

PPF 881

Paderewski, Ignace Jan

881

December 17, 1940

My dear Mr. Paderewski:

On the eve of my departure for the South I received your letter of November 30 and read it with interest and sympathy. I was sorry to learn from it that the condition of your health is such as to confine you to your room, and hope that eventually you will improve to such an extent as to render it possible for me to tell you in person how pleased we are to have you in the United States.

The remarks contained in your letter with regard to the loyalty to the United States of American citizens of Polish origin were particularly interesting. It is gratifying in these trying days to feel that the Government of the United States can rely upon the patriotism and loyalty of practically all elements of the American people regardless of the part of the world from which they or their forbears have come. The maintenance of this national unity is of the utmost importance.

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Before my departure I brought your letter to the attention of Admiral Leahy and I am sure that certain information contained in it has been useful to him. Although Admiral Leahy is extremely busy endeavoring to take care of numerous matters which must receive his immediate attention, I have asked him, if he can possibly find an opportunity to do so, to call on you or to see Mr. Strakacz.

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You may be certain that all of us want to do everything that is possible and proper to alleviate

x463

the hardships and sufferings of the innocent victims in Europe of the present conflict. It is unfortunate that situations sometimes arise in which we find ourselves almost powerless to be of effective aid. Through diplomatic and other established channels we hope to be able to keep in touch with developments in order to make sure that we shall not overlook any opportunity which may present itself to be of real assistance to your fellow countrymen who, as a result of the war, are in such great need both in their own country and in other parts of Europe and Asia.

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xPP76677

x3126

I am deeply anxious that you will devote your best efforts for the time being to the recovery of your health, so that you may be able fully to resume your activities. In the meantime, you may be rest assured that the whole question of Polish interests will be given full and most sympathetic consideration by this Government in its discussions with the new Polish Ambassador with whom I feel sure you will be in close touch.

Very sincerely yours,

(Signed) Franklin D. Roosevelt

His Excellency
Ignacy Jan Paderewski, #
Ritz Tower,
Park Avenue at 57th Street,
New York, New York.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

December 11, 1940

My dear Mr. President:

I am returning herewith the letter addressed to you under date of November 30 by Mr. Paderewski, together with the suggested draft of a reply from you to Mr. Paderewski.

You will note that although the drafted letter is of a friendly nature, it nevertheless does not include any detailed discussion of the various points raised in Mr. Paderewski's letter to you. This omission is due to our feeling that it is preferable for discussions of this nature to be conducted through established diplomatic channels with the Polish Government rather than through Mr. Paderewski. It is our understanding that the condition of Mr. Paderewski's health is such that he is not able to handle public affairs. It appears, however, that his secretary, Mr. Strakacz, who is a man of considerable energy and ambition, hopes, by making use of Mr. Paderewski's name and prestige, not only to engage in activities among American citizens of Polish origin

The President,

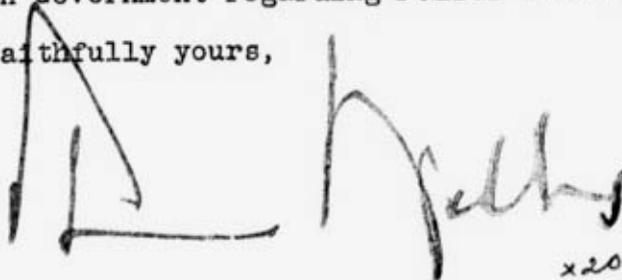
The White House.

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origin in this country but also to handle certain matters relating to Polish-American relations which normally would be conducted through diplomatic channels. In order to prevent confusion and additional friction between the various Polish elements in this country it is believed that we should encourage the use of diplomatic channels in the solution of various problems between the Polish Government and the American Government, particularly since a new Ambassador will reach Washington in the near future.

It is hoped that this letter, as drafted, will show Mr. Paderewski your feelings of friendliness and sympathy for him and at the same time will give Mr. Strakacz to understand that the Polish Embassy, rather than Mr. Strakacz, is the proper channel for communications and discussions with the American Government regarding Polish matters.

Faithfully yours,



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Enclosures:

1. Letter from Mr. Paderewski, November 30, returned.
2. Draft of reply to Mr. Paderewski.

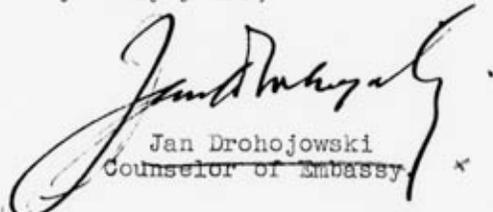
POLISH EMBASSY

December 2nd, 1940.

My dear General Watson,

I am directed to solicit your kindness in order to have the attached letter delivered at the earliest possible convenience to the President of the United States. The sealed envelope contains a personal message to the President from The Honorable Ignacy Jan Paderewski.

Very truly yours,


Jan Drohojowski
Counselor of Embassy

enclosure

General Edwin M. Watson,
Secretary to the President,
The White House.



Wicks
Ritz Tower
Park Avenue at 57th Street
New York

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"RIZTOWER"

November 30th 1940.

State support for 2/10/40

*ackd.
11/2/40*

My dear Mr. President,

upon my arrival in the United States my first thought was to ask you to grant me the honor of paying my respects to you and to Mrs. Roosevelt.

I am naturally most anxious to express to you my sincere appreciation and my deep gratitude for the personal interest you graciously took in my misadventure in Spain as well as for the efficacious intervention of your Ambassador Hon. Alexander W. Weddell.

Unfortunately my doctor's strict order still confines me to my room and, at least for the present time, my ardent desire to be received by you can not be realized.

Numerous friends of mine, American citizens of Polish extraction, have already visited me.



TELEPHONE
WICKERSHAM 2-5000

Ritz Tower
Park Avenue at 57th Street
New York

2.

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"RIZTOWER"

I am only too glad to report that their love for and their devotion to the United States, their attachment to the liberties and to the democratic system, their appreciation and their understanding of your great achievements, gave me a full satisfaction. They are and they will remain most loyal citizens, conscious of the debt of gratitude they owe to their country.

They are willing and ready to serve their country in every way, to contribute to its greatness by their daily efforts and work, as well as to defend it in case of need. They were most proud in letting me know that although American citizens of Polish extraction represent less than 3 per cent of the entire population, 17 per cent of the total number of volunteers, who answered your appeal, were of Polish derivation. This fact certainly gives the best attestation to their patriotism.



Ritz Tower
Park Avenue at 57th Street
New York

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"RITZTOWER"

Mr. President! You have just appointed a new Ambassador to the Vichy government, Hon. Admiral Leahy.

Under the constant pressure of Hitler's Germany, the French government in Vichy, in spite of its formally expressed regrets, had to interrupt the diplomatic relations with the Polish government. After the departure from Vichy of the Polish Embassy and of our consulates from unoccupied France, Polish citizens in France have no more protection.

I understand that the Vichy government has no more liberty in agreeing that Polish citizens would be officially protected or represented by your Embassy, or by the American Consular Service, than the said government had in the question of maintaining our diplomatic relations. The Vichy government however has been permitted to maintain in unoccupied France the activity of the Polish Red Cross.



Ritz Tower
Park Avenue at 57th Street
New York

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"RIZTOWER"

May I be permitted, Mr. President, to suggest that Ambassador Leahy be instructed to maintain a friendly contact with the Polish Red Cross authorities in Vichy and to morally assist them in case of need. Could Ambassador Leahy also be permitted to instruct the American Consuls to take the same friendly and protective attitude towards the local Polish Red Cross Committees?

It is quite plainly understood that these eventual instructions would remain strictly confidential and would not cause any expenditure or involve your representatives in any form of material help.

I would greatly appreciate your permission to see Ambassador Leahy before his departure for Europe, but in view of my rather precarious state of health, I would propose that my friend, minister Sylwin Strakacz, be received by Ambassador Leahy in order to submit to him the whole problem.



TELEPHONE
WICKERSHAM 2-5000

Ritz Tower
Park Avenue at 57th Street
New York

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"RITZTOWER"

I think that Ambassador Leahy might even be interested in seeing Mr. Strakacz who on several occasions has been received in Vichy by Marechal Petain and confidentially discussed with him many important problems connected with the present situation of the Vichy government.

I quite realize the importance of my plea but the destiny of about 500,000 Polish citizens still remaining in France is at stake.

I make my appeal in the name of humanity, in the name of all those sacred and lofty ideals the civilized world is defending against the barbarous aggression. I can assure you, Mr. President, that your generous approval of my humble request would save hundreds of thousands of my countrymen, women and children from many unnecessary sufferings.

The day will come, when this new contribution of yours to our civilization will become known and then, I am sure, all those whom you eventually saved will bless you, as well as the United States.



TELEPHONE
WICKERSHAM 2-5000

Ritz Tower
Park Avenue at 57th Street
New York

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS
"RIZTOWER"

It will add to the glory of the United States, the noble and paramount defensor of humanity, it will strengthen the traditional ties which are uniting my, now suffering, country and your great Democracy.

I take the liberty of enclosing a short statement concerning the actual status of Polish citizens in France as well as exposing the general principles of the eventual assistance to them.

May I be permitted to offer to you, Mr. President, and to Mrs. Roosevelt the expression of my highest regard
yours very gratefully and affectionately

J. J. Paderewski

Pro Memoria.

STATUS OF POLISH CITIZENS IN FRANCE.

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1. Approximate number: 450.000
2. Composed of:
 - a/ Overwhelming majority immigrated during 1922-1936. Mostly manual workmen occupied in mining, farming, handicrafts and trade /about 350.000/.
 - b/ Former commissioned and non commissioned officers and soldiers who joined the Polish Army in France. They fulfilled their duty in fighting the enemy until the very last moment. There lies the reason of their non evacuation to England /about 15.000/. They are actually confined to concentration camps in different districts of non occupied France. They are organized in labour formations under French military guard.
 - c/ Civilian refugees from Poland /mostly wives and children of officers and soldiers now in active service in Great Britain/.
3. The Polish Red Cross in Vichy and its Committees in Lyon, Toulouse and Marseille are taking care of them.

4. The Polish government would greatly appreciate:

a/ If Ambassador Leahy would occasionally mention to the competent French authorities that the United States take an interest in the fate of the Polish citizens remaining in France.

b/ if the same mention to local authorities could occasionally be made by the U.S. Consuls.

c/ if Ambassador Leahy would authorize the chief of the Polish Red Cross in Vichy to apply to him for moral help and assistance in exceptionally important cases and if Ambassador Leahy would be willing to intervene in favour of the Polish Red Cross.

5. No instructions whatsoever notifying to the Polish Red Cross the eventual favourable decision concerning the above exposed request would be given neither directly by the Polish government nor by the headquarters of the Polish Red Cross. Ambassador Leahy would himself at his convenience and in proper time get in touch with the representative of the Polish Red Cross in Vichy in order to explain to him his willingness to assist him in case of need.