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*The letter of the 22nd of August, 1939, from the Prime Minister
of the United Kingdom to the German Chancellor.*

10 DOWNING STREET,

LONDON, Aug. 22, 1939.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,—Your Excellency will have already heard of certain measures taken by His Majesty's Government and announced in the press and on the wireless this evening.

These steps have in the opinion of His Majesty's Government been rendered necessary by the military movements which have been reported from Germany, and by the fact that apparently the announcement of a German-Soviet agreement is taken in some quarters in Berlin to indicate that intervention by Great Britain on behalf of Poland is no longer a contingency that need be reckoned with.

No greater mistake could be made. Whatever may prove to be the nature of the German-Soviet agreement, it cannot alter Great Britain's obligations to Poland which His Majesty's Government have stated in public repeatedly and plainly and which they are determined to fulfil.

It has been alleged that if His Majesty's Government had made their position more clear in 1914, a great catastrophe would have been avoided. Whether or not there is any force in that allegation, His Majesty's Government are resolved that on this occasion there shall be no such tragic misunderstanding.

If the case should arise, they are resolved and prepared to employ without delay all the forces at their command, and it is impossible to foresee the end of hostilities once engaged.

It would be a dangerous illusion to think that if war once starts it will come to an early end even if success on any one of the several fronts on which it will be engaged should have been secured.