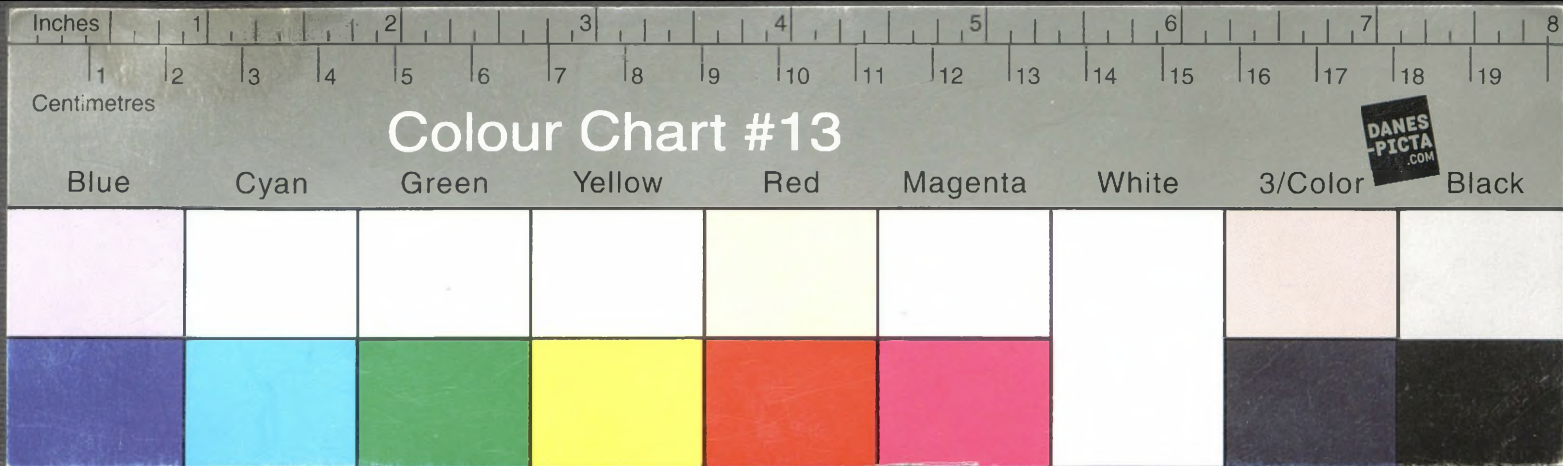




THE CRIMEAN REVENGE

1855 - 1945

by

Professor STANISLAW STRONSKI

Former Polish Minister of Information

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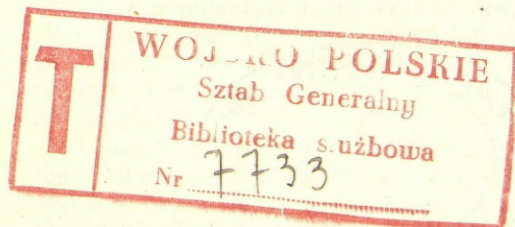
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1855-1945

LESS than a hundred years after her defeat in the Crimean War of 1854-55 at the hands of the forces of the two Western Powers, Britain and France, Russia scored her revenge against the present Western Powers, Great Britain and the United States, at the Yalta Conference between Mr. Churchill, Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Stalin in February, 1945.

The Crimean War was caused by Russia's policy aiming at the domination of South-Eastern Europe and the Balkan Peninsula. In those days she was already the master of North-Eastern Europe and the Baltic shores, holding as she did Finland, Esthonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In Central Europe Russia made a substantial advance westwards towards the close of the 18th Century and the beginning of the 19th Century as a result of the partitions of Poland: indeed her frontier was pushed forward from the Eastern bank of the Dnieper to the West of the Vistula.

Ever since the 18th Century Russia pushed into the Balkans and in her aggressive wars against Turkey played the part of protector of the Balkan Orthodox Christian nations, who for centuries had been subjugated by the Ottoman Porte. Catherine II learned well the lesson of her profitable protection of the Orthodox population of Poland, which provided her with a unique opportunity for interfering in the internal affairs of the Polish Commonwealth; and thus in her treaty of peace with Turkey, signed at Kuchuk Kainardji in 1774 (in Articles 7 and 14), she obtained the right to extend a similar protection to the Christian populations under Turkish domination. The Crimean War broke out after the failure of the Embassy of Prince Menshikov, who was sent to Istanbul by Nicholas I with the request that these Articles of this old treaty should be implemented.

In her policy regarding the Balkans and the protection over the Balkan nationalities Russia pursued a number of objects. She was, of course, all in favour of enfeebling Turkey by raising the problem of these nationalities, of weakening her hold over the Balkans, and finally of obtaining control over the areas inhabited by the Balkan Christians. But she was not in the least desirous to see these Balkan nationalities emerging as

independent states over which it would be difficult to gain complete control, as indeed the fate of this part of the world could not be indifferent to the Western Powers, Britain and France, who had such important interests in the Eastern basin of the Mediterranean or to the Hapsburg monarchy whose territories were adjacent to the Balkans. Russia did not forget that the Greek Rising of 1820 against Turkey was assisted by Britain, France and Russia and that while she herself favoured a certain degree of self-government for Greece within the Turkish Empire, Britain and France supported the Greek claim to full independence, and in this they finally succeeded after 1830, notwithstanding Russian objections. In 1829 Tsar Nicholas I set up a special committee to work out a policy towards Turkey; this committee criticised the traditional Russian policy of partitioning Turkey and advised a policy of caution; they warned the Tsar that the destruction of Turkey might lead to the creation of a number of independent national states, like Greece, which would easily escape Russia's tentacles and bring to nought the hopes that Russia would find in them obedient tools.

Thus, for twenty years, Nicholas I reversed his policy and patiently waited for a more propitious occasion. In 1844, in a conversation with Lord Aberdeen, Nicholas described Turkey as "l'homme malade" of Europe and suggested that it should be partitioned between Britain and Russia; that Britain should annex Egypt and perhaps Crete, while Russia would take care of the Balkans and Constantinople. The London Cabinet was, however, non-committal. In January, 1853, while Lord Aberdeen was Prime Minister, Nicholas I took up the subject again with Sir Hamilton Seymour, the then British Ambassador in Russia, to whom he suggested an arrangement according to which Russia would have a paramount position in Constantinople without, however, annexing it outright. But again these suggestions were turned down by the London Cabinet. Then Nicholas tried to deal directly with Turkey by sending a special embassy under Prince Menshikov, and when he returned empty-handed the Russian armies entered Moldavia and Wallachia, that is to say modern Rumania, under the pretext of protecting the Balkan Christians. Thus war broke out in 1853, and in 1854 Britain and France came to the rescue of Turkey and landed substantial forces in the Crimea.

Russia lost the Crimea War in 1855 and in the Peace Treaty of Paris she had to renounce all her former treaty rights of

interfering in the internal affairs of Turkey: from then on, the process of freeing the subject nationalities of Rumania, Serbia and later Bulgaria and their establishment as independent states, not Russian vassals, entered into a new phase.

To-day we are witnessing Russia's Crimean revenge of 1945.

In the South the Balkan States of Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and even Hungary are to remain under Russian protection. The Baltic States in the North, freed after the last war and annexed by Russia at the beginning of the present conflict, are not even mentioned. In Central Europe Russia is subjugating Poland.

In his Crimean revenge on the Western Powers, who have betrayed their traditional principles concerning the freedom of the nations, Stalin scored where Nicholas I failed, and he is re-annexing all the territories which became free after the downfall of Nicholas II, and even far more than that.

TEN NATIONS

100 Million People—1 Million Sq. Km.

PARAGRAPHS 1-3 of the Crimean declaration refer to Germany, paragraph 4 to the San Francisco Conference, then follows the Declaration on Liberated Europe as paragraph 5, and two final paragraphs, the 6th on Poland and the 7th on Yugoslavia.

The Baltic countries, which in 1939 were free and independent, do not seem to exist to-day even as a memory for the leaders of the liberating Powers. Days, weeks and months pass without any news from there. These countries seem to be outside the pale of the world. A paper in London recently published the photographs of the so-called 16 heads of the Soviet Republics; following the representatives of Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Kazakstan, all in the depths of Asia, the pictures of Messrs. Paleckis, Kirchstein and Vares are to be a testimony of the existence of Soviet Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia; about their fate however no more is known than about that of those exotic Asiatic provinces. On the other hand, the Committee of the Free Balts in America has proclaimed towards the end of 1944 that the nations of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia are facing complete extermination and may not survive until the day comes when the world will start debating whether the Atlantic Charter should apply to these nations or not.

On December 31st, 1944, a broadcast from Moscow said that the Bulgarian politicians, including the former Regent, Prince Cyril, who have been imprisoned since the early autumn of last year (when Bulgaria was occupied by Russian troops), were to be committed for trial; since then sentences have been passed on them; there is no further news from that country.

On February 27th, 1945, two weeks after the signing of the Crimean declaration, M. Vyshinsky, M. Molotov's Deputy, arrived in Rumania, which is also occupied by Soviet troops. Next day the Government of General Radescu, on which all political groups were represented, was overthrown; King Michael's attempt to appoint Prince Stirbey in his place failed; on March 6th, 1945, the Communist leader, M. Groza, became head of the Government, and General Radescu fled for his life to the British political mission in Bucharest. This was indeed a peculiar way of applying in practice the principle, enunciated in Paragraph 5 of the Crimean Declaration, to wit:

"... the three Governments will jointly assist the people in any European liberated state or former Axis satellite state in Europe."

Hungary has completely disappeared behind the Russian smoke-screen, as never before in her stormy history.

Czecho-Slovakia has moved from London to Moscow. She will start on her new journey from there. The lesson of that itinerary is meant to be deeply impressed on all Czechs and Slovaks and also on the rest of the world.

In Yugoslavia, which is also within the area of the action of the Red Army, the legal Government under King Peter allied to Britain and to the United Nations is struggling for crumbs of influence from the omnipotent Marshal Tito, the ally of Russia.

And lastly, Poland:

By some strange right, Messrs. Churchill and Roosevelt have granted on M. Stalin the frontier of the partition of Poland drawn in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement of September 28th, 1939. By some unknown right, Messrs. Molotov, Clark-Kerr and Harriman, that is to say, to use old-fashioned language, three distinguished foreigners, are to set up, in Moscow, a Government for the rest of Poland, where authorities strictly controlled by Russia are already in power. Lastly, again by some unknown right, Messrs. Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, with M. Chiang-Kai-Shek, have excluded Poland from the 45 United Nations invited to San Francisco.

There was no loafing in Yalta: Central Eastern Europe lies indeed prostrate in the chains of liberation.

Russia has already paid visits to distant parts of Western and Central Europe. Thus, Suvorov roamed into Italy and Switzerland in 1799. Alexander I was in Paris in 1814. Paskiewich was in Hungary in 1848. But, on the whole, these inroads were of short duration, hardly longer than the visits which were paid by others to Russia.

Now it looks as if the Ural has been set in motion and is steam-rolling Russia before it deep into Europe, from the Arctic to the Mediterranean.

In her treaty of October, 1944, with Finland, Russia pushed her frontier westwards in the region of Petsamo, on the shores of the Arctic, and she also entered Northern Norway, occupying Kirkenes. In the middle of November, 1944, a Norwegian military mission, accredited to the Soviet High Command, arrived there. On this Northern sector, where the Arctic flows into the Atlantic, things on the whole look less menacing yet.

At the Southern end, in Greece, which the Russian troops have not reached, and where British forces have landed in October, 1944, a hard contest started at once under the guise of a Communist revolt; in this contest Great Britain had to make a big effort to defend the independence of this Southern outpost of our Continent, facing as it does Egypt and Suez.

Yugoslavia differs from Bulgaria and Rumania in this, that the two latter countries border only on the Black Sea beyond the Straits, while the former borders on the Adriatic, and through it on the Mediterranean. It is for this reason that paragraph 7 of the Crimean Declaration speaks, or rather dreams, of the independence of Yugoslavia, at least under the banners of Tito-Subasich. This arrangement cannot be called even a fifty-fifty solution.

Between these two hinges in the North and South, Russia is occupying the whole of Central Eastern Europe. She sits astride the Carpathians and she controls the basins and the estuaries of the Dvina, Niemen, Vistula, Oder and Danube. In the countries she has occupied in this area, she sets up pre-fabricated governments, of her own make.

In our eyes, Central Eastern Europe with its ten nations, with a thousand years of history behind each of them, with its one million sq. kilometres and its 100 million inhabitants, is collapsing and rapidly sinking.

What next?

A NEW GEOGRAPHY OF FREEDOM

THIS war is being fought under the banner of freedom. This is largely the result of the fact that two centres of militarism, aggression and domination, Germany and Japan, have built their internal regimes on the slavery of the individual, and refusing to admit the right of other nations to independent existence embarked upon a policy of limitless aggression. And the behaviour of these two Powers has induced millions of men to defy the aggressors and fight for freedom.

Throughout the war the consciousness that this war was not merely fought in self-defence against imperialist aggressors but in defence of the very principle of freedom, found manifold and unmistakable expression. The world understood at once that this battle was being waged for the Christian civilisation. This term covers what is meant by freedom and is even more embracing, as Christianity forms both the strongest stimulus of human life and the highest achievement of the human spirit.

Definitions of the freedom for which the world has fought have not been lacking. These definitions have been often strong and precise. And they were not forthcoming merely from studious scholars buried in their books, nor from pulpits or tribunes, but from the lips of the leaders of the United Nations in their gigantic struggle.

Thus, in his message to Congress of January 6th, 1941, President Roosevelt forged his famous slogan of the Four Freedoms: freedom of speech and expression, freedom to worship God, freedom from want, freedom from fear.

The fundamental principles of freedom and independence of the United Nations found their expression in the Atlantic Charter on August 14th, 1941, and in the Declaration of the United Nations of January 1st, 1942: no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned (Art. 2) and the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government (Art. 3).

The right of the nations to free life and to the integrity of their national territories was thus formulated in unmistakable terms.

In his speech of August 28th, Mr. Churchill deemed it useful to describe what he meant by freedom with yet greater precision:

“There are one or two quite simple, practical tests by which it can be known in the modern world in peace conditions,

namely: Is there the right to free expression of opinion and of opposition and criticism of the Government of the day? Have the people the right to turn out a Government of which they disapprove, and are constitutional means provided by which they can make their will apparent? Are their courts of justice free from violence by the Executive and free of all threats of mob violence and all association with any particular political parties? Will these courts administer open and well-established laws associated in the human mind with the broad principles of decency and justice? Will there be fair play for poor as well as the rich, for private persons as well as Government officials? Will the rights of the individual, subject to his duties to the State, be maintained, asserted and exalted? Is the ordinary peasant or workman earning a living by daily toil and striving to bring up a family free from the fear that some grim police organisation under the control of a single party like the Gestapo, started by the Nazi and Fascist parties, will tap him on the shoulder and pack him off without fair or open trial to bondage or ill-treatment? These simple practical tests are some of the title-deeds on which a new Italy could be founded."

If the things enumerated by Mr. Churchill do not exist in a country it means that, there, there is no such freedom for which the United Nations are fighting.

Recently in his 1944 Christmas message the Pope gave a very precise description of the freedom which the individual should enjoy in the State and every State in the international community, and, in particular, he strongly advised that:

"Every State should maintain equal sovereign rights."

* * *

But this bright light of future freedom is dismally dimmed throughout vast areas in the very heart of Europe.

The American and British armies, together with other Allied forces, among which the Poles have not been the least, are liberating in turn France, Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg. What happens? The Governments of these countries which resided in London have returned to their countries and there established their administration. These lands have been truly liberated and are truly enjoying the blessings of freedom."

Similarly in Greece, to which the British forces have brought liberation, in spite of the obstacles raised by the Communists

backed by Russia, the same principles have been vindicated. In his speech in the House of Commons on January 18th, 1945, Mr. Churchill strongly denounced the activities of the Communists and rejected the E.L.A.S. allegations that it represented a larger section of the Greek opinion than the Communist Party alone. He declared that the E.L.A.S. aim simply was:

“Making Greece a Communist State with the totalitarian liquidation of all opponents.”

Even in Italy, which had sided with Germany, the expulsion of the Germans by British and American forces, as well as the Polish forces, was followed by the formation of a fresh Italian Government appointed in a strictly constitutional fashion.

But here the liberation of nations from the German yoke ends; in those countries which are entered not by the Americans and the British but by the Russians the picture is completely different.

In Yugoslavia there seem to be insurmountable difficulties. And in Poland?

The Polish Government in London—the most indubitably lawful and legitimate Government of a country which was the first to fight the Germans side by side with Britain and France, and a Government under whose guidance the most uncompromising Underground Movement in Europe fought throughout the whole period of German occupation, a Government which formed in exile the largest Continental European armed force on the Allied side, ever gaining fresh laurels on land, at sea and in the air—this Government is not permitted by Russia to return home, and its supporters, more especially those who have fought so heroically against the Germans, are persecuted, arrested and deported to the Interior of Russia.

On the other hand, Russia had set up in Moscow a Committee which was later transferred to Lublin and then recognised by Russia as the lawful Government. This Committee has no legal basis whatever for its existence in the Polish Constitutional Law. It lacks any form of recognition by the Polish people. Briefly, it is a purely arbitrary creation of Russia in Poland and its aims may be described as:

“To make Poland a Communist State with the totalitarian liquidation of all opponents.”

What sort of liberation is this?

Germany arbitrarily annexed Western Poland to the Reich while the rest of the country was oppressed by them under a different name, though they could never find a Quisling to twist for them; Russia arbitrarily annexed Eastern Poland to the U.S.S.R. and oppressed the rest under a different name, concealing herself under the shield of a local authority of an exclusively Russian make.

So Poland, whose resistance to Germany was the signal for the outbreak of the war, is the only Allied country not to be liberated!

Has Russia not subscribed on January 1st, 1942, in Washington, together with Poland, the United States and Great Britain and 26 United Nations, to the principles of the Atlantic Charter which forbid all unilateral territorial changes and ensure the restoration of sovereignty and of governments of their own choosing to all the signatories?

Is this to signify that the new geography of freedom throughout the world, the chief aim of the present war, does not comprise Russia and her neighbours?

Why this exception, when true liberation is to be binding everywhere else, not only to the West of the Russian sphere of influence, but also to the East of it?

Indeed, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill proclaimed in Cairo on December 1st, 1943, that:

"All the territories that Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be returned to the Republic of China, and Korea shall become free and independent."

If China is to recover Manchuria, Formosa and the Pescadores, why should Poland not keep Wilno and Lwow?

If Korea is to be free and independent, why not Poland?

At the same time, in Africa, Ethiopia is recovering her independence and her territory.

It is indeed a very peculiar new geography of freedom.

* * *

Shut your eyes, think it all over again, and you will perceive an extraordinary map of the world.

Here lies the vast mass of Europe and Asia. From the Atlantic and the Western European countries bordering upon

it, and along the Mediterranean, there follows in the wake of the British and American soldiers, real, honest and true liberation. From the Pacific to the Far Eastern shores of Asia the British and American forces bring a liberation fuller than the countries concerned have ever known. But over Central Eastern Europe, which is being overrun by the Russians, there hangs a dark shadow; there is to be no liberation there. States will have no true independence. There will be no freedom for the nations and no free will or dignity for the peoples. And all this is to happen in the very place where Germany met armed resistance for the first time, resistance which gave to the world the signal to fight against the enslavement of nations and the degradation of man.

For those who still remember the promises of a free and better world this is indeed an appalling picture.

Shut your eyes once more and look at that picture not only in space but also in time.

We seem to be back in the darkest ages, centuries behind modern times. Every civilised right and law seems to have been broken and abandoned. Even the elementary right of a nation to independent existence has been crushed. Countries are conquered by invaders to be finally subjugated by their liberators.

Were this to be allowed to happen it would spell disaster not only for the nations of this unhappy belt of Eastern Central Europe. It would be tantamount to the withdrawing, after hundreds of years, of the most important frontier: the frontier of this Western Christian civilisation under whose banners millions are fighting, dying and conquering to-day. And once this frontier recedes who can foretell how far back it will go?

Thus perhaps not only one or two martyred nations, but many other nations as well, will have great difficulty in deciding whether this war ended in a glorious victory or in a staggering defeat.

THE DECISIONS ON POLAND

THE paragraph concerning Poland in the joint declaration signed by President Roosevelt, the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, and Marshal Stalin in Yalta, Crimea, on February 12th, 1945 (a declaration which, in its other paragraphs, contains many important and beneficent decisions), has been a

terrible shock to all Poles and also to all those who look forward to an era of justice in world affairs.

What are, indeed, the contents of this declaration with regard to Poland?

1.—First, the solution imposed at Yalta has been reached without any contact whatever with the Polish Government before, during or after that Conference. Both legally and morally this is an amazing feature of the Crimean Conference. This absence of contact represents a complete departure from the friendly and confident relations which had been established between the Polish Government and the United Nations, and in particular Britain and America, during the last five and a half years of their common struggle against Germany.

The President of the Polish Republic and the Polish Government in London are not only the lawful Polish authority representing the continued legal existence of the Polish State, but they are also recognised by every country in the world with the exception of the enemy powers. For five and a half years, from the very beginning of the war, they remained in close alliance with the Government of Britain and the most friendly contact with the Government of the United States. It was under the ægis of that Polish Government that the incomparable Polish resistance against the Germans in Poland was organised and directed, and it was under them that Polish armed forces abroad fought and fight side by side with their British and American allies.

The Crimean decisions have been taken not only without the concurrence but even without the knowledge of the Polish Government; no provision has been made for their participation in the application of the Crimean plan; nor was any reference whatever made to their existence.

2.—The problem of the frontiers of Poland has also been settled in a most peculiar way.

The Three Powers represented at the Crimean Conference have recognised the so-called Curzon Line as Poland's Eastern frontier. An overt trait of this line is that it cuts off almost one half of her territory from her body, including such celebrated Polish cultural centres at Lwow and Wilno and many districts with a clear Polish majority. Its more hidden trait is that it is an exact copy of the line partitioning Poland between Germany and Russia in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Agreement of September 28th, 1939.

The Western frontier of Poland is to be fixed only at the Peace Conference.

Could anything emphasise more strongly than this postponement of the solution of Poland's Western frontier that the speed with which the Eastern frontier had been settled had nothing to do with justice but was adopted merely to please Russia and silence Polish protests over the wrong done to their country?

3.—Where will the Government of the Polish State, or rather of what will remain of it after the seizure of the Eastern half by Russia, be formed?

In Moscow.

And by whom will this Government be formed?

By M. Molotov, assisted by the Ambassadors of the U.S.A. and Great Britain; these three gentlemen have been instructed beforehand to consult on this matter the members of the so-called Lublin Government; they have been silently but implicitly forbidden to consult the Polish Government in London which is still recognised by Britain and the United States; and they are entirely free in their choice of private Polish politicians with whom they would deem it advisable to communicate.

The newly-formed Government born in Moscow and with the self-appointed, or rather Moscow-appointed, so-called Lublin Government as its backbone is to be labelled a Government . . . of National Unity (this label, affixed in Moscow, is to be a sufficient decoy) and this Government is to hold . . . free elections in Poland.

These amazing decisions cause to the world not only a surprise but a sense of stupefaction.

IS IT FAIR?

It happens sometimes that people engaged in enlivened conversations dwell upon everything, but forget the most important item. It happens to the most respectable persons from the best society. This also occurs to the participants of very important meetings.

Something of that sort seems to have befallen the Prime Minister and the President in their Crimean conversations about Poland with Marshal Stalin. Everything seems to have been taken into account. But they have entirely forgotten the exist-

ence of the Polish Government in London, an Allied Government from the very beginning of the war.

How strange an omission!

Yes, they have forgotten the existence of the Government of whom Mr. Churchill said in the House of Commons on December 15th, 1944, after M. Mikolajczyk had been replaced by M. Arciszewski:

"We still recognise the Polish Government in London as the Government of Poland, as we have done since they reached our shores in the early part of this war."

This is the Government which organised the Polish resistance for which five million people have suffered death at the hands of the Germans; this is the Government of the only country which has not produced a single Quisling; this is the Government which has organised abroad large armed forces in the service of the United Nations, airmen who won their wings in the Battle of Britain, sailors who sailed the Seven Seas, and soldiers who won their laurels in Tobruk and Monte Cassino, at Falaise and in the Low Countries; this is the Government which was responsible for that unflinching attitude of the Poles, described by President Roosevelt as an inspiration to the world.

Perhaps this was not an involuntary omission, perhaps it was rather the consciousness that if any reference had been made to the lawful Government representing the legal continuity of the Polish State, the Big Three would have had to face the problem of Polish rights and not that of Russia's right to impose her will on Poland.

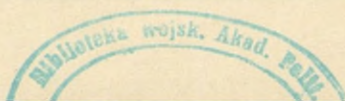
In Austria, depraved by forty years of Metternich rule, a famous phrase was coined by Prince Schwarzenberg about the middle of last century:

"L'Autriche va étonner le monde par son ingratitude . . . Austria will astonish the world by her ingratitude."

Now, a hundred years later, this Austrian ingratitude looks trifling and puny when compared to what has been achieved at the Crimean Conference.

THE LEGAL ASPECT

THE communique of February 12th, 1945, about the decisions reached after a week's discussion at Yalta in the Crimea, signed by the President, the Prime Minister and Marshal Stalin,



is indeed a most important statement of policy and an event of far-reaching importance in international life.

But what is its legal importance?

The two meetings of the leaders of the Three Great Powers held so far, at Teheran in December, 1943, and at Yalta in February, 1945, are the outcome of the very natural and justified desire of the Big Three to concert themselves, but these meetings have no basis whatever in any decisions taken by the United Nations as a whole. The only legal basis, and one may also say the Magna Charta of the United Nations, is to be found in the Joint Declaration of the 26 Allied States signed in Washington on January 1st, 1942, in which they made the principles of the Atlantic Charter of August 14th, 1941, their own, expressed the belief that they are fighting for the freedom and independence of their own and all other countries, and pledged themselves to use all their resources in this struggle, to co-operate closely with each other and not to conclude any separate armistice or peace. This fundamental and only joint declaration of all the United Nations did not empower the three Governments to take any decisions on their behalf and it does not contain the slightest reference to any such smaller executive body.

Thus the announcement of February 12th, 1945, is merely a summary of the decisions reached by the Big Three and it is only their individual declaration. It is noteworthy that the communique does not even mention the views or decisions of the three Governments but merely those of the three leaders present. On the whole any attempt at giving to that declaration a legal, binding force is carefully avoided in the text of that declaration, the only exception being military problems and the occupation of Germany about which, it is obvious, some binding though unrevealed decisions have been taken by the members of the Conference. Another exception is the proviso that the three Ministers of Foreign Affairs are to meet frequently in future. Otherwise the declaration does not mention decisions but uses expressions such as "we recognise it as just," "the three heads of Governments consider," "we recommend," and so forth.

It is, therefore, most striking that with regard to Poland, and only with regard to Poland, an entirely different line has been adopted:

a. Some decisions have been taken with regard to the organisation of the Government of the Polish Republic and these decisions are being immediately unilaterally implemented.

b. With regard to Polish frontiers the Western Powers have acquiesced in some changes unilaterally enforced.

These are, indeed, far-reaching deviations from the path of law.

* * *

In this conjunction, in addition to the general principles and norms of the International law, which were in force before the war and still are, the principles of the Atlantic Charter, endorsed as they are by the United Nations, should be also taken into consideration, the more so that the Crimean declaration in its 5th paragraph concerning the liberation of Europe (the paragraph immediately preceding the decisions reached with regard to Poland) quotes the Atlantic Charter twice as well as the Joint Declaration of the United Nations of January 1st, 1942:

"By this declaration we reaffirm our faith in the principles of the Atlantic Charter and our pledge in the Declaration of the United Nations."

Furthermore, firm pledges that the principles of the Atlantic Charter will be applied by Britain, the United States and Russia in their practical policies, have also been given in separate agreements.

Thus the British-Soviet agreement of May 26th, 1942, in its 5th paragraph regarding the co-operation of these two Powers to ensure the peace and security of Europe, says:

"They will take into account the interests of the United Nations in these objects and will act in accordance with the two principles of not seeking territorial aggrandisement for themselves and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States."*

* In his speech in the House of Commons, on February 28th, 1945, Mr. Petherick quoted the Clause 3 of the secret Protocol attached to the Anglo-Polish Treaty of Mutual Assistance of August 25th, 1939, as follows: "The undertakings mentioned in Article 6 of the Agreement, should they be entered into by one of the Contracting Parties with a third State, would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other Contracting Party." Paragraph 5 of the British-Soviet Agreement of May 26th, 1942, seems to be conform to this Clause. But the Crimean decisions or recommendations?

The statement issued from the White House on June 11th, 1942, on the occasion of M. Molotov's visit to Washington, said:

"Further were discussed fundamental problems of co-operation between the Soviet and the United States for safe-guarding the peace and security of freedom-loving peoples after the war. Both sides state with satisfaction the unity of their views on all these questions."

In reply to a question in the House of Commons (February 21st, 1945) Mr Churchill made a casual remark.

"The Atlantic Charter is a guide and not a rule."

But even so the position is not fundamentally altered. Whatever the description of the Atlantic Charter, there cannot be any doubt that its content was a pledge by Britain and America to the United Nations and that it was meant as a clarion call to them to continue their resistance and their struggle in the cause of the Allies. It would be very unfortunate if the United Nations were "guided" in their efforts by the promises and pledges of the Atlantic Charter and then "ruled" by such decisions as those agreed upon at Yalta in the Crimea.

I am afraid, in French this would mean:

—Les Nations Unies, guidées par le Charte de l'Atlantique, roulées par celle de la Mer Noire.

Let us examine the deeds in the light of the principles.

* * *

1.—The Attitude of the Crimean Powers towards the Polish Government.

Article 2 of the Joint Declaration of the United Nations signed in Washington on January 1st, 1942, says:

"Each Government pledges itself to co-operate with Governments signatory hereto . . ."

Among its signatories were the Governments of Poland, Britain, the United States and the U.S.S.R.

Now, how could the formation of a new government in Poland behind the back of the lawful Polish Government be described as a form of co-operation with it?

Even if this Joint Declaration of January 1st, 1942, had not been made binding upon the United Nations, such a procedure

would be inadmissible and unlawful in the light of the established principles of International Law. But this declaration, so recent and so fundamental for the assurance of good relations between the United Nations in the future, is binding, and it proclaims this principle anew and with increased emphasis. Nor could it be overlooked that the Crimea Declaration solemnly quotes this Joint Declaration of January 1st, 1942.

This contradiction between deeds and legal texts clearly set out cannot possibly be excused by any lawyer or, indeed, by any honest man.

Article 2 of the Joint Declaration of the United Nations has been violated in its spirit and its letter.

* * *

2.—The Formation of a New Polish Government.

Article 3 of the Atlantic Charter says:

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

How, then, is this new Polish Government for Poland to be formed? Who forms it, where, how, with whom, with whose assistance, against whom, and without whom or what: *quis, ubi, quomodo, cum quo, quibus auxiliis, contra quem, sine qua re?* Here are the answers to these questions.

Who will form the Government for Poland? M. Molotov with the British and American Ambassadors. Where? In Moscow. How? According to their own fancy. With whom? With the illegal Russian sponsored so-called Lublin Government as backbone, plus a few additions of their own choosing. With whose assistance? That of the N.K.V.D. Against whom? Against the existing fully lawful Polish Government which has directed the struggle of the Polish nation against the Germans. Without whom or what? Without any regard for Polish constitutional law which should be respected no less than the British or American constitutions.

So this is how the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live works in practice.

Article 3 of the Atlantic Charter has been violated in its spirit and its letter.

* * *

3.—Polish Frontiers and the Annexation of Eastern Poland.

Article 2 of the Atlantic Charter says:

“... They desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.”

Meanwhile Poland is to be given an Eastern frontier which leaves a substantial part of the country in the hands of Russia. What frontier is this? Under the misleading name of Curzon Line this is the frontier of the partition of Poland consecrated in the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement of September 28th, 1939, after the German invasion of Poland from the West of September 1st, 1939, and the Russian invasion from the East of September 17th, 1939.

Article 2 of the Ribbentrop-Molotov agreement says:

“Both countries recognise as final the frontier between their respective States’ interests, as set out in Article 1, and will resist any interference with this decision on the part of other Powers.”

Yes, they recognise as final and will resist any interference . . .

Russia is now carrying out her share of the threat which she made in conjunction with Germany in September, 1939: she recognises as final the frontier which she then drew with Germany in Poland, and she resists any interference with this decision on the part of other Powers.

This, in spite of the fact that the same Russia had declared in her agreement with Poland of July 30th, 1941:

“The Government of the U.S.S.R. recognises the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 as to territorial changes in Poland as having lost their validity.”

In spite of the fact, too, that the British Government in their note to the Polish Government on the same date, July 30th, 1941, had declared:

“His Majesty’s Government do not recognise any territorial changes which have been effected in Poland since 1939.”

And indeed in spite of the fact that on the following day, July 31st, 1941, the Government of the United States had made a similar declaration.

Despite all this, the Russian Government has again reaffirmed its position as it was at the time when Russia partitioned Poland in conjunction with Germany in September, 1939. Re-entering Poland in 1944, it has incorporated into the Soviet Union the part of Poland which in this partition was given to the U.S.S.R. by Hitler. And at the Crimean Conference it resisted any interference with this decision on the part of other Powers.

The incorporation of Eastern Poland into the U.S.S.R. is exactly as lawless an act as was the incorporation of Western Poland into the Reich in October, 1939.

So the concurrence of other Powers at Yalta in this decision is an obvious instance of an attempt to white-wash lawlessness in international relations. This British and American assistance was highly valued by Moscow. The paper "War and the Working Class," of March 15th, 1945, said:

"No one and nothing will succeed in nullifying the Crimean decisions with regard to Poland."

Thus Article 2 of the Atlantic Charter, and not only that Article alone, has been violated.

* * *

In the Joint Declaration of the United Nations of January 1st, 1942, the purposes of the Grand Alliance have been set forth in these words:

"... to defend life, liberty, independence, religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice in their own lands as well as in other lands ..."

Nor should Marshal Stalin's statement in his speech of November 6th, 1941, be forgotten:

"We have not and cannot have war aims such as to impose our will or our regime on the Slav peoples or other subjugated European peoples who wait for help and succour. Our aim is to help these peoples in their struggle for liberty against Nazi tyranny, and later to allow them to decide freely the destinies

of their countries. No interference in the internal affairs of other peoples."

And to-day?

Russia's will is to be Poland's law.

Poland is told to agree to Russian demands and peremptory orders. At the same time she is given some vague and indefinite promises. But one may ask, what was the value of not only promises but very definite and very binding pledges given before?

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATE

THE Crimean debates in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords have shown that of the M.P.'s and peers friendly to Poland (and there is no doubt that there is a very general feeling of friendship for Poland in this country) some were anxious only to maintain Poland as a free country independent from Russia, while others continued to uphold the view that Poland, from the first an Allied country and first to rise in arms against Germany, should not lose a great part of her territory including Lwow and Wilno.

* * *

In his speech of February 27th, 1945, the Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, told the House that he accepted the so-called Curzon Line as Poland's Eastern frontier not because he bowed to force, but because he considered it as just and right.

Why is it just and right?

Mr. Churchill mentioned that in 1914 the frontiers of Tsarist Russia ran to the West of Warsaw.

"Russia is, in fact, accepting a frontier which over immense distances is 200 or 300 miles farther to the East than what was Russian territory for many generations under the Tsarist regime."

This was obviously a reference to the frontiers which Russia obtained as a result of the partitions of Poland, and for this reason it should be recalled that:

1. The so-called Curzon Line is in practice the frontier drawn by Germany and Russia in the new partition of Poland sealed

by the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of September 28th, 1939, and the frontier drawn in this partition was the same as that which Russia obtained after the third partition of Poland in 1795, with the addition of Lwow and South Eastern Poland, which Russia never possessed.

2. In 1815 at the Congress of Vienna Alexander I obtained a further addition of Polish territory with the town of Warsaw, which was to be made into an independent Kingdom of Poland, but was deprived of that independence by Russia soon afterwards.

Russia follows the same policy to-day.

1. She annexes Eastern Poland into the U.S.S.R. up to the frontier which she obtained as a result of the partition of Poland in the 18th Century, with the addition of Lwow and South-Eastern Poland.

2. She recognises the rest of Poland as an independent country, but under a government appointed by her in Lublin, or under some other government set up in Moscow.

The frontier which Russia obtained after the partitions of Poland in the 18th Century and also the Ribbentrop-Molotov frontier of 1939, now disguised under the name of Curzon Line, is not one which could commend itself to an enlightened and fair-minded public opinion. Indeed, historians in all countries have been unanimous in denouncing the partitions of Poland as the greatest crime in modern history. And the revolutionary government of Russia, headed by Lenin, in an official decree of the Council of People's Commissars of August 29th, 1918, declared the Russo-Prusso-Austrian partition treaties as null and void:

"Owing to their being contrary to the principle of the self-determination of nations and of the revolutionary consciousness of the Russian people."

It would, indeed, be an irony of fate if now Russia were to obtain all she had seized during the partitions of Poland and even more than that.

Mr. Churchill added that the so-called Curzon Line was drawn in 1919:

"At a time when Russia had few friends among the Allies, in fact, I may say that she was extremely unpopular."

This is true, Soviet Russia was at that time very much out of favour, but this line was drawn not in negotiations with her but, on the contrary, with a committee of former Tsarist officials in Paris, headed by M. Sazonov, the former Tsarist Minister of Foreign Affairs. Their memorandum was received, in April, 1919, at the Peace Conference in Paris, by the Committee for Polish Affairs, and they demanded a frontier which would prevent Russia from losing any of her acquisitions in the three partitions of the 18th Century. The Committee agreed to that (though only temporarily) because the defeat of Red Russia by White Russia was then eagerly and generally anticipated.

However, when the Red Armies marched on Warsaw in July, 1920, and the Supreme Council in a telegram from Spa signed by Lord Curzon (hence the name of the Curzon Line) urged an armistice upon Russia along that line (it was always meant as a line for the delineation of the contending armies and not as a frontier), the Soviet Government rejected these proposals, stated that it preferred to negotiate with Poland directly, and added that it was ready to grant Poland a frontier far more favourable than the one suggested by Tsarist politicians.

* * *

The Prime Minister, Mr. Churchill, and the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden, repeatedly told the House of Commons:

"We have at no time guaranteed Poland's pre-war frontier."

Let us not go into the meaning of the word "guaranteed," let us look only at the essentials on the reasonable assumption that in any case the declarations of H.M. Government were meant to convey some meaning.

What can be the meaning of the note handed by Mr. Eden to General Sikorski on July 30th, 1941, the day of the signing of the Polish-Soviet agreement:

"On the occasion of the signature of the Polish-Soviet Agreement of to-day's date . . . I also desire to assure you that His Majesty's Government do not recognise any territorial changes which have been effected in Poland since August, 1939."

Once more, what can be the meaning of these words?

Again, what can be the meaning of Article 2 of the Atlantic Charter which was first proclaimed by Mr. Churchill and Mr.

Roosevelt (on August 14th, 1941) as a message in which they appealed to all the United Nations, including Poland, to continue their resistance and struggle, and subsequently signed as a Joint Declaration (of January 1st, 1942) by all the Allied Nations, including Britain, Poland and Russia:

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

What is the meaning of these words?

These solemn declarations must have had some meaning and Britain, being a signatory, must have thought so.

I should like also to draw the attention of the reader to Mr. Churchill's statement in his speech of February 27th, 1945:

"I know of no Government which stands to its obligations, even in its own despite, more solidly than the Russian Soviet Government."

Here Poles can recall Article I of the Polish-Soviet Agreement of July 30th, 1941:

"The Government of the U.S.S.R. recognise the Soviet-German treaties of 1939 as to territorial changes in Poland as having lost their validity."

And now we witness a revival of the frontier concocted in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact of September 28th, 1939.

Again the Poles can recollect a statement by Marshal Stalin in his speech of November 6th, 1941:

"We have not and cannot have war aims such as to impose our will or our regime on the Slav peoples or other subjugated European peoples who wait for our help and succour. Our aim is to help these peoples in their struggle for liberty against Nazi tyranny, and later to allow them to decide freely the destinies of their countries. No interference in the internal affairs of other peoples."

And now we have the so-called Lublin Government and the setting up of a Polish Government . . . in Moscow.

To Mr. Churchill's words that he knows of no government which stands more solidly by its declarations than the Russian Soviet Government, every Pole would like to reply:

"I know one—the British Government."

There is no doubt that every Pole would have made such a reply until the last few days.

* * *

Here are some excerpts from the House of Commons Crimean Debate (February 27 and 28, March 1, 1945) which will remain a tribute to the fairness of the Mother of Parliaments for ever engraved in human memory.

Mr Greenwood: "I say it really is a cardinal sin for three Great Powers—one of whom has an interest which we have not got—in the absence of the people whose lives are being bartered away, to determine the future of any country."

Lord Dunglass: "I feel rather different from other Members about this territorial matter. I believe that if you try to force what is an act of power within the framework of the Atlantic Charter, you will not whitewash the act but you will break the Charter."

Sir William Beveridge: "I need not emphasise the difference except to say that the fact that Russia has liberated any part of Poland is not any reason why she should have any part of it."

Captain McEwen: "It amounts to little more or less than a complete acceptance of the Russian point of view . . . I am told that I can talk as much as I like about a bear's hug but that is nothing more or less than prejudice and, in fact, this is merely the bear's way of showing its affection . . . Both for the sake of my own conscience and in the hope of lessening the possibilities of this sort of thing repeating itself at some future stage, I feel I cannot allow it to pass without registering a definite but uncompromising protest."

Captain Alan Graham: "It is, indeed, a mournful reflection that this Empire, which stood alone in 1940, except for Poland, against the might of triumphant Nazi Germany, cannot now, when she has mighty Allies by her side, stand up for juster treatment of her first and most martyred Ally of this war."

Mr. Petherick: "As a result of the Yalta Agreement, if it goes through, Poland is to lose nearly half of her territory, a third of her population, 85 per cent. of her oil and natural gas, half her timber and peat, half her chemical industry, nearly half her grain, hemp and flax, and nearly 40 per cent. of her water

power, potassium mines and phosphates, and the ancient Lion City of Lwow which stood up for centuries against attacks from North and South and from the East."

Commander Sir Archibald Southby: "If it is agreed that so great is the strength of Russia in Europe that she must inevitably in the end obtain what she wants by force, then, although we might not be able to influence that fact, there can be no reason why we should now deliberately underwrite any action which we believe to be morally wrong."

Major Lloyd: "I look upon the intentions of the Yalta Agreement as downright annexation of a large portion of Poland's territory . . . I believe myself that it is a very definite breach of the Anglo-Russian Treaty, a very definite moral breach of the Anglo-Polish Treaty, and I am quite certain that we have once and for all departed from the guidance of the Atlantic Charter . . . I believe that we are the trustees of Poland, of this weak country which has done so much to help us in this war. We are her trustees and we dare not let her down. We are about to let her down, and that is an act of which I shall always be ashamed and in which I will not participate to-day."

Captain Thorneycroft: "I rise to support the Government . . . I concede at once—and this may be embarrassing to the Government—that I do not regard the Polish settlement as an act of justice. It may be right or wrong, it may be wise or foolish, but at any rate it is not justice as I understand the term."

Major Lord Willoughby de Eresby: "When I saw the report of the Yalta Conference I did have a feeling of having been let down . . . I cannot help feeling many who were with me in the Army might have the same feeling. On instructions from the War Office it was our habit to hold once a week what became known as A.B.C.A. discussions. One of the most popular and, indeed, the most frequent of those discussions was the question of what we were fighting for . . . When I say 'Poland' I do not mean, and we did not mean, Poland as decreed by Soviet Russia or underwritten to-day by the British Government, or Poland as imagined by the late Lord Curzon, but a Poland with similar frontiers to those we guaranteed, and over which we went to war at such very great cost in life and suffering, frontiers extended possibly at the expense of a defeated Germany. I cannot help regretting that I shall be asked soon to approve of an agree-

ment whereby the frontiers of Poland are to be radically altered from those which we pledged ourselves to preserve, an agreement embodying a settlement which we know is distasteful to those many heroic and gallant fellows who have fought for us on land, on sea and in the air during the past five years."

Mr. Raikes: The real issue of this Amendment is far wider than Poland. It is the issue of the good name of Britain among the nations of the world. Are we in the attitude we are adopting at the present time, encouraging as the result of the Yalta Agreement, the nations of Europe to say, as they have often said in the past, that Britain is the friend and hope of the weak? That is the touchstone and test . . . In speech after speech after Teheran, the Prime Minister has said that he regarded the Curzon Line as necessary for Russian security. He has said it with firmness and vigour and I am sure that he believes it. What did he say yesterday? He said that the new Poland moving further West would have no great fear of danger from Germany, because drastic steps would be taken to prevent any offensive action by Germany for many years to come. If that is so, what have 180,000,000 Russians to fear? "

Mr. McGovern: "With the deportation of millions of Poles, and the putting to death of a large number of Polish politicians and Trade Union leaders, and of every individual who does not subscribe to the totalitarian ideals of Marshal Stalin, I have grave doubts about the carrying out of this democratic plebiscite."

Major-General Sir Edward Spears: "The question that I put to myself is this: Was the Agreement arrived at at Yalta in conformity with the principles upon which this war is being fought? That is the question I imagine many other Members put to themselves. Having heard the Prime Minister, I came to the conclusion that he, at any rate, was convinced that that was so. I was prepared to accept that, and to support him, if I had not felt that not even a six-line Whip would have made me vote for the Government."

Mr. Pickthorn: "What I find it impossible to give positive approval to, is that so far as I know it is the first time in history that one country has had both its regime and its boundaries altered in the course of the war by three other nations—all in alliance with it, or at least two of them are in alliance in every

sense of the word, and the third is in alliance in one sense or another—without that country being present.”

These are excerpts only from a few speeches, in all of which the defence of right and justice found a strong and admirable expression.

* * *

On March 1st, 1945, Polish aptitude for politics was denied both in the House of Lords and in the House of Commons.

In the House of Lords Viscount Samuel said:

“But this must in candour be confessed, in statesmanship they have shown little aptitude.”

In the House of Commons the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Attlee, who as usual confirmed his friendship for Poles and paid tribute to them, added:

“But I cannot say that political wisdom is an outstanding quality among them.”

These criticisms were due in both cases to the unwillingness of the Poles to accept the Curzon Line and to their present rejection of the Crimean decisions.

Mr. Petherick's words in the Debate on the previous day may perhaps provide an answer:

“I have heard it said that the Poles are a difficult people. Perhaps they are. So would we be, if our country were to be given away to somebody else.”

And on March 1st Viscount Elibank said this about the Curzon Line:

“If I were a Pole I should feel very, very strong about this.”

What is political wisdom and statesmanship and what constitutes deficiency in these virtues?

The Polish Government, like almost all Poles, refuses to see nearly one half of Poland, including Wilno and Lwow, severed from her body. It refuses not only because this is an appalling wrong but also because it is not in a position to accept it. The Polish Constitution forbids the Government to alienate national territory in time of war without the assent of Parliament. And it is this attitude of the Polish Government and of Poles which is denounced as a lack of political wisdom.

And when the British Government defends the integrity of the British Empire and abides by the laws which rule it, is it guilty of political ineptitude?

Why is it that when Poland refused to surrender her rights in Danzig and a stretch of country across Polish Pomerania and resisted the German attack, paying an untold price in the sufferings of millions of Poles, this attitude was called, in English, political wisdom and statesmanship, while, when she refuses to surrender half the country to the Russians and accept a position of vassalage for what remains of it, it is called, in English, lack of political wisdom and statesmanship?

In Polish the appellation is the same in both cases.

Though they are charged with the lack of political acumen, the Poles are not so naive and perhaps even less naive than other peoples.

It is often claimed now that had the Poles agreed to the Curzon Line a year ago, after Teheran, there would have been no Lublin Committee and all that followed in its wake.

Whence this certitude?

Poles know, and all should know, that when M. Mikolajczyk with Messrs. Romer and Grabski were on their way to Moscow in late July, 1944, they learned in Cairo that the Russian Government had received the representatives of the Lublin Committee in the Kremlin and concluded with them an agreement about the provisional administration of Poland, thus creating a *fait accompli* just before their arrival.

Is it true proof of political wisdom and statesmanship to shut one's eyes to facts and realities and discourse upon unfounded suppositions such as what would have happened if and so forth?

But, granted that there is a good deal of truth in these charges that the Poles are deficient in statesmanship, this is not the end of the story yet.

Indeed, during the last 20 years of the reborn Polish State, from what model, from what country and from what statesmen was Poland to learn and assimilate political wisdom and statesmanship?

* * *

On March 1st, 1945, the House of Commons, by 413 "Ayes" against 0 "Noes," and the House of Lords *nem dis.*, passed the motion tabled by the Government:

"That this House approves the declaration of joint policy agreed to by the three Great Powers at the Crimea Conference and, in particular, welcomes their determination to maintain unity of action not only in achieving the final defeat of the common enemy but thereafter in peace as in war."

The day before only 25 M.P.s—against 396—voted for the so-called Polish Amendment, which said:

"... but remembering that Great Britain took up arms in war of which the immediate cause was the defence of Poland against German aggression and in which the overriding motive was the prevention of the domination by a strong nation of its weaker neighbours, regrets the decision to transfer to another power the territory of an ally contrary to treaty and to Article 2 of the Atlantic Charter and furthermore regrets the failure to ensure to those nations which have been liberated from German oppression the full right to choose their own government free from the influence of any other power."

An important comment on this vote can be found in the speech of the leader of the Labour Party, Mr. Arthur Greenwood:

"If I were to be committed to every word in the White Paper and to every word of the Prime Minister's speech I should feel some reluctance in giving it my support in the Division Lobby. But if my right hon. Friend (the Prime Minister) appreciates that there may be many Members of the House who, on one point or another, have mental reservations which they may express, and if I may take it from him that those reservations can be freely expressed and that he will not use it in evidence against us, if my right hon. Friend will assume that on the points where there is no disagreement, we are wholeheartedly behind the Government, on terms like that, I think I can support the Motion in the Division Lobby."

Continuing, Mr. Greenwood made the chief reservations with regard to Poland.

Some Members who refrained from voting for the Government's Motion, and said so, did not vote for the Amendment either.

Mr. Raikes said in the House:

"One thing is certain, however great the vote may be to-day, it will not be able to go out that all who voted for the Motion voted for it because they believe that the Motion was just."

Mr. H. G. Strauss resigned from the Government and informed the Prime Minister that he could not support the Government's policy with regard to Poland.

After Munich Mr. Duff Cooper resigned from the Government. After three days' debate the Motion supporting Mr. Chamberlain's policy was passed by 366 votes against 144 (there was then no Government of National Unity and the Labour Party was in opposition). Nineteen Conservatives, among whom were Messrs. Churchill and Eden, abstained.

The vote of March 1st, 1945, after Yalta, gave to the Government a majority similar to that obtained by Mr. Chamberlain on October 6th, 1938, after Munich.

Nor does the analogy stop there.

SAN FRANCISCO

Four days after the conclusion of the Crimea Debates in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords (March 5th, 1945) the Governments of the United States, America, Great Britain, the U.S.S.R. and China sent invitations to 44 United Nations Governments:

"... to send representatives to a conference of the United Nations to be held on April 25th, 1945, at San Francisco, in the United States of America, to prepare a charter for a general international organisation for the maintenance of international peace and security."

This invitation was sent to the Governments of 44 United Nations, that is to say to all of them with the sole exception of the Polish Government; at the same time it was announced that this invitation had been postponed until a Polish Government is formed in accordance with the Yalta recipe.

The San Francisco conference is convoked in accordance with Article 8 of the Atlantic Charter which was endorsed by the original 26 United Nations in their Joint Declaration of January 1st, 1942. The Polish Government in London was a signatory to that act. This Polish Government is recognised by all the United Nations with the single exception of the U.S.S.R., and the Polish armed forces under this lawful Government have fought for five years and are still fighting side by side with the armed forces of the other United Nations.

The question arises, who is entitled and on what grounds to exclude the Polish Government?

It would seem that this lawful Government must be invited and if some other Government is constitutionally set up later, the duties and rights of its predecessor will normally devolve upon it. That a different course, contrary to every precedent and practice, has been adopted shows that both commonsense and elementary honesty have completely disappeared from the policy of the Great Powers towards Poland. The creation of a better international order begins with a lawless act of blatant injustice, namely with the exclusion of the nation which was the first to take up in arms Germany's challenge.

* * *

Thus the building of a new and better post-war world, announced in the Atlantic Charter and endorsed by all the United Nations by their Washington declaration of January 1st, 1942, has begun with the omission of Poland from the list of the Powers invited to San Francisco for April 25th, 1945.

Three things should be borne in mind:

1. That the San Francisco Conference is to implement Article 8 of the Atlantic Charter;
2. That Poland is one of the original 26 United Nations (since then their number has increased to 45) who signed the Washington Declaration of January 1st, 1942;
3. That this foundation act which forms the legal basis for the convocation of the San Francisco Conference has been signed by the constitutional and lawful Polish Government.

Thus, the first question which arises is: Who claims the right to exclude from the United Nations a nation and a Government who are signatories to the fundamental charter of the Allied coalition?

The rights of the four inviting Powers, that is to say, the U.S.A., Great Britain, Russia and China, are inexistent in this respect and no one has ever granted such a right to these Powers. There is no lawyer in the whole world who could honestly and seriously claim that these four Powers have a shadow of right to exclude one of the signatories of the Washington Declaration. This is no more than a striking abuse on their part.

The exclusion of one Power by the four inviting Powers is the kernel of the problem, not the pretext under which this exclusion was pronounced.

The inviting Powers claim that they are waiting for the setting up of an illegal Polish Government—to replace the lawful one—which is to be concocted in Moscow by M. Molotov, Mr. Harriman and Sir Archibald Clark-Kerr, who have no right whatever to settle Polish affairs. Every other Government which has signed the Washington act can be treated in a similar manner: you will not be invited until we form another government for you. This is adding insult to injury and, instead of admitting the truth, the Powers pretend to be waiting for something.

Nor is the slightest legal significance to be attached to the fact that the Polish Government, recognised by all the United Nations and by all States with the exception of the enemy powers, has no diplomatic relations with Russia, who, indeed, severed them. The attitude of one of the 45 Powers cannot determine the attitude of 44 others. After the Dumbarton Oaks conference of September, 1944, the plans prepared there were communicated to the Polish Government (though at that time it had no diplomatic relations with Russia either) and that Government communicated its observations to all other United Nations. To-day the only legal Polish Government is still recognised by all the Powers though it has been passed over in the list of Powers invited to San Francisco.

There is hardly any other instance of such unexampled contempt for international law as shown here. Is this to be the beginning of a better world? Then, this beginning is anything but promising.

Another question requires an answer to-day: if such contempt for the Washington Charter of the United Nations is possible, what is the value of international acts endorsed and signed by all the United Nations in Washington?

* * *

What will the opening of the San Francisco Conference look like?

On April 25th, 1945, 45 United Nations will gather at San Francisco and begin their deliberations. They will look round and not in vain. Indeed the picture they will see will be a very forceful summary of the present war.

The war broke out on September 1st, 1939. Poland was the first to resist Germany along a frontier of 1600 miles. Where is Poland? She is not present. Too bad! The beginning of the war was lost somehow on the way. Let us proceed further on.

On September 17th, 1939, Poland, attacked by Germany from the West, was attacked by Russia from the East along a frontier of 1000 miles. This new attack was the result of a Russo-German plot dated August 23rd, 1939. The victim of the aggression is absent, but the aggressor, Russia, is present. We begin to see more clearly, so we can proceed further on.

Poland fought her lonely battle for a whole month. Warsaw surrendered only on September 28th, Modlin on September 30th, Hel on October 2nd and Kock on the 5th October, 1939. It was only after the German attack on Holland, Belgium and France in May, 1940, and after the victorious Blitzkrieg in the West that the world realised the value of Polish resistance for a whole month, and the invaluable time it gave to the Western Powers to prepare for the inevitable German onslaught. But the events of that month, when Poland fought with cavalry against tanks and with 250 planes against 5000 German planes, are not recorded in San Francisco.

On September 30th, 1939, two days after the partition of Poland, signed on September 28th, 1939, by Von Ribbentrop (Oh! he is not here) and Molotov (Oh! yes, here they are), a new Polish Government was constitutionally set up in Paris under the premiership of General Sikorski, appointed by the President of the Polish Republic, M. Racziewicz. It was the first Government in this war which, though its country was occupied by the enemy, organised further resistance abroad and thus gave a model for the other countries of Europe which were to be subsequently invaded and conquered. Across mountains, forests and seas the Polish youth flocked from Poland to the Polish forces in France. Within six months the Polish Army in France numbered 100,000 soldiers; several Polish warships miraculously escaped from the Baltic to join the British Navy, and the Polish Air Force grew from strength to strength. The agreements concluded between the Polish Government and the Governments of France, Great Britain, and later also the United States, provided the basis for the Polish forces which were, and are, to the amazement of the world, the strongest armed force from the Continent of Europe. But in San Francisco their representatives are absent.

Inwentaryzacja
1984

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Then five years of fighting of the Polish armed forces abroad. Indeed, exactly five years, because it was on April 25th, 1940, that the Polish Mountain Brigade sailed from Brest to Narvik, and it is to-day, April 25th, 1945, that we are meeting in San Francisco. Only the Poles are absent.

And they were in France in June, 1940, on the Maginot Line and along the Marne.

They were in Britain when she fought her lonely battle for her very existence. From August to October, 1940, Polish air-men shot down 220 planes over London and over the Channel, and before 1945 this number rose to nearly a thousand enemy aircraft shot down by Poles in air combats. When invasion threatened the British Isles between the summer of 1940 and the spring of 1941 the Polish soldiers kept watch by the side of their British comrades along the Scottish shores.

They were in North Africa in 1941, defending Tobruk.

They took part in the air invasion of Europe, and before the end of 1944 they dropped 26 millions 159 thousands 847 pounds of bombs on Germany and German-occupied countries.

They were present on all the seas and they were so eager for battle that the First Lord of the Admiralty said, in 1944, that the number of engagements in which the small Polish Navy took part was truly incredible.

In 1943 they fought in Italy at Monte Cassino and along the Gothic Line.

In 1944 they were again in France, in Normandy, at Falaise, in Belgium and in Holland, where they fought at Breda and Arnhem.

For five years they fought against the Germans in Poland. They fought in the country which alone did not produce a single Quisling, which lost some 5,000,000 people in this struggle and which had the most powerful and strong underground movement in Europe. A movement which, e.g., was responsible for 7000 attacks on German supply trains and for the two-months rising of Warsaw against the Germans in the summer of 1944.

Yes, they were present everywhere, except San Francisco.

The representatives of the 44 United Nations look round. The 45th member is conspicuous by his absence. On one face, then another, then on 10, then on 40, then on 43, a blush of shame appears.

Printed by The Munro Press, Ltd., Perth, Scotland

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Nr. 17984



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