Moscow for the concluding stages of a series of negotiations. The most important of these was stated to be the settling of Polish debts arising from the maintenance of the Polish army in the Soviet Union during the war. Also at issue were Soviet debts to Poland for costs borne by the PKWN and Provisional Government

during the presence of the Red Army in Poland. In what was clearly a move designed to contrast with the British attitude over costs incurred by the Polish Government in London and Polish armed forces in Britain, for which the Provisional Government of National Unity was deemed responsible by the British Foreign Office, the Soviet and Polish delegations agreed to annul both sets of debts. The rest of the negotiations were concluded on equally favourable terms for the Polish side. Soviet supplies of arms and ammunition were assured for the Polish army until such time as the Polish military industry could supply these itself; an open credit line from the Soviet gold reserve was agreed upon — contrasting with Poland's difficulties in receiving back its own gold reserves held in Britain; and massive supplies of Soviet grain were promised — in contrast with the UNRRA's decision to cut back still further its grain shipments to Poland. Talks were held and successfully concluded on matters of repatriation, on mutual trade and on the return to Poland of the Ossolineum Library, the Panorama Racławicka and other cultural treasures left in Lwów.²⁰

On the return of the delegation to Poland, the PPR leaders and their press made much of the goodwill of the Soviet Union toward Poland. In his interview for the press, Gomułka saw fit to emphasise the economic benefits to be gained from Poland's relationship with the Soviet Union. Economics and politics were inextricably linked in this relationship: economic cooperation between the two neighbours flowed from the interest each took in the welfare and power of the other, threatened as they were by a common danger, Gomułka warned.²¹

8.2 Poland's 'Own Road'

On 2 December 1946, after a period in which frictions between the security interests of the Soviet Union and Western powers in southern and eastern Europe had been steadily building up a head of steam, Gomułka made a speech in which he addressed directly the accusations made by Western statesmen. The accusation which went deepest, doubtless because it was closest to the truth, was that the Soviet Union had delivered the eastern German territories to Poland in order to weaken Germany, strengthen its own position in central Europe, and consign Poland to a fundamental dependence on the Soviet Union for its territorial and regime security. Just the opposite, declared Gomułka. The overwhelming aim of the domestic and foreign policies of the PPR and its 'democratic bloc' was to deliver Poland from its historic dependence on one or other great power, and create instead an independent, sovereign and powerful Polish Republic. This aim could not be compromised. The 'recovered territories' were intrinsic to this aim, and an essential part of Poland's ability to go it alone in Europe. If men like Byrnes and Bevin could question Poland's new western borders when they themselves had taken part in setting these borders, then in international relations the name of the game was still predominantly 'the naked rule of force'; and without the western territories, Poland would be as it was before the war — weak and defenceless, dependent on the help of others:

A state which does not have possibilities to develop based on its own strength, which is condemned to relying on the constant help of others, can never be sovereign. It is a vassal of that state which gives it help even if formally it is independent. Relations between such states are similar to the relations between a lord and his loyal servant. And the development of a vassal state is dependent only on the needs of its protector.

Such a vassal independence in which all the external forms of national freedom might be present, but which about the

development of the nation, the power of the state and its economic life, foreigners actually decide, is not worth much.²²

At the same time, Poland could not afford to take any risks in its new European incarnation. The memories of the war were too fresh and the inbuilt ideological threat to the power of the new communist regime from 'imperialist reaction' could not be met without powerful support:

The Polish nation cannot have two political orientations — east and west. Poland's *racja stanu* should decide about Poland's political orientation. In line with this *racja* the Polish nation can have only one political orientation, one which secures the inviolability of the current borders of the Polish state. Just as we cannot have an orientation on Germany as an ally of Poland, nor can the political thought of the Polish nation orientate itself on those who support the German dreams of revenge for defeat by questioning our western borders.²³

Those who supported these 'dreams' of territorial revanchism, were the same sources who supported the equally dreamlike goal of ideological revanchism in East Europe. The fact that these two threats coincided over the international dispute regarding Poland's western borders made Poland's new position especially certain. Poland, Gomułka continued in a later speech, presented a very important link in the chain of 'democratic states'. Poland, indeed, occupied one of the strategic positions on which the decisive victory in the world 'battle of reaction with democracy' relied:

The Polish positions find themselves in the hands of democracy; they should be, however, strengthened, better fortified, so that the enemy will never be able to have access to them.²⁴

The PPR's endeavours to provide for Western trade and aid based on an appreciation of the West's pragmatism, were beginning to become subject to the greater political imperatives inherent in Poland's post-war *racja stanu*.

For all this, Gomułka did not lose his enthusiasm for continued good relations with the West. Just as the Western states wanted good relations with Poland on their terms, so he wanted relations with the

West on his terms. What was at stake was the presence and influence of Poland as a communist state, secure in its domestic power, yet a legitimate partner in a world where the Soviet Union would be treated by the Western allies with the same regard as they had for each other. The Western states needed to come to terms with the post-war greater Soviet power. So also did they need to consign Germany to economic servitude in retribution for its sins. That the Western powers had no intention of doing any of these things made Gomułka no less committed to continuing his search for the most practical basis on which to build his country's national prestige.

The foreign policy statement made by Józef Cyrankiewicz, the new socialist Premier, to the freshly constituted Sejm in February 1947, was upbeat and positive. Not surprisingly, the peace accords with Germany were of overwhelming importance. For Poland, these accords needed to be in line with the position made clear in the past, a position very close to that of the Soviet Union. The West had already signalled its intentions of opposing this position. In New York on December 2, Bevin and Byrnes had signed an agreement joining the British and American zones of occupation in Germany, creating 'Bizonia'. The ground ahead looked very rocky indeed. But the Polish government was not discouraged. International peace was its objective. Peace meant time for it to consolidate its power and rebuild Poland from the destruction left by the war. Cyrankiewicz's speech was conciliatory. Now was not the time to break with the West. Even if the involvement of Britain and the United States in Poland's domestic affairs during the election campaign had been less than warranted, this was now all in the past.²⁵ This attitude was given the full support of the PPR: 'The need to maintain world peace and the need for economic cooperation dictates our relations with the Western states

and with all peace loving nations', Bieńkowski reminded the PPR dominated Sejm.²⁶

As well as the hope that the Western world understood Europe's desperate need for peace, there was another consideration underlying Gomułka's confidence in the PPR's ability to overcome the ideological divide and coexist with the West on the basis of trade: the party which had from its earliest days based its claim to be nationally representative on its patriotic profile, believed in its own power. Already at the PPR's First Congress, Gomułka had announced that the fact that the Soviet Union had made it easier for 'truly democratic forces' to take over the administration did not mean that the USSR should then continue to dictate its will in Poland. There was no theoretical or practical model which was good for all the new 'people's democracies', Gomułka had insisted. Each needed to be left to settle its own affairs on the road to socialism.²⁷

It was to offset the linkage between domestic and international 'reaction' that the power of the Soviet Union and the other Slavic 'democratic' states was critically needed. And now that the PSL, the main internal threat, had been defeated and the international linkage vitally weakened, Gomułka, Bieńkowski, Kliszko and other 'national' PPR leaders felt confident enough to make more of Poland's own foreign policy path. Within the limits set by political good sense and Western pressure, the PPR headed by Gomułka intended to make its own mark in the international arena, not simply as a 'vassal' of the Soviet Union.

At the turn of 1947, Gomułka made this the centre of his argument in an article published in the first edition of the party's new monthly theoretical journal, *Nowe Drogi* (New Roads). Poland was not about to be 'sovietised' under the leadership of the PPR, Gomułka once more assured his readers. There were three good reasons why not: the

Russian revolution had been a bloody affair — in Poland it had been peaceful; Russia needed to go through the stage of 'dictatorship of the proletariat' — in Poland this had not been necessary; the Russian soviets had combined legislature with executive — Poland was and would continue to be a parliamentary democracy. Why the difference? Because in 1917 'world capital' had been immensely stronger than it was at the end of the Second World War thanks to the strength of the 'democratic forces' within their own countries. Furthermore, the Soviet Union was helping Poland economically. This did not mean Poland would go the way of the Soviet Union economically. It did mean that Poland was being given the chance to go on its 'own road towards socialism' without the pressures to which Russia had been subjected, and which had resulted in the Soviet Union being organised the way it was. Gomułka made plain he intended to lead the PPR and Poland along that 'own road to socialism'.²⁹

This communist optimism fed through into Poland's foreign relations. Negotiations for a Polish-French treaty had continued through 1946 and in the first months of 1947, Modzelewski, now Polish Foreign Minister, was able to present a series of Polish concessions which brought the matter to an imminent conclusion.²⁹ The Polish-French relationship was accepted in Poland as proof of the success possible in maintaining good relations with the Western states. The basis of this success, it was acknowledged, was the interest Poland and France had in common in securing themselves from German aggression. No such common interest existed with Britain or the United States. The Anglo-Saxons, in contrast to the French, were understood not to have been as scarred by the German aggression and not as sensitive to the possibility of it ever happening again.

With Czechoslovakia also, relations underwent a dramatic turn for

the better. After August 1945 little political will had existed on either side for any dramatic move to attempt to overcome the impasse which had developed over the territorial dispute in Silesian Zaolzia. Instead a propaganda war had been sparked off with both sides alleging the misconduct of the other.³⁰ The success of the Czechoslovakian communists in the May 1946 elections brought a swift and wholesale change in the situation, and by March 1947, thanks to the mediatory roles of Stalin and Tito, Poland and Czechoslovakia were approaching many foreign policy positions from a united standpoint. On March 10, Poland and Czechoslovakia signed a Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Assistance, written along the same lines as those already in force between both countries and the Soviet Union and Jugoslavia; Germany was the focus of their mutual defence.³¹

In February, having been briefed by Stalin and Molotov on the intended Soviet position on the German Peace Treaty to be taken during the Moscow Conference of Foreign Ministers scheduled to begin in March, the new Polish Premier and his delegation agreed that the two sides' common interests continued to be reflected in an identity of views. On other issues, Modzelewski characterised the two states' foreign policies as 'similar, but not identical'.³² Polish foreign policy makers did not see themselves as following blindly in the Soviet Union's footsteps. This was a point of Polish pride. Perceptions abroad of Poland's 'satellite' foreign policy were not shared by the communists directing that policy. From the Polish communist point of view, what was deemed 'satellite' was a common interest with the Soviet Union in security; balancing this common interest were other independent prestige interests which the Polish communists wanted the chance to develop.

Gomułka and the 'national' PPR leaders understood that Polish prestige required more than simply paying lip service to the idea of Poland's sovereignty. Independent action had to be taken to show that this sovereignty really existed; while there remained room to move between the 'identity of interests' with the Soviet Union, and the 'general interests' of trade and good relations with the West, then the Polish leaders intended occupying this space. Unfortunately, their best intentions were being swiftly undermined by the environmental changes taking place around them.

Caught in the throes of a domestic economic crisis brought on by catastrophic winter conditions, the British government in February informed the US State Department that from 31 March 1947 it would no longer be in a position to continue its support for the anti-communist governments of Greece and Turkey. The American response went much further than simply taking up these British positions. The ideological divide between the Western powers and the Soviet Union could no longer be patched over with explanations of national security in Europe. A greater national interest was at stake in American perceptions: its own international prestige as the post-war world's strongest non-communist state. Britain's plea for aid in the Balkans symbolised its exit from the ranks of the great powers at the same time as its traditional balancing role in Europe was being decisively eroded by the new-found power of the Soviet Union. More importantly, this Soviet power with its traditional appeal to a world communist movement had the potential for rapid international expansion. In his March 12 speech before Congress, Truman announced that the United States would be taking up the challenge issued it by international communism. The US 'mission': to give help to any country threatened by communism either internally or externally. 33

From the time it became clear that the United States and Britain on the one hand, and the Soviet Union on the other, would be going their own ways over Germany, Polish spokesmen grew increasingly bitter. As had been reiterated time and again, the issue of who Poland would do business with depended on the prospective business partner's attitude to Germany. The same states to whom Poland had looked for the bulk of its Western trade and economic support were now intending to create from Germany the spectre which Polish foreign policy had been working so hard to avoid; Germany would again occupy the dominant position in central Europe:

At Yalta as at Potsdam, the issue of German needs was discussed; at both conferences, however, the idea of Poland as the "inspiration of the world" dominated.

One has the impression that now the Germans are beginning to be afforded this position.³⁴

Modzelewski no longer felt obliged to keep his ideological rhetoric in check for the sake of trade and good relations. The Anglo-Saxons had quickly forgotten all about Hitler's attempts to eliminate the Slavs; they were now openly supporting revisionist/reactionary German elements:

They do this by calling on the interest of Europe, but Europe for them, for some unknown reason, ends somewhere on that side of the Elbe. They are building a peace riddled with dangers, a peace which is to serve all sorts of unsatiated cartels and trusts.³⁵

The Foreign Minister expressed firm support for Molotov's response to Truman: 'Polish opinion solidarizes with Molotov's remarks regarding the destruction of German militarism and basing European security on the future German system'.³⁶

Modzelewski had touched on an issue which had quickly come to dominate the international press after Truman's speech to Congress. Since Churchill's Fulton speech in March 1946, the 'iron curtain' had become a popular catch-phrase among journalists. Now, politicians were also beginning to use it with increasing frequency, talking of an

East-West political divide. In Poland, after Churchill's speech, talk of a Slavic bloc had been dropped; the feeling was that Britain and the West should not be needlessly antagonised into reacting with a traditional balancing policy opposing the new Slavic power in the East. But the series of treaties negotiated among the new communist states, the most recent being the Polish-Czechoslovak treaty, had resurrected the notion within Poland with a vengeance — with an important qualification: for the Polish leadership, the concept of a Slavic bloc was not the same as that of a political 'East Europe'.

In reviewing the newly established Polish-Czechoslovak treaty in the Sejm, Modzelewski had this to say on the subject of alliance partners:

We, in our foreign policy, reject opportunistic methods; we look for allies among those states and nations that are and could be our natural allies, that is, that have the same interests, and if possible, the same methods of international cooperation.³⁷

Modzelewski scotched talk of a political 'East Europe', pointing to Poland's ongoing negotiations with France: 'We will willingly sign any treaty guaranteeing us peace on our western borders'. Slavdom had as its common interest defence against a Germany which had never learnt to live peacefully with its neighbours. The Polish treaty with France would expand this common Slavic interest, limited so far to eastern and southern Europe, to take in western Europe. Very soon these negotiations were to break down as the French also came to identify with American and British policy in Germany. But while they could, Polish communist policy makers intended resisting the Western attempts to push Poland into a classification they did not want for it. The communist Poles, like the pre-war regime, saw Poland as a central European power occupying a crucial geographic position as transmission belt between eastern and western Europe; any consolidation of Europe into two political halves would spell the demise of that ambition.

Seeking to make this point as clear as possible to foreign observers, the socialist chairman of the Sejm Foreign Policy Commission made a speech the next day emphasising the unity of the Slavic nations in the face of the renewed German threat. This unity, Stanisław Dobrowolski pointed out, did not constitute a Slavic bloc, but a system of bilateral treaties, 'links in a system of full common security based on the real teaching of history'.³⁸ The remaining PSL deputies took the same position. Their view was represented by Stanisław Jagusz: 'The third state to whose advantage it is for the power of one or other Slavic state to be diminished, will always be Germany, regardless of its political system and the camouflage which it takes on for tactical reasons'.³⁹

8.3 Ideological Reassessment

By May 1947, the PPR had gone onto the offensive. Gomułka led the attack, signalling a whole new approach to the question of Poland's relations with the West. Gone were the efforts to keep anti-capitalist rhetoric domestic and continuing to do business with the United States and Britain. Now that ideology had taken over the diplomacy of the Anglo-Saxon powers, the ground rules set by wartime cooperation no longer applied. The United States had succumbed to the lobbying of 'world reactionary circles' and was conducting a policy overtly hostile to the interests of the new 'democratic' states.

Poland was not about to turn the other cheek; the state's most sensitive interest was at stake — its national security. The question of the post-war German system had been unilaterally decided on by the Anglo-Saxons, determined to seal off their German zones from the

principled influence of the Soviet Union. This meant that the issue of the Polish-German border was likely never to be afforded the finality of ratification by a Peace Conference. It meant that the questioning of the new Polish territories was likely to continue ad infinitum, or at least until such time as the good relations between the capitalist West and the new 'people's democracies' were restored. By May 1947, Poland's communist leaders had little hope that this might occur in the foreseeable future. America under the Truman Doctrine was continuing to maintain a huge standing army in Europe. Suddenly it seemed that the new Polish-German border would not simply be a line of security for the Slavic states from the possibility of renewed German aggression. Truman's 'doctrine' had heralded a new type of Anti-Comintern Pact; the United States, far more powerful than Hitler's Germany, now directly threatened this border and the entire foundation of Poland's communist power.

Poland had already suffered incredible devastation from the war just past. The majority of the population had no wish to go through another. Talk of a third war spread by the armed underground as a way of destabilising communist authority had been no more than that — talk. Now the possibility of another war seemed more likely than at any time in the past two years. In his May Day speech, Gomułka posed the all important question: what needed to be done to prevent another war? His answer came, for the first time publicly, from Marxist theory:

Wars will disappear from the moment when at least in the majority of countries the means of social production ceases to be privately owned by a handful of capitalists joining together in cartels, trusts and various corporations.⁴⁰

While cartels and trusts continued to dominate, Gomułka continued, they stood to profit enormously from war. In the years 1940-1945, American corporations had made a profit after tax of 52 billion

dollars according to American Department of Trade statistics. Nor did these corporations suffer any damage whatsoever to their domestic plant as a result of the war. And now that this money was continuing to be reinvested in armaments, American capitalists were looking for an excuse to justify their expenditure. They had found it in the Soviet Union:

International war-mongers say that the Soviet Union threatens all nations and for this reason America must arm itself.... Behind this falsehood lurks the unsatiated appetite of American monopolistic capital reaching out for the world's oil resources, for British colonies, for Japanese and German industry, for new markets, for domination over the world.⁴¹

Much worse, the defeat of Hitlerism by the forces of 'world democracy with the Soviet Union at their head', had not destroyed the spirit of fascism:

This fascist spirit yet rises above the world; it peers from behind the back of monopolistic finance capital, from behind banking-houses, banks and cartels, from behind the palaces of the kings of oil, coal and steel. This fascist spirit peers from the columns of the international reactionary press, penetrates into the parliamentary bodies of certain countries, hides in not one ministerial cabinet, accompanies and shows itself in the thoughts expressed by certain diplomats.⁴²

Poland, in contrast, had fully expunged this spirit. The January elections had not completely rid the country of 'reaction', but they had consolidated the power of the communists. The world, announced Gomułka, could count on Poland remaining 'democratic' in the face of the international onslaught.⁴³

Gomułka's vehemence reflected the insecurity now felt by the PPR. It would be enough for Germany to regularly remind the world of the impermanence of the border between the two nations and Poland would never be allowed to take full advantage of its new economic and political potential. Polish policy makers would never have peace of mind so long as Germany retained even a perceptual right to claim what was once its own. That right had to be taken away. Germany had to be

broken. Peace in Europe, the PPR leader had told the Second Industrial Congress of the Recovered Territories in October 1946, depended on 'how the German state will be organised, and in what spirit the German nation will be brought up in'. The 'spirit' the PPR wanted was as follows:

...the democratisation of Germany, the tearing out at the roots and complete destruction of hitlerite ideology, the destruction of the centuries old spirit of war, aggression and conquest in the German nation, the renouncement of all thoughts of revenge for the defeat sustained in the last war, and the liquidation of the base of German war industry.

'Democratisation' would take at least twenty or thirty years, Gomulka had concluded.⁴⁴ The only political force which could carry out this 'democratisation' was the working class, a *Nowe Drogi* article now pointed out.⁴⁵

Polish frustration was alleviated somewhat by the official optimism still evident among the Soviet leadership. In June, Bierut, Cyrankiewicz and other Polish leaders again travelled to Moscow for a briefing on the increasingly difficult situation regarding Germany. The Poles were encouraged by Stalin to maintain their dialogue with the Western states, especially over Germany, and now also regarding American economic aid for the European continent. As Cyrankiewicz put it in his report to the Sejm on June 16, Stalin created an atmosphere of friendship and understanding for the Poles' predicament. Polish-Soviet friendship, Cyrankiewicz continued, was 'filled with the living substance of mutual help and sincere cooperation flowing from the permanent, parallel and vital interests of both countries'. The Premier went on to make a conciliatory speech, in which he called for a normalization of Polish-British and Polish-American relations, and the elimination of ideological strings attached to trade and aid.⁴⁶ The Poles had clearly received the go ahead from Stalin to continue to maintain open lines to the United States and Britain for as long as

possible. The Polish example was to be of a communist state which behaved in international relations as normally as any Western state.

The American aid Stalin and the Polish delegation had been discussing was soon being referred to in Europe and America as the 'Marshall Plan'. On June 5, in a speech given at Harvard University, General George Marshall, Truman's new Secretary of State, had laid out the basis of a programme designed to rebuild Europe from the ravages of war and natural calamity. Poland was desperate for this aid. European reconstruction was essential; but it could not involve only one section of the continent, and not that in the greatest need. Kliszko presented the PPR's position several days after Cyrankiewicz's bridge-mending speech in the Sejm:

We see that the issue of cooperation in the economic reconstruction of Europe is currently becoming one of the main and most discussed matters. We consider that Poland, as one of the countries most destroyed by war, must study with deep interest the projects being discussed in this area.

We do not yet have the details of these projects, but it seems to us that their realisation would play a positive role in the reconstruction of Europe on the condition that they do not become an instrument for the splitting of Europe into two camps, and that they will encompass the whole of Europe including of course the most badly destroyed parts.

We consider that the delineation of needs in this area should be a matter for the European countries themselves, which would contribute to harmonious cooperation in the task of ensuring universal welfare and would allow various doubts and suspicions to be avoided.⁴⁷

The communist doubts and suspicions were not unfounded. Poland's diplomats were hoping that whatever was being discussed in Washington, London and Paris, would not be based on the same premises as previous Western decisions on Germany. If the aid to be injected into Europe was to be of the magnitude press reports were having it, then this was a very serious matter indeed. It was either a sincere effort on the part of America to rebuild Europe in its entirety, or it was intended as a tool against the interests of the Soviet Union and the newly created 'people's democracies'. These were the only two possibilities

for Poland's policy makers. Poland was in a good position to make use of the aid. It could turn the American capital to advantage in carving out for itself a larger communist role in east-central Europe.

Events were to move very quickly. Poland and the countries east of the 'iron curtain' were not given access to the detail of the Marshall Plan until it was already on the discussion table in Paris. Poland and Czechoslovakia accepted their invitations to attend the conference to discuss the plan, beginning on July 12, only to withdraw from the discussions almost immediately on the instructions of the Soviet Union. The official reasons for the change of mind were given by Gomulka in a *Głos Ludu* article published ten days later on the official anniversary of the PKWN Manifesto:

Up till now, in the course of our international economic relations, we have shown that we wish cooperation and that we are cooperating in this field with all states, not only the Soviet Union and people's democratic countries. Poland, however, is determined to categorically work against all attempts designed to organize an anti-Soviet bloc, just as it will never agree to any limitation or sale of its state sovereignty.

The attempt to isolate the Soviet Union by certain reactionary elements in the West, based on the exploitation of the economic difficulties of the European countries destroyed by the Germans, has not succeeded.

The Polish government rejected the invitation to attend the Paris Conference also because its initiators did not even hide their intentions, that what they intended above all else was the rebuilding of Germany and returning Germany its lost position in Europe. The Polish government will never accept these intentions, as they point along the path of a reborn German imperialism and are potentially aimed at Poland's most vital interests.⁴⁸

The small print of the Marshall Plan proposals was nothing if not provocative. From the Polish communist point of view it broke the fundamental axiom of respecting Poland's economic sovereignty. It established a series of conditions attached to the proposed American credits which were more political than even economic, such as the right of United States military bases to be established in Europe. Other conditions such as the status of American corporations in trade with the Europeans were deemed to be an effort to give American

economic factors a deciding voice in the trade of the participating countries. The United States was, in other words, seen to be moving to strengthen the capitalist system in Western Europe, entrenching its own links with this system, with itself as the deciding voice. The Marshall Plan was seen to complement the Truman Doctrine by working to prevent the emergence of communist or socialist power in these countries.

Indeed, the American strategy was nothing as subtle as even this. From the Polish communist point of view it could not have been more cynical. Nothing had changed in the American position over the intended future of Germany. Washington policy makers were very well aware of the Polish and Soviet positions on this issue. The Americans, in other words, had played the biggest joker imaginable — Germany. They had deliberately excluded the Soviet Union from the Paris Conference before it could get even started. The Soviet Union and its 'democratic' allies were not welcome. That was plain.

The Marshall Plan was a direct threat to Polish security. It sought to rebuild Germany as a barrier against further Soviet encroachment westward. For the Polish communist leadership, it sought to create the foundations for a renewed German encroachment eastward. This was no fantasy, something unimaginable. It had happened barely eight years before and the country had been left irrevocably scarred. Poland needed to come up with an answer to the American effort to rebuild Germany:

To the plans to rebuild Germany before other states — the victims of German aggression — are able to heal their war wounds, the Polish nation must reply with a greater than hereto work effort. We must not allow the Germans to get in front. We are not allowed to remain behind in the race of reconstruction. Our strength and the security of our borders, the consolidation of the nations yearning for peace must be built faster than the German aggression.⁴⁹

The scope of the Marshall Plan left the Polish leaders undeterred.

Since no more aid was to be expected from the United States, Gomulka now presented the concept of the 'Polish road' of rebuilding the economy, as opposed to the 'dollar road'. The 'dollar road', said Gomulka, meant a loss of faith in Poland's own powers, resignation from the 'patriotic soul of the Polish nation'. It would condemn Poland to the 'good graces and bad graces' of external aid. Worse, the 'dollar road' would have meant the loss of various essential attributes of independence, such as economic sovereignty. For its part, the 'Polish road' was to be based on the new three year plan for 1947-1949.⁵⁰

A basic element of the 'Polish road' and three year plan was export led growth. Coal was to continue to be the major foreign currency earner, but the production of other exportable goods, particularly mineral ores, was to be increased. Imports of consumption items would be cut, and export earned hard currency would be directed toward investment items sorely needed for Polish heavy industry. Poland needed to keep its export markets open. It succeeded in doing this up to the end of 1948 and beyond.

In August, at the opening of the International Trade Fair in Gdańsk, Gomulka once more made an appeal for Europe to unite in trade: 'The Polish government would like all states, especially European, on the basis of mutual respect for each others' sovereignty, to be tied in a thick net of trade relations'. Gomulka's conception for European reconstruction, in contrast to the Marshall Plan, was more modest. It was designed to play up Poland's strengths, consolidating the progress already made and keeping the door wide open to economic exchange across ideological borders: 'The widest possible economic cooperation and exchange of trade between all the states involved is necessary for the rebuilding of Europe on healthy, peaceful foundations'. Poland,

said Gomułka, was proud that it was among the first to establish trade links with several states, notably Sweden, when the country was still in a desperate state of destruction. And now the Polish government 'will not be changing its policy of maintaining and widening trading links with all states to the extent of its maximum production capabilities'.⁵¹

But the Polish efforts to maintain the country's bridges to the West regardless of the ideological obstacles being put in the way were running now increasingly into ideological obstacles from the Soviet side. Moves were being made in Moscow to bring the new 'people's democratic' states into closer line behind Soviet policy, to close ranks before the American economic and diplomatic offensive. Between September 27 and 29, nine communist parties were called together by the VKP(b) to discuss proposals to form a new central communist organisation, the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties (Cominform). The conference took place in Poland, at the small Silesian resort town of Szklarska Poręba. As well as the Soviet delegation, communist parties from Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Poland and Rumania were represented. The French and Italian communist parties were also invited. The communiqué released at the conclusion of the conference spoke of the consolidation of two political tendencies in international relations: one the policies of the Soviet Union and 'democratic' countries working to weaken 'imperialism' and strengthen 'democracy'; the other the policies of the United States and Britain working to strengthen 'imperialism' and crush 'democracy'. This could not be tolerated, the parties agreed.

Gomułka led the Polish delegation and played host at Szklarska Poręba. His report back to the Central Committee was presented at the Committee's October Plenum. A close look at Gomułka's report shows an

interesting mix of Polish national prestige, disenchantment with the West, and fallback into ideological resoluteness based on wholehearted support for the foreign policy efforts of the Soviet Union.

Gomułka began by quoting extensively from the United Nations Charter recently instituted and signed by all the parties involved in the ideological divide. Poland, like the other countries of the 'democratic bloc', had always strived to maintain good relations with all sides, with the United States, Britain and any other capitalist state, as well as with the Soviet Union. The policy of the PPR was based on the principle that systemic differences between states should not present barriers to their mutual cooperation, Gomułka insisted. This being as well an axiom of the UN Charter, however, it was clear that the governments of certain capitalist states were treating the Charter as a screen behind which they were conducting policies diametrically opposed to UN principles.⁵²

The Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine were two sides of the same coin, Gomułka continued, an attempt to conquer the world by American capital. In its European variant, the Truman Doctrine directly attacked 'democratic forces', and in the first instance 'Marxist working class parties', such as the communist parties in France and Italy, forced out of their respective coalition governments in May 1947 under pressure from the US. 'This strategy of the American imperialists is calculated to create for themselves forward bases against the Soviet Union and people's democratic countries'. Gomułka goes on to compare the moves of the United States with those of Hitler before and after the Munich agreement in 1938. What was lacking then, he commented, was international resolve to halt the aggression before it grew stronger. The representatives of the nine communist parties had this resolve. But it was not to the American nation that they were

saying 'no'. Rather, it was to specific 'imperialist circles' of American politicians. And it was not under Soviet pressure that they had taken this stand. It was because they were all supporters of peace between nations; and the greatest center of world peace was Moscow.⁵³

For Poland, 'the most precious treasure' was peace. But above peace, Poles placed their freedom, independence and sovereignty. And it was these latter principles which were being threatened by the positions of the Anglo-Saxon states. The Anglo-Saxons were following a policy at odds with the Potsdam agreement; they were hiding within their German policies the intention to use German feelings of revenge against Poland. The PPR 'all the more solidly, together with the entire nation, joins in the policies of the Soviet Union... as the Soviet Union has categorically disagreed with the Anglo-Saxon attempts to undermine the Polish border established at Potsdam'.⁵⁴

The new communist organisation with its headquarters in Belgrade was not another Comintern; that it could never be, Gomułka stressed. There was no formal charter of the type established for the Comintern, and rather than sixty parties, Cominform was made up of only nine. Gomułka insisted on Poland's and the PPR's political sovereignty. But the Polish working class also needed its international allies. If Poland had not been able to agree to a treaty of alliance with France, then it had now an alliance with the French working class represented by the French Communist Party. In conclusion, Gomułka made the point that the international division between 'imperialism' and 'democracy' was also an internal division. Increased domestic vigilance was required now that 'international imperialism' had heightened its profile. The party needed to increase its pressure against the 'Western or Anglo-Saxon political orientation' within the country. The internal enemy could not be allowed to undermine the strength of the

Polish nation and encourage the external enemy to aggression.⁵⁵

Gomułka's speech illustrated several significant developments in the PPR leader's perceptions. The link between domestic and international 'reaction' had once again grown stronger. Gone, therefore, was the political basis on which 'democratic' Poland could have tried for a more independent role in central Europe. Polish prestige had been forced onto the back-foot by the aggressive capitalist onslaught which had once again brought the issue of Polish state and territorial security to the fore. Furthermore, this aggression had widened the scope of the state/territorial security linkage: the Slavic bloc, essentially a defensive concept ranged against the threat of future German aggression eastward, had given way to a new, also defensive, but larger grouping — the 'democratic bloc'. Defence against Germany was secondary to the goals of the 'democratic bloc'. Far more important was a defence against the threat aimed at the heart of the new status quo in Europe — the power of the 'people's democracies' and at the Soviet stake in their continuation.

Communist Poland's national prestige was damaged, but not irreversibly. In the new conflictual international environment, Poland would not be able to take the important place it had sought for itself in Europe and the world at large. Polish foreign policy would be working on a slightly different tack, Cyrankiewicz announced:

We want peace, based on the definite breaking of German aggression, to be stabilized on the new balance of power which opened the way to our independence and which is its guarantee for the future. We want the consolidation of new forms of international cooperation, forms which have risen from the post-war system of [international] relations, based on the essential need for various political and economic systems to coexist.⁵⁶

Three years before, the PKWN diplomats had worked mightily hard to achieve a semblance of international recognition for the new communist regime and the 'democratic' state's new borders. Now, Cyrankiewicz was

announcing a re-run of that campaign, only in 1947 it was to be on a much broadened scale. In 1944 the argument had been that the PKWN was the best thing going for Poland in the circumstances of the Soviet advance and the need for a guarantee against future German revanchism. In 1947, Polish diplomacy had spread its wings and was arguing that 'the new balance of power', previously a concept rejected as reactionary, was the best thing going for the sake of peace and territorial stability in Europe. This was to remain the refrain of Poland's foreign policy in the following years. Poland's prestige as part of the 'democratic bloc', its territorial security, and above all, the security of its regime, became firmly fixed to the mast of peace and stability in Europe.

For Gomułka and his supporters in the PPR, what was most at issue was whether the competition between the ideological systems would be peaceful or conflictual. Gomułka had no doubt that in peaceful competition the socialist system represented by the 'Polish road' had every chance of proving victorious over capitalism.⁵⁷ Others in the PPR had no such illusions. Their facts were that it was not in the nature of capitalism to peacefully coexist with communism. Peaceful economic competition could only condemn Poland to playing by the rules of the West and to being always on the defensive. Communist Poland's prestige demanded something better. Poland had to take its rightful place as moral and regional leader of the new 'people's democracies'. But to do this, the party first had to complete its domestic programme. Communist power was still not yet complete. The 'internal enemy' could not be allowed to 'encourage the external enemy to aggression'.

Notes

1. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzenia KRN w dniu 31 XII 1944 i 2-3 I 1945*, sesja VI, Warszawa, 1946, p.28.
2. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne*, sesja VI, pp.24-30.
3. Władysław Gomułka, 'Zgodnym wysiłkiem narodu, stworzymy Polskę wielką, silną i niepodległą', *Głos Ludu*, 3 July 1945, p.1.
4. Władysław Gomułka, 'Zwyczajstwo Polski w Poczdamie', *Głos Ludu*, 5 August 1945, p.1.
5. 'Zwyczajstwo Polski'.
6. *Głos Ludu*, 21 December 1945, p.3.
7. *Głos Ludu*, 21 December 1945, p.3.
8. See 'Zwyczajstwo Polski'.
9. Jakub Berman, 'My niesimy pokój, reakcja — wojnę', *Głos Ludu*, 10 December 1945, p.6. For the full transcript of Berman's speech, see 'Dyskusja na I Zjeździe Polskiej Partii Robotniczej nad sprawozdaniem politycznym Komitetu Centralnego (7-8 grudnia 1945 r)', *Archiwum Ruchu Robotniczego*, volume 10, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1986, pp.229-33.
10. See 'Rezolucja I Zjazdu PPR w sprawach politycznych, 13 XII 1945', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, pp.320-1.
11. 'I Zjazd PPR. Ze sprawozdanie politycznego KC PPR wygłoszonego 7 grudnia 1945 r', Władysław Gomułka, *O Naszej Partii*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1968, p.150.
12. Władysław Gomułka, 'O jednolity front klasy robotniczej', *Głos Ludu*, 2 March 1946, p.1.
13. Unable to agree to a treaty with France on terms similar to those already concluded with the Soviet Union and Jugoslavia, the Polish position changed in late 1945 to one of recognising that the old pre-war alliance was still valid but needed to be amended in line with the new international situation. See Włodzimierz Borodziej, 'Rozmowy polsko-francuskie 1945-1947: Zapomniany epizod z historii dyplomacji', *Kwartalnik Historyczny*, 93 (1), 1986, pp.82-7.
14. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z posiedzeń KRN w dniach 26-28 IX 1946*, sesja X, Warszawa, 1946, p.34.
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16. 'Uchwała Plenum KC PPR w sprawie referendum, 2 VI 1946', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, p.336.
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20. Włodzimierz Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP 1944-1947*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1971, p.220.
21. 'Polska odbuduje się szybciej dzięki pomocy otrzymanej od ZSRR. Wywiad dla przedstawiciela RAP udzielony w Warszawie 27 maja 1946 r', Władysław Gomułka, *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1946-kwiecień 1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1964, p.122.
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30. See Roman Werfel, 'Zaprzestać prześladowań Polaków na Zaolziu', *Głos Ludu*, 4 August 1945, p. 3.
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34. 'Oświadczenie w sprawie granicy polsko-niemieckiej złożone prasie (Warszawa, 10 kwietnia 1947)', Zygmunt Modzelewski, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski. Artykuły i przemówienia*, Warszawa, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1960, p. 44.
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37. *Sprawozdanie... w dniu 16 kwietnia 1947 r.*, p. 22.
38. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 11 posiedzenia Sejmu Ustawodawczego w dniu 17 kwietnia 1947 r. Sesja zwyczajna r. 1947*, Warszawa, 1947, p. 18.
39. *Sprawozdanie... w dniu 17 kwietnia 1947 r.*, p. 29.
40. 'Dalszy marsz naprzód. Przemówienie wygłoszone na akademii pierwszomajowej w Warszawie 30 kwietnia 1947 r', *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1946-kwiecień 1948*, p. 407.
41. 'Dalszy marsz naprzód', p. 409.
42. 'Dalszy marsz naprzód', p. 409.
43. 'Dalszy marsz naprzód', p. 410.
44. Cited in Kowalski, *Polityka zagraniczna RP*, pp. 320-1.
45. Adam Paszt, 'Wielkie mocarstwa a Niemcy', *Nowe Drogi*, 2, March 1947, p. 185.
46. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 16 posiedzenia Sejmu Ustawodawczego w dniu 19 czerwca 1947 r. Sesja zwyczajna r. 1947*, Warszawa, 1947, pp. 19-34.
47. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 17 posiedzenia Sejmu Ustawodawczego w dniu 20 czerwca 1947 r. Sesja zwyczajna r. 1947*, Warszawa, 1947, p. 23.
48. 'W trzecią rocznicę. Artykuł opublikowany w "Głosie Ludu" 22 lipca 1947 r', *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1946-kwiecień 1948*, pp. 448-9.
49. 'Przemówienie na III Zjeździe Przemysłowym Ziemi Odzyskanych w Szczecinie 7 września 1947 r', *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1946-kwiecień 1948*, p. 463.

50. The statute establishing this plan had been ratified by the KRN on 21 September 1946; its parameters had earlier been ratified at the PPR First Congress in December 1945. This period also saw various trade agreements signed with the USSR continuing the supply of credit and encouraging centrally planned industrialisation in Poland. See Euzebiusz Basiński, 'Początki współpracy gospodarczej Polski Ludowej z krajami socjalistycznymi Europy', *Z Dziejów Stosunków Polsko-Radzieckich. Studia i materiały*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1972, pp. 157-9.

51. 'Przemówienie na otwarciu międzynarodowych targów Gdańskich 2 sierpnia 1947 r', *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1946-kwiecień 1948*, pp. 452-8.

52. 'Referat Sekretarza Generalnego PPR na Plenum KC partii w związku z powstaniem Biura Informacyjnego, 11 października 1947', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe*, p. 403.

53. 'Referat Sekretarza Generalnego PPR', pp. 404-5.

54. 'Referat Sekretarza Generalnego PPR', p. 411.

55. 'Referat Sekretarza Generalnego PPR', pp. 412-20. See also Bogdan Brzeziński, 'Gomułka a Kominform', *Życie Literackie*, 7 March 1982, pp. 1, 6 for an assessment of Gomułka's participation in the September meeting of the Cominform.

56. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 28 posiedzenia Sejmu Ustawodawczego w dniu 29 października 1947 r. Sesja zwyczajna r. 1947*, Warszawa, 1947, pp. 11-3.

57. See 'Prowadzimy bezkompromisową walkę w obronie pokoju. Przemówienie na manifestacji we Wrocławiu 25 listopada 1947 r', *Artykuły i przemówienia. Styczeń 1946-kwiecień 1948*, p. 488.

9. STATE AND INTERNATIONALISM

Poland's security and prestige interests as reflected in the PKWN Manifesto had been at first presented by Poland's communist foreign policy managers in a manner relatively free of ideological content. These were to be broad policy goals natural to any Polish government in the circumstances that followed the war. From the creation of the common foreign policy in the summer of 1945, this situation began to change under the pressure of the PPR's domestic consolidation and continued following the elections of January 1947 notwithstanding the best efforts of Gomułka to maintain the PPR's pragmatic national interest profile internationally.

The engine behind the foreign policy ideologisation in 1947 and 1948, just as it had been in 1945/1946, was both domestic and external. This duality was best exemplified by the changes that took place in the foreign policy interpretation process of the Polish socialists, allies of the PPR. Ceded the role of policy counter-point by the administrative repression and defeat of the PSL, and in an atmosphere of increasing international ideological division, PPS leaders began heightening the ideological profile of their party's foreign policy in what was deemed to be an entirely justified response to the ideological onslaught of the United States, while at the same time continuing the search for a 'Polish road to socialism'.

PPS foreign policy proposed an international grouping of left socialist parties fully committed to integral cooperation with the communists, based on the critical premiss that such cooperation would encourage the continuation of a multi-party 'national front' system in Poland as well as in the other 'people's democracies'. Like the social-democratic parties of Western Europe, however, proposing a

'third force' grouping to offset the threat of a two-bloc formation in Europe, the PPS was seen by Soviet leaders and the 'internationalists' in the PPR to be perpetuating the traditional social-democratic role of splitting the international working class. The result was a Soviet retreat from the policies of the 'national front' and a return to an ideological consolidation on the pattern of the 1929 'class against class' policy. The 'internationalist' wing in the PPR now dramatically increased its pressure on both the PPS and its own 'national' wing.

The greatest impact of this newest ideological consolidation was felt in the area of Poland's foreign policy prestige; unlike the Yugoslavian example, in Poland, state and territorial security were already firmly 'internationalised'. For the 'internationalist' wing of the PPR, already defining Polish prestige in terms of the 'democratic' state's place as an ideological Soviet ally, the consolidation required little re-adjustment. But for Gomułka, Poland's national prestige was vested in its national independence and sovereignty. In creating a new united workers' party from both the PPR and the PPS, therefore, the PPR leader saw an opportunity to internalise the tradition of socialism with independence represented by the PPS as an axiom of the new enlarged communist party's foreign policy. This was the substance of Gomułka's 'nationalist deviation'. In overcoming the 'deviation', the PPR 'internationalists' established a monopoly on the ideological interpretation of Polish national prestige and succeeded in entrenching this interpretation in the new united party's political creed.

9.1 Socialist Foreign Policy

In their post-war role of principal PPR allies within the 'bloc of democratic parties', the PPS saw themselves as a domestic political force not only strengthening the position of the new authorities domestically, but also internationally. The RPPS had transformed itself into the 're-born' PPS in September 1944 at a Lublin conference with the participation of Drobner and other socialists recently arrived from the USSR. Its primary domestic goal was support for the PPR in a political united front. The united front, like that of 1922/1923, was intended to provide the broad church 'national front' political bloc with a working class grouping incorporating both the traditions of national independence and workers' internationalism. It also provided a counter to the national stigma of revolutionary communism in the PPS's initial commitment to evolutionary socialism.

Internationally, the PPS sought to underscore the viability of the 'national front' policy in a Polish context. The choice of Osóbka-Morawski as Premier and Foreign Minister during the PKWN and Provisional Government period said much for the authorities' intentions in representing themselves abroad. Osóbka-Morawski was not a communist ideologue. He represented a line of moderation and commitment to the multi-party system he embodied. Unlike the PSL who were never given a leading role in foreign policy making, the PPS continued to be well represented even after Osóbka-Morawski's replacement as Foreign Minister by Rzymowski.'

Characteristically for the PPS, traditional policy concerns soon manifested themselves within the 'reborn' party. Several groups advocating the party's traditional national interest position became

apparent. Drobner lead one such group, supporting a united front with the PPR but calling for full political independence for the PPS within the front. Zygmunt Żuławski, also of the pre-war PPS, led another group which regarded PPS cooperation with the PPR as purely tactical, to be balanced with similar good relations with the PSL. At the other end of the spectrum, an 'internationalist' group made its appearance from a very early stage. Unlike the fairly even balance between the 'internationalist' and 'national' wings within the PPR leadership, the influx of traditional socialist support into the 're-born' PPS during 1945 reduced the PPS 'internationalists' to a relatively small and isolated rump.²

The positions of the 'internationalist' group are important for our purposes as they show the extent to which PPS foreign policy changed in the period after January 1947. Stefan Matuszewski, during the existence of the PKWN the RPPS General Secretary, was the principal representative of the PPS 'internationalists'. From 31 December 1944 to September 1946, Matuszewski served also as Minister of Information and Propaganda. Matuszewski's group supported the wholesale immediate incorporation of the 're-born' PPS into the PPR as a way of preventing the socialists moving to the right and eventually rejecting cooperation with the communists altogether. Following the creation of the Provisional Government of National Unity, however, Matuszewski's group decreased in influence as the PPR gave its support to the broader PPS leadership in the interests of establishing a more credible multi-party legitimacy, and the basis from which to politically defeat the PSL. Matuszewski was ejected from the PPS Executive Council in August 1946 only to return in April 1948 once the tide had turned in his favour.³

Matuszewski's foreign policy positions were indicative of the

manner of policy interpretation the main-stream PPS leadership was anxious to avoid in the interests of maintaining their policy distinctions vis-a-vis the PPR. In November 1944, in the first issue of the post-war edition of the PPS daily, *Robotnik* (The Worker), Matuszewski set out the following position:

In order to be secured for the future against German aggression, Poland cannot stand alone — she must move together with other democratic nations, among which the most realistic and the most powerful ally is the Soviet Union.⁴

No mention was made of any Western allies in Matuszewski's message. As Minister of Propaganda, Matuszewski openly modelled his foreign policy pitch on that of the 'internationalist' PPR. It was under his guidance that the propaganda ministry undertook its campaigns first for the transformation of the PKWN into the Provisional Government, and later for the signing of the Polish-Soviet treaty. In May 1945, with the war with Germany barely over, he told a conference of PPS regional secretaries that Germany had sent its agents into certain states in order to be in a better position to 'win the peace'.⁵ Three weeks later, during the Moscow negotiations leading to the creation of the Provisional Government of National Unity, Matuszewski announced that the 'peace could be won' by Poland if it successfully defeated the forces of 'reaction and fascism' within its own borders.⁶ Unhappy with the relative docility of the PPS's own party organs, the Matuszewski group moved to establish a more radical socialist newspaper. The first issue of the monthly *Lewy Tor* (The Left Track) in September 1945 dealt with Poland's new democracy. Its model — 'The most democratic state in the world... the Soviet Union'.⁷

In contrast to Matuszewski's domestic and Soviet focus, Osóbka-Morawski, in his Chairman's ideological report to the XXVI PPS Congress (its Second Congress as the 'reborn PPS') on 29 June 1945, identified four other determinants of peace in Europe, all of which

looked beyond Poland, Germany and the USSR. Peace was to be built on the 'lasting alliance of the three great powers', the United Nations organisation for common security, the bloc of Slavic nations in Europe, and last but not least, the 'consolidation of democratic governments and systems in the majority of states'.²⁹

It was in this last building block that the PPS leadership saw the greatest potential for its own contribution to Poland's 'democratic' foreign policy. 'Democratic governments and systems' meant those where the left had either come to power or were sharing power in a 'national front' situation. At the time of the XXVI Congress, the full momentum of the European swing to the left had yet to be felt. But the PPS, in a manner reminiscent of the European hopes of the 'three W' 'national' wing of the KPRP in 1922, felt that its own domestic independence now depended greatly on what seemed to be becoming a European prerequisite for communist parties to maintain their power — cooperation with the socialist left. In his report to the Congress, Osóbka-Morawski went on to warn against taking the 'beautiful and noble international efforts toward socialist cooperation' too far and losing touch with reality.³⁰ Unavoidably, however, as the party grew larger³¹ so too did its confidence and its efforts to carve out its own independent contribution to Polish foreign policy increased.

By the winter of 1945, the swing toward the left in Europe had taken a central position in the PPS policy platform. Its best expression came with the launching in November 1945 of the party's official monthly, *Przegląd Socjalistyczny* (Socialist Review), under the editorial control of Julian Hochfeld, a pre-war PPS intellectual. In an attempt to clarify the party's policy position, Hochfeld wrote that the 're-born' PPS:

...strongly tied the party's best traditions of half a century with the re-born position of the united front. Patriotism and internationalism, attachment to PPS tradition and a clear line of cooperating with the communist section of the workers' movement, socialist revolutionism and state realism, creating a connecting link between the gains of socialist construction in the USSR and the socialist offensive in Western Europe — this is our programme.¹¹

But the first concrete efforts made by the PPS leadership were not directed at socialist Western Europe. It was in the crisis with Czechoslovakia that the PPS Central Executive Committee sought its first independent foreign policy success through its contacts with the Czechoslovakian Social-Democratic Party. The Committee went so far as to directly criticise the PPR for its handling of the crisis in relations between the two Slavic neighbours.¹² In August 1946, the party's supreme policy making body, the Executive Council, brought the Czechoslovakian focus into line with its wider policy:

The PPS can play an important role in contributing to the realisation of the goals of Polish foreign policy by relying on its influence and relations amongst other friendly socialist parties, above all in the Slavic countries, presenting the situation in Poland in the required light, and striving to ensure that they understand the specific conditions and difficulties amongst which the new Polish reality is being built.¹³

In their encounters with Western European socialist parties, PPS representatives presented much the same case: Polish socialism needed to be seen in the context of Polish post-war realities; in such a situation, any real socialist party would proceed in much the same fashion as had the PPS in its cooperation with the PPR. The PPS was being essentially realistic and mindful of Poland's national interests. The most important issue on a European-wide scale, was for all socialist parties to come to terms with the post-war power of the USSR and to work closely with this power in the interests of socialism.

From the conclusion of the war, various voices had been heard in

the Western European socialist parties urging a post-war settlement in Europe that would prevent the continent splitting into two opposing political and ideological blocs. The power of the Soviet Union as much as that of the United States needed to be countered. This was the so-called 'third force' position. It contrasted directly with the PPS appreciation of the realities in which Poland found itself.¹⁴

The immediate threat for the Polish socialists was not the as yet rather loose conceptions of 'third force'. More important was the fact that the German Social-Democratic Party had become what they considered the embodiment of German nationalism. It could not, therefore, be admitted to a re-created Socialist International, the issue around which relations among the various European socialist parties revolved. The wounds inflicted on Poland by Germany could not be healed while the German social-democrats encouraged the German people to forget their crimes and re-establish themselves as a force in Europe. These were the realities and priorities that informed the policies of the Polish socialists.¹⁵

In PPS eyes, its complementary political role in Poland had been underwritten by Stalin himself. In August 1946, Stalin had told Morgan Philips, General Secretary of the British Labour Party, that 'the Soviet road' to socialism was certainly not the exclusive road. The 'British road', while longer and less difficult, was just as valid.¹⁶ Speaking to the PPS Executive Council in August, Cyrankiewicz, now General Secretary after Matuszewski's demise, talked of the central European 'new road' to socialism, a road which differed from the Soviet road as it differed from the Western road to socialism. For Cyrankiewicz and the PPS the 'new road' meant above all an equal political alliance between the PPR and PPS, and unlike the 'national communist' road of the PPR, an ideological 'synthesis' of 'communist

revolutionism' with what the PPS called 'socialist democracy'.¹⁷

The principal foreign policy implications of such an alliance, founded on a firm commitment to the socialist transformation of Poland, were firstly that the enemies of the 'democratic' Polish state could no longer take advantage of the political differences between the parties of the majority working class. Poland would at long last cease to be a political football for the great powers that surrounded it. Secondly, an equal alliance meant that the popular foundation of the security alliance with the Soviet Union, the foundation of Poland's 'new track' foreign policy, would not be limited to the PPR constituency within the Polish population; the new relationship with the USSR could depend also on the wholesale support of the broader membership of the PPS, thereby eliminating the rationale on which PSL support for the common foreign policy had been built.¹⁸

By the beginning of 1947, following the election defeat of the PSL, the PPS was having to come to terms with a rapid increase in its membership. The positions of the groups on the right of the mainstream were strengthened. Many of the leaders of the 're-born' mainstream such as Osóbka-Morawski, Hochfeld and Stanisław Szwalbe, now also came to appreciate the possibility of a greater role for the PPS both domestically and internationally. Others such as Cyrankiewicz, understood their only option to be eventual organisational integration with the PPR. Any other course would allow the powerful anti-communist forces within the country to inevitably turn the PPS into a party opposing the power and policies of the PPR. In the geo-strategic situation in which Poland found itself, this option could only result in a physical defeat for the PPS on a scale similar to the defeat recently experienced by the PSL. The essential realism of the Cyrankiewicz alternative was given added force by the rapidly growing

ideological divide within the positions of the European socialist parties.

In the spring of 1947, the PPS came under considerable pressure from both domestic and international sources. Within the country, the PPR proposed a resolution that committed the PPS to unification with the communists at some unspecified stage in the future. The PPS was confronted with its central dilemma: cooperation or competition with the PPR. A choice had to be made. The PPR proposal was eventually agreed to but it was seen by the independence-minded elements among the leadership and the party's rank and file as an intention for the relatively distant future, with no immediate bearing on the tasks ahead.¹⁹

At the same time, the PPR began what was known as 'the battle for trade'. This pitched the favoured PPS 'three sector' economic policy with a prominent role for the cooperative sector, against the PPR's conception of the dominant socialist or state sector. The cooperative sector was presented by Minc as being only a transitional phase which in certain conditions, such as then were seen to be the case, could contribute to the activation of capitalist trends. Nationalisation was judged by the PPR to be the only method by which to proceed toward a socialist economy.²⁰

Outside Poland, the European socialist community was beginning to divide sharply over the international intentions of the United States and the Soviet Union. In April, the large pragmatic wing of the French socialist party, led by Leon Blum, stated its support for American policies in Greece and Turkey and encouraged other Western socialist parties to support American economic aid as an important element in contributing to peace and development in Europe.²¹ In June, the Polish socialists were confronted with a meeting of the International

Conference of Socialist Parties at Zurich which for the first time clearly demarcated the dividing line between the cooperationist left and the anti-communist right. Most disagreement at Zurich was over the various conceptions for a re-created Socialist International, with the French proposing the formal re-constitution of the Second (Socialist) International, the Labour Party preferring a looser organisation, and the Dutch and Scandinavian parties wanting to see a firmly anti-communist organisation. But the dominant issue once again for the PPS representatives, was the growing Western European support for the admission of the anti-communist and anti-Soviet German Social-Democratic Party to the forum.²²

Following the conclusion of the Zurich conference, at its Executive Council meeting on June 30 the PPS leadership took the dramatic step of declaring its allegiance to a Marxist interpretation of history. 'The PPS road', it declared, 'runs only on the left. The enemy is only on the right'. The meeting extended the party's principal duty of consolidating the united front at home, to its foreign policy. Henceforth, the PPS's international role would revolve around working toward a more integrated left socialist position based on close cooperation with communist parties and open warfare with the 'opportunist' and 'reformist' socialist right. The Executive Council stated its purpose as being to work for the creation of a United Workers' International, a unified communist and left socialist International.²³

At the same time, Osóbka-Morawski, Hochfeld and Szwalbe continued to identify the mechanical integration of the PPS into the PPR as a move to be avoided. Continued cooperation in a united front was far more preferable, since it gave the Polish socialists the opportunity to contribute their independent strength to the development of

integrationist socialism in Poland and in Europe.

Following the Cominform inaugural meeting at Szklarska Poręba in September, the PPS Central Executive Committee announced that there was no longer a foreign policy which did not consign a state to either one side or the other of the class struggle barricade. Zhdanov's analysis of prevailing international relations was judged correct in its basic precepts. The world had polarised irrevocably; the PPS needed to increase its efforts to support a reconstructed international socialism on the basis of revolutionary Marxism and left socialism. The Central Executive Committee charged its members with heightening the profile of their arguments for the acceptance of 'genuine socialist political tenets' within the international socialist movement; with increasing their efforts toward bringing about agreement between socialist parties and 'sincere revolutionary and left groups'; with increasing their efforts toward the creation of an international united front of socialists and communists. At the same time, the Central Executive Committee took the opportunity to state that the 'attitude of the PPS to the tasks and forms of cooperation in the united workers' front in Poland as internationally has not changed'.²⁴

The PPS, Hochfeld wrote, next to the Italian Socialist Party the greatest left-socialist party and the most experienced in the work of constructing a new socialist state, had an especially important role to play in these tasks.²⁵ Cyrankiewicz agreed. The PPS had to work to its utmost to transplant its united front attitudes, its revolutionary Marxism and the Polish alliance with the USSR into the international socialist movement.²⁶

The party's opportunity came in November with the next International Socialist Conference held at Antwerp. Here, once again,

the battle lines between the united front parties of Poland, Hungary and Italy, and those of the increasingly anti-communist West, were strongly defined. And once again also, the PPS was confronted with the strong support of the Western European parties for the entry of the German social-democrats to the conference. The predictable outcome was a resounding defeat for the PPS. Hochfeld and Kazimierz Rusinek, PPS delegates to the conference, formulated a resolution that sought to define the united front position: 'In the face of the danger posed by aggressive capitalist reaction, it becomes vitally necessary to rebuild mutual trust among the working classes of individual countries as well as genuinely free unity within each working class'. The resolution was defeated by fourteen votes to three.²⁷ Notwithstanding this outcome, the PPS delegates decided to participate in the creation of a permanent socialist secretariat to be based in Paris (COMISCO) so as to be able to at least continue their efforts to influence the international body.

Hochfeld went furthest in his presentation of the party's international united front programme. He linked it directly to the 'synthesis' on which the party's domestic concept of 'socialist humanism' was based. The PPS, wrote Hochfeld, favoured neither a reconstructed Comintern nor the creation of a 'Third Force' Socialist International. Both communists and socialists in all countries needed to work through their own domestic united fronts toward an international 'synthesis', toward 'integral socialism', toward a United Workers' International:²⁸ 'Defending independence and fighting for socialism, the PPS is working for a union of free peoples, for a free socialist republic in a Socialist States of Europe'.²⁹

At the party's XXVII Congress beginning on December 17, PPS leaders were unanimous in stressing the need to continue the party's work

within the international socialist movement.³⁰ Present at the Congress as an invited guest, Gomulka agreed with the PPS analysis of international relations but did not comment on the role the PPS sought for itself in the international socialist movement. Instead, he focused all his attention on arguing for the quickest possible integration between the PPS and PPR.³¹

By March 1948, the PPS knew it had failed to make any impact on the rapidly polarising European political stage. In February, France, Britain, the United States and the Benelux countries began debating the future political status of Germany and its inclusion into the European Recovery Programme, or Marshall Plan. In Rumania, a joint Congress of the Rumanian Communist Party and Rumanian Socialist Party concluded with the unification of the two parties into the Rumanian Workers' Party; and on March 6, the Hungarian Socialist Party convened an Extraordinary Congress at which a resolution was passed agreeing to unification with the Hungarian Communist Party. But it was the February *coup* in Czechoslovakia that generated the most international concern. On March 18, the leaders of the Czechoslovak Social-Democratic Party's anti-communist wing were ejected from the party.³²

Talk of unification between the PPR and PPS now reached fever pitch. Following a visit to Moscow as head of a government delegation, Cyrankiewicz no longer expressed any need for the PPS to continue its independent policies. On March 10, at a meeting of six PPS and PPR leaders, it was agreed that the organic unification of the two parties would begin.³³ Cyrankiewicz made the decision public a week later in a speech during which he expressed the view that the international socialist camp was 'broken between left and right'. The fight with the socialist right internationally had to be tightly linked to the fight with the socialist right within Poland. There could no longer be any

compromises.³⁴ Nor was there on either side. On March 19, the International Socialist Conference met in London. Unable to attend due to the failure of the British government to provide their delegates with visas, the Czechoslovakian and Polish parties became the focus of a sharp polemic following which an appeal was sent to the PPS calling for it to remain faithful to the international socialist movement.

The PPS leadership had little regard for such sentiments. Opponents of organic fusion among the leadership were already being denied access to the party's press organs. There remained little purpose in continuing to maintain an independent profile internationally. On March 23, in a move corresponding to similar actions undertaken by the Czechoslovakian, Hungarian and Italian socialist parties, the PPS announced it was withdrawing from COMISCO.³⁵ The same day, the party's Central Executive Committee, dominated by supporters of the Cyrankiewicz line, confirmed the decision of the party's General Secretariat 'beginning the period of preparing for the organic unity of both workers' parties in Poland'.³⁶ At a joint meeting of the PPS Central Executive Committee and PPR Central Committee, Cyrankiewicz spelt out the new PPS line: from the moment when the Western partners to the Yalta and Potsdam agreements and the UN Charter had stepped onto the road of international expansion, the task of the working class parties became to sharpen the international class struggle; Poland's independence, its security and territorial integrity depended on the support of the Soviet Union and the victory of the progressive camp; Poland's *racja stanu* was a revolutionary *racja stanu*.³⁷

9.2 'Nationalist Deviation'

March 1948 saw Gomułka begin to emphasise the importance of an ideological unity between the PPS and PPR. Unification could not take place while the PPS membership was still greatly influenced by its traditional right socialist ideals. It was important also that not only the two parties, but also the population at large, was imbued with ideological consciousness, according to the PPR leader. In this way, the Polish 'people's democracy' could face the future with optimism. Gomułka went further still: Poland's new existence as a 'people's democracy' gave it a particular right to share its experiences with other countries. If other nations wished also to attain this higher stage of social democracy, then they too should join the struggle of 'the world of labour with the world of the capitalist exploiters and their helpers'.³³ The PPR's battle with the PPS centre-right could not be de-coupled from the international trends that surrounded it. Having said this, what was evident was that Gomułka saw Poland's 'higher stage of social democracy' as its own — and the PPR's — creation. The Polish 'people's democracy' could not remain isolated behind a Soviet wall. What was needed, Gomułka insisted, was a unified international working class, not British, Scandinavian or Russian, but truly international and Marxist.³⁴

From this point onward, the PPR's attention turned sharply away from international matters to domestic affairs. The process of bringing the PPR and PPS together ideologically also called for the creation of a common political platform and agreement as to a common interpretation of the history of the two parties. Up till now, this process had been dominated by the PPR's attacks on the PPS centre-

right. In line with the Cominform policy of attacking the 'social-democratic splitters' of the international socialist right, the PPR had vociferously condemned the policies of Blum and Atlee, identifying them with the pre-war anti-Soviet PPS and its leaders such as Jan Kwapiński, Adam Ciołkosz and Zygmunt Zaręba, still active in London. The party's attention now turned to the PPS centre-left.

Gomułka had no intention of excluding any contribution from the 're-born' PPS altogether. In May, a joint PPR/PPS commission was formed to direct work on the preparation of the ideological programme of the new united party. Its membership consisted of Gomułka, Berman, Bieńkowski, Werfel and Franciszek Fiedler on the PPR side, and Cyrankiewicz, Lange, Matuszewski, Stefan Arski and Adam Rapacki from the PPS. Gomułka now began to look seriously at the history of the two parties and at the possibilities for Poland's 'national communist' future in the traditions of the PPS. During the course of the commission's work, Gomułka concluded that the new party should incorporate what he saw as the best of PPS tradition and exorcise the worst of PPR tradition in the anti-independence positions of the KPP. His opinions generated considerable controversy and opposition within the Politburo. Notwithstanding this opposition, Gomułka decided on presenting his views at the PPR Central Committee's Plenum in June. He declined to clear his speech with his Politburo colleagues prior to its delivery.

The significance of Gomułka's June Plenum speech for the foreign policy of the post-war communist Polish state lies in the consciously alternative future it presented. Communist state-hood had yet to be experienced outside the USSR for any length of time. The Soviet model need not apply. This was a clear refrain of the European left. But the processes of 'vassalisation' taking place, as seen in the communist

mind, throughout Western Europe, threatened to force their own 'objective' logic on Eastern Europe also. Gomułka knew well the odds against him. He was aware of events in Yugoslavia. Yet he sought to convince the party Central Committee, over the heads of the 'internationalist' Politburo, that it was in the interests of both state and society to have the new united workers' party pay more than lip-service to the concept of Polish independence. Gomułka was both a communist and a realist. His foreign policy attitudes had much in common with the work of Alfred Lampe. It was, therefore, only natural that the PPR should strongly assert its allegiance to its foremost allies. There was both an ideological and a national security reason for this. The firm linkage between these two elements stemmed from the historical relationship between the Polish and Soviet states. But as much as this was a positive linkage for the interests of both the Polish 'people's democracy' and the Soviet state, it also had the potential to be a negative linkage: the party's long-term legitimacy was at stake. The PPR now had a golden opportunity to overcome this handicap and institutionalise a tradition that could do more to consolidate the party's power than the most pervasive presence of Soviet troops.

Gomułka proceeded to assess the policy positions of the KPP. Were these policies realistic then? Would they be realistic now? Gomułka's answer was a definite no. Any introduction of similar policies in 1948, based on an ideological reading of history and removed from every day reality, would be similarly devoid of practical meaning. Gomułka wanted to give the party a lesson in communist pragmatism. He acted as though nothing had changed from the time he had helped to bring the party to power through his tactical manouvering and common sense. The June Plenum speech generated a furious polemic among the

top echelons of the PPR. So much so that the speech itself has only recently been published in Poland.⁴⁰

Dealing first with the SDKPiL, Gomułka made the observation that it had never in fact been a true Marxist party. Rather, it had been completely dominated by the ideas of Rosa Luxemburg which on the issues of revolution and nationality had diverged significantly from those of Marx. Luxemburg's theory of proletarian revolution had been predicated on the mechanical collapse of capitalism and a natural, irrepressible revolutionary momentum rather on than on the efforts of the working class itself to win social power. Luxemburg had on this basis completely denied the validity of any efforts on the part of the working class to win national independence. Because of this, the SDKPiL had been unable to rise to lead the working class. It had been condemned by the impotence of its policies on the most crucial issue facing Poland at the time.

The PPS, on the other hand, continued Gomułka, had a far better perception of realism. The PPS had been able to touch the chord that mattered in the Polish nation — independence. Poland had experienced seven hundred years of independent existence. It was inevitable that this existence had shaped the mentality of the Polish people and Polish working class differently from those who did not have such a tradition. The fight for independence led by the PPS needed to be incorporated as part of the inheritance of the joint future party, Gomułka told the June Plenum.

The KPP, in contrast, seeking its inspiration in the SDKPiL, never came to grips with this reality. Its answer to the question of Polish independence had been to fight for a Polish Soviet Republic:

Only one thing can be said definitely on the basis of the political experiences of the KPP; namely, that a false analysis of the situation, and a lack of regard for reality and the position of the working class, must push a given workers' party onto the road of abstract revolution, expressed in slogans that

have no basis in life experience. Abstract revolutionism and dogmatic Marxism leads neither to revolution nor to Marxism. The [KPP's] sectarian slogans about the fight for a Polish Soviet Republic were exploited by the Polish reaction for its own goals, for the fight with the movement of social-liberation. Now, as during the [German] occupation, the vast majority of the nation has reservations.... ...only the long practice of our party has convinced the nation that all of our slogans are sincere, that the PPR stands on the foundation of independence, and that we can best secure our independence, our national and state survival through an alliance with the Soviet Union.⁴¹

The first publication of this speech in Poland has Gomułka's statement portrayed in a different light:

The vast majority of the nation supported the slogans for social reform put forward by our party without reserve. However, only the longer term practice of our party, together with the position of the Soviet Union toward Poland, have convinced the nation that all of our slogans are sincere, that the PPR stands firmly on the foundation of independence, and that we can, with the most certainty, secure our independent national and state existence only through an alliance with the Soviet Union.⁴²

Gomułka's message was clear enough without it needing to be corrected 'stylistically' for publication. The new united party could only lead the Polish nation from a position emphasising Polish independence. The support of the population could not otherwise be guaranteed. From this standpoint, the PPR leader set out to establish a set of theoretical constructs within which the 'national communist' future could be nurtured.

The first of these constructs dealt with the concept of 'independence' itself. It could only meant proletarian independence, or the independence of a 'people's democratic' state. National independence in the bourgeois sense of the word had completely lost its meaning since, as a result of the victory of socialism in Russia and of the outcome of the Second World War, the working class had taken over the banners of independence and sovereignty in the new socialist states. These concepts, therefore, now incorporated a deep revolutionary meaning. They implied the fight against exploitation, 'imperialism', capitalism. They were being realised and solidified by

Poland's alliances with the Soviet Union and the other 'people's democracies'.⁴³

The next important construct was Gomułka's concept of 'alliance'. Poland's alliances with the Soviet Union and the other 'people's democracies' were a new type of alliance, reasoned Gomułka. The old capitalist alliances had been arrangements of convenience to be abrogated when new circumstances arose. Now, when the world's single socialist state had been joined in alliance with the 'people's democracies', the result was two distinct international forms of alliance: 'capitalist-imperialist' and 'socialist-democratic'. The essence of the 'socialist-democratic' alliance was that the parties to it had no designs on one other, were obliged to defend each other from aggression and, irrespective of their relative strengths, regarded each other as equals. No contradictions could exist between states joined in a 'socialist-democratic' alliance since such states owed a common allegiance to the Marxist ideology. It was this very ideological nature of the alliances in which Poland was participating that formed the most important base for the country's independence and sovereignty, the most important factor securing the inviolability of its borders, and the integrity of its government.⁴⁴

In conclusion, Gomułka reiterated his previous position on the 'Polish road to socialism': the doctrine of Marxism and Leninism was not infallible — it could and would change with the passage of time; the Polish road to working class power had been different to that of the Soviet Union; but without the liberation of Poland by the Red Army, the representatives of the Polish working class would never have been able to come to power. The Polish 'people's democracy' understood its debts and responsibilities, but it could never truly fulfill these if it was not allowed its own Polish space within which to develop.⁴⁵

Within the PPR, the 'internationalist' majority of the Politburo consisting of Berman, Bierut, Minc, Radkiewicz, Zambrowski and Aleksander Zawadzki, were only too happy to use the wide ranging and highly controversial June Plenum speech as the lever with which to prise Gomułka from his post.⁴⁶ Several days following the conclusion of the Plenum, the Politburo met and decided on a series of criticisms of the speech. Gomułka's replies, written on June 15, give some indication as to what these criticisms were about.

The Politburo majority accused Gomułka of not taking into account the entire history of the Polish workers' movement, thereby distorting that history. This could only have been a provocation designed to put Gomułka on the defensive. No one speech could incorporate all the necessary history, nor could such a speech be anything but a distortion, if an intentional highlighting of particular aspects of history for the sake of discourse. The Politburo's second point was more substantial. Gomułka was accused of favouring the PPS over the SDKPiL. This was undeniable. Gomułka reiterated: if the Politburo thought that 'the conceptions of the PPS [regarding independence] can only be termed realistic in the sense that they coincided with those of a section of the Polish political bourgeoisie', then indeed, 'the SDKPiL on the question of Polish independence showed less realism than a section of the Polish bourgeoisie'. Gomułka conceded that he had gone too far in saying that 'the fight for independence belongs to the great traditions of the PPS which we should lay at the foundations of the united party', but that it could only be ill will and bias (!) on the part of the Politburo to accuse him on the basis of this remark of wanting to include in the foundations of the united party the 'chauvinist-bourgeois PPS conception of independence'.⁴⁷

On the Politburo's third point, again on the view of the SDKPiL

presented in the Plenum report, Gomułka went further still: 'One must have complete ill will in order to come to the conclusion... that this view is wrong and blatantly simplified'. Nor could Gomułka agree with the Politburo's fourth point, that his view of the pre-war PPS constituted a factual acceptance of the PPS position of working for Polish state independence in alliance with 'imperialism' and opposed to revolutionary Russia.⁴⁸

On point five, concerning the position of the KPP on Polish independence, Gomułka in desperation went through each of the KPP's six congresses to provide a detailed rebuttal of the Politburo's criticisms. There was little doubt in anyone's mind, wrote Gomułka, that for the entire period from the time the party was created up till 1936, the KPP had stood on the position of incorporating Poland into the Soviet Union. Only in 1936 did the KPP change its position on Polish independence in the face of the threat from Germany.⁴⁹

The sixth and last criticism of the Politburo was that 'the view of the traditions of the workers' movement in Poland given by comrade Wiesław (Gomułka's wartime pseudonym) represents a grave concession on behalf of the nationalistic-bourgeois and reformist traditions represented by the PPS'. In answering this charge, Gomułka bit back at the Politburo. The unification of the PPR and PPS did create the danger of the growth of a right wing in the new party, Gomułka agreed. But another danger also existed — that of the KPP sectarianism still evident among PPR members:

Any return to the bad KPP traditions whose symptoms may be found in the position taken by the members of the Politburo laid out in the written response to my [Plenum] report, and which could also be observed in the speeches of certain comrades at the Plenum of the party Central Committee, all simplifications of the situation existing in Poland and underestimations of the attitudes existing in the ranks of the working class and in the nation, and especially looking for nationalism in places where it does not exist — may undermine the great capital of trust which our party has gained among the working class and in the nation thanks to its correct policies and thanks to the use of the correct

tactics. The person who does not want to see the fact, just as the KPP did not see it, that the historical development of the Polish nation has proceeded along a specific track unknown to any other European nation, the person who forgets that the attitude of the Polish nation is formed by the sum of its history — that person is destined to commit political errors, to separate himself not only from the nation but also from the working class.⁵⁰

Gomułka was intensely worried by the tendencies around him trying to shift Poland into a political reliance on the Soviet Union he personally wished to avoid. The situation in the Cominform with regard to the KPJ in which Gomułka and the Politburo had offered at the end of May to mediate, was becoming increasingly tense. And in Warsaw the stage was set for a meeting of the foreign ministers of all the seven 'people's democracies' with Molotov. Preparation for this meeting had been initiated in March by Poland together with the Soviet Union as a response to the London Conference of the three Western powers plus the Benelux states. The concluding communiqué of the London Conference was issued on June 7. It declared the intention of the conference participants to create a new federal German state from the three Western occupation zones.⁵¹ This was the final nail in the coffin of Poland's German policy. There could be no reversal of the process of polarisation in Europe. Modzelewski, in a Sejm debate devoted to the results of the London and Warsaw conferences,⁵² did not rein in his sentiments: the Anglo-Saxons wanted to put the western German economy under the control of their cartels and trusts; the atmosphere in Germany — revisionism and questioning the borders with Poland — had its sources in Wall Street; the London Conference had given control of the Ruhr Valley to American and British financial magnates, the Foreign Minister told the Sejm.⁵³

The climax in the debate over Poland's future, its relations with the Soviet Union, the other 'people's democracies' and the West, its independence and the future of its foreign policy, came in the summer

of 1948. As well as the Warsaw Conference of Foreign Ministers, the latter half of June had also seen a meeting of the Cominform in Bucharest called by the Soviet Union to condemn the 'insubordination' of the KPJ.⁵⁴ Tito had his obvious counterpart in Gomulka. The Central Committee was convened again in July to discuss and ratify the Comintern's resolution on the Jugoslavian crisis. Gomulka failed to take part. He was evidently, according to the official version given by Bierut, on an enforced 'sick leave', thinking over his attitude to the Politburo's criticisms.⁵⁵

Gomulka's effort to provide the new unified party with a long term position on Polish independence had failed. The PPR's 'national' wing now became the focus of an unmitigated ideological backlash designed to remove any doubt as to the total commitment of the new party to its internationalist roots. These roots were not those of the SDKPiL and Luxemburg internationalism; they were the roots provided by the 'internationalist' wing of the KPP. The July Plenum proved decisive not only for determining the fate of the PPR General Secretary and the party's right wing; also decisive was the general tone on foreign policy adopted during the debate.

One issue dominated the July Plenum debate — nationalism. Nationalism was the crime committed by the KPJ and it also ran very deep within the PPR. Not surprisingly, this attitude had a significant impact on the Central Committee's appreciation of Polish foreign policy in general. Ochab, for example, saw the evil of nationalism beginning when a national movement tied itself with 'foreign and reactionary interests', or played off one 'imperialist' power against another. This was a clear, if rather inaccurate, reference to Poland's pre-war foreign policy and to the policies of the PSL. The facts were, Ochab continued, that nationalism could not be isolated from the

international situation, and the most important international phenomenon was the struggle for the liberation of the proletariat. Nationalism could only be one small part of this struggle.⁵⁶

In other words, nationalism was secondary to internationalism and internationalism meant having a correct attitude toward the Soviet Union: 'If we talk of a bloc of peaceful and anti-imperialist powers with the Soviet Union at its head, then we think of it in this way, that the Soviet Union plays the leading role in the anti-imperialist camp'.⁵⁷ Berman tied this state internationalism to the party tradition:

...we always considered the revolutionary movement in Poland as an integral part of the general revolutionary movement... This is what our strength relies on, that we are a single body, that we are always ready to support and give help when it is needed, when the common, unitary interest of the revolutionary movement demands it.⁵⁸

On this basis, the policies and actions of the KPJ were quite legitimately open to criticism from the Cominform, and indeed KPJ rejection of this advice had now put the Yugoslavian party beyond the fold of the internationalist community. The Central Committee had no wish for the PPR to travel down the same road.

Taking up the conceptual issues raised by Gomułka in June, Modzelewski sought to link the nationalism/internationalism debate to the issue of state independence. The war had shown that the bourgeois system had not been able to protect bourgeois states from the loss of their independence and sovereignty, the Foreign Minister pointed out. In this situation, the fight for independent statehood in Eastern Europe had been taken over by the working class. While in the West efforts were being made to limit the political and economic independence of individual states, among the 'people's democratic' states entirely new relations had arisen. These new relations, the Foreign Minister was convinced, allowed the new Polish state to defend

the interests of 99% of the nation. This conviction had to be inculcated into the Polish nation, he advised.⁵⁹

The Foreign Minister's inverted perspective reflected the general retreat of Polish foreign policy from its activist role after the establishment of the communist state in 1944. Up till the creation of the Cominform, cooperation among the 'people's democracies' and the Soviet Union had been limited to a coordinated foreign policy, trade and cultural exchanges. An institutionalised mechanism for inter-party cooperation did not exist. Now, as a result of the series of blows dealt the Soviet (and Polish) position on Germany by the policies of the Western allies, and the American and British propaganda offensive against the USSR and communism in general, the gap between state and party interests was being sharply narrowed.

It was the Jugoslavian episode that contributed the most to the seige mentality setting in firmly among the Polish communists. The Jugoslavian issue could not be treated separately from international politics Werfel reminded the July Plenum.⁶⁰ The security of the 'people's democracies' was under dire threat. 'Imperialism' had already succeeded in splitting off one of the fraternal allies, and this could not be allowed to continue. Nationalism, with all its variations, had to be eliminated, was the verdict of the July Plenum debate.

With regard to the Cominform's Bucharest meeting, Gomułka had made clear to the Politburo that he disagreed with them on the methods being used in the Jugoslavian dispute. He had gone so far as to question the authority of Berman to agree to the Cominform resolution on the collectivisation of agriculture on behalf of the Polish party.⁶¹ Having returned from his 'sick leave', Gomułka came under intense pressure from the Politburo to recant. He would have to agree

to a resolution criticising his position being presented at the Central Committee's August-September Plenum, to his presenting a self-criticism at this Plenum, and to his resigning from his position as General Secretary.

Bierut, having 'returned to active service' in the PPR immediately prior to the August-September Plenum, opened the proceedings with a keynote speech entitled: 'On the right and nationalist deviation in the party leadership and on ways of overcoming it'. Bierut's speech signalled a fundamental change in the PPR's role in Poland. The party would now be leading on the basis of its ideological identity. Where this identity had previously been subdued, and the PPR under Gomułka had maintained its patriotic and national-state profile, communist orthodoxy was now being elevated to a position that overruled all other considerations or priorities. Gomułka's June Plenum speech, according to Bierut, quite simply 'cut itself off from the foundation of class struggle, from the fundamental revolutionary goals of this struggle'.⁶²

Bierut paid no attention to the situational exigencies of the past. Instead, he used this opportunity to review the entire history of the 'opportunistic' Gomułka leadership, criticising it for its lack of regard for ideological principles:

We consider one of the main sources of the ideological uncertainty of comrade Wiesław to be the lack of a deep understanding of the ideological principles of Marxism-Leninism, by which the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks has always been directed, and which continue to play today the leading role in the front for the international battle against imperialism.⁶³

The evident conflict of Gomułka's 'right and nationalist deviation' with the direction of communist consolidation in the face of international pressure only became clearly visible with the concrete steps taken in this direction by the Cominform, noted Bierut. Gomułka failed to see the tight linkages 'between national aspirations and

internationalism'. Nor was he correct in his interpretation of alliances and the likelihood of a permanent place for a bloc of 'people's democracies'. As Bierut saw it, this was an attempt to create a 'golden center' between the liberal-bourgeois democracies, and the socialist democracies. It showed an erroneous understanding of the relationship between the 'people's democracies' and the Soviet Union, based, as this relationship was, on the deepest identity of interests.⁶⁴

The most immediate reason for Gomulka's lack of success in defining a new relationship between the Soviet Union and its 'democratic' allies, was the first post-war ideological policy change in Moscow. The creation of the Cominform had coincided with a Soviet move away from the 'national front'. In November 1947, Vyshinsky, soon to succeed Molotov as Soviet Foreign Minister, had begun an attack on the right wings within the communist parties, criticising them for their failure to appreciate the need for a Soviet type 'dictatorship of the proletariat'. At the Cominform meeting itself, the French Communist Party was criticized for its 'reformism' and the Italian Communist Party accused of 'parliamentary cretinism'. By the winter of 1948, the 'national roads to socialism' experiment had been officially brought to a close. 'According to Marxist-Leninist principles, the Soviet regime and people's democracy are two forms of one and the same rule.... They are two forms of the dictatorship of the proletariat', Dimitrov told the Bulgarian party, in a speech that was soon being echoed in the other 'people's democracies'.⁶⁵

In terms of foreign policy and the Polish communist state's national prestige, the crux of the issue revolved around the recognition of the Soviet party as the leading party in the bloc. Internationalism was a slogan meaning the acceptance of the 'leading

role' of the VKP(b). The fact that with the Soviet party's 'leading role' came also the usual bevy of Soviet advisers, was what the Yugoslavians were most objecting to. Poland was not in a position to object. Its geographical position opened it to far more direct Soviet influence than the communist state on the Adriatic. As Bierut put it, with the growing polarization between 'imperialism' and 'anti-imperialism', attitudes toward the Soviet Union were now the gauge of sincere internationalism.⁵⁶

In presenting his 'self-criticism', Gomułka stated the following:

I never questioned the right of the VKP(b), gained by its revolutionary experience and its construction of socialism, to provide the leading role in the international workers' movement.... Also beyond discussion for me is the issue of the closest possible cooperation and mutual trust between Poland and the Soviet Union, as only on this road can we secure our country's independence and sovereignty before the lust for conquest of imperialism, and guide the development of conditions in Poland on the road to socialism.⁵⁷

But this was just what the criticism of Gomułka was all about. Gomułka's 'closest cooperation' was at odds with the close cooperation envisaged by Bierut and Berman. In the August-September Plenum resolution agreed to by the Central Committee, point two addressed this issue directly. Gomułka's character defects, the resolution stated, stemmed, as well as from other sources, from 'a lack of understanding of the essential ideological content of the relations between the countries of 'people's democracy' and the USSR, and the leading role of the VKP(b) in the international front against imperialism....'⁵⁸

Gomułka had identified an important distinction between state alliance and party internationalism, a distinction he had been endeavouring to enshrine in his 'national communist' alternative. On questions of state and territorial security Gomułka unreservedly endorsed the Soviet Union's security guarantee in the face of the

'imperialist' threat to Poland's borders and Poland's socialist development. On questions of ideology and prestige, his position was far more ambiguous. Modzelewski picked up this point on the third and final day of the August-September Plenum proceedings. Gomułka and his group feared a certain divergence, the Foreign Minister said, 'between the realisation of socialism in Poland and the question of Polish sovereignty....'⁶⁹ Gomułka took up the issue in his own concluding comments. After having listened to three days of criticism, the PPR leader told the Central Committee that he had 'fallen out of the wagon on a historic turn'.⁷⁰ It was obvious, he concluded, that the heart of the entire issue was his attitude towards the Soviet Union, towards the VKP(b):

...in practice my attitude was not so much one of party relations between the VKP(b) and the PPR, but rather of state relations between Poland and the USSR, good alliance-like and friendly relations, but rather only state and not party relations.... I understood these things, but it was difficult in practice for me to change my attitude toward the Soviet Union above all to an ideological, party dimension.⁷¹

Gomułka's 'historic turn' was a turn that saw Poland move from an activist self-interested communist state foreign policy, however qualified it might have been, to one identified as that of an ideological satellite. The Plenum agreed to build its links with the VKP(b) even tighter, work harder for the realisation of socialism, and increase the ideological purity, the discipline and the principles of the party.⁷² Gomułka was forced to tender his resignation.⁷³ Symbolising the new symbiosis between party and state, Bierut, state President, became the new PPR General Secretary.

9.3 Ideology Entrenched

The process of uniting the PPR and PPS in the next few months proceeded quickly, but hardly smoothly. The PPR tended to assume a position of authority; disagreements were ignored in the effort to finalise formal united positions, and whereas thousands of PPS members were ejected on the grounds of their ideological unsuitability, the PPR proceeded with its own verification rather less vigorously (29,000 members were ejected). Instead, it undertook a recruitment drive so that at the time of unification the PPR could boast over a million members.⁷⁴

On December 14, the Second PPR Congress and the XXVIII PPS Extraordinary Congress met separately in Warsaw, each ratifying identical resolutions. The next day, one day short of thirty years from the time of the SDKPiL and PPS-Left Unification Congress, the two parties met in a Unification Congress with the PPS being incorporated organisationally into the PPR. The new Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR) ideological declaration was ratified on the sixth day of the proceedings. Work on this document had been disrupted by the 'right and nationalist deviation' controversy within the PPR and when progress resumed again in late August, the PPR leadership decided it was a task too sensitive to be left to a joint party commission. A PPR Politburo commission in charge of drawing up the declaration was instead created under the chairmanship of Berman. Bierut maintained a close oversight of the work and in the final analysis had a decisive influence on the final shape of the declaration.⁷⁵

The result was a statement of uncompromising 'Stalinist' orthodoxy. On the history of the Polish workers' movement, the declaration stated

bluntly that the PPS represented the movement's anti-Marxist and nationalistic stream; the SDKPiL, in contrast, in its most valuable contribution to the tradition of the Polish workers' movement, 'stood firmly on the basis of internationalism, on the basis of a common battle with the Russian revolutionary movement'. On pre-war Polish foreign policy, the declaration presented the KPP view that the aim of the *Sanacja* regime's foreign policy had been to work together with Hitler's Reich for an invasion of the Soviet Union. It was this policy that had brought about Poland's defeat and occupation by Germany. Nationalism, the declaration stated, was and remained a tool of the exploiting classes. Nationalism led to the degeneration of the workers' movement; its goal was to undermine the sovereignty of the Polish nation. All its forms had therefore to be eliminated. Real patriotism, in contrast, could not be separated from proletarian internationalism.⁷⁶

Poland's foreign policy, under the guidance of the PZPR promoted to being a 'fundamental characteristic of 'people's democracy', was put as follows:

The defence of Poland's sovereignty and security from the threat of aggression by the imperialist powers, and ensuring the development of Poland toward socialism with the support of the fraternal alliance and friendship with the Soviet Union, the leader of the great anti-imperialist democratic camp.

All tendencies aiming to loosen cooperation with the Soviet Union threaten the foundation of people's democracy in Poland, and at the same time the independence of our country.⁷⁷

Close alliance and friendship with the Soviet Union had developed from being the basis or foundation of foreign policy during Gomułka's leadership, to, in the PZPR document, being the 'principal instruction' (*wskazanie*) of Polish foreign policy.⁷⁸

A Manichean perception of the international system now dominated the new communist party's foreign policy positions. The world, the document stated, was divided into two camps:

...from one side the huge, united anti-imperialist camp with the Soviet Union at its head, taking into its scope the Soviet nations, the countries of people's democracy, the revolutionary workers' movement in the capitalist countries as well as the revolutionary national-liberation movements in the colonial and half-colonial countries; from the other side the imperialist camp full of internal contradictions, the camp of conquest and regression, repression and ignorance, the camp in which the leader is American capital.⁷⁹

Polish foreign policy was ranged firmly against American and British 'imperialism'. On the positive side, Poland would participate 'actively' in the 'anti-imperialist camp'. The alliances that united the Soviet Union with the 'people's democratic' countries of this camp were still the 'new type' postulated by Gomułka, but in the Bierut version had as their focus not equal state relations but 'the solidarity of our countries in working towards socialism and a classless society'. Poland's activity in the 'anti-imperialist camp' would revolve around using the possibilities of the new alliance system to quicken its economic development and to build a socialist Poland.⁸⁰ Forty years hence, Polish communist foreign policy continues to seek its inspiration in these 'Stalinist' axioms.

Notes

1. Oskar Lange continued serving as Polish Ambassador to the UN from 1945 until after the two parties' unification. In November 1946, Stanisław Leszczycki became Deputy Foreign Minister, also continuing to serve following the unification.

2. See Jerzy Holzer, *PPS. Szkic dziejów*, Warszawa, Wiedza Powszechna, 1977, p. 207.

3. Holzer, p. 207. The immediate reason for Matuszewski's fall from grace was an unsuccessful attempt by the 'internationalist' PPS group, together with Berman, Zambrowski and other 'internationalist' PPR leaders, to change the balance in the PPS Central Executive Committee by way of a *putsch* at the PPS headquarters with the help of the PPS 'militia'. See Bronisław Syzdek, 'U źródeł zwrotu w polityce PPR w 1948 r', *Zeszyty Naukowe Wojskowej Akademii Politycznej*, 110, 1982, pp. 44-5.

4. Stefan Matuszewski, '11 listopada — Święto niepodległości Polski', *Robotnik*, 11 November 1944, p. 2.

5. Stefan Matuszewski, 'Konferencja sekretarzy wojewódzkich', *Robotnik*, 31 May 1945, p. 2.

6. Stefan Matuszewski, 'Podstawowe warunki wygrania pokoju', *Robotnik*, 22 June 1945, p. 4.
7. Wacław Bielecki, 'Nowa i stara demokracja', *Lewy Tor*, September 1945, p. 11.
8. Edward Osóbka-Morawski, 'XXVI Kongress PPS. Referat ideologiczno-polityczny', *Robotnik*, 1 July 1945, p. 1.
9. 'XXVI Kongress PPS', p. 2.
10. In December 1944 PPS membership was around 5,000; by April 1945 this had grown to 140,000, but by the end of 1947 the party had around 700,000 members. Holzer, p. 210.
11. 'Od redakcji', *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, 1 November 1945, p. 3.
12. See 'Protokoły CKW PPS (marzec-czerwiec 1946)', *Z Pola Walki*, 4 (112), 1985, pp. 119-21.
13. Stanisław Szwalbe, 'Stanowisko naszej partii wobec problemów polityki zagranicznej', *Robotnik*, 26 August 1946, p. 3.
14. For an analysis of PPR and PPS attitudes regarding 'third force' policies see Jerzy Juchnowski and Marian Wolański, 'PPR i PPS wobec socjaldemokratycznej koncepcji tzw. "trzeciej siły" (1945-1948)', *Z Pola Walki*, 1-2 (97-98), 1982, pp. 64-83.
15. 'Protokoły CKW PPS (marzec-czerwiec 1946)', pp. 119-20. See also *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, April 1946, p. 24.
16. See Julian Hochfeld, 'Jednolity front proletariatu', *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, September 1946, p. 47.
17. See Jerzy Jagiełło, *O polską drogę do socjalizmu. Dyskusje w PPR i PPS w latach 1944-1948*, Warszawa, Kraków, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1984, pp. 151-216.
18. See Józef Cyrankiewicz, 'Partia jednolitifrontowa, partia niezależna, partia zdyscyplinowana', *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, September 1946, p. 3.
19. Holzer, p. 209.
20. Stanisław Ciesielski, *Niepodległość i socjalizm. Tradycja w myśli politycznej polskiego ruchu socjalistycznego w latach 1939-1948*, Warszawa, Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1986, p. 239-40.
21. Juchnowski & Wolański, p. 68.
22. See Julian Hochfeld, 'Nasze stanowisko w sprawie socjalizmu niemieckiego', *Robotnik*, 19 October 1947, p. 3.
23. Aleksander Żaruk-Michalski, 'O uchwałach Rady Naczelnej PPS', *Lewy Tor*, September 1947, pp. 15-6.
24. 'Uchwała CKW PPS z dnia 21 października 1947 r w sprawie sytuacji międzynarodowej', *Robotnik*, 22 October 1947, p. 1.
25. Julian Hochfeld, 'Obecny etap międzynarodowej walki klasowej i zadania PPS', *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, November 1947, p. 11.
26. Józef Cyrankiewicz, 'W rocznicę wielkiej rewolucji', *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, November 1947, p. 12.
27. Julian Hochfeld, 'Po konferencji w Antwerpii (II)', *Robotnik*, 10 December 1947, p. 3.
28. Julian Hochfeld, 'Po konferencji w Antwerpii', *Robotnik*, 7 December 1947, p. 3.
29. Julian Hochfeld, 'Projekt tez do programu', *Robotnik*, 13 December 1947, p. 5.
30. See Józef Cyrankiewicz, 'Rola dziejowa odrodzonej PPS', *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, January-February 1948, pp. 1-9. Also Oskar Lange, 'PPS wobec sytuacji międzynarodowej', *Przegląd Socjalistyczny*, January-February 1948, pp. 10-1.
31. Juchnowski & Wolański, pp. 74-5.

32. Unification between the Hungarian socialist and communist parties took place on June 14 when the Hungarian Workers' Party was established. Unification of the Czechoslovak Social-Democratic Party with the Czechoslovakian communists took place on June 27.
33. Marek Łatyński, *Nie paść na kolana. Szkice o opozycji lat czterdziestych*, London, Polonia, 1985, p.550.
34. Józef Cyrankiewicz, *Robotnik*, 18 March 1948, p.1.
35. 'Oświadczenie PPS w sprawie wystąpienia z Komitetu Międzynarodowych Konferencji Socjalistycznych', *Robotnik*, 24 March 1948, p.1.
36. Cited in Łatyński, p.550.
37. Józef Cyrankiewicz, 'Wspólne posiedzenie CKW PPS i KC PPR 3 kwietnia 1948 r', *Robotnik*, 4 April 1948, p.5.
38. Władysław Gomułka, 'Praca-walka-nauka', *Głos Ludu*, 19 March 1948, p.1.
39. Władysław Gomułka, 'Na nowym etapie', *Głos Ludu*, 20 March 1948, p.1.
40. '1948, czerwiec 3, Warszawa. Referat Sekretarza Generalnego KC PPR Władysława Gomułki wygłoszony na plenum Komitetu Centralnego', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1984, pp.594-613.
41. 'Przemówienie tow. Wiesława na plenarnym posiedzeniu KC PPR w dniu 3 czerwca 1948 roku', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 34, 1975, pp.60-1.
42. '1948, czerwiec 3, Warszawa', p.602.
43. 'Przemówienie tow. Wiesława', pp.61-3.
44. 'Przemówienie tow. Wiesława', pp.63-4.
45. 'Przemówienie tow. Wiesława', pp.64-6.
46. It is doubtful that Gomułka could even count on the support of the one remaining Politburo member, Marian Spychalski.
47. 'Wyjaśnienie Sekretarza Generalnego KC PPR Władysława Gomułki w związku z jego referatem i projektem rezolucji Biura Politycznego', *Zeszyty Historyczne*, 34, 1975, pp.71-4.
48. 'Wyjaśnienie', pp.74-6.
49. 'Wyjaśnienie', pp.76-81.
50. 'Wyjaśnienie', p.84.
51. Barbara Mikulska, 'Konferencja warszawska 23-24 czerwca 1948 r', *Z dziejów Stosunków Polsko-Radzieckich. Studia i materiały*, volume 9, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1972, p.242.
52. The final document of the Warsaw Conference issued on June 24 announced that the eight participants could not 'acknowledge the legality nor any moral authority of the decisions of the London Conference'. Mikulska, p.244.
53. *Sprawozdanie stenograficzne z 47 posiedzeniu Sejmu Ustawodawczego w dniu 26 czerwca 1948 r*, Sesja zwyczajna 1948 r, Warszawa, 1948, pp.10-2.
54. For the background to these events see Adam Ulam, *Titoism and the Cominform*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1952, pp.96-135.
55. See Bolesław Bierut, 'O odchyleniu prawicowym i nacjonalistycznym w kierownictwie Partii i o sposobach jego przezwyciężenia', *Nowe Drogi*, 11, September-October 1948, p.13.
56. Edward Ochab, 'Dyskusja', *Nowe Drogi*, 10, July-August, p.43.
57. Eugeniusz Szyr, 'Dyskusja', *Nowe Drogi*, 10, July-August, p.46.
58. Jakub Berman, 'Dyskusja', *Nowe Drogi*, 10, July-August, p.48.
59. Zygmunt Modzelewski, 'Dyskusja', *Nowe Drogi*, 10, July-August, pp.113-4.
60. Roman Werfel, 'Dyskusja', *Nowe Drogi*, 10, July-August, p.122.
61. Krystyna Kersten, *Narodziny systemu władzy. Polska 1943-1948*, Paris, Libella, 1986, p.340.

62. 'O odchyleniu prawicowym', p. 17.
63. 'O odchyleniu prawicowym', p. 24.
64. 'O odchyleniu prawicowym', pp. 9-39.
65. Cited in Jeff Frieden, 'The internal politics of European Communism in the Stalin Era: 1934-1949', *Studies in Comparative Communism*, 14 (1), Spring 1981, p. 65.
66. 'O odchyleniu prawicowym', p. 29.
67. Władysław Gomułka, 'Samokrytyka', *Nowe Drogi*, 11, September-October 1948, p. 43.
68. 'Rezolucja w sprawie odchylenia prawicowego i nacjonalistycznego w kierownictwie Partii, jego źródeł i sposób jego przewyciężenia', *Nowe Drogi*, 11, September-October 1948, p. 149.
69. Zygmunt Modzelewski, 'Dyskusja', *Nowe Drogi*, 11, September-October 1948, p. 118.
70. Tow. Wiesław, 'Dyskusja', *Nowe Drogi*, 11, September-October 1948, p. 138.
71. Tow. Wiesław, 'Dyskusja', p. 144.
72. 'Rezolucja w sprawie odchylenia prawicowego', p. 155.
73. Gomułka's supporters, including Kliszko, Bieńkowski and Aleksander Kowalski, were demoted to candidate membership of the Central Committee. See Kersten, pp. 448-9.
74. 82,000 members were officially expelled from the PPS, although a large proportion also left voluntarily since the membership figure fell from 700,000 in December 1947 to 513,000 at the time of unification. Kersten, p. 351.
75. See *Dokumenty programowe polskiego ruchu robotniczego 1878-1984*, Warszawa, Książka i Wiedza, 1986, p. 434.
76. 'Deklaracja ideowa Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej', *PPR. Dokumenty programowe 1942-1948*, pp. 615-23.
77. 'Deklaracja ideowa', p. 619.
78. 'Deklaracja ideowa', p. 626.
79. 'Deklaracja ideowa', p. 614.
80. 'Deklaracja ideowa', p. 626.

10. CONCLUSION

Communist state foreign policy must continually confront the paradox inherent in its character between the 'universalistic-international' and the nationally exclusive. The purpose of this analysis has been to present an explanation of how this paradox came to be internalised in post-war Polish foreign policy. The inherent dualism in communist foreign policy can be identified through a reading of those public perceptions that seek to interpret national interests through a prism of ideological interests. The interpretation process fuses the two sets of interests; it creates a policy climate that legitimizes state actions abroad and explains them domestically as a balance between the two sets, to be adjusted according to the domestic or international determinants dominant at a particular time. The analysis above presents the particular configuration of the ideological/national interest balance in the case of Polish communist foreign policy, and shows how it operated up to 1948. The next step, for further research, is to show how the balance has been affected since this period by specific external and internal conditions.

At its broadest, the 'universalistic-international' is encompassed in the concept of internationalism, one of the firmest planks of Marxist theory and one that has also generated some of the most bitter disputes within the socialist movement. Internationalism as represented by Rosa Luxemburg meant a working class consciousness of common interests that surpassed the narrow nationalism of the bourgeoisie. Such consciousness was to be created through the leadership provided by the social-democratic parties in teaching the proletariat of the developed industrial nations that its common interest lay in the spontaneous workers' revolution and the socialist

future in Europe and the world. This was Luxemburg's life task. It was a task she began first in Poland with the SDKPiL and then on the left of the German Social-Democratic Party. Luxemburgist internationalism saw its greatest defeat in the events of the First World War and the destruction of the Second (Socialist) International. By voting for war appropriations in support of their governments, the German, French and Austrian social-democratic parties destroyed their revolutionary credibility. The socialist movement split irrevocably.

In Poland and Germany, Luxemburg's contribution to Marxist theory was anathema to those socialists who looked first to gain national power and then to provide the working class with its dues. Her concept of a spontaneous workers' revolution met with criticism from both the establishment German social-democrats and the nationalist PPS. It had also been dismissed by the Russian social-democratic revolutionaries inspired by Lenin.

In Poland unlike in Germany, the Polish left had been split by the national question since its creation, with the internationalist SDKPiL seeing its greatest enemy in the nationalist agitation of the PPS. Socialism in Poland was not immune to the patriotic fervour of the repressed nation. The effect of the February Russian Revolution and October Bolshevik *coup d'état* was not to spark off a wider European-wide revolution as Luxemburg had hoped. In Poland it acted instead to cement the national/internationalist split in the Polish left still further; the PPS was now faced with a powerful ideological foe as well as the traditional national enemy.

Internationalism took on a new meaning with the creation of the unitary and isolated Soviet state. Theoretical internationalism could now claim a practical focus, institutionalised in point 4 of the Third (Communist) International's articles of membership. Conscious of its

internationalist obligations in contrast to the nationalist PPS, the KPRP had its idealistic Luxemburgism quickly overwhelmed by the practical imperatives of the war being waged against the Soviet state. It soon found itself under the direct authority of the Russian party. It could expect little else. The inter-war Polish state was in the unique position of lying between the newly created Soviet state and a Germany in which the hopes of the European revolutionary left were most vested. In response, the Western powers saw it as all the more important that the new national Poland regime play a high-profile anti-Soviet role. In the face of the Western and Polish threat, state and territorial security took on an overwhelming significance for the fledgling Soviet state. Caught between the European hopes of the Bolsheviks and their efforts to consolidate their security on the one hand, and the anti-communist repression of the Polish authorities and their efforts to undermine the Bolshevik regime on the other, Polish communism developed in an atmosphere unlike that affecting any other European communist party. Polish communists became acutely sensitive to the security needs of the Soviet state. For their part, the Bolshevik leaders soon began seeing in the Polish party a conduit for their wider European ambitions.

From this point on, the inter-war history of the KPRP's internationalist foreign policies revolved around a debate within the party between those whose national and ideological instincts had become offended by the instrumental relationship developing with the Russian party, and those who saw the Soviet-centred internationalist obligation as natural in the circumstances. Immediately following the conclusion of the Polish-Soviet war, the former group held sway. In return for a greater degree of national autonomy in domestic tactics, the leadership agreed to reject Luxemburg's criticisms and accede to

the Bolshevik line on the national and organisational questions. The KPRP recognised the need for a position on Polish independence and sought a guarantee for this independence in the European wide revolution — the 'United States of Europe'.

In contrast to the theory of spontaneous revolution developed by Luxemburg, the Bolshevik conception was for national communist parties to attain their power in much the same centralised and disciplined way as they themselves had in Russia. In this the KPRP (and the KPD) proved singularly ineffective. The European revolution, let alone the Polish or German revolutions, never took place and instead the 'national' leadership of the KPRP was replaced at the Comintern's 'Bolshevisation Congress' in June 1924. Internationalism returned to being an instrumental link between the Russian and Polish parties this time symbolised by the 'broken bones' metaphor used by Koszutska. In the years to 1929, the KPP's leaders were changed regularly according to the prevailing Soviet policy line and balance of power in the Russian Politburo. The division in the Polish party grew to the extent that had there not been further Soviet intervention the KPP would have split into two rival political parties.

By 1929, Stalin had established his predominance in the Soviet Politburo. Within the KPP, the 'national' leadership was removed from the Central Committee altogether and replaced with two Comintern 'advisers' both close to Stalin. Little regard was now paid to Polish conditions. KPP foreign policy exhibited a vicarious concern for Soviet security and the German revolution. Once these concerns had been made redundant by a reorientation of Soviet foreign policy toward Germany, the ineffectual KPP was dissolved altogether. Stalin went on to oversee the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact and the partition of Poland. Polish communists were positively discouraged

from undertaking any political activity. But with the fall of France and the German occupation of Rumania, members of the KPP were brought into the Soviet propaganda apparatus and the Comintern's schools.

This was the developmental road for KPP internationalism. From 1942 and the creation of a new Polish communist party — the PPR, a conscious state-orientated 'super-structure' was added — Polish national interests. Two of these interests, ie. the internal security of the state and the territorial integrity of its borders, were from the outset presented by the PPR as needing to be vitally linked to Soviet power. The PPR based their case on a fundamental reality: Poland's historical dilemma of needing to balance between its two powerful and unfriendly neighbours had been simplified by the German aggression. Only one option remained — the support of the USSR; and with its heritage of internationalism the PPR were the only domestic Polish political force the USSR could trust unconditionally in return for its support.

The PPR were also vitally aware of a third national interest: Polish independence and national prestige. Notwithstanding the evident conceptual contradiction, communist patriotism had been made official by the Comintern's new 'national front' policy and Stalin's dissolution of the Comintern. 'National communism' became the basis on which the PPR intended building its patriotic credentials. These credentials were given added credibility by the ability of the party to re-activate its 'national' wing and put this wing into a position of leadership. Patriotism also became the theme of the Polish communists organising in the Soviet Union. Here, even more so than in the PPR which was operating away from the direct oversight of the Soviet party, this patriotism was built on a conscious recognition of the primacy of Soviet power and policies. It was in the Soviet Union

that Poland's future state structures and territorial boundaries were agreed to by Poland's future communist leaders.

Polish foreign policy's national interest 'superstructure' continued to develop with the PPR in power after July 1944. Vital for the PKWN's legitimacy was the recognition by the Western allies of the political reality now existing in Poland: only the PKWN could deliver the Soviet guarantee that secured Poland's political and territorial integrity from future German aggression. The acceptability of this position was broadened by the accession of the PSL to what, with the new geo-strategic reality in place at the conclusion of the war, had quickly become the new foreign policy consensus. At the same time as the regime's security was being consolidated through the help of Soviet 'advisers', it gained the implicit recognition of the Western allies at the Yalta summit; and with the advance of the Red Army past Berlin, Western recognition of the new territorial shape of Poland, based on the earlier 'Teheran Formula', soon followed at Potsdam. The Polish communists could now turn their attention to their state's prestige.

Here the national interest 'superstructure' relied more on ongoing Western recognition. After 1945, the 'national communist' experiment remained acutely vulnerable to the withdrawal of this recognition. While Soviet policies remained open to the West, Polish policies were even more so. But in Western perceptions, these Polish initiatives were treated as an expression of the greater political and ideological authority of the Soviet leadership. Whatever the national variations Polish leaders attempted to introduce into their foreign policies, these were never substantial enough to warrant a change in Western perceptions. The methods used by the PPR to repress the PSL opposition did little to remedy the situation. Little understanding or patience

existed in Western policy councils in the immediate post-war years for the idiosyncracies of 'national communism'. In many ways because of this fact, the international communist threat became a self-fulfilling prophecy. If Stalin had been prepared to countenance a greater variation in socialist statehood in eastern and central Europe in exchange for the acceptance of the Soviet great power into the international state system, for their part the Western states after the death of Roosevelt had no intention of catering to the Soviet leader's understanding of his state's security.

The prestige of the national Polish communist state could not continue to operate along traditional patriotic lines once the split in the allied camp had become irrevocable. The 'national communist' experiment was brought to an end. In 1920 the theoretical possibilities of Marxist internationalism had been dashed for the Polish party by the practical imperative of security for the world's first socialist state. In 1947, the theoretical possibilities of 'national communism' were ended in much the same way and for much the same reasons. Where in 1919 and later 1923, the Polish communists had looked to the revolution in Europe to provide their native movement with greater autonomy from the Soviet security imperative, in the immediate post-war years the 'national' PPR and the PPS had sought the same freedom in the European swing to the left. The 'national' PPR in particular saw its greatest hope in the 'democratisation' of Germany and the elimination of the insecurity inherent in the Polish ideological frontier syndrome. It was not to be. Instead, the Polish communists once again found themselves occupying point position in the defence of the Soviet state.

Under threat from an assertive Western response to their search for security in Eastern Europe, it was not difficult for the Soviet

leadership to encourage an ideological retrenchment in the Polish party through the re-activation of its weighty 'Stalinist' component. Poland's national prestige was simply brought into line with the Soviet security guarantee; after 1948, what became in effect an ideological form of Polish national prestige, as well as the state's political and territorial security, came to be embodied in the political power and ideological prestige of the rapidly developing Soviet super-power.

The particular configuration between national and ideological interests that forms the thesis of this work has significant implications for the manner in which Polish communist foreign policy has been conducted since 1948. Stalin's legacy is imbedded in the very foundations of the modern Polish state. In foreign policy, this legacy is manifest in the ideological rationalisation for the post-war geopolitical configuration of Eastern Europe and Poland's 'new' foreign policy, ie. the so-called 'turn' at the conclusion of the Second World War. Since Stalin's death, various domestic processes of 'de-ideologisation' have confronted foreign policy makers with the need to lessen their external ideological profile.¹ Never in foreign policy, however, has 'de-ideologisation' gone further than simply updating the diplomatic brief and bringing it into line with current attitudes.² The underlying internationalist tenets of Polish foreign policy cannot change. They have remained untouched.³ Instead, avoiding recourse to an overt ideological rationalisation, policy makers emphasise the state's national interests and the concept of foreign policy 'realism'.⁴

But internationalism remains the basis of an agenda that from the outset has been classified as national and realist. Polish national security after 1944 was established through the Soviet *fait accompli*

in Poland; Poland's state and territorial security has henceforth been subject to Soviet oversight. Understanding and accepting this fact became the test of realism for all political parties wishing to operate in the post-war state. By 1948, the Polish communists could already claim their monopoly on this understanding of realism. 'De-ideologisation', therefore, can be seen as no more than an effect of this perceived monopoly.

Polish foreign policy is quickly able to redistribute its internationalist/national interest balance to suit its diplomacy. What it cannot do is separate itself from its own history or break its real monopoly on the fusion of inter-war communist internationalism with the historical national interest. Within the country, what have been presented as national foreign policies have always been recognised by the Polish population as being well within the ideological parameters set by the communists' internationalist commitment. As such, their implementation has achieved little of the popular recognition intended to win the Polish party its legitimization.

Notes

1. See Andrzej Walicki, 'The main components of the situation in Poland: 1980-1983', *Politics*, 19 (1), May 1984, pp.7-8, for his comment that the process of 'de-ideologisation' within the PZPR under Gomułka's leadership resulted in 'a narrowly conceived political realism based upon geo-political considerations'.

2. Compare, for example, Adam Bromke's analysis of Polish foreign policy being subject to an erosion of ideology as a result of *detente* with the West, 'Polish foreign policy in the 1970's', in A. Bromke and J.W. Strong (eds.), *Gierek's Poland*, New York, Praeger, 1973, pp.192-204; and an article in the same collection by the Polish Deputy Foreign Minister Stanisław Trepczyński, 'Poland and European Security', pp.205-212. In discussing the role of *detente* between ideological adversaries, the Minister concludes that only 'a true recognition of existing realities' would lead to the fulfillment of Poland's basic foreign goal: 'economic stability and a secure position in a peaceful Europe'. See pp.206, 208.

3. Gomułka's foreign policy efforts with regard to the non-nuclearization of West Germany and the Bundesrepublik's recognition of the Oder-Neisse border may have been 'genuine Polish initiatives', but already by 1960 Gomułka had almost entirely conceded the foreign policy field in a trade-off enabling him to focus the 'national' element of his strategy on domestic politics. By the middle of the decade, Gomułka had become one of the most conformist leaders of the Soviet alliance. Similarly with Gierek, no challenge to Soviet control over foreign policy was intended in his campaign for greater Western economic cooperation. See Peter Summerscale, *The East European Predicament: Changing Patterns in Poland, Czechoslovakia and Romania*, Royal Institute of International Affairs, Aldershot, Gower, 1982, pp. 38-40.

4. According to one authoritative commentator, not only has Polish security been enhanced in post-war Europe, it has indeed been perfected. The 'Polish question' is taken to no longer exist. Poland's borders and its state security are no longer a problem. There is now only the 'universal problem of... the stability and security of Europe as a whole', and here 'for the first time in centuries, Polish political thought is in high esteem for its realism, constructiveness and wisdom'. Marian Dobrosielski, 'Thirty-five years of foreign policy', *Polish Perspectives*, 22 (6), June 1979, p.18.

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