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## POWER POLITICS

THE BASIS OF THE ALLIANCE concluded between Great Britain and Poland was the conviction of both contracting parties that the policy of the German Reich menaced both Polish interests on the one hand and the interests of the British Empire on the other. The alliance between Poland and France was based on the same principles of a joint defence of the integrity and independence of the two contracting states.

We are not mistaken in supposing that when these agreements were made there was no word of the future organization of the world. The Poles carried out their obligation to defend France and Great Britain to the limits of their ability. This has never been questioned by anyone. In good faith Poland awaits a full mutual response from Great Britain and the liberated French Republic in the future.

In the most difficult period, after the capitulation of France, those who direct British policy joined with the President of the United States to define their war aims on a world scale. The war aim of great and small Allied nations alike was to be the defence of "western civilization" or "Christian civilization" against attacks by dictators, pagans and atheists.

The ultimate war aims were officially formulated in the Atlantic Charter, which promised full independence, integrity and a joint realization of universal prosperity to all nations, and thus, as we supposed, to those above all who were fighting for these principles.

When the Atlantic Charter was proclaimed, British and American soldiers had the right to meet death or injury believing that they were fighting not only for the interests of their own already powerful and wealthy countries, but also for justice in the world and for a better future for all mankind. Polish soldiers had the right to share this same conviction, and the population in our country, tortured mercilessly in the fight against the superior force of the enemy.

The leaders of the English-speaking countries became by proclaiming the Atlantic Charter the leaders of a cause which overleaped the dimensions of normal war for the interests of one's own state, and thus contracted quite clear and distinct obligations in the names of their respective states in relation to their own fighting citizens but to an even greater extent to the other nations waging the common struggle.

The subsequent Soviet signature of the Atlantic Charter caused the formal responsibility for the realization of the principles therein expressed to be divided between three and not two world powers. Nevertheless there remained as always a considerable difference between the moral responsibility of the originators and that of those who later announced their adherence to it. In a very short time it was clearly seen that Soviet policy was not going to submit to the Atlantic Charter; on the contrary, even while the war was going on and before her own territory was entirely freed, she began to make aggressive demands on Great Britain's oldest and most loyal ally. From the mouth of the British Premier we have recently learnt that the British Government is in sympathy with these aggressive demands.

At the same time it became evident that three most democratic, peace-loving and Christian nations, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, are to be incorporated forcibly into the Soviet Union, not in part but as a whole. These three nations, who are a danger to nobody, have, like Poland, been excluded from the application of the Atlantic Charter, while three other states—Austria, Korea and Iran—have had their integrity and independence declared, probably because of their special services to the victory of democratic ideals.

This apostasy from the ideals of the Atlantic Charter is explained by the necessity of keeping Russia in the war against Germany. For after an explanation of mutual views between Russia, the



"The Man of Sorrows," by Mirecki, a young Polish artist, now serving with the Polish Forces in Great Britain.

On the back page: Fragments of the Reredo in Our Lady Church in Cracow, work of the greatest and most famous Polish sculptor, Wit Stworz (fifteenth century). This altar is now taken to Germany.

THE PRESENT WAR HAS ALREADY swallowed up so many victims, so much blood and tears have flowed, such an infinity of pain and suffering is behind us, that the sight of death has already ceased to make any impression. The thousands and hundreds of thousands dead on the battle-fields or murdered by the occupying powers, the descriptions of refined tortures in concentration camps, have to a large extent dulled human feelings and the instinctive response to the harvest of death.

But there is one death which one can never regard with apathy—that death which occurred on Golgotha nineteen hundred years ago. Here mortal beings—men—are dying; there died God—in His nature of a man. The Way of the Cross and the last act of the drama which was played on the mount of Calvary come before us most expressively during Lent. The spirit of every Christian lives through the various stages of Our Lord's Passion, accompanies the Redeemer before the judges, walks behind Him through the streets of Jerusalem to Gol-

gotha, to stand beneath the Cross with His sorrowing Mother and the faithful disciple and to witness the last words and the last breath of Our Lord, until the words "Consumatum est."

How lively are the pictures of the leading figures in this Divine Tragedy, as presented to us by the Gospels. Judas, who, for an insignificant gain, betrays his Master. Peter, from fear of force, denies Him to whom only a few hours before he promised: "Lord, with Thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death" (Luke xxii, 33). Pilate, aware of Christ's innocence, delays the sentence which will condemn Him, resorts to half-hearted methods, giving the order to scourge Jesus with the thought that this will save His life. And when this faint-hearted compromise only incites the enemies of Jesus, he finally pronounces the death sentence, washing his hands before the throng and saying cynically: "I am innocent of the blood of this just person" (Mat. xxvii, 24). Fearing to lose the Emperor's good grace, Pilate decides to sacrifice Truth.

States and Great Britain, the conviction grew up that co-operation between these three powers on the basis of the Atlantic Charter is impossible, whereas it is possible on a basis of division into spheres of interests, naturally of other nation's interests.

Decisions in this direction are based on the idea of assuring world peace for the future not on the principle of law and justice, but of a balance of power.

However, the experience of history

teaches us that every time powerful states divided world rule between themselves without consulting the smaller states, on a basis of spheres of interest, disputes between them were avoided only for a very short time. Thus, after the pacts between Napoleon and Alexander at Tilsit and Erfurt to divide their separate spheres of interest, came the war of 1812. The division of spheres of interest between Russia and Japan resulted in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904.

In order to get rid of Jesus and take His life, His enemies the Pharisees start a deliberate propaganda drive. They suborn false witnesses, they send lying rumours about Him amongst the crowds, trying to make the latter turn against Jesus. These same crowds which followed their Master for three years, ardently listened to His teachings and witnessed the miracles, sometimes forgetting heat and hunger, which some days before His Passion, on Palm Sunday, gave Him a triumphal entry, raising shouts of "Hosannah"—on Good Friday howled before the palace of Pilate: "Away with Him, away with Him, crucify Him" (John xix, 15).

It is true that Christ was not altogether deserted. This would be an appalling testimony for mankind. On Good Friday there were souls which felt the pain with Jesus. On His way to Calvary the Redeemer met with frequent signs of sympathy: "And there followed Him a great multitude of the people, and of women who bewailed and lamented Him. But Jesus turning unto them said: Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days are coming in which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the breasts that never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us" (Luke xxiii, 27-40). Passive sympathy cannot be reconciled with a Christian attitude, which shows action when principles and laws are being broken.

All these things which happened on that Good Friday were not, alas, isolated events, which were not to be repeated in history, when Truth was again crucified. In the world political scene, besides the eternal Pharisees, who wish to kill Truth for their own interests, there are other figures too, as if they had been taken literally from the tragedy of Calvary. There is the weak Peter, denying promises with oaths. There are the fearful Pilates, appalled at the very thought that they may lose the good graces of Might. There are the statesmen, and the crowds, moving unconsciously to the strings pulled by a paid group of propaganda specialists. There are also the pitiful women, weeping and helpless at the sight of Truth brought to the place of execution. Some await the words of the victim—"Consumatum est"—thinking that with them everything will be over, and it will be possible to go quietly home.

An answer to all this is given by the message sent by Cardinal Hinsley to our nation at the news of the attack on Poland in September 1939:

"The darkest hour on Calvary was the

dawn of the day of Salvation. The Crucifixion of Christ our King was not the end, but the beginning of His Reign. His Resurrection proclaimed the victory of the Cross, and there is the sole hope of mankind. The very means devised by the enemies of God to bury the memory Our Saviour for ever became the reason of their defeat.

"The soul of Poland cannot be slain: she will rise again in the strength of her undying faith. Over her martyred body the forces of evil on this side and on that may gloat for a brief space, but the moral power of right will give her renewed life. . . ."



The sorrowful Christ—a fine example of Polish peasant art, from a wayside shrine in Southern Poland (Carpathian District).

To all Friends and Subscribers of 'THE COMMON CAUSE' Best Easter Greetings

The four-power treaty at Locarno contained the nucleus of the present war of two against two. The partition of Poland and Central Europe in general in the Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact finished in the German attack on Moscow in 1941, and so on. Only in the event of division of interests being planned and not put into practice, as, for example, in the Matsuoka-Stalin agreement, is there a probability that the "matrimonium non consumatum" will be fairly durable, be-

cause the division has not yet been made. The principle of power in international relations is well known to us Poles. Before the days of Adolf Hitler, Bismarck taught us: "Kraft geht vor Recht." We were not nor shall we become adherents of this idea as the successor to the Atlantic Charter, and if—what is still not quite sure now—this idea will prevail, we expect only the worst consequences from it both for ourselves and for our allies.

