

Appendix I

AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE POLISH GOVERNMENT REGARDING MUTUAL ASSISTANCE (WITH PROTOCOL) LONDON, AUGUST 25, 1939

The Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Polish Government:

Desiring to place on a permanent basis the collaboration between their respective countries resulting from the assurances of mutual assistance of a defensive character which they have already exchanged:

Have resolved to conclude an Agreement for that purpose and have agreed on the following provisions:

Article 1.

Should one of the Contracting Parties become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of aggression by the latter against that Contracting Power, the other Contracting Power will at once give the Contracting Power engaged in hostilities all the support and assistance in its power.

Article 2.

i. The provisions of Article 1. will also apply in the event of any action by a European Power which clearly threatened directly or indirectly, the independence of one of the Contracting Powers, and was of such a nature that the Party in question considered it vital to resist with its armed forces.

ii. Should one of the Contracting Powers become engaged in hostilities with a European Power in consequence of action by that Power which threatened the independence or neutrality of another European State in such a way as to constitute a clear menace to the security of that Contracting Party, the Provisions of Article 1. will apply, without prejudice, however, to the right of the other European State concerned.

Article 3.

Should a European Power attempt to undermine the independence of one of the Con-

tracting Powers by a process of economic penetration or in any other way, the Contracting Powers will support each other in resistance to such attempts. Should the European Power concerned thereupon embark on hostilities against one of the Contracting Parties, the provisions of Article 1. will apply.

Article 4.

The methods of applying the undertakings of mutual assistance provided for by the present Agreement are established between competent naval, military and air authorities of the Contracting Parties.

Article 5.

Without prejudice to the foregoing undertakings of the Contracting Parties to give each other mutual support and assistance immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, they will exchange complete and speedy information concerning any development which might threaten their independence and, in particular, concerning any development which threatened to call the said undertakings into operations.

Article 6.

- i. The Contracting Parties will communicate to each other the terms of any undertaking of assistance against aggression which they have already given or may in future give to other States.
- ii. Should either of the Contracting Parties intend to give such an undertaking after the coming into force of the present Agreement, the other Contracting Party shall, in order to ensure the proper function of the Agreement, be informed thereof.
- iii. Any new undertaking which the Contracting Parties may enter into in future shall neither limit their obligations under the present Agreement nor indirectly create new obligations between the Contracting Party not participating in these undertakings and the third State concerned.

Article 7.

Should the Contracting Parties be engaged in hostilities in consequence of the application of the present Agreement, they will not conclude an armistice or treaty of peace except by mutual agreement.

Article 8.

- i. The present Agreement shall remain in force for a period five years,
- ii. Unless denounced six months before the expiry of this period it shall continue in force, each Contracting Party having the Right to denounce it at any time by giving six months notice to that effect.
- iii. The present Agreement shall come into force on signature.

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Protocol

The Polish Government and the Government of the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland are agreed upon the following interpretation of the Agreement of Mutual Assistance signed this day as alone authentic and binding:

1. (a) By the expression of “a European Power” employed in the Agreement is to be understood Germany.

(b) In the event of action within the meaning of Article 1 or 2 of the Agreement by a European Power other than Germany, the Contracting Parties will consult together on the measures to be taken in common.

2. (a) The two Governments will from time to time determine the hypothetical cases of action by Germany coming within the ambit of Article 2 of the Agreement.

(b) Until such time as the two Governments have agreed to modify the following provisions of this paragraph, they will consider: that the case contemplated by paragraph (1) of Article 2 of the Agreement is that of the Free City of Danzig; and that the cases contemplated by paragraph (2) of Article 2 are Belgium, Holland, Lithuania.

(c) Latvia and Estonia shall be regarded by the two Governments as included in the list of countries contemplated by paragraph (2) of Article 2 from the moment that an undertaking of mutual assistance between the United Kingdom and a third State covering those two countries enters into force.

(d) As regards Roumania, the Government of the United Kingdom refers to the guarantee which it had given to that country; and the Polish Government refers to the reciprocal undertakings of the Roumano-Polish alliance which Poland has never regarded as incompatible with her traditional friendship for Hungary.

3. The Undertakings mentioned in Article 6 of the Agreement, should they be entered into by one of the Contracting Parties with a third State, would of necessity be so framed that their execution should at no time prejudice either the sovereignty or territorial inviolability of the other Contracting Party.

4. The present protocol constitutes an integral part of the Agreement signed this day, the scope of which it does not exceed.

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One of the original English-language copies of this treaty is in the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, London. A. II. 76/1. and A.II. 76/2. Both are graced with the respective family seals of the signers.

In March 1944, the secretary of state for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Anthony Eden, responded to a question in the House of Commons: “Article 8 of the Anglo-Polish Agreement regarding mutual Assistance, signed in London on August 25, 1939, provides that the agreement shall remain in force for a period of five years from the date of signature, and that, unless denounced six months before the expiry of the of this period, it shall continue in force, each contracting party having thereafter the right to denounce it at any given time by giving six months notice to that effect. There is, therefore, no question of this Agreement expiring in August, 1944, and no need for any extension of the Agreement at this time.” *Jedrzejewicz, Poland in the British Parliament, 1939–1945*, p. 418.