

Polish Government-in-Exile

New Polish government established after Germany and the Soviet Union occupied Poland in September 1939. The Polish Government-in-Exile was first based in France, but moved to London after the French army surrendered to the Germans in mid-1940. The Allies accepted the government-in-exile as the legitimate representative of the Polish people soon after it was created.

The government-in-exile allied itself with the West, as its members believed that only a total military victory over Germany would restore Poland's independence and freedom. In addition, it amassed its own land, air, and naval forces.

In 1942 reports about the mass murder of Jews in Poland reached London; at that point, the Polish government-in-exile made several public declarations on the subject, and officially demanded that the Allied powers stop the Germans from continuing on their murderous crusade. In early 1943 the Polish government-in-exile begged Pope Pius XII to condemn the Nazis' actions. From December 1942 onward, the government-in-exile backed the rescue work of Żegota, which offered aid to Jews throughout occupied Poland.