

BRITAIN AND POLAND

It is high time that the wall of mistrust be pierced, which still separates this country from Russia. Yet, unless we judge the recent Moscow trials on their merits and are ready to draw the true lesson from them, mutual suspicion can hardly be expected to ~~diminish~~ diminish.

Socialists must be prepared to shed prejudice and to reconsider their opinions in the light of the evidence. Mr. Douglas Arber challenges my assertion that the British Government never endorsed the charge of breach of safe conduct which was levelled by the London Poles against Russia. Yet a glance at Hansard would have convinced him that Mr. Law in his answers to Professor Savery could merely assure the questioner of his understanding and ~~sympathy~~ sympathy but consistently refused to endorse the charge. (Cf. Hansard, No. 67, 71 and 75, pp. 807, 1384-6 and 1883). Nor is it correct, as Mr. Arber asserts, that either the Russians or the ~~Polish~~ Poles had ever denied the fact of the ~~massive~~ arrests of the fifteen. (The Lublin denial of mass arrests referred to an entirely ~~of~~ different case. Finally, Mr. Douglas Arber even challenges the truth of the famous personal statement made by Stalin on this ~~main~~ matter of prime importance! That pronouncement appears incredible to Mr. Arber because he starts on a series of false assumptions. The one basic fallacy which accounts for the rest is invincible distrust of Russia.

Lack of confidence is also at the heart of Mr. John Brown's critical comments.

My thesis was that the Moscow trials revealed the political line of the London Polish Government. It can be summed up in the slogan of the Third World War. Essentially it is the policy propagated by Goebbels as well as later by Boenitz and Schwerin-Krosigk. I described it as follows:

"The military success of the U.S.S.R. will make a European coalition against that country inevitable. The leader of ~~the~~ coalition will be Great Britain. Germany, under a disci ~~plined~~

Nazi leadership, will be its most valuable Continental asset".

I referred to all possible type of evidence.

There was the voluminous material of the trials themselves. No observer, in our knowledge, called into doubt its authenticity, the freedom of the defence, the seriousness of the political discussions at the trial.

There was the internal evidence supplied by an analysis of the position of Poland as a buffer state which - after this war - has only the alternative of making peace with Russia or with Germany.

There was the ~~inhuman~~ attitude of the late London Polish Government on a number of issues, including that of the Polish prisoners of War in Germany. It obviously proved their intention to fight their Eastern neighbours, setting their hopes on a Third World War, this time to be waged against the Soviet Union.

Last not least, there was the moral evidence supplied by men like Mikolajczyk and his group. A

Against this stands Mr. Brown's irreduc^{ible}~~ible~~ determination not to credit the Russians with anything decent or good. Some foolish statements made ^{more than seven} years ago about the present First Lord of the Admiralty at a political trial in Moscow serves him as a sufficient excuse to discard the whole evidence of the present trials.

The self-sacrificing stand made by the Poles against the Nazis since 1939 culminating in the heroic ~~war~~ rising of Warsaw is adduced as a proof that the London Poles can not contemplate a Third World War against the Soviet Union! The pre-1939 policy of Poland, which was fascist and pro-German, is ~~completely~~ ignored. So is the inexorable logic of history which governs the fate of nations leaving them only the choice between alternatives.

Western security interests are recognised as justified. But the same privilege is not extended to the East. Eire's case is brought up as conclusive proof that the sovereignty of small states need not be impaired by the neighbourhood of a great power. As if Great Britain had been twice in a generation invaded from Irish territory as was metropolitan Russia through Poland, ~~was~~ when Russia is in question, the laws of history are

forgotten.

I plead for understanding and solidarity. The future of mankind depends on successful Anglo-Russian co-operation. Poland is a test case. Not only for Russia, but also for this country.
