

## **Soviet-Polish relations regarding the visit of general V. Sikorski to the USSR (30 November-16 December 1941)**

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### **Abstract**

This article deals with Soviet-Polish relations during the Second World War, which have for many years, especially since the demise of the Soviet Union, been subject to revision and falsification. Particular emphasis is placed on the period during the Second World War, when these relations were of an ambiguous nature. The Poles never forgave the fact that on 17 September 1939 the Red Army crossed the pre-war border and occupied the territory of Western Belarus and Western Ukraine, forgetting that, firstly, these territories had been forcibly annexed by the II Rzeczpospolita (Second Polish Republic) from Soviet Russia during the Civil War, and secondly, that on that day the Polish government, including the Supreme Commander, abandoned the country, the people and the army to the whims of fate and fled to Romania, where they were interned. To replace this imprisoned government, a new Polish cabinet headed by General V. Sikorski was formed in France. One of its first actions was to issue a decree in which it declared itself in a state of war with the Soviet Union. In addition, it stated the nonrecognition of the reunion of the Ukrainian SSR and Belorussian SSR areas of Western Ukraine and Belarus, and declared its intention to fight for the return of these regions to Poland. It was under these conditions of huge national tragedy that Sikorski's government took an anti-Soviet position. Naturally, for the Polish government-in-exile (which after the defeat of France had moved to London) to take such a position was not conducive to the establishment of normal relations with the Soviet Union. In an effort to consolidate the forces of all the enemies of Nazi Germany, the Soviet leadership considered it appropriate to bring the governments-in-exile into the existing Soviet-Anglo-American coalition, and to push these governments to take an active role in the struggle for liberation. Only after the Soviet Union's offensive defence had blocked Hitler's plan of Blitzkrieg, thus proving its strength and ability to defeat the enemy, did Sikorski withdraw from his divisive theory of "two enemies," the expression of which was the signing of the Polish-Soviet agreement of 30 July 1941. Sikorski's official visit to Russia in 1941 was of great importance in the establishment of these bilateral relations, and an analysis of this visit forms the main content of this article.

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### **Keywords**

A. Vyshinsky, Buzuluk, I. Stalin, Polish army, Tatishchevo, Totskoye, V. Sikorski