The more significant holdings, with their detailed reference websites:

1. **Poland. Ambasada (Soviet Union) Records, 1941-1944**
   http://www.oac.cdlib.org:80/dynaweb/ead/hoover/reg_205/

2. **Poland. Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji Records, 1939-1945**
   http://www.oac.cdlib.org:80/dynaweb/ead/hoover/polminld

3. **Wladyslaw Anders Papers, 1939-1946**
   http://www.oac.cdlib.org:80/dynaweb/ead/hoover/reg_344

4. **Commission for Polish Relief Records, 1939-1949**

5. **Dom Polskich Dzieci, 1942-1947.**
   http://www.oac.cdlib.org:80/dynaweb/ead/hoover/reg_313/

See details below.
1. Poland. Ambasada (Soviet Union), 1941-1944

Abstract.

Reports, correspondence, accounts, lists, testimonies, questionnaires, certificates, petitions, card files, maps, circulars, graphs, protocols, and clippings, relating to World War II, the Soviet occupation of Poland, the Polish-Soviet military and diplomatic agreements of 1941, the re-establishment of the Polish embassy in Moscow, Polish prisoners of war in the Soviet Union, deportations of Polish citizens to the Soviet Union, labor camps and settlements, relief work by the Polish social welfare department delegations among the deportees, the Polish armed forces formed in the Soviet Union, evacuation of Polish citizens to the Middle East, the Katyn massacre of Polish officers, and the breakdown of Polish-Soviet relations in 1943. Includes material on the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Soviet government, 1928-1929.

Biography.

Polish-Soviet diplomatic relations were severed with the Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland on September 17, 1939. After the German invasion of the USSR in June 1941, however, the Soviet government re-established diplomatic relations with the Polish government, then in exile in London. An agreement was signed on July 30, 1941, followed by a military accord on August 14. The Poles were allowed to re-establish an Embassy in Moscow, to form an army on Soviet territory for the common struggle against Germany, and to set up a network of Polish citizens deported to the USSR in 1939-1941.

Friction soon developed in several areas, leading to an eventual break in diplomatic relations. Of particular concern to the Polish government were the Polish deportees, many of whom were forced to accept Soviet rather than Polish citizenship. The activities of the Polish social welfare workers awoke the suspicions of the Soviet authorities, who conducted a series of arrests in June and July of 1942. Finally, the question of the fate of between 8,300 and 8,400 Polish officers who had been taken prisoner by the Soviet forces in 1939 and who were supposed to be released from the prison camps at Kozel'sk, Starobel'sk and Ostashkov became a source of Polish-Soviet discord. The discovery by the Germans of mass graves of between 4,443 and 4,800 Polish officers at Katyn on April 13, 1943, seemed to confirm Polish suspicions. The Soviet authorities responded by accusing the Polish government of collaboration with the Germans. On April 25, 1943, the Soviet government broke diplomatic relations with the Polish government, and the mission of the Polish Embassy was officially terminated.

The Polish ambassador in Moscow from 1941 to July 5, 1942 was Stanislaw Kot. After the general evacuation, when the Embassy was moved to Kuibyshev, the post was assumed by Tadeusz Romer. He remained there until July 25, 1943, although his official status had been revoked in April of that year. The Romer papers are located at the Public Archives of Canada, and a microfilm copy has been deposited at the Hoover Institution.

A major part of the activity of the Polish Embassy was the organization of a network of social welfare "delegations" administered by "hommes de confiance" appointed by the Social Welfare Department. The Embassy representatives were responsible for the physical well-being and in some cases the religious and educational care of the more than one million Polish citizens deported by the Soviet authorities to labor camps and settlements in 1939-1941. A mass southward evacuation of these deportees was effected in 1943, and many made their way to Britain via Iran. A large number were interviewed in Tehran in 1943 regarding their experiences in the USSR. The interviews themselves are a part of the General Wladyslaw Anders Collection at the Hoover Institution.
2. Poland. Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji, 1939-1945

Abstract.

Correspondence, reports, bulletins, memoirs, and photographs, relating to conditions in Poland during World War II, deportation of Poles to the Soviet Union, the Katyn Forest Massacre, and activities of Polish armed forces and of the Polish Government-in-Exile. Includes release certificates and reports of several thousand Polish deportees released from the Soviet Union in 1941.

Introduction.

The origins of the Ministry of Information and Documentation go back to the inception of the Polish government in exile in October 1939 in Paris. At first it had neither a definite organizational structure nor a name. It was referred to as the Office (urzad) or Bureau of Information and Documentation. By April 1940, the unit was named Center of Information and Documentation, and in September 1940 the Center was reorganized into the Ministry of Information and Documentation, a designation it carried for the remainder of the war and in the years that followed.

During the early months of its existence the office, comprised of information and documentation sections, was headed by Deputy Prime Minister Stanislaw Stronski, who was directly in charge of its documentation section. The information section was headed by Minister Marian Seyda. Stanislaw Stronski was in charge of the Ministry of Information and Documentation until March 1943, when his position was taken over by Stanislaw Kot, who headed the Ministry in the cabinet of Stanislaw Mikolajczyk, until the resignation of that government in November 1944. Kot's successor was Adam Pragier, who was Minister of Information and Documentation until 1949.

The Ministry of Information and Documentation was the main information and propaganda unit of the Polish government in exile. It coordinated and facilitated the dissemination of information in support of the Polish war effort through its publishing and radio programs. The Ministry also documented and analyzed the conditions and developments in occupied Poland. One of its units, for example, the Research Section headed by Wiktor Sukiennicki, was assigned the task of systematically reviewing and summarizing the testimonies of former Polish prisoners and deportees to Soviet Russia, with a view to document the entry of the Red Army into Poland, the first weeks of Soviet occupation, the October 1939 "elections", and the consequent sovietization of the occupied territories. Thousands of original Soviet camp release certificates, statements of survivors, and detailed summaries of Soviet occupation compiled by the Research Section for every county of Eastern Poland, make up about forty percent of the volume of the Ministry's collection.

Most of the archives of the Ministry of Information and Documentation, together with those of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were moved from London to Dublin at the end of the war, and remained in storage for more than a decade. In 1959, in keeping with the agreement reached between the Hoover Institution and Aleksander Zawisza, Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Polish government in exile, the archives were shipped to their new home at Stanford.

The collection of the Ministry of Information and Documentation in the Hoover Institution Archives occupies about 31 linear meters. A smaller portion of the Ministry's archives, 3.6 linear meters, is preserved in the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum in London. Two Hoover collections in large measure complement the archives of the Ministry of Information. One of these is the Wladyslaw Anders Collection, consisting mostly of over 18,000 statements and reports of former Polish prisoners and deportees to Soviet Russia. The other collection is that of the Polish Government Information Center (Polskie Rzadowe Centrum Informacyjne), the New York agency of the Ministry of Information and Documentation.
Preliminary processing of the collection was provided in the 1980s by the late Helena Sworakowska. Detailed processing and preservation microfilming were made possible by a generous grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1997 and by matching funds from the Taube Family Foundation.

In addition, the grant provides depositing a microfilm copy of these materials in the State Archives of Poland in Warsaw.

Maciej Siekierski
November 1998

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Selected box details.

RELEASE CERTIFICATES ("UDOSTOVERENIA"), 1941 August-September.
Boxes 152-184

Nearly 13,500 certificates issued by the NKVD after the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 1941, releasing Polish deportees from forced labor camps and other places of detention. Arranged alphabetically by name of deportee. Each name has also been entered on-line in a separate database, along with indication of father's name, camp name, date and place of birth, names of other family members, and box number. The names use standard Polish spelling and diacritical marks; because of that, the computer has alphabetized the names in a sequence that is not quite the correct alphabetical one. Please consult reference archivist for searches in that database. Hard copies of both databases are in separate binders.

REPORTS OF POLISH DEPORTEES, 1941.
Boxes 185-247

Nearly 12,000 questionnaires ("ankiety"), statements, and depositions of Polish deportees (as well as of some Polish prisoners of war in Box 246) collected by the Bureau of Documents of the Polish Armed Forces (Referat Historyczny Polskich Sił Zbrojnych) after evacuation to the Middle East. Arranged by name of province, and therein alphabetically by name of county. This series also includes related studies as well as copies and excerpts of some of the reports, which are filed after the orginal ones. Each name of deportee for whom we have an original report has also been entered on-line in a separate database, along with indication of profession, province, county or city, and box number (more biographical information is found in the report itself). The names use standard Polish spelling and diacritical marks; because of that, the computer has alphabetized the names in a sequence that is not quite the correct alphabetical one. Please consult reference archivist for searches in that database. Hard copies of both databases are in separate binders.

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Abstract.

Orders, reports, card files, questionnaires, accounts, Soviet government documents and publications, photographs, microfiche, and printed matter, relating to World War II, the Polish Armed Forces in Russia, the Polish 2d Corps in Italy, Polish citizens arrested and deported under German and Soviet occupation, Polish foreign relations, the Polish government-in-exile in London, and Polish Jews.

Introductory Note.

The Wladyslaw Anders Collection is the core of the 1946 archival deposit to the Hoover Institution made by General Wladyslaw Anders, the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces. The collection is composed mostly of the archives of the Documents Bureau of the 2nd Polish Corps. The Bureau was established by General Anders in April 1943 to collect documentation on the 1939-1941 Soviet occupation of Eastern Poland, and the fate of the hundreds of thousands of Polish prisoners of war, labor camp inmates, and deportees, as well as to prepare materials in support of the Polish cause for the future peace conference.

The collection contains over 18,000 original personal accounts and questionnaires of former prisoners and deportees, some documents dating back to 1941, most completed later, shortly after the 1942 evacuation from the Soviet Union. The materials were once filed in one sequence numbered 1 to 18,304. Later the file was broken into two sections, one labeled as "Relacje" and the other as "Ankiety", translated loosely as "Statements" and "Reports" in the present Hoover register, but with the old numeration retained. The highest number of the "Reports" file is 15,714, and the highest number in the "Statements" file is 18,304. The "Statements" and the "Reports" files are complementary, with numbers which are lacking in one file found in the other. The documents have an alphabetical card index, occupying the first 34 boxes of the Anders Collection, comprised of over 18,000 cards, listing the name, brief biographical data, and the corresponding personal account or questionnaire number. The 18,000 plus documents contained in the next 33 boxes of the Anders Collection (boxes 35-68) represent a variety of formats. Two questionnaires, one shorter, page-long ten point form, and the second, a four-page questionnaire, were commonly used. There were also specialized questionnaires -for the clergy, for Jews, one about working conditions, etc. Some less typical materials, such as general situation reports, regional compilations, and memoirs, are also numbered with "Reports" and the "Statements". The personal accounts and questionnaires of the Anders Collection have a detailed subject index with about 250 entries on cards (boxes 89-92). There is also a card index (boxes 93-107) of several thousand names of people who died in prisons and labor camps or who were probably left behind after the 1942 evacuation to Iran. Additionally, the index includes the names of suspected collaborators and of Soviet camp and prison personnel. Besides the original accounts and questionnaires and the card indexes, the Anders Collection includes a large number of internal documents and reports collected or produced by the Documents Bureau (boxes 68-81). Finally, the Anders Collection is supplemented by materials generated by a 1951-1952 U.S. Government study of Soviet labor camps. During that time, with the permission of General Anders, the entire Anders Collection and some files of the Poland-Ambasada (Soviet Union) Collection, were loaned to the Library of Congress. In exchange, the Hoover Institution received copies of the resulting works -nearly 1,300 English language abstracts of the personal accounts from the Anders Collection (boxes 81-87), card indexes on the geography and terminology of the Soviet camp system (boxes 108-109), and a final report of the study.

Two other Hoover Institution collections include original depositions of Polish soldiers and civilians, former prisoners and deportees in the Soviet Union. These are the Poland-Ministerstwo Informacji i Dokumentacji Collection, and the Poland-Ambasada (Soviet Union) Collection. Most of the holdings of the Documents Bureau were filmed in 1945-1946 in Italy, before the transfer of the archives to the Hoover Institution. These microfilms are now part of the Col. Wincenty Bakiewicz Collection in the
Archives of the Polish Institute and the Sikorski Museum in London. The personal papers of General Anders are also at the Polish Institute.

Maciej Siekierski
June 1998
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4. Commission for Polish Relief, 1939-1949

In response to the appeal of the Polish Government in Exile -including the Prime Minister, General Wladyslaw Sikorski, and the Ambassador in Washington, Count Jerzy Potocki -we organized the Commission for Polish Relief, Inc., on September 25, 1939. The officers of the new organization were: Chauncey McCormick, Chairman; Maurice Pate, President. The Directors were Hugh Gibson, W. Hallam Tuck, Edgar Rickard, Perrin C. Galpin, Lewis L. Strauss, Theodore Abel, Frederic C. Walcott, and Mrs. Vernon Kellogg. They sacrificed important positions to answer this call of suffering. I was made Honorary Chairman of the Commission. It was my responsibility to conduct negotiations with the various governments concerned, to secure financial support, and enlist public support by making speeches and by issuing public statements. My colleagues attended to the major problems of purchase of supplies and transportation.

For the Polish operations, a staff was quickly recruited in Europe by cable. Mr. William C. McDonald..., was located in Switzerland, enjoyed high confidence in Poland. He went to Berlin immediately to conduct negotiations with the Germans and then proceeded to Warsaw, where he set up arrangements for the distribution of food and medical-relief supplies. Mr. Gilbert Redfern... was recruited in London and sent promptly to Vilna, where he performed an outstanding task in carrying for Polish refugees in the Baltic States. Mr. F. Dorsey Stephens, aided by his wife Zora, did equally devoted and useful work among the fifty thousand Polish refugees in France. In the New York headquarters of the Commission for Polish Relief, McCormick and Pate had the invaluable devotion and experienced work of Columba P. Murray, Jr., Colonel Joseph Krueger, and Bernard Fraser, all veterans of the American Relief Administration. Hugh Gibson and Frederic Walcott voluntarily gave generously of their time on the negotiating and diplomatic side. Mrs. Vernon Kellogg was a zealous raiser of private contributions in the United States...

In the initiation of relief to Poland, we concentrated upon two programs: the supply of food and clothing to the underfed children in the congested districts and ghettos in Poland, and care of Polish refugees, now scattered over Europe. Mr. Pate set up canteens, under the care of Polish women, which provided special meals to 200,000 undernourished children and aged persons daily in Poland. The Polish Government in Exile had set up refugee relief, and our organization supplied it with food and clothing. Our route for shipments was from the United States to Sweden and thence to Hamburg or Danzig. When it was cut off because of the German invasion of Norway on April 9, 1940, the Commission was able to ship through Genoa or Lisbon and thence by rail to Poland. To finance the relief, the Commission supported the appeals of the Polish-American organizations in the United States, from whom we received about $400,000. The Polish Government in Exile made an initial donation of $186,225.

It was certain that if the Commission were to be successful in carrying out a substantial program, it would cost more than the combined resources of both charity appeals and the exiled Polish Government. Therefore, on February 29, 1940, I obtained a hearing before the House Foreign Affairs Committee and advocated a fifty-million-dollar appropriation to the Red Cross for relief for Poland. I urged Norman Davis, Chairman of the American Red Cross, to undertake this relief. When the Congressional appropriation subsequently became law, the Red Cross undertook medical aid, but our organization received no part of it for the major need: food. To stimulate charitable contributions, the Commission organized a mass meeting at New York City's Madison Square Garden on March 12 at which I spoke. It organized a mass meeting in Chicago at which I also spoke, and another in New York on April 28, where both General Joseph Haller, Minister of State of the Republic of Poland, and I
spoke. In the meantime, August Zaleski, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Polish Government in Exile in London, took a hand in the finances of the Relief Commission...

Our total resources with these additions amounted to about $6,000,000, including $3,060,704 in Polish gold deposited in the National Bank of Rumania. We sent Dorsey Stephens to Bucharest to bring out the gold. The Bank of Rumania refused to hand it over. After all patience had been exhausted in negotiating with it, we attached its balances in New York and won our case on July 15, 1941, in the lower courts. Although the British blockade was in action against delivery of food to German-occupied territory, we had no difficulty in obtaining permits for relief shipments during the Chamberlain ministry. However, when Churchill succeeded Chamberlain as Prime Minister in May, 1940, he soon stopped all permits of food relief to Poland. At the outset of our Polish relief operations, I conducted negotiations with the Germans through their Embassy officials in Washington. They were most cooperative, and issued certificates of immunity from submarine attack, provided neutral vessels were used.

After we were prevented by Mr. Churchill from sending overseas supplies to Poland, the Relief Commission deployed its American staff over Europe to seek food outside British control. They were able to make some purchases in the Baltic nations and in Russia, but in the end, the blockade closed in upon us, and this effort to aid Poland was ended. It was only by the incredible tenacity of Maurice Pate and our men in Europe that a meager stream of food and medical relief continued to trickle to Poland for nearly two more years. Beyond doubt, this saved thousands of lives. The further relief of Poland was now dependent on whether or not the British blockade could be relaxed for relief shipments. We did not abandon our effort to secure relaxation of the blockade, but merged this problem with those of the other small democracies.


Abstract.

Dom Polskich Dzieci (Oudtshoorn, South Africa)

Correspondence, telegrams, notes, memoranda, clippings, accounts, lists, protocols, reports, inventories, and published materials, relating to the evacuation of the war orphans from Russia to Oudtshoorn, the establishment and operation of the Home, and the care and education of the orphans.