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### **SOME HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND AND REASONS FOR THE CREATION OF THE 1ST POLISH INFANTRY DIVISION NAMED AFTER TADEUSZ KOSCIUSZKO IN 1943-1945**

#### *Abstract*

In this research article addresses the issue from the point of view of the Soviet government a "betrayal" of the Polish General Anders, and it was his decision to evacuate the entire Polish army in the Soviet Union, particularly from Kazakhstan and Central Asia in Iran. Some historical and political reasons for the creation of the 1st Polish infantry division named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko are investigated.

**Keywords:** world war II, USSR, Poland, Anders Army, General Sigmund Berling, 1st Polish infantry division named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko, 1st army of the Polish Army.

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### **1943-1945 ЖЖ. ТАДЕУШ КОСТЮШКО АТЫНДАҒЫ БІРІНШІ ПОЛЯК ЖАЯУ ӘСКЕР ДИВИЗИЯСЫ ҚҰРЫЛУЫНЫҢ КЕЙБІР ТАРИХИ-САЯСИ АЛҒЫШАРТТАРЫ МЕН СЕБЕПТЕРІ**

#### *Аңдатпа*

Бұл мақалада кеңес үкіметінің көзқарасы бойынша поляк генералы В.Андерстің «сатқындығы», дәлірек айтқанда, оның барлық поляк армиясын Кеңес Одағы территориясынан, нақты атап өтсек, Қазақстан және Орталық Азия аумағынан Иранға эвакуациялау туралы шешімі қарастырылды. Тадеуш Костюшко атындағы 1-ші жаяу әскер дивизиясы құрылуының кейбір тарихи және саяси себептері зерттелді.

**Кілт сөздері:** Екінші дүниежүзілік соғыс, КСРО, Польша, Андерс Армиясы, генерал Зыгмунд Берлинг, Тадеуш Костюшко атындағы 1-ші жаяу әскер дивизиясы, Поляк Әскерінің 1-ші армиясы.

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## **НЕКОТОРЫЕ ИСТОРИКО-ПОЛИТИЧЕСКИЕ ПРЕДПОСЫЛКИ И ПРИЧИНЫ СОЗДАНИЯ ПЕРВОЙ ПОЛЬСКОЙ ПЕХОТНОЙ ДИВИЗИИ ИМЕНИ ТАДЕУША КОСТЮШКО В 1943-1945 гг.**

### *Аннотация*

В данной научной статье рассматривается вопрос, с точки зрения советского правительства «предательство» польского генерала Андерса, а именно его решение об эвакуации всей польской армии с территории Советского Союза, в частности с территории Казахстана и Центральной Азии в Иран. Исследуются некоторые исторические и политические причины создания 1-ой польской пехотной дивизии имени Тадеуша Костюшко.

**Ключевые слова:** Вторая мировая война, СССР, Польша, Армия Андерса, генерал Зыгмунд Берлинг, 1-ая польская пехотная дивизия имени Тадеуша Костюшко, 1-ая армию Войска Польского.

The second world war is one of the most significant historical events and tragedies of the XX century. Despite the fact that today, the theme of the largest war of the last century is one of the most relevant and widely studied among historians around the world, it has a lot of white spots. One of them is the Soviet-Polish relations in the context of the Second world war and the great Patriotic war.

Soviet-Polish relations are ambiguous, there are dualistic opinions of historians and the public at large on this topic. One of the most important areas of Soviet-Polish relations is the military Alliance between the two countries during the Second world war.

In historiography, several Polish military formations are known: the home Army, the Ludowa Guard, the Anders Army and the 1st Polish infantry division named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko, then reformed into the 1st army of the Polish Army. Of all these armies, Kazakhstan and Central Asia are directly related to two military formations that were formed in different years of world war II, the army under the command of Vladislav Anders in 1941-42 and the army under the command of Polish Colonel and General Zygmunt Berling in 1943-1945. In order to try to reveal some historical and political background and reasons for the creation of the 1st Polish infantry division named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko in the USSR in 1943-1945. in the historical context, it is necessary to start in chronological order with the formation of the Army of Anders.

14 August 1941 was signed military agreement between representatives the USSR and Polish emigrant governments (PEG), about fix stated in too costly 4 agreement Sikorsky-May from 30 July 1941. On Soviet territory it was supposed to create a Polish army to participate in the battles together with the Soviet troops. During the war, the army had to obey the Supreme command of the USSR, but everything related to the personnel and internal organization was under the jurisdiction of the Supreme command of Poland. In matters of provision and sanitation of personnel Polish units were equated to the soldiers of the red Army [1].

Conscription was subject to soldiers and officers of The Polish Army, who were in prison camps. From the former Eastern territories of Poland – the areas of Western Ukraine and Western Belarus occupied by the Soviet troops, young people of the appropriate age were called from among those convicted and exiled administratively in 1939-1941, as well as poles who were evacuated in 1941 and sent to the construction battalions and combat units of the red Army. Anders ' army was formed quickly: already on August 29, 1941, it numbered 8.5 thousand people, and on October 28-41, 5 thousand soldiers and 4 thousand. officers released from Soviet camps [2, 7].

It should be noted that most of the Polish soldiers and officers of the army of Anders were negative to the USSR as a whole and considered cooperation unpromising. Some of them were not afraid to say out loud that after the end of the war, Western Ukraine and Belarus would become Polish again. The facts of unworthy behavior of soldiers of Anders army in the Soviet territory are known. Cases of robberies and robberies of the population of local collective farms, forcible withdrawal of cattle and food are recorded.

1942 further revealed the fragility of the Soviet-Polish Union. The Soviet Union began to experience a sharp shortage of food, as many agricultural areas were occupied. The financial situation of the Polish army deteriorated sharply. The conversation of I. V. Stalin and V. Anders on March 18, shows that the Soviet Union could not fully provide the Polish part of the food and decipiat. Anders ' army was

expensive, but it was understaffed and did not participate in any battles. Knowing about these difficulties, V. Sikorsky in November 1941 proposed to transfer Polish pilots to England and another 20-25 thousand troops to replenish Polish units in the middle East and in England [3]. Then, at the suggestion of W. Churchill, the Prime Minister of Poland proposed to Stalin to withdraw the entire army of Anders in Iran, while guaranteeing participation in hostilities when it is ready. But the Secretary – General noted that the purpose of creating Polish units was to help the red Army on the Eastern front-the most difficult part of the military operations. He said in a sharp form that this proposal Sikorsky comes from the UK, which Polish hands decided to ensure their interests in the middle East.

The General tried to have the I. V. Stalin at least a minimum provide for each soldier, as even the grain rations were not enough for everyone. The Soviet leader invited the servicemen to work in collective farms. To this Anders replied that his army was a professional military, and the regulations did not allow it, especially since the collective farms were starving no less. General not saw another exit, except as to leave in the USSR 44 thousand soldiers (on the day army averaged about 80 thousand), on which could point to food, and rest send in Iran. "Perhaps one day we will be able to organize a unit on the territory of Iran, which together with those who remain in the USSR, would go to the front." 5th division 3. Berlinga Anders army was ready to stay and fight with the Soviet troops. V. Anders in a letter to V. Sikorsky on February 4, 1942 called it a disgrace for the Polish army: "the Desire of one division will undermine the morale of the entire army." V.Sikorsky replied: in any case, the army is not divided, and until it is ready, do not throw into battle [3].

There were political differences between the Prime Minister and the commander of the Polish army in the USSR. Behind them were different forces-supporters of the Union with the USSR in the fight against Germany and its opponents. V. Anders insisted on the withdrawal of the entire contingent of troops to the middle East, V. Sikorsky assumed half of the army to be transported to the UK, where it could receive weapons and reinforcements. He gave a categorical order to leave some of the soldiers and officers on Soviet territory. The Prime Minister understood that the Soviet government would perceive abrupt steps as a violation of the military agreement and could break off relations.

Eventually V. Anders declared that "the Polish government contrary to the agreement between the USSR and Poland does not consider possible to use on the Soviet-German front the Polish armies formed in the USSR" [4], and made the decision to evacuate actually all army without the consent of the Soviet and Polish government. As a result, about 80 thousand soldiers left the Soviet Union, 12 thousand of them, including pilots, sailors, tankers, were sent to England, the rest – to Iran. On Soviet territory remained only a few officers and soldiers led by Colonel 3. Beurling.

In the USSR, the withdrawal of Anders ' army was regarded as a retreat from allied duties. The British Prime Minister W. Churchill and PEG had a different opinion. During the discussion of the future actions of the army on August 22, 1942, W. Churchill in Cairo said to W. Anders that he admits: the Russians will not be disposed to allow the departure of Polish officers because of fears that they may tell how they were treated. The General replied: "in Russia there is no justice and honesty, and there is not a single person whose word can be trusted" [5]. U. Churchill, however, warned: "Nothing good can happen if you cause hostility from the Russians."

In the Polish emigrant press, for example in the " Worker Polski " of February 1, 1943, the departure of Anders's army beyond the Soviet borders was explained by the fact that the troops and the command did not wait for Soviet weapons and, seeking as soon as possible to take part in the defeat of the Nazis, decided that together with the British.

The Soviet-Polish military agreement of August 14, 1941, was most likely doomed to failure in advance. From the beginning, there was a lack of understanding between the two commands. Anti-Soviet sentiment prevailed in Anders ' army. The soldiers had no desire to liberate, as they imagined, a hostile country. Many of them experienced all the hardships of staying in Soviet camps, including V. Anders himself. The General, who took part in the hostilities against the USSR in 1939, had already formed a negative position towards the Soviet state as a whole. The army command and soldiers were closer to the position of the right-wing forces of the PEG: "Since Russia will be extremely weakened and Germany crushed, Poland will be the most powerful state in this part of the world" [6]. The centuries-old habit of poles to look at Russia as an invader and exploiter who uses Polish resources for his own purposes was also manifested here.

However, the fact that Anders ' army was understaffed cannot be considered the main reason for its non-participation in the fighting, especially since the ready division 3. Berlinga was already eager for battle. For comparison, we give only a small fragment from the memoirs of G. K. Zhukov, who told how factory workers had to be removed directly while working to repel the German attacks on Leningrad in

1942. Here and speech not resisted about some "complete set" [7]. What was Anders' army doing at the time? It is worth remembering the Warsaw uprising of 1944—the Poles selflessly fought in the absence of artillery, aircraft and tanks.

The Eastern front of the battles represented the most intense part of the military operations of the Second World War. And for the USSR in the difficult year 1942, any human resources were important here, the need for reinforcements was felt many times stronger than in the Middle East, where the Anglo-American forces operated. Of course, if it were necessary to liberate not Soviet, but Polish land, Anders' army would enter the battle as the divisions formed. The General decided that Poland could be liberated from the other side – from the Middle East, together with the Anglo-American allies: to act against Hitler, but not together with the Soviet Union. And although the majority of the PEG members to the end stood for the implementation of the military agreement, the opinion of V. Anders was decisive.

The military agreement complicated the issue of the joint border of the USSR and Poland. Stalin and the Soviet government constantly insisted on the legality of the Curzon line – on the accession of Western Ukraine and Belarus to the Soviet Union. It also reduced the desire of the Poles to act in conjunction with the Red Army. It seems that even if fully staffed, hardly the soldiers would have fought with great enthusiasm – at that time, the command of the Polish army was just stalling. They expected either the Soviet Union to liberate its territory from German troops on its own, or a German victory, or that the PEG would be able to obtain Stalin's permission to transfer the entire army to Iran.

It should be noted that the conclusion of the Sikorski-Mayski agreement was not supported by all political forces of the Polish emigration (for example, K. Sosnkovsky's group resigned from the government after July 30, 1941 in protest). The President V. Rakhiwicz initially considered cooperation with the Soviet Union exclusively as a necessary step.

The collapse of the military agreement of August 14, 1941 was predetermined by political reasons. Soon became apparent and logical consequences. The Soviet government's distrust of its Polish partners increased. In the relations of the USSR and the PEG, the tension grew more and more. Both sides came to the conclusion of the futility and futility of the Sikorski-Mayski agreement as a whole. After reports of the death of Polish officers in Katyn in 1943, the Soviet government annulled the Treaty. The main reason is the divergence of interests of the two governments, which began to prevail over common goals, as well as accumulated mutual grievances and unresolved problems.

As a result, on May 6, 1943, the State Defense Committee of the USSR issued resolution No. 3294 "on the formation of the 1st Polish Infantry Division named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko". The formation command a division began 14 on May 1943 year in Seletskikh military camps under Ryazan.

Colonel Zygmunt Berling (former head of the Anders Army military camp in Krasnovodsk) was appointed the first division commander; Karol Sverchevsky and Boleslav Kenevich were appointed Deputy division commanders; Osta Stets was appointed chief of staff; and Alexander Zavadsky was appointed Deputy commander. From 20 November 1943 to 27 September 1945, the division commander was a Soviet Colonel, (from 13-March 1944, major General and simultaneously Brigadier General, and from 1-August 1945, major General of the Polish armed forces) Wojciech Bevziuk.

The units were armed with Soviet weapons, as the USSR provided military equipment, equipment and was responsible for the logistics of the Polish division. Training was carried out according to the statutes of the Red Army. The personnel were dressed in the Polish military uniform of the 1939 model, but with their own insignia (the Piast eagle was approved as a cockade) [8].

The provision of food for the division's personnel corresponded to the norms established for the Soviet guards rifle division [9].

In the autumn of 1943, Soviet troops began the liberation of Eastern Belarus from the Germans. The Red Army was approaching the borders of Poland. In the current situation, the Supreme Commander-in-Chief, General Sosnkovsky, sent a Directive to the commander of the Home Army, General Komarovsky, on September 5, 1943. It provided for three options for the behavior of the AK, depending on the development of military and political events:

"Option 1: Russia undertakes to restore the borders of 1939. This obligation the allies provide with their guarantees. Mixed inter-Union commissions and allied military units appear in the territories of Poland covered by military operations. In the occupied areas, the administration is carried out by representatives of the Polish Government. Berling's military formations are disbanded or reassigned to the Polish command.

2-option: Russia retains its aggressive and imperialist goals. And with Berling's divisions, the Communist Polish government penetrates into the territory of Poland, forms the political situation, the population is subjected to repression and persecution.

3-option: in the outside world, Russia does not put forward claims to the borders, pretends to accept the American formula for solving these problems after the war, however, by introducing Burling troops, penetrates into Polish territory, carries out repression and persecution, but does not allow any inter-allied Commission or units, changes the political situation, organizes elections and plebiscites" [10, 198-199].

Taking into account all the above mentioned materials written in this study, we believe that the main reason for the creation of the 1st Polish infantry division named after Tadeusz Kosciuszko is that the government of the Soviet Union had to look before the world community as a liberator of Europe and in this particular case of the Polish state. Without the participation of the Polish armed forces in the liberation of Polish territories by the red Army from Hitler's expansion, some members of the world community could regard it and present it as the occupation of Poland by the Soviet Union.

In order to avoid this coincidence, the USSR government took a decision to return to the necessity of Polish-Soviet military Alliance for the liberation of Poland and the border area, then use the Pro-Soviet Polish army to establish Pro-Soviet government and to exert external influence on the domestic policy situation in Poland.

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