

Primate and General. Contacts between Cardinal Wyszyński and Władysław Anders in the Light of Their Correspondence – a Contribution to the History of the Polish Independence Emigration

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Abstract: The article takes a closer look at the relationship between Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński and General Władysław Anders between 1957 and 1970. The letters found in the Warsaw Archdiocesan Archives, complex: Secretariat of the Primate of Poland, and in the Archives of the Polish Institute and the Sikorski Museum in London show the close relationship between the Primate and the General. Although contact between them was occasional, we can observe the mutual respect and appreciation of these two leaders of “free Poland”. The former upheld Polish identity in a country ruled by communists, while also defending the independence of the Polish Church. At the same time, the latter acted as the leader of the Polish independence emigration community. Documented communication between Cardinal Wyszyński and General Anders began in 1957. It could not have taken place on a permanent basis, as the Primate feared that such relations could be a pretext for persecuting the Church in Poland – on the charge of maintaining contacts with “reactionary emigration circles”. Nevertheless, the Primate and the General met in person in Rome in May 1963, during Cardinal Wyszyński’s stay in the Holy See. The article is supplemented by an edition of correspondence concerning their mutual contacts. The text should be treated as a complementary contribution to the history of Polish emigration.

Keywords: Primate, general, emigration, patriotism

Introduction – The Primate as protector of emigration

The Catholic Church played an extremely important role among the Polish community scattered all over the world. It was noticed by the Holy See, and for this reason in 1931 Pope Pius XI bestowed the title of Protector of Polish Emigration on Cardinal August Hlond. After the Primate’s death, due to the difficult situation of the Polish Church, the aforementioned dignity was given to Bishop Józef Gawlina, who was residing in Rome, and not to Archbishop Stefan Wyszyński, Metropolitan of Gniezno and Warsaw. After the death of the hierarch in 1964, the dignity of Protector of Emigration returned to

the Primate of Poland. It was the time when Bishop Władysław Rubin was appointed a delegate for emigration by Cardinal Wyszyński, and he successfully held that position for the following years. As the Protector of Emigration, the Primate was able to influence the religiosity of the Polish diaspora in a real and wide-ranging way, e.g. with the help of the network of Polish Catholic Missions.¹

Cardinal Wyszyński's activity for the Polish community continued throughout his Primate's ministry. The hierarch was interested in the life and activities of the Church on emigration, supported it at the Holy See, and corresponded with its representatives. His role was particularly significant during the celebrations of the millennium of the Baptism of Poland. Together with Archbishop Gawlina, the Primate initiated the celebration of the millennium of Polish Christianity in all corners of the globe. Cardinal Wyszyński was supposed to personally take part in the millennium celebrations in the USA, among others, but the communist authorities did not permit his departure.²

General Anders welcomes the Primate on behalf of the Polish Community

Important for Primate Stefan Wyszyński and the entire Polish Church was his visit to the Holy See in May and June 1957 to receive the cardinal insignia. This was his first visit to the Vatican after his isolation ended in October 1956. During the journey made by rail, the Polish hierarch was greeted enthusiastically as a martyr of the Church.³ General Anders welcomed the Metropolitan of Gniezno and Warsaw on behalf of the independence emigration by sending him a letter on 10 May 1957.⁴ In the letter, he stated that he was

¹ Jan Żaryn, *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce 1944–1989* (Warszawa: Neriton, 2003); Jan Żaryn, "Raport o stanie badań nad dziejami Kościoła katolickiego na wychodźstwie w latach 1945–1966 (1989)," in *Polska emigracja polityczna 1939–1990. Stan badań*, ed. Sławomir Łukasiewicz (Warszawa: IPN, 2016), 472–528. Other works worth reading include Zbigniew Werra's study on the ministry to the Polish 2nd Corps – Zbigniew Werra, *Działalność duszpasterska w 2. Korpusie Polskich Sił Zbrojnych na Zachodzie gen. Władysława Andersa 1941–1947* (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2009).

² *Obchody Millenium na Uchodźstwie. W pięćdziesiąt rocznice (1966–2016)*, ed. Rafał Łatka, Jan Żaryn (Warszawa: IPN, Senat RP, UKSW, 2016).

³ Rafał Łatka, Beata Mackiewicz, and Dominik Zamiatała, *Prymas Stefan Wyszyński. Biografia* (Warszawa: IPN, Soli Deo, 2020), 59–61; Stefan Wyszyński, *Pro memoria vol. IV: 1956–1957*, ed. Michał Białkowski in collaboration with Monika Wiśniewska (Warszawa: IPN, UKSW, 2020), 216–294.

⁴ It is important to add here that in November 1956, on the orders of General Anders, parcels containing materials for a cassock, a warm winter coat, underwear, a jumper and coffee were sent to Cardinal Wyszyński. Ludwik Maria Łubiński, an employee of General Anders' office, was in charge (Letter from Ludwik Maria Łubiński to Gen. Władysław Anders, London, 28 November 1956, KGA 299, Wyszyński Stefan Kardynał, pp. 10, Władysław Anders Collection, Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum – PISM).

unable to come to Rome in person, but asked to accept the homage paid by the emigration.⁵ He also assured of the affection and fidelity of the Polish people abroad to “their Archbishop and, through him, to the whole Nation, of which we remain an inseparable part”. The General also stressed that “In spite of the remoteness, in spite of the already long years of separation, our hearts beat to the same rhythm as those of our brothers and sisters, our parents and children in the Country. Like them, we do not cease to ask God to be willing, in His supreme mercy, to shorten the time of the hard trial imposed on our tormented nation.”⁶ Unfortunately, we do not know whether Cardinal Wyszyński replied to this letter; no relevant annotation has survived in the resources of the Secretariat of the Primate of Poland or in the cardinal’s *Pro memoria* diary.⁷

Return of the Jagiellonian tapestries to Poland

Cardinal Wyszyński was strongly involved in the campaign to bring the Jagiellonian tapestries to Poland. It was successfully completed in 1961 as a result of an agreement between the governments of Canada and Polish People’s Republic. The role of Cardinal Wyszyński in this respect was remarkable – due to the doubts of the Canadians, he was actually acting as a kind of guarantor of the agreement. It is significant that he did not bring his person to the fore, believing that the most important thing was that the treasures of the Wawel Castle should return to their homeland, even if the authorities of the Polish People’s Republic would propagandize as exclusively their own achievement.⁸ The Primate appreciated the evolution of views of a large part of the independence emigration circles, recognizing in it

⁵ Undoubtedly, General Anders’ personal religiosity was an important aspect of his approach to Primate Wyszyński (Zbigniew Werra, “Obraz dowódcy,” in *Bitwy Generała Władysława Andersa. Studia i materiały do dziejów 2. Korpusu Polskiego*, ed. Bogusław Polak, Waldemar Handke, Zenon Józwiak (Leszno 2007), 168–).

⁶ Letter from Gen. Władysław Anders to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, 10 May 1957, London, SPP, 14/31, Wychodźstwo, p. 205, Warsaw Archdiocesan Archive – AAW. A letter from Stefan Soboniewski to General Anders, containing an account of the Primate’s stay in Rome in 1957, has been preserved in the resources of PISM. The sender discussed in quite some detail the course of the ceremony of handing the cardinal’s hat to S. Wyszyński. Soboniewski stressed that the Primate was received with great kindness by Pius XII. The letter also discusses the Polish Church leader’s approach to emigration. The author rightly noted that the Primate, due to the risk of repression by the communist authorities against the Catholic Church, avoided public meetings with the leaders of the Polish emigration, even though he had a warm-hearted attitude towards them (Letter from Stefan Soboniewski to Gen. Władysław Anders, 16 VI 1957, KGA 299, pp. 12–13, Władysław Anders Collection, PISM).

⁷ Wyszyński, *Pro memoria* vol. IV: 1956–1957.

⁸ Stefan Wyszyński, *Dzieła zebrane* vol. VI: 1960, collective work (Warszawa: Soli Deo, 2007), 171; Cf. Stefan Wyszyński, *Pro memoria* vol. 7: 1960, ed. Rafał Łatka (Warszawa: IPN, UKSW, 2019).

also the merit of Anders. In his diary, he noted that this was largely due to positive statements made by the general, who publicly supported the return of the tapestries to Poland.⁹

The next contact – 1962

On 1 November 1962, Cardinal Wyszyński granted an audience to General Anders' representative, Lieutenant Colonel Marian Norbert Czarnecki, who had been staying in France since 1944.¹⁰ Czarnecki conveyed greetings from the leader of the Polish emigration.¹¹ The security apparatus of the Polish People's Republic treated this meeting as an official establishment of contacts between Cardinal Wyszyński and the "leaders of the Anders veteran group".¹²

A letter from Lieutenant Colonel Czarnecki to General Anders of 1 November 1962, containing an account of the audience granted to him by the Primate, has been preserved in the resources of the PISM Archive in London. We learn from it that the meeting lasted 45 minutes, it took place in a good atmosphere, and that Cardinal Wyszyński spoke about the leader of the Polish emigration "in a very warm, cordial and loving tone". The Primate also encouraged emigration circles to speak out and regularly remind people of the persecution of the Church in Poland. He also noted that "We are not only fighting for the rights of the Church and religion; we are fighting for the nation, for the soul of the nation; in our case this fight for the nation is combined with the fight for religion [...]".¹³ The hierarch was then to add that "in the fight against the regime, he constantly puts forward the fundamental, natural rights of the individual, the human being, the family and the nation, and not only religious matters. He said that if he speaks in Poland, as he did recently in Częstochowa, he speaks on behalf of 40 million Poles, 30 million in Poland and 10 million outside the country whom we must consider an integral part of

⁹ Wyszyński, *Pro memoria* vol. 7: 1960, 72–264–265.

¹⁰ Barbara Toporska, "Czarnecki Marian Norbert," in *Encyklopedia polskiej emigracji i Polonii*, vol. 1, ed. Kazimierz Dopierała (Toruń: Oficyna Wydawnicza Kucharski, 2003), 362.

¹¹ Stefan Wyszyński, *Pro memoria* vol. 9: 1962, ed. Antoni Poniński (Warszawa: IPN, UKSW, 2020), 287.

¹² *W służbie Boga i Polski. Komunistyczna bezpieka wobec kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego*, ed. Józef Marecki, Piotr Nitecki, and Roksana Szczepa-Szczęch (Kraków: IPN, WAM, 2014), 250.

¹³ Letter from Gen. Władysław Anders to Lt Col Marian Czarnecki, London, 6 November 1962, KGA 299, Wyszyński Stefan Kardynał, pp. 39–40, Władysław Anders Collection, PISM. These words were consistent with Cardinal Wyszyński's general attitude to patriotism (Rafał Łatka, "Patriotyzm prymasa Stefana Wyszyńskiego – zarys zagadnienia," in *Kościół wobec niepodległości Polski 1918–1989. Ludzie-miejsce-wydarzenia*, ed. Krzysztof Sychowicz, Jarosław Wasilewski (Białystok–Warszawa: IPN, 2020), 388–409; Rafał Łatka, Ewa Czaczkowska, *Prymas Stefan Wyszyński a Niepodległa. Naród–patriotyzm–państwo w myśli i nauczaniu Prymasa Tysiąclecia* (Warszawa: IPN, UKSW, 2019).

the nation and constantly manifest it”.¹⁴ The issue of millennium celebrations in emigration was directly related to the aforementioned topic, as Cardinal Wyszyński reminded us that they should take place with an emphasis on the close connection of emigration with the homeland. In this regard, it is worth adding that the Primate was one of the main authors of the concept of the celebration of the millennium of Polish Christianity outside Poland, and the main executor of his vision was Bishop Władysław Rubin¹⁵. Among other threads that emerged in the conversation, it is worth noting two more important issues. Firstly, Cardinal Wyszyński stressed that some “progressive” Catholics from organizations licensed by the communist authorities were spreading the opinion that “the situation of the Church is not so bad”. Among them, he pointed to the circle of Jan Frankowski and PAX.¹⁶ Secondly, the Primate mentioned that American aid to Poland “is given in a bad manner”, because the Americans should emphasize that they would give it in the name of freedom and human rights, provided that the repressiveness of the system was reduced. The Hierarchy justified this by saying that “The nation must know that this aid is for the nation and not for the regime. Today this is not clear”.¹⁷

The accounts of the above-discussed letter concerning Lieutenant Colonel Czarnecki’s conversation With the Primate are also confirmed by the materials of the security apparatus of the Polish People’s Republic. According to information obtained by the intelligence service, Cardinal Wyszyński was said to have remarked during the conversation that emigration “is an integral part of the nation,” and also to have pointed out that during one of his speeches in Częstochowa “I emphasized publicly that I was speaking on behalf of 40 million Poles – 30 million in the country and 10 abroad”.¹⁸ Judging by the content of this material, the security apparatus obtained copies of the above-discussed letter from Lieutenant Colonel Czarnecki to General Anders of 1 November, as the same expressions are found therein explicitly.¹⁹

In the conclusion of the letter discussed above, Lieutenant Colonel Czarnecki encouraged General Anders to address the Primate directly: “It seems to me that it would be a good idea for you to write directly to the Primate thanking him for this picture and for the blessing he conveyed to you, General, with this picture. Obviously, one must write carefully, because

¹⁴ Letter from Gen. Władysław Anders to Lt Col Marian Czarnecki, pp. 39, Władysław Anders Collection.

¹⁵ Żaryn, *Raport o stanie badań*, 21–46.

¹⁶ The topic of the attitude of “progressive” Catholics to the millennium celebrations has already been addressed by Dominik Zamiatała (Dominik Zamiatała, “Katolicy koncesjonowani wobec obchodów Milenium,” in *1966 – Milenium chrztu Polski prymasa Stefana Wyszyńskiego: perspektywa teologiczno-społeczna*, ed. Ewa Czackowska (Warszawa: UKSW), 85–113.

¹⁷ Letter from Gen. Władysław Anders to Lt Col Marian Czarnecki, pp. 40, Władysław Anders Collection.

¹⁸ Marecki, Nitecki, and Szczypka–Szczęch, *W służbie Boga i Polski*, 250.

¹⁹ Letter from Gen. Władysław Anders to Lt Col Marian Czarnecki, pp. 39–40, Władysław Anders Collection.

perhaps his mail is controlled by the communists”²⁰ This did indeed occur, and General Anders’ letter had the content suggested by his representative. Correspondence has been preserved in the resource of AAW, SPP. The letter from the leader of the Polish emigration was handed over to Cardinal Wyszyński by Lieutenant Colonel Czarnecki in 1962, but we do not know when exactly this happened. The letter was dated 6 November. Analogous to his correspondence of 1957, General Anders expressed homage and filial affection on behalf of the Poles abroad. He also stressed that “With the greatest attention and a beating heart we look at the hard and sacrificial work of Your Eminence full of deep devotion to the Church and to Poland. I ask God with confidence and faith to bring the blessed gifts of this work closer.”²¹

Anders’ representative forwarded not only the letter, but also the main reflections of General Anders on the Catholic Church and the role of emigration in maintaining the Polish identity (contained in a letter he received from the General, along with the correspondence to the Primate).²² A member of the Council of Three began by thanking him for the picture of Black Madonna of Częstochowa (given by the Primate to Lieutenant Colonel Czarnecki with a request to give it to General Anders). The second thought was to emphasize that Cardinal Wyszyński’s views were widely shared among the Polish emigrants. The third was to express reverence and admiration for the Cardinal’s tenacious struggle for a „Catholic and independent Poland”. The General also asked Lieutenant Colonel Czarnecki to convey that:

[...] all Poles outside the country, who are aware of their supreme duty to their homeland, want with all their heart and soul to work for Poland and the oppressed Church. In this work, we naturally expect a helping hand from our Polish priests on emigration, and there are countries of our settlement, such as Great Britain and France, where these expectations of ours may not be fully fulfilled. I trust that the earnest unity of Church and nation, to which Poles have become accustomed over the centuries of their history, will also come to life in the areas inhabited by Polish political emigrants.²³

In his reply sent to W. Anders on 29 November, the Primate expressed his thanks for the letter of 6 November and remarked:

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ AAW, SPP 14/31, *Wychodźstwo*, p. 432, Letter from Gen. Władysław Anders to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, 6 November 1962, London.

²² The aforementioned letter was handed over in the original to Cardinal Wyszyński, probably precisely together with a direct letter from General Anders. The originals of both are today in the resources of AAW, SPP. I am specifically using these original typescripts.

²³ Letter from Gen. Władysław Anders to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, 6 November 1962, London, SPP 14/31, *Wychodźstwo*, p. 431, AAW. A copy of this letter can also be found in the KGA 299, 41, Władysław Anders Collection, PISM.

I am pleased to hear that the General duly assesses the work of the Holy Church in Poland. Its simplest aspiration is to keep the Nation in peace, so that it can concentrate on protecting the most precious gifts of God – the treasures of soul and body. We are constantly talking about the fact that national culture can be preserved through its connection with religious life. We emphasize that sparing the Polish blood, so that it can be used in a patient will to persevere for fruitful work for the Nation, is perhaps the simplest policy for the many years of national existence still to come.²⁴

The meeting in Rome

The Primate avoided public meetings with representatives of the London government or, more broadly, with representatives of independence organizations operating on emigration. This was due to his conviction that one should not give the authorities of the Polish People's Republic pretexts for attacks on the Church in the country.²⁵ An example of this approach can be seen in the refusal to attend the ceremony planned by Archbishop Gawlina, i.e. the service for the Millennium Committee (which was scheduled for early May 1962). The reason for this was the presence of W. Anders. The Primate explained it as follows on the pages of his diary: "I refused because of the presence of General A[nders], since Warsaw would have said that I was seeking camouflaged contacts with London".²⁶ A few days later, on the morning of 13 May, Cardinal Wyszyński held a service for Polish veterans living in England. On the same day, at the Pontifical Polish Institute in Rome, he met at 5 pm with General Anders, who was accompanied by his aides. He recorded his impression in the *Pro memoria diary*. What emerges from his notes is a very positive opinion on one of the leaders of Polish emigration. Let us quote it in full: "I thank him for the speech [on] 'Monte Cassino'. [...] He makes the impression of a man well versed in the situation, still young in spirit, physically holding up well, confident, devoted to the Church".²⁷ An important accent of the meeting (according to the account of Father Eustachy Rakoczy) was the handing over of the Monte Cassino commemorative cross with the number 1 by W. Anders to Cardinal Wyszyński. The Primate

²⁴ List Prymasa Stefana Wyszyńskiego do gen. Władysława Andersa, 29 November 1962, Warsaw, SPP 14/31, *Wychodźstwo*, p. 434, AAW.

²⁵ S. Wyszyński, *Pro memoria* 1964, 5 May 1964, Gniezno Archdiocesan Archive – AAG.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 13 May 1964.

²⁷ *Ibid.* The security apparatus was aware that Cardinal Wyszyński had met with General Anders, but did not obtain any further information on the course of the discussion, apart from the Primate's emphasis that the activities of the emigration needed to be coordinated in order to yield adequate results (Marecki, Nitecki and Szczypka–Szczęch, *W służbie Boga i Polski*, 276).

then presented it as a votive offering to the sanctuary at Jasna Góra.²⁸ As it seems, this was the only personal meeting between Cardinal Wyszyński and the General.²⁹

The security apparatus of the Polish People's Republic treated the Primate's meeting with W. Anders as one of Cardinal Wyszyński's important moves aimed at "a clear alignment" of the hierarchy with "reactionary emigration groups". It was also supposed to mean that the leader of the Polish Church had "gradually abandoned the pretense of not engaging in hostile activity and was moving to the position of openly fighting the Government of the Polish People's Republic, intending to use the help of reactionary emigration in this fight [...]".³⁰

Commemorative medal for the 25th anniversary of the Battle of Monte Cassino

Five years later, on 29 October 1969, General Anders and General Bolesław Duch, on behalf of the soldiers of the Polish 2nd Corps in Italy, presented Cardinal Wyszyński with a medal minted on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Battle of Monte Cassino.³¹ The Primate accepted the gift with great affection. In his reply to the letter from the two generals, dated 29 December, he stressed that he was deeply honored to receive the medal "to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the historic victorious battle of Monte Cassino, which brought glory to the Command and Soldiers of the Polish 2nd Corps in Italy. I will keep alive and in grateful memory this token of remembrance of the Soldiers of Poland about the Primate of Poland, who fights for the spiritual freedom of the Nation". Cardinal Wyszyński ended his letter with wishes and blessings for the new year.³²

The Mass for the soul of General Anders

The last of the AAW SPP documents that could be recovered regarding relation between the Primate and the General, is the text of a speech given by Cardinal John Heenan,

²⁸ "Jasna Góra," accessed on August 20, 2021, <http://www.jasnagora.com/wydarzenie-14790>.

²⁹ No mention of other meetings between the Primate of Poland and General Anders could be found in church sources or literature.

³⁰ Marecki, Nitecki and Szczypka–Szczęch, *W służbie Boga i Polski*, 313.

³¹ Letter from Gen. Bolesław Duch and Gen. Władysław Anders to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, 29 October 1969, London, SPP 14/123, p. 241, AAW.

³² Ibid.

Archbishop of Westminster, at the funeral mass for W. Anders on 21 May 1970 in Westminster Cathedral (nine days after his death).³³ In his speech to the Polish faithful attending the service, the English hierarch pointed to the General's achievements and exceptional life story. He drew particular attention to his role as a commander of the Polish army emerging from the Soviet Union and to the great triumph that was the victorious Battle of Monte Cassino. He also emphasized that "General Anders has become a symbol of a spurned hero, even in his own country. The Polish authorities are going to repent one day for the sin of treating Poland's noble son that way. The entire Polish nation is a symbol in itself. They are a suffering nation sustained by a hope that never dies. They are a reminder that tyranny can never survive unless the human spirit is conquered. They live on the hope of true freedom, to which General Anders had devoted his life" [back translated from Polish into English].³⁴

Conclusions

Based on preserved documentation from Church sources, Cardinal Wyszyński and General Anders were united by mutual respect and shared beliefs about the unique role of the Church in maintaining the identity of the Polish nation. In the content of the letters addressed to the Primate by one of the leaders of the emigration, the General's great admiration for the activities of the leader of the Church and his recognition of his providential role for Poles in the country and abroad are evident. The reflection that Cardinal Wyszyński made after his meeting with W. Anders in Rome proves, in turn, that the Primate highly valued the General's personality and character, as well as his attachment to the Catholic Church. What is distinctive and needs to be emphasized is that the Primate did not refer to the disputes that took place within emigration circles. Undoubtedly, the subject of the relationship between General Anders and Cardinal Wyszyński requires further research and queries in the archives of the Sikorski Institute in London.

³³ On the funeral ceremonies and the three funerals of General Anders, cf. P. Zięta, "General Anders trzy razy pogrzebany. Londyn, Warszawa, Monte Cassino," accessed August 20, 2021, <https://tygodnik.tvp.pl/47894672/general-anders-trzy-razy-pogrzebany-londyn-warszawa-monte-cassino>.

³⁴ Cardinal John C. Heenan's sermon at General Anders Requiem Mass in Westminster Cathedral on 21st May 1970, SPP 17/61, p. 1, AAW.

Appendix

Document No. 1

*10 May 1957, Letter from General Władysław Anders to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński
Primate of Poland, London*

General W[ładysław] Anders
Princes Gate
London, S.W. 7

10 May 1957 20,

Eminence, Primate,

It was with emotion and concern that I learnt that the Primate's arrival in Rome, so long awaited by us, has now come to fruition.³⁵

In spite of the remoteness, in spite of the already long years of separation, our hearts beat as much as those of our brothers and sisters, our parents and children in the Country. Like them, we do not cease to ask God to be willing, in His supreme mercy, to shorten the time of the severe trial imposed on our tormented nation.

I am writing these words to express the thoughts and feelings of all, many very tens of thousands, Polish soldiers who, faithful to their banners, remained in the free world to demand full freedom, wholeness and independence for their Homeland.

Not being in Rome at this solemn and elevated moment of Your Eminence's arrival, I ask that at least by this means the homage we pay to the Primate of Poland be accepted.

I would like my letter to convey the deepest assurance of affection and fidelity with which Poles abroad address their Archprelate, and through him, the entire nation of which we remain an inseparable part.

In expressing my deepest reverence, I remain

Władysław Anders³⁶

His Eminence
Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński,
Primate of Poland,
Rome

Source: SPP II 14/131, p. 205, typescript, AAW.

³⁵ Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński left for Italy on 6 May 1957 and returned to Warsaw on 19 June 1957. The main reason for his visit to Rome was to receive the cardinal's insignia. On the course of the visit, cf. Żaryn, *Dzieje Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce*, 176–179; Wyszyński, *Pro memoria vol. IV: 1956–1957*, XVI–XVII.

³⁶ Handwritten signature.

Document No. 2

1 November 1962, Letter of Lieutenant Colonel Marian Czarnecki to General Władysław Anders, Rome

via Lucia 19–9
Rome, 1 November 1962

Most Honourable and Dear General,

This morning I was received by Primate Wyszyński. I spent about 45 minutes in conversation with him alone. I conveyed to him from the General the expressions and assurances of filial devotion. The Primate said: “We follow the work of General Anders with great joy and value it”. He asked about the health of the General and gave me two pictures with a blessing, one for the General and one for me (I enclose this picture). He spoke of having read the Memoirs of General³⁷ and essentially talked about you in a very warm, cordial and loving tone. This has made an impression on me.

I explained to him our situation, that the only name that plays with us, the only person that emigration follows, is the General. All in all, I told him how things are with us. That President Kennedy³⁸ respected the General and I recognised that even more so de Gaulle,³⁹ that only perhaps the English were more indifferent. To this, the Primate said that “the English and us are indifferent, we have no sentiment for them.”

He said that we should write as much as possible, speak, explain in the West about the persecution of the Church in Poland, that it is not true, that these voices of ours can harm the Church, on the contrary, they help. He said: “We are not only fighting for the rights of the Church and religion, we are fighting for the nation, for the soul of the nation; in our case this fight for the nation is combined with the fight for religion, but, “he stressed,” we are fighting first of all for the nation. He said it is a “bloody” struggle, although no blood is being shed at the moment.

He spoke of the Millennium. He pointed out that this Millennium, celebrated in emigration, will only have value if it is celebrated in close connection with the Country. He mentioned that he had read a proclamation here, where there was not a word about the Country. “Such a notion of the Millennium loses its meaning,” he said, “because the

³⁷ It refers to W. Anders, *Bez ostatniego rozdziału. Wspomnienia z lat 1939–1946* (Newtown: Montgomeryshire Printing Co., 1949 [1st edition]).

³⁸ John Fitzgerald Kennedy (1917–1963) – American politician, US President 1961–1963, assassinated on 22 November 1963.

³⁹ Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970) – French politician and military officer During World War II, leader of the Free France movement. President of the Provisional Government of the French Republic 1944–1956, Prime Minister 1958–1959 and President of the French Republic 1959–1969.

purpose of the Millennium is to document that our civilisation came from the West, that the Polish nation is linked to the West and not to the East, that these ties are a thousand years old and unbreakable.” He said that the communists just want to tear up these ties and here lies the basis of the fight against the Church in Poland, that if the Church had kept silent about these ties, it would not have had difficulties.

He said that all Catholic missions were receiving from him a programme of the work of the Millennium in the Country, and that this programme and guidelines should be demanded of them to link our celebrations with this.

He pointed out that “in the fight against the regime, he constantly puts forward the fundamental, natural rights of the individual, the human being, the family and the nation, and not only religious matters.” He said that if he speaks in Poland, as he did recently in Częstochowa, he speaks on behalf of 40 million Poles, 30 million in Poland and 10 million outside the country, that we must consider ourselves an integral part of the nation and constantly manifest this.”

He remarked that today an increasingly damaging action is being carried out by Frankowski,⁴⁰ because he is spreading the opinion that actually the situation of the Church is not so bad. We should fight against this and exterminate his campaign – just like that of Piasecki,⁴¹ of course.

Finally, a very important thing: American aid. This aid to Poland should be sought, because the nation sees that this West, against which communism is fighting, this West is helping it. But he also said that American aid is given badly, because the Americans should emphasise more firmly that they are helping in the name of freedom and human rights, they should make this a condition, even if this condition is later not kept, they should proclaim it – but not stop the aid. The nation should know clearly what the meaning⁴² and purpose of this aid is, and today the nation does not really know whether the Americans are helping Poland because the regime is more liberal than in other countries of the Soviet bloc, or whether they are helping to win certain rights for the nation. The nation must know that this aid is for the nation and not for the regime. Today it

⁴⁰ Jan Frankowski (1912–1976) – lawyer and publicist, Catholic activist, Member of the Legislative Assembly and of the Sejm of the Polish People’s Republic 1947–1972, founder and President of the General Board of the ChSS from 1957. Deputy chairman of the compulsory management board of the “Caritas” organization in 1950. From 1952 to 1956, he belonged to the PAX Association. He left it after October 1956.

⁴¹ Bolesław Piasecki (1915–1979) – politician, lawyer. Arrested in 1944 by the NKVD, released in 1945 as a result of his declared support for communist reforms and the collaboration of Catholics with the communist authorities in Poland. In 1945, founder of the weekly magazine *Dzisiaj i Jutro* (Today and Tomorrow). Co-founder and 1952–1979 Chairman of the PAX Association. The Holy See condemned in 1955 his views contained in his book *Zagadnienia Istotne* (Essential Issues). Member of the Sejm of the Polish People’s Republic 1965–1979. Member of the Council of State 1971–1979.

⁴² The word “is” was added by hand.

remains unclear. From this I understood, although the Primate did not say it explicitly, that every time help is given, there should be a stipulation that if you do not end your persecution, you will not receive the next help.

He said that Poland was feeding East Germany and Czechoslovakia, that Canadian grain was even being sifted out of Canadian sacks and sent to Russia. But nevertheless this aid has to continue, because it is a sign that the West is not forgetting Poland, that it is not abandoning it. The nation knows that some of this grain is going elsewhere and this fact undermines confidence in the regime, which is a good thing.

He questioned me in great detail about relations in France, both Polish relations and the political situation in France.

It seems to me that it would be a good idea for you to write directly to the Primate thanking him for this picture and for the blessing he conveyed to you, General, with this picture. Obviously, one must write carefully, because perhaps his mail is controlled by the communists. He lives in the Pontifical Polish Institute, Via Pietro Cavallini 38. There is no doubt that the Primate has a great appreciation for your work. I think it is better to write directly, because I do not see anyone here who could personally hand over such a letter. Any intermediary can have one expression or another. I am already going back to Paris next week and maybe on 13 and 14 November I will be in London, because there is a convention of the International Federation of Free Journalists, I have been invited with reimbursement. I shall check in with the General. If the General had something more serious to convey to the Primate, then I am ready to go to Rome a second time later. He will certainly receive me, as I sense that he has great affection for me.

He indicated that I cannot write about what he told me, but I can announce that I was received by him. They have to do politics so that they are not shut out from going to Rome at the next sessions of the Council. I'm going to correct myself, one must write about what he said to me, only one must not cite that it was him who said it.

My deepest respect and soldierly devotion.

Marian Czarnecki⁴³

Source: KGA 299, p. 39–40, Władysław Anders Collection, PISM.

⁴³ Handwritten signature.

Document No. 3

6 November 1962, Letter from General Władysław Anders to Lieutenant Colonel Marian Czarnecki, London

General W[ładysław] Anders
20, Princes Gate
London, S.W. 7

16 November 196

Lieutenant Colonel Marian Czarnecki
Rome

Dear Marian,

Thank you so much for your letter and all the news so important to me. I am sending a letter to the Primate at your address by the same post and I would like you to deliver it personally.

In my letter, I formulate only a short expression of my deep sentiments for the Primate. I know under what unfortunate circumstances he finds himself outside Poland, and I would never want to expose him to any unpleasantness or difficulties.

From the bottom of my heart I am grateful to His Eminence, our Primate, for the blessing conveyed to me in the picture of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Jasna Góra.

The views of the Primate, so clear and far-reaching, are certainly professed by the whole nation, and are sincerely and deeply shared by us here. We possess great reverence and admiration for his tenacious struggle for a Catholic and independent Poland.

I would like to assure the Primate that all Poles outside the country, who are aware of their supreme duty to their homeland, want with all their heart and soul to work for Poland and the oppressed Church. In this work we naturally expect a helping hand from our Polish priests in emigration, and there are countries of our settlement, such as Great Britain and France, where these expectations of ours may not be fully fulfilled. I trust that the earnest unity of Church and nation, to which Poles have become accustomed over the centuries of their history, will also come to life in the areas inhabited by Polish political emigrants.

That is all, Dear Marian, please present the entire contents of this letter to His Eminence, if he so wishes. It carries to the Primate of Poland and to the illustrious leader of the whole nation the assurance of the deepest filial sentiments of mine and of all Poles abroad, on behalf of whom I know I can speak.

For you, Marian, I join a cordial soldierly handshake.

Władysław Anders⁴⁴

Source: SPP II 11/12, p. 431, typescript, AAW.

⁴⁴ Handwritten signature.

Document No. 4

6 November 1962, London, Letter from General Władysław Anders to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński Primate of Poland

General W[ładysław] Anders
20, Princes Gate
London, S.W. 7

6 November 1962

Your Eminence, Primate,

Taking opportunity of Your Eminence's stay in Rome, I would like to express, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Poles abroad, our heartfelt filial affection and homage.

With the greatest attention and a beating heart we look at the hard and sacrificial work of Your Eminence, full of deep devotion to the Church and to Poland. I ask God with confidence and faith to bring the blessed fruits of this work.

I kindly ask you to accept, Dear Primate, my deep reverence and devotion.

Władysław Anders⁴⁵

His Eminence
Stefan Wyszyński,
Primate of Poland

Source: SPP II 11/12, p. 432, typescript, AAW.

Document No. 5

29 November 1962, Rome, Letter from Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, to General Władysław Anders

Rome, 29 November 1962
N.6142/62/P

Most Honourable General,

I thank you wholeheartedly for your letter of 6 November 1962. I am pleased to hear that the General duly assesses the work of the Holy Church in Poland. Its simplest aspiration is to keep the Nation in peace, so that it can concentrate on protecting the most precious gifts of God – the treasures of soul and body. We are constantly talking about the fact that national culture can be preserved through its connection with religious life. We emphasise that sparing the Polish blood, so that it can be used in a patient will to persevere for fruitful work for the Nation, is perhaps the simplest policy for the many years of national existence still to come.

⁴⁵ Handwritten signature.

Please accept, General, my best Christmas wishes, full of hope that “the last chapter is constantly being written.”⁴⁶

Honourable
General W[ładysław] Anders
20, Princes Gate
London, S. W. 7

Source: AAW, SPP II 11/12, p. 434, typescript.

Document No. 6

*29 October 1969, London, Letter from General Władysław Anders and General Bolesław
Duch to Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland*

⁴⁷General W[ładysław] Anders

20, Princes Gate
London, S.W. 7

His Eminence
Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński
Primate of Poland

Eminence,
With deep reverence for Your Eminence, on behalf of the former soldiers of the Polish
2nd Corps in Italy to accept the Medal minted on the occasion of the 25th anniversary
of the victorious Battle of Monte Cassino.

With filial devotion,

Major General B[olesław] Duch
Chairman
of the Committee of the 25th Anniversary
of the Battle of Monte Casino
London, 29 October 1969

Lieutenant General W[ładysław] Anders
F[ormer] commander
of the Polish 2nd Corps
in Italy

Source: SPP II 14/123, p. 241, typescript, AAW.

⁴⁶ The letter ends with a handwritten initial of Primate Wyszyński.

⁴⁷ The letter was sent on embossed notepaper with the emblem of Poland depicted at the top.

Document No. 7

5 December 1969, Warsaw, Letter from the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, Primate of Poland, to General Władysław Anders

Rome, 5 December 1969

N. 3407/69/P

General,

I am deeply honoured by your magnificent gift – the Medal, minted to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the historic victorious battle of Monte Cassino, which brought glory to the command and Soldiers of the Polish 2nd Corps in Italy.

I will keep alive and in grateful memory this token of remembrance of the Soldiers of Poland about the Primate of Poland, who fights for the spiritual freedom of the Nation.

Please accept, General, my greetings and best wishes for the Anniversary, and my blessings for the New Year of the Lord.

Primate of Poland⁴⁸

The Most Honourable

Major General Władysław Anders

20. Princes Gate,

London, S.W. 7

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⁴⁸ Above the inscription is a handwritten initial.

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