

February 6, 1945

**Letter from President Roosevelt to Stalin on an
Acceptable Compromise Regarding the Composition
of the Postwar Polish Government, 6 February 1945**

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Summary:

Letter from President Roosevelt to Stalin on an Acceptable Compromise Regarding the Composition of the Postwar Polish Government; discussing Soviet actions and the Polish government.

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Transcript - English

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 6, 1945

My dear Marshal Stalin:

I have been giving a great deal of thought to our meeting this afternoon, and I want to tell you in all frankness what is on my mind.

In so far as the Polish Government is concerned, I am greatly disturbed that the three great powers do not have a meeting of minds about the political setup in Poland. It seems to me that it puts all of us in a bad light throughout the world to have you recognizing one government while we and the British are recognizing another in London. I am sure this state of affairs should not continue and that if it does it can only lead our people to think there is a breach between us, which is not the case. I am determined that there shall be no breach between ourselves and the Soviet Union. Surely there is a way to reconcile our differences.

Marshal V. I. [sic] Stalin,
Koreis, The Crimea

I was very much impressed with some of the things you said today, particularly your determination that your rear must be safeguarded as your army moves into Berlin. You cannot, and we must not, tolerate any temporary government which will give your armed forces any trouble of this sort. I want you to know that I am fully mindful of this.

You must believe me when I tell you that our people at home look with a critical eye on what they consider a disagreement between us at this vital stage of the war. They, in effect, say that if we cannot get a meeting of minds now when our armies are converging on the common enemy, how can we get an understanding on even more vital things in the future.

I have had to make it clear to you that we cannot recognize the Lublin Government as now composed, and the world would regard it as a lamentable outcome of our work here if we parted with an open and obvious divergence between us on this issue.

You said today that you would be prepared to support any suggestions for the solution of this problem which offered a fair chance of success, and you also mentioned the possibility of bringing some members of the Lublin government here.

Realizing that we all have the same anxiety in getting the matter settled, I would like to develop your proposal a little and suggest that we invite here to Yalta at once Mr. Beirut [Bierut] and Mr. Osubka Morawski from the Lublin government and also two or three from the following list of Poles, which according to our information would be desirable as representatives of the other elements of the Polish people in development of a new temporary government which all three of us could recognize and support: Bishop Sapieha of Cracow, Vincente [Wincenty] Witos, Mr. Zurlowski [Zulawski], Professor Buyak [Bujak], and Professor Kutzeva [Kutzeba]. If, as a result of the presence of these Polish leaders from abroad such as Mr. Mikolajczyk, Mr. Grabski, and Mr. Romer, the United States Government, and I feel sure the British government as well, would be prepared to examine with you conditions in which they would dissociate themselves from the London government and transfer their recognition to the new provisional government.

I hope that 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 interest.

It goes without saying that any interim government could be formed as a result of our conference with the Poles here would be pledged to the holding of free elections in Poland at the earliest possible date. I know this is completely consistent with your desire to see a new free and democratic Poland emerge from the welter of this war.

Most sincerely yours

Franklin Roosevelt