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ANTONI PLUTYŃSKI

JAN REMBIELIŃSKI

POCHWAŁA WIERNOŚCI

DOCHODZĄ NAS WIADOMOŚCI O nowych próbach Niemców doprowadzenia do porozumienia z narodem polskim. Wiemy jakie z tamtej strony wysuwane są argumenty.

Natychmiast po wzięciu Warszawy zjawił się na jej placach afisz "Anglio! Oto twoje dzieło," za którego zdzieranie studentki Polki skazane zostały na karę śmierci. Afisz przedstawiał Warszawę w gruzach i krwi oraz przyglądającego się temu widokowi obojętnie Chamberlaina z parasolem w ręku. Odpowiedzią Polaków była nowa armia we Francji i udział lotników polskich w bitwie nad Wielką Brytanią.

Obecnie przekonuje się Polaków o tym, że w razie cofnięcia się linii bojów do granicy Polski, ich wieś i miasta po raz drugi będą gorzały od bomb i szrapneli, ich resztki mienia ulegną zagładzie, ich kobiety i dzieci ginąć będą od kul i bagnatów, od ognia i głodu. Jedyną odpowiedzią Polaków są coraz nowe dywizje formowane z byłych więźniów i zesłańców polskich w Sowietach, do obrony Kaukazu i Blizkiego Wschodu przed Niemcami.

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Jeżeli teraz ty, mój przyjacielu Szkocie, pytasz mnie dlaczego postępowanie Polaków jest tak inne od postępowania wielu narodów Kontynentu, dlaczego z dwu dróg polityki: z drogi walki i drogi układów ograniczamy się tylko do tej pierwszej, dlaczego tak nieroztropnie nie próbujemy oszczędzać narodowi ciosów, zwlekając i paktując do chwili pomyślniejszego ukształtowania się sił walczących, to mogę Cię zapewnić, że powodem takiego a nie innego wyboru nie jest wcale wyjątkowa tępota naszych umysłów. Nie tylko rozumiemy korzyści z prowadzenia podwójnej gry i podwójnej buchalterii w teorii, ale obserwujemy nawet tutaj i obecnie, jak gra taka wcale nie wywołuje zgorszenia i spotyka się z równym uznaniem jak nasza pojedyncza i prostolinijna.

Zamknęliśmy przed sobą drogę układów osobnych z wrogiem, bo... poprostu zakochaliśmy się wszyscy bez pamięci w cnotie wierności. "Wierności komu?" — zapytasz. Wierności sobie samemu. Wierności słowu, które dała Polska i które nigdy nie zostanie złamane. Wierności idei "Księcia niezłomnego," której winien pilnować każdy Polak i każda Polka. Przepuszczenie, że Polska mogłaby być nie wierna sobie i swojej decyzji, nie mieści się w naszych mózgach.

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Widzę już jak ze zdziwieniem pochylasz głowę i stwierdzasz: "Tak to jest piękny, bardzo piękny romantyzm, ale romantyzm to jest rzecz nie na czasie i nie praktyczna. — Wszakże polityka każdego narodu musi zmieniać się stosownie do czasu, do warunków do ugrupowania sił. Stałość przymierzy jest tym wszystkim ograniczona i nie możemy mówić o wierności swoim decyzjom z chwilą, gdy zmuszeni jesteśmy powziąć decyzje odmienne w odmiennych okolicznościach."

Masz rację, drogi przyjacielu, ale czy nie uznajesz, że naród, zwłaszcza wielki naród, który musi zmieniać swe decyzje

MSZA, JAK NA UROCZYSTOŚĆ ŚW. TOMASZA . . .

"MSZA, JAK NA UROCZYSTOŚĆ świętego Tomasza Kantuaryjskiego, z wyjątkiem wyrazu: Tomasz, który zastąpić wyrazem: Stanisław . . ."

Tymi słowami — pod datą 8 maja — przepisuje Mszał Rzymski nabożeństwo ku czci pierwszego Patrona Polski, Stanisława, biskupa i męczennika.¹ W istocie też podobieństwa między świętym polskim i angielskim poprostu rzucają się w oczy. I jeden i drugi działali początkowo w całkowitym porozumieniu ze swymi królami: Bolesław Śmiały, w wojnie Cesarstwa z Papiestwem, opowiedział się bez zastrzeżeń po stronie Kościoła, angielski Henryk II zawdzięczał swój tron duchowieństwu i sam z kolei przeprowadził wybór Tomasza Becket, swojego druha i powiernika od lat młodych, na stolicę arcybiskupią w Canterbury. Jeśli więc, mimo zgodności tej, obaj męczennicy musieli w końcu przeciwstawić się swoim monarchom, była to walka nie o charakterze politycznym, ale w obronie zasad moralnych, których strzegli.

A jak podobne u obu wypadkach było to historycznego dramatu, tak też podobny i sam jego przebieg i następstwa. I Tomasz Becket, i biskup Stanisław legli zamordowani w murach świątyni:



Bolesław Śmiały
według rysunku Stanisława
Wyspiańskiego

pierwszy w katedrze kanterburyjskiej, z rąk siepaczy Henryka, drugi na Skalce — jak powiada Kadłubek: "między kościołem i ołtarzem." Śmierć i jednego, i drugiego zarówno, wstrząsnęła sumie-

¹ Św. Stanisław poniósł śmierć męczeńską w r. 1079, więc przed św. Tomaszem Becketem (†1170), ale kanonizowany został później, w r. 1253.

niami ich narodów: relikwie obu stały się przedmiotem kultu i celem religijnych pielgrzymek. A wreszcie, chociaż od dat ich męczeństwa upłynęło tyle długich stuleci, postaci obu świętych nie przestają w dalszym ciągu przykuwać uwagi dziejopisów, być świeżym zawsze źródłem poetyckich natchnień, od legend średniowiecznych do dzieł Wyspiańskiego i Eliota.

Uprzymieniłem sobie te podobieństwa uderzające, czytając wydany przed miesiącem w Londynie przedruk rozprawki znakomitego historyka, ks. Kalinki pt. "Męczeństwo św. Stanisława."² Te analogie zaś uzmysłowiły mi z kolei, że kult św. Stanisława w Polsce, jego znaczenie i skutki stąd wynikłe, były przejawem pewnych tendencji powszechniejszych, chociaż właściwych tylko jednej cywilizacji, tej mianowicie, zachodnio — chrześcijańskiej, co nas zrodziła. Co więcej, zrozumienie charakteru tego kultu, duchowej atmosfery, w jakiej powstać mógł i jaką wytwarzał, pozwala wejrzeć równocześnie w genezę i istotę owej swoistej całkiem, nieznanym innym cywilizacjom, zbiorowości, jaką jest naród w pojęciu zachodnio — europejskim, naród chrześcijański.

Spróbujmy wniknąć bowiem, jakie uczucia i pojęcia rodził i musiał rodzić wśród owych rzesz w średniowieczu kult świętych, którzy przez królów byli wydani na śmierć, a przez Kościół wyniesieni na ołtarze. Czyż społeczeństwa owe nie musiały mieć wrażenia że swoją cziłą powszechną, oddawaną męczennikom, sprawują równocześnie sąd nad ich zbrodnicami, że publicznie, jednomyślnie ich potępiają?

Nie było to — w politycznym sensie — nastroje rewolucyjne: rzecz rozgrywała się w dziedzinie moralnej i nie stawiano sobie za cel przeniesienia w inne ręce kierownictwa sprawami państwowymi. Ale przemiana, jaka wynikała, była głębsza, aniżeli wszelkie rewolucje. Bo i w innych cywilizacjach — w starożytności na przykład — dokonywały się nieraz przewroty, lecz nie zmieniały one zasadniczego stanu rzeczy, że państwo dyktowało, co jest złe, a co dobre, że ono było dalej nieograniczonym władcą sumień, chociaż ster władzy obejmowały inne jednostki czy grupy.

Tutaj natomiast jęły tworzyć się stopniowo nowe całkiem poglądy i zasady. Państwo zaczęło stawać się już tylko organem zbiorowości, podlegającym jej kontroli i ocenie, którego czyni może ona sądzić i potępiać, jeśli są sprzeczne z

² Walerian Kalinka: "Męczeństwo św. Stanisława i jego znaczenie dla Narodu," Londyn — Maj — 1942, nakładem czcicieli Męczennika.

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Wszyscy obserwatorzy naszego narodu zgodzą się na sąd, że uległ on szybko militarnej przemocy nieprzyjaciela w starciu orężnym. Mało jednak kto z obcych rozumie, że jednak w czasie tej klęski odnieśliśmy największe od stuleci zwycięstwo. Zwycięstwem tym była absolutna jedność. Jedność bez względu na ugrupowania społeczne czy przynależność partyjną. Ta jedność sprawiła, że mimo klęski możemy walczyć dalej.

Otóż każdy przyzna, że można utrzymać jedność w wierności, ale nie sposób pogodzić jej z niewiernością swoim

moralnością, przez nią wyznawaną. I co najistotniejsze, państwo uznawało tę przemianę, a trudno wskazać wymowniejszy tego symbol i dowód, jak fakt że każdy król polski przed koronacją szedł na Skalkę, by się pokajać przed ołtarzem św. Stanisława, poczem u jego trumny przyjmował Komunię na Wawelu, korząc się przed tym, którego zabił jego poprzednik.

A równocześnie z tą nową rolą zbiorowości przeobraża się i wewnętrzny jej charakter, — i tutaj znowu cześć, oddawana męczennikom, jest doniosłym bardzo czynnikiem kształtującym. Bo i po śmierci święty nie przestaje dalej zachowywać łączności ze swoim ludem. Jest jego Patronem, Orędwnikiem, do którego zwraca się on w dniach smutnych i radosnych, którego widzi u swojego boku w przełomowych chwilach dziejów, tak jak — według Długosza — rycerze grunwaldczy: "przez wszystkie czasy trwającej bitwy widzieli ponad wojskiem polskim osobę w stroju biskupim, która błogosławiła Polakom i walczących ciągle podnosiła w boju, niewątpliwie obiecując im zwycięstwo . . . Mniemano, że to był św. Stanisław i że za jego przyczyną Polacy tak świetny odnieśli tryumf."

Rola Patronów narodowych w tworzeniu się świadomości narodowych u ludów zachodnio — europejskich była w historii czynnikiem rozwojowym o doniosłości po prostu olbrzymiej. Zasięg kultu każdego z nich określał granice narodu w sposób o wiele trwalszy i pewniejszy, niż zmienne ciągle rubieże państw i państewek, w czasach dziedziczeń feudalnych i dynastycznych podziałów. W Polsce, w wieku XIII, gdy przez rozdział dzielnicowy wszelka łączność państwowa jej części została zerwana, kult św. Stanisława, kanonizowanego w tym czasie, stawał się więzią jednoczącą i zapowiedzią, że — według słów ówczesnego biografu — podobnie jak rozciętą ciało męczennika, również i Polska cała znowu się zrośnie w przyszłości, "bez żadnego śladu dawnej bliźny."

A z takich przeżyć powstawał właśnie naród, jako "istność moralna," jedność duchowa, trwalsza od form zewnętrznych, bo przez ich zniszczenie bynajmniej nie ulegała jeszcze zagładzie. Przewaga materialna bowiem może zburzyć państwo, jego władzę i fizyczne narzędzia przymusu, ale bezsilna staje wobec Patrona w niebie i wewnętrznego, w głębiach serc trwającego zespolenia.

My tak już zrosiliśmy się z takim właśnie, duchowym pojmowaniem zjawiska więzi narodowej, iż zdaje się ono nam czymś przyrodzonym i powszechnym, a przeczamy źródło kultury chrześcijańskiej, z której wypływa. W rzeczywistości

jednak naród, jako społeczność tego typu, jest historycznym wytworem chrześcijaństwa, i tylko przez nie, w jego atmosferze moralnej, mógł on się zrodzić i może się rozwijać. Gdy ducha chrześcijańskiego zbraknie, życie zbiorowe społeczeństw automatycznie stacza się do stadium pierwotniejszego, od tysiącleci znanego



Pieczęć majestatyczna
Leszka Czarnego
(Książę krakowski koty się
przed św. Stanisławem)

dziejom ludzkości, dziś — dla odmiany — nazwanego "totalizmem": zbiorowość bez norm religijnych, w imię których mogłaby sądzić państwo, traci w stosunku do niego swą niezależność, i ono tylko znów jest odtąd władzą absolutną, według swej woli ustalającym etyczne miary.

I dlatego dziś, gdy o byt narodów toczy się walka, dobrze jest uprzytomnić sobie jaśniej, jak powstał jako "istność moralna," gdzie są początki naszych narodowych uświadomień. Dzisiaj gdy Kraków, stolica świętego Stanisława, bezczeszczonej jest stopą najeźdźcy, gdy Canterbury, stolicę Tomasza Becket, burzą bomby niemieckich lotników, warto przypomnieć sobie że stawka w tych zmaganiach — to właśnie żywe wciąż dziedzictwo krwi Męczenników, ten za sobą pojęć, instynktów, umiłowań, co z jej posiewu pośrednio lub bezpośrednio się wywodzi.

Msza na uroczystość św. Tomasza Kantuaryjskiego — i św. Stanisława — i każdego świętego, który poniósł śmierć męczeńską — odprowadzana jest, w myśl przepisów liturgicznych, w kolorze czerwonym. Też samą czerwień nakazuje liturgia na dzień Zesłania Ducha Świętego. Czyż więc w głębokej symbolice, zawartej w tym zidentyfikowaniu, nie wolno dojrzeć uzmysłowienia też i tej myśli, że i ta ziemską społeczność, lecz duchową w więzią złączoną, jaką jest naród w cywilizacji chrześcijańskiej, rośnie przez krew, przelewana w imię Prawdy — i przez nią żyje i jest nieśmiertelna?

ST. WYSPIAŃSKI

SKAŁKA
(URYWEK)

Bywało, brzęczało wokoło gaj —
gaj widzę w oczach ściety.
Człowiek zasieczon w kwietny maj,
przez wieki wstanie święty!
Zabójca posiadł tron i kraj.
Ród w kłatwie padł przeklęty.
Naród — się męką w życie rwie
i idzie śladem świętej krwi,
przez mękę krwi poczęty.

THE COMMON CAUSE

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ANTONI PLUTYŃSKI

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IN PRAISE OF FIDELITY

IT IS REPORTED THAT GERMANY is again attempting to reach some kind of understanding with the Poles. We also know what sort of arguments are being advanced by the other side.

Immediately after the capture of Warsaw the famous poster, "ENGLAND, THY WORK," was affixed to the walls, and Polish schoolgirls were sentenced to death for tearing it down. This poster showed a ruined and bleeding Warsaw, with Chamberlain, umbrella in hand, callously looking on. The Poles replied to these arguments by forming a new Polish Army in France, and by taking part in the Battle of Britain.

Germany is now trying to convince the Poles that should the front line move back to the Polish borders, Polish villages and towns would again be ravaged by shells and bombs; that what is left of their property would evaporate into thin air; that their wives and children would be killed by bullets and bayonets, fire and hunger. The only reply of the Poles to these new insinuations has been the forming of new divisions from former prisoners of war and political deportees in Soviet Russia, for the defence of the Caucasus and the Near East against Germany.

★ ★ ★

Now, my dear Scottish friend, if you ask me why the behaviour of the Poles is so different from that of so many other nations on the Continent; why, of the two available policies of fighting or of negotiating, we choose only the first; why we so imprudently refuse to spare our nation from fresh disasters by procrastinating and making pacts up to the moment when conditions are more favourable; then I can assure you that we have not made this choice because we are exceptionally obtuse. Not only do we realize the theoretical advantages of a double game, and a false book-keeping, but even in this country we can see that the playing of such a game evokes no protest and is even rated as highly as our own straightforward policy.

We have barred the way against ourselves to separate negotiations with the enemy simply because . . . we all conceived a great passion for the virtue of fidelity. "Fidelity to whom?" you will ask. Fidelity to ourselves. Fidelity to the promise which Poland has given and which will never be broken. Fidelity to the ideals of "the Steadfast Prince" of Calderon, which every Polish man and woman should cherish. We cannot visualize a situation in which Poland would be unfaithful to herself and to her decision.

★ ★ ★

I see that you are shaking your head in surprise; and I hear you say: "Indeed, this is a very beautiful and romantic sentiment, but such feelings are not practical and not suited to our times. The policy of every nation must change according to the time, to conditions, and the proportion of forces. The validity of every alliance is limited, and we should not talk about fidelity to our pledges when it is necessary to take a different decision in entirely different circumstances."

You are right, my dear friend. But

MASS, AS FOR ST. THOMAS'S DAY . . .

"THE MASS IS TO BE SAID AS FOR the feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury, with this difference only, that the name Stanislas is to replace the name Thomas . . ."

In these words the Roman Missal orders a Mass—under the date of May 8th—in

Both Thomas à Becket and Bishop Stanislas lay murdered in their churches. The former was assassinated in the Cathedral of Canterbury by Henry's henchmen; the other in the Church of Skalka in Cracow, in the words of the chronicler Kadlubek, "between the nave and the altar." The

tion only, namely to that of Western Christendom, of which we are the heirs. Furthermore, if we understand the character of this worship, and the spiritual atmosphere in which such worship could come into being, we shall also be able to understand the origin and the essence of this peculiar community, unknown in other civilizations—the Christian nation in its Western European form.

Let us try to understand what sort of feelings and ideas the worship of saints, who were slain by kings and then raised to the altars by the Church, must have created amongst the communities of the Middle Ages. How could these communities fail to be under the impression that, while rendering homage to those martyrs, they were also trying their murderers; that they were condemning them publicly and unanimously?

Politically, these ideas were, of course, not identical with a revolutionary spirit. The whole problem was a moral one, and no one aimed at putting the helm of the state into other hands. Yet the change eventually was deeper than any revolution. In other civilizations, for instance in antiquity, there were many revolutions, but they never altered the fundamental position; the state continued to dictate what was good and what was bad — it always remained the absolute master of the consciences of its subjects, though the helm of the state passed from the hands of one group into those of another.

Now, new principles and view-points slowly began to take shape. The state slowly became an organ of the community, subject to its control and opinion, capable of judging and condemning its deeds, if contrary to the moral principles of this community. A more important thing still was that the state recognized this change. No more eloquent proof of this change could be found than in the tradition according to which every Polish king had to go before his coronation to the Church of Skalka, to pray before the altar of St. Stanislas, and then to accept Holy Communion at his tomb in the Wawel Cathedral, thus doing homage to the man who was killed by his predecessor.

Accordingly, the internal character of this new community also changed. In this respect the worship of national martyrs exerted a strong influence. These saints did not cease to remain in close unity with their folk after their deaths. They remained their patrons and their interceders with heaven, to whom the people turned in days of joy or sorrow, whose assistance they requested in the crucial moments of their history. The Polish historian Dlugosz (fifteenth cen-

tury) writes that the Polish knights who fought at Grunewald "saw throughout the battle a person in the robes of a bishop hovering over the Polish forces, blessing the Poles, raising their spirits, and promising them victory. . . . It was thought that this was St. Stanislas, and that it was through his intercession that the Poles gained so great a triumph."

The role of the national patron saints in creating national consciousness in the Western European nations was of immense consequence in the course of history. The area over which the worship of every one of them extended, defined the boundaries of their nations in a much more durable and certain fashion than the constantly shifting frontier-lines of petty states and dukedoms in those days of feudal and dynastic divisions. In Poland, in the thirteenth century, the sense of state unity was completely lost through its divisions into petty principalities, but the worship of St. Stanislas, who was canonized at this time,¹ became the actual main link of national unity, and a promise—in the words of his contemporary biographer — that just like the quartered body of the martyr, Poland also would grow together again "without any trace of her old scars."

From experiences like these the nation arose, "as a moral entity," a spiritual unity, which is more lasting than any external forms, because even if these were destroyed it is not doomed. Superior material forces can crush a state, its authority and its physical expression, but they remain powerless in the face of its patron saint in heaven and the unity in the hearts of its peoples.

We have become so accustomed to this spiritual conception of the essence of national unity that it seems to us to be natural and universal, and that we are likely to forget that its source is to be found in Christian culture. Actually this conception of the nation is the historical product of Christianity, and it can grow and develop only in its moral atmosphere. When the Christian spirit is lacking, the communal life of the nations is automatically lowered to a primitive level, well known in history for thousands of years, and today for a change called "totalitarianism." A community deprived of religious dogmas, in the name of which it could judge its own states, loses its moral independence, the state again becomes an absolute master and establishes ethical standards according to its own will.

For this reason it is fitting today, when a struggle for the very existence of nations is in progress, to realize how we, the Christian nations, came into being as moral entities, what lay at the source of our national consciousness. Today, when Cracow, the See of St. Stanislas, is desecrated by the boots of the invader; when Canterbury, the See of St. Thomas à Becket, is devastated by German bombs, it is worth while remembering that the real stake in this struggle is the heritage of these martyrs, the ideas, the loves, the instincts, which directly or indirectly sprang from their blood.

The Holy Mass for the feast of St. Thomas of Canterbury, of St. Stanislas and of every saint who died a martyr's death, is said according to the directions of the Liturgy, in red chasubles. The same red colour is prescribed by the Liturgy for the Day of the Coming of the Holy Ghost. Should we not see the symbolism in this repetition, and in a way the expression of the idea that this earthly, but spiritually united, community, namely the Christian nation, is also growing through the blood shed in the name of the Truth, and through it lives and is immortal.

¹ Although St. Stanislas was assassinated in 1079, roughly a hundred years before St. Thomas à Becket († 1170), he was canonized only in 1253.



The Cracow Cathedral on the Wawel Hill, the See of St. Stanislas, and the place where his relics are buried.

On the back page: (1) King Boleslaw the Brave, who assassinated the Saint; and (2) the Seal of the Polish King Leszek the Black (XIII century), representing the King doing homage to Saint Stanislas.

honour of the first patron saint of Poland, Stanislas, bishop and martyr. Actually the analogy between this Polish Saint and the English one is striking. Both of them acted at first in close unity with their kings. Boleslaw the Brave sided unflinchingly with the Church during the war between the Papacy and the Empire. Henry II of England owed his crown to the clergy, and was instrumental in the elevation of Thomas à Becket, his friend and trusted adviser, to the See of Canterbury. If, therefore, the two martyrs had to oppose their monarchs in the last resort, it is obvious that the reason for this was not political, but the defence of moral principles of which they were the guardians.

In both cases the historical background of the drama was similar; and similar, too, were its actual course and consequences.

don't you think that a nation, and especially a great nation, which changes its decisions under the impact of circumstances thus shows that it is ruled by circumstances and does not rule them? Is not the abandonment of fidelity to oneself a dangerous admission of weakness? Naturally, this inherent danger varies according to the geographical situation. The Poles are in such a position geographically that they cannot afford weakness.

We have chosen the path of stubborn and uncompromising fidelity, because this path gives us more than any other could. The nations which embrace a policy of military or any other form of violence, may squander with apparent impunity the great treasure which consists of fidelity to one's own word and pledge. It may be said that the more a nation has of material strength and the less it has of moral strength, the less importance can

death of both of them shook the consciences of their people; the relics of both became the object of worship and of religious pilgrimages. Lastly, though so many long centuries have passed since the days of their martyrdom, the personalities of these two do not cease to attract the attention of historians; they remain ever a fresh source of poetical inspiration, from medieval legends down to the works of Wyspianski and Eliot.

I realized this striking analogy when reading a new edition of the book of the famous Polish historian Father Kalinka, entitled "The Martyrdom of St. Stanislas," published a month ago in London. This analogy, too, made it clear to me that the worship of St. Stanislas in Poland, its meaning and its consequences, were but an expression of some universal tendencies, though peculiar to one civiliza-

tion be placed on its word and pledge. The German nation provides us with the most extreme example of this. The nations which are not sufficiently large to afford a policy of violence must find another value on which to build their future. The virtue of fidelity is such a value.

★ ★ ★

Even those who are most friendly to our country will admit that it was quickly overrun by the superior armed forces of the enemy. But few foreigners understand that in this defeat we scored the greatest victory for centuries. Absolute unity was this victory; unity without any regard for class interests or partisan affiliations. Thanks to this unity we can continue our struggle despite our defeat.

Everyone will admit that unity can be maintained by fidelity, but it cannot be achieved when one is unfaithful to one's own principles, one's own word, one's

own alliances. Every Polish child understands this by now.

We conceived a great passion for the virtue of fidelity, because, despite the practical disadvantages and serious difficulties which we have to face in adhering to it, this virtue guarantees our unity; it gives us the confidence of the numerous nations in Central Europe whose position is as dreadful as our own, or even worse; it makes it possible for Poles to hold their heads high and to look straight into the eyes of every foreigner, and it gives us hope in the final triumph of truth.

On the other hand, when we observe the course of events in this great world, we are ever more convinced that there could not be any such material power which would not disintegrate from within by a lack of fidelity to the principles proclaimed by it, and which in consequence would not find itself at the mercy of foreign enemies.

TADEUSZ ZABŁOCKI

IN QUEST OF A VISION

IT MAY BE THAT WE POLES ARE not entitled to look for a vision of the better world of tomorrow. It may be that the vision of our lost fatherland should suffice us. Our imagination is directed upon material and almost prosaic things. In our mind's eye we see trees, or a road along which we strolled in days bygone; towns and houses, a friend's window glowing in welcome. So little is needed to bring our country back to mind, and so much would be necessary to make us forget it. Who can know this better than those who have lost their country?

However, although the whirlwind of war reft us from our homes, our thoughts have slowly become harnessed to the rhythm of daily life. But perhaps our ears can hear more distinctly the fore-echo of coming events; perhaps we can perceive more distantly the need, not of bread, of which there is sufficient, but of a new vision.

We entered the war like clever accountants. We calculated our material resources and those of the enemy. Everything seemed to be in our favour. On our side we had greater man-power, more moral energy and endurance, a higher industrial potential and more raw materials. We knew that on the other side there was a mass of human energy, cunningly organized, and more efficient weapons of war. When all these elements were taken into account the net result seemed clear. Everything pointed to the need for applying a delaying strategy, for planning decisive action for the following years only. During this first period the enemy was to use his best forces, to disperse them far away from his centres of production and supply, to stretch his lines of communication to the utmost, to exhaust himself psychologically, and finally to become ripe for the decisive blow, the coup de grace which would be dealt in the last round.

These calculations proved to be wrong. Indeed, the very principle on which they were based seemed to permit only a partial mobilization of the available forces; seemed to dole them out little by little, and carefully to preserve the routine of peace-time life. The calculations were wrong; so we must look for other solutions. The first question which presents itself to our minds is whether the present war is limited exclusively to material and calculable matters. Have we not forgotten, in our calculations, some items which cannot perhaps be weighed in any human scales, no matter how sensitive, but which are still capable of producing a strength so great as to decide the issue of the war?

What lies at the source of effort, decision, will to victory, and sacrifice? In those who have lost their country—the memories of the roads along which they can no longer stroll, of the trees, the towns, of a street unknown to the world but nearest to their own heart, are so strong that they can kindle a powerful and lasting flame. In those who have

suffered no such losses these emotions may be replaced by reason, sense of duty and ordinary love of country. Here I should like to add a word which may seem blasphemous. This will not suffice.

It cannot suffice in this war, which is being waged not for frontiers, not for raw materials and not for colonies; in a war in which ten centuries of human thought are at stake, which threatens to engulf in a few years our moral ideas, the wisdom of our legislation and the faith of many generations. We are fighting for all that; both those who think that they are fighting only to return to their towns or fields, and those who are urged to fight by all the imponderabilia which they have imbibed with their mothers' milk.

That we were wrong in the beginning, no one will deny today. The material superiority in which we believed so deeply appeared to be a mirage. After two and a half years of war, we succumbed to the temptation of committing one more mistake. We are ready, as if impelled by some kind of fatalism, to shut our eyes to unpleasant truths, to hide these truths

behind a screen of cheap phraseology. We are waging war not only against material things, but also in the domain of the spirit. Our adversary is not without weapons in this sphere, since not all that he is now destroying deserves to be rebuilt. We are succumbing to the temptation of cheap solutions, because we know that justice is on our side, and for this reason we are undertaking the struggle with old and out-worn weapons. This provides a striking analogy to the material side of this war.

The lesson which we must draw from the last few years is that it is absolutely necessary to find a way out of mental inertia. We have discarded the faulty calculations which brought us to the verge of defeat, and we must in turn discard the principles in which we ourselves ceased to believe. Until we do this we shall not form a realistic picture of the post-war world, and we shall not instill into the hearts of millions now suffering and fighting for a brighter though unknown dawn any genuine enthusiasm.

F. C. ANSTRUTHER

SWALLOWS AND EAGLES

We are publishing here these few lines, sent to us by a young English writer, as they express the feelings that Poland still evokes among freedom-loving people.

THE SWALLOWS HAVE ARRIVED FROM THE South. All day long they fill the air with their whirring wings, their graceful flight, their sweet, rather shrill cries. They seem tireless; and from dawn to dusk they wheel and they dip, they soar and they dive, making in their flight a lovely, intricate pattern. One could watch them for ever and, watching them, recall happy memories. Of summer evenings when the world was at peace; of hot, lazy afternoons when the only clangour was made by the blacksmith's anvil and the only traffic was a farm cart; of a holiday, started at dawn on a June day. Then there was leisure, and peace and — liberty.

The flight of the swallow is so free, so effortless, that the bird seems unbound by earthly ties. It might be the very symbol of liberty. And the swallows may come and go, they may leave us when summer is past, when the world is cold and grey. But we cannot leave with them and go towards the sun, for duty bids us stay.

The swallows have arrived in Poland, too. The Nazis cannot stop them if they would.

They are free to come and go; they are free to build their nests under the eaves if they will. And the people of Poland can but watch them, wishing that they, too, were free. It is considered lucky for a house if swallows should nest in it. But the Polish villages are not lucky now. They cannot greet the arrival of the little birds with the joy of the old days; the sight of them only evokes memories. Summer can bring but little joy to Poland, bound and fettered as she is. For though the swallows have returned, the eagles have not come back. The proud, white eagles of Poland have been banished by the carrion-crows of Nazidom. But they are not dead, those eagles. They live, though on foreign soil; they soar, though in foreign skies. They are daily strengthening their wings and sharpening their beaks, so that they may swoop down on the carrion-crows and tear out their black hearts. There are eagles in Africa, eagles in Britain, eagles in Russia, and caged eagles in Poland. Perhaps those eagles under the warm African sky have whispered to the swallows a message of hope to take to those of their brethren whose wings are chained. Perhaps the caged ones have whispered to the swallows: "We have not lost heart. We shall soar again."

May the swallows of this year bring a message of hope to Poland.

May the swallows of next year bring the eagles back with them.

SOME OBSERVATIONS FROM AMERICA

(An Interview with Mgr. Zygmunt Kaczynski)

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT that Father Zygmunt Kaczynski has just returned to London from a two months' visit to the United States, we asked him to give us some of his impressions which he gathered on the other other side of the ocean.

"The aim of my journey," said Father Kaczynski, "was to give direct information to the American bishops and to the Catholic laity about the position in Poland, and especially of the religious situation under German rule. I also spoke of the ever-growing Polish-British co-operation, of the part played by the British Catholics in giving this friendship a deeper value, partly with the help of the 'Sword of the Spirit' organization, headed by Cardinal Hinsley, the mention of whose name was always greeted with applause.

"I had many conversations with the American bishops, who all received me most cordially. I gathered from these conversations that the American bishops, though inadequately informed about the position in Poland, have a profound understanding for the Polish cause, and are in deep sympathy with our nation. I had several lengthy interviews with the following representatives of the American Catholic hierarchy: Archbishop Mooney, of Detroit, the chairman of the American Episcopal Committee; Archbishop Stritch, of Chicago; Archbishop Speelman, of New York; and Archbishop Cicognani, the Apostolic Delegate in Washington. The assistance which the American Bishops intend to give to Poland aimed at first at a total of 100,000 dollars. When I was leaving, the total collected amounted already to 750,000 dollars. Of this sum, 100,000 dollars was spent in buying food-stuffs, medical supplies and clothes, which were sent to the Poles in Russia.

"I also gave a report to the American Bishops and to the American Press about Polish-Russian affairs. I explained to them the necessity of maintaining the independence of the Baltic States; in particular of Lithuania, undaunted in her allegiance to the Catholic Church; and also of creating a federation of nations between the Baltic and Adriatic, as a means of assuring the security and the progress of these countries."

"In your American journey you probably met representatives of our emigrants across the seas. What impression did they make upon you?"

"When I arrived in America I received several invitations from the Polish clergy and Polish organizations, asking me to visit the main Polish centres in the U.S.A., and to address them. I did not speak about people or about parties, but only about the Polish cause, about the contribution of Poland in the present war, about the necessity of bringing help to her. This made it possible for me to get into touch with all circles, and to see my activities endorsed by the whole Polish Press. When I saw that it was divided into two rival syndicates, I suggested that they should make peace, and I added that I was ready to contribute to reaching an understand-

ing. The chairmen of both syndicates agreed to this, and at a meeting of the two syndicates a decision was reached to unite. A special committee is to prepare a Congress of Polish journalists in America, which will take place in the autumn of this year."

"That was certainly a fine achievement which should bear fruit. But how do you explain the small contributions of our American emigrants to the Polish cause, contributions which are so niggardly compared with the prosperity they enjoy at present?"

"We here in London should reproach ourselves for that, because we are largely responsible for this state of affairs. The Polish Press in America is constantly complaining of lack of information regarding many most essential problems. It is true, we have a propaganda department in New York, the Polish Information Centre, headed by Professor Ropp, but this institution does not, even in the opinion of its own directors, fulfil its task properly. I must, however, add that Professor Ropp is a man of good will, and high intellect. But what can he do when the P.I.C. receives news much too late, sends it out to the Press by post, and, what is most surprising, the most interesting news is reported by other agencies much earlier. The Polish Press in America also complains of lack of contact with our representatives, and of the lack of Press conferences — traditional in America, as you know.

"Furthermore, the whole so important field of radio has been completely neglected in our America propaganda. In order to realize the importance of the radio in America, let it suffice to say that in the last Presidential campaign, 83% of the total expenditure was spent on the radio, and 17% on the press. We should also remember that America will have a decisive voice not only in the conduct of the war, but also in the conclusion of the peace. Every country which has an interest in this war is developing a lively propaganda in America. There it sends its best spokesmen, its keenest brains. Every country tries to win politicians, journalists, scientists and public opinion in general for its cause.

"We still have there," Monseigneur Kaczynski burst out, "a compact mass of several million Poles. We owe the strong moral position that we have in America not only to the heroism of our home country and to the gallantry of our soldiers, but perhaps even more to the voting power of American Poles. The White House, the State Governors and the Mayors have to reckon with it.

"It would be an unpardonable offence to neglect the American Poles. But they should be properly led. They should not be offended by mistaken appointments by the Polish Foreign Office, especially of persons of whom they have unpleasant memories. Nor should one create entirely unnecessary offices, as, for instance, the Bureau for the Study of Prices and Business Cycles after the War.

"Unfortunately, we do not now have

any men of Paderewski's scale in America. It is necessary to send there men with authority who could lead the opinion of the American Poles and influence Americans themselves. If such men cannot be sent there permanently, they should be sent in rotation. No attention whatever should be paid to party allegiance. Really, it is high time to forget about party interests, about sympathies and antipathies arising out of different political views, up to the end of the war, or even up to the conclusion of peace. This would greatly facilitate an attempt to gain the sympathies of the American Poles, and their moral and material support for the Polish cause."

"Naturally, during so short a stay, you had to develop a truly American tempo of work?"

"Actually, during my two months' stay in the U.S.A. I attended some 200 meetings, and made as many speeches. I held special conferences with the clergy and with about 600 nuns teaching in the

schools. The enormous number of cuttings from the American Catholic Press is the best proof of the sympathy of American Catholics for Poland."

"Did you not, during your journey, meet representatives of other Central European nations, with whom we are linked by a communion of political interests and traditions?"

"I had talks with the Lithuanians, namely with the Vice-Chairman of their National Council, Father Prunskis, with Professor Paksztas, and with Professor Grigajtis, the representative of the Lithuanian socialists. The chief Lithuanian paper, 'Draugas,' printed a long interview with me, maintaining a very friendly tone."

While we were talking, many people knocked at the door of the small room in which Father Kaczynski was working. So I said "Good-bye," expressing the hope that he would find time once again to impart his impressions to the readers of "The Common Cause."

RELIGION

IN RUSSIA

The "Catholic Herald" reporter has had an interview with Major Cazalet, M.P., who, as political liaison officer, has recently visited Russia with the Polish Prime Minister, Gen. Sikorski.

Here is Major Cazalet's opinion on the religious freedom of Russia:

I asked Major Cazalet whether religion was free in Russia. He replied that under the constitution religious worship is free. In practice this is also true, but from a Christian point of view—and this is an important but — there exists in Russia today a mere handful of people, and those only the more elderly, who have read the Bible or heard about God or Christianity. The Christian religion as we know it plays no more important part in the lives of the majority of the Russians than does the Mohammedan or Buddhist religion here."

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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POLISH PRESS REVIEW

"POLSKA NA MORZACH" ("Poland on the Seas") writes:

"The end of the war in Europe may bring about a situation resembling that which prevailed towards the end of the last war. The navies of the two principal naval powers in the Baltic may mutually destroy each other and leave the Swedish fleet as the only effective force in the Baltic. It is to be doubted whether Sweden, after dodging the war for so long, would abandon its traditional passive policy and become a constructive element in the Baltic.

"It is therefore clear that an important part may have to be played by Poland, but only a Poland with an adequate navy.

"This is not a matter of individual ambition or service patriotism. It is a problem vital to the existence of Poland and in consequence to the general situation and balance of power in post-war Europe.

"At the end of the war, it will be possible to take over the control of the southern Baltic with a relatively small force. We can produce such a force.

"That is the only means of guaranteeing a free outlet to the Baltic, of obtaining the ports which we need and of replacing the Versailles conception of an 'access to the sea' with the London conception of a 'footing on the Baltic.' A return of the Polish navy to the Baltic in its present strength would be another gamble, another half measure, likely to increase post-war chaos.

"We need a navy of 40,000 tons to secure there a strong position. It means two heavy cruisers of 7,000 tons each, twelve destroyers,

six submarines and a sufficient number of torpedo boats and auxiliary craft."

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Mr. M. Harusewicz writes in "MYŚL POLSKA":

"It is to be believed that no serious-minded person will maintain at present, at the time of a total war effort, that it is possible to obtain it on a wider scale and for a longer period of time without the understanding, the good-will and active support of an enormous majority of the population. Such a possibility is denied not only by the essence and machinery of today's war organization, but also by the right intuition of the leaders of all fighting nations. They are all putting an enormous effort in whatever leads to the release of a maximum of initiative and self-sacrifice, not of fighting men only, but in the first place perhaps of workmen in the war industries, the employees in transport and the energy-supplying centres, in agriculture and consuming industries and in nearly all the branches of a national economic system. . . .

"So long as the German nation continues to nourish a hope in its victory and position of 'Herrenvolk,' it will not refuse to make a conscious and willing effort, no matter how great, to obtain these ends. On the other hand there is no doubt that this effort will weaken or perhaps even entirely break at the moment the hope in victory and its consequences will have abated for any reasons whatever."

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