**November 26, 1944**

Dear fellow countrymen and countrywomen, I greet you with the words: Praised is Jesus Christ!

Years ago, as our parents told us, there were the greatest numbers of doctors on earth. Every man and every woman had their own prescriptions for healing. These caretakers, not only did it gratis, but even when not asked offered their services to the needy. They handed out their recipes blindly…and even without any kind of diagnosis. In different times, their nomenclature varied. One time it was named, *quack,* another time *sorcerer,* and another *magician.Did you mean:* *W jednej okolicy,* ***uchodzili*** *za wieszczbiarz*

In one area, they were considered diviners; in the second, the folk doctors. A debt to the existence and success of these alleged benefactors of humanity. The existence and success of these alleged benefactors of mankind, we attribute to their cleverness and cunning, as well naivety and gullibility of the masses. In our times, however, generally in the last six months, there originated a whole batch of miracle-worker-prophets in military matters. These are know-it-alls. With all certainty, they claim that the war will end in a few weeks and maybe even in a few days. From where this certainty? Where does this info come from? Perhaps from the inspiration by God? I doubt it and I am averse to believe it. I understand that perhaps there is not even one man in these United States, who would not want and not look forward to cessation of hostilities or who would know the day of victory and the end of the war. Therefore the experts in military affairs do not want to talk about the date of the end of the war. I remember that when I was visiting Great Britain in the last months of 1948, I spoke to a host of personnel. We underwent some very interesting conversations. In my sincerity and naivete, more than once I asked: “When will the end come to these hostilities? The answer I received was, “Who knows?” or “Nobody knows’ or “God only knows!” etc. Such were the answers from military strategists. The British Prime Minister, after returning from a conference in Ottawa, in speaking to members of the British Parliament, warned against optimism, since the war may last through the winter and food probably until the spring. In spite of all of this, our prophets carry on about the swift coming of peace. They are unjust to the people and their concern. They foster a diminishing care in the people who are making the war winnable by the armed forces whom they supply. As far as the economy is concerned they lessen the purchase of war bonds etc. And therefore, on to our talk entitled:

IN THE MEANTIME

When currently, our elegantly dressed prophets, boldly renewed by their revelations sit completely satisfied at well supplied tables, with a cigar or cigarette in their lips, and a glass in hand and sure of themselves, prophesy the swift end of the war and keep changing the date of cessation of hostilities, what is the scene is played out in the front lines? In the air? On the oceans? There, our men are bleeding and dying. They are exposing themselves to injuries and death. They hide in ditches, in ruins of homes, in trenches and fox holes. Hunger haunts them, anxiety burns. In rain, snow, tired, by day and by night, they battle for ever foot of ground. Please listen to the witness and participants, a young American of Polish descent who took part in one of the last invasions. “It was early in the morning of June 6. A cold and strong wind chased black low hanging clouds. Night was ending. On a small ship, sailors and soldiers rested in cells and corridors. Despite their weariness, very few slept. The night guard stood at watch looking out for safety on the ship and listening to the howling wind and roaring sound of waves beating ceaselessly against the sides of the ship. The men were told that they would engage in an invasion which was in the workings for four years. Winds played with the ocean waves and swayed the ship like a baby crib. Soldiers began to fall ill. They looked at the waves with apprehension and fear, and who knows if they were praying for mercy from the sea and restful peace. The fog grew more intense and concealed us from the earth. Heavy winds, roar of the waves and a heavy fog. Amid these unwanted griefs, we existed. I looked upon the faces. All were of sober mind. I first thought of my family. How were they? Most probably were in thoughts of their families. All looked upon their iffy future; not the future many years from now but a future hanging over their heads, now! What will be in a hour, in a few minutes? What will it bring? How will it be? The soldier knows that for him, every moment may bring the end of the war? And that not be among joyful waves and shouts of alleluia, no. But it will be in blood, sweat and tears, among the thunder of artillery, among the whistling of ammo and bombs. And what is worse, far away from our own families. And the thought of the soldier fly like lightening to the family home. I know for I was in Africa, Sicily and in Italy. In the moments before battle, the soldier thinks of God and those he loves. Suddenly walls of fog began to come above us and were lost in the air. Around us, were hundreds of ships. At a distance, the shores. We approached the shores secretly, in silence, nothing good of prophecy. They were giving commands by megaphone. “Get ready to embark into the waters and then to the shore.”
The propellers groaned, broiled and the ship stuck dead in its tracks. We were about thirty feet from shore. In a few minutes, the deck emptied. The soldiers slushed through the broiling waters. Not all reached the shore. Here and there once in a while one sees a soldier covered with water which swallowed the poor guy in order to a while later spit him up on the shore. For him and those it was the end of the war. In the meantime somewhere ahead the roar of enemy artillery could be heard. A heavy task beamed ahead and foretold for some a funeral march. The ammo spread injury and death on the beaches and on the water. Those who were already landed were greeted with ammo of the smaller guns and machine guns, showering them with a hail of lead. The landing lasted several hours. The soldiers, having been accustomed to previous landings sought safety behind rocks and trees. Some hid in the earthen holes where a bomb had landed. There was little harbor under the murderous blasts. Their place was taken by those freshly landed. When I say that the landing lasted several hours, I have thoughts of the several previous encounters, which lasted several days. What can one say? The enemy usually put their heavy camouflaged artillery on a hidden well-fortified mountain. Despite the fact that we were well supported at the beach we were relentlessly open to the fire of a well prepared foe. Every blast of artillery did damage. In order to better convey what was happening, I made this comparison. Our men were as if it were in a deep ravine. Ahead of us was a powerful war machine. There was no escape ; the artillery was regular, the shrapnel penetrating the flesh of the soldiers. Ahead of us was a terrible war machine, and behind us was an angry ocean with huge waves. You can’t move forward and the great ocean holds you back. One has to look directly into the eyes of death. The beach and the sea were covered with bodies. It was a terrible, frightening sight to see the dead bodies and the torn flesh all around in midst of the horrific shelling. Stomachs were upset even by those trying to take care of the wounded. One had the impression that the soul-less flesh of humans danced on the waves of the ocean to the tune of the noisy artillery and gunfire. Look at the heads, hand and feet of the soldier in torn-apart khakis. They had lived just a while ago; now their bodies look like shards of a broken clay pot. Hell celebrates at the sight of such devastation. The noise of the war machine drowns out the screams of the dying. I will surely admit that among these first minutes of landing there were no atheists present. All prayed in their own way. Some prayed loudly; some prayed in whispers. Both the wounded and healthy prayed. The fighting went on for days. One day went by, then another, then another. Air support of their artillery came. On the third day at night came several bombers. They did not so much hit our ships and the bombs hit near shore sending up streams of water and smoke. The bombs fell near us throwing the ocean waves. One of the enemy planes was shot down in a fiery crash. I don’t know what happened with the crew. I don’t know if anyone really cared. Besides, war and the events of war, at the time of occurrence tempt certain human emotions. On the second day, our soldiers managed to fight through the enemies defenses. The battle moved into the interior to a small village. Soon clouds of thick and black smoke appeared. It indicated that the enemy was having a hard time. But before he ran away, he burned the village. That night, again, the enemy sent an attack by plane. Night turned to daylight. The enemy artillery started up again. So did the machine gun fire. And as daylight appeared the planes bombed but unsuccessfully. They did a small degree of damage. Fire flowed through the beaches. A burning ship seemed to skip around the ocean like a giant frog. After one mighty jump it was torn apart.

It was only on the second night that they were able to pick up the wounded. These young men covered with mud and blood lay many hours before aid came. Some were in fever others cold. Weak because of the letting of blood they looked with blind eyes upon us. It seemed that their looks showed gratitude for God for sparing their lives and thanks to us for getting them out of the battle area. Eleven of the first saved were from New York, from Pennsylvania and North Carolina. Talking with them I found out that four of them were Catholic. This I knew because of the fact that they had rosaries around their necks. I gave each of them a little water from my canteen and li t a few cigarettes and put them into the lips of those who shivered from the cold and pain. I made pillows from soldier’s coats by folding them. I placed them under their heads. You had to see their flesh, ripped apart to understand. The military medics went about checking each one out. The scenario made one realize the true meaning of war. They were given shots and bandaged their wounds. The first had serious wounds. Then there were those whose wounds were less serious. In no time, all were checked out. They were all taken on stretchers to a small ship. In the meantime, a photographer appeared and took pictures. Perhaps in the not too distant future these images would be seen in the United States. All will see and know the best care given to our men at war. Let their mothers and fathers know that their sons have the best car in the world. I will remember every detail and keep it in my mind the rest of my life. I remained with the wounded. The doctors whispered that shortly the landing will be over and everyone will be in their place. True, all will find themselves in their place on land but not all will be alive, I thought, but I kept those thoughts to myself. One of the doctors, seeing my discomfort and nervousness gave me some king of medication to calm my nerves. He told me to rest in my bed. I threw myself on the couch. One was not allowed to undress because one did not know the day or the hour. The enemy did not sleep. I slept – I didn’t sleep. Something interrupted my rest. In the morning, a distant roar of heavy artillery interrupted my musings. Evidently we were the object. Our ship meandered through the waters. I headed for the deck. I scanned the vicinity. There were ships everywhere – ships of various sizes and ilk.. warships and transports. Giants on the sea. Floating fortresses. Freighters and tugs. Everything was in motion. The sea turned into an anthill; the ships like ants. Artillery shells fell all around us on the water. Our planes went out on missions to uncover the German batteries which had hindered our landing. - I couldn’t eat my breakfast. A cup on hot coffee did the trick. I considered my position. Yes, mine, but how long? It is the will of God. I sit down to write my coverage of the situation which goes very slow. I feel so intoxicated as if I was under the influence of ether. Maybe the smell of gunpowder and human blood has something to do with it. We go for dinner. Little can be swallowed of the food. Three young sailors came to me like little children to mother’s apron strings. For the first time in they are engaged in the midst of battle and openly admit that they are in fear. They never expected that war would be such great hell. The have tears in their eyes and one of them shakes like a leaf on a tree in the wind. What a tremendous impact a battle in war can make on a man. I explain to them that our men who are landing fight for us all and in protection of humanity which has a right to our protection and we have the obligation to bring them help when the order comes. They had promised to fulfill their obligation. What they promised they later did. In the evening a command: “Everyone is landing.” At our side are several tucks, a jeep and an ambulance. We advance slowly. Several men shake, and do not take their eyes off the coast. Since the enemy began to strafe us, we changed our bearing and it was not as hot. We successfully reached the shore and jumped off into the water. In the manner of the soldier, my feet stood on land and I bent and took a handful of earth, and kissed it, in order that in this manner I would thank God that I landed safely and to ask a blessing for the future. At that moment the enemy started shooting at as with machine guns. What a surprise! We hugged the ground. Shells passed us a fell into the sea. You could hear them hit the water. The enemy aimed too high. At every outburst we hugged the ground and crawled forward. I was fortunate. Not too far from me, stood a disabled tank. It served as a first protection. I inched forward to it. I never in my life ran with such frenzy and haste. I hid at the side for protection. Fear to me was as gas for an automobile. Luckily I came across a group of our soldiers. We waited a while and the strafing subsided. At last there was silence. Our shooting at the enemy, however, continued. Our little contingent became organized. We headed forward to meet our own troops. On the way, we came across a Frenchman who walked with his wife. Probably he was headed to his home and found it destroyed. The pair spoke in their native French. I hailed them with “bon soir” – good evening. The smiled sadly. They went their way – I went mine. On our way we met more and more of our troops. How many we had lost, no one knows. We lost quite a bit on water and her on land. There were a few well known officers. I liked them because they were serious and hard working people, who like the ordinary soldier took on the difficulties and lacks of the soldier’s life. I said a few Hail Maries for the repose of their souls. We marched further. The moon light lit our way. Our pilots did not hesitate in their work. The strafed the road ahead so we would be protected. This country is beautiful. The fields are covered with wheat. We came to the edges of a beautiful forest. We decided to rest here and spend the night. We gathered some hay and lay down to rest. However no one was able to sleep. Everyone had something to relate. I lost my blanket but one of the guards gave me his. I listened to the tales with one ear, since I held a rosary in my grasp and whispered Hail Maries. A new raid came from the enemy side. New rat-a-tat of shooting. We shot down seven German planes. After an hour came the pined-for silence. I fell asleep. Peacefully I spent my first night in France. In the morning of June 8th I was aroused by our men. In between jokes, we prepared some coffee. What’s for breakfast? A piece of dry bread and two good American coffees. It tasted heavenly. We were all grateful to be healthy and sound of body. After breakfast we began to pick up the dead and bury the bodies. Besides the Americans, there were Poles, White Russians and Germans. We learned that this night a German spy was with us who was caught before dinner. In our trek through France, I met quite a few polish prisoners. In one hamlet I noticed a group who was interested in us. I called out: “Are those Poles?” The chorus replied: “ We are all Polish.” I gave out cigarettes and candy. They cried when I spoke to them in Polish.”

I don’t know whether the above story was interesting to you or not. It doesn’t matter. I placed it here to share with you the way our soldiers fought in this terrible war; here, a thousand miles away from home on a battlefield where death and bravery took place. It is not a joy to those whose sons, brothers and intended, lie lifeless. There is no optimism there. Even if the German’s quit we still have to deal with the Japanese. We fight two wars not one – while here they foretell the short end of war, and there, Churches, schools hospitals and homes of the workers lie in ruins. There, people starve. Food supplied are scarce and medicine in bought for gold. There, cities are without electricity and water. Families are dispersed. The father is arrested, the mother taken the children taken. Here we speak of public parades, general celebrations, or entertainment from morning till night. There on general prayer of sadness and shouts of despair and a prayer of petition: “Lord, Christ! Have mercy on your people.

He who plays the role of prophet in the matters of war plays wrongly and plays with fire. Empty talk and senseless planning ever does anyone any good. Often it brings harm, a great injustice to those who wage the war and pay with their lives in protection of their country and harm those husbands, sons, and brothers fight the battles. We hope that the war will be over as soon as possible in order that the rainbow of peace arrives. For that we direct our work and our prayers. Let us stop the useless prophecy.

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