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The Polish Ministry of Information, Stratton House, Stratton St.
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This is to inform you that the following article appeared in the
Aug. 12th issue of the "Times".

The British Role.

Mr. Churchill had good reason last week, at the end of a long war review and on the eve of a conference of experts at Washington, to abstain from any exposition of British views on the future organization of world security. He was right, too, to emphasize the need for keeping in line with our two great partners on this subject. Yet these considerations certainly do not rule out some clearer definition in the near future of the objectives of British policy and the principles which govern their pursuit. The erection of a general system of world security which is the primary purpose of United Nations policy, can be achieved only by the efforts of all the allies, and particularly the major allies, in consultation with each other. Successful negotiations can, however, be based only on clearly defined proposal put forward not in any spirit of uncompromising finality, but with the desire to provide a basis for further inquiry.

Britain is in a peculiarly favourable position to provide such a lead, and this fact confers upon her at once a great opportunity and an invaluable asset of which she has yet to prove herself worthy. By her resistance in 1940 she laid the foundations of the grand alliance upon the preservation of which the structure of a stable peace depends. She has no reason now to lag behind in making her voice heard on the forms and conditions through which that structure can be made secure. Closely knit to Europe by geography and historical traditions she can easily appreciate the preoccupation of her European allies, and particularly of Russia with strictly defined problems of military security. As a great naval Power, with far-flung imperial interests and until recently primarily dependent upon the sea for protection she is also able to appreciate the wider and less precise requirement of an "oceanic", though not, therefore an "isolationist", policy such as geography imposes on the United States. Her interest link her equally with Russia and with the United States: and conversely her security is on any long view a matter of equal concern to both. In any proposals for world security based on a lively sense of this community of interest she could confidently hope to elicit a friendly and sympathetic response..

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A vigorous initiative is often the most fruitful form of cooperation. In pursuing the wider objectives of world organization the British Government cannot afford to neglect the necessary conditions of British security or to allow attention to them to wait upon the achievement of full agreement on schemes of universal scope. The attainment of such agreement is indeed likely to be facilitated rather than hindered by the consolidation of more limited relations between Powers which recognize that, whatever the nature of final settlement, they must in the interest of their own safety and wellbeing maintain close cooperation with each other. This is the sense and purpose of the Anglo-Soviet treaty of alliance: and no peace system which does not leave scope for the operation of such special arrangements will be able to make sufficiently cogent an appeal to national interest to ensure its stability. The attempt to merge them completely into a single, undifferentiated loyalty to a world organization so wide as to make it impossible to conceive it in any but the most abstract form, must inevitably produce a reaction towards national isolation. The lesson of the League of Nations seems cogent in this respect. An effective international system is most likely to be held together by a series of solid links, not necessarily based on any narrow regional conception, but expressing the permanent strategic requirements of international security.

It is axiomatic that the safety and wellbeing of these islands depend, in the main, upon two such relations—namely, with the Dominions and with the western seaboard of Europe. The practical aid which the Dominions gave to the British war effort in 1940 was a factor of immense material and moral significance in the days when Britain, alone but for that aid, withstood the pressure of the enemy. It is equally true, and spokesmen of the Dominions could not have escaped the consequences of the collapse of British resistance and the elimination or appropriation by the enemy of Britain's naval strength. The same considerations apply to Britain's relation with the States of Western Europe, whose security is inextricably bound with her own and without whose friendship her policy must lack the necessary base for action in Europe. Here also the war has brought a tremendous integration of the effort of independent sovereign States, and it is essential that this integration

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should be maintained and extended in peace. The time is ripe for the Powers comprised in these two systems to undertake serious consideration of how, bearing in mind the limitations of geography and their relations with other Powers, and within the framework of any general system, they can most successfully cooperate in the interests of common defence. By taking the initiative in such discussions the British Government would not only serve the vital interests of this country but would give clear proof of the fact which in some quarters is still doubted, that Britain is resolved to fill the role in peace-making to which her part in the war entitles and indeed obliges her.

The cementing of relations between the British Commonwealth and the countries of Western Europe would be the complement to a drawing together of nations in Eastern Europe under Russian leadership and would make impregnable the western bastion of European peace. The structure would indeed be far from complete without the full participation of the United States, the necessity of which is in no way diminished by the leading part which she must take in the organisation of Pacific security. But it is a mistake to suppose that American support for measures of security in Europe is most likely to accrue through waiting for an American initiative. The American people have a wise and lively belief that European affairs are, first and foremost, a matter for Europeans to settle. Their main interest is that Europe shall be a going concern which will not once again become a breeding ground of tumult and war: and it is provisions made for European security by Europeans themselves which are in the long run most likely to rally American adhesion. Moreover it is only in the atmosphere created by general agreement about the framework of security that the United Nations can confidently approach the specific problem of the future of Germany. The solution of this problem is to be found only in common action after full and general deliberations: but its achievement is scarcely conceivable except in the context of previously agreed plans for the other sectors of the security system.

If Britain's leadership is to be made effective she must be clearly aware of those intangible sources from which her influence and authority in great part derive. At a time when the main concern of British policy must be to compensate a relative decline in material /to be continued/



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strength by the acquisition of new ^{and/}lasting connections with other Powers, her reputation for good faith in the fulfilment of her international engagements imposes the need for the great circumspection and strictest definition in the contraction of new commitments and for ensuring that existing pledges shall be backed by the resources necessary to sustain them. A scarcely less important factor in Britain, s "alliance-potential" is the association of British policy over a long period with the defence of the principles of individual freedom on which the liberal tradition of Western European is founded. These principles must now be reinforced by greater emphasis than has hitherto been given to their necessary concomitants - a social consciousness transcending political frontiers and the attainment of that degree of economic emancipation without which political rights are illusory. The first test of Britain, s fidelity to these ideals will be found in her policy in relation to the political and economic rehabilitation of the occupied countries. By unstinting assistance not only in the liberation of these countries but in the restoration of their political liberties and in the rebuilding of their economic life, she will be discharging a trust given to her by those who put their faith in British power and British intentions when the Commonwealth stood alone: and she will win for herself firm and lasting friendships founded upon that new and broader conception of social and economic advance which has enabled the British Commonwealth to emerge with enhanced unity from the great crisis of this .. history.

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