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FOREIGN NATIONALITY GROUPS IN THE UNITED STATES. MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC SERVICES FROM THE FOREIGN NATIONALITIES BRANCH Number B-101 29 October 1943

149-1607

ACTIVITY ON THE POLISH-AMERICAN LEFT

Organizational activity is being planned on the Polish-American Left. Among those included in plans for an organization to preach Polish-Russian friendship are Wacław Soyda, Oscar Lange, and the Reverend Stanislaus Orszanski.

Left-wing Polish-Americans, fired by the reluctance of moderate and right-wing groups to bring pressure on the Polish Government-in-Exile to come to terms with Soviet Russia, are calling a private meeting to be held in Detroit 8 November 1943 to set up an organization for that purpose. The platform of this organization will call for settlement of the border question with Russia and thoroughgoing agrarian reform and democratization in post-war Poland. Invitations to the meeting are being issued by Wacław Soyda, editor of the Detroit labor-socialist weekly, Nasz Swiat. Professor Oscar Lange of the University of Chicago, author of a much-discussed declaration entitled "Call to Reason" (see FN Number B-58, 15 July 1943) will be one of the chief speakers. "A priest from Boston" will be the other.

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Waclaw Soyda An elderly, well educated Polish-American Journalist, Soyda is described as an intelligent and capable man. As publisher of Nasz Dziennik he is probably the leading figure among liberal Polish-American groups in Detroit. At various times he has been associated with non-socialist papers, including Dziennik Polski, now the Detroit organ of the Polish National Alliance (KNAPP). He was discharged from his position as editor-in-chief of Dziennik Polski in 1937 for expressing pro-labor views during a strike against that paper. Although accused of being a Communist, he recently told a friend that he has cooperated with the Communists as the only active group on the Left. "I am not a fascist," he said, "I am also not a hater of the Communists, but am not willing to follow the Communists."

Soyda hopes that Poland will lose the disputed eastern territories. The areas inhabited by Ukrainians, he says, have always been a source of trouble, and the provinces of White Russia and Volhynia are coveted chiefly by rich Polish landlords as a means of exploiting the Ukrainian and White Russian peasantry there.

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Soyda is not optimistic on the score of the Polish-Americans. In an interview in June he said that most Polish workingmen in the United States who are liberal in viewpoint as to the American scene are anti-Soviet on the question of Polish borders. "They are," he said, "very poorly educated. Many cannot read and know less about geography, and to them any city with a name that has a Polish sound belongs to Poland. It is hard to explain the Atlantic Charter to them. They know Russia wants half of Poland and they are not ready to give it up. As they cannot read the American press they know only what they read in the Dziennik Polski of Detroit."

Oscar Lange Oscar Lange, formerly professor at the University of Cracow, is now a professor at the University of Chicago. Recently he restated his position in a letter published in the New York Herald Tribune 5 October 1943. The intransigent Poles, says Lange, based their denunciations of Russia's plan to dominate the Ukraine and White Russia upon an erroneous belief in the weakness of Soviet Russia. The proven strength of the USSR requires the adoption of another program. If Poland is to be free and strong that program

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must be based upon a closer understanding with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. Poland can help protect Russia from Germany, and Soviet Russia can in turn offer the same protection to Poland as the United States offers Mexico and Canada. All attempts to promote misunderstandings between the Anglo-Saxon Allies and the Soviet Union plainly threaten suicide for Poland since the only alternative for a system of collective security is a system of "exclusive spheres of influence" in which Poland would fail completely within the Soviet sphere.

"A final prerequisite for Poland's future," Lange argues, "is an amicable solution of the boundary dispute with the Soviet Union. The Polish nation must recognize the right of the Ukrainians and White Ruthenians to national reunion with the Soviet Ukraine and Soviet White Ruthenia [White Russia]. Attempts to force these peoples into Poland against their will can result only (as it has in the past) in a weakening of the Polish state by internal dissension." Requiring coercion, such attempts would also make democracy within Poland impossible.

Poland must democratize and undergo an agrarian reform "which will eliminate the feudal elements in the

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country by giving the land to the peasants." The Polish Government-in-Exile, Lange continues, must be reorganized with "an understanding of the democratic elements in that government with the Union of Polish Patriots in the USSR and with democratic Polish groups in other places."

Professor Lange demands Polish sovereignty over East Prussia, except for its Lithuanian section. "A democratic Poland will have to expropriate the Junkers, to ship them out of the country, and to settle their estates with peasants. Poland should have all of Upper Silesia with a prevailing Polish population, a step both in democracy, since the Poles there are peasants chiefly, and also a step toward weakening German militarism by removing war industries." "Centers of Polish culture" in Galicia, such as Lwow, should be left to Poland even though they are located in ethnographically Ukrainian or White Russian territory. This feature of Lange's program is being attacked by Ukrainians in the United States as a manifestation of Polish imperialism from the Left.

To the bulk of Polish Socialists Professor Lange and those Socialists who with him signed the "Call to Reason" are still renegades.

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Stanislaus
Orlemanski

It is probable that the "priest from Boston" is the Reverend Stanislaus Orlemanski of the Church of St. Mary of the Rosary in Springfield, Massachusetts. Orlemanski was born in Erie, Pennsylvania, 12 December 1889. He has for a long time been concerned with various Polish activities and problems. In 1932 he wrote a brochure on The Polish Immigration in the U.S.A. Two years ago he aroused attention through his opposition to a Polish Day which was to be sponsored in Springfield by local followers of KNAPP. Several months ago he took a stand against official Polish policy and announced his endorsement of the Polish Kosciuszko Division organized in the USSR. He thereupon organized a group known as the Kosciuszko Legion in Springfield, which aims to extend moral and material support to Polish forces in the Soviet Union, and he issued an appeal to other Polish-Americans to follow suit. The rightist Polish press has of late been taking him severely to task for propagating the idea of Polish-Soviet cooperation. He has been writing articles both for Soyda's Nasz Swiat and the pro-Communist Glos Ludowy.

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These activities of the Reverend Orlemanski have evoked charges that he is a Communist, or at least a fellow-traveler. This view, often presented by such newspapers as the Nowy Swiat of New York, is not generally shared. Some moderate papers, like the Jersey City Glos Narodu, regard him as a man of goodwill who during these times of confusion is seeking a road toward the better tomorrow. Glos Ludowy recommends him as a "foe of fascism," and in printing his articles often reminds its readers that they represent the Reverend's own views. Father Orlemanski says of himself: "I am a priest, I am a patriot, I am an American who loves the people of his descent. And I want to aid the Polish people, but in the American way."

People who know Father Orlemanski categorically deny that he is a Communist and compare his views with those of certain liberal Protestant ministers. He cannot be considered as a leader of any movement, but merely as an individual with strong political and social interests which have made of him a public figure. It is recalled that in Poland there were occasional radical priests who identified their interests with those of the common people and became exponents of their needs. One of the better

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known was Father Okon, a member of the Polish Sejm.

Beginning with last July, Orlemanski has published a number of articles reflecting his views on various current problems. It is his contention that the Polish Government-in-Exile and Polish statesmen are to blame for the bad relations with Soviet Russia. "Polish diplomats," he says, "are viewing Russia and Germany through glasses of the past. Whereas present-day Germany is a greater foe than the former Germany ever was, post-revolutionary Russia considers collaboration with Poland as beneficial to both countries." Only Soviet Russia, he continues, can help Poland culturally and economically, and only a policy of Soviet-Polish friendship can guarantee the frontiers of Poland. As to religion, Poland can keep its traditional motto, "God and the Fatherland," while Russia can do as she pleases.

Outside Support The arguments of Soyda, Lange, and Orlemanski are closely aligned to those advanced by some Polish-Americans of sympathies more definitely to the Left, including Boleslaw Gebert, head of the Polish-American Section, IWO. In a recent series of articles in the Glos Ludowy Gebert demanded from KNAPP

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a statement as to the source of its budget of \$42,000, which he declared to be in need of explanation in view of the small membership of only 600. (KNAPP officers claim a membership of 1475.)

Polish-American liberals and leftists have found support in the Detroit News, where Philip Adler has been running a series of articles, the latest of which attack the anti-Semitic record of the Polish Government. KNAPP leaders say Adler is behind a left-wing "unity organization" of trade union groups nominally headed by Szymon Kaminski, formerly editor-in-chief of the Socialist Robotnik Polski of New York City, with which he broke in protest against its anti-Soviet policy. Other Socialist leaders who left the Robotnik Polski for similar reasons were Stefan Arski and Dr. A. Penzik, co-signers with Lange of his "Call to Reason."

State Senator Stanley Nowak of Michigan has recently been addressing pro-Soviet Polish meetings. The charges brought against him on the ground that he failed to declare his alleged Communist sympathies at the time of application for citizenship in 1938 were dropped early this year.

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