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ADDRESS DELIVERED BY GENERAL WLADYSLAW SIKORSKI, PRIME MINISTER OF POLAND, AT THE LUNCHEON OF THE OVERSEAS PRESS CLUB, ON WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1942, IN NEW YORK CITY.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am most grateful for the opportunity given me by the Overseas Press Club of addressing so distinguished an audience in the press world, on problems so closely affecting all the United Nations.

I realize that I am speaking to people who have a deep knowledge of world problems and in particular of the rroblems of Europe. I will therefore speak to you simply and sincerely as a soldier with a realistic outlook on international questions.

On every hand I am asked questions of a strategic and political nature regarding present war issues. I attribute this primarily to the fact that I represent the Polish nation who, in 1939, was the first to oppose armed resistance to the German onslaught, who refused to surrender, and will continue to fight until final victory. Owing to her geo-political position and her consequent importance to peace, Poland holds a key position.

My Government maintains uninterrupted contact with the Mother Country which no obstacles or persecutions have been able to prevent. I presume that these questions are put to me in my capacity of Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Armed Forces, as the author of several books on modern warfare for which the American army is today so perfectly trained and equipped, and, last but not least, as the initiator of the federal conception in Eastern Central Europe.

Following the trend of these questions, I should like to give some of my views to this distinguished forum, - not avoiding questions which might seem embarassing. There are no indiscreet questions, but only indiscreet answers.

The fortunes of war may still fluctuate. War requires the greatest unity of action not only militarily speaking, but unity of allied purpose. But its final issue is becoming ever clearer. We must therefore be prepared for peace, lest peace finds us unprepared as we were for war.

In the course of the conversations which I had in Washington where I was honored to be the guest of President Roosevelt, I noted with the greatest satisfaction that this necessity for unity of purpose and unity of action are fully realized and acted upon.

I shall first attempt to give my estimate of the present war situation.

Within the limits in which I may speak on this subject in public, I can say that in 1942 Germany failed to achieve the aims she had set herself. She did not succeed either in destroying the Russian army or in bringing about the overthrow of the Soviets. She did not take Leningrad, or Moscow, or Stalingrad, or the Caucasus. Winter finds

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the German forces once again on the vast Russian open spaces. Their situation is analogous to that of the last winter, and even their winter equipment is by no means better than that which elicited Hitler's bitter complaints. It is not improbable that the situation of the German army will become even worse than it was last winter. The third "purge" of experienced German military leaders and their substitution at most responsible posts by the henchmen of Himmler - the ~~Executioner~~ hangman, - clearly point to the difficulties of Hitler who thus tries at all cost to maintain his exclusive hold on the army. Such measures will not increase the cohesion of the German forces, but they are a proof that Hitler is doing his utmost to maintain his influence and his hold on the military conduct of the war.

The valiant Russian armies are taking advantage of their natural ally - Winter, and may be I hope able to force the German armies to retreat on some sectors of the front.

One should always avoid over-optimistic estimates of a situation especially at times of success. We have to deal with an enemy admirably prepared and still disposing of the indispensable reserves of manpower and war material. The natural resources controlled by Germany, the slave labor temporarily at her disposal in occupied countries, enable her to keep up a further effective fight and to main tain a high level of her war production.

The war production of Great Britain and the Dominions, and especially that of the United States, already greatly exceeds that of the Axis Powers.

This production is steadily rising as I have been able personally to observe, while German and Japanese war production has long ago reached its peak. In the realm of war production our victory is certain.

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This production is steadily picking up. I have been able personally to observe, while German and Japanese war production has long reached its peak. In this region our production now vitally is ahead.

Germany has likewise failed to interrupt communications between the Continents. Neither German submarines in the Atlantic, nor Rommel at Suez, nor yet Japan in the Pacific have succeeded in achieving this aim.

Only now, in the light of American losses at Pearl Harbor, can we appreciate the magnificent achievement of the American Navy in maintaining communications with Australia.

In the course of this year Germany has also lost her former momentum. The large scale thrusts which she used to launch simultaneously in several directions, are a thing of the past. Her Luftwaffe is weakening and is showing signs of fatigue. Next year this will become even more pronounced.

In summing up my views on the present war situation, I consider that we are entitled to foresee that Germany will tend to pass to the defensive. In time Germany will be completely on the defensive and will hold in Europe as in a fortress if the Allied African offensive succeeds in forcing the enemy out of that continent. That this will not long be deferred is shown by the considerable success achieved by the British Eighth Army at El Agheila which has so brilliantly opened the second phase of its offensive against General Rommel's forces. The Germans entrenched in Europe will play for time, tending to persuade the Allies that further bloodshed is hopeless and that war should be ended by a negotiated peace. The Germans will try to frighten the great Western Democracies by the threat of Bolshevism, addressing them in behalf of civilization which these arch-barbarians pretend they are defending.

In the name of the high principles for which we are fighting, you, the leaders of public opinion of this ~~powerful nation~~ great Republic will have to oppose these outbursts of Goebbels propaganda. A compromise peace

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In the face of the high authorities for which we have fighting, the leaders of public opinion of this country will have to prove their usefulness of official propaganda, a popular voice

with Germany would equal the greatest defeat. The enormous sacrifices of the fighting nations would have been in vain. Such a peace would be at best another precarious and most dangerous armistice.

The African campaign brings me to another subject on which I am frequently being questioned, namely that of the problems arising out of the present operation in North Africa and especially regarding the attitude of the Allies towards the French. In my opinion, the real problem can be summed up in the following question: Are political or strategic considerations more important and decisive at the present stage of the African campaign?

I do not hesitate in answering that, under the circumstances and for the time being, political considerations politics cannot be allowed adversely to influence the course of strategy, especially when dealing with an operation so important and so difficult as the Allied offensive in Africa. The decision of the Allied High Command in Africa was exclusively dictated by military requirements and is entirely justified by them. I would regard as most dangerous for the further development of the operations conducted by General Eisenhower anything that would interfere with, or restrict the freedom of his operational moves. All the more so on account of Germany's decision to hold Tunis and Bizerte at all cost, and the advantage held by the Axis Powers as regards communications.

I have been asked how I should have acted in General Eisenhower's place. I reply that I would have acted in exactly ~~the same way.~~ as he did.

But what about "Fighting France"?

We have no right to forget that at the time when the [redacted] flag of France fell from the hands of her surrendering army, it was picked up and raised by General Charles de Gaulle. His action was true to the highest ideals and traditions of France, - of that France without

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But what about "liberating France"?

We have to bear in mind that at the time when the liberation of France came from the hands of Mr. Churchill from the hands of Mr. Roosevelt, it was placed up and welcomed by General Charles de Gaulle. His action was true to the deep ideals and traditions of France, - of that France with which

which durable European peace is unthinkable. Therefore, General de Gaulle will forever remain the symbol of Fighting and Immortal France.

What under the circumstances is the future of "Fighting France"?

Here again political considerations should give way to the exigencies of war and ultimate victory. I firmly believe that all Frenchmen will realize the demand of the moment and will join in a policy uniting all their efforts for the time being outside their country, ~~in the same way as we Poles have done~~, so as to fight in full harmony and unity with the single aim of saving their country.

The necessity of unity is true for us all. We must face facts. We must fully realize the nature of the enemy.

We are fighting an enemy who aims at the destruction of all of us. He aims at enslaving us. Poland has become the main testing ground for this modernized version of barbarism.

Just before leaving England I received the latest report on the situation in Poland. I had meant to read it to you, but on second thought I decided not to. Why? Frankly, because I know from experience that even friends devoted to my country are apt to doubt the veracity of the terrible facts reported from the Hell of the Vistula and Warta. You, free people of the Western Hemisphere, are not capable of grasping and believing the depth to which the Germans have sunk. I will give you some of the facts from this report dated end of November.

The Germans have made 6 1/2 million victims, which means that every fifth man, woman or child in Poland has been either murdered, or driven from his home, taken to concentration camps, tortured, or taken away to forced labor in Germany.

To help you visualize what this really means, I ask you to imagine that the entire population of Metropolitan New York has been

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To help you visualize what this really means, I ask you to imagine that the entire population of Western New York has been

murdered, deported and driven from their homes. What mass enslavement for forced labor means may best be realized in imagining that the entire populations of Chicago and Washington have been thus enslaved. Therefore, if you transpose these figures in terms of America, you would obtain the following picture:

22 million Americans thrown out of their homes.

8,000 University and College professors murdered.

One million American men and women undergoing torture in concentration camps.

One and a half million American children dying yearly.

Such would be America under the German heel. Such is the situation in Poland today.

To realize the extent of the monstrous massacre of Jews, you must imagine the whole of Manhattan closed in by ghetto walls behind which all the Jews of the Western Hemisphere have been imprisoned and gradually and methodically exterminated in groups of several thousands daily be means of machine-gun shootings, or in lethal gas chambers or by electrocution.

Regardless of this appalling state of things, underground Poland fights on. Newspapers are secretly printed and circulated four times daily and print the latest British and American radio bulletins. We do not boast of sabotage because the glory that such propaganda would bring us is not worth the victims it would inevitably entail in our country.

Let us consider the reaction of our population. I will read you the text of a protest secretly proclaimed in Poznan, Warsaw, Wilno, and Lwow:

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Let us consider the remnant of our population. I will read you the text of a protest secretly proclaimed in Poznan, Warsaw, Wilno and Lwow:

"The total number of Jews killed has reached one million, this number being increased daily. All perish: the rich and the poor, the aged and women, men, youth and infants. Their only crime was that they were born [redacted] the Jewish [redacted] condemned to extermination by Hitler. Therefore we, Catholics and Poles, desire to speak. We do not want to be Pilates. We cannot actively counteract the German crimes, cannot help anything, nor save anybody, but we protest from the bottom of our hearts, filled with compassion, indignation and horror."

On the day of victory the walls of the ghetto in Poland will fall. They will be destroyed by the Polish people. At the moment, however, means must be found to save this population, especially the Polish Jews, who are the victims of this most bestial barbarism.

In reply to questions regarding the future European settlement, I should like to say that it is the natural instinct of nations which makes them tend towards the establishment of international unity among those freedom-loving peoples who, living peacefully side by side, are exposed to the threat of attack from their powerful neighbors. This tendency towards federation is especially strong among the countries of Eastern Central Europe. The realization of this idea, of which I am a fervent advocate, will safeguard not only the security of those nations situated between Germany and Russia who will thus form a kind of international family, but it would likewise be the natural rampart of security of Soviet Russia, always so uneasy about her Western security. Such a peaceful family of nations would not only be a factor of security, but also one of permanent European equilibrium and economic

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development through the creation in a vast area of possibilities of production and commercial exchange on a large scale. As the Representative of Poland, I feel I have the right to talk of federation, in view of the fact that five centuries ago, Poland had already established a successful concept of federation of neighboring States.

In this present war, Poland is not only fighting for her own freedom. True to her traditions, she is fighting for the realization of her oldest maxim: "The union of the free with the free on the basis of mutual equality".

Regardless of overwhelming odds, Poland was the first in Europe to challenge brutal aggression. She will be the last to leave the battlefield.
