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TELEGRAM ( En claire ) FROM Mr. LESLIE ( Revel )

D. 4.20 P.M. July 18th 1920

R. 4.44 A.M. July 19th 1920

No.154.

Following from Cziezerin:

Begins.

July 17th.

" The Russian Soviet Government is the more pleased to acknowledge the declaration of the British Government on its desire to contribute to the establishment of general peace in Eastern Europe, as quite recently still, at the time when the complications between Russia and Poland were developing, which led to the Polish advance against Russia and the Ukraine, the British Government unfortunately did not manifest the same desire of contributing to the cause of peace in Eastern Europe, and as earlier, likewise at the time when Soviet Russia was trying to obtain peace with the Border States, the British Government did not support the obtainment of this aim, not when the Esthonian Government was preparing to conclude peace with the Soviet Government in December of last year received the warning in the name of the Supreme Council. The present change in the attitude of Great Britain in the question of peace between Soviet Russia and other States, is in complete harmony with the wishes of Soviet Russia, whose desire to live in peace with all other States, to which reference is made in the last communication of the British Government, remains firm and unalterable. Regarding Poland likewise, in spite of the latter's wanton aggression against the Soviet Republic, Soviet Russia remains as faithful as before to the principles she has proclaimed so often and to her earnest

desire of establishing peaceful relations with all peoples. The question however, of cessation of the armed struggle between Russia and Poland will be unfavourably influenced by the fact that on the part of the Polish Government there has been no direct declaration to the Soviet Government regarding its wish to conclude peace. Numerous utterances of the representatives of the Polish people have come to the knowledge of the Soviet Government in which they express themselves in an extremely bitter sense as to the British Government's political action in this question and information has been likewise published in the press as to a decision of the Polish Diet to reject the proposal of an armistice with Soviet Russia. The Soviet Government must therefore consider with some <sup>caution</sup> ~~caution~~ such proposals so far as they do not come directly from the Government concerned and as long as the danger subsists that the attitude of the Polish Government will not correspond to the declarations of other Governments which speak in its name. The necessity of <sup>a</sup> the direct communication with <sup>from</sup> the Polish Government to the Soviet Government in this case is the more urgent as the past attitude of the British Government in the conflict between Poland and Russia can hardly be considered as a reason for assuming the role of mediator between this two Governments. If at the time when the Polish Republic was preparing its wanton aggression against Russia and the Ukraine the British Government ~~had~~ <sup>not</sup> only made no attempts of hindering this aggression, but even left without any answer the communication of the Soviet Government to the Entente Governments on this question, and if, at the time when the Polish offensive has had as result military disaster

for Poland, the British Government on the contrary, tries to assume the role of mediator in order to suspend the hostilities that have become so disastrous for Poland, so the position which results for the British Government from this line of action is such, that it deprives it of the role of an impartial third party, which would alone render possible its mediation between the belligerents. It is necessary to remind likewise the British Government that it has itself described the state, created by the adoption by Russia of its memorandum of July 1st, as a state of armistice and that it has therefore described itself in this way as a belligerent, waging war against Soviet Russia - a fact that can in no way create a normal basis for the recognition of its role of mediator between Soviet Russia and another belligerent. Regarding the British Government, the Russian Government has in its answer to the Memorandum of July 1st made an absolutely conciliatory declaration, including the ~~xxx~~ acceptance of all the demands of the British Government. It has thus shown its anxious desire to remove completely all conflicts and to obtain definite peace with Great Britain. It desires likewise to establish peace with Poland, and in the attainment of this aim it considers direct negotiations with Poland, without any immixtion from outside, as necessary as direct negotiations with Great Britain in its relations with the latter.

The Soviet Government is the less inclined to accept the proposed mediation in the negotiations with Poland, as the re-conciliation with Poland which it earnestly desires can only be hampered in such a case in view of the subordinate position which Poland's interests and fate in comparison

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with interests foreign to Poland ,are occupying in the domain in relation between Soviet Russia and third Power. With the frankness which can alone completely remove all misunderstandings between two Governments , the Soviet Government ventures to recall to the British Government that when one of its members defended in the House of Commons the help given to Denikin and Kolczak ,he justified this line of action of the Government by the argument that the struggle of Denikin and Kolczak against the Soviet Government presumably helps towards the defence of India , and of the British interests in Asia in general , against dangers which allegedly threatened them. Not long ago , when the head of the British Government was negotiating with the Head of the Russian Trade Delegation, regarding resumption of trade relations ,he referred to the relations between Russia and the numerous other States as to such facts that can have some influence upon the commercial relations between Russia and Great Britain. The Soviet Government is of the opinion that re-conciliation with Poland can be successfully accomplished only in case the interests of both parties are taken into consideration , seeing that these interests can easily be re-conciled ,and this aim will be on the contrary ,extremely hard to obtain if these interests are subordinated to the interests of a Third Power . The labouring masses of Russia desire full and complete re-conciliation with Poland ,and in order to obtain the same the Soviet Government considered it necessary to remove from the action of re-conciliation all that does not belong to the interests and desires of the two peoples and Governments. In the cause of re-conciliation

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with Poland the Soviet Government finds it necessary to consider, besides the interests and desires of the Russian labouring masses, only the interests and desires of the Polish labouring masses, and it finds it therefore possible to attain peace with Poland only through direct negotiations with the latter. It must also point out, that it has already obtained without foreign immixtion complete re-conciliation with three neighbouring States and that Esthonia has concluded peace with Russia in spite of the warning of the Supreme Council, that the Treaty between Russia and Georgia has been, at the moment of the negotiations between the head of the Russian Trade Delegation and the head of the British Government, a complete surprise for the latter, and that the British Government was deprived of any information regarding peace between Russia and Lithuania, when in its ultimatum of July 12th it pointed to Lithuania as to one of the Border States with which Russia has still to obtain peace. The Soviet Government thinks that it can with the same success obtain peace with Poland through direct negotiations as it did with three other neighbouring States.

The Soviet Government considers, still less admissible the interference in the cause of peace between Russia and Poland of the group of Governments called "League of Nations", whose Covenant is quoted by the British Government in its ultimatum of July/21st. The Russian Government has never received from the so-called "League of Nations" any communication as to its creation and existence and it has never had the opportunity of adopting a decision about recognition or non-recognition of this association of States.

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When acquainting itself, from unofficial Press sources, with the Covenant of the so-called "League of Nations", the Soviet Government could not leave unnoticed the fact that according to article 17 the non-members in case of conflict with members of the so-called "League" can be invited to submit to its decision as if they were members. The Soviet Government can in no way agree that one group of Powers should assume the role of supreme body over all the States of the world and, watching over the full inviolability of the sovereign rights of the Russian labouring people, the Soviet Government absolutely rejects the pretensions of any foreign groups of Powers claiming to assume the role of supreme masters of the fate of other nations. It absolutely rejects therefore every immixtion of this association in the cause of peace between Russia and Poland.

Direct negotiations with Poland are in full harmony with the wishes of the Soviet Government and it declares therefore that if the Polish Government addresses to Russia the proposal of entering into peace negotiations, the Soviet Government will not reject its proposal and will also consider in the most friendly spirit any subsidiary proposal as to an armistice or some other means meant to facilitate peace negotiations. The Soviet Government expresses also its willingness to agree to a territorial frontier more favourably for the Polish people than the frontiers indicated by the Supreme Council in December last and proposed once more by the British Government in its ultimatum of July 12th. The Soviet Government cannot leave without notice the fact that this frontier was elaborated by the Supreme Council in some parts under the pressure of counter-revolutionary Russian elements, adherents of the Russian capitalist and landed class and that, for example, as to the region of Cholm

the decision of the Supreme Council clearly reflected the influence of this counter-revolutionary elements and followed the traces ( ? ) tracks ) of the anti-Polish policy of Tsarist and of Russian Imperialist, capitalist class in this question. Soviet Russia is willing in general as to the peace conditions with Poland to meet the interests and wishes of the Polish people the more fully the more the Polish people in its internal life will enter a path creating a <sup>solid</sup> ~~Soviet~~ basis for really fraternal relations between the ~~major~~ labouring masses of Poland, Russia, Ukraine, White Russia and Lithuania and which creates guarantees that Poland will cease to be an instrument of aggression and intrigues against the workers and peasants of Soviet Russia and of other countries.

As a separate proposal, the British Government has put forth the idea of an armistice between Russia and the mutinous ex-General Wrangel. The Soviet Government, however, cannot shut its eyes upon the indissoluble connection between the military operations of Wrangel, which were supported by the Entente Powers, and the Polish campaign against Russia and Ukraine. This close connection found its expression in the negotiations and the Military Agreement between Wrangel and the representatives of the Polish Government. Wrangel's offensive, which coincided with the advance of the Polish army in the Ukraine, was only a subsidiary Military manoeuvre aiming at rendering more difficult the struggle of the Russian and the Ukrainian troops against the Polish aggressor and as facilitating the latter's task. The army and administration of Wrangel, being almost completely deprived of sources of revenue of their own, exist almost

entirely with the financial help received from some Entente Powers . His military operations are carried out exclusively with the help of the war material sent by these Powers. This war material is brought to him on British ships or from harbours under British occupation and the proposal itself regarding Wrangel in the British ultimatum of July 12th in which the British Government decided for Wrangel that he will come to London for the discussion of the fate of his troops shows with complete evidence that he is only a subordinate agent of the British Government and partly of its Allies. The Soviet Government in its wish to obtain peace with the British Government and wishing to meet the latter's desires confirms once more its willingness to guarantee personal safety to the mutinous Ex-General Wrangel, to all the persons belonging to his Army and to the refugees under his protection under condition of immediate and full capitulation and of surrender to the Soviet authorities of all the territory he occupies and of all the war material, stores, buildings , means of communications , and so on , in his power, on the same terms as it was proposed by the Soviet Government with reference to the Northern Government of the Ex-General Miller. The Soviet Government cannot however , remain indifferent to the repeated attempts of the British Government to transport the Crimea Peninsula into an inviolable permanent asylum for the mutinous General and for other mutineers , who in fact are the British Government's subordinate Agents, and thus really to render the Crimean Peninsula a British independence . It is impossible not to mention that , at the time when the Archangel and the Murmansk region was in the same subordinate position as to Britain , the British authorities ruled there unrestrained and acted

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as the Supreme power , devastating the whole region , wasting  
its natural resources and exporting to Britain as much as  
possible its riches . The bearer of the will and the re-  
presentative of the interests of the Russian neighbouring  
people , the Soviet Government, cannot remain indifferent to  
any violation of its vital interests and of the inviolability  
of its territory and it protests most strongly against the  
attempt of Great Britain to annex in fact the Crimean Penin-  
sula. It must also be pointed out , that the present proposal  
of the British Government , is a violation of its precedent  
proposal , which became an obligation after having been adop-  
ted by the Soviet Government regarding cessation of any help  
and support to the Ex-General Wrangel. The Soviet Govern-  
ment is therefore of the opinion that the greatest possible  
concession on its part , a concession which is the out-  
come of its anxious desire to come to terms with the Bri-  
tish Government , is its willingness to <sup>agree</sup> to the capi-  
tulation of the Ex-General Wrangel and of his troops  
with a guarantee of their personal safety .

The Soviet Government thinks that the proposal  
of convocation in London of a Conference of representa-  
tives of :Russia , Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Finland,  
is the outcome of insufficient information of the British  
Government as to the relations between the Russian Republic  
and her neighbours . The Peace-Treaty between Russia and  
Lithuania was signed on July 12th and the negotiations  
between Russia and Latvia and Russia and Finland are  
being carried on independently without foreign interference.

and their further continuance on the same lines is the best pledge <sup>of</sup> their successfull result.

Being animated with the most earnest desire of putting an end to all conflicts between Russia and Great Britain and to the struggle between them and to obtain definite peace with Great Britain, the Soviet Government rests its hopes upon the Delegation which it sends to London with additional members with the purpose of carrying on negotiations with the British Government on the basis of the British Memorandum of July 1st and of the reply of the Soviet Government of July 7th in order to obtain a full agreement with Great Britain. The same will be obtained the more successfully if all new and strange elements which can only do harm to the beginning improvement <sup>role</sup> of the relations between Russia and Great Britain, are kept aside.

No. 634, Peoples Commissary for Foreign Affairs

( 19.7 8/4 ).

His Majesty's Government have given their best consideration to the reply by the Soviet Government of Russia to their Note of July 11th. This reply raises a large number of controversial issues as to which there are profound differences between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Soviet Russia, both on questions of fact and questions of principle. With those it is not proposed to deal in the present despatch, which will be strictly confined to the pressing problem of terminating the hostilities between Poland and Soviet Russia with the least possible delay, and at the smallest possible cost of human suffering. The Soviet Government has declared its readiness to consider in the most friendly spirit an armistice with Poland as a first step towards the establishment of a final peace; they have also declared their readiness to concede a frontier not less favourable to Poland than the ethnographical frontier originally suggested by the Supreme Council. It is true they have accompanied these declarations with an expression of their strong objections to allowing the negotiations with regard either to the armistice or the peace to be entered upon by any Governments ~~but~~ those representing Soviet Russia on the one side and Poland on the other. This, however, is not a point on which His Majesty's Government have the least desire to insist, if the Soviet Government adhere to their objection. They only proposed that the Conference should meet in London because they thought that it would bring Russia into relations with the Peace Conference and so pave the way to a better understanding between Russia and the outer world. What they desire is that the negotiations should be carried out in good faith and without delay; that the frontier between Russia and Poland should correspond,

as far as possible, to the wishes of the populations concerned ; and that a permanent peace should be established between Poland and her eastern neighbour, which would secure the cessation of hostilities ,and the abstention on the part of either nation from any interference in the internal policy of the other.

In order, therefore ,to bring matters to a clear issue the Polish Government have been urged by the Allies immediately to initiate negotiations for armistice and for peace. If, however ,despite a request for an armistice from the Polish Government, the Soviet armies continue to advance, the British Government and its Allies must necessarily assume that it is the intention of the Soviet Government to make war on the Polish people and will in conjunction with their Allies give to Poland the assistance and support they have promised in that event. Further , they must make it clear that the negotiations for the resumption of trade between Russia and the British Empire cannot be usefully pursued if Soviet Russia invades Poland ,and they have, therefore, telegraphed to Messrs. Kameneff and Krassin to delay their departure from Revel until an armistice has been agreed to.

**NACZELNE DOWÓDZTWO WOJSK POLSKICH**  
**ADJUTANTURA GENERALNA**  
**WARSZAWA**

L. Dz. 4391/2 dnia 2/IV 1918 r.  
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