

March 31, 1945

**Telephoned Telegram from Soviet Ambassador to
Poland V. Z. Lebedev to I. V. Stalin and M. V.
Molotov**

Citation:

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Summary:

Ambassador Lebedev reports about an appeal from the underground group "Stronnitstvo Ludove" to the Military Commandant of Krakow with a proposal for negotiations with the Polish Leadership.

Credits:

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Original Language:

Russian

Contents:

Translation - English

Telephoned Telegram from USSR Ambassador to Poland V. Z. Lebedev to I. V. Stalin and M. V. Molotov about the Appeal of Representatives of the Underground Stronnitstvo Ludowe to the Military Commandant of Krakow with a Proposal for Negotiations with the Polish Leadership[1]

March 31, 1945

03:05 a.m.

SECRET

Urgent

Via telephone from Warsaw

To comrade I. V. STALIN,
to comrade V. M. MOLOTOV

Military commandant of Krakow, Ostrovsky, informed the government in Warsaw that on March 29, representatives of the Vitos wing "Strunnitstvo Ludowe" -- Marchinkowsky and Vitashek -- visited him. They raised a question about an immediate meeting between the leadership of the Vitos group, and possibly Vitos himself, with President Berut or with Prime Minister Morawsky. If the answer is positive, Marchinkowsky and Vitashek asked to inform them when Vitos' representatives could come to Warsaw for negotiations.

Berman informed me that Berut and Morawsky decided to turn to you for advice. Berut and Morawsky themselves think in the following terms: a legalization of Vitos and any kind of official negotiations with him would remove the main argument, on the basis of which the Polish government rejected Vitos as a member of consultations in Moscow.[2] At the same time, it would be desirable to find out what Vitos' position is. Therefore, Berut and Morawsky are inclined to agree that Vitos' representatives or Vitos himself meet with one of less official figures, for example, with representatives of the parties, Veslav or Shvalbe, and the conversation itself would have a strictly unofficial character.

In my opinion, Ostrowsky's information shows that the British would like to remove the argument about Vitos' illegal status from the hands of the Polish government. It is possible that during the meeting in Warsaw, Vitos, for the purposes of maneuvering, would meet the interim Polish government halfway, because now it is very important for the British to include Vitos in the delegation for consultations in Moscow, and then in the government of National Unity. Politically, from the point of view of his reputation in the country, Vincent Vitos is considerably more dangerous than Mikolaichik, and it is understandable that Berut and Morawsky do not want to have him in the composition of the Polish government. Because Vitos' representatives propose an official meeting in Warsaw themselves, the plan of an unofficial meeting proposed by Berut and Morawsky is a "stick with two ends" - it would remove the argument of Vitos' illegal status for Warsaw, but it would not obligate Vitos to do anything.

I believe that Berut and Morawsky should meet with Vitos officially, and propose that he accept the basic program principles of the bloc of the four parties, and of the manifest of the Polish Committee of National liberation from June 22, 1944.[3] If he refuses to do that, the Polish government would have in its hands an opportunity to expose him publicly to the country and to the peasantry. If he makes an agreement and he would have to be included in the government, then the present official negotiations would obligate him to abide by the promises that he makes now.

LEBEDEV

[1] The document bears two resolution by A. Ya. Vyshinsky: "To the files. 03.31," "Give our response to this letter. 04.03." Copies of the telegram were sent to I. Stalin, V. Molotov, A. Vyshinsky, V. Dekanozov, and to the IV European Department.

[2] He refers to the "Commission of Three"

[3] The Polish security services and the organs of the NKVD USSR organized in the beginning of April 1945 a meeting between V. Vitos and representatives of workers' parties (PWP and PPS) E. Okbab, and St. Shvalbe (For details see "NKVD and the Polish Underground. 1944-1945" (Based on I. V. Stalin's "Special Folders), Moscow, 1994. pp. 120-123)