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ODETTE KEUN

REFLECTIONS OF A EUROPEAN\*

Shortly before the Munich Pact was concocted in the autumn of 1938 by Germany, Italy, Britain and France, the great British cartoonist, Low, published a drawing. In the background was a close cluster of enormous wobbling rocks, piled on one protruding stone, which was itself just in the act of falling... Czechoslovakia. In the foreground, under this huge cliff that was crumbling, sprang an Englishman cheerfully asking of the world at large what he had to do with the Czechoslovak boulder obviously on the point of breaking his skull. I often think that it would not be a bad idea to reproduce this picture with a slight difference of wording...

the peoples were maintained in a political and ethnic confusion which — infinitely more than their temper — prevented them from achieving uniformity or even solidarity. (The one great effort to create a Common-wealth, made by Poland in the sixteenth century, was shattered eventually by Russia and Prussia.) Unable to pursue a common aim or to assemble against a common adversary, during the best part of two thousand years they formed an abnormally heterogeneous mixture of strains, structures, outlooks, customs, memories and antagonisms, and were uninterruptedly victimized by various Empires. The last of these, the Hapsburg dynasty, was broken only as recently as 1918 by the Allies of the First World War — but then there opened a calamitous period. True, the Allies bestowed independence on the bigger historical units; but none of them had economic self-sufficiency, disparate minorities were included in all and territorial divisions were arbitrarily made. To the bitter and interminable claims and counter-claims which ensued, were progressively added difficulties due to the world depression, pernicious commercial measures taken by France, Britain and America (who either protected their own industries by savage tariffs, or poured unlimited capital into Germany solely), the mounting appetites of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, and the insane concessions made by the democracies to the dictators. In these circumstances, the old weaknesses of the Middle Zone — dissensions, economic crises, and defencelessness — remained unchanged, and the perennial danger it represented for Europe was aggravated. An external attack made upon it by a resolute and vigorous enemy aiming at the hegemony of the Continent, could not but be fatal. Hitler understood this perfectly when he drew up his plans for the conquest of Europe — a conquest of which the first phase was the dismemberment of the Zone by the annexation of Austria and Czechoslovakia in 1938-1939; and the second phase, the annihilation of Poland and the Balkan campaigns in 1940-1941. No mainland European makes any error on this score: what brought Hitler within an arm's length of realizing the age-long German dream of

supremacy was not the crushing of the Western countries, not even the crushing of France — it was the seizure of the Middle Zone by political coercion and by arms. And what applies to Hitler applies, I repeat, to every aggressor who may, in the future, be moved by the same frantic ambition to control Europe. These brief considerations are sufficient to explain the overwhelming anxiety which Europeans feel regarding the Middle Zone — and especially, of course, the alarm of those unfortunate States which compose the belt. One basic, unalterable truth is now acknowledged: the Zone must be protected against a foreign attack, from whatever side it may proceed. (I stress the word "foreign," for no member of the central band can become a mortal danger to any other member: none is strong enough to threaten, much less devour, its neighbours. The peril can only come from the outside.) This being so, the crucial question arises: in what fashion is the Zone to be protected against a foreign attack? By the nature of the case, there are only two possible methods. The first is to place the Zone under the guardianship of a superlatively strong State, which must then act as its overlord; the second, to make it coherent and powerful enough to defend itself. The imposition of any tutelage on the Zone would be a direct and monstrous violation of the principles and promises announced urbi et orbi by the United Nations since the beginning of this war — principles and promises, moreover, which rallied to the Allied cause every liberal-minded country in the world. The more did the Germans conquer and persecute, the more did the Allies swear that their martyred partners would eventually be liberated and restored to their sovereign rights, their national independence, their freely-chosen governments and institutions, their traditional way of life. The most solemn pacts signed by the Great Powers (notably the Anglo-Russian and the Russo-Polish treaties of 1941) contain clauses stipulating not only that no territorial changes imposed by force since August, 1939, will be recognized, but also that no attempts will be made to

interfere in the internal affairs of any associate-State. Unless the United Nations are prepared to repudiate the essential nature and objectives of their coalition (and plunge everybody again into the game of super-crooks and double-double-crossings that finally resulted in this conflict), they must rigorously observe the pledges they have given. Any kind of overlordship on the part of a major Power is utterly incompatible with these pledges. It is glaringly evident, too, that the peoples who have agonized under the German yoke, resisted the Nazi New Order with incredible heroism, and developed their sense of patriotism to the point of the most exalted and total devotion, will demand that their torments, their sacrifices and their constancy should bear fruit, and they will exact, as their inalienable right, freedom to evolve according to their desires and their specific genius. Of all the multitudinous passions which this war has provoked, the most prevalent and invincible is nationalism; and after the slavery to which the majority of European countries have been reduced, any scheme savouring of regimentation, compulsory vassalage, or "spheres of influence," will lead to fresh convulsions. Occupied Europe has no intention to pull itself out of the Nazi frying-pan merely to fall into someone else's fire. There is yet another objection to tutelage. Once victory is won, three systems, and three systems exclusively, will be capable of extending protection to the Middle Zone: the United States, the British Empire, and Soviet Russia. It is a foregone conclusion that America will not undertake such a complicated commitment; and there is nothing to suggest that Britain means to envisage the security of the whole Zone as her particular duty, leading, if need be, to armed intervention on its behalf. (To the mind of very many Continentals, England is in process of losing a unique opportunity of consolidating Europe. She is to-day at the peak of her prestige. She enjoys an unprecedented, a breath-taking respect, goodwill, confidence and authority. If she enlarged her conceptions of the British Empire and invited the Continental countries to join it as associates, there is

hardly a small or middle-sized European nation which would not, most willingly and gladly, adjust itself to the indispensable conditions of membership. Then no fighting would be necessary to safeguard the integrity of the Zone, for not a Power on earth could challenge the might of a British Commonwealth embracing two-thirds of Europe.) Only Soviet Russia remains. I doubt whether in this period of swamping propaganda and deliberate camouflage of the real issues at stake, I should be allowed to analyze frankly all the reasons for which the possibility of Soviet protection is regarded with terror by the bulk of Europeans, despite their admiration for Russian endurance and military valour. So I shall confine myself to one incontrovertible historical statement. The experience of the Europeans is that Soviet "influence" in a country promptly results, first in the loss of all democratic liberties and personal rights in property and land; next, in the loss of national sovereignty and in the final absorption of that country in the U.S.S.R. (usually through the medium of "plebiscites" at the point of the bayonet). For Soviet Russia is not a Commonwealth of Nations on the British pattern. She still aims, not at the extension of political freedom and dominion status, but at the most absolute centralization, and at the effective suppression of every manifestation of thought and activity which is not in conformity with the tenets of the single totalitarian party in power. Since the paramount wish of the Europeans in general is for national independence, for democratic and genuinely parliamentary home-régimes, and for private enterprise and property, Russian protection, which turns infallibly into Bolshevist rule, is unacceptable to the Continent. The mere prospect of such a solution has already caused shiftings and groupings in Europe (and set Russia fulminating, most illogically, against tentative blocs — Nordic, Latin, Iberian, Turco-Iranian, and so on — which would not have been discussed if the Soviet's notions of guardianship were just ordinary). The other solution is to make the Zone capable of assuming its own defence. For this, partial ententes are quite useless — we

saw what happened to them between 1919 and 1939, whenever the power of their pivotal-member (the great snag of all partial ententes), declined, as in the case of France. It is necessary to organize a complete and compact unit, and to do so, the only possible means is federation. Naturally I cannot dream of developing this theme in the latter part of a short article. But from the viewpoint of the main European purpose — security — think what this represents for the Continent. An area of about 2,000,000 square kilometres; a population of about 125,000,000; a collective army under a single command; common strategic fortifications; a corporate naval defence — so long, wide, and cohesive a barrier that no one State could hope to capture the vital core of Europe again... It would write finis to the German Drang nach Osten, that violent intention to subvert world order, which has frightened Europe for over seventy years. Were this the only merit of a federated Middle Zone, it would still be colossal enough to gain for the whole plan of unifying north-east, central, and south-east Europe, the support of practically the entire globe. (For in comparison with German rule, the methods of modern British, Dutch, and French colonization appear to belong to the Golden Age.) But a federated Middle Zone would possess a great many more advantages than the one, essential though it is, of obliterating the Teutonic Peril. Each country would retain its national independence and choose its internal structure, while adhering to a super-Constitution and an organism directing questions of general policy — something in the nature of a Council of Parliaments. Representative economic and technical bodies would handle questions of industry, agricultural production, State commerce, a customs union, a central bank, communications, power grids and gasworks, public utilities services, drainage of fields and swamps, scientific research stations, etc., etc., so that activities should be complementary, and resources, properly financed and exploited, distributed for the general good. (Nothing could serve as a better model than that magnificent experiment, the American T.V.A.). Planned and co-ordinated development of the abundant foodstuffs and raw materials of the region would not only ensure universally-raised standards of existence, but provide a very important surplus for exportation; the Zone would have at its disposal an almost inexhaustible reservoir of intelligent and skilled labour which common tasks would absorb; and it would constitute a market for the goods of all the nations, and a vast field of investment for their capital. Though it would remain primarily an agricultural area, it contains already the bases of as much industrialization as it needs so as not to be helpless: before the war, the Poles and the Czechs had done much on these lines, and since the war the Germans have enormously increased its industrial potentialities by transferring their factories to Bohemia, Silesia, Austria, and even further, in order to protect them against Allied air-raids.

J. A. TESLAR

ROZMOWY Z JANEM

Janowi Jankowskiemu

ROZMOWA PIERWSZA

Rzecz że w parku angielskim w słońcu się przechadam, powie Ci to niewiele, bo uroków władza, jaka tutaj czaruje umęczoną duszę, jest tak wielka, przemożna, że ani się kusze, by pochwytać Delille'ów czy Trenbeckich pióro i by opis był zgodny z tą ciwną naturą, by malować tych tonów zielonych organy, wśród nich białych i różowych krów, lub czarnych, plamy, owe dęby wiekami ku ziemi schyłone, owe jodły niebieskie czy buki czerwone, albo znów kastanicze, rzekłbyś — korsykańskie, cedry pełne godności, królewskie, libańskie, dźwięczące, jak mitry, wzdychające czuły, nad honary związane kępami przeguby.

Patrz, jak nagle te łęki zbiegają w dolinę, ściana grabów, co wiecznie patrzy w niebo sine, tak zamknięte najszlachetniej, że ci się wydaje, iż gdyś wstąpił niebacznie w te zabłędne kraje, wyjść ci stąd niepodobna na świat miejskich bruków. Słyszysz ciszę tę żywą tyła drzew pomruków, westchnień, szepiów wplątanych w płasie antyfony? Ach! mój Janie! już myślę, że w raj — zbawiony! Cóż dopiero za rozkosz, gdy w puszystej trawie igrających zapachów czieszysz się zabawie, albo kiedy o zmiroku pihacz ci opowie, co mu leśni prawięczni mówili bogowie.

Wejź na chwilę w różarnie, taflami z kamienia tak pocią w kwadraty, że się jeno zmienia, każdy kwadrat gęstością różanego krzaku i ogniem płonącego słońca róż szkarlatu. Tu się Wenus białością swoich ramion pięści, wyglądając sekretne od Kupida wieści, zasłoniona wstydliwie szpalerem lawrowym. Tam za kwiatów lekliwych pasem kolorowym skamieniały lew pada i skonać nie może, zapatrzone w jałisie traw soczystych łoża. Tu zaś Hory pokorne, jedną stanowiącę holuśkę, po której szczytce chodzi słońce, niolam tarczę: gdy tarczy tej o sekret spytasz, łączo z lic jej godzinę słoneczną wyzyszczasz. Nagle — w strachu usłochysz, bo po obu stronach smoki zioną na ciebie, stadszy na ogonach; z inoćwalskiej krainy morza przebieżają i w Anglii są śladem bezimiennej chwały. O, mój Janie kochany!... Wspomnienie o chwale brzmi w mych ustach bezwładnie, żalostnie, zuchwałe, gdy wraz w myśli mej stają obrazy okrutne naszej wojny... i twarze poległych — tak smutne... Nacóż cudność ludzkości zdziczałej się przyda? — pyta się tu w zadumie polski inwalida.

ROZMOWA DRUGA

Lat dwadzieścia pięć temu, także w czasie wojny, jakże zgodniśmy razem, Janie, pracowali! Dziś ów czas się wydaje sielski i spokojny, gdy płynijemy w Niznane po przeciwniej fali, gdy w obłądnej rozgromu dawnych prac zamieci, ani domu nie mamy, nie wiemy gdzie dzieci, gdzie są Twoi we święcie zgubieni synowie, gdzie są moi... Któż to wie i któż nam to powie? Toż dwadzieścia i cztery lat dziś właśnie temu, jak mój starszy syneczek na świat się narodził, a dziś matce milczącej i mnie stroskanemu niewiadomo kłódy on po świecie chodzi... Starszy pragnął machiny potężne budować, a zaś młodszy przez burzę mórz groźnych żeglować. Obaj blił się dzielnie, jak prawi żołnierz, mam relacje kolegów i święcie im wierzę. Obaj tak pracowali, zreczni i uczynni, a dziś — może głodują za drutem, bezczynni, a może... Nie chcę myśleć i nie chcę się pytać, bo mnie lęka, to gniewu wiech za włosy chwyta,

gdy im zdala nie mogę iść żadnej pomocy... Ty wiesz, Janie, jak się ma jest męka niemocy! Często leżąc z zamkniętą, kamienną powieką, tuż ich widzę przed sobą... lzy mi przez sen cieką, już radości... Mój Janie! jakże dzień jest smutny, kiedy wracam w niewiedzy kierat balamuty! Cóż za ojciec, co dzieciom ojcem być nie może? Ach! bądźże Ty im Ojcem, niepojęty Boże!...

ROZMOWA TRZECIA

Jakże często wspominam, mój kochany Janie, nasze pierwsze w karpackich wozach spotkanie, nasze pierwsze rozmowy w cudzoziemskiej mowie, gdyśmy siebie ciekawo, nie umieli w słowie własnych wlotczeg po świecie nakreślić bezdroży, któremi nas za rękę wodził anioł Boży. Dziś się nieraz zamysłam nad Twoją wędrowką, gdy mi o niej nieznacząc czasem rzucasz słowo: jak to dziwnie się stało, że przez cudze kraje, poprzez obce języki, księgi, obyczaje, przecież trafić musiałeś sam do polskiej ziemi, sercem idąc śladami zmarłych ojców cieni. I gdy w bojów zamieci, jak zew Olifanta, zabrzniał głosy po świecie Komendanta, aby chwycić za oręż i bić się w legionach, usłyszałeś ten rozkaz, hen, gdzieś w obcych stronach i stanąłś posłusznie, jak żołnierz, wraz z nami.

I tak wszedłeś do Polski, Karpat wawozami i w legionach się polskiej wyczyliły moży, zawsze czynny, do każdej roboty gotowy, a gdy Ci się sprzykrzyła wreszcie ziemia szara, jako lotnik śmigaleś śladami Ikaru. Tak przez wszystkich kolegów lubiany, kochany, nie dziwnego, żeś został przez Wodza wybrany, codziem opromieniony byłeś Jego sławą, codziem mogłeś o zmiroku gawędzić z Wieniawą, byłeś z nim w Belvedere, Wodza adjutantem, miałeś szczęście jedyne — mieszkać z Komendantem! Już to samo w Twem życiu jest jasnym próżnieniem, żadna złość go nie zaćmi w Twem sercu swym cieniem.

Ach! mój Janie! jak cudny to czas! jak daleki, gdyś zostawił po sobie wędzanie bibioteki, to gdzieś w Wiedniu, to w Pradze, pewnie i w Londynie, to w Krakowie, w Warszawie, w Paryżu i w Rzymie, gdyś wędrował, jak pielgrzym; za Sztuką-Madonną, od kolebki z nią związana miłośnika doznagna. Wszakżeś wśród Muz dziewięciu na świat się narodził, więc Chaucera z Tagorem w swych pracach godził, życie Twoje, to jedna wędziana kanytylena. Któż nad Ciebie cudowniejsz wskrzeszał nam Chopina, któż z nas posiadał choć częstkę Twojej wszechnauki, kto z nas tak po mistrzowsku wszelkie posiadał sztuki i wszelkie zgłębił skarby ducha Europy, którą Twoje obeszły wędrownicze stopy.

Nie skarz się więc, mój Janie, na swój los pielgrzymi. Choć przy sobie nie masz, nosisz skarb olbrzymi, w sercu mienaszonym, przestronnem, słonecznem, skarb zdobyty w cierpieniu i w pragnieniu wiecznem. Tak więc dola Twa górna jest i tak bogata, że Cię nam ukazuje jako typ Polaka, który życia wszelkiego będąc przyjacielem, kocha kraj swój, lecz światła jest obywatel. Jeśli o Twojej polskości śmie ktoś powątpiewać, chyba wątpi czy w puszczy mamy polskie drzewa!

ROZMOWA CZWARTA

Gdy dziś w tryumfie biją w Anglii dzwony, słucham ich, Janie, gorzko zasmucony, bo w sercu mojem chorem i sierocem bić dzwony inny, tak za dnia jak w nocy: to dzwony Zygmunta, w zamkniętym Krakowie, gdzie śpi Wódz zmarły i stary królowie.

O! drogi Janie! wyznam Ci w sekrecie, o czym niby nie wiem, a oszalbym śmiejąc, że serce moje sercem tego dżwoonu losem związane jest do chwilk zgonu. Bo gdy mój ojciec dzieckiem w polu śpiewał, to serce dżwoonu mój dziadek odwiał. Gdy stare serce z nieznaney przyczyny pękło urwane, mój dziad był jedynym majstrem poważnym, zdolnym odlać nowe w sucheckich hudał i tak zahartować, by po wiek wieków mogło używać z wieży wernych do modłów, do boju rycerzy. Dziś dzwon ten milczy. Kto wie, czy istnieje i jakie serca jego są ostatnie dzieje, gdy Ci me serce o tem opowiada, cierpiąc w milczeniu, wspominając dziada...

Choć więc dziś tylko w Anglii biją dzwony, ale nie w Polsce, choć ten zasmucony, czekam i wierzę, o mój drogi Janie, że wnet i dla nas jasny dzień nastanie, i jakie serca jego są ostatnie dzieje, gdy Ci me serce o tem opowiada, cierpiąc w milczeniu, wspominając dziada...

ROZMOWA PIĄTA

Je meurs de soif auprès de la fontaine... (Charles d'Orléans)

W ciemnych tęsknoty godzinach własna rozryzłam niewiedzę, jak Orleńczyk-poeta, zapatrzone w studni toń siedzę, ginąc w męczarniach pragnienia.

Ty mnie jedyny pojmujesz, drogi mój Janie milczący. Domy zburzyli nam zboje, nieznani władcy rozkazem w kaźni niemocy zamknęli... Z kim? o czym mówić dziś możemy? słuchać nas nie chcą anieli, z ludami zaś gadać — miast milczec — trudna, doprawdy, to sprawa! W oczu zdreżzonych głąbinie nagle — Monsalut nam stawa... w pierśi ogromnem pustkowiu, po wilem, leśnem podbitciu biegnie mistyczny Jednoróg równo, jak epos o życiu, rączemi biegi swych nometr w rytm heksametru wciąż stuka, mógłbyś się zmyleć i przysiąc, że własne serce twe puka. Drzewa gdy szumia w tej puszczy, słyszemy w nich głos Parcevala, rycerski chorus, co bronie świętego wiocha wychwała. Słyszemy głos rogu z wawoła: to zew przedśmiertny Rolanda tonie nam w pierśi żalostnie, jak w nurtach wstających Wanda. Musim przeczekać w niemocy pustą czekając odwieczność, Benitowskich i Don Kichotów awantur bezużyteczność...

Obydwaj wiemy to wszakże, Janie mój, wiedzimy minstrelu, że śmierć nam wolność przywróci podług Bożego kartelu. Ze wszystko czem dziś jesteśmy, życia całego kochanie, po nas idącym pielgrzymom na nowy żywot zostanie.

Wrzesień — listopad 1942

J. A. TESLAR.

ODETTE KEUN,



Cz 4570/1944/5







KOMUNIKACJA LOTNICZA

Dawny zespół pracowników polskiej komunikacji lotnicznej, który w liczbie około 50% stanu przedwojennego znalazł się w Wielkiej Brytanji...

Stąd też monografia, wydana pod egidą Zrzeszenia, ma charakter reprezentacyjny opinii fachowej. Autorem opracowania jest wiceprezes zarządu...

Zwycięstwa, które w ostatnich latach przed wojną przynosiły, nie miały jednak przed wojną odpowiedniego miejsca na szlaku międzynarodowym.

Praca Góreckiego zasługuje na szczególną uwagę. Jest to — jak dotychczas — pierwsza ogłoszona na polskiej emigracji londyńskiej monografia...

Równocześnie prawie z pracą Góreckiego ukazało się obszernie sprawozdanie z kongresu technicznego lotnictwa...

Na szczególną uwagę zasługują trzy referaty: inż. Królikiewicza o samodzielnosci lotnictwa na tle przemian sposobów walki...

„DRUGA WYSPA“

Do sztuki Marveya i Sempa należą podchodzący do dwu punktów widzenia przedewszystkiem: z jednej strony jest to uczucie roboty obliczonej na wzmocnienie polityki...

Oto trzech „Drugiej wyspy“ w znacznym skrócie. Młody wynalazca angielski, inż. Hopkins, dostaje się do niewoli niemieckiej i wysłany jest do Polski...

Sensacyjne zakończenie, dość częste w anglosaskich filmach o „underground Europe“, z wszelkiego rodzaju wariantami technicznymi...

Mimo tej koncesji, sztuka jest żywa i oryginalna na swój własny sposób. Tu i ówdzie błyska krótkimi wstawkami dobrego humoru...

„Wielki przelaz“ z dn. 12 stycznia omawia stosunki polsko-sowieckie i píše: „Najsmutniejszym i najbardziej znamienitym aspektem kryzysu polsko-rosyjskiego jest fakt, że pozbawia on sensu motywy...

Wobec tego uwagi o „demokratycznym“ charakterze tego plebiscytu, które nigdy nie brzmiałyby bardzo przekonująco.

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Wszystkim abonentom „Wiadomości Polskich“, którzy do dn. 1 lutego b.r. nie odnowią przedpłaty za kwartał I b.r., dalsza wysyłka pisma zostanie bezwzględnie wstrzymana.

MISCELLANEA

MOTYWY I WYNIKI

„Peace News“ z dn. 14 stycznia omawia stosunki polsko-sowieckie i píše:

„Najsmutniejszym i najbardziej znamienitym aspektem kryzysu polsko-rosyjskiego jest fakt, że pozbawia on sensu motywy, dla których Wielka Brytania wypowiedziała wojnę Niemcom...

Wobec tego uwagi o „demokratycznym“ charakterze tego plebiscytu, które nigdy nie brzmiałyby bardzo przekonująco.

POLSKA I SPRZYMIERZENI

Znana pisarka holenderska Odette Keun ogłosiła w „Time and Tide“ z dn. 15 stycznia list w sprawie stosunków polsko-sowieckich.

„Zagadnienie polsko-sowieckie jest sprawdzeniem. Opinia na kontynencie trafnie ocenia to zagadnienie. Opinia amerykańska głośno i żywo wypowiada swe poglądy...

„ECONOMIST“ O STOSUNKU SOWIETÓW DO POLSKI

„Economist“ z dn. 15 stycznia omawia kryzys polsko-rosyjski i podkreśla, że „oferta rosyjska trudno określić jako nadmierne szczerą, jeśli się zwąży że w r. 1920 sam Lenin odrzucił propozycję...

„ECONOMIST“ O STOSUNKU SOWIETÓW DO POLSKI

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(Daily Mail) rys. Illingwortha

na dobro gen. Weyganda“, który sam się tego wyparł.

Pisząc o wojnie polsko-sowieckiej, Poznański przypomina, że Polacy przez cały czas uważali ją za konflikt z Rosją a nie z komunizmem.

Wreszcie Poznański zwraca uwagę, że we wschodniej Polsce religia gra znacznie ważniejszą rolę niż narodowość i że nikt nie wyprzedził Polaków w tym względzie.

„Państwa bałtyckie mają takie samo prawo do niepodległości jak inne małe narody europejskie. Nawet gdyby Rosja nie podpisała karty atlantyckiej, jej uprzednie stosunki z Litwą, Estonią i Litwą oparte były na traktatach pokojowych z r. 1920, na których podstawie państwa te stały się niepodległe“.

„Istnieją dokumentalne dowody — czytamy dalej — że wybory, zarządzane przez Rosjan na obszarach zaanektowanych, przeprowadzone zostały nieuczciwie, a marnotrawnie, ustanowione przez Moskwę, nie reprezentowały swobodnej woli narodów bałtyckich...“

W odpowiedzi na twierdzenia, że Rosja pragnie „strategicznie racjonalnych granic“, Bevan zapytuje: „Czy w warunkach obecnej wojny mechanicznej i lotniczej istnieją ogólnie w Europie jakiejkolwiek racjonalne granice strategiczne?“

W zakończeniu artykułu czytamy: „Narody bałtyckie oczekują dziś ze sprzymierzenia wywołają je ze zniecierpliwionym uciskiem hitlerowskim. Byłoby doprawdy tragedią gdyby narody te miały ponownie stracić z trudem zdobytą niepodległość, czy to wskutek objętości innych wobec ich losu, czy też z uwagi na to co jest politycznie wygodne“.

„POLSKIE PAKTU CZESKO-SOWIECKIEGO“

„Tribune“ z dn. 7 stycznia zastanawia się nad istotą paktu czesko-sowieckiego i dochodzi do wniosku, że oznacza on włączenie Czechosłowacji do sowieckiego systemu odbudowy gospodarczej, a z punktu widzenia wojkowego ma stworzyć nową zapórę przeciw ekspansji niemieckiej.

W następnym numerze tygodnika, z dn. 14 stycznia, znajdujemy streszczenie artykułu, jaki ukazał się już po podpisaniu tego paktu w sowieckim piśmie „Wojna i Klasy Pracujące“.

„GWIZDANIE I SZUBIENICE“

„Sunday Dispatch“ z dn. 7 stycznia omawia egzekucję skazanych w procesie charkowskim i zwraca uwagę, że nie była to „szybka i humanitarna procedura znana naszym wzięciom“.

„GWIZDANIE I SZUBIENICE“

„GWIZDANIE I SZUBIENICE“

nie się tłumiu w Charkowie jest typowe dla nastrojów sowieckich; wydawać się one mogą Anglikom „nieradne“, ale niemniej są faktem. Z faktami takimi trzeba się zapoznać, gdyż w przeciwnym razie stworzy się podstępny, „przychylny nieporozumienia“ między narodami rosyjskim a brytyjskim.

CIANO A WĘGRY

W związku z rostrzelaniem Ciana „Pester Lloyd“ z dn. 12 stycznia píše: „My Węgrzy jesteśmy głęboko wzruszeni wieścią o jego tragicznej śmierci. W naszej pamięci hr. Galeazzo Ciano będzie nadal żył jako prawdziwy przyjaciel naszego narodu, i Węgry muszą pozostać mu wdzięczne.“

KAJ MUNK

Niemcy zamordowali czołowego poetę duńskiego, Kaj Munka. Kaj Munk był poetą chorowitem dzieckiem, że jego matka — nie miała jak matka Orcia z „Nie-boskiej“ — miała swój wyraz: „Jeśli nie będzie poety, nie wiem co się z nim stanie“.

„Bucharest Tagblatt“ z dn. 16 grudnia donosi o procesie, wyciecznym przez niemieckiego Andrzeja Benedekta, byłoby rosyjskiemu, który domagał się zwrotu majątku skonfiskowanego na podstawie ustaw antyżydowskich.

„POLONIA“

„Linn's Weekly Stamp News“ (Ohio, U.S.A.), z dn. 27 maja ub.r. przynosi artykuł Irene Piotrowskiej, „The Art of the Polish Postage Stamp“.

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KORESPONDENCJA

PLEBISCYT

Do redaktora „Wiadomości Polskich“

W nr. 201 „Wiadomości Polskich“ znajduje się artykuł p. red. Zygmunta Nowakowskiego p.t. „Pieję kur“, w którym zataktowany zostałem spowodu poglądu, wypowiedzianego na posiedzeniu Rady Narodowej w sprawie stosunków polsko-sowieckich.

Nie mogę w ramach listu do redakcji wypowiedzieć się co do treści i formy tego ataku, choć miałbym w tej sprawie sporo do powiedzenia. Sądę jednak, że rany listu nie zostaną przekroczone, jeśli ograniczę się do informacji faktycznej i zacytuję petyt tego co o stosunkach polsko-sowieckich powiedziałem na posiedzeniu Rady Narodowej dn. 28 grudnia 1943 r., w przemówieniu, wygłoszonym w toku dyskusji budżetowej.

„Uważamy, że ani układ Ribbentrop-Molotow, ani oparte na nim t.zw. „głosowanie“ nie usadniają rozseparowanie sowieckich do wschodnich ziem Polski i nie zmieniają ich prawnego stanu.“

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ZABÓR I GWAŁT \*)

Przez słowo aneksja, lub zabór cudzych ziem, rząd sowiecki rozumie, zgodnie z pojmowaniem prawa przez demokrację w ogóle, przez jakieś przemoc, a nie silniejszego państwa, małego albo słabego narodu, bez jego zgody i życzenia, wypowiedzianego niedwuznacznie, jasno i doborowicie; bez względu na to kiedy takie przynusowe przyłączenie się odbywa; bez względu także na to, w jakim stopniu naród przemocą przyłączył, lub przemocą utrzymywany w obrębie takiego państwa, jest postępowy czy zaoczny; bez względu wreszcie na to, czy taki naród znajduje się w Europie, czy też w odległych krajach zamorskich. Jeżeli jakiś naród utrzymywany jest przemocą w obrębie jakiegoś państwa i wbrew wyraźnej jego woli (bez względu na to, czy ta wola wyrażona jest w druku, na zgromadzeniach ludowych, w uchwałach stronnictw, lub w protestach i w powstaniach przeciwko uciskowi narodowemu), jeśli nie przynajmniej jest w stanie stanowienia w kwestii form jego bytu państwowego, bez żadnego przymusu, w drodze swobodnego głosowania, przy całkowitem usunięciu wojska narodu przylącającego, lub wogóle silniejszego — natenczas takie przyłączenie jest aneksją, jest zaborem i gwałtem.

„PSALMY“ JANTY

„Psalmy z domu niewoli“ Aleksandra Janty, napisane w niemieckim obozie jeńców i we francuskim szpitalu wojskowym, ukazały się p.t. „Thirteen Polish Psalms“ w angielskim przekładzie Zofji Iłińskiej.

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Restauracja VICTORIA, 149, Victoria Street, London, S.W.1

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O PRZEMYSŁ POLSKI POD OKUPACJĄ, Do redaktora „Wiadomości Polskich“

ZWIĄZEK DZIENNIKARZY, Zarząd sekcji londyńskiej Związku Dziennikarzy ukonstytuował się jak następuje: prezes — Zygmunt Nowakowski

OFIARY, Lady Clementine z Holmer Court, Holmer Green, złożyła w redakcji „Wiadomości Polskich“ 45 dla dzieci w Polsce. Sumę tę przekazał Polskiemu Czerwonemu Krzyżowi.

GINNAZIUM KUPIECKIE, Osrodek Kształcenia Handlowego (34, West George St., Glasgow C.2) przyjmuje zgłoszenia kandydatów do czwartej klasy gimnazjum kupieckiego.

Wieloletni współpracownicy „Wiadomości Polskich“ w Warszawie, którzy w 1944 r. przywrócili im życie, wzywają do wyrażenia im najwzajemniejszego szacunku.

WIELKI PRZELAZ, Wzrost i wytrzymałość człowieka zależy od jego sposobu życia. Aby przetrwać w trudnych warunkach, należy dbać o swoją kondycję.

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# THE POLISH NEWS

ARTICLES  
EXTRACTS  
LETTERS

## PEACE OR ANOTHER MUNICH?

This is a critical juncture of the war and there is no use pretending that it is so only from the point of view of military operations. War was never a purely military issue; and this war is even less a purely military issue than all the previous conflicts which have befallen Europe. Political, moral, psychological and emotional factors are closely interwoven with the military fabric of war, and only by understanding the interdependence of all these factors can a clear victory be won for the Allies.

The Russo-Polish controversy has been commented on in the British press in a way which must give rise to the gravest apprehensions. Many organs of the British press have shown an attitude which cannot be called impartial or unbiased. Articles have appeared which show not only an astonishing depth of geographical ignorance which can be called almost Shakespearean (e.g. the *Daily Express* statement that Russia would like to establish a common frontier with Czechoslovakia "north of Grodno," which reminds one of Shakespeare's Bohemia bordering on the sea), but also — which is much more disturbing — a contempt for historical facts and for an impartial study of the past. From some articles and comments published in the British press one might assume that it was actually Poland's fault that she was dismembered by the three Powers at the end of the eighteenth century, that her "claims lacerated" the bodies both of Prussia and Russia and that she had to choose domination by one or the other; other papers explained that Poland was conducting an imperialistic war in 1920, forgetting that the fear of Bolshevik Russia was universal and especially pronounced in the capitalist countries of the West, that the first intervention came from the Western Powers which supported such generals as Koltchak, Denikin and Wrangel, that Pilsudski rejected the offer put forward in 1919 by some members of the British Parliament when they went to Warsaw and suggested a common action with the "White" Russian military commanders. The British press wish the whole period between 1918-1921 to fall into oblivion and to erase the historical fact that the German revolutionary movement wanted to join hands with the Russian Communists and that these facts were plainly stated by such eminent historians and statesmen as Sir Bernard Pares and Mr. Winston Churchill as well as by Lenin himself. The British papers are busy to re-write the history of the last twenty years or so, trying to throw all the blame on the Poles and to whitewash Russia.

It has been a painful experience to watch the British press descending to such a level of bias and misrepresentation; it has been an especially painful experience for those people who for many years have in their own countries presented the British press as an instrument of fairness and impartiality. And for that reason these interpreters of the British ways of life and of British public opinion to their own countries — like the writer of these lines — cannot be silent, and they must raise their voices in appeal to the British press and British writers to realize the consequences which the activities of some British papers are likely to produce.

First of all, to many people from the Continent — not only the Poles — the line taken by the British press in the Russo-Polish dispute is strikingly reminiscent of the attitude of part of the English press during the Munich crisis. In 1938 the "Runciman Line" was hailed as just and rightful, in 1944 the "Curzon Line." It was said that the Czechs included the Sudetenland against the advice of the Allies and they did not carry out their promises made to the German population in these areas — now it is said that the Poles advanced their frontiers in spite of the decisions of the Spa Conference and that they did not fulfil their promises to the Ukrainians in Eastern Galicia. The Czechs were called upon to make sacrifices for the sake of peace — now the Poles are advised to make territorial sacrifices to Russia for the sake of the unity of the principal Allies and of the future peace. During the Munich crisis the press explained at great length that Czechoslovakia "would be a much happier, homogeneous and coherent country" if she ceded the Sudeten area; the same argument is now advanced in the case of the Polish State.

All these manoeuvres are now repeated; but the nations of Europe have, so it seems, a better memory of the pattern of submission and for a new Munich than some British writers and journalists suppose. The nations of Europe interpret the propaganda drive of the British press as an expression of this country's weakness and view the latest press campaign as a prelude to a new Munich.

This should be stated bluntly. And a perusal of the neutral press furnishes plenty of proofs that the neutral countries are highly disquieted by this attitude of the British press and that to-day Europe is asking whether this new edition of appeasement will lead to another catastrophe.

It should be stated clearly and unequivocally, as the moment is much too grave for evasive words and for compliments, that this trend in the British press will seriously perturb public opinion all over Europe, that it will strengthen the hand of German propaganda and that it will result in a great wave of disillusionment among the nations of Europe. And nothing unites men or nations more thoroughly and more quickly than disillusionment and embitterment.

Some British papers (e.g. the *News Chronicle* which seems to specialize in attacks on some of Britain's Allies) suggest that actually the Governments of some countries, as Yugoslavia, are no good any more, that, for instance, King Peter of Yugoslavia should be disavowed; of course, the fact that Yugoslavia, and mainly the Serbs, resisted the Germans in spite of the tremendous odds and of the bitter experiences of other nations which have received no timely military assistance from this country, is now almost completely forgotten. The press cynically expresses the view that Poland is a country of "few assets", if any, that she cannot make Russia change her attitude as she has no strength, that among her few and obviously waning assets are,

of course, such minor events as the facts that she resisted the Germans single-handed, that she is still fighting the Germans on the home front and on all the fronts, the 1944 air frontier of this country included, that she is suffering almost inhuman losses in Poland which are undermining the biological resources of the nation, that she has produced no Quisling. These are indeed "small assets."

What sort of reaction may such voices produce in the occupied countries? A reaction of despair. The people in these countries who risk their lives every day and who believe in their coming liberation, will not be able to bear such cynicism. The countries which resisted Hitler and his cynical and materialistic creed are not going to accept another edition of gross materialism even if it styles itself "democratic."

Must the nations of Europe regret that they did not join Hitler? Must they now regret that they did not produce "better" Quislings and provisional Governments? Must they conclude that the policy of this country is vacillating, that they cannot hope for any sort of aid, either material or moral, and that they must look out for themselves? Must they be forced to believe that Europe will be abandoned to its fate and that this country and the United States are too weak to defend any new order?

Miss Odette Koun, the eminent Dutch writer, recently gave a warning in the correspondence column of *Time and Tide* against the consequences which the line adopted by the British press might bring. It is the duty of European writers to state bluntly that such a trend runs the greatest risks of estranging Europe from Great Britain and that this campaign may produce truly disastrous results.

The affairs of Europe and of all European countries, Poland included, are open to criticism, to fair analysis and to impartial study. Some British papers, like the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Scotsman*, the *Daily Mail*, the *Tablet*, the *Weekly Review*, *Time and Tide* and others, still uphold the high standard of impartiality for which the British press was esteemed throughout the world. But the majority of the British press is giving a performance of bias and cynicism; and it should be stressed once more that moral values are more vulnerable than political slogans, that the whole Allied cause is now at stake, that the moral prestige of England is at stake, too, and that unless this country and the United States reaffirm their policy and their attitude towards Europe, there exists a grave danger that the Allied cause will suffer irreparable damage.

Europe will reject any divisions into spheres of interest; Europe will also reject any attempts at domination. It destroyed the attempts of the German "new order" and it will destroy any other efforts to dominate by sheer force. Europe demonstrated during the centuries of its existence that it is ready to accept moral guidance and cultural values; the influence of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages and the wave of French culture which spread all over Europe in the eighteenth century are the best examples that Europe can be united by great ideas and by spiritual factors. To-day Europe is anxiously awaiting such new great ideas which will unite its forces, reconstitute its sorely tried resources, and put new life into its veins. Cynicism can never be hoisted as a banner; and we are not fighting this war to help on the victory of the ideas of force, brutality, contempt for international law, for good manners and goodwill. A war won on these lines would constitute Hitler's greatest victory.

ZBIGNIEW GRABOWSKI.

## POLISH EXILES IN RUSSIA\*

A letter in our correspondence columns to-day makes a plea which the Russian Government should surely grant. From the beginning of the war in 1939 to the days following Hitler's attack in June, 1941, large numbers of men, women, and children caught in the war in Eastern Poland and the Baltic States were transferred to the "remote and desolate regions of Asiatic and Arctic Russia." The Russo-Polish Agreement which followed the German attack promised to bring about the release of the prisoners, and some children of Polish soldiers were allowed to leave Russia. But since then has come the growing breach between Russia and Poland, until at last relations were completely broken off. Now the lot of the prisoners appears to be hopeless. But that is just what we cannot believe nor Russia intend. Whatever the political difficulties these wretched people, especially the women and children, ought not to suffer. Many of them are the families of men who are fighting among the United Nations—who are, therefore, fighting for Russia herself. It would be a convincing evidence of Russia's decision to make genuine friendship the basis of her relations with her allies if she let these exiles go and helped them to new homes.

To the Editor of the "Manchester Guardian."

Sir,—May I call the attention of your readers to a great but almost unknown tragedy within the greater tragedy of this war? I refer to about one and a half million men, women, and children who were forcibly removed from their homes in Eastern Poland and the Baltic States after the Russian occupation of those territories from 1939 to 1941.

These unfortunate people were transported in cattle trucks hundreds and thousands of miles into the remote and desolate regions of Asiatic and Arctic Russia. Many of them died on the way. The rest were imprisoned or put in labour camps or on collective farms in Kazakhstan and elsewhere. Some were forced to work in mines in Karaganda and Kolyma, others along the Trans-Siberian Railway or in brickworks and sawmills in many districts of Central Russia. Thousands died from overwork, illness, and under-nourishment—particularly the old people and young children. For these deportees were of all ages and classes, including peasants and workers as well as professors, doctors, and lawyers, with their families, who were quite unaccustomed to such hard manual labour in severe climatic conditions.

They were forced to live in over-crowded barracks without sanitation, in stables, earth huts, and even pigsties, without light or heating in many cases. Those who were too old or ill to work usually received no food or money and had to be maintained by their families or friends. Quite small children thus often supported their aged or ailing relatives. The mortality of these children was fearful. Precise figures are unobtainable, but it is estimated that between 25 and 30 per cent. succumbed out of about 180,000 children deported from Poland and roughly 30,000 from the Baltic States. Many families were broken up and dispersed to different regions—wives were separated from husbands and children from their parents.

After the Russian-Polish Agreement in July, 1941, the Soviet Government undertook to release all Polish subjects from prisons, labour camps, and places of exile. Their condition improved considerably in 1942 when the Polish Embassy was allowed to organise welfare and relief for them. Money was distributed, over 50 hospitals and infirmaries were opened, about 150 feeding centres and communal kitchens were

\* From the *Manchester Guardian*, 23rd and 31st December, 1943, 10th, 11th and 17th January, 1944.

## REVIEW OF REVIEWS

### THE 1939 FRONTIER\*

Leaving Manchester just before Christmas I arrived back in England the same day and eventually reached home. Since then I have travelled here and there in the South and South-East, visiting friends, enduring relatives, renewing acquaintances, in short, delighting in the rôle of the returned exile. What a joy it has been to watch our planes setting forth on their hazardous flights, sometimes crossing the 1939 British frontier at roof-top height, sometimes passing over the pre-war English coastline thousands of feet up. In an incredibly short space of time they have done their job and the formations return, the roar of their engines reverberating over the old Anglo-Saxon boundaries. Deep into Europe they have flown and bombed, over the old English town of Calais, past the post-war Anglo-Czech-Slovak frontier, past even the 1945 Anglo-Russian border.

When peace is restored and Fascism crushed, when the rights of small nations are once again recognized and the British province of Anjou is liberated from its foreign yoke, when inspiration is a thing of the past and Stalin and Tito have established Democracy in the Balkans, I shall spend my post-war credits in travel. One place I must visit will be the new Poland. I shall make a tour of all its towns and villages. It ought not to take more than half a day.

### A RELIGIOUS FRONTIER†

It is at the moment much more important that the Soviet should renew diplomatic relations with the Poles than that any attempt should be made to settle the question of frontiers. The frontier fixed by the Treaty of Riga, in 1921, has no particular self-evident character. But it was a frontier accepted for eighteen years; not one which the Russians were ceaselessly seeking to revise.

Men become tormented about frontiers either for historical reasons, the sense that something indubitably theirs is being held from them, or because they have a visual image in their eye of some rounded whole. But when Poland was a great Kingdom, its frontiers were much further east in Russia, up to Kiev and Smolensk and beyond; and

\* T.G.G. in the *Weekly Review*, January 13th, 1943.

† From the *Tablet*, January 15th, 1943.

when Poland was partitioned the Russian frontiers touched the Prussian west of Warsaw. The partition of Poland was achieved in three stages, of varying and accumulating injustice; but the effect of that earlier history was to make it exceedingly difficult in 1919 for the peace-makers to say where and on what principles the eastern frontier should be found.

The Curzon line, which the Russians are now suggesting, was a temporary line of armistice, not to be invoked with any authority because it figured on the map for a short time then. But it has a much more interesting characteristic, that it is approximately the line which is the frontier of Latin Catholicism. We do not suppose that this demarcation was present to the minds of Stalin and his colleagues, for if they admit that religion is a real line of demarcation, Lithuania also is wholly Catholic.

In many respects Eastern Galicia, or "little Poland," is the most Polish of all parts of Poland, for it is the part that Austria held under the partitions, and the Austrian tutelage was very liberal compared to the harsh Prussian and the harsher Russian. The authentic traditions of Poland had more chance of survival. So ill-reated were the Austrians, indeed, that Pilsudski was able openly to lay in Eastern Galicia the foundations for a restored Poland, and to drill his men in the streets of Vienna in the years before 1914.

### REYNOLDS NUISANCE‡

Mr. David Reynolds, whoever he may be, devoted himself in *Reynolds News* of Sunday to an examination of the Russo-Polish question. In it occurred one or two startling sentences: "The British people cannot be expected to uphold (the guarantee to Poland) any more than it can be held responsible for other acts of the Chamberlain Government."

Mr. Reynolds seems to forget that the Chamberlain Government was the constitutional Government of the British people, placed and kept in power by the people's representatives. It was headed by Mr. Neville Chamberlain, whom that same public deluged with adulation and gratitude at the time of Munich. But why cannot the British people be expected to uphold the guarantee? Because—believe it or not—

‡ From the *Truth*, January 15th, 1943.

started, and some 300 schools and orphanages were established which benefited about 15,000 children. Some 2,500 tons of food, clothes, and medical supplies were sent to Russia by the Polish Government, the British, American, and Canadian Red Cross, and other Allied charities.

But at the beginning of 1943 the Russian authorities closed all welfare establishments and took over the schools and orphanages, where they replaced the Polish staffs by Soviet teachers. This was done despite a proposal of the Polish Government to evacuate 50,000 children to other Allied countries. But the Soviet Government rejected the proposal, although it had previously allowed some 11,000 children of Polish soldiers to be evacuated with their families to Persia in 1942.

Since the severing of Soviet-Polish relations in April of this year no further evacuations have been allowed and no relief has been sent in bulk. The Australian Government is now looking after Polish interests in Russia, but it can give no information concerning the 271,000 Poles still known to be there (including about 80,000 children)—apart from the unknown thousands still in prison, and about 150,000 Baltic deportees of whose fate nothing is known as there is no means of communication with them.

The Soviet Embassy in London vouchsafes no information beyond two "Soviet Monitor" reports last July which described the setting up of a committee in Moscow last June under the People's Commissariat for Education in the R.S.F.S.R. to establish "special children's institutions" and "Polish elementary and secondary schools." But as the majority of Polish teachers were arrested in 1943 for refusing to accept Soviet citizenship it is difficult to see how this programme can be carried out. In any case, the children will undoubtedly be brought up as Soviet subjects and thus become lost to their country and their religion.

I have read letters from some of these children describing their education in Communist schools and I have seen photographs of some of them when they reached Persia showing what skeletons they had become. I am aware of the difficulties which would attend a renewed evacuation—the distances are vast and transport scarce and overburdened by war-time traffic. But children are dying, and no one can tell how many will survive their fourth winter of exile. Surely the families of those Poles who are serving with the Polish and Allied forces should be allowed to leave Russia and join those already settled in Persia, India, and Kenya. Or, if humane and generous persons in Britain and America would adopt some of these children, surely it should be possible to obtain the consent of the Russian authorities to bring their unmerited exile to an end.

ELMA DANGERFIELD  
(London).

To the Editor of the "Manchester Guardian."

Sir,—May I support the plea you make in your issue of December 23rd for a reconsideration by the Russian Government of the melancholy plight of the Polish exiles? The compulsory migration took place both from Eastern Poland and from the Baltic States in the days before the perfidious attack of Germany on Russia.

But it is particularly the case of Poland that your correspondent Elma Dangerfield portrays. Indeed, she has already called attention to the tragedy of the deportation elsewhere, though few, I think, can realise its full import or its magnitude.

The savage invasion by the German armies of Russian soil on a vast scale will have had its repercussions in the remotest regions, making fresh difficulties of transport and organisation for the Russians and, alas, fresh sufferings for the deportees. But in

"the Chamberlain Government, responsible for Munich, gave this guarantee without consulting Russia and with no means of carrying it out."

Why, in the name of reason, should Russia have been consulted, that Russia which in 1939, when Poland was raped, signed a pact of amity and non-aggression with the German Nazis under Hitler?

Germany took military action because of German minorities in Poland. Britain objected to such aggression. Did *Reynolds News* or Mr. Raymond support the German action at that time? Mr. Raymond asks "Does the latest Polish Government statement satisfy the Russians?" Did he ask in 1939: "Does the German statement on Poland satisfy the Russians?" He probably did, for Russia approved it by her pact with the aggressor. But he argues now that some provinces of Poland are inhabited by a majority of White Russians, therefore there must be a new partition of Poland on Russia's behalf. That is exactly how Hitler argued in 1939—that the habitation of parts of Poland by Germans justified a forcible partition of Poland by Germany. Mr. Raymond stresses the fact that "Poland flouted the League by renouncing her obligations to report regularly to Geneva on the condition of her minorities." That is precisely the German justification for her aggression.

Herr Hitler and Mr. Raymond may be right but, even if they are right, it does not seem to affect Britain's position, for Britain went into the war to protect, as best she might, the territorial integrity of Poland. Nothing that has occurred—as, for example, the following of Germany's example by Russia—can possibly change that stark historic fact. That Mr. Raymond justifies the dismemberment of Poland by exactly the arguments used by Hitler for a dismemberment does not change Britain's pledge to protect Poland from dismemberment by force.

If Mr. Raymond and *Reynolds News* are prepared to throw over any pledge given by a Government of the past on the grounds that when the pledge was given Russia was not consulted, Parliamentary Government to them is obviously meaningless, and British sovereignty, the right of the British to decide their policies for themselves, is obviously, to them, farcical. It is incredible that Britons should either suffer or display such mental and spiritual degradation.

spite of these the Russian-Polish Agreement of 1941 clearly led, as your correspondent makes plain, to great improvements in the conditions of the Poles.

During the past 12 months the political situation has deteriorated. But when Poles and Russians are engaged in fighting a common enemy it is very hard to understand how (apart from all other considerations) the Russian Government can be willing to allow the existence of political difficulties to stand in the way of relief and release for many thousands of Polish children and old people who are now suffering such extremes of wretchedness.

GEORGE CICESTR  
(Chichester).

To the Editor of the "Manchester Guardian."

Sir,—I am thankful to read in your leader and correspondence columns some account of a particularly terrible aspect of the Russo-Polish question. I have recently had a Pole spending his leave in my house, who, with his wife and family of five children, was deported into Asia in just such circumstances as your correspondent describes. His story leaves no doubt that her account is a most moderate one, and the most remarkable thing in a remarkable tale is that a man could survive such suffering and privation, and, moreover, survive with his humanity intact. He, however, is fortunate in that both he and his family were able to leave Russia alive and are now safely in British territory, though widely separated.

It is time that these facts should become generally known and everything possible be done for these tragic exiles. The minds of all Poles and many British would be relieved by a generous gesture towards them on the part of the Soviet Government. This is no time for disagreement with Russia, but it is due to the war victims of an older ally that our help should once more reach them.

C. BARBARA HALL  
(Disley).

To the Editor of the "Manchester Guardian."

Sir,—On December 23rd you published a letter from Mrs. Dangerfield and a leading article both dealing with the deportations from Latvia, Estonia, and Poland to Soviet Russia.

To the facts quoted in the letter I should like to add one known to me personally. The wife and child of a Polish officer serving in the R.A.F. were deported from Eastern Poland to Russia at the time of the mass deportations. All endeavours to have these two transferred to British territory have been of no avail. Recently this officer discovered that his wife and child, having been inhabitants of Eastern Poland, are now considered by the Soviet authorities as being Soviet citizens, and as such they would never be able to leave Russia. A decision of this kind is, under existing conditions equivalent to a permanent separation between himself and his family. What must be his feelings when he is out in his plane?

Whatever the political situation may be, surely a stop can be put to avoidable tragedies of this nature.

M. BLAND  
(Churt).

To the Editor of the "Manchester Guardian."

Sir,—May I add a plea for the Polish children who are at present in the Soviet Union? Their fate is a very hard one and these children are those of an ally. There is no difficulty in finding homes for them if they could obtain permission to leave. The Government of India alone offered to take 10,000 more (there are 1,000 Polish orphans in India), but they were not permitted to go. Even if the difficulties of transport are too great, surely at least permission could be obtained to send some comforts to them and food parcels through the Australian Legation, which is looking after Polish interests? They are, after all, Allied children in an Allied country and help should be sent to them if their lives are to be saved.

F. C. ANSTRUTHER,  
Chairman Polish Children's Rescue Fund.

To the Editor of the "Manchester Guardian."

Sir,—May I be permitted to express my views as an American on the subject of the tragic situation of the enforced exiles from Poland and the Baltic States in Russia?

From personal interviews with evacuees from Russia's vast isolated districts I know that the sufferings of this group of roughly over 600,000 Polish subjects and over 150,000 Estonians, Latvians, and Lithuanians are not "propaganda reports" but cold facts. The report that Russian children are also suffering from lack of proper food, clothing, and shelter makes the situation all the more worthy of organised relief on a large scale, and right now before it is too late. Naturally my countrymen, if they fully realised this situation, would ask, "If war materials are going to Russia via Archangel and Teheran, why cannot relief materials, food, clothing, and medical supplies be going via the same routes for the specific purpose of relieving the condition of these exiles and the Russian children?"

Learning on unquestionable authority that the Polish Red Cross in Teheran has a list of individual names and addresses of approximately 200,000 Polish subjects in Russia, it seems logical to suggest that some system be organised on a large scale to send individual packages of food, clothes, etc., to these exiles. The Society of Friends, together with the American Red Cross, might undertake this work, with headquarters at Teheran. The writer considers this method under the conditions would be the only practicable and effective way of dealing with this problem. The public would be interested to know that there is now no international organisation whatsoever in Russia for distribution of relief supplies.

Surely our Russian brothers in arms, so industrious in their work and so incredibly brave and persevering in their battles, will co-operate with us, their Western allies, in this matter of humanitarian work within their own country.

ELEANOR RITCHIE NALLE,  
Member American National Red Cross.

## A JUST CAUSE\*

Dear Lord Donegal,

As you sometimes write about your Polish acquaintances, and as there is a definite affinity between the Slav and the Celt, may I, a fellow Celt though not Irish, appeal to you to give a spot of decent publicity to Polish affairs, now a very topical subject? Their propaganda is of the depressed variety peculiar to Britain until very recently. Their cause is just, and worthy of a fair hearing. Will the *Sunday Dispatch* sponsor the Polish cause? I am not a crank, but have many Polish friends, and hope to see the Anglo-Polish fighting alliance strengthened into an enduring friendship in the same post-war world that has been promised. Poland has had a bad deal from the British Press. The publicity has been of the silly season type—about beautiful Polish manners, their undoubted charm and of their occasionally peculiar English. This amuses the exiles, but it is not the type of publicity they crave.

Britain entered this war to defend the right of the small nations. Through thick and thin, Poland fought with us, never questioning the outcome when events were at their blackest in 1940. At that time Poland was our only fighting ally, and strangely few people realise that the Polish Air Force accounted for one in every eight of the Luftwaffe destroyed in the Battle of Britain; 302 and 303 Polish Fighter Squadrons were definitely some of the glorious "Few."

Until 1939, the average person in Britain held his breath prior to a Hitler speech and heaved a sigh of relief if no more territorial aspirations were voiced. We've recovered our breath since then to breathe defiance at the world during the dark hours. But, since gaining new and powerful allies in 1941, are we re-adopting the old deferential attitude which admittedly hasn't paid in regard to Lease Lend, etc., etc., in these days when it is vitally necessary to blow one's own trumpet? Are we afraid to argue with the more powerful of our allies? Has the free Press of Britain been muzzled in regard to the Russian-Polish problem? We owe much to gallant Poland, invaded from two sides (whatever the diplomatic reasons involved) as recently as 1939, again in 1941, and now in 1944 the tide of war is again surging against this stricken country.

The recent Russian-Czech treaty has been much publicised, and many broad hints given for Polish participation. The Poles are eager to co-operate, but not under pressure. Why is this outstanding problem not freely discussed? Poland would welcome an investigation and a solution, with or without the restoration of Russian-Polish diplomatic relations. The United Nations could and should mediate in this dispute, in the friendly spirit of co-operative discussion featured as the mainstay of post-war living conditions in the family of nations.

Poland is unfortunate in being bereft of a real leader such as the brilliant Czech diplomat Beneš. And so Poland looks to Churchill and to British justice to restore her proper place in European affairs. British justice should remember Poland's courageous fighting challenge to the hitherto undisputed chain of Nazi "diplomatic conquest" in 1939; remember Poland's agonised torture during the long years of Occupation; remember that Poland, alone of the Occupied countries, has not thrown up a single Quisling of note; and above all, remember Poland's answering loyalty to Britain's almost lost cause in 1940.

Britain has learned, bitterly, that the splendid isolation of Victorian times is no longer feasible, and that, in future, good relations must be maintained with the continent of Europe. Britain gave refuge, in their hour of need, to exiles from Poland, the almost unknown country of the pre-1939 era. Poland has repaid her debt with loyalty, and has set an heroic example of shining courage and patriotism that may well be equalled, but never excelled.

I apologise for taking up your time, but the Polish cause needs no apology. If you can help, Lord Donegal, believe me you will win the unstinted gratitude of many Polish hearts. Hoping against hope that the future holds some happiness for them. That happiness has been hard earned and well merited.

Very many thanks for the space I hope you will spare—it really is in a good cause.

ENA PARKES  
(Douglas).

## FALSIFIED PICTURE†

Sir,—Miss Kosara Gavrilović in her letter to you, recalls the heroic uprising of the Yugoslavs in face of a German invasion, and adds: "An English newspaper, the *News Chronicle* of December 29, 1943, has expressed its thanks to the Yugoslav nation and its monarch in a cartoon which surpasses all the insults Germany ever offered to the Yugoslav people."

That cartoon made me ashamed to be an English journalist. However, some of us remain who cherish the native English (or British) ideals of honour and loyalty; though Miss Gavrilović could not surmise this from the treatment her country, its King, and its fighting War Minister currently receive in our newspapers.

The insults, nevertheless, taint only the newspapers which print them; the British people are better than that, and ask each other uneasily what is this new trend in the war, that causes the Press suddenly to attack all our friends, all those who bore the brunt of the fight "against Nazi aggression."

Unhappily the people can only look to the Press for their information, and this leads me to say (as I hope you will allow me to say) that in all my experience I have never known (not even in Germany or other dictatorship States) the picture of affairs in foreign countries to be so falsified, in presentation to the reading public, as is the picture of Poland, Yugoslavia and Greece in the information laid before the British people by the radio and the Press today. It is hypocrisy to assert that any freedom of the Press exists in this country today while, in the matter of these three countries, the future of which affects us as closely and vitally as did that of Czechoslovakia in 1938, some secret ban has quite clearly been laid on the publication of authentic information.

DOUGLAS REED.

\* Copy of a letter sent to the *Sunday Dispatch*.

† From *Time and Tide*, January 15th, 1943.