

This may sound like an empty protestation, but none the less I am disposed to accept it as a very probable forecast of what would happen were the premises realised. The Poles have fought for their complete independence of alien control repeatedly over a period of nearly 200 years, in fact, ever since the Confederation of Bar in the 1760s: they believe that Poland and the Polish nation are indestructible, and most of them are ready at any time to face persecution and death in order to pass on the torch of that belief to coming generations. In 1939 they would have fought Germany rather than yield on the question of Danzig and the Corridor, even if we and the French had failed to fulfil our treaty obligations.

7. So far not one of the groups, geographical or political, the composition and views of which I have tried to analyse above, has shown a disposition to advocate territorial concessions to Russia. In his confidential conversations with British statesmen, General Sikorski has, I think, said that personally he would be prepared to consider frontier rectifications in the east, but to the best of my knowledge he has always safeguarded the right of the Polish nation to decide what, if any, territorial concessions are to be made either to the Soviet Union or to any other of Poland's neighbours. I am told, too, that in the early months of the war there was a tendency among some Poles, for instance, among officials of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, to consider the possibility of territorial concessions (excluding concessions which would touch Wilno or Lwów) provided East Prussia and the remainder of the Upper Silesian industrial district could be secured for Poland. But up to now we have never given the Poles much encouragement to look for compensation in those quarters. All Poles are convinced that after the war East Prussia will be incorporated in Poland but I am not sure how many of them still look on such incorporation as a possible *quid pro quo* to make good territorial losses in the east.

8. But it is quite impossible for two Governments to discuss frontier rectifications or territorial concessions unless they are, to start with, agreed over the frontier line which is to be modified for the eventual benefit and to the eventual satisfaction of both parties. That is not the case with the Poles and the Russians who are most emphatically not agreed as to what is the present frontier between their respective countries. The Poles say that it is the line laid down by the Treaty of Riga. They add that that line was itself in the nature of a negotiated compromise between the claims of the two States; that it left to the Soviet Union about 1 million racial Poles and vast stretches of territory which had belonged to the Polish State until the partitions; and that their delegates at Riga did not even accept all the territory which the Soviet negotiators offered them. That is the frontier line of which, at any rate until recently, General Sikorski, and probably other Poles too, were prepared to consider possible "rectifications." For the Soviet statesmen, however, the present frontier is the Ribbentrop-Molotov line which they consider to have been consecrated by the two plebiscites of October 1939. M. Stalin is reported to have once spoken of Lwów as a Polish town: on that or another occasion he appears to have hinted at a frontier rectification on the sector of that line just south of East Prussia—a rectification which might perhaps give Bialystok to Poland and substitute in that sector the Curzon for the Ribbentrop-Molotov line. In conversation with me M. Bogomolov said emphatically that the Soviet Government did not want any citizens of Polish race but that they would insist at least on the Curzon line as their frontier with Poland.

9. On their side the Poles maintain that in taking as the Polish-Russian frontier the Curzon line with its prolongation to the south along the River San, that is to say far to the west of Lwów, the Soviet Government are laying claim to practically all parts of Polish territory on which are settled any Slavs not of Polish race, or for that matter Lithuanians, who are not Slavs; that they pay no heed to the fact that literally millions of Poles are and have for centuries also been living on those territories.—Continuing the argument the Poles say that, if the Russian Government were really only anxious to help the Ukrainians and White Russians by incorporating them in the Soviet Union and were sincere in their expressed desire for a "strong Poland," they would have proposed a more nearly equal division of the territory between the Ribbentrop-Molotov line and the Riga frontier, coupled with a transfer of population. In this connexion the Poles also call attention to the activities of the Soviet parachutists and guerrilla bands in German-occupied Poland and to the organisation of the new Communist outpost known as the "Polish Workmen's party." They may admit that the guerrilla bands, though not the new political party, are more widely organised in the eastern marches than in the general Government, but they will point out—