

Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara in the period of September 1939 - July 1945

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I. INTRODUCTION

During the Sultanate, the headquarters of the embassies were located in the Galata district located in the European part of Constantinople. North of it was the European district of Pera (Beyoğlu), on whose slopes there was the seat of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in the 18th century. After the partitions, it was not handed over to partitioners. In 1830, it was burnt during the Pera fire.

In 1923, the Government of the Polish Government at the High Port in Istanbul was closed. In June of the following year, the Republic of Poland was established in Ankara, where the capital of the new Turkey was located. Three years later, the Turks assigned a plot for the construction of the embassy building. Its building, built on the model of a belvedere, was located in the diplomatic district of Çankaya, near the residence of President Kemal Atatürk. The foundation stone Kemal Atatürk laid on May 3, 1927, and two years later the building was completed. The then chargé d'affaires of the Polish Legislation in Agora, Jan Gawroński, wrote: Our newly completed embassy was then regarded as the most beautiful building in Ankara (...)¹. By the decision of the Council of Ministers of 27 June 1930, the mission was elevated to the rank of embassy² (Türkiye Lehistan Sefareti). This testified to the very good relations between Warsaw and Ankara.

It is worth mentioning that during the Second World War the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland also had a summer residence located about 30 km from Istanbul, in Yeniköy on the Bosphorus. The summoned Gawroński recalled that during the reign of the Sultan, each power had two seats for its diplomatic representation. In Constantinople, the palace of the embassy, proudly representing its power and a rural summer residence on the Bosphorus³. After the transfer of diplomatic missions to Ankara, the buildings of embassies in Pera were irretrievably deserted, (...) but summer residences on the Bosphorus were not frozen up, where diplomats continued to protect themselves during the summer „dog days”⁴.

They had to travel to Istanbul, where the consulates were located. Time passed on the Bosphorus on baths, yachts, bridge and nighttime games. Nevertheless, this did not prevent continuous exchange of information. In the atmosphere of relaxation, one could negotiate topics that were stuck in Ankara in a bureaucratic machine.

At the outbreak of the war, Poland was represented by 10 embassies. At the end of 1940, Ankara was one of 5 branches of this rank⁵. In the summer of 1941, the Polish embassy was formed in the USSR, which functioned until May 1943. In November this year, the refugee authorities again represented 6 ambassadors. Their headquarters were in London, Washington, Vatican, Ankara, Chungking and Algiers.

Polish-Turkish friendship was born at the end of the fall of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Turks did not sign with their signature partitions. At the annual reception of the diplomatic corps for the sultan's question about the ambassador of Lechistan, the master of the ceremony repeated the answer that (...) the ambassador was not able to come in⁶. This custom survived until the beginning of the 1920s, i.e. until the resignation of Sultan Mehmed VI.

¹ J. Gawroński, *Wzdłuż mojej drogi. Sylwetki i wspomnienia*, Warszawa 1968, s. 104.

² Dz.U. MSZ RP (Journal of Laws, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland), No 5 from 10 X 1930 r., p. 108.

³ Jadwiga from Działyński Zamoyska, *Listy z Turcji (1854-1855)*, Letter of 18 III 1845, chosen and elaborated by S. K. Potocki; <https://books.google.com/books?id=FAoFBAAAQBAJ&pg=PT9&lpg=PT9&dq> (11 January 2018).

⁴ J. Gawroński, *Dyplomatyczne wagary*, Warszawa 1965, s. 190.

⁵ Archive of New Files, Hoover Institute, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (hereinafter: AAN, IH, MSZ), 800.42.0.214.6, Tel. cipher. No. 13 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from January 3, 1940; W. Pobóg-Malinowski, *Najnowsza historia polityczna Polski. Okres 1939-1945* Gdański 1990, p. 171.

⁶ M. Sokolnicki, *Polityka Piłsudskiego a Turcja, „Niepodległość”* 1958, No VI, p. 5.

In the reborn Commonwealth, Polish Marshal Józef Piłsudski attached great importance to the selection of representatives sent to the Bosphorus. From June 1936, Michał Sokolnicki was Poland's ambassador in Ankara. He was a close associate of the Commander, although he did not belong to the closest body. The appointment of this Minister of Foreign Affairs Józef Beck (...) filled the will of Piłsudski posthumously⁷. Sokolnicki was very well received by the Turks. For a number of years in Ankara, he gained their friendship, which prevented him from resigning in 1941. His prestige grew even more after the departure of US ambassador John Van Antwerp MacMurray in 1941. At that time, Sokolnicki, as the longest-accredited ambassador in Ankara, became dean of the diplomatic corps. This fact was recognized without reservations by Minister Numan Menemencoglu. Well, with the aforementioned function, it was associated with representing the diplomatic corps at ceremonies. One of the most important was the celebration of the anniversary of the death of Kemal Atatürk (10 November), when the wreaths were made by the president, government, dean of the diplomatic corps, parliament and army before the provisional tomb. Sokolnicki remained in this institution until August 1945. After leaving the service, he remained in Ankara, where he lectured at the local university. He died there in 1967.

Table 1. Ambassadors of the Republic of Poland in January 1943

LP	First name and last name	Embassy of the Republic of Poland	Period of office
1.	Edward Raczyński	London (Great Britain)	XI 1934-VII 1945
2.	Jan Ciechanowski	Washington (USA)	16 XII 1940-VII 1945
3.	Alfred Poniński	Czungking (China)	XI 1942-VII 1945
4.	Tadeusz Romer	Moscow (USSR)	IX 1942-IV 1943
5.	Michał Sokolnicki	Ankara (Turkey)	VI 1936-VII 1945
6.	Kazimierz Papée	Holy See (Vatican City)	VII 1939-VII 1945

Source: AAN, Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara, ref. 37, Letter from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland No. 245 / IV / 3/43 from 2 April 1943. The order according to distributor.

In terms of the number of personnel, the Polish branch in Ankara could not match the Polish embassies in Paris, London or even the legations like in Tehran in 1943. This testified to its lower weight. In April 1938, there were two diplomats, Sokolnicki and Szczerbiński, and four contract agents. Until the outbreak of the war, this state remained unchanged⁸. The closest associate of the ambassador and the highest diplomatic member of the hierarchy was a first-class official. At the outbreak of war, Zdzisław Szczerbiński was the number two person in the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara. It is worth adding that in addition, on March 1, 1937, he was appointed the head of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Istanbul⁹. He took them briefly, because on October 31 this year he was released from it, retaining the position of counselor of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Turkey¹⁰. He served in Ankara until December 1942. At that time he was transferred to Istanbul, where he took over the leadership of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland. At the request of Sokolnicki, in February 1942, Minister Raczyński appointed Antoni Baliński, second counselor of the Polish Embassy in London¹¹. The diplomat took up duties on 10 June¹² and held them until August 1945. He successfully replaced the ambassador among others in June (18-28) 1943, when Sokolnicki went to Syria to meet with Prime Minister Gen. Władysław Sikorski. In July 1940, Minister August Zaleski appointed Tadeusz Kunicki a counselor of the Polish Embassy in Ankara. In contrast to its predecessors, its

⁷ Ibidem, s. 22.

⁸ *Rocznik Służby Zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Yearbook of Foreign Service of the Republic of Poland) as of April 1, 1938, Warsaw 1938, p. 141. Embassy in Paris 13 (with military attaché) and 23 contracts, London 7 and 10, Moscow 6 and 7, Bucharest 5 and 5, Helsingfors 3 and 3.

⁹ *Rocznik Służby Zagranicznej Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej* (Yearbook of Foreign Service of the Republic of Poland) as of 1st of April 1937, Warsaw 1937, p. 129.

¹⁰ *Dz.U. MSZ* (Diry of the Laws of the Forreign Affairs Department) No. 4 of 27 August 1937, p. 77; M. Kruszyński, *Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Moscow 1921-1939*, Warsaw 2010, p. 299. In his biographical note it was stated that he was directing the Consulate in the period from March 1, 1937 to August 31, 1944.

¹¹ AAN, IH, MSZ (see footnote No5), 800.42.0.250.2, Tel. cipher. No. 14 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from 19 February 1943.

¹² AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.250.3, Tel. cipher. No. 129 From Ankara Ankary to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs dated 12 June 1943

headquarters was in Istanbul¹³. According to Sokolnicki, it was a misguided appointment because it doubled the role of the embassy. Nevertheless, he was assigned a cipher handset by Zygmunt Wyszński and a typist Bożena Janowska. At the end of March 1941, after the transfer of duties to the head of the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Warsaw, Minister Karol Bader was dismissed. It was worth mentioning that in mid-January 1941, the Minister of the Treasury entrusted Tomasz Kuźniarz with the duties of a financial advisor to an embassy based in Istanbul¹⁴. In autumn this year he became the curator of the DAL S.A. company in the USA. In the rank of secretary of the embassy in September 1941, Adam Macieliński was appointed¹⁵. It seems that this function was relatively short, because from March 1942 he was in Athens, where he made contact with the military attaché, Colonel Dipl.-Ing. Tadeusz Machalski¹⁶.

From November 1942 to February 1944, Jerzy Kurcysz was an official serving as the first secretary of the embassy. In spite of this nomination, he remained in the post of the Ministry of the Interior and carried out work commissioned by the manager of this ministry, including issues related to the Continental Action¹⁷. After his dismissal to London, duties in Istanbul were taken over as the titular second secretary of the embassy, pre-war deputy prosecutor of the Vilnius Court of Appeal Jerzy Rabczewski¹⁸ (pseudonym Jan Rudowski).

In the second secretary he served mainly the subordinates of the head of the Second Staff of the Commander-in-Chief. One of them was Lieutenant Włodzimierz Ledóchowski, valued by Ambassador Sokolnicki. In a letter to the lieutenant of December 11, 1942, the ambassador did not hide his satisfaction with the nomination. I am very happy, wrote Sokolnicki, that You come to our circle here and becomes one of my closest associates. On my part you can always count on help and cooperation and honesty and also my kindness¹⁹. In his place in October 1944, he was named Lieutenant Stanisław Patkowski using a passport in the name of Stanisław Longin Prus²⁰.

In the autumn of 1940, Wiktor Zaleski was included in the rank of press attaché. Previously, he served in the embassy as a commercial adviser. However, his main activities were focused on intelligence issues. The Press Department, in turn, functioned in conjunction with the Polish Telegraph Agency (PAT). From 1937, her correspondent was Ingus Wassan Girej Dżabagi, whose headquarters were in Istanbul. At the end of October 1941, Sokolnicki introduced to the President İsmet İnönü the press attaché of the embassy. It was Stefan Werner²¹, the trustworthy minister of information and documentation of Stanisław Stroński. Istanbul, where his headquarters was located, left in February 1945. By that time, Jabbagi remained his collaborator²².

On January 1, 1945, Stanisław Szeremeth was appointed as the attaché of the embassy²³. He arrived in Ankara on July 16²⁴, but eight days later, Sokolnicki asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to authorize him to pay him a £ 150 advance on his return journey to London. This request was renewed by the ambassador on 27 July²⁵ and 13 August²⁶. In view of the planned transfer of the embassy to a representative of the government in Warsaw, Sokolnicki did not see the possibility of starting his office.

¹³ The Józef Piłsudski Institute in America (hereinafter IJPA), Archive of Ambassador Michał Sokolnicki (hereinafter referred to as AAMS), file box 9-17, reference number 13, Tel. Zaleski No. 14 of July 20, 1940; AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.225.3, Tel. cipher. No. 3 to Istanbul from July 20, 1940; J. Pietrzak, op. cit., p. 141. The author said that Kunicki was then appointed a special envoy of the embassy.

¹⁴ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.236.4, Tel. cipher. No. 10 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from January 14, 1941.

¹⁵ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.226.6, Tel. cipher. No. 156 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara of September 20, 1941.

¹⁶ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 16, Tel. No. 37 Kurcysz from Istanbul to Ankara from 16 III 1942.

¹⁷ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.235.14, Tel. cipher. No. 143 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from 9 October 1942.

¹⁸ He also appears in the documents as Jan Rabczewski and Jerzy Rudowski.

¹⁹ <http://www.ledochowski.eu/rodzina/wlodzimierz1910.html> (20 IV 2017).

²⁰ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.263.16, Tel. cipher. from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara No. 123 of 11 October 1944.

²¹ M. Sokolnicki, *Dziennik ankarcki 1939-1943*, London 1965, p. 272.

²² AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.225.2, Tel. cipher. No. 89 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Istanbul from December 30, 1940.

²³ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.263.16, Tel. cipher. No. 175 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from December 8, 1944.

²⁴ IJPA, AAMS, box 18-24, ref. 21, Tel. No. 99 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of July 18, 1945; M. Sokolnicki, *Ankarcki dziennik 1943-1946*, London 1974, p. 365.

²⁵ IJPA, AAMS, box 18-24, ref. 21, Tel. No. 2 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 27 July 1945.

²⁶ IJPA, AAMS, box 18-24, ref. 21, Tel. No. 6 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs from August 13, 1945.

It should be remembered that lower personnel were necessary for the proper functioning of the facility. It includes the accountant, typist, chauffeur, radio operator, watchman (janitor) and kavas recruited from among Turkish citizens (table 2).

Table 2. Personnel composition of the Polish Embassy in Ankara in October 1940.

LP	First name and last name	Degree name / position	Degree name/position
Position based in Ankara			
1.	Michał Sokolnicki		ambassador
2.	Zdzisław Szczerbiński		counselor of the embassy
3.	Piotr Cymmer		radiotelegraphist
4.	Wiktor Kowalski		accountant and authorizing officer
5.	Maria Parczewska		typist and archivist
6.	Stanisław Piszczatowski		chauffeur
7.	Józef Worsley		butler
8.	Piotr Kempka		kavas
9.	Muemin Ferdig		kavas
10.	Mustafa Atar		kavas
11.	Yusuf Gokmen		night watchman
Position based in Istanbul			
12.	Tadeusz Kunicki		counselor of the embassy
13.	Wiktor Zaleski		attaché of the press
14.	Zygmunt Wyszynski		cipher
15.	Bożena Janowska		typist
Position based in Yeniköy			
16.	Stanisław Ryży		janitor

Source: AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.293.8, Letter from the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Turkey No. 478/1/37 from October 24, 1940.

As a result of the evacuation of Polish authorities in September 1939, the embassy was deprived of subsidies. Later this month, Col. Ignacy Matuszewski left 9539.65\$ in Ankara. These funds were after covering the costs of transporting the gold of the Bank of Poland²⁷. They were small and in December they were used up for conscripts and embassy employees.

The second source of financing at that time was the National Armaments Wytwórnia Fund. Without the authorization of the Ministry of Treasury, Sokolnicki, he could not use it²⁸. In September 1939, it amounted to 14,125 Ltqs²⁹. At the end of this month, this amount was exchanged for dollars at 1 Ltqs = 0.5323\$ which, according to the embassy, made 7095 \$³⁰. Another source of financial resources used by the embassy were the funds flowing from the clearing contract to the account of the National Clearing Institute. Jan Marynowski became the delegate of this institution in Turkey. He was also entrusted with conducting negotiations with the Central Bank of Turkey regarding the liquidation of the clearing arrangement.

The funds for Polish institutions in Turkey came in the form of a transfer. The budget of the embassy consisted of personal expenses (salaries, allowances) and administrative and material expenses. The latter included charges for water, electricity, renovation of premises, garbage collection, and costs related to car maintenance and purchase of office supplies (Table 3). By the spring of 1944, the budget for the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Istanbul was also sent to the embassy. For example, at the end of January 1941, the ambassador was obliged to take in the Turkish currency the equivalent of 150000 FRF³¹ for the embassy and 46000 FRF for the consulate³².

²⁷ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.224.1, Tel. cipher. No. 18 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 26 August 1940.

²⁸ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.214.4, Tel. cipher. No. 5 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 12 January 1940.

²⁹ Turkish Lira.

³⁰ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.226.5, Tel. cipher. No. 219 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of September 27, 1941.

³¹ French franc.

³² AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.214.7, Tel. cipher. No. 25 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ankara of January 27, 1940.

Table 3. Specification of the monthly budget of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara on July 1940.

Details	Amount (FRF)
Personnel expenditures	
Salary of full-time employees	
Ambassador + Representative allowance	15000+8000 [*]
Attorney + representative allowance	10000+2700
Military Attaché +representative allowance	9100+2700
Salary of contract employees	
Wiktor Zaleski	5600
Wiktor Kowalski	3500
Maria Parczewska	3500
Piotr Cymmer	3500
Basic salary of lower rank officers (Polish citizens)	
Stanisław Piszczatowski	2500
Stanisław Ryży	1800
Basic salary of lower rank officers (foreign citizens)	
-	7000
Administrative expenses-allowances	
-	22000
Total	96900

Note: * At the rate 1 £=177 FRF it was about 85£+45£. Hence, the budget of the embassy amounted to around 547£.

Source: IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, reference number 13, Tel. cipher. No. 20 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of July 18, 1940; ibidem, Tel. cipher. No. 23 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of July 22, 1940; AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.224.1, Tel. cipher. No. 13 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from July 20, 1940.

Non-budgetary sums also flowed through the embassy. These were funds allocated to representatives of offices (cover), deductions in installments, reimbursement of travel expenses. In addition, funds were provided for, for example, the delegate of the Polish Red Cross, Jerzy Kurcysz from the Ministry of the Interior, and for the protection of refugees (table 4).

Table 4. Specification of the message for the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara on July 1941.

Details	Amount (£)
Amount of money for the embassy	1308.54
Extra-budgetary donation	
Polish Telegraphic Agency in Istanbul for VII and behind III	212.0.0
Zygmunt Zydorowicz	40.0.0
Ambassador disposition fund	41.6.6
Zygmunt Blenau	27.10.11
Aleksander Figlarewicz	35.0.0
Alfred Poniński	75.0.0
Tadeusz Berdysiński hike for VII	7.1.3
Chymkowski's salary and Piotr Cymmer's hike for VII	25.8.6
From consulate grant deducted salary for Jan Marynowski for V and VI	80.0.0
Total	543.7.2
Budget grant	
Total	764.18.2

Source: AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.226.5, Tel. cipher. No. 179 Sokolnicki from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 16 July 1941; AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.226.4, Tel. cipher. No. 132 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from 17 July 1941.

For the embassy staff, the reduction of emoluments was particularly severe. In February 1940, the ambassador was ordered to pay 80% of January's salary³³. It is true that with the elapse of time, the salary has been increased, but it effectively eliminated the increase in the prices of basic food products. Therefore, the ambassador repeatedly, especially when drawing up the budget estimate, appealed to raise the budget of the institution. An almost chronic phenomenon was the delay of subsidies. It forced the ambassador to pay advances for the next month. Another issue that was struggling was the lack of specifications for the subsidies received.

³³ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 22 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from January 23, 1940.

This was the reason for many mistakes and ambiguities, which unnecessarily generated additional costs of correspondence regarding their clarification. The issues related to the exchange rate were not without significance, which Sokolnicki repeatedly pointed out. It should be remembered that Viktor Styburski played an important role in stabilizing the finances of the embassy, which from May 1941 controlled the finances of Polish institutions in the Middle East³⁴.

It should be added that despite the difficult financial situation, the embassy officials did not refuse to help their colleagues and their families staying in a difficult situation. From the beginning of 1941, tax was paid in the amount of 1-2% of the salary. Declared premiums were deducted at the Ministry of the Treasury when sending the budget and Foreign Service Officials were assigned to the Co-operation Fund. Initially, it was 5.13.8 £, while in 1945 it increased to 5.18.0 £.

Meetings with government officials, observation, and press analysis were the basic source of information about Turkey. It can be said that, on an ongoing basis, in political, economic and secret matters, the embassy maintained correspondence with telegram telegrams. Reports, especially after the transfer of the authorities to London, reached the addressee with a delay. Hence, they became less frequent with statements and comments of a synthetic nature. Their range included a broad spectrum of Turkish life from foreign policy to internal regulations guaranteeing the functioning of the state. At the request of the British authorities, a longer break in correspondence between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the embassy took place in 1944, from mid-April to almost mid-June.

One of the main tasks of the embassy was to maintain the constitutional continuity of the Polish authorities. On the day of the swearing-in of Władysław Raczkiewicz, Sokolnicki was to know whether his notification of the head of state would be welcomed by the Turks³⁵. The head of Turkish diplomacy told the ambassador that the friendly attitude of President İsmet İnönü to President Raczkiewicz was not in doubt. However, the fact of accepting Ambassador Sokolnicki testified to the recognition by Ankara of the Polish government in Paris³⁶. Nevertheless, according to the diplomatic protocol, the head of the Turkish Foreign Ministry promised to give an official reply³⁷, which took place on October 7³⁸.

The role of the embassy played during the evacuation of the Polish Bank gold in September 1939. Sokolnicki took responsibility for the loyal attitude of Ankara. The Polish side was obliged to cover transport costs³⁹.

There was a trail throughout Turkey, which Polish soldiers after reaching Syria and then Palestine, were using to join the ranks of the Polish Armed Forces. Ambassador Sokolnicki in September 1939, he postulated that from the military residing in Romania and Hungary, form one division in Syria at the Allied Allied Command. Its organization would be parallel to the Polish Army in France. According to him, this great infantry unit would constitute the core of the Polish army that could fight in the Middle East operational theater, from where the relatively shortest route to Poland led. Its organization was supported by favorable transport and supply conditions⁴⁰. The ambassador's opinion was shared by the military attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara, Lt. Col. Tadeusz Machalski⁴¹.

The role of this transit increased after Italy joined the war. In the middle of May 1940, Deputy Minister Zygmunt Graliński, in the instructions to Sokolnicki, remarked that in the event of a change in the position of Italy, insurmountable difficulties would arise in getting to France. At that time, the Polish authorities intended to direct refugees who were subject to military service to Beirut and their families to Turkey, which was to constitute (...) a temporary distribution stage⁴². All costs related to maintaining refugees are obliged to cover the Polish government, which has already obtained the consent of France for the arrival of Polish refugees from Hungary and Romania. In a conversation with the minister of foreign affairs of Turkey, Sokolnicki was assured

³⁴ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.228.15, Tel. cipher. No. 146 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Istanbul from 19 May 1941.

³⁵ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. (?) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Polish Embassy in Ankara from October 3, 1939.

³⁶ M. Sokolnicki, *Dziennik ...*, p. 70.

³⁷ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 13 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 5 October 1939.

³⁸ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.282.39, Tel. cipher. No. 16 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on October 7, 1939.

³⁹ W. Rojek, *Odyseja skarbu Rzeczypospolitej. Losy złota Banku Polskiego 1939-1950*, Krakow 2000, p. 48-67.

⁴⁰ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 5 from Ankara to Paris from September 21, 1939.

⁴¹ T. Machalski, *Co widziałem i przeżyłem*, London 1980, p. 175-176, 178, 181.

⁴² IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 2 from Paris to Ankara from 17 May 1940.

that Ankara will not make any difficulties in the transit of Polish refugees from Romania, Hungary and Yugoslavia. Free passage through the territory of Turkey was provided to both civilians and military⁴³.

At the end of June, in the event of the Syrian border being closed, the Turks allowed transit via sea via Aleksandretta, Haifa or by land through Iraq⁴⁴. However, according to Sokolnicki (...) the only way out (...) was to obtain British visas for entry to Palestine and provide a safe route to it⁴⁵. The ambassador immediately began to try the Turkish authorities. It should be remembered that in the issue of obtaining visas, the embassy was subject to pressure from both the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the heads of Balkan institutions. Until the autumn of 1940, Turkish railways transported over 3,000 Polish soldiers heading for Syria and then Palestine. However, the failure of the embassy ended efforts to obtain the consent of the Turkish authorities for asylum for a larger number of political refugees. In July 1940, it was decided that 500 people could be located in Cyprus. Sokolnicki offered sea routes as an escape route from Istanbul, Greece, Mersyn, Alexandretta and land, through Turkey (Istanbul - Mersyna), poor rail capacity. In addition, he suggested a thorough agreement on the evacuation between the British and Turkish authorities, because only on this basis Ankara could grant transit visas⁴⁶. The first transport arrived in Cyprus on September 16, 1940 and the last on November 11. Thanks to the efforts of the embassy through Turkey (Istanbul - Mersyna) there were 504 people there⁴⁷.

The Turks also refused to allow, even for temporary stay, several thousand civilian refugees and soldiers' families⁴⁸. As Sokolnicki was informed, Ankara was not prepared to receive as many refugees. The diplomat warned the Ministry of Foreign Affairs against sending large numbers of women and children to Turkey for a longer period. He justified this with the heaviest housing and material conditions prevailing in the whole of the Middle East. Another factor that the ambassador gave was the intolerance of foreigners by the administration and the police. The mobilization and eventuality of the war in the Straits may have led to their living conditions becoming catastrophic⁴⁹.

Loads of room in the embassy reports was devoted to Turkey's foreign policy and the question of its accession to war. Apart from the relations with the authorities of the Republic of Poland, her relations with the world's greatest powers were particularly important. We're talking about the USSR, the Reich, Britain, France, Italy and the USA. The relations with Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece and Romania were not a significant issue. The reports also contain information on Turkey's internal situation. They talk about the system, administration, economy, industry and trade⁵⁰.

It is worth mentioning that the second Polish branch in Turkey, subordinate to Sokolnicki's ambassador, was the Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in Istanbul⁵¹. His territorial competences covered the entire territory of the Republic of Turkey. In view of the allocation of a significant number of employees of government agencies, it was a relatively extensive office. Unlike the embassy, in terms of personnel, the consulate was the most unstable institution in the Middle East. In the period under discussion, he was headed by Wojciech Rychlewicz (November 1937-March 1941), Karol Bader (April-October 1941), Alfred Poniński (November 1941-December 1942), Zdzisław Szerbiński (December 1942-August 1944), Witold Adam Korsak (September 1944-August 1945).

One of the closest associates of Ambassador Michał Sokolnicki, who was a military attaché at the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Ankara, should be mentioned at this point. The first officer who was in this position during the war was Lt. Col. dipl./pkk. coffees. Tadeusz Machalski (September 1939-May 1941),

⁴³ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.214.4, Tel. cipher. No. 38 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 24 May 1940.

⁴⁴ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 7 from Ankara to London from June 28, 1940; ibidem, Tel. No. 10 from Ankara to Bucharest from June 28, 1940; ibidem, Tel. No. 13 from Ankara to Istanbul from June 28, 1940.

⁴⁵ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 8 from Ankara to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of 29 June 1940.

⁴⁶ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. cipher. No. 19 from Ankara to Bucharest and London from July 16, 1940.

⁴⁷ J. Pietrzak, op. cit., p. 46-47.

⁴⁸ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 66 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ankara from June 12, 1940.

⁴⁹ IJPA, AAMS, box 9-17, ref. 13, Tel. No. 47 from Ankara to Angers from June 13, 1940; ibidem, Tel. No. 4 from Ankara to Bucharest from June 13, 1940; ibidem, Tel. No. 4 from Ankara to Belgrade from June 13, 1940; ibidem, Tel. No. 1 from Ankara to Athens from June 13, 1940; ibidem, Tel. No. 2 from Ankara to Budapest from June 13, 1940.

⁵⁰ AAN, IH, MSZ, 800.42.0.21.14, Letter from the Polish Embassy in Turkey No. 775/6/43 from 13 and 1943.

⁵¹ W. Namysłowski, *System prawa konsularnego*, Warsaw 1949, s. 125; W. Skóra, *Służba konsularna Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej. Organizacja, kadry i działalność*, Toruń 2006, p. 29-30, 33, 36,

replaced by Colonel rush. Andrzej Liebich (May 1941-December 1942). His successor was Lt. Col. rush. Marian Zimnal (December 1942-August 1945)⁵².

As a result of the withdrawal of recognition to the authorities of the Republic of Poland, on the basis of the decree of President Raczkiewicz, on July 31, 1945, the relationship with diplomatic service employees was terminated. Most of the staff, along with the ambassador, left the embassy building on August 28⁵³.

In the discussed period, the embassy functioned in an atmosphere of friendship and full understanding of the Turkish authorities, which was reflected in the work of the consulate and the military attaché. This was largely due to the ambassador Michał Sokolnicki and his wife Irena. The ambassador's partners were conscientious Turkish diplomats, reluctant to give in any concessions indicating the weakness of their country. It must be said that during this difficult period the embassy fulfilled the tasks imposed on it.

II. SUMMARY

At the outbreak of the Second World War, the Polish Embassy in Ankara was the only Polish branch in the Middle East. During this time, Ambassador Michał Sokolnicki was the head of it, having the highest rank among the managers of Polish institutions in neutral countries for the longest time. After the outbreak of the war, and especially after the liquidation of Polish diplomatic missions in the Balkans, the role of the embassy increased significantly. In addition to standard tasks, she conducted observation of the Balkan states. It was also used as a transit station between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Polish Embassy in the USSR and the Republic of Poland in Tehran. With the approval of the ambassador Sokolnicki and with the knowledge of the Turkish authorities, an intelligence unit was active, which in comparison with the pre-war period has been expanded. It should be remembered that the embassy was a field in which the influence of the supporters of the pre-military government against the opponents of sanacja was clashing, which was reflected in the HR policy. In the article presented, the author outlined the creation of the Polish Embassy in Turkey and its functioning during World War II. The composition of the staff of the facility was presented, which increased in the discussed period. In addition to full-time officials, representatives of other ministries, including military intelligence officers, were placed in its structure. Some of her staff spent time in Istanbul, where she carried out tasks for other ministries. The issues of financing the facility were also outlined, both at the initial stage of the war and later, when there was a relative stabilization of finances. The author presented the budget of the institution and its components. In addition, it also mentioned a number of problems that have been faced on this level. Expenses flow through the embassy to help the needy as well as Poles in the USSR and the country. The institution's officials also marked their participation in this type of campaign, from which funds were directed to diplomats remaining without allocation. During the war additional tasks fell on the embassy. These included an important, though short-term undertaking, which was the evacuation of Polish gold. The transit through Turkey of evacuated soldiers and civilians turned out to be a much longer process. The task was resolved thanks to the cooperation of the embassy with the consulate and the military attache. The Turks, on the other hand, remained tenacious about the admission of more Polish refugees to their territory. A great effort for the embassy was to obtain asylum for several dozen Poles, including a group of engineers and technicians. Ankara's approval was not obtained by the ambassador to transfer the facility's building in September 1945.

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⁵² R. Majzner, *Attachaty wojskowe Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej 1919-1945. Strukturalno-organizacyjne aspekty funkcjonowania*, Częstochowa 2014, p. 540.

⁵³ M. Sokolnicki, *Dziennik ...*, p. 376.