Great Britain's Obligations Towards Poland

and

Some Facts About The Curzon Line

by

Ignacy Matuszewski

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"No right anywhere exists to hand peoples about from sovereignty to sovereignty as if they were property."

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Address to the United States Senate
January 22, 1917

"We know that the partition of Poland between the German and Russian capitalists was the greatest crime ever committed against that country."

— Lenin
Congress of Economic Council
January 27, 1920

"The conditions of the Dark Ages had advanced from the Urals to the Pripet marshes; but there it was written: "So far and no further!"

—Churchill, Winston S.
"The Great War."

Foreword

I have tried in this pamphlet to present with all fairness what I think about the reciprocal obligations of Great Britain and Poland, as based on the Agreement of Mutual Assistance of August 25, 1939. Perhaps I am not right. Perhaps my opinion, in spite of my efforts to be objective, is too purely Polish. If this is the case, I hope that some independent English writer will answer and tell me publicly wherein I am in error.

I have not written it to quarrel with any one, but because I believe that the Anglo-Polish Agreement was a fact arising from the solidarity of the nations of Western culture. I believe that this solidarity is the only force in the world whereby cataclysm may be avoided. If it fails, the cataclysm will come.

It is my belief that this force is stronger than any temporary political constellation and therefore I believe that this Agreement will once more become operative. I am convinced that this is also the point of view of the Polish nation as a whole.

IGNACY MATUSZEWSKI

New York, April 10, 1945

CHAPTER I

The Texts

On March 31, 1939, Mr. Chamberlain, British Prime Minister, in his report to the House of Commons, made the following statement:

> "As the House is aware, certain consultations are now proceeding with other Governments. In order to make perfectly clear the position of His Majesty's Government in the meantime, before those consultations are concluded, I now have to inform the House that during that period, in the event of any action which clearly threatened Polish independence, and which the Polish Government accordingly considered it vital to resist with their national forces, His Majesty's Government would feel themselves bound at once to lend the Polish Government all support in their power. They have given the Polish Government an assurance to this effect."[1]

In this first guarantee of support which Great Britain, of her own free will and initiative, gave Poland no hedge of geographical limitation was placed about the promise. Mr. Chamberlain did not say that his country would go to Poland's assistance only if a threat came from a specific direction; he promised support "in the event of *any* action which clearly threatened Polish independence."

The succeeding document, which defines more precisely the obligations of the two signatories, was the joint communiqué issued on April 6, 1939 which presented the viewpoint of both governments as agreed upon during the visit to London of Joseph Beck, Poland's Minister for Foreign Affairs. The text of the communiqué reads as follows:

> "It was agreed that the two countries were prepared to enter into an agreement of a permanent and reciprocal character to replace the present temporary and unilateral assurance given by His Majesty's Government to the Polish Government. Pending the completion of the permanent agreement, Mr. Beck gave His Majesty's Government an assurance that the Polish Government would consider themselves under an obligation to

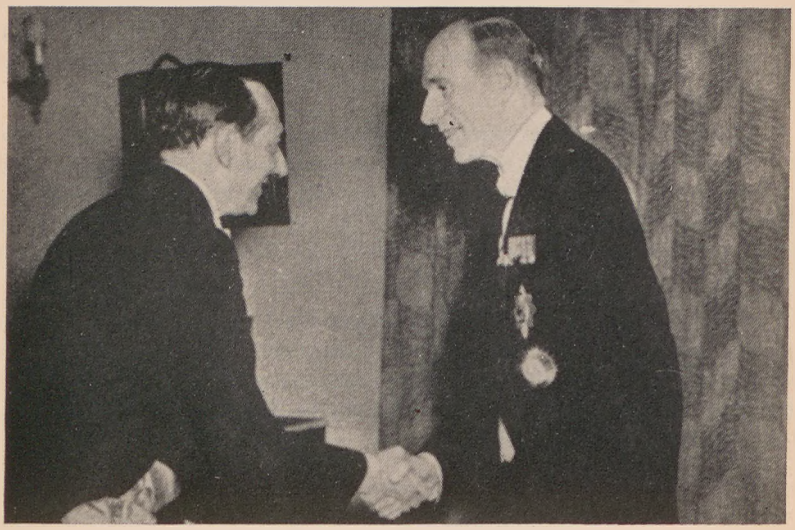
[1] The British War Blue Book, Doc. 17, p. 48. (Hereafter cited as BWBB.)

render assistance to His Majesty's Government under the same conditions as those contained in the temporary assurance already given by His Majesty's Government to Poland.

"Like the temporary assurance, the permanent agreement would not be directed against any other country, but would be designed to assure Great Britain and Poland of mutual assistance in the event of any threat, *direct or indirect*, to the independence of either."[2]

There are two differences — both of major importance — between Mr. Chamberlain's statement of March 21 and this later document. In the first the guarantee of assistance was unilateral — given by Great Britain to Poland. In the latter the same obligation was assumed by Poland. Furthermore, whereas the terms of the first could be understood as binding only in case of "direct" aggression, the text of the communiqué states specifically that the commitments shall also become operative in the event of an "indirect" threat to either country.

Neither of these changes involved any limitation, political or territorial, of the commitments undertaken. On the contrary, their scope was so widened that, broadly considered, they became a guarantee of armed resistance to any State attempting to establish a preponderance of power on the Continent.



Anglo-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance
Polish Foreign Minister Beck (left); British Foreign Secretary Halifax (right)

[2] BWBB, Doc. 18, p. 49.

At the time when the communiqué was signed it is doubtful that either England or Poland realized fully the far-reaching ramifications of its significance. In the spring of 1939 the obvious danger threatening Poland was the German menace and the word, "indirect," in all likelihood, may have been introduced into the text of the understanding to take care of the eventuality of an attack on Danzig.[3]

But by the end of August the situation on the Continent had so changed, the issues so clarified, that the British pledge against an indirect attack must have been consciously understood in this more general sense.[4] Two days before the Anglo-Polish Agreement in its final and binding form went into effect the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, signed in Moscow, was made public. Great Britain entered the engagement with Poland fully aware that danger threatened her ally from the East as well as from the West.

In a communication to Hitler, under date of August 22, Mr. Chamberlain notified the German Chancellor that:

> ". . . apparently the announcement of a German-Soviet Agreement is taken in some quarters in Berlin to indicate that intervention by Great Britain on behalf of Poland is no longer a contingency that need to be reckoned with. No greater mistake could be made.
>
> "Whatever may prove to be the nature of the German-Soviet Agreement, it cannot alter Great Britain's obligations to Poland which His Majesty's Government have stated in public repeatedly and plainly, and which they are determined to fulfill."[5]

Two days later, August 24, Sir Neville Henderson, British Ambassador at Berlin, cabled Lord Halifax that he would:

> ". . . be surprised if it (the German-Soviet Agreement) is not supplemented later by something more than mere non-aggression."[6]

The same day Mr. Chamberlain informed the House of Commons that:

> "The Soviet Government were secretly negotiating a pact with Germany for purposes which, on the face of it, were inconsistent with the objects of their foreign policy as we had understood it . . . (His Majesty's

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[3] The possibility of a hostile move on France by Germany was, of course, always in the background and, while we have not to hand existing documentary evidence, we can state that to our knowledge, during the 1939 April-May conversations between England and Poland the possibility of a German thrust eastward into Lithuania or west into Belgium and Holland was considered.

[4] The documents relating to the Anglo-Soviet and the Franco-Soviet negotiations of June-August, 1939, are not yet published. It is, therefore, difficult to make any accurate estimate as to how clearly Soviet Russia had put forth her annexationist demands at that time. We may, however, assume that in some measure she had already revealed her intentions concerning Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the eastern half of Poland.

[5] BWBB, Doc. 56, p. 125.

[6] idem. Doc. 58, p. 131.

Government) had to consider . . . what effect, if any, this changed situation would have upon their own policy. In Berlin the announcement was hailed with extraordinary cynicism as a great diplomatic victory which removed any danger of war, since (Great Britain) and France would no longer fulfill their obligations to Poland. We felt it our first duty to remove (this) dangerous illusion. . . . The guarantee . . . to Poland was given before any agreement with Russia was talked of . . . and was not dependent upon any agreement being reached. . . . We therefore issued a statement that our obligations to Poland and other countries remained unaffected."[7]

On August 25 Ambassador Henderson again called Hitler's attention to the fact that:

". . . (this) Russian Pact in no way altered (the) standpoint of His Majesty's Government . . . and that Great Britain could not go back on her word to Poland."[8]

It was in full awareness, then, of the gravity of the international situation and with complete realization of the momentous issues hanging in balance, that England on August 25, 1939, of her own free will elected for the third time to support Poland's position in Europe.

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The terms in which this decision were reaffirmed and re-stated are explicit. They admit of no misunderstanding or misinterpretation. Let us examine more closely the official text of the document as made public:

"Desiring to place on a permanent basis the collaboration between their respective countries resulting from the assurances of mutual assistance of a defensive character which they have already exchanged,"—so reads the first sentence— (we) "have agreed on the following provisions:

(Art. 1) "Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of aggression by the latter against the Contracting Party, the other Contracting Party will *at once* give the Contracting Party engaged in hostilities all the support and assistance in its power."[9]

Translated from juridical verbiage into plain every-day language this simply means that if Britain were attacked by any European Power, Poland would go to her assistance, and if Poland were so attacked, Britain would do the same thing for her. Both signatories stood ready to help each other in fighting a defensive war against aggression.

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[7] BWBB, Doc. 54, p. 141.

[8] idem. Doc. 69, p. 158.

[9] idem. Doc. 19, pp. 49-50.

The question immediately arises: "What do we mean when we speak of aggression?"

There have been innumerable discussions as to the precise definition of the term "aggressor." The best of them, perhaps, is that proposed by Mr. Litvinov (at the time Soviet Commissar for Foreign Affairs) and adopted by representatives of the Soviet Union, Roumania, Estonia, Latvia, Poland, Turkey, Iran, and Afghanistan, meeting in London at the Convention for the Definition of Aggression July 3, 1933. It runs as follows:

> ". . . The aggressor in an international conflict shall . . . be considered to be that State which is the first to commit any of the following actions:
>
> 1. Declaration of war upon another State;
>
> 2. Invasion by its armed forces, with or without a declaration of war, of the territory of another State;
>
> 3. Attack by its land, naval or air forces, with or without a declaration of war, on the territory, vessels or aircraft of another State;
>
> 4. Naval blockade of the coasts or ports of another State;
>
> 5. Provision of support to armed bands formed in its territory which have invaded the territory of another State or refusal, notwithstanding the request of the invaded State, to take in its own territory all the measures in its power to deprive those bands of all assistance or protection.
>
> No political, military, economic or other considerations may serve as an excuse or justification for the aggression (above) referred to . . ."[10]

This seems to us to be an eminently comprehensive and satisfactory summary of what is meant by "aggression." If, however, there is anyone who does not find himself in complete agreement with every detail of Mr. Litvinov's finely elaborated definition, we are sure that no one will quarrel with the assertion that when the army of one State invades the terrain of another State and enforces its will by slaughter and extermination, such an outrage constitutes an act of aggression.

It may be asked what would be the purpose of a coalition war against aggression?

The signatories to a defensive alliance obviously cannot arrange *a priori* all the details of the forthcoming peace, but they certainly must intend, once victory is won, to restore the territorial integrity of the country or countries attacked. Otherwise there would be no meaning or sense to a mutual assistance pact. The Anglo-Polish Agreement, therefore, must be considered first and foremost as a mutual guarantee of frontiers.

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[10] "Polish-Soviet Relations." Published by the Polish Information Center, New York, N. Y. Doc. 7, p. 17.

In several of his reports to the House of Commons Mr. Churchill has insisted that Great Britain never guaranteed any "particular" frontier to Poland. We agree. The Prime Minister is right in his contention. It was not a particular frontier; it was *all* the frontiers both of Poland and of Great Britain *as they existed de jure and de facto August 25, 1939*, that were assured by the assistance agreement. The terms of the document are explicit; they make no provision for any choice on the part of either of the contracting parties. Had Malta, for instance, or Scotland, or Ulster been attacked by enemies of Great Britain, there was no loop-hole by virtue of which Poland could eventually have claimed that she had no legal obligation to fight for that "particular" British possession. She would have been in honor bound to take up arms and fight till Britain was fully restored in her rights and territories. In the same way England took upon herself equally inclusive obligations, namely, to support Poland in resistance to an assault on *any of her 1939 frontiers.*

Formerly one of the largest countries in Europe, the Polish State during the partitions period of the 18th century was completely torn asunder by her three powerful neighbors, Russia, Prussia, and Austria, and her territory divided up among them. As a consequence, the Republic as re-constituted in 1918, necessarily included both in the west and in the east, large areas that for over a century had been in bondage to these countries.

Great Britain, however, did not wait till Hitler's hordes reached the partition line of 1795 before recognizing the Reich as an aggressor. She declared war as soon as the Wehrmacht violated the 1939 frontiers.

The situation in the east was exactly the same. Russian aggression against Poland began when the Soviet invaders crossed the Polish-Russian frontiers of 1939. It was not delayed till they reached and crossed the 1795 line of the third partition — which is precisely the so-called Curzon Line.[11] (The reason why England did not make a similar declaration of war on Russia in September of 1939 is explained further on in the text.)

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Article II of the Anglo-Polish Agreement goes far beyond a guarantee of frontiers. It obligates Great Britain and Poland to maintain the status quo in vast areas of Europe. Section 1 of Article II declares that:

> "The provisions of Article I will also apply in the event of any action by a European Power which clearly threatened, directly or indirectly, the independence of one of the Contracting Parties, and was of such a nature that the Party in question considered it vital to resist it with its armed forces."[12]

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[11] The history of the Curzon Line is explained in the special appendix.

[12] BWBB, Doc. 19, p. 50.

The import of this provision can best be explained, perhaps, by a concrete illustration. Let us suppose for a moment that the present conflict had not begun with an attack on Poland, but that early one morning from under the decks of German merchantmen lying peacefully at anchor in some Irish port, divisions of the Wehrmacht had marched out and occupied the Irish Free State. (This is what actually happened in Norway.) If the war had started in this fashion, it would not have been a direct attack on England, since Eire is an independent Commonwealth. Would Poland, in such a case, have been obligated to join England in a war on Germany?

Had England considered the occupation of Eire by the Wehrmacht a threat to her own safety, and had she sent troops into the Free State to resist the occupation, the answer is most decidedly: "Yes." Poland would have been bound to come to England's assistance in a defensive war on Germany.

Section 2 of Article II makes still clearer the broad implications of the Agreement The issue is seen to be not merely that of resistance to aggression, but of maintenance and re-establishment of the former status quo. This provision rules that:

> Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of action by that Power which threatened the independence or neutrality of another European State in such a way as to constitute a clear menace to the security of the Contracting Party, the provisions of Article I will apply, *without prejudice, however, to the rights of the other European States concerned.*"[13]

Apply this ruling of the Agreement to the case predicated above — a hypothetical war waged in Ireland against Germany. This war would have to be conducted "without prejudice" to the rights of Ireland. After an allied victory, therefore, Ireland would return to her status quo as an independent State within her old frontiers.[14]

If in days to come the historian shall cast about for the genesis of the Atlantic Charter — in particular, those sections of its text that deal with the non-recognition of territorial changes imposed by force—he will, I make bold to suggest, find himself going back to Section 2, Article II, of the Anglo-Polish Agreement wherein Poland and Britain bind themselves to respect the rights of every nation within their respective spheres of defence.

It is essential here that a clear-cut differentiation be made between the meaning of "spheres of defence" and "spheres of influence."— a term which at present is receiving particular attention in discussions about the future struc-

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[13] BWBB, Doc. 19, p. 50.

[14] Article II states that war in resistance to aggression should not prejudice the rights of a third state (aggressors excepted). Once again, is it not evident that the Anglo-Polish Pact can not be interpreted as permitting the partition of Poland, one of the Contracting Parties?

ture of the European peace. Today, when the word "influence" has become but another name for "violence," it is clear that the proposed division of the Continent into spheres of influence dominated by Great Britain and Russia would mean the absorption and eventual slavery of many nations within the Russian orbit. (Witness the tragic fate of the Baltic States.)

The ideology of "spheres of defence" was the very antithesis of this crushing out of individual Statehood. For boiled down to its real significance, Section 2 of Article II meant that England and Poland were prepared to defend and maintain the sovereign rights of those States in Europe whose preservation and independence they considered essential to their own security. This was a very "tall order." The territory involved spanned virtually the entire Continent.

Poland's sphere of defence was plainly delineated by her geographical position. To the north it included Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. It is certain that she would have considered a hostile move against any one of her sister Republics on the Baltic as endangering her safety. That she felt the same way with respect to Roumania is indicated by the treaty of mutual assistance which she had with that country. Poland had no alliance with Hungary, but a violation of Hungarian territory would have been regarded by her as no less a menace to her own security than an attack on the Baltics. In signing the treaty of assistance with Poland, therefore, England took upon herself the responsibility of maintaining the legal and political status of a great part of the territory lying between the Baltic and the Black Seas.

The area through which Great Britain was vulnerable was, as I see it, very wide-flung. Scandinavia, Belgium, Holland, Denmark, Ireland, France, in the west. In the Mediterranean Basin the southern Balkans where — if past history is any criterion — an attack on Greece or a move by Russia against Turkey (with its implied threat to the Dardanelles) would have been looked on by Great Britain as menacing her life-line to Africa and the Orient.

Thus it will be seen that the Polish-British Treaty of 1939 was in no sense an incidental and fragmentary commitment. Rightly understood, it was a program of joint Anglo-Polish policy in Europe. Uniting to maintain their own security, Britain and Poland pledged themselves to uphold the sovereignty and freedom of the peoples over a vast part of the entire European Continent.

This policy was based on the principles of (1) preservation of their own independence and integrity, (2) respect for the rights of third parties, (3) armed resistance to force, and (4) recognition of aggression as such when resistance was offered by the attacked or threatened party.

Furthermore, the two signatories agreed not to undertake commitments with other nations in the future which would be inconsistent with this four-point policy. This understanding is set forth in the terms of Article VI, which provide that:

"1. The Contracting Parties will communicate to each other the

terms of any undertakings of assistance against aggression which they have already given or may in the future give to other States;

"2. Should either of the Contracting Parties intend to give such an undertaking after the coming into force of the present Agreement, the other Contracting Party shall, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the Agreement, be informed thereof;

"3. Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned."[15]

Article VI narrows the freedom of Britain and Poland in respect to the nature of any future political alliances they might make. After August 25, 1939, neither country could (and still cannot) engage in new undertakings with a third country which would interfere with the execution of their mutual obligations. "*Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall not limit their obligations under the present Agreement.*" For instance, after signing the Agreement with Britain, Poland could not make a pact with Italy without including in the formula a proviso that if Italy anywhere violated the status quo to the detriment of the British Empire, the Polish-Italian undertaking would automatically become null and void. On the basis of Article VI Poland was bound to fight for the legal, political, and territorial status quo within the British defence sphere and could not act contrary to this stipulation.

But the same stipulation also forbade England to conclude an agreement with a third country (as, for example, Russia) that would anywhere alter the status quo at the expense of Poland.

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August 25, 1939, marks a revolutionary turn in Great Britain's Continental policy. During the twenty years preceding England had held steadily to the theory that her interests stopped at the Rhine. By 1939, however, she had altered her position. In the Anglo-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance she reached out beyond the Vistula. Why this change in her policy came about need not delay us here. The important fact is that it did occur. By her alliance with Poland Great Britain assumed certain political and military responsibilities in Eastern Europe. These responsibilities she has never denounced. In accordance with the provisions of Article VIII of the Agreement, therefore, they are still in effect. It is expressly provided in this article that

"1. The present Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years:

[15] BWBB. Doc. 19, p. 51.

"2. Unless denounced six months before the expiry of this period, it shall continue in force, each Contracting Party thereafter the right to denounce it at any time by giving six months' notice to that effect:

"3. The present Agreement shall come into force on signature."[16]

The five-year period ran out in 1944. Great Britain did not denounce the Agreements. It is an open judicial question whether it *can* be denounced by either one of the signatories, since Article VII specifies that:

"Should the Contracting Parties be engaged in hostilities in consequence of the application of the present Agreement, they will not conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement."[17]

It would seem to be a logical conclusion that an agreement binding both countries to conclude a common armistice and a common peace cannot be dissolved before the termination of the war. This point, however, is rather in the nature of an academic question. What concerns us here is the fact that because the treaty never has been denounced, it is still valid.

Much water has flowed under the bridge since 1939. But notwithstanding all that has taken place in the last five years — the British-Soviet Treaty of 1942, the Moscow Declaration of 1943, the understandings reached between London and Moscow at Teheran and at Yalta — notwithstanding all these things, today, we repeat, the commitments of the Anglo-Polish Agreement are still valid. Mr. Churchill's many attempts since his return from Teheran to beg the question can not alter the fact.

[16] BWBB. Doc. 19, p. 52.

[17] ibid.

CHAPTER II

The Interpretations

The terms of the treaty are explicit: its undertakings are clearly defined. Why then, is there now so much hesitation and vacillation in carrying them out? Why is the whole issue so beclouded with a fog of ambiguity and uncertainty?

As far as the general public is concerned, this attitude may be due to the fact that there was never any wide-spread understanding of what the Agreement was all about. "Zero hour" was already at hand when it was signed. Had the war started six months instead of six days later, it is certain that exhaustive dissertations would have been forthcoming in explanation of this new field of British international relations.[18] But the signatures were hardly dry on the page when they were covered with the dust of battle. One crisis followed hard on the heels of another; there was no time for analysis and elucidation.

As soon as Hitler struck, Poland demanded that the provisions of the Agreement be honored, and England loyally responded with a declaration of war. By September 17, however (the date when Russia launched her attack) it was apparent that neither England nor France was physically capable of taking any decisive military action against Germany. To have asked for a declaration of war against the Soviet Union in such a moment could have served no practical purpose. It would only have complicated still further England's already difficult position. For this reason Poland did not demand it. But this did not mean that she had resigned from her right to do so.

Definite proviso of this right was made in the notes which the Polish Embassies in London and Paris handed their respective governments in September, 1939:

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[18] In the Agreement of August 25, the British Government (1) extended its geographical obligations to Eastern Europe, (2) resolved to resist by force the violators of international law, (3) defined relations with Poland on an equal basis. The Locarno Treaty (guaranteeing French-German but not Polish-German frontiers) should be recalled in order to understand the revolutionary character of the first change. London's rejection of the so-called Geneva Convention (binding members of the League of Nations to armed reaction in case of violence) must also be borne in mind in order to understand the importance of the second change.

"Today, September 17, 1939, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics committed an aggression against Poland. At dawn large Soviet forces crossed the Polish frontier at several points. The Polish troops resisted. In view of the superiority of the Soviet forces, the Polish troops withdrew, fighting.[19]

"The Polish Government have protested to Moscow, and have instructed their Ambassador to demand his passports. The Polish Government await from the Allied French (and British) Government a categorical protest against the aggression committed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"The Polish Government reserve the right to call upon their Allies in regard to the obligations devolving upon them by virtue of the treaties in force."[20]

At the time the public knew very little about this document. It is doubtful if today, even, there are many who know of its existence. The man in the street saw only that England declared war on Germany and that she did not declare war on Russia. As a result, there gradually came about in Britain a cleavage of mind on the subject of England's responsibilities — between her legal and her psychological obligations towards Poland.

No one can be blamed for this. It was, perhaps, inevitable that in the confusion of those tense autumn days of 1939 certain issues should become blurred. But the result was that the average well-intentioned Englishman supposed that once Great Britain had declared war on Germany, she had no further legal obligations towards Poland. The British people believed — and they still believe — that England is morally bound to sympathize with Poland's cause. They do not know that she is formally and legally *bound to shape her policy in Eastern Europe with regard to Poland's interests.*

During the past year, however, Mr. Churchill's speeches have sounded as if he considered Anglo-Polish relations to be based principally on sentiment. He seems to have forgotten Article VII wherein it was expressly stipulated that a war made in common was to be finished with a peace made in common. The Prime Minister's interpretation of the treaty with Poland nowadays "waters down" Britain's obligations to Poland into a sort of benevolent protective attitude of well-wishing on the subject of Poland's rights. And even this sympathy has its limits. It stops short at the Curzon Line. This is, in effect, not an interpretation, but a repudiation of Britain's most solemn pledge. We think it should be vigorously opposed and the true facts made known.

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[19] Poland resisted the aggression on her eastern border. In his speech of October 31, 1939, Mr. Molotov thus described the entrance of the Soviet armies into Polish territories: "When the Red Army entered these areas, in several districts serious battles took place between our and Polish divisions . . ." cf. "Polish-Soviet Relations," Doc. 26, p. 36.

[20] Polish-Soviet Relations, Doc. 19, p. 27.

It is obviously impossible in writing a contract to frame its terms so minutely that all the details which come up in the course of its execution are settled in advance. Every such text will need interpretation and clarification. But no interpretation can be allowed which is patently contrary to the expressed purpose and intent of the agreement. Black cannot be called white; partition is not unification; weakening is not strengthening.

The construction put on the Anglo-Polish Agreement by Mr. Churchill at present is utterly and completely at variance with the way in which it was understood by both signatories at the time it was formulated. It can only be regarded as a would-be negation of the whole contract. As an example, consider the Prime Minister's report to Parliament on February 22, 1944. Mr. Churchill said, in part:

> ". . . We ourselves have never in the past guaranteed on behalf of this Government any particular frontier line to Poland. We did not approve of the Polish occupation of Wilna in 1920. The British view in 1919 stands expressed in the so-called Curzon Line, which deals at any rate impartially with the problem . . ."[21]
>
> "I have intense sympathy for the Poles — that heroic race whose national spirit centuries of misfortune cannot . . . quench . . . But I also have sympathy for the Russian standpoint . . . I cannot feel that the Russian demand for reassurances about her western frontiers goes beyond the limits of what is reasonable and just. Marshal Stalin and I also spoke and agreed upon the need for Poland to obtain compensation at the expense of Germany both in the north and in the west."[22]

How widely this interpretation of the Prime Minister diverges from the provisions of the Agreement is at once apparent when we set over against it the stipulation of Article III that:

> "Should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence of one of the Contracting Parties by processes of economic penetration or in any other way, the Contracting Parties will support each other in resistance to such attempts."[23]

We have already seen that Article I provides that the party attacked shall "at once" receive from its ally "all support and assistance in its power."

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[21] According to Parliamentary Debates, Mr. Churchill used in this context the word "partially," — not "impartially." But the London *Times*, London BBC, and the American Press (based on BBC transmission) used the latter word in their reports of the speech. This, of course, utterly changed the meaning of what the Prime Minister actually said. I remonstrated against this at the time in an article published in the *Polish Daily*, May 3 and 4, 1944, New York, N. Y. I asked the British Embassy in Washington to correct the misquotation of the important speech of His Majesty's Prime Minister. I had no answer in any form.

[22] New York Herald Tribune, Feb. 23, 1944, p. 11.

[23] BWBB, Doc. 19, p. 51.

The nature of the Russian demands on Poland are both territorial and political. Territorially they may be characterized as an ultimatum: Poland must tear up the Treaty of Riga and accept as her eastern frontier the 1939 Ribbentrop-Molotov Line. Politically they amount to this: the Poles are asked to surrender their independence and resign themselves to becoming a Russian protectorate. Are these demands not calculated to "undermine the independence" of the Polish State?

As to what the Soviet demands on Poland's territory mean to her economic life, let an impartial Englishman take the floor. Discussing the forcible annexation of Poland's eastern provinces by Russia in September, 1939, he reports:

> "By this incorporation Poland lost 51.6 per cent of her territory, 37.3 per cent of her population, more than half of her timber, about half her chemical industry and of her peat for fuel, more than 40 per cent of her water power, about 85 per cent of her oil and natural gas, her potassium mines, phosphates, and most of her grain.[24]

As to Moscow's political pretensions on Poland—to understand their true nature and what they bode for Poland's future, it is necessary to look at them in the light of historical perspective. In this connection we are reminded of the conversation between Alice and Humpty Dumpty on the subject of semantics.

> "When I use a word," said Humpty Dumpty, "it means just what I choose it to mean."
>
> "The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make a word mean so many things."
>
> "The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master — that's all."

Long and bitter experience has taught the Poles that, like Humpty Dumpty, when Russia uses a word she, too, makes it mean what she chooses — and the word "friendly" she always chooses to mean dependent. "That's all." There you have the whole story. The Poles think they should be master in their own house.

They have not forgotten their experience with Russian "friendship" during the 18th century. One hundred and fifty years ago Catharine, Empress of all the Russias, made the same demands as those put forward by Stalin today. The very details are identical. Catharine forced the dismissal of Kosciuszko; Stalin forced the dismissal of Sosnkowski. The 18th century Russian autocrat demanded that the Polish King place authority in the hands of the traitorous Targowica Confederation; the 20th-century Russian autocrat demands that the Polish Government in London cede authority to his Lublin wheel-horses

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[24] Voigt, F. A., "Poland: Nineteenth Century and After," p. 56, London, Feb. 1944.

known as "The Provisional Government of Poland." Catharine insisted that the Polish Constitution of 1791 (known as "The Third of May" Constitution) be annulled, denouncing it as "Jacobin;" Stalin outlaws the Polish Constitution of 1935, stigmatizing it as "Fascist."

In the weeks directly preceding the outbreak of war Hitler, in his efforts to dominate Poland, used similar tactics. Like Stalin he, too, stood ready to negotiate with a Polish Government which he could dominate. He named as his price for continuance of "good relations" with Poland and England, the dismissal of the "pre-September" Government (the government whose legitimate continuation has for months past been the target of Soviet press barbs and which today is threatened with derecognition by England and America). In a conversation with Ambassador Henderson on August 28, the German Chancellor announced that:

> ". . . he would be willing to negotiate if there was a Polish Government which was prepared to be reasonable and which really controlled the country."[25]

What Hitler really was after in 1939 is the same thing that Stalin is scheming for today. "Friendly" government . . . "reasonable" government — it all adds up to the same in the end. Both mean "dependent" government, the ultimate aim of which is the destruction of the Polish State. Demands such as these made by Hitler and Stalin — demands which are politically identical, territorially analogical, and which threaten her very existence as an independent sovereign State, Poland *must and will continue to resist.*

Article III of the Agreement provides that "should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence" of Poland, the Government of Great Britain will "support" the Poles in their resistance to this attempt. We must confess that we fail to find in Mr. Churchill's reports to Parliament this past year and a half anything that even remotely resembles such an attitude towards the Polish position. Whatever supporting the Prime Minister has done, it has been the Russians, not the Poles, who have profited from it. If he has given the Poles the benefit of his advice, it invariably has been to the effect that they cease their resistance and yield. In short, whatever efforts Mr. Churchill has made towards implementing the enactments of Article III seem always to have been in reverse gear.

In his message to Parliament of February 22, 1944, the Prime Minister gave the Poles the following reassurance:

> "I took occasion to raise personally with Marshal Stalin the question of the future of Poland. I pointed out that it was in fulfillment of our guarantee to Poland that Great Britain declared war on Nazi Germany and

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[25] From a telegram sent Lord Halifax by Sir Neville Henderson, August 29, 1939. cf. BWBB, Doc. 75, p. 165.

that we had never weakened in our resolve even during the period when we were alone, and that the fate of the Polish nation holds a prime place in the thoughts and policies of His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament.

Soviet-German Friendship
Stalin (left); von Ribbentrop (right)

"It was with great pleasure that I heard from Marshall Stalin that he, too. was resolved upon the creation and maintenance of a great, integral, independent Poland as one of the leading Powers in Europe."[26]

But the facts speak louder than the Prime Minister's words. Here is what the facts report:

[26] The *New York Herald Tribune*, Feb. 23, 1944, p. 11.

1. On September 17, 1939, Russia attacked Poland, already engaged in a life-and-death struggle with Germany:

2. Twelve days later, September 29, Molotov and Ribbentrop, in a "treaty of friendship," divided up between themselves the whole of Poland:

3. From the part to which Russia helped herself over a million Polish citizens were deported to Siberia and other remote districts of the Soviet Union:

4. In contravention of all principles of international law the farce of a plebiscite was staged in the seized territory by Soviet authorities and was carried out at the point of the bayonet:

We submit the question to our readers: "Were not these acts of aggression (see Mr. Litvinov's own definition, p. 11) calculated to undermine the independence of Poland?" The scene shifted with Germany's assault on the Soviet Union. Paradoxically enough, Russia and Poland now found themselves fighting side by side against a common enemy. But *eadum sunt eadem semper*. I offer you further facts:

5. Stalin promised Sikorski on July 30, 1941, to liberate all Polish deportees. But to this day most of them are still languishing in Russian prisons and Arctic wastes:

6. Among these deportees were Alter and Ehrlich, two internationally known Jewish Socialists prominent and beloved in Labor circles. These men, Polish citizens who should have been liberated, were murdered in cold blood by the Russians on the trumped-up charge that they were "Hitler's agents:"

7. In January, 1943, Soviet citizenship was imposed willy-nilly on all Poles in Russia:

8. From these new "Soviet citizens" a so-called Polish Army was formed. As Commander-in-Chief of these forces Stalin appointed one Zymierski, a criminal formerly sentenced by the Polish courts to a long prison term for graft:

9. As crown and climax of this long roster of arbitrary acts, came the appointment by the Kremlin of a "Polish Committee of National Liberation," composed of a group of "yes men" — communists of Polish origin — ready at "their master's voice" to (1) deport still further hundreds of thousands of Poles, (2) put to death countless numbers of men and women (particularly any member of the Polish Underground they could get their hands on), (3) agree supinely to the partition of Poland as arranged by Molotov and Ribbentrop, and (4) recognize officially as part of the Soviet Union that half of Poland which Hitler had gratuitiously handed over to Stalin.

Again we put the question: Were not all these acts of a nature calculated to undermine the independence of Poland? We think there can be but one reply. Every single one of them was shrewdly and deliberately aimed at the weakening of Poland — her man-power, her economic self-sufficiency, her political independence, her very existence.

In the face of these facts we find it difficult to understand Mr. Churchill's complacent acceptance of Stalin's assurance that he too was resolved on the maintenance of a "strong and independent Poland."

We have just seen how Mr. Churchill, as spokesman of his country's government, failed on February 22 to give Poland the support she had every right to expect. On December 15, the Prime Minister went further. From a "sin of omission" he proceeded to an outright "sin of commission." We note the following expression of opinion:

> ". . . I am most anxious that the House should understand the whole position, speaking on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and in such a way which I believe will probably be held binding by our successors, that at the conference we shall adhere to the line which I am now unfolding to the House and shall not hesitate to proclaim, that the Russians are justly and rightly treated in being granted the claim they make to the eastern frontiers along the Curzon Line . . ."[27]

We have every reason to understand this declaration of Mr. Churchill as a pledge given publicly to Russia of England's support. Did the Prime Minister have any right to give Stalin this assurance of support? We think he did not have the right to do this. We ask your attention briefly once more to Section 3 of Article VI of the Agreement, wherein it is stipulated that:

> "Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in the future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned."[28]

If these words mean anything at all, they certainly mean that Great Britain could not possibly support Russia against Poland without breaking her word to the latter.

Just before the present hostilities broke out, Mr. Churchill laid down certain broad outlines of British policy which we find it appropriate to recall at this point. In the light of his position today, they make bitter reading:

> "It is a root doctrine of Communism, not only that no faith need be kept, but that *no faith should be kept* with non-Communists.
>
> "It is, therefore, very difficult to handle these kinds of gentry, as they are powerful, well-armed, and live in large numbers in the world which we also inhabit. There must be a persistent attempt to establish relations; to find some language in which, whether in war or peace, parley can be held across the gulf. But we may be quite sure that in the long run

[27] *The New York Times*, Dec. 16, 1944, p. 6.

[28] BWBB, Doc. 19, p. 51.

fidelity and strict observance of honourable engagements is a means of survival and of victory, and that the contrary only leads to a squalid and barbaric convulsion and welter."[29]

For our part, we are of the same opinion today as was Mr. Churchill when he wrote these words five years ago. We still think that to put faith in the Communist word is to "be wrong," and that to break one's pledged word is to "do wrong."

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To understand how far Mr. Churchill has departed from his Government's original position, it is pertinent at this point to run through certain diplomatic exchanges of opinion that went on during that last hectic week of August, 1939.

Only six days elapsed between the signing of the document and the outbreak of war. But in that short space of time Germany made vigorous last-minute efforts to bring about its repudiation. Goering tried first. His attempt to cajole the Polish Ambassador into breaking with England was communicated by M. Beck to the British Ambassador at Warsaw who, in turn, advised Lord Halifax in the following telegram that:

"The Minister for Foreign Affairs (Beck) informs me that the Polish Ambassador in Berlin had an interview with Field-Marshal Goering this afternoon (August 24). The interview was most cordial and he told me the Marshal expressed his regret that his policy of maintaining friendly relations with Poland should have come to nought and admitted that he no longer had influence to do much in the matter. The Marshal had, however, no concrete suggestion to make beyond what had struck M. Beck as a most significant remark which he requested me to convey to you most confidentially. The Marshall stated that the question of Danzig and so forth were relatively small matters, but the main obstacle to any dimunition of tension between the two countries was Poland's alliance with Great Britain.

"M. Beck had consulted the President and Marshal Smigly-Rydz, and it had been decided that if the German Government should put forward this suggestion in any other way the answer would be categorically in the negative. M. Beck feels that the German Government may make every effort to secure a free hand in Eastern Europe by such methods and he feels that it should be clearly understood that Poland will not be drawn into any intrigue of this nature."[30]

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[29] Churchill, Winston. *"The Terrible Twins,"* *Collier's*, Sept. 30, 1939, p. 50. "Mr. Churchill cabled this article to *Collier's* a few hours before the war began. (Editor's comment prefacing Mr. Churchill's article.) At the time he was First Lord of the Admiralty in the War Cabinet of Mr. Chamberlain."

[30] BWBB, Doc. 67, pp. 154, 155.

The following day, August 25, Hitler tried his hand. He summoned the British Ambassador and presented him with what he said was his "last bid" for understanding and friendship between Great Britain and the Reich. The main point of this proposal was the statement that "the problem of Danzig and the Corridor must be solved at all cost." (Naturally on Germany's terms.) In return the Chancellor said he was "prepared and determined to approach England once more with a large, comprehensive offer." He asked Ambassador Henderson to fly to London with his proposal. "If the British Government would consider these ideas." he said, "a blessing for Germany and for the British Empire might result but," he added warningly, "if it rejects (them), there will be war." He went on to say that "he had no interest in making Britain break her word to Poland, that he had no wish to be small-minded in any settlement with Poland, and that all he required for an agreement with her was a gesture from Britain to indicate that she would not be 'unreasonable.' "[31]

Mr. Chamberlain's reply to Hitler on August 28 was, that:

> "The condition which the German Chancellor lays down is that there must first be a settlement of the differences between Germany and Poland. As to that, His Majesty's Government entirely agree. Everything, however, turns upon the nature of the settlement, and the method by which it is to be reached. On these points, the importance of which cannot be absent from the Chancellor's mind, his message is silent. and His Majesty's Government feel compelled to point out that an understanding upon both of these is essential to achieving further progress."
>
> "The German Government will be aware that His Majesty's Government have obligations to Poland by which they are bound and which they intend to honour. They could not for any advantage offered to Great Britain, acquiesce in a settlement which put in jeopardy the independence of a State to whom they have given their guarantee."[32]

Ambassador Henderson, when he handed this reply to Hitler, told him squarely that:

> ". . . He must choose between England and Poland. If he put forward immoderate demands, there was no hope of a peaceful solution . . . He had offered a Corridor over a Corridor in March, and I must honestly tell him that anything more than that — if that — would have no hope of acceptance."[33]

On the instruction of Lord Halifax, Mr. Kennard in Warsaw informed the

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[31] idem., Docs. 68, 69, pp. 155-159.

[32] idem., Doc. 74, p. 163.

[33] idem., Doc. 75, p. 167.

Polish Government of the British reply to Hitler's proposals, and promised further that:

> ". . . any settlement of German-Polish differences must safeguard Poland's essential interests and must be secured by international guarantees."[34]

Still hewing to the line, on August 29, Hitler made one final effort to pry England apart from Poland. In a note to the British Ambassador he renewed once again his demand that Danzig be returned to the Reich and that a plebiscite be held in Pomorze. He explained that:

> "The Government of the Reich felt bound to point out to the British Government that in the event of a territorial re-arrangement in Poland they would no longer be able to bind themselves to give guarantees or to participate in guarantees without the USSR being associated therewith.
>
> "For the rest, in making these proposals the German Government have never had any intention of touching Poland's vital interests or questioning the existence of an independent Polish State."[35]

The methods of Hitler in 1939 are identical with the methods now employed by Stalin. The same wooing of England with the offer of "permanent friendship" if only — a little thing to ask, a bagatelle — if only she consent to let him interpret the happiness, strength, and "independence" of Poland in accordance with his own ideas! The same guarded hint of "or else," in case England turns deaf ears to his proposition.

For this reason, it is not only interesting, but important as well, to look at Britain's reply to Hitler in which, on the very eve of the war, she set forth her official interpretation of the Agreement with Poland. At midnight of August 30, Sir Neville Henderson handed Herr von Ribbentrop Mr. Chamberlain's answer:

> "His Majesty's Government repeat that they reciprocate the German Government's desire for improved relations, but it will be recognized that they could not sacrifice the interests of other friends in order to obtain that improvement. They fully understand that the German Government cannot sacrifice Germany's vital interests, but the Polish Government are in the same position."[36]

England refused to be used as a tool to force capitulation on Poland. Much as she desired a peaceful settlement, she insisted that:

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[34] BWBB. Doc. 73, p. 162.

[35] idem. Doc. 78, pp. 177, 178.

[36] idem. Doc. 89, p. 184.

"As to method, we wish to express our clear view that direct discussions on equal terms between the parties is the proper means."[37]

Today it is Russia who is demanding concessions from Poland, concessions that mean her extinction as a nation. Britain's wish is the same as it was five years ago, namely, to settle the question by peaceful methods. Why has she not insisted, as she did in those early crucial days, that a settlement be reached by the method of "direct discussions on equal terms" between Poland and Russia?

Convinced at last that he could not gain his ends by blackmail and intimidation, Hitler resorted to force. On September 1, 1939, the peace of the world was shattered by the wanton attack of the Wehrmacht on Poland. England stood steadfastly by her position. At once the British pre-war interpretation of the Anglo-Polish Agreement received its most positive confirmation in the course followed by Mr. Chamberlain's Government. With the backing of the whole nation, the Prime Minister declared war on Germany.

September 17 came, and with it Russia's infamous assault on Poland, engaged in her bitter battle with the German aggressor. The immediate reaction of the British Government was to affirm once more its unchanged position. Mr. Chamberlain made this plain in his speech to Parliament on September 20, in which he said:

". . . In this situation His Majesty's Government authorized the issue of a statement on 18th September that this attack by the Soviet Government upon Poland (a country with whom she had a non-aggression pact) at a moment when Poland was prostrate in the face of overwhelming forces brought against her by Germany, could not be justified by the arguments put forward by the Soviet Government . . . For the unhappy victim of this cynical attack the result has been a tragedy of the grimmest character . . . If Britain and France have been unable to avert the defeat of the armies of Poland, they have assured her that they have not forgotten their obligations to her nor weakened in their determination to carry on the struggle."[38]

Warsaw was still burning on the last day of her heroic defence, when Messrs. Ribbentrop and Molotov in Moscow signed a "pact of friendship" sealing the partition of Poland along the same line which Mr. Churchill at present finds is "just and right."

But five years ago British public opinion did not consider this partition

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[37] BWBB. Doc. 73, p. 161.

[38] Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Sept. 20, 1939.

Note : cf. "Polish-Soviet Relations," Doc. 19, p. 27.

"just and right." Mincing no words. the London *Times* expressed bluntly its opinion of the infamous Nazi-Bolshevik deal:

> "The nocturnal bargainings and banquetings which have been occupying RIBBENTROP on one side and STALIN and his adjutants on the other during these last three days in Moscow have reached their appointed

Warsaw, September, 1939
"A tragedy of the grimmest character"

climax in the issue of an agreement . . . Terms contain a faint element of surprise in the degree of insolence and iniquity which they achieve, but no other. The plenipotentiaries met to consider "the dissolution of the Polish State," an event which seems to be complacently regarded as having happened of itself. They have arranged its consequences to suit themselves, chiefly by an agreed division of Polish territory, and have

"in this way created a firm foundation for a lasting peace in Eastern Europe." It is now their joint opinion "that the liquidation of the present war between Germany on the one hand and Great Britain on the other is in the interests of all nations." If Britain and France fail to accept this view — fail, that is, to approve, ratify, and guarantee the momentary profits of calculated crime — it will be proved that 'they bear the responsibility for the continuation of the war.' In that case, Bolshevism and Nazism will consult further on necessary measures . . .

"The Allied pledge to Poland stands irrefragible, fortified, if that be possible, by the valour and self-sacrifice of the Poles themselves . . . Freedom and independence for the Polish nation within frontiers as unchallengable as that which Germany violated on September 1, and with full and guaranteed access to the sea, constitute in their own right an article of any conceivable peace."[39]

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[39] London *Times*, Sept. 30, 1939.

CHAPTER III

The Secret Protocol

Before long, however, important voices were heard in London, hesitating, anxious voices, speaking in different accents. On October 19, the question was brought up in the House of Commons as to the extent of England's commitments to Poland. We instance the following exchange of opinions in Commons:

> MR. HARVEY asked the Prime Minister whether the references to aggression by a European Power in the Agreement of Mutual Assistance, signed between the United Kingdom and Poland, 25th August last, were intended to cover the case of aggression by other Powers than Germany, including Russia?
>
> MR. BUTLER: No, Sir. During the negotiations which led up to the signature of the agreement, it was understood between the Polish Government and His Majesty's Government that the agreement should only cover the case of aggression by Germany; and the Polish Government confirms that this is so."[40]

Mr. Butler, Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office, was not a Cabinet member. The same question, therefore, was put later to Lord Halifax in the Upper House. Speaking before the House of Lords on October 26, the Earl of Listowal expressed the opinion that:

> "What would do more, I am convinced, than anything else to persuade the Russian Government of our sincerity and to gain their goodwill would be some sort of official intimation that we have no intention now or at any future date of challenging or interfering with their new position in Eastern and North-Eastern Europe. Since it was made clear in another place that our pledge to Poland was only operative in the event of German aggression, we have no obligations to honour to resist Russian expansion in Eastern Europe, and we have no conceivable national or Imperial interests to protect in that part of the world."[41]

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[40] Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Oct. 26, 1939.

[41] Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, Oct. 26, 1939.

Lord Mottistone immediately got to his feet and protested:

> "My Lords, I had not intended to take part in this debate, but I could not sit still and hear the extraordinary doctrine preached in the British Parliament that after we had given our solemn pledge to Poland — that is to say, to 30,000,000 men, women, and children — that we would protect them from aggression, we should choose to say: 'Oh, we only meant aggression from one particular side and not from any other.' It would be a ridiculous thing to say, and it was not what we did say. I cannot stand here as an ordinary Englishman and allow myself to be accused of such a dreadful breach of faith. I know that every Englishman feels the same. It may be that Russia is too powerful for us to say 'Get out!' but for us to say that we acquiesce in a wrong done is a thing which I cannot sit down under, and I hope no Englishman will. When the Foreign Secretary comes to speak, I hope he will deal frankly with the matter and say: 'Of course it was equally wrong for the invasion from the East to take place as it was for the invasion from the West.' It is wasting words, saying what is not true, and being untrue to one's heart and soul, to say that what was wrong from the West is right from the East. The 30,000,000 Poles suffered just the same."[42]

Faced with this very ticklish situation, Lord Halifax rose and responded with a masterpiece of diplomatic oratory so nebulous and evasive that it said absolutely nothing:

> "The noble Earl, Lord Listowal, started a topic that brought the noble Lord Mottistone to his feet; and the noble Earl, Lord Listowal, having started it, was good enough to say that he would leave the further developments of the case to the Foreign Secretary. As the debate proceeded between him and Lord Mottistone, I found myself, as is not infrequently the case, reflecting that they were not, perhaps, arguing on exactly the same point, and that what had begun by being a matter of rather academic historical accuracy was developing into a contest and controversy of high principle in which their passions might easily and warmly become engaged . . . I can, perhaps, say a word upon what I had thought had been the issue — namely, that of historical accuracy. I understood the noble Earl opposite to say — and he referred to the statement which was repeated on the subject in another place by my honourable friend, the Under Secretary — that in our discussions with Poland and with Colonel Beck, it had always been understood that the purpose of those discussions, and the sole purpose of those discussions, was to provide against a case of aggression by Germany. In making this statement, I am not saying anything that would not carry the whole-hearted support of the Polish Government, past and present. But when the noble Lord,

[42] Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, Oct. 26, 1939.

Lord Mottistone, suggests that it would be the policy of this Government, or of any other Government that might fill our places, to recoil from pledges that they had given, and from the understanding that those pledges carried. he will, I am sure. allow me to say, and I am sure that he will agree, that no Government holding our place would ever ask our country to do any such thing.

"It is quite true, of course, as he says, that it makes no difference to the Poles whether they are invaded from East or West . . ."[43]

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As we see now, from the recently published "British White Paper,"[44] in the background of these discussions was the question of the interpretation to be placed on the terms of a secret Protocol to the Anglo-Polish Treaty. Following are the provisions of this Protocol:

"The Polish Government and the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and North Ireland. are agreed upon the following interpretation of the Agreement of Mutual Assistance signed this day as alone authentic and binding:

ARTICLE I

(A) By the expression "European Power" employed in the Agreement is to be understood Germany.

(B) In the event of any action within the meaning of Articles 1 or 2 of the Agreement by a European Power other than Germany, the contracting Parties will consult together on the measures to be taken in common.

ARTICLE II

(A) The two Governments will from time to time determine by mutual agreement hypothetical cases of action by Germany, coming within the ambit of Article 2 of the Agreement.

(B) Until such time as the two Governments have agreed to modify the following provisions of this paragraph, they will consider: that the case contemplated by Paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the Agreement is that of the Free City of Danzig; and that the cases contemplated by Paragraph 2 of Article 2 are Belgium. Holland and Lithuania.

(C) Latvia and Estonia shall be regarded by the two Governments as included in the list of countries contemplated by Paragraph 2 of

[43] Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, Oct. 26, 1939.

[44] "British White Paper," 1945.

Article 2 from the moment that an undertaking of mutual assistance between the United Kingdom and a third State, covering those two countries, enters into force.

(D) As regards Roumania, the Government of the United Kingdom refers to the guarantee which it has given to that country; and the Polish Government refers to the reciprocal undertakings of the Rumano-Polish Alliance, which Poland has never regarded as incompatible with her traditional friendship for Hungary.

ARTICLE III

Undertakings mentioned in Article 6 of the Agreement, should they be entered into by one of the contracting Parties with a third State, would necessarily be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other Contracting Party.

ARTICLE IV

The present Protocol constitutes an integral part of the Agreement signed this day, scope of which does not exceed it.

In faith whereof the undersigned, being duly authorized have signed the present Protocol. Done in English in duplicate at London, August 25, 1939. *The Polish text will subsequently be agreed upon between the Contracting Parties, and both will then be authentic.*"[45]

There is no question that the obligations of Great Britain towards Poland were limited by the provisions of the Protocol. The immediate military assistance promised her by virtue of Articles I and II of the Treaty was, by the enactments of the Protocol, restricted to the eventuality of aggression by Germany. So much was clear. What was urgently needed was an interpretation of Paragraph "B", Article I, of the Protocol, which should define the mutual commitments of the two signatories in the event of aggression coming from "a European Power *other* than Germany."

Judging from the resumé of parliamentary discussions previously given, it would appear that two sharply contrasting opinions were represented in

[45] The first inkling the public had of the existence of the secret Protocol was Mr. Petherick's reference to it in December of 1944. Mr. Petherick brought up the subject of the Protocol again on February 28, 1945, asserting that it had been attached to the body of the Treaty on December 15, 1939. It seems to us that in all probability this Protocol was formulated while the negotiations between London and Moscow in 1939 were regarded as promising the adherence of Russia to the anti-Hitler front. After the Russo-German Pact was signed it lost its significance. We may suppose that it was then in abeyance as a "draft," the day that the Agreement was signed, and that only in totally different circumstances, resulting from the German-Russian partition of Poland, was it resurrected on December 15, 1939.

governmental and parliamentary circles in London as to how this hypothetical situation should be met. The one, as expressed in the speech of Lord Listowal, was that once Great Britain had declared war on Germany, she had no further obligations towards Poland; the other, brilliantly presented by Lord Mottistone, argued that even in the face of an attack on Poland by a European Power other than Germany, the general spirit and intent of the Agreement laid upon Britain the obligation of shaping her future European policy in common with Poland.

It is probable that neither Lord Listowal nor Lord Mottistone knew about the secret Protocol. But their attitudes expressed two tendencies between which His Majesty's Government had to choose and by that choice establish once and for all the official interpretation of the Protocol.

In our judgment, a careful study of the text of the document allows of only one possible interpretation, that expressed by Lord Mottistone in the words:

> "For us to say that we acquiesce in a wrong done is a thing which I cannot sit down under, and I hope no Englishman will."

Because there is nothing in the Protocol which would limit the *political* obligations assumed by Great Britain towards Poland in accordance with Section 3, Article VI of the August Agreement, which reads:

> "Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement, nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Parties not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned."

This unmistakably plain agreement on a common Anglo-Polish European policy was reinforced by the statement in Article III of the Protocol that:

> "The undertakings mentioned in Article VI of the Agreement, should they be entered into by one of the Contracting Parties with a third State, would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other Contracting Party."

We understand this — and we believe that every honest-minded person will likewise so understand it — to mean that the secret Protocol did not give to Great Britain freedom to shape her future European policy *without* Poland, and still less did it entitle her to shape such policy *against* Poland.

In October and November of 1939, however, as we see from the statement of Lord Halifax on October 26, His Majesty's Government vacillated between two different interpretations of her committments to Poland, as qualified by the Protocol. The one virtually repudiated these committments, thereby opening the way for England to "play ball" with Russia; the other, while not calling for

an immediate declaration of war on Russia in defence of Poland, obligated her to shape her future European policy in consultation with Poland. As far as can be judged from the facts immediately following the discussions of October, the circumstances leading in December to British-Polish accord on the second of these interpretations were as follows:

The Polish Government was shocked and dismayed by the wavering stand of English opinion as expressed through these discussions in Parliament. I understood from General Sikorski, who spoke with me about the matter late in 1939, that as a result of the diplomatic talks and correspondence that followed, the British Government, early in November, returned to its earlier position, namely, that the understanding with Poland guaranteed assistance against aggression from East and West alike.

General Sikorski tactfully made this fact public at a press interview held on November 19, in which he said that "his Government made no difference between the seizure of Polish territories by Russia and their seizure by Germany and, *they had no reason to believe that their allies took a contrary view.*[46]

This assertion of the Polish Premier was confirmed publicly in the House of Commons on December 6. We quote below a question put by one of the members and Mr. Chamberlain's answer:

> MR. PRITT asked the Prime Minister whether the statement by General Sikorski, the Premier of Poland, that "his Government made no difference between the seizure of Polish territories by Russia and their seizure by Germany and that they had no reason to believe that their allies took a contrary view," is in accord with the policy of His Majesty's Government.
>
> THE PRIME MINISTER: The views of His Majesty's Government about the invasion of Poland have already been stated to the House, and *there can be no difference of opinion about an unprovoked attack followed by the seizure of the territory of another State.*[47]

The painfully difficult situation was potently resolved in the words of Lord Halifax who, speaking in the House of Lords, December 5, stated unequivocally that:

> "We have always tried to improve our relations with Russia, but in doing so we had always maintained the position that rights of third parties must remain intact and be unaffected by our negotiations. . . . I have little doubt that the people of this country would prefer to face difficulties and embarrassments rather than feel that we had compromised the honour of this country and the Commonwealth.[48]

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[46] London *Times*, Nov. 20, 1939, p. 6.

[47] Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, Dec. 6, 1939.

[48] Parliamentary Debates, House of Lords, Dec. 5, 1939.

A comparison of Lord Halifax's two speeches leads us to believe that it is his statement of December which expressed the definite official British interpretation of the Treaty and the Protocol. Limiting our analysis of the published text of the treaty *in the light of the terms of the Protocol*, we can now sum up the obligations of Great Britain and Poland as a program of joint Anglo-Polish policy in Europe based on the principles of (1) preservation of their own independence and territorial integrity, (2) respect for the rights of other nations, (3) a common political resistance to force, direct or indirect, brought against either of the Contracting parties, and (4) military assistance if agreed upon in common consultations.

Practically it meant that while Great Britain had no obligation to go to war with Russia over Poland, she was, at least, constrained *not to recognize territorial changes made in Europe by Soviet military conquest.*

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His Majesty's archives are not yet opened, and we cannot say with certainty why it was that in October of 1939 a wave of hesitancy in regard to Britain's military obligations towards Poland swept over the council tables of England, nor why in December it abated. Some facts there are, however, which should be noted.

On October 31, Mr. Molotov made a report on the international situation and the "peace policy" of the Soviet Union to the Fifth Extraordinary Session of the Supreme Soviet. This speech was so full of hatred and contempt for the western democracies, so fixed in its determination to cooperate with Hitler, that any hope which England may have entertained for understanding with Russia was utterly blasted under the hail of its invective.

> "Everybody should understand," said Mr. Molotov, "that an ideology (Hitlerism) cannot be destroyed by force, and that it cannot be eliminated by war. It is not only senseless, but *criminal*, to wage such a war as a war for 'the destruction of Hitlerism' camouflaged as a 'fight for democracy'."[49]

In November came the Soviet attack on Finland — an illuminative illus-

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[49] Polish-Soviet Relations, Doc. 17., p. 34.

Note: In this speech Mr. Molotov rebuked President Roosevelt in the following words:

"In a message to Comrade Kalinin, chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet, dated October 12, Mr. Roosevelt expressed the hope that friendly and peaceful relations between the U. S. S. R. and Finland would be preserved and developed.

"One might think that matters are in better shape between the United States and, let us say, the Philippines or Cuba, who have long been demanding freedom and independence from the United States and cannot get them, than between the Soviet Union and Finland, who has long ago obtained both freedom and political independence from the Soviet Union."

tration of the Kremlin's peculiar moral code, namely, that whereas other nations (France, Britain and Poland) in *resisting* aggression are acting as "warmongers." Russia, in *committing* aggression, shows herself a "peace-loving nation."

But the Western Democracies took a different view of the matter. The unprovoked attack on Finland roused great and growing indignation in the United States, already outraged over the Polish situation. Mr. Roosevelt, with his extraordinary capacity for articulating the public mind, summed up American sentiment thus:

> "The Soviet Union as a matter of practical fact, as everybody knows who has got the courage to face the fact, the practical fact known to you and to all the world, is run by a dictatorship, a dictatorship as absolute as any other dictatorship in the world."[50]

Under the circumstances His Majesty's Government felt it no longer expedient to hide under a bushel the light of true British idealism. What may have seemed a virtue in England's conciliatory approach to the Soviets, was manifestly a vice in her efforts to win American assistance. The time was ripe for England to let shine the light within her. It was probably with a feeling of great and genuine relief that Lord Halifax stood before Parliament on December 5 and announced firmly that "the people of this country (Britain) would prefer difficulties and embarrassments rather than feel that we have compromised the honour of the country and the Commonwealth."

Mr. Chamberlain's statement on December 6 in regard to England's policy, reaffirming what Lord Halifax had said the preceding day, established a sound *modus vivendi* between the Polish and the British Governments. Britain denounced the Soviet attack on Poland as an act of aggression, and refused to recognize the new frontiers as legal; Poland, while not abrogating any of her treaty rights, held some of them in temporary abeyance..

This *modus vivendi* lasted for a little over two years. The German attack on Russia apparently made no difference at first. We have here to evoke the operative sections of notes exchanged between Mr. Churchill's Government and the Government of General Sikorski on the occasion of the signing of the Polish-Russian pact July 30, 1941, in London[51] At the conclusion of the ceremony, Mr. Eden gave the Polish Premier the written assurance that:

> "His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have entered into no undertakings towards the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics which affect the relations between that country and Poland. . . .

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[50] From a speech by President Roosevelt to the American Youth Congress, Feb. 11, 1940.

[51] On this occasion it is important to recall the United States official position taken at that time, as expressed by Mr. Sumner Welles, Under-Secretary of State: "The Russian-Polish Agreement was in line with the United States' policy of *no recognition of territory taken by conquest.*" *New York Times,* Aug. 1, 1941.

"I desire to assure you that His Majesty's Government do not recognize any territorial changes which have been effected in Poland since August, 1939."[52]

In return, General Sikorski handed Mr. Eden the following statement:

"The Polish Government . . . desires to express its sincerest satisfaction at the statement that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom do not recognize any territorial changes which have been effected in Poland since August, 1939. This corresponds with the view of the Polish Government which, as it had previously informed His Majesty's Government, has never recognized any territorial changes effected in Poland since the outbreak of the war."[53]

For two years England stood firm. This steadiness on her part brought her world-wide admiration and sympathy. It was a primary factor in winning for her the support and understanding of the United States.

Out of this understanding between the two great Anglo-Saxon democracies was born that Magna Carta of humanity — the Atlantic Charter. It is our sincere belief that this vision of a world to come whose foundations and pillars shall be righteousness and justice among all peoples, was the outgrowth and flowering of principles first laid down in the Anglo-Polish Agreement of Mutual Assistance. "First the seed, then the blade, then the full corn in the ear." That which took its inception in a regional plan for the security of the European Continent had expanded and developed into the concept of a world-embracing order under which all nations of earth should live together in peace and security.

In our ears there vibrates still — albeit of late in accents that have faltered somewhat — the echo of that solemn pledge given to a troubled world by the Premier of Britain and the President of the United States that:

"1. Their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;

"2. They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the people concerned;

"3. They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.

"4. They will endeavor, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity."

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[52] "Polish-Soviet Relations," Doc. 30, p. 56.

[53] idem.

CHAPTER IV

The Implementation

Unfortunately, prior to the historic meeting of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill off the coastal plain of North America, "the beginning of the end" for the high principles enunciated in the Atlantic Charter had already arrived. It announced itself with the signing of the Russian-Polish Pact on July 30, 1941.

In collaboration with Hitler, Soviet Russia, in cynical disdain of the "expressed wishes of the people concerned," had certainly promoted territorial changes in Poland. She had certainly "forcibly deprived" the Poles of their "sovereign rights" over more than half of their national territory. She had certainly sought "aggrandizement" at the expense of the Polish State.

It was clear to everybody — Moscow included — that if the principles of the Atlantic Charter represented the true aims, in peace and war, of Great Britain and the United States, then the acceptance of Soviet Russia into the family of democratic nations would have to be preceded by rectification of the wrongs perpetrated on Poland.

With their customary astuteness, the Soviet Government deliberately chose the issue of the Polish question as the iron test of the strength and sincerity of the Western Democracies. From Britain's reaction to this test, the Kremlin — rightly or wrongly — concluded that England and America were weak; that they stood ready to compromise with every one of the principles at stake.

Immediately after Hitler's treacherous attack on the Soviet, the Polish Government made its position perfectly plain. They were prepared to forget the grievous wrongs committed by Russia and, on a basis of the pre-war status, to cooperate whole-heartedly with her in a struggle against the common enemy. General Sikorski offered Moscow friendship and alliance, asking in return only an unequivocal recognition of the Riga Treaty frontiers as they had existed, unchallenged, from 1921 to 1939.

At the time Russia desperately needed British and American help. The occasion offered an unparalleled opportunity for British diplomacy to establish Russo-Polish relations on a solid basis of genuine understanding. To have

followed this line would have been statesmanship of the highest order. It is our sincere belief that had Great Britain insisted on it as the price of assistance, Russia would have consented to rectify the wrong done to Poland and would have recognized once and for all the validity of the Riga Treaty frontiers. And we believe that the acceptance of these frontiers would have led to her acceptance, in its true spirit and intent, of the Atlantic Charter. We venture the opinion that many — if, indeed, not most — of the present international difficulties, aftermath of ill-considered diplomacy of "muddling through," would not have arisen had England in 1941 used her influence to effect an establishment of Polish-Russian relations on an enduring basis of justice and law.

Unfortunately His Majesty's Government did not choose to pursue this policy. They made no effort to bring about a real adjustment of Russo-Polish differences, but contented themselves with the semblance of an understanding. What was worse, they used the whole weight of their influence to induce the Poles, by means of Mr. Eden's "lullaby" note of July 30 (cf. p. 38) to go along with them on the path which, as we now see, led to the debacle of Yalta.

The pact between Poland and Russia was signed in the presence of Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden. Almost as soon as it was concluded, contradictory interpretations of its enactments were issued by the two signatories. For instance, the first paragraph of the document states that:

> "The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics recognizes the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 as to territorial changes in Poland as having lost their validity."[54]

According to General Sikorski's understanding, immediately made public, this provision contained:

> ". . . no suggestion of doubt about Poland's frontiers as they were before September, 1939 . . . no suggestion that Poland might surrender part of her territory."[55]

On the other hand, *Izvestia*, official Soviet organ, announced in its columns on August 3, 1941 that:

> "The Soviet Russian-Polish Pact does not necessarily guarantee the return to Poland of frontiers as they existed in 1939 by the Treaty of Riga."[56]

An agreement drawn up in terms of such imprecision that from the start it admits of two diametrically opposite interpretations is a bad agreement. In all fairness, we must admit that it is primarily the Poles who must shoulder the blame for accepting such a make-shift adjustment. It was the Poles who

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[54] "Polish-Soviet Relations," Doc. 31, p. 56.

[55] Montanus, B., "Polish-Soviet Relations in the Light of International Law," p. 45, University Publication, New York, N. Y.

[56] *The New York Times*, Aug. 7, 1941, p. 7.

signed the pact. British pressure, however, was very strong — not to say even brutal.

Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden were well aware of the flaws in the terms of the pact. They knew of the profound anxiety and concern felt by the Poles over the ambiguous phraseology of the document. Several times during the course of negotiations evidence of the deep split between the Polish and the Russian points of view came to light. These differences were so acute, in fact, that three members of the Polish Cabinet (among them Mr. Zaleski, Secretary for Foreign Affairs) resigned rather than affix their signatures to a text so double-tongued. In the end, however, the hesitations of the Poles were quieted by British reassurances, the pact was signed, and a brief period of uneasy "friendship" between the signatories followed.[57]

For the Kremlin the attitude of Great Britain towards her Polish allies on this occasion became the gauge by which henceforth they were to measure the strength and sincerity of the principles actuating His Majesty's Government. England had given to Poland a solemn pledge of support. Now, for the sake of momentarily side-stepping a difficult situation, on the first occasion when this promise was challenged she deliberately "looked through her fingers." For Stalin this was the "green light." After July 30, 1941, the Kremlin began to carry on its dealings with the Western Democracies with a high hand, convinced that it need be constrained by no regard for moral principles.

Within a few weeks came the first manifestation of this cynical attitude of Moscow. In London, on September 24, along with the governments of the other allied nations, the Soviet Government gave its adherence to the Atlantic Charter. Previous to signing, however, M. Maisky, Soviet Ambassador, made a long and speciously worded Declaration setting forth the Soviet's understanding of the document. The gist of this Declaration was that while considering the other signatories to be bound by the strict letter of its provisions, Soviet Russia reserved to herself the right to interpret the premises of the Charter in matters touching her own interests as she saw fit.[58]

"No fountain can at the same time send forth both sweet and bitter water." The adherence of Moscow to the Atlantic Charter, given with tongue in cheek, was from the beginning never anything more than lip service. Her consistently followed policy in Eastern Europe ever since has constituted a continuing repudiation of all its principles.

To be fair to Mr. Churchill, we must say that for many months he contended valiantly against the bald-faced flouting by Russia of the Charter and the Polish Pact. In December, 1941, on the occasion of Mr. Eden's visit to Moscow,

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[57] cf. Footnote 52.

[58] For a detailed analysis of the Russian Declaration, see David Dallin's brilliant handling of the subject in "Russia and Postwar Europe," pp. 136-141. Published by Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn.

the Soviet Government officially made known its annexationist demands. According to trustworthy sources of information, in the discussion that followed most of Mr.Churchill's Cabinet were in favor of meeting these demands. The Prime Minister, backed by a minority, prevented it. Again, in May, 1942, when the British-Soviet Pact was signed, Mr. Churchill resisted a second attempt of Mr. Molotov to secure British recognition of Soviet conquests in Poland.

In March, 1943, Mr. Churchill attempted to find a solution for the thorny problem posed by the Russian position by the suggestion that there be set up in Europe "a confederation of States side by side with the great Powers." But the plan found no favor in Moscow. "War and Peace," (a Russian periodical which reflects official opinion) cried out indignantly that "the project of an Eastern European Federation is directed against the Soviet Union." The Kremlin, not to be swerved from its purposes, remained adamant. The final result of the Russo-Polish Pact of July, 1941, was Teheran and Yalta.

Everything seems to point to the fact that it was at Teheran that Mr. Churchill's plans for reconciliation and reconstruction in Europe finally met their Waterloo. After this historic gathering, proposals for regional European federations apparently were rubbed out of the international agenda and whatever steps there may have been on foot for a joint Anglo-American invasion of the Continent through the Balkans, thrown into the discard. The protocol of diplomacy, however, veiled these facts for over a year.

It may be that, in spite of his stout denials, Mr. Churchill was out-generaled at Teheran. Comparing the position of Great Britain's spokesman with that of the other two members of the Triumverate present at the Crimean Conference, Mr. George Sokolsky, well-known columnist, has aptly described it thus:

> "One of these men (the Big Three) is a British aristocrat, conservative, imperialistic, proud, the most heroic political figure of the war. But he heads an Empire that has long been used to the limit. Its principal resource now is the treasury and industry of the United States. His mind is robust, but his purse is bare. At a bargain he sits with empty hands and high hopes."[59]

Whether for these reasons or for others not yet apparent, at any rate it is now clear that at Teheran Mr. Churchill gave his consent to the division of Poland along what is virtually the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line. Mr. Churchill himself belatedly admitted the fact in his report to Parliament on December 15, 1944.

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The Anglo-Polish Agreement was an expression of a definite historical

[59] *New York Sun*, March 8, 1945.

policy long adhered to by England. This policy was briefly expressed by Lord Halifax in his statement of June 29, 1939:

> "In the past we have always stood out against the attempt by any single Power to dominate Europe at the expense of the liberties of other nations, and British policy is, therefore, only following the inevitable line of its own history."[60]

This policy seems of late to be changing. It may be that Great Britain does not feel herself strong enough to oppose Russian domination of Europe. If such is the case, the fact should be openly admitted.

An agreement is an agreement, whatever its nature. In commercial life a merchant, if he is unable to meet his obligations, does not try to prove that his signature does not mean what it says. He declares bankruptcy. English sense of honor and fair play would never stand for any other course. Should the procedure be otherwise when, instead of money, the issue at stake is flesh and blood?

Whatever the duress under which the British Prime Minister labored, there were only two procedures befitting the traditions and spirit of the English people: to insist — cost what it might — on carrying out their responsibilities to Poland or, if forced to repudiate them, to avow the fact and make a clean open break.

But Mr. Churchill did not elect to follow either one of these courses. Instead, he tried to maneuver the Polish government into a position where they would feel constrained of their own volition to agree to Russia's demands. The twelve-month following the Prime Minister's return home from Iran is a sorry record of steadily mounting pressure put on the Poles to sign away half of their territory and put in jeopardy their future independence. This, of course, was not to be considered. The London Government had no mandate from their nationals to take this action and they knew well that no such mandate would ever be given them.

The Polish Government in London tried hard to find some middle ground. For over a year they bent over backward in their effort to effect a compromise. They asked that definitive settlement of boundaries be deferred till the close of the war; that the frontier demanded by Stalin be regarded in the meantime as a temporary demarcation line. They requested that the British and American Governments might use their good offices towards an impartial understanding. Finally they even went so far as to offer to take into their administration communistic elements from the Lublin Committee. All these plans (which, modest as they were, at the time I strongly condemned) were rudely rebuffed.

It was evident that Stalin would be satisfied with nothing less than (1) surrender of the eastern half of Poland, (2) abrogation of the 1935 Consti-

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[60] BWBB, Doc. 25, p. 78.

tution and, (3) resignation of the Government-in-Exile, whose authority derived from this Constitution. As a concession, he signified his willingness to include in the Lublin Committee a few men from the émigré group — to be selected by himself.

Simultaneously with this campaign of political pressure the British were putting on the screws in another sensitive spot. As the Soviet armies in their rapid sweep westwards neared Polish territory, the question arose of their relation to the Polish Home Army and their status in the country in general. England asked for whole-hearted cooperation with the Soviet troops, and the government-in-exile instructed their nationals to give it. On January 4, 1944, several Polish detachments skirmishing near the border, helped the advancing Red army put to flight a considerable German force. At the close of the battle the Poles made overtures of friendship towards the Soviet soldiers. Whereupon the Russian commanders promptly seized twenty of the Polish officers and hanged them out-of-hand.[61]

In spite of this ominous beginning, the British Government continued to press for closer collaboration with the Russian "liberators." The charge, made in Moscow, that the Polish Underground was doing nothing began to be heard more and more often in London; the Poles were admonished to show a "friendly attitude" toward Russia by militant action. At the insistence of Britain, the Polish Government in London instructed the Polish Underground to cooperate fully with the advancing Russians fighting the Germans on Polish soil. Though it was apparent that Soviet imperialistic policy was aimed at the destruction of Poland, the Underground obeyed. The upshot of the whole campaign of pressure was the unspeakable tragedy of the Warsaw uprising in the summer of 1944. From August 1 to October 2 Warsaw, forsaken by her Western allies, betrayed by Moscow, fought on alone against overwhelming forces of the Reich. Not till the city was become a smoldering mass of blood-stained rubble, counting her dead by the hundreds of thousands, did the survivors surrender.

The full story of what lies back of this heart-breaking debacle is not yet known. To our mind, however, certain facts appear to be established. For the Russians, stalling at the Vistula, the revolt for which they had been asking so insistently by radio was — to say the least — convenient. For sixty-three days, scarcely seven miles distant from the perishing city, the Red Army marked time while the Germans saved them the trouble of exterminating a quarter million Poles. That England cannot be wholly absolved from her share of responsibility for the tragedy is also true. Pressure from London certainly played its part in influencing General Bor's decision.

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[61] "In reply to questions about the Underground army's cooperation with the Russians, Mr. Mikolajczyk asserted that, under orders from London, thirty-five units had made contact with the Red Army. In three cases, he added quietly, the commanders were shot and twenty were hanged when they insisted on remaining under the orders of the exiled government." *The New York Times*, May 17, 1944.

By November, 1944, the Poles decided that further offers of concession were useless. Warsaw's smoldering ruins spoke eloquently for all the world to hear. Poland had done her part. She had sacrificed her present; her future she refused to put in pawn. The Polish Government refused categorically to capitulate.

Stalin was insistent; the Poles would not yield. Another way had to be found whereby Great Britain could withdraw gracefully from her treaty obligations towards Poland. Faced with an apparently insoluble dilemma, Mr. Churchill, nevertheless, found a way out — or more correctly speaking, he found a way around. At the Yalta Conference a plan was devised which enabled Great Britain to have her cake and eat it too. At Yalta a scheme was worked out by the Three Great Powers to ease out of position the recalcitrant London Poles. The legal Constitutional Polish Government — without definitely saying so — is left to fade imperceptibly out of the picture while diplomatic recognition is accorded a mongrel set of men assembled around Stalin's Lublin Committee. This decision is defended, even acclaimed, in some quarters, as a necessary compromise, substantial and valuable and in accordance with the new realities of accomplished fact. It is not a compromise: it is not even a concession. It is capitulation, pure and simple.

Let us examine in detail the sections of the Yalta Declaration concerning Poland to see how diplomatic camouflage operates. The opening sentence reads:

> "A new situation has been created in Poland as a result of her complete liberation by the Red Army."

This statement is simply not true — on two counts. In so far as this is a common war, in which all the allied nations are broadly and basically united, all their resources of man-power and materials pooled in an attempt to crush the German enemy, victory on any front is not "completely" due to any one of them. What would have happened if Poland, in September, 1939, had not defied the Wehrmacht? If the Battle of Britain had turned out differently? If America had not thrown into the balance the might of her men and her material strength? Who has saved who? Can anyone say? One thing only is sure. Had a single link in the chain of effort snapped or been lacking, the struggle could have been lost. Because of her strategical position it fell to Russia to chase the Nazis out of Poland. But suppose Russia had not had the planes, tanks, and other military equipment which she received from America and Great Britain? To say that Poland owes her complete liberation to Russia is to say what is not true. The "blood, sweat and tears" shed by all have had their part in the liberation of all.

In so far as this is not a common war — in that the ultimate aims of the participants are separate and selfish — then the plain truth, which will be admitted by every straight-thinking person who knows the facts, is this: the

Not till the city was become a smoldering mass of blood-stained rubble did the survivors surrender

position of Russia in Poland today is not that of a liberator but of a conquering occupier.

The Yalta Declaration continues:

> "The Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should, therefore, be re-organized on a broader democratic basis . . . "

Here we have the camel's nose which eventually is to crowd the rightful owner out of his tent. Wrapped up in swaddling bands of imprecise phraseology is a *de facto* recognition of the Lublin Committee as the functioning government of Poland. The existence of the Constitutional Government in London is ignored as completely as if it had never existed, and the "made-in-Moscow" group brought forward to become the nucleus for future reference.

It will be of interest here to know what manner of men these are. We shall quote the opinion of William Henry Chamberlin, eminent American writer on world political affairs:

> ". . . The Council of National Liberation is a synthetic made-in-Moscow puppet regime. It was never heard of until Soviet troops had entered what was by Soviet admission Polish territory. Formed on July 23, 1944, it was recognized as a provisional Polish administration by the Soviets and only by the Soviets, on July 24. This was pretty quick work, even when it is a question of recognizing a regime of one's own making. Most of the members of the Moscow-made Council are completely unknown in Polish life. And those who are known hardly inspire confidence. They are broken, discredited adventurers, just the kind of men who might be expected to turn out as quislings."[62]

In contrast with this unedifying picture, let us set the record of the London Government from which, after five years of closest collaboration, His Majesty's Government now prepares to withdraw its recognition.

I do not wish to exaggerate the part played by the Poles in this war, but under the circumstances it is only fair to call to mind that Hitler's battle against Poland in the fall of 1939 was not exactly a pleasure promenade. The Germans lost so heavily in men and materials that it took them full eight months to re-group and re-assemble their forces for their drive on the West. Thus, though less dramatic and less recognized, the contribution to the total war effort made by the broken and defeated Polish armies in the opening campaign of the conflict was no less signal than that of the Polish fliers in the 1940 Battle of Britain. Their stubborn resistance on the blood-soaked Polish plains gave to a defenseless and unarmed England priceless time in which to prepare.

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[62] "American Mercury" February, 1945.

Through five terrible war years Poland, instructed by its Constitutional Government (sitting first in Warsaw, later in London) has continued to "hold up the hands" of England through superb assistance. This government, acting as a transmission belt, so to speak, has been the means by which Great Britain could and did command all the resources (they were not a few) and the strength (and it was not inconsiderable) which Poland had to offer. It has served faithfully the common cause. Active resistance, passive resistance, military action at home and abroad, sabotage against the Germans, cooperation with the Soviets — whatever England has asked, that she has received. A promise made in Poland's name by the Constitutional Government of Poland has never failed of performance by the Polish Underground, the Polish soldiers, the Polish people.

In return, Great Britain gave to Poland her word — her guarantee of support. The Poles staked their whole future on this pledge. Never — even in Poland's darkest hour — did their confidence in her powerful ally falter. . . . Cherishing this faith, Poles in all quarters of the globe went forth to battle. On the land, in the air, on the high seas, over three million of Poland's sons have laid down their lives, dying that Poland might live. The Poles perished faithful to their obligations; they died believing that England would honor hers.

But at Yalta the Polish Constitutional Government was forgotten; the "Provisional Government" emerged. The Declaration continues:

> "Mr. Molotov, Mr. Harriman, and Mr. A. Clark Kerr are authorized as a commission to consult in the first instance in Moscow with members of *the present Provisional Government*, and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad, with a view to the re-organization of the present (Soviet-sponsored) government. . . ."

Where was the Atlantic Charter when these words were penned? If they mean anything at all, they mean that at Yalta Poland, without so much as a "by-your-lief," was *forcibly deprived of her sovereignty*. The Three Great Powers, arbitrarily overriding the rights of the Polish nation, took over the authority *vested in the President of the Polish Republic by virtue of Polish constitutional law*, and placed that authority in the hands of a Regency headed by Mr. Molotov.

We have no right, of course, to discount in advance the influence which the British and American Ambassadors may be able to wield in the exercise (euphoniously called "consultations") of this sovereignty which they have usurped. It seems to us very probable, however, that Mr. Molotov, uninhibited by the democratic sensibilities of his western colleagues, will play the determining role in these consultations.

"*Never in the history of the world was the fate of so many so cruelly decided by so few!*" Poland has been treated exactly as if she were a van-

quished nation no longer having any rights of her own. This is the plain, unvarnished truth. It is not pleasant to contemplate.

Something had to be done to make the fact acceptable to British and American public opinion. So was decked out with the promise of "free and unfettered" elections which, it is hoped, will confirm and legitimize the high-handed diplomatic skulduggery employed. Continuing our analysis of Yalta, we read:

> "This Polish Provisional Government formed by the Commission (headed by Mr. Molotov) shall be pledged to holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal and secret ballot. In the selection all democratic and anti-nazi parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates."

Nobody understands better than does Mr. Churchill the magic power of words. He is past-master in their use. What happier slogan could have been found with which to lull to sleep any qualms the Western Democracies might have over Poland's fate than the resounding words, "free and unfettered."

But we Poles know that the coming elections will not be free. The people of Poland will not be given a chance to express their will. All the fine talk put out at Yalta for British and American consumption means less than nothing. We know this for many reasons and because of many circumstances.

Some of these apply to all the stricken European countries as, for instance, the problem posed by masses of "displaced" peoples — homeless, stateless, deported, imprisoned; the dislocation of all forms of local autonomy; the economic chaos which everywhere prevails. For these and similar reasons general elections all over the Continent have been postponed till more stabilized conditions come about. In France and the Low Countries there is no thought of elections being held before the return home of the war prisoners and the deportees carried away to slave labor in Germany. Even in England, where the House of Commons has sat for ten consecutive years, Mr. Churchill still does not feel it indicated to dissolve the Parliament and submit the confirmation of his leadership to the country. But in addition to all these difficulties, there are circumstances peculiar to Poland's position which make the question of elections there more sensitive and vital than anywhere else.

In the first place — and if for no other reason — it is impossible for a representative election to be put on in a country which is under hostile occupation.

That Poland *is* under hostile occupation no honest-minded person will deny. Every inch of her territory is controlled by Russian soldiers. When it became evident that their country would eventually become a theatre of renewed war operations, the Polish Government-in-Exile tried to arrange in advance with Russia a code of procedure binding on the Soviet armies during the period of occupancy. But, as usual, Stalin refused. From the moment they crossed onto Polish terrain the Russians assumed the role of conquerers. Their

studied policy has been aimed at pulverizing the Poles into helplessness. The Underground military and civil organizations (functioning under direction from London) by which stability of administration has been maintained in the country, have been destroyed; civil rights have been suppressed; freedom of speech and of press abolished; confiscations instituted; purges are raging in which eminent political leaders (communists and communist sympathizers excepted) are being imprisoned and deported; hostages from every Polish family are seized and impressed into military service. Every shred of legal authority is being wiped out by a steady stream of "decrees" issuing from the Lublin Committee. We challenge anyone to deny that such measures constitute hostile occupancy.

It is small wonder that the Poles fail to look upon the Russians in the light of liberators. Liberators do not cut a country in half and annex one of its parts, which is what the Russians have done. Eastern Poland has already been taken over and sovietized at break-neck speed. In this section of the country are the great cities of Lwow and Vilna — Polish cities since time immemorial. Here live eleven million people whose voice will not be heard in the forthcoming elections. It is their future and the future of their children that is at stake but, politically speaking, they are dead and buried. Like the dead, they have no voice.

A second, even more compelling reason why the elections will not — *can not* — be free is that Moscow does not dare let the Poles speak. Effect follows cause. Hostility begets hostility. The tale of Russian atrocities in Poland is so long and so gruesome that were the Polish people given opportunity to express themselves, so mighty a protest would go up that the whole world — dulled to insensibility as it is by a surfeit of brutalities — would be stung into active intervention. Tyranny rules by murder and terror — and tyranny cannot allow of "free elections." With all his power, no dictator is strong enough not to be in horror of the truth.

The Poles know that the result of the Yalta Agreement will simply be to rivet the yoke of Russia still more firmly on their necks by legalizing the establishment of a Moscow puppet government. Perhaps some Polish "stalking-horse" will be put forward by the Kremlin's representative, and the British and American Ambassadors, to insure the Polish people from a worse fate, will urge him to accept the role. (Only a few short years ago Mr. Molotov declared it his purpose to put an end forever to the existence of the Polish State.)

Historia magistra est vitae. The elections under Russian occupation are not to be held for the purpose of expressing the true will of Poland but for falsifying it. The Poles have been well taught in the school of experience. They are convinced that the election following this fifth partition of their country will be carried out by the same means and with the same aims as those employed after the first and second partitions. Mr. Churchill himself told them so in his statement of February 28, 1945:

"We have agreed," said the Prime Minister, "that (in Poland) all those that are democratic parties — not nazi or fascist parties or parties of collaborators with the enemy — will be able to take their part."

We could wish that Mr. Churchill had chosen to be more specific. It would be interesting to learn just who, in his opinion constitute these "nazis, fascists and collaborators with the enemy," about to lose their franchise at the insistance of Russia. *Where are they to be found in Poland?*

In the specific Soviet political slant the terms "democratic," "pro-nazi," and "pro-fascist" have a different meaning than they do in western countries — including Poland. The Soviet pins these labels onto all political elements which do not absolutely agree with them. To put it plainly — anyone whom they wish to get rid of they dub "nazi" or "fascist." This is proscription.

The use of proscription, as a means of falsifying the expressions of a nation's will, goes very far back in history. First employed by Sulla in 82 B.C., it has ever since been found a very convenient instrument for dictators. Professor Robert Howard Lord, eminent American historian tells us how it was used by the Empress Catharine to wring unwilling "friendship" from the defeated and prostrate Polish Republic on an earlier occasion:

"The best men of the nation, the leaders of the Constitutional party were in exile . . . The elections were planned by the (Russian) ambassador with great care. (He) gathered about him . . . an unofficial committee of his Polish "friends" with whom he settled the details of the campaign, the list of deputies to be elected, and the instructions to be given them. Electioneering agents...were appointed. Russian troops were everywhere on hand to overawe the opposition; and no means of persuasion, bribery or coercion were . . . neglected . . . The ever-complaisant Generality (as the then "Provisional Government" was known) assisted as much as it could by issuing . . . a couple of decrees which excluded from being elected all those who had not renounced the Four Years' Diet (Parliament) . . . and those who had participated in the establishment of the Constitution of the Third of May[63] . . . It (was) very difficult for honest men to be elected . . . most of them were men without decent reputations, who could be expected to render blind obedience."[64]

History repeats itself. Today the best, the most heroic elements of Poland are to be found among (1) the members of the Polish Underground and the Home State and (2) those abroad who have been valiantly serving their country in exile. They include all classes of people; they represent all political parties. Notwithstanding their unimpeachable loyalty to the allied cause, their effective

[63] The famous Constitution of 1791 by which sweeping reforms were initiated in Poland.

[64] Lord, Robert Howard, "The Second Partition of Poland," pp. 454, 458, 461.

struggle against the common enemy. their invaluable support to the Soviet military forces, all these elements, because they refuse their adherence to the "Provisional Government," have been branded by the Soviets and their Lublin group as pro-nazi, anti-democratic, and enemies of the people.

Among them are such personalities as the President of the Polish Republic, Wladyslaw Raczkiewicz, who in the dark days following Dunkirk brought his

Polish flyers at rest under English sod

government from Paris to London to assist in carrying on the fight; General Kasimir Sosnkowski, commander of the Polish armies which fighting near Lwow in 1939, crushed several divisions of the Wehrmacht; Thomas Arciszewski, veteran of the 1939 Warsaw barricades and Underground Socialist leader, who was sent to London in 1944 to assume the Vice-Presidency and is at present Polish Premier; General Anders, victorious at Monte Cassino and Ancona, now acting Commander-in-Chief of the Polish military forces; General Bor, patriot-hero of the 1944 Warsaw uprising, labelled by Moscow and Lublin as "criminal and traitor."

These men and a host of others like them, ardent patriots all, completely loyal to the allied cause in the fight of democracy against totalitarianism, are outlawed by Soviet proscription.

Mr. Churchill assures the Poles that after the elections they:

". . . will have their future in their own hands with the single

limitation that they must honestly follow in harmony with their allies a policy friendly to Russia."

Friendship is not a one-way street. The Poles, out of their experience in the past, look upon this proposed "gun-shot wedding" with a wary eye. They recall that after the second partition of Poland in 1793:

> "Catherine was still unsatisfied . . . she was firmly determined to rivet her claims upon what was left of the unhappy Republic . . . doomed not only to cede away more than half of the national territory, but also to sign a bond of servitude (the treaty of friendship) surrendering what remained to guardianship and the scarcely disguised domination of Russia"[65] . . . and that this treaty . . . "gave Russia practically unrestricted control of the army and the foreign relations of the Republic. It deprived the Poles of the right of altering and reforming their fundamental laws and institutions at their own discretion. It gave sanction and the widest opportunities for Russian interference in almost every branch of Poland's domestic affairs. It was indeed a *pactum subjectionis et incorporationis* . . . "[66]

The new government which will emerge in Poland under the guidance of Messrs. Molotov, Harriman and Clark Kerr very possibly will serve Mr. Churchill because it will liberate Great Britain from her obligations to Poland. But it will not represent the Polish nation.

In his report to Parliament on February 28, 1944, the British Prime Minister said boldly, without apology:

> "If I am championing this frontier to Russia, it is not because I bow to force."

★ ★ ★

His Majesty's Government may have found a way to escape the fulfillment of their legal obligations to Poland. But Great Britain has not escaped her responsibilities to the Poles. The burden will be heavy. For by the course she elected to follow at Yalta Britain has made herself responsible not only for the present fate of the Polish nation, but for the future of countless generations yet unborn.

The Polish fliers who throughout the length and breadth of the lovely English countryside now lie at rest are gone. The grave will not give back its own. But I think that when the hour is come and the statesmen shall gather

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[65] Lord, Robert Howard, "The Second Partition of Poland," pp. 454, 458, 461.

[66] op. cit. p. 459

around the council tables at the Golden Gate, there to write the word that spells the weal or woe of countless millions — I think that in that hour there will be under the English sod a stirring of troubled spirits. And I ask myself whether — if our ears were attuned thereto — we should not hear a ghostly wailing, a weeping that will not be comforted for faith betrayed and for "honour that rooted in dishonour" stands.

We doubt not that in England many, if not most, people sincerely believe that in forcing the Poles to yield to Russia's demands they are acting for the best interests of Poland. The British press reiterates this belief again and again. They believe that by the concessions made at Yalta, a long stride was taken towards bringing in enduring peace for the whole world. We differ. England has presumed to know better than do the Poles themselves "the things that belong to Poland's peace." This allows us to state briefly how we Poles now view the future of Albion in the new world that is in the throes of being born. In a word, the situation looks to us like this:

At Teheran the Atlantic Charter was rent asunder; at Yalta it was flung to the four winds. And the position of England throughout the world is now everywhere in danger.

★ ★ ★

On September 29, 1938, Mr. Chamberlain, returning to London from another historic meeting, was received with the plaudits of a delighted people to whom he came bringing assurance of "peace in our time."

Yet less than a year later, Mr. Chamberlain, with bowed head, stood before his country's representatives in Parliament and in unforgettably poignant words confessed that:

> "Everything that I have worked for, everything that I have hoped for, everything that I have believed in during my public life has crashed in ruins."[67]

Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill, as they come back from the Crimean Conference, may honestly believe that by the concessions made there — concessions that mean the death and dissolution of Poland — they have safeguarded the world from the specter of another and final cataclysm.

If so, they have failed to read aright the lessons written in "blood, sweat and tears" by the consequences of Munich. Once again a gigantic military power, intoxicated by victory and the consciousness of its own strength, is plunging ahead along the road to world-wide imperialism. How long will the sacrifice of Poland stay the wheels of Juggernaut?

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[67] BWBB, Doc. 120, p. 230.

Twenty-five years ago one of Briton's wisest, most far-sighted sons wrote the following words:

> "A victorious Roman general,, when he entered the city amid all the head-turning splendor of a "Triumph," had behind him on the chariot a slave who whispered into his ear that he was mortal. When our statesmen are in conversation . . . some airy cherub should whisper to them from time to time this saying:
>
> "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland:
> Who rules the Heartland commands the World Island:
> Who rules the World Island commands the World."[68]

Mr. Churchill would do well to ponder long and earnestly these prophetic words.[69]

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[68] MacKinder, H. J., "Democratic Ideals and Realities," p. 150. Henry Holt and Co., New York, N. Y., Apr. 1942.

[69] The following calculations are based on a report prepared for the League of Nations, "Future Populations of Europe and the Soviet Union," Princeton University, 1944:

Relative Preponderance of Power in the year 1955
Between the rest of the European Continent
(Germany excluded—The United Kingdom included)
and
The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Total Population	Labor Man-Power (ages 20-60)	Military Man-Power (ages 16-36)
Europe reconstructed according to principles of Atlantic Charter		
All Nations Independent		
Europe—Soviets	Europe—Soviets	Europe—Soviets
3 to 2	2 to 1	3 to 2
Europe reconstructed according to Yalta Compromise Agreement		
Ten nations (Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Finland, Bulgaria, Roumania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugo-Slovia) with population of 115 million, included in Soviet sphere of influence.		
Europe—Soviets	Europe—Soviets	Europe—Soviets
2 to 3	2 to 3	1 to 2

CHAPTER V

Conclusion

The records have spoken. With the following brief summary of the facts they have established, we rest our case.

In 1939 both Poland and Britain were faced with a choice. For Poland it was a question of (1) breaking with the Western Powers and becoming a satellite of Germany, or (2) accepting the probable eventuality of war. Her situation was well described in the cable of April 29, 1939, sent to his Government by the French Ambassador in Warsaw:

> "The point is whether, by consenting to concessions which, moreover, would lead to others, Poland is to agree to stand aside in an eventual conflict between Germany and the Western Powers and thus resign itself to becoming an auxiliary and vassal of the Reich; or whether, on the contrary, it will use the political independence . . . in order to join, should occasion arise, the common defence front against German imperialism."[70]

Poland confirmed this objective evaluation of M. Noel by the words of her Foreign Minister, M. Beck, pronounced on May 5, 1939:

> ". . . if . . . the Government of the Reich interpreted the Polish-German declaration of non-aggression of 1934 as intended to isolate Poland and to prevent the normal friendly collaboration of our country with Western Powers, we ourselves should always have rejected such and interpretation."[71]

Faced with the two alternatives, Poland, in fidelity to her centuries-long tradition, elected for solidarity with the West. The importance of this decision for Europe was attested by M. Coulondre, French Ambassador at Berlin, who,

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[70] French Yellow Book, Doc. 112, p. 133.

[71] BWBB, Doc. 15, p. 39.

in a confidential letter to his Government's Minister for Foreign Affairs, expressed the opinion that:

> "Polish acceptance of Germany's demands would have rendered the application of any braking machinery in the East impossible . . . Danzig is in itself only a secondary question. It is not only the fate of the Free City, it is the enslavement or liberty of Europe which is at stake in the issue now joined."[72]

Great Britain was confronted with a different problem. She had either to let herself be eliminated politically from Europe, or to form an alliance with whatever countries on the Continent were prepared to defend the status quo. Walter Lippman has accurately summed up the situation in the terse observation that:

> "From 1935 to 1940 Hitler's aim was to isolate Great Britain. He was unsuccessful; therefore he must lose this war."[73]

But in 1939 Hitler had come dangerously close to realizing his purpose. England was unarmed and, powerless in a military sense, was weak politically. Her only alliance on the European mainland was with France — and the situation in France was obscure. It was not the defeat of 1940 that gave rise to collaborationists in France; these gentlemen were present long before the war. Within the French Cabinet itself, their philosophy was represented by no less an outstanding figure than the French Minister for Foreign Affairs. M. Bonnet.[74]

Aside from this dubious point of support, England stood alone. Italy was in the German camp; Russia, as events showed later, was doing all she could to loosen the ties between Germany and the Western Powers; the smaller nations, including Holland and Belgium, fearful of the risks involved by an alliance with Great Britain, had isolated themselves within a shell of neutrality.

The political constellation left open to England only two courses. She could bow to Hitler and withdraw from Europe. Or she could ally herself with the one nation on the Continent that stood ready to resist with armed force the hegemony of one Power in Europe. This meant committing herself to participation in the affairs of Eastern Europe. She chose the latter alternative.

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[72] French Yellow Book, Doc. 115, p. 155.

[73] Lippman, Walter, "United States Foreign Policy," p. 105.

[74] We should direct the attention of the reader to the little-known fact that on September 2, 1939, after the German invasion of Poland, the French Government practically agreed to the proposition of Mussolini to call a "conference" a la Munich. This conference was intended expressly by the Duce to decide on a revision of the Polish frontiers in accordance with Hitler's wishes. The idea was to mark time quietly and deliberately while the German hordes went deeper and deeper into Poland. The French Minister, M. Bonnet, agreed to the proposal, and only the firm attitude of Lord Halifax forced the French Government to repudiate the policy of its Foreign Minister. cf. The French Yellow Book, Doc. 347, p. 378.

Lord Halifax made known this decision of England on August 24, 1939, in the following statement of policy:

> "There are some who say that the fate of European nations is no concern of ours, and that we should not look far beyond our own frontiers. But those who thus argue forget, I think, that in failing to uphold the liberties of others, we run great risk of betraying the principle of liberty itself, and with it our own freedom and independence. We have built up a society with values which are accepted not only in this country but over vast areas of the world. If we stand by and see these values set at nought, the security of all those things on which life itself depends seems, to my judgment, to be undermined."[75]

Such, in short, seems to be the genesis of the Anglo-Polish alliance. It was an alliance between the only two peoples who at the time were prepared to run the risk of resisting any nation seeking preponderance of power on the Continent. The risk was great. Poland staked all she had. Britain — though she gained the invaluable element of time for preparation — took upon herself the new and difficult obligation of defending the freedom of all Europe.

Between March, 1939, at which time England gave to Poland her first guarantee, and August of the same year, when the final terms of the Assistance Agreement were formulated, the situation became clarified to such an extent that each of the signatory Powers realized the risks she was running. Poland knew that she was in danger of being attacked from both East and West: England knew that, sooner or later, in all likelihood conflict with the totalitarian States, Soviet and Nazi, was inevitable.

War came, and with it the necessity for fulfilling the commitments assumed. Poland did her part — and she is still doing it. To the last full measure. England, too, kept faith. She declared war on Germany and has fought heroically.

But as to the ultimate aims of the war an English publicist has pointedly asked:

> "What, then, did it mean? That we should drive the Germans out of Poland . . . only to create a vacuum for the Soviets to fill?"[76]
>
> *Certainly not.*

Mr. Churchill's interpretation of the treaty obligations between Poland and Britain remind us of the humorist's definition of a rivulet:—"a stream so narrow that it has only one bank." Can it be that the Prime Minister thinks Poland has only one frontier?

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[75] BWBB, Doc. 65, p. 153.

[76] McKee, John, "Poland, Russia, and our Honour," p. 7.

It is true, a secret Protocol existed. And, juridically speaking, it gave Great Britain the right to refuse to fight Russia for Poland's sovereignty and territorial integrity. But even in this strictly legal sense, the Protocol did not give His Majesty's Government the right to *refuse support* to Poland in her resistance to Russia's political onslaught. Still less, did it give them the right *to support Stalin* in this aggressive policy which is aimed at the destruction of the Polish State.

We do not mean to imply that during the last five years His Majesty's Government has been publicly pledging one course towards Poland and secretly holding to another. We wish emphatically to disclaim that such is our opinion. But because of inept statesmanship, "muddling,"—shall we say—we have arrived at a situation today where that is just what Great Britain is doing.

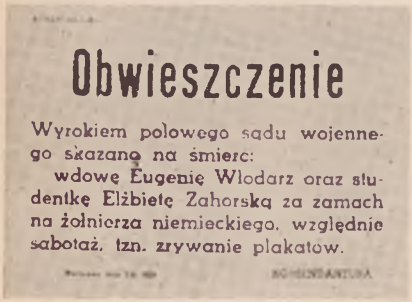
We condemn both governments, British and Polish alike, for having entered into a secret agreement whereby a whole nation was deceived in matters touching the issues of life and death. Secret understandings in matters of military strategy are sometimes necessary. But secret understandings made in matters which involve the very existence of nations are little less than criminal. It is utterly wrong and blameworthy to promise full brotherhood to a people going forth to fight and die and afterwards, behind closed doors, to qualify that promise. The Poles fighting at Tobruk, Narvik and Monte Cassino, the Poles who died in the Warsaw Underground holocaust. knew nothing of the implications of a secret agreement.

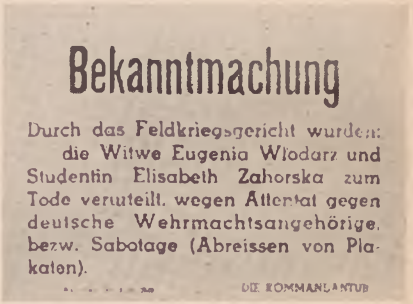
An honest adherence to the commitments of the Agreement does not allow of the Prime Minister's interpretation. The complete execution of her obligations towards Poland by Great Britain means nothing less than a joint stand with her on the problems of Eastern Europe. It means resistance to the imposition by force of changes in the Baltic area and in the Danubian Basin. *It means the honest application of the principles of the Atlantic Charter to all free peoples living in the zone between Germany and Russia.*

This is how the Polish people understood the treaty with England. Every word of its text was known to them. They had full faith in the validity of its promises.

In closing, may I quote a few lines which I wrote at the beginning of 1940, in the hour when Poland lay stretched out on the cross of martyrdom, and the Western World, silent, made no move?

> "The Poles who came to fight and to die in this manner *had* to believe. Believe intensely and deeply. And when I look for the simplest and most magnificent manifestation of this faith, one picture rises always before my eyes, the walls of Warsaw—battered, charred, destroyed—hung with tattered posters. Posters on which the hated invaders had written the mocking inscription: 'England, this is your fault!'





To touch them meant death

"To touch them meant death. Yet every night they *were* torn down. Those who did it, those who *had* to do it, those who vied for the privilege of doing it, were expressing their faith. Faith in that which lifts man out of bondage; faith in that which is the basis of human dignity; faith in the word of their fellow man."

Appendix I

ORIGINS OF THE CURZON LINE

I. *An Unsuccessful Armistice Proposal*

In the summer of 1920, the second year of the Polish-Soviet conflict, the Red Army's offensive against Poland was in full swing. An order of the day given on July 2 by General Tukhachevsky, Commander of the Soviet forces, made clear the purpose of this offensive:

> "In the West the fortunes of the world revolution are at stake. Over the corpse of Poland lies the way to world conflagration. On to Wilno, Minsk, Warsaw!"

The Polish Government turned to the Western Allies for help.[1]

This request of the Poles for assistance was taken under advisement by representatives of the Western Allies, then in conference at Spa. In the discussions that followed Mr. Lloyd George, British Prime Minister, was the guiding spirit. He practically took the whole matter into his own hands.

There were three possible courses that he could adopt: he could mediate, he could offer effective assistance, or he could abandon the Poles to their own fate. In the course of the following month (July 10—August 10) he was to make abortive efforts at the first two and finally to follow the last.

Influenced largely by political reasons, Mr. Lloyd George made up his mind to try mediation first. In England as elsewhere there was apprehension and uneasiness over the spread of revolutionary ideology and the military successes of the Bolsheviks. But on the other hand the British Labor Party was openly anti-Polish. Mr. Bevin had even gone so far as to threaten a general strike should Great Britain give any assistance—direct or indirect—to Poland.[2] Under the

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[1] The Principal Allied and Associated Powers at Versailles were the United States of America, Great Britain, France, Italy, and Japan. By 1920 the United States had withdrawn, Japan was inactive in European affairs, and Italy in general was neutral. The term, "Western Allies" at this time, practically speaking, meant Great Britain and France—frequently not in accord in their policies.

[2] Nicholson, Harold, "Curzon, The Last Phase," p. 204; Harcourt, Brace and Co., New York, 1939.

circumstances it seemed to Lloyd George that a solution of the difficult Russian-Polish problem might best be reached by a temporary armistice followed, as soon as possible, by a Conference in London for negotiating "final peace between Russia and its neighbors."[3] To induce Russia to agree to this plan the British Prime Minister did not hestitate to put pressure on the Poles in order to wring from them the greatest possible concessions.

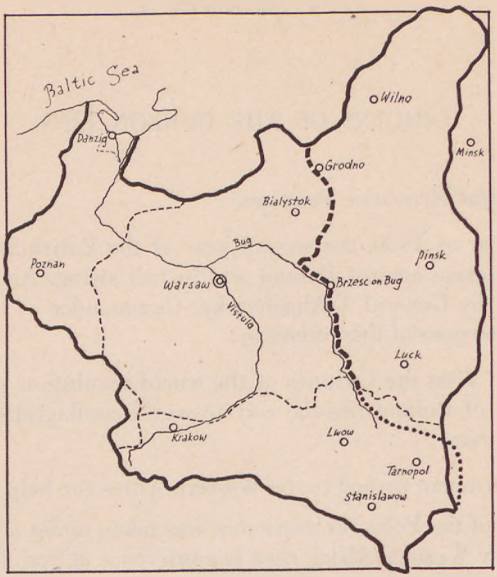

Fig. 1. The "Curzon Line" of the 1920 British-proposed armistice.
..... Polish forces to stand.
- - - - - - Polish forces to withraw.

On July 10 at Spa, at the close of a long interview with Lloyd George, the Polish Premier, Wladyslaw Grabski, signed an agreement with the Allies on the following terms:

> "That an armistice shall be signed without delay and the Polish Army withdrawn to the line provisionally laid down by the Peace Conference on December 8, 1919 . . . (that) in Eastern Galicia both armies shall stand on the line which they occupy on the date of the armistice (Fig. 1) . . . Should (Soviet Russia) refuse an armistice, the Allies shall give Poland all aid . . . possible in view of their own exhaustion and heavy obligations elsewhere."[4]

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[3] From the text of Curzon's Note, p. 15. Sworakowski, W., *Journal of Central European Affairs*, vol. 4, no. 1, April 1944.

[4] idem.

The following day, July 11, a note containing the proposed armistice conditions and suggestion for a conference was dispatched in all haste to the Bolshevik government.[5] It was signed by Lord Curzon, head of the British Foreign Office, but, as has been attested by one of his closest collaborators. "Curzon himself had little to do with it."[6] He merely signed it.

The Bolsheviks, however, wanted nothing to do with either British sponsored armistice or British mediation. As Lloyd George himself remarked at the time, the Russians, though not in the least averse to intervening in the affairs of other peoples, were "opposed to any intervention in their own affairs."[7] As a matter of fact they were concerned at the moment with far weightier matters than frontier settlements. We learn from Lenin himself what was occupying the minds of the Soviet leaders in the summer months of 1920. It was their hope, he writes that:

> "By destroying the Polish Army . . . (they might) destroy the Versailles Peace. . . . Had Poland become sovietized, the system built on victory over Germany would have been destroyed likewise."[8]

They took their time in replying to the British proposal, in the meantime continuing to press the offensive against the Poles.

On July 18 came their answer—a categorical rejection of Lloyd George's plan, joined with a scathing rebuke of the suggested line as having been "elaborated . . . in some parts under the pressure of counter-revolutionary Russian elements,"[9] and a profession of willingness to "give a territorial frontier more favorable for the Polish people than that indicated by the Supreme Council at Paris in December, 1919."[10]

This diplomatic rebuff to the British was followed up three days later by a propaganda attack. On July 21 a proclamation signed by Lenin and other prominent Soviet leaders was broadcasted to the world, in which the Bolsheviks publicly offered to Poland "frontiers . . . to the east of the frontier marked out by the imperialists of London and Paris," and expressed their "firm assurance that this message would reach the people of Poland."[11]

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[5] Since Soviet Russia had not been represented at the Peace Conference and hence *presumably* had no knowledge of the line referred to in the note, a detailed description of its course was added. For reasons never satisfactorily explained, a singular error which will be discussed later, crept into this description, the results of which have gravely affected the Polish cause.

[6] Nicholson, Harold, op. cit., p. 204.

[7] Speech of Lloyd George to the Commons on July 22, 1920.

[8] Lenin, Sochineniia, vol. XVII, p. 334.

[9] As far as we know, Chicherin's note of July 18, 1920, was not fully published. We therefore quote from the London *Times* of Jan. 12, 1944, p. 5, col. 6.

[10] From Smogorzewski, K., "About the Curzon Line," a *Free Europe* pamphlet printed in London in 1944, p. 18.

[11] London *Times*, July 22, 1920, p. 11, col. 1.

What is this? Through what necromancy of Soviet reasoning has a line denounced by Lenin in 1920 as "imperialistic," been metamorphosed by Stalin in 1945 into a line representing the democratic principles of the Atlantic Charter? But *volte faces* like this astound and bewilder only such as consistently forget or wilfully ignore the fact that Soviet Russia's policy, as someone has aptly said, consists of one hundred per cent tactic and zero per cent principle.

In 1920 the world did not hesitate to call a spade a spade. The London *Times* at once correctly appraised the Soviet's seemingly generous offer to Poland at its real worth: "a bribe to Poland, designed to detach Poland from the Allies."[12] And that is just what it was. In 1920 Soviet Russia was planning—as she is today—to harness the Polish nation to the chariot of the triumphant revolution. A gifted and brilliant young parliamentarian—a member of the British Cabinet in those days—said of the Soviet offer:

> "Under a fair-seeming front of paper concessions about independence, frontiers and no indemnities, the Soviets claim nothing less than the means to carry out a Bolshevik revolution in a disarmed Poland."[13]

The possibly well-meant, but certainly ill-advised projects for an armistice, for mediation and for a conference having fallen through, the time had now come to give the Poles the assistance promised in case of such an eventuality. As related by Mr. Nicholson:

> "On July 20 Lord Curzon addressed to Moscow a communication in which he made it clear that the Allies would come to the aid of Poland if the Russian forces crossed the Curzon Line. Wittingly or unwittingly, the Bolsheviks crossed that line at Nowy Dwor on July 24. They advanced beyond it and then they paused while they communicated with the (Soviet) Trade Delegation in London. Was Lord Curzon bluffing? M. Kamienieff and M. Krassin replied in the affirmative. The Russian armies advanced into the heart of Poland and converged on Warsaw."[14]

The Russians had judged rightly. On August 10 Mr. Lloyd George declared to the House of Commons that Great Britain was not in a position to assist Poland. He advised the Polish Government to approach Moscow direct and sue for peace.

Thrown back on their own resources, the hard-pressed Poles saw no other course to follow. Negotiations with Moscow were begun, but the Russian terms proving unacceptable, the struggle was continued. The tide of battle suddenly turned, the Red Army was repelled from Warsaw and within a few weeks was driven far to the rear. Shortly after an armistice was concluded and peace

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[12] *London Times.* July 22, 1919.

[13] Churchill, Winston S., "The Aftermath," p. 270.

[14] Nicholson, Harold, op. cit. p. 203.

negotiations on equal terms between the participants were initiated. Over a five-month period in a series of free discussions a healthy compromise was gradually worked out which culminated in a treaty of "final, everlasting . . . honorable peace"[15] signed at Riga on March 18, 1921. This treaty, confirmed on several succeeding occasions as satisfactory to both signatories, lasted until September 17, 1939, when Soviet Russia, wantonly breaking both treaty and non-aggression pact, joined with Germany to crush the Polish State.

It is clear from the above historically attested facts that:

(1) In 1920, at Spa the Curzon Line was proposed to both Poles and Russians merely as a temporary armistice line.

(2) It was decided upon under the high pressure of a critical military situation in Eastern Europe and a no less critical political situation in England.

(3) While it seems very likely that in Lloyd George's own opinion the northern sector of this line was the suitable frontier between Poland and Russia,[16] there is nothing in the text of the Agreement he signed with the Poles at Spa to suggest that the felt the same way with respect to the Galician sector. The section ruling that military forces in Eastern Galicia were to "stand on the line they occupied" seems to us to lead definitely to the opposite supposition. The further proposal that "representatives from Eastern Galicia," (a strongly anti-Soviet region) be invited to the London Conference supports this conclusion.[17]

Be that as it may, whatever may have been the *arrière pensée* of Mr. Lloyd George, nothing came of it. His plan for an armistice fell through, and with it the term "Curzon Line," after a brief life-span of a month, passed forgotten, into the limbo of oblivion. Twenty-five years later Russia unearthed Lord Curzon's note from the archives of the Kremlin and at Teheran presented to the world the line therein referred to (now re-baptized by them "The Curzon Line") as the eastern frontier of Poland settled upon by the Supreme Council at the Paris Conference on December 8, 1919. This it never was.

II. *The Line of December 8, 1919*

It is true that Lord Curzon's note refers to a "line provisionally laid down . . . in a document drawn up by the Peace Conference. The document was

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[15] Preamble to the Riga Treaty

[16] Lloyd George stated to the House on July 21, 1920: "As far as I can understand . . . far from complaining of *the boundaries which we fixed for Poland*, they (the Soviets) say we have treated Poland very badly. They want to give more to Poland."

[17] cf. Note of Lord Curzon of July 11, 1920, Smorakowski, op. cit., p. 16 *Remark*: After World War I Great Britain strongly favored an autonomous quasi-independent East Galicia mandated to Poland under the League of Nations. There is nowhere any evidence that Great Britain ever thought of giving this territory to Russia. The Treaty of Sevres, signed August 10, 1920, at the moment of the greatest Soviet military success, held to an autonomous East Galicia. (cf. Arts. 1 and 2 (par. 4) and Art. 3 (par. 6).

signed by Clemenceau. But to assume (as ninety-nine people out of a hundred mistakenly do) that the Supreme Council in delineating this line intended to fix

Fig. 2. - - - - - Line of Paris Conference December 8, 1919.

the final frontiers between Russia and Poland is an error of the first magnitude, and the statement attributed to Stalin at Yalta that he himself could not be "less pro-Russian than was Clemenceau" has no basis whatever in fact. Clemenceau never had the slightest idea of even projecting the eastern frontier of Poland, when he signed his name to this document, prepared merely to meet the temporary exigencies of a very confused political situation in Eastern Europe.

Rather than to form one's opinion on this matter from what *certain interested statesmen* are saying at present *about* the document, we ask the reader to *look into the text* for himself. It reads as follows:

> "The Principal Allied and Associated Powers, recognizing that it is important as soon as possible to put a stop to the existing conditions of political uncertainty in which the Polish nation is placed, and without prejudging the provisions which must in the future define the eastern frontiers of Poland, hereby declare that they recognize the right of the Polish Government to proceed according to the conditions previously provided by the Treaty of June 28, 1919, to organize a regular administration of the territories of the former Russian Empire situated to the West of the line described below. . . ."

There follows a detailed topographic description of this line which, in brief, starting at the River Niemen at Grodno, extends to Brest-Litovsk, and thence along the River Bug to the point where it meets the former Austrian boundary. (Fig. 2) The provisions of the Declaration then continue:

> "The rights that Poland may be able to establish over the territories situated to the East of the said line are expressly reserved."

Three points in this text should be especially noted:

(1) The area referred to is strictly restricted to "*the territories of the former Russian Empire.*" No reference is made to Galicia, Polish territory which at the time of the partitions came under Austrian control. Never in all its history had Galicia formed a part of the Russian Empire.

(2) It is stated specifically that the question of Russo-Polish frontiers "*must be decided in the future.*" This provision effectively *rules out the claim that they were fixed then and there.*

(3) This future frontier must have been envisaged as lying somewhere between the line described and the pre-partition boundary of 1772. The words referring to reservation of "rights that Poland might be able to establish over the territories situated to the east" of the said line would otherwise be but a meaningless phrase.

But if the Paris line was not meant by the Supreme Council to fix the Russian-Polish frontier, what was its purpose? Why was this official declaration in respect to Poland ever issued? To answer this question we must bear in mind the situation in Eastern Europe at the end of 1919, especially the anomalous relation of both Poland and Russia in respect to the proceedings of the Paris Peace Conference.

The *principle* of an independent Poland had been slowly and somewhat reluctantly recognized during the war years by all the belligerents. First to make a move in this direction was Italy who, in 1915, by a vote taken in Parliament expressed her "most ardent wishes" for the reconstitution of Poland, "as a unity of a free and independent State."[18] This was followed on November 5, 1916, by the pledge of Germany and Austria that after the war Polish territories wrested from Russia were to become "an autonomous State."[19] The breath of life was blown into these dry bones of vague commitments by an address of Mr. Wilson to the United States Senate on January 22, 1917, in which the American President declared that "*there must be a united, independent, and autonomous Poland.*" At the close of the first Russian revolution the new moderate Russian Government under Prince Lvov, announced in its manifesto of March 29, 1917, that "the creation of an independent Polish State . . . was an assured guarantee of . . . durable peace,"[20] and on June 3, 1918, the Allied and Associated Governments formally declared that "the creation of a united and

[18] [19] [20] The Cambridge History of Poland, pp. 481-491; Cambridge, England, 1941.

independent Polish State, with free access to the sea constitutes one of the conditions of a solid and just peace."[21] The most radical step of all was that taken by Lenin who, in his decree of August 29, 1918, after the Bolshevik revolution, annulled "forever" all agreements and acts concluded by the former Russian Empire in connection with the partitions of Poland.[22]

The recognition of a principle is one thing; its implementation, however, is another. A glance at the map (see Fig. 3) will suffice to show that there could be no integrated Polish State until there reverted to her administration large sections of the former Polish Commonwealth usurped by Russia in the 18th century. But in the absence of a Russian Government recognized by the Allies,

Fig. 3—Poland's actual boundaries in December, 1919.
Territories formerly held by Germany.
Territories formerly held by Austria.
—•—•—•— Final Russo-Polish frontier as decided by Riga Treaty of March 18, 1921.

no definite settlement of sovereignty over this area could legally be made by them. Consequently, although Poland had actually established control over a great part of the area in question, she was functioning, juridically speaking, in a sort of "legalistic no-man's land."

[21] op. cit.

[22] "Sobranie uzakonenii," Sept. 1918, no. 64, pp. 775-777.

The process by which Poland had won this control was most important for her position in December 1919. We shall, therefore, outline it in brief.

The close of the war in the West found the German forces still in possession of a large part of Eeastern Europe. According to Article 12 of the Armistice with Germany, these forces were to remain "in the territories which before the war formed part of Russia," . . . and to return to Germany "as soon as the Allies shall think the moment suitable."[23]

But on November 10, 1918, General Pilsudski, just released from the Magdeburg prison in Germany, arrived in Warsaw. News of his presence was a signal for the Polish Underground to rise against the Germans garrisoning the city, and the following day, November 11—the very same day that the German delegation at Compiègne was signing the terms of the armistice dictated by Marshal Foch—the German armies were being cleared out of Warsaw. A few weeks saw them disarmed and expelled from the greater part of Polish territory. The swift capture by the Poles of the area stretching from Grodno and Poznan to Cracow and Lwow was the chief reason why the armies of the Central Powers evacuated Russian territories without waiting for Marshal Foch's instructions.[24]

In spite of difficulties with the Germans in the West, with the Bolsheviks in the East and the Ukranians in the South; in spite of misery and inevitable internal strife, the organization of the Polish State progressed rapidly. On January 26, 1919, the first post-war elections in Europe were held in Poland. On February 10 a Parliament met in Warsaw.

By December, 1919, the territory controlled by the Poles actually extended from the Baltic to the Carpathians, from Silesia to the River Berezina. (Fig. 3). Notwithstanding many undeniable imperfections, inevitable after a hundred and twenty-five years of foreign occupation and four years of devastating war, the boundaries of this territory were the boundaries of a culture and a way of life that belonged to Western Europe. The people who lived within these boundaries were ruled by constitutional law, by a representative system of government, and by the basic principles of a "Bill of Rights." At the opening of the first Polish Parliament Pilsudski stated his ideal for the newly-born Republic.

> "Amid great troubles in which millions of people decide problems impetuously and with force, I have tried to have the exigent and inevitable problems of our country decided in a democratic way: according to laws made by representatives of the people."

This swift internal development of Poland soon made her an important

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[23] Rudin, Harry R., "Armistice, 1918," p. 423. Yale University Press, 1944.

[24] For a detailed analysis of the influence of the victory of the Polish Underground over the Germans at this time see Benoist-Méchin, "Histoire de l'armèe allemande après l'armistice." Michel, Paris, vol. I, p. 261 *et al.*

factor in international relations. She was necessary to Europe, the more so because (as Mr. Churchill, speaking not as a politician, but as a historian, has pointed out):

> "Eastward, also prostrate, also in dire confusion, lay the large mass of Russia—not a wounded Russia only, but a poisoned Russia; an infected Russia, a plague-bearing Russia; a Russia of armed hordes not only smiting with bayonet and with cannon, but accompanied and preceded by swarms of typhus-bearing vermin which slew the bodies of men, and political doctrines which destroyed . . . nations."[25]

Once more, as so many times before in her history, Poland stood as the bulwark of Western civilization against devastation impending from the alien East. In view of the rôle that she was actually playing in the European situation at the end of 1919, the anomalous character of her juridical status was absurd. Formally, she was not even in legal possession of her administrative center, Warsaw.

In a certain sense it was the Western Allies who were responsible for this situation. By the terms of the Versailles Treaty the Principal Allied and Associated Powers had assumed the rights and obligations of defining Poland's frontiers[26] and this they proceeded to do quite naturally and as a matter of course in those provinces which had been under the domination of Germany and Austria. These countries had been defeated, and the Allies, as victors, had the right to draw up new frontiers for them.

But the Western Powers were not and had not been at war with Russia. It was true that after the Bolshevik revolution Russia, breaking her alliance with the West, had concluded a separate peace with Germany, but even this fact did not give to the Peace Conference a right to dispose of the territories of the former Russian Empire. A Russo-Polish frontier could be decided on at Paris only in the presence of Polish and Russian representatives accredited by their respective governments.

Lenin, who ruled Russia *de facto*, had, as stated (see p. 70) renounced by an official decree all the acts on which the partitions were based. The Allies, had they recognized the legitimacy of his authority, were in a position to re-establish the 1772 frontiers of Poland *in toto*.[27] But believing that the Bolshevik regime would be of short duration, the Western Powers attached no value to this decree.

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[25] Churchill, Winston, S., "History of the Great War," vol. III, p. 1466.

[26] Versailles Treaty, Art. 87, par. 3.

[27] "The Polish delegation to the Peace Conference did not make any such demands . . . (they) wanted to see within Poland's frontiers only those lands on which Polish civilization continued to exert a strong influence, and proposed to leave to Russia about 120,000 square miles west of the 1772 line. Smogorzewski, K., "About the Curzon Line and Other Lines," *Free Europe Pamphlet*, no. 7, p. 7.

Moreover, two of the Principal Powers, Great Britain and France, were deeply involved in anti-Soviet intervention. Fearful of the spread of Bolshevism, anxious to see it crushed, but exhausted by the four-year struggle from which they had just emerged victorious, they were, as Mr. Nicholson puts it, "determined to renounce all further physical effort."[28] For successful intervention in Russia, therefore, they needed to make use of all available counter-revolutionary elements, Czarist sympathizers not excluded. Some of the "White" leaders whom they were supporting—no less imperialistically minded after the revolution than before—though desiring the support of the Polish armies in their struggle, persisted in regarding Poland as a part of the Russian Empire. Pilsudski, limiting Polish military operations to the liberation of non-Russian peoples formerly belonging to the Polish Commonwealth, steadily refused to be drawn into the internal conflicts in Russia. As a result, by 1919 a certain tension had developed between Poland and government circles in London and Paris.

Other international factors, too, rendered the situation still more complex. If *some* of the Allies, interested in intervening in Russia, needed the support of "White" Russians, *all* of the Allies needed the support of Poland to help check the rising tide of communistic ideology that threatened to overwhelm all Europe. For France it was also of the utmost importance to have a counterbalance in the East against Germany, and at the time it was only in Poland that she could find such a check.

Faced with a situation at once so fluid and so complex, the Supreme Council did what is usually done under such circumstances: it postponed decision. Final delimitation of Poland's post-war frontiers to the East was put off till "a more convenient season." In the light of the general European situation it is evident that the significant section of the December Declaration was that containing the words: "*without prejudging the provisions which must in the future define the Eastern frontiers of Poland.*"

Something, however, had to be done to mitigate the difficulties and dangers inherent in the situation. And something was done. A line — THE LINE — was drawn. But, as Mr. Churchill recently informed Parliament, "a line is not a frontier."[29]

This line was not, as it is commonly represented to be, the work of ethnographical experts; it was chosen by statesmen (chiefly British and French) with a weather eye out for political effects. It had to be a line which would dispel the uneasiness of the Poles lest collaboration of the West with imperialistic-minded Russians boded fresh disaster to their hard-won independence; it had, at the same time, to dispel the suspicions of the

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[28] Nicholson, Harold, op. cit., p. 68.

[29] Churchill, Winston, S., Speech to the Commons, Feb. 28, 1944.

Russian counter-revolutionaries that the Peace Conference meant, as they expressed it, "to dismember Russia" by the re-establishment of the Polish Commonwealth within her 1772 frontier boundaries. (Fig. 4).

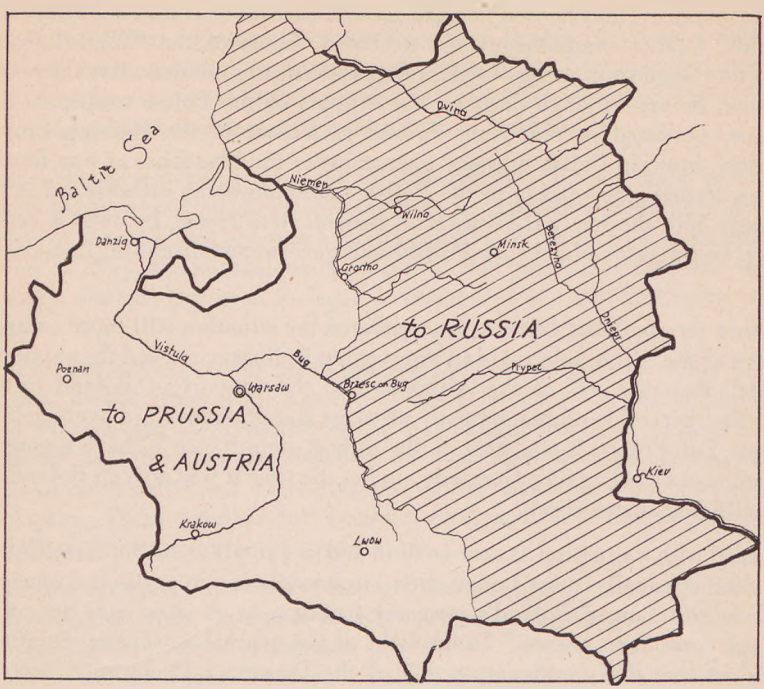

Fig. 4. Poland as divided after the Third Partition, 1795.
———— Poland's 1772 boundaries.

Without committing themselves too far before they knew which way the cat was going to jump, the line of December 8 was settled upon as a temporary expedient. By this decision there was eliminated from the disputed area a minimum of Polish territory wherein the Poles were authorized to establish a legal administration. Warsaw, ceasing to be, juridically speaking, a Russian town, had at last become the Capital City of the Polish Republic. But acting on the theory of never crossing a bridge till one comes to it, definitive settlement of conflicting Russo-Polish claims was tabled.

Such, in brief, seem to be the reasons why the December line (to which only a year later the name, "Curzon Line," became attached), ever came into the picture, namely, to meet temporarily an embarrassing international problem. But these reasons do not explain *why just this particular line* was chosen. The choice certainly had nothing to do with ethnographical considera-

tions, for it excluded from Polish administrative control extensive areas (for instance, in the northeast) where lived large and homogeneous groups of Poles. (Fig. 5.) It coincided almost exactly with the line of the third partition under Catherine and, we submit, not even the most ardent Russophile will argue that the old Empress ever concerned herself with considerations of

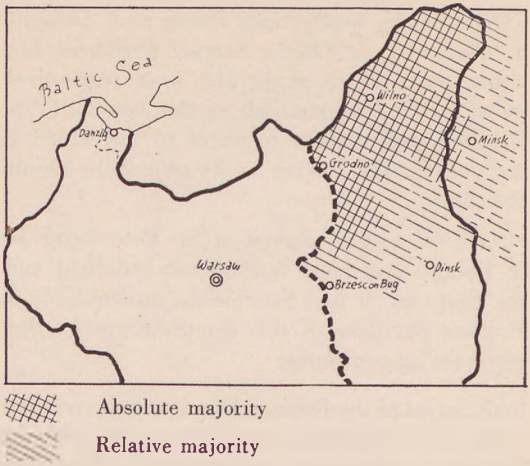

Fig. 5. Polish majorities east of the December, 1919 line.

nationality.[30] To suggest for a moment that the Peace Powers at Paris by this choice set the seal of their approval on the 1795 partition is out of the question. The condemnation of this act by the Western world, sustained for over a hundred years, only recently was again vigorously expressed by Senator Vandenberg. Speaking in Detroit April 2, 1944, on the occasion of the 40th jubilee banquet of the *Polish Daily*, Mr. Vandenberg said:

> "Poland's boundaries . . . certainly cannot honestly be drawn along the line of the criminal Czarist partition of Poland more than 150 years ago, or in the line of the no less criminal partition of Poland in 1939." (Figs. 4 and 8.)

In sharp contrast to these words of Senator Vandenberg is the recent statement of Mr. Churchill that:

> "The Curzon Line was drawn up in 1919 by an expert Commission on which one of our most distinguished foreign representatives of those

[30] "Catherine's policy was . . . concerned about . . . material power and the glory and profit of making territorial acquisitions . . . about the . . . magnitude of the acquisitions in area and population; but nothing at all about the gain for the cause of Russian national unity." Lord, R. H., op. cit., p. 500.

days, Sir Eyre Crowe, was a member . . . They just tried to find out what was the right and proper line to draw."[31]

If by this statement Mr. Churchill meant to say that this commission drew a "frontier" line based on ethnographical considerations, we can only regret that the Prime Minister is so badly informed. The actual "experts" who originally drew this line to which Mr. Churchill refers as "The Curzon Line," lived 150 years ago. Their names were *Nikita Panin* and *Alexander de Yakovlev* on the one part, *Alexander de Thiele*, *Samuel Frederick Stein* and *Andrew Vetter* on the other part. These gentlemen were respectively Russian and German members of a commission which on October 24, 1795, met at Grodno to draw up a detailed delimitation protocol to the Third Partition Treaty between Germany and Russia, having as its object the elimination from the map of the Polish State.

This Third Partition Treaty, signed at St. Petersburg January 3, 1795, stated that since Poland had been "completely subdued and conquered by the armies of the Empress, it had become an unavoidable necessity to . . . proceed to a complete partition of this Republic among the three neighbor Powers . . . Henceforth," it continues:

> "The boundaries of the Russian Empire shall stretch along the border between Volhynia and Galicia to the River Bug: from there they shall follow the course of the river until they reach Brest-Litovsk and to the limits of the palatinate bearing that name . . ."[32]

Compare this with the Declaration of December 8, 1919, which specifies that "without prejudging the future . . . they (the Allies) recognize the right of the Polish Government to . . . organize a regular administration to the West of the line thus described:

> "From the point where the old frontier between Russia and Austria-Hungary meets the river Bug to the point where it is cut by the administrative boundary of (the) Brest-Litovsk (district or palatinate) the course of the Bug down stream . . . "[33]

The attentive reader will note at once that the "experts" at Paris have repeated in substance what the "experts" at Grodno recommended over a century and a half ago.

Still more interesting is it to compare the detailed description of the 1795 Russian-German frontier cut through Polish territory on the sector between Brest-Litovsk and Grodno with the particularized description of the same sector as laid down in the 1919 Peace Conference Declaration. They are virtually identical. In both the line of demarcation meanders through the same localities, district by district, village by village. In some instances the

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[31] Churchill, Winston S., Speech to Parliament, Feb. 28, 1945.

[32] Treaty of the Third Partition, Martens and Cussy, vol. II, p. 98.

same little brooks and forest roads are mentioned. We found only one deviation sufficiently important to be noted. At the railroad station of Czeremcha there is a swing of about five miles to the east, made apparently to avoid crossing and re-crossing a railroad which in 1795, when the original Russo-Prussian frontier was drawn, did not exist.

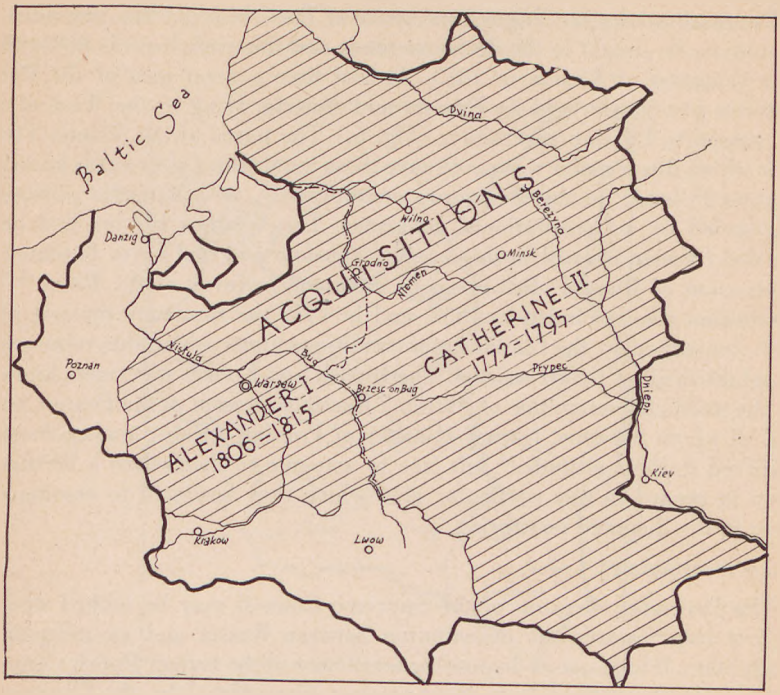

Fig. 6

Maximum of 1772 Poland ever to come under Russian control.

— • — • — • — Line dividing the Polish territories annexed by Alexander I at from those earlier acquired by Catherine.

Is this meant as a criticism of the able and distinguished Commission at Paris of whom Sir Eyre Crowe was a member? By no means. We mean only to say that in the preparation of the December Document this Commission apparently worked under the direction of the British and French Cabinets. What Sir Eyre Crowe and the others associated with him actually did in this delineation was to copy the line of division between Russia and Prussia agreed by the plenipotentiaries of Catherine and Frederick at Grodno. Cutting out the tedious minutiae of the document, they selected certain cites and landmarks mentioned in the Grodno Protocol and used them to trace the legal line separating the acquisitions of Alexander I in the early 19th century[33] from

[33] By Treaty of Tilsit, 1807, and Treaty of Vienna, 1815.

those of his grandmother, Catherine the Great, in the 18th. (cf. Figs. 5 and 6.)

We have discussed the 1795 delimitation protocol at some length because of all the ballyhoo that has been raised to justify the absolutely false assertion that the Paris line of December 8, 1919 was drawn up along strictly ethnographical principles. There is no truth whatever in this statement.

The reasons why the Peace Conference at Paris selected this line must, in my opinion, be sought in the decisions made and the commitments undertaken at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. At that time a great part of the Polish territories previously held by Prussia and Austria, lying to the West of this line, passed to Russian suzerainty. (Fig. 6.) The terms of the Vienna Treaty under which this transfer was made gave these territories (afterwards known as Congress Poland) to the Romanovs conditionally, as a dynastic possession safeguarded by a Constitutional guarantee. The Western Powers had never regarded Russian control in this area as absolute and had never hesitated on the occasion of Russo-Polish crises to intervene in favor of the Poles.[34] The Constitution was rescinded in 1832, and in 1917 the Romanov dynasty abdicated. Consequently, the fundamental conditions under which this relationship was established no longer existed. The British and French statesmen, knowing that the unofficial committee of "White" Russians present at the Peace Conference, of whom Sazanov, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, was spokesman, concurred in their attitude,[35] felt free to arrogate to themselves a latitude of action in regard to this particular area which they hesitated to assume elsewhere in the disputed territories.

To recapitulate:

The December decision of the Supreme Council may be looked upon as the first step towards the delimitation between Russia and an independent Polish State. It took out of dispute the territories of the former Polish Commonwealth *given conditionally* to the Emperor Alexander I by the Congress of Vienna and *gave them unconditionally* to the new Polish Republic. Official recognition of final frontiers between the two countries was accorded on March 15, 1923, when Great Britain, France, Italy and Japan, "considering that so far as its frontiers with Russia is concerned, Poland (had) entered into direct relations with that State with a view to determining the line . . . " acknowledged as the frontiers of Poland with Russia, "the line drawn and delimited by the agreement between the two States."[36]

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[34] The Duchy of Warsaw . . . shall be attached to the (Russian) Empire by its Constitution; and be possessed by His Majesty, the Emperor of all the Russias, his heirs and successors in perpetuity." Treaty of Vienna, Article I.

[35] See discussion of Russian letter to Peace Conference of April 9, 1919, by Miller, David H., in "My Diary at the Peace Conference of Paris," vol. 18, pp. 273-276.

[36] Decision of the Conference of Ambassadors, March 15, 1923, on the subject of the frontiers of Poland. From the "Polish White Book," Doc. 149. p. 165. Published by Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., London and Melbourne. The United States of America signified its adherence to this decision by a note of April 5, 1923.

III. A *Clerical Error and a Historical Hoax* [37]

In the agreement signed at Spa between Lloyd George and M. Grabski it was specified that:

> "The Polish Army (shall be) withdrawn to the line provisionally laid down by the Peace Conference of December 8, 1919 . . . In Eastern Galicia both (Polish and Russian) armies shall stand on the line fixed at the date of the signature of the armistice."

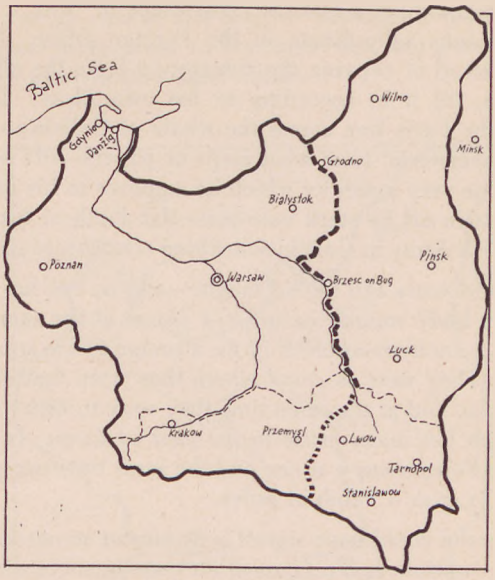

Fig. 7. Error in Curzon note of July 11, 1920.
- - - - Line as described by Peace Conference declaration of December, 1919.
..... Prolongation of this line added by clerical error.

This line was precisely described in the Declaration of December 8, as follows:

> "From the point where the old frontier between Russia and Austria-Hungary meets the River Bug to the point where it is cut by the administrative boundary between the district of Byelsk and Brest-Litovsk, the course of the Bug downstream[38] . . . thence northwards of the administrative boundary of Suvalki to its junction with the old frontiers between Russia and East Prussia . . ." (Fig. 2.)

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[37] All the data of this chapter is taken from the remarkable research of Swarakowski, W., op. cit., "An Error Regarding Eastern Galicia in Curzon's Note to the Soviet Government."

[38] Here follows a detailed description of the line between Brest-Litovsk and Grodno.

But in the note which went off to the Soviets the following day the line is thus described:

> "This line runs approximately: Grodno, Vapovka, Nemirow, Brest-Litovsk, Dorogusk, Ustilug, east of Grubeshov, Krilov, and thence west of Rawa Ruska, east of Przemysl, to the Carpathians . . . (Fig. 7) . . . In Eastern Galicia each army will stand on the line which they occupy at the date of the signature of the armistice." (cf. Fig. 1 and Fig. 7.)

How explain the discrepancy between the two documents which is at once apparent? Somewhere a clerical error crept in. Was it carelessness, or did some over-zealous subordinate in the Foreign Office, thinking that he "knew better," instead of copying the description from the official text of the Paris Declaration, fill it in according to his own ideas? This anonymous clerk prolonged the Paris line across the whole of Galicia to the Carpathian Mountains. It is immaterial from what maps or papers—old or new—he drew his inspiration. The very assiduity which he employs in his minutely detailed description reveals in all its stark nakedness the depth of his ignorance. For he asks of the Polish Army in Galicia something contrary to the laws of nature.

Over a thousand years ago Euclid taught—and no one has since disproved his theory—that a body cannot occupy two places at the same time. Yet that is exactly what the anonymous clerk in the Foreign Office asked of the Polish Army in Galicia. They were to *stand* where they were fighting—actually *far to the east of Lwow*, and at the same time they were to *retire* to a line west of Rawa Ruska which lies *many miles to the west of Lwow*. In other words he proposed that the Poles occupy at one and the same time two places separated from each other by over a hundred miles.

How Lord Curzon could have signed a document so carelessly prepared it is hard to say. The mistake had no immediate consequences, since the armistice never went into effect. But on July 13, 1920, the London *Times* published a map showing the proposed armistice line according to the erroneous geographical specifications as noted above, and "from the *Times* note and description found their way into various books of reference, encyclopedias, political and scientific words, etc. . . ."[39] From these shelters the error subsequently crept out to lend credibility to one of the great international hoaxes of history.

In the fall of 1939 the fourth partition of Poland between Germany and Russia took place along the Ribbentrop-Molotov Line. (Fig. 8) At the time this partition was as strongly condemned by world opinion as were those of the 18th century at the hands of the same Powers. But five years later at Yalta the fifth partition, with minor deviations, ratified and confirmed the fourth.

The Yalta Line, whose family tree we have briefly traced, is the product of a series of sinister international political deals stretching back through

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[39] Sworakowski, op. cit. p. 25.

the last 120 years. Over its genesis lies the long shadow of criminal relations between Catherine and Frederick. At the Crimean Conference came its latest incarnation — synthetic offspring of a clerical error and a diplomatic falsification. The error (apparently the fault of a minor official in the 1920 British Foreign Office) responsible for the southern sector of the line, affords a plausible excuse for handing over to Stalin "on demand" Eastern Galicia with the great city of Lwow, seat of ancient Polish culture, together with the Polish oil fields. As to the northern sector, the falsification whereby there was transmuted into fixed frontiers a temporary military armistice line — a falsification more arrant because of the *Peace Conference's official recognition of Poland's "rights to the east of this line,"*— provides a specious argument for allowing to Russia large areas to the north that are purely Polish, thereby *depriving Poland of these very same rights.*

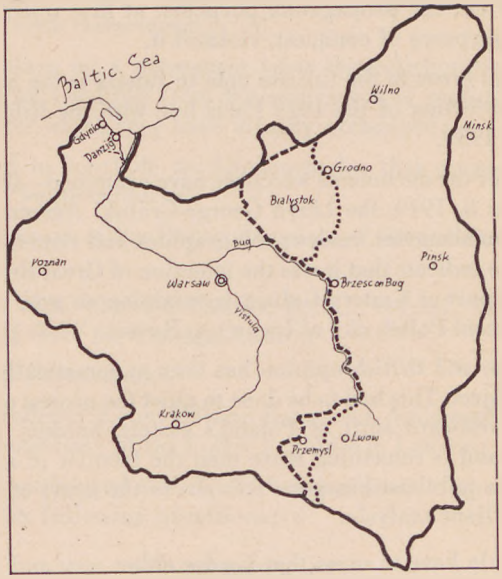

Fig. 8. Fourth and fifth partitions of Poland.
- - - - Ribbentrop-Molotov Line.
···· Yalta Line.

Since Yalta this illegitimate offspring of error and falsification has masqueraded under the title of "The Curzon Line." It has no right to call itself thus. But the best brains of the most eminent statesmen have set to work to convince the world that this 20th century partition of Poland is "just and right." The noble name, "Curzon" is being used to serve this ignoble end.

So persistently has the slogan, "Curzon Line" been dinned into the ears of British and Americans that finally they have come to believe that: at the close

of the Great War a frontier line between Poland and Russia was fixed at Paris, that the Poles at first rejected and later violated this line, and that the Yalta Agreement only gives back to Russia what is rightfully hers.

All this is utterly and completely at variance with the truth. The actual facts which we hope we have established are that:

(1) The line proposed at Paris in 1919 was not intended to fix Poland's eastern frontier, but for temporary administrative purposes.

(2) It ran solely across the territories of the old Russian Empire.

(3) It stopped at the Galician boundary.

(4) It was not based on ethnographical considerations.

(5) It was first called the Curzon line when a year later, in 1920, it was suggested by Lord Curzon as an armistice line.

(6) The Soviets, for propaganda purposes, at first rejected this line and afterwards, for purposes of conquest, violated it.

(7) A clerical error in the Curzon note to Russia is the only basis for the unjustified identification of the 1919 Paris line with the Ribbentrop-Molotov partition line of 1939.

(8) In none of the documents which we have examined—the Paris Declaration of December 8, 1919, the Lloyd George-Grabski Agreement at Spa, and host of maps, commentaries, reviews, biographies and reminiscences, have we found anything to indicate that it was the intention of Great Britain in 1919 and 1920 to give any part of Eastern Galicia (containing an area of 19,500 square miles and the ancient Polish city of Lwow) to Russia.

(9) American and British opinion has been systematically and purposely misled on this subject. This had to be done to quiet the protest of the democratic world over the westward shift of Poland's eastern borders. For the eastern boundary of Poland is something more than the frontier of a country. A distinguished British publicist has gone straight to the heart of the matter with the following brilliant analysis:

> "You only have to cross that border either way and you will realize that you are passing from one civilization to another, from the older European to the new Russian, or the reverse. I am not saying that one civilization is better than the other. I only say that they differ from one another—differ fundamentally. The Eastern border of Poland is not, therefore, one border like another—it is the Eastern border of Europe.[40]

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[40] Voigt, M. F., "Poland's Position in Central Europe," a lecture delivered at the University of Liverpool on Sept. 25-26, 1943. Printed by G. Tingling and Co., Ltd., London. pp. 7-8.

Appendix II

Agreement of Mutual Assistance Between the United Kingdom and Poland
London, August 25, 1939

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Polish Government:

Desiring to place on a permanent basis the collaboration between their respective countries resulting from the assurances of mutual assistance of a defensive character which they have already exchanged:

Have resolved to conclude an Agreement for that purpose and have appointed as their Plenipotentiaries:

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

The Rt. Hon. Viscount Halifax, K.C.G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs;

The Polish Government:

His Excellency, Count Edward Raczynski, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Polish Republic in London;

Who, having exchanged their Full Powers, found in good and due form, have agreed on the following provisions:—

ARTICLE 1

Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of aggression by the latter against that Contracting Party, the other Contracting Party will at once give the Contracting Party engaged in hostilities all the support and assistance in its power.

ARTICLE 2

(1) The provisions of Article 1 will also apply in the event of any action by a European Power which clearly threatened, directly or indirectly, the independence of one of the Contracting Parties, and was of such a nature that the Party in question considered it vital to resist it with its armed forces.

(2) Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of action by that Power which threatened the independence or neutrality of another European State in such a way as to constitute a clear menace to the security of that Contracting Party, the provisions of Article 1 will apply, without prejudice, however, to the rights of the other European State concerned.

ARTICLE 3

Should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence of one of the Contracting Parties by processes of economic penetration or in any other way, the Contracting Parties will support each other in resistance to such attempts. Should the European Power concerned thereupon embark on hostilities against one of the Contracting Parties, the provisions of Article 1 will apply.

ARTICLE 4

The methods of applying the undertakings of mutual assistance provided for by the present Agreement are established between the competent naval, military and air authorities of the Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE 5

Without prejudice to the foregoing undertakings of the Contracting Parties to give each other mutual support and assistance immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, they will exchange complete and speedy information concerning any development which might threaten their independence and, in particular, concerning any development which threatened to call the said undertakings into operation.

ARTICLE 6

(1) The Contracting Parties will communicate to each other the terms of any undertakings of assistance against aggression which they have already given or may in future give to other States.

(2) Should either of the Contracting Parties intend to give such an undertaking after the coming into force of the present Agreement, the other Contracting Party shall, in order to ensure the proper functioning of the Agreement, be informed thereof.

(3) Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned.

ARTICLE 7

Should the Contracting Parties be engaged in hostilities in consequence of

the application of the present Agreement, they will not conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement.

ARTICLE 8

(1) The present Agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years.

(2) Unless denounced six months before the expiry of this period it shall continue in force, each Contracting Party having thereafter the right to denounce it at any time by giving six months' notice to that effect.

(3) The present Agreement shall come into force on signature.

In faith whereof the above-named Plenipotentiaries have signed the present Agreement and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in English in duplicate, at London, the 25th August, 1939. A Polish text shall subsequently be agreed upon between the Contracting Parties and both texts will then be authentic.

(L. S.) HALIFAX

(L. S.) EDWARD RACZYNSKI

Appendix III

ATLANTIC CHARTER

"... (This) is a solemn and grave undertaking. It must be made good: it will be made good."—*The Meeting with President Roosevelt*, A Broadcast Address, August 24, 1941.— Churchill, Winston S.[75]

"The President of the United States and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, have met at sea.

"They have been accompanied by officials of their two Governments, including high-ranking officers of their military, naval, and air services.

"The whole problem of the supply of munitions of war, as provided by the Lend-Lease Act, for the armed forces of the United States, and for those countries actively engaged in resisting aggression has been further examined.

"Lord Beaverbrook, the Minister of Supply of the British Government, has joined in these conferences. He is going to proceed to Washington to discuss further details with appropriate officials of the United States Government. These conferences will also cover the supply problems of the Soviet Union.

"The President and the Prime Minister have had several conferences. They have considered the dangers to world civilization arising from the policies of military domination by conquest upon which the Hitlerite government of Germany and other governments associated therewith have embarked, and have made clear the steps which their countries are respectively taking for their safety in the face of these dangers.

"They have agreed upon the following joint declaration:

"Joint declaration of the President of the United States of America, and the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, representing His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, being met together, deem it right to make known certain common principles in the national policies of their respective countries on which they base their hopes for a better future for the world.

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[75] Churchill, Winston S., "The Unrelenting Struggle," p. 237. Published by Little, Brown and Co., Boston, Mass.

"(1) Their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;

"(2) They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

"(3) They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them;

"(4) They will endeavor, with due respect for their existing obligations, to further the enjoyment by all states, great or small, victor or vanquished, of access, on equal terms, to the trade and to the raw materials of the world which are needed for their economic prosperity;

"(5) They desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field with the object of securing, for all, improved labor standards, economic advancement, and social security;

"(6) After the final destruction of the Nazi tyranny, they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford assurance that all the men in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want;

"(7) Such a peace should enable all men to traverse the high seas and oceans without hindrance;

"(8) They believe that all of the nations of the world, for realistic as well as spiritual reasons, must come to the abandonment of the use of force. Since no future peace can be maintained if land, sea, or air armaments continue to be employed by nations which threaten, or may threaten, aggression outside of their frontiers, they believe, pending the establishment of a wider and permanent system of general security, that the disarmament of such nations is essential. They will likewise aid and encourage all other practicable measures which will lighten for peace-loving peoples the crushing burden of armaments.

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

August 14, 1941

Appendix IV

Sections of the Yalta Communiqué Relating to Poland

A new situation has been created in Poland as a result of her complete liberation by the Red Army. This calls for the establishment of a Polish Provisional Government which can be more broadly based than was possible before the recent liberation of western Poland. The Provisional Government which is now functioning in Poland should therefore be reorganized on a broader democratic basis, with the inclusion of democratic leaders from Poland itself and from Poles abroad. This new government should then be called the Polish Provisional Government of National Unity.

M. Molotov, Mr. Harriman and Sir A. Clark Kerr are authorized as a commission to consult in the first instance in Moscow with members of the present Provisional Government and with other Polish democratic leaders from within Poland and from abroad, with a view to the reorganization of the present Government along the above lines. This Polish Provisional Government of National Unity shall be pledged to the holding of free and unfettered elections as soon as possible on the basis of universal suffrage and secret ballot. In these elections all democratic and anti-Nazi parties shall have the right to take part and to put forward candidates.

When a Polish Provisional Government of National Unity has been properly formed in conformity with the above, the Government of the USSR, which now maintains diplomatic relations with the present Provisional Government of Poland, and the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the United States of America will establish diplomatic relations with the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity, and will exchange ambassadors by whose report the respective Governments will be kept informed about the situation in Poland.

The three heads of government consider that the eastern frontier of Poland should follow the Curzon Line with digressions from it in some regions of five to eight kilometers in favor of Poland. They recognize that Poland must receive substantial accessions of territory in the North and West. They feel that the opinion of the new Polish Provisional Government of National Unity should be sought in due course on the extent of these accessions, and that the final delimitation of the western frontier of Poland should thereafter await the peace conference.

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[75] Churchill, Winston S., "The Unrelenting Struggle," p. 237. Published by Little, Brown and Co., Boston, Mass.