

IN DEFENSE  
of  
POLAND'S  
WESTERN BOUNDARY

---

*An Economic Study*

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FACTS VERSUS THE FICTION THAT  
POLAND'S RECOVERY OF HER WESTERN BORDER  
DEPRIVES GERMANY OF HER  
"BREADBASKET"



POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS, Inc.  
1514-1520 W. Division St.  
CHICAGO 22, ILL.

mpn. 153

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## P R E F A C E

In a broader sense, the term "Western Boundary", when referring to territory recovered by Poland from Germany, not only includes areas immediately West of the 1939 Polish-German frontier, but also includes, in the North, a part of what was formerly East Prussia.

This publication is only a fragment of a larger study on the subject of Polish-German frontiers. It serves primarily to refute false claims advanced by German propaganda, yet so readily believed by leaders in Western countries, that (1) incorporation of the recovered territory into Poland deprives Germany of her "bread-basket," and (2) that retention of this territory by Poland becomes a burden on the American taxpayer, because we have to make good the deficit brought about by "depriving" Germany of an important food source.

What makes this brief study even more authoritative is that the fiction advanced by German propagandists is, point by point, belied by factual evidence, statistics and data — from GERMAN sources!

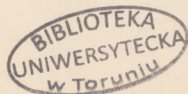
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### SECOND PRINTING

The recent agreement between Communist Eastern Germany and the Warsaw Communist Regime has brought the question of Poland's western boundary again to the public arena.

In releasing a second printing of this booklet, the Polish American Congress desires to place it into hands of all who are interested in the case and to help clarify Poland's just claims to the recovered lands up to Oder-Niesse rivers.

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## CHANGE OF AMERICAN POLICY TOWARDS GERMANY

Almost immediately after signing their unconditional surrender, the Germans began a campaign aimed at protecting themselves against the consequences of having lost the war which they had unleashed.

At first timidly, then increasingly more boldly and vociferously, they have been striving for full rehabilitation and recovery of their former power.

A foremost place in their program is occupied by the demand for the return of those Eastern territories which on the basis of the Yalta and Potsdam agreements have been recovered by Poland.

To achieve their aims, they use the same propaganda methods and means which they had successfully employed after World War I.

The German endeavors would not in themselves be dangerous to Europe, which has a proper knowledge of the Germans and their real aims, were it not for the fact that the English-speaking powers, and particularly the United States, so readily believe Pan-German propaganda.

This concerns above all the statement, supported by elastic or *ad hoc* fabricated statistical data, that the territories recovered by Poland are allegedly indispensable to Germany's food supply.

The change of the United States position concerning the Polish-German frontiers was first indicated officially in an address by the then Secretary of State, James F. Byrnes, at Stuttgart on September 6, 1946, and was clearly stated in a broadcast by Secretary of State George C. Marshall, on April 28, 1947, after his return from Moscow.

On that occasion he said:

"The United States Government recognized the commitment made in Yalta to give fair compensation to Poland in the west for the territory east of the Curzon Line incorporated into the Soviet Union. But the perpetuation of the present temporary line between Germany and Poland would deprive Germany of territory which before the war provided more than a fifth of the foodstuffs on which German population depended. . . We do not want Poland to be left with less resources than she had before the war. She is entitled to **more**, but it will not help Poland to give her frontiers which will probably create difficulties for her in the future. Wherever the frontiers are drawn they should not constitute barriers to trade and commerce upon

which the well-being of Europe is dependent. We must look toward a future where a democratic Poland and a democratic Germany will be good neighbors."

(Quoted from Publication 2822, Department of State).

General Marshall returned to the same subject in his speech delivered on December 15, 1947, at the Conference of Foreign Ministers in London, when he said:

"...The United States believes that an effort should be made to establish a frontier which, while it would compensate Poland, would not become a formidable economic barrier preventing Germany access to food and raw materials from this eastern area upon which it has heavily depended."

(Quoted from "New York Times," December 16, 1947).

It is extremely regrettable and painful that a man of the stature of General Marshall, the distinguished and victorious Chief of Staff of the United States Army, has given credence to the skillful, but untrue, German propaganda on the question of Polish-German frontiers, and having accepted its arguments has taken a stand, which not only threatens the existence of Poland, but moreover, in the more distant future, endangers world peace.

Therefore, we shall try to demonstrate, exclusively on the basis of German sources, without referring to the abundant Polish literature on the subject, with the exception of data concerning Poland which are based on official Polish statistics, that none of the reasons quoted by General Marshall as justification for a revision of the present Polish-German frontiers is actually valid.

#### DID POLAND OBTAIN "FAIR COMPENSATION"?

First of all the question arises whether Poland has indeed obtained "fair compensation"?

Has she really obtained "more resources than she had before"?

These questions must be answered in the negative.

Assuming the basic standpoint that national territory can never be the object of bargaining, exchange or compensation, especially when carried out against the will of the people, it must be stated on the basis of accurate statistical material presented below that Poland by receiving the Western territories did not obtain commensurate compensation for the territories lost in the East, neither with respect to their area nor to their quality.

On the basis of a speech by Mr. Churchill delivered on February 27, 1945, in the British Parliament, in certain circles not sufficiently familiar with the real state of affairs the completely erroneous conviction became current that Poland derived considerable advantage from this exchange.

At that time Mr. Churchill said:

"It seems to me that this talk of cutting half of Poland off is very misleading. In fact, the part which is to be east of the Curzon Line cannot in any case be measured by its size. It includes the enormous dismal region of the Pripet Marshes and it exchanges for that far more fertile and developed land in the West from which a very large proportion of the German population have already departed."

In this speech Mr. Churchill tried to justify before the British Parliament, and before the whole world, his breach of faith towards Great Britain's first and most loyal ally, attempted to embellish the bargaining away of almost half of Poland, contrary to the will of the Polish people and contrary to the declaration of the Atlantic Charter, by implying that in exchange for the "dismal region of the Pripet" Poland obtained the fertile and developed territories in the West. However, the Pripet Marshes are only a fraction of the lost territory which even as wasteland was of extreme strategic importance. It was an excellent defense line as well as Poland's natural frontier. All strategists recognized its defense value, not only for Poland, but for all Western Europe.

However, in addition to the small Polesie area Poland lost her most fertile lands abounding in natural resources.

Poland's present area comprises 120,000 square miles while before the war it was 150,000 square miles. Thus Poland's net loss amounts to 30,000 square miles, i. e., her area is 20% smaller than before the war.

Germany, which in 1938 had an area of about 180,000 square miles, lost 38,986 square miles i. e., also about 20% of her prewar territory.

It follows from the above comparisons that as the result of the World War begun in her defense, Poland lost 47%, i. e., almost one-half of her prewar territory, on the basis of the "friendly" decision of her allies, and that after the incorporation of the Western territories this loss still amounts to 20%. On the other hand, Germany which had unleashed the war plunging the entire European continent into misery and despair, lost as a result of the war and as a safeguard against future aggressions the same percentage of her area as "victorious Poland."

No less painful are the qualitative losses. Germany lost her poorest provinces which, contrary to Mr. Churchill's statement, are actually barren, undeveloped and neglected. Poland, on the other hand, lost in the East 25,947,458 acres of agricultural land and 10,131,100 acres of forests, while gaining in the West 14,826,822

acres of inferior agricultural land and 4,447,800 acres of forests. Consequently, Poland's total loss amounts to 11,120,636 acres of agricultural land and 5,683,300 acres of forests.

The above loss includes the most fertile wheat lands of Volhynia and Podolia and 18,000 square miles of primeval forests in the Carpathian mountains of Southern Poland.

The recovered territories have actually only one asset, i. e., the coal of the Silesian basin.

Leaving aside for the moment the question of the danger inherent in leaving this basin in German hands, and applying the principle of compensating justice, it may be said that the coal deposits which Poland now obtained are a minimum compensation for the losses which she had suffered in the last war.

In addition to the loss of the rich Eastern provinces, Poland suffered losses and damages in the remaining parts, amounting according to official and international estimates to about 50 billion dollars in gold.

To this must be added losses in manpower due both to military operations and biological damages deliberately inflicted by the Germans during their five-year, cruel occupation.

#### GERMANY'S SELF-SUFFICIENCY WITH RESPECT TO FOOD SUPPLY

Secretary of State Marshall motivates the desire of a revision of the present Polish-German frontier by economic reasons. Therefore, the present study is concerned only with economic problems, leaving aside for the time being, historical, political, demographic and moral considerations which fully justify that the recovered territories should remain Poland's.

The reasons mentioned by General Marshall actually do not exist. They have been created by skillful German propaganda which quickly realized that economic questions, and in particular lack of food and threatening the American taxpayers with having to bear the costs of feeding the German population, were the best means to attain the principal objective, i. e., Germany's rehabilitation.

Germany could and can be self-sufficient with respect to food without resorting to continuous help from those countries which she aimed to destroy. It must be admitted that German economy is at present disrupted, in the same way as the economic conditions of other European states. This is due to the war which Germany had started and due to the destruction of the economy of the countries occupied by the Germans.

Even if it is assumed that momentarily Germany needs help from the victorious countries, this help should be only transitory and does not at all justify that the Western territories should be taken from Poland.

Therefore, it would not only be highly injurious to Poland, but

dangerous for the world if German propaganda succeeded in exploiting Germany's current bad food situation, and the present political tension, for recovering the territories which always formed her base for aggression and her military arsenal.

At present German propaganda maintains that already before the war Germany was forced for many years to import one-fifth or even one-fourth of the agricultural products, and in particular the bread grains she needed; that by depriving her of her Eastern territories she lost a further one-fifth or one-fourth of her grain supply and that, consequently, her permanent deficit will amount to about 50% which will have to be covered by imports.

However, the actual state of affairs, as is evident from official and authoritative German sources, gives the lie to the present German propaganda and presents the following picture:

The military and nationalist circles never admitted that Germany, had lost World War I militarily. They were able to convince the broad masses of the German people that the war ended with Germany's defeat only because the domestic front had broken down. The well known legend of the "stab from the back" and of starving out the army was launched.

Therefore, the principal slogan of those circles after World War I was the achievement of Germany's self-sufficiency in food supply.

The Weimar Republic already made strenuous efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in foodstuffs. The Nazi government, which from the beginning of its existence entertained plans of military aggression, made it the chief objective of its domestic policy.

These efforts were successful and the Nazi government soon began to boast of having made Germany self-sufficient in food supply. This was accompanied by a constantly rising living standard and high consumption, several times exceeding that of other European countries.

The Book of Herbert Becke, the Third Reich's minister of food, entitled *Um die Nahrungsfreiheit Europas*, Leipzig 1942, contains on pp. 259-60 a table of Germany's food deficits and surpluses. According to this table, already in 1932 Germany covered her domestic needs with her own production:

bread grains	97%
flour	97%
potatoes	101%
sugar	104%
beef	98%
veal	100%
milk	100%
fats	74%

Therefore, privy councillor Dr. Wilhelm Volz, professor of Leipzig University, the greatest German authority on economic geography, states in his book *Die Ostdeutsche Wirtschaft* the following:

"With respect to cereals, potatoes and milk, Germany has achieved complete or almost complete self-sufficiency. Similarly, meat requirements are almost fully met by domestic production. Only the balance of fats continues to show a serious gap."

An identical statement is contained in the semi-official book published in 1939, *Warun Aussenhandel, eine Lebensfrage fuer das deutsche Volk* by Dr. R. Eicke director of the Reichsbank, who says:

"Concerning the supply of cereals we have no more cares."

The official Nazi work *Der Reichsnaehrstand*, third edition, Berlin 1940, states that between 1933 and 1939 German agricultural production increased by about 10% in grain, by about 20% in potatoes and 100% in sugar beets, and therefore continues boastfully: "The Nazi agrarian policy has adopted the Fuehrer's program of March 6, 1930 (self-sufficiency in foodstuffs) and through hard work, conscious of its aims, has since the assumption of power carried it out almost completely."

"Domestic grain production meets for the most part the requirements in bread cereals, but there exist considerable import requirements for feed grains. For this reason, as well as in order to lay in stocks, it was necessary to import in the last years before the war about 2 million tons of grain annually." (p. 285).

More important and eloquent than the above statements is the following table of grain imports, which appears on p. 206 (in thousands of tons):

	1935-36	1936-37	1937-38
rye	-6	147	72
(i. e. a surplus)			
wheat	38	842	969
feed barley	61	45	255
oats	21	51	150
corn	205	789	2346
Totals	319	1874	3792

Germany was long determined to start a war and her efforts were directed towards its preparation. When in 1936 these war plans assumed concrete forms the Germans began to arm, at the same time preparing large food stocks.

Dr. Rudolf Eicke states in his above mentioned book that the imports of iron ore, i. e., the most important component of the armament industry, increased from 6,598,000 tons in 1933 to 26,243,000 in 1937, and to 26,780,000 in 1938.

Parallel with this was the growth of the import of agricultural products for war reserves. According to the above statistical table these imports jumped from 319,000 tons in 1935-6 to 1,874,000 tons in 1936-7 and to 3,792,000 in 1937-8.

Therefore *Der Reichsnaehrstand* states officially and triumphantly: "The outbreak of war found the German food economy fully prepared." (p. 250).

At present the Germans are silent on one very important additional fact, that before the war Germany's food imports were caused by the high German standard of living.

This is stated by Professor Wilhelm Volz who writes in his book *Die Ostdeutsche Wirtschaft*:

"Germany's growing prosperity caused by her great industrial development permitted the importation from foreign countries of foodstuffs of the highest quality. This was a symptom of luxury which the prosperous Germany could afford, but which was really quite unnecessary, particularly to such a large extent." (p. 64).

Finally, the following fact, on which German propaganda is silent, for it is very inconvenient for its thesis, should be pointed out:

According to the official statements of *Der Reichsnaehrstand* Germany used rye as feed. In the last years before the war Germany could afford to use for that purpose an average of 2.2 million tons of rye per year (out of which 80% was feed for pigs) and 500 tons of wheat. This practice was only discontinued in the second half of 1937, when because of the military preparations Hitler prohibited the use of grain as feed.

The above arguments and figures based solely on German official statistics and works of highest authority, prove beyond all doubt:

a) that before the war Germany was not only self-sufficient in agricultural products but in all her food requirements;

b) that before the war Germany imported grain and other foodstuffs, however not to meet her current needs **but, above all, to create enormous stocks for the time of war, to meet the demand for luxury articles** and finally for the high quality and normally quite unnecessary cattle feeds.

c) that German propaganda is untrue and ad hoc constructs arguments for political purposes primarily directed toward regaining Germany's Eastern provinces.

#### THE REGAINED TERRITORIES WERE NEVER GERMANY'S "BREADBASKET"

Even more untrue is the second argument advanced by Germany, that the territories regained by Poland had always constituted the Reich's "granary," that they supplied 20% to 25% of its food

requirements, that without these provinces Germany would not have enough food and that, therefore, they should be returned to her as soon as possible.

In order to refute this German propaganda, it is high time to present at least briefly the actual situation which differs diametrically from what this propaganda claims.

It should be mentioned that the following presentation is based exclusively on official and authoritative German sources, in the first place on the previously quoted book of Dr. Wilhelm Volz.

It should also be observed that in his convictions Volz was an extreme nationalist and Pan-German, that he violently opposed the "Versailles Diktat," and that his books are imbued with this spirit. Consequently, the results and conclusions reached by Volz do not come from quarters hostile to Germany, but from the most German-nationalist sources imaginable.

The quintessence of Volz's *Ostdeutsche Wirtschaft* is the statement that the German East does not play any role in Germany's economy as a whole, and in her food supply in particular:

Volz writes:

"The statement which is still constantly repeated that the German East is the basis of the Reich's food supply, is a **completely false conclusion. This is very regrettable, but true!**" (p. 89, emphasis by Volz).

And he continues:

"An analysis of the economic situation of Easter Germany in relation to the rest of the Reich leads to the significant conclusion that the German East does not play any role in the whole system of German economy.

"As a matter of fact, Western and Southern Germany meet their own requirements of potatoes and bread grains, with the exception of a partial import of wheat from abroad." (p. 94).

What Volz calls the "German East" is almost complete identical with the territories recovered by Poland, and even a little more, for it comprises certain parts on the left bank of the Oder such as the Frankfurt Regency on the Oder and parts of the Grenzmark which were left to Germany.

The Eastern German provinces were always the poorest and most backward part of the Reich. The soil there is bad, the climate unfavorable and, moreover, there was a constant lack of labor.

Volz writes about this as follows:

"The German East was poorly endowed by nature. Deprived of natural resources, it has little industry (Silesia excepted), has a

modest agriculture, produces only unpretentious crops such as rye and potatoes; it possesses forests, but mostly pine, unsuitable for industry and is very sparsely populated. All these are facts which do not create any economic impulses and do not yield great results." (p. 46).

These general statements are corroborated by Volz with detailed data of which we quote here only those referring to the most important products, i. e., potatoes and bread grains, namely:

"One should at last discard the fairy tale that the East supplies the Reich, and particularly the Ruhr basin, with potatoes. (p. 74).

"Out of the potato crop the entire German East only 45% is sent to the Reich, 2.4% serves to supply Berlin, while 13% remaining after meeting internal consumption is **completely unusable and rots. A shocking result! This definitely means that the German Reich does not need the East for its supply of potatoes.**" (p. 75, emphasis by Volz).

And further:

"The amount of bread grains which the East contributes to the economy of the rest of the Reich is:

in wheat	1% (!)
in rye	7.6%

of the total crop of the remaining parts of Germany.

"In other words: **The German East does not play any role as a supplier of wheat for the German Reich, and only an insignificant one as a supplier of rye. A shocking conclusion!**" (emphasis by Volz).

#### "FLIGHT FROM THE EAST"

Actually, not economic and food supply considerations, but political and strategic causes are the reason why the Germans at present, as after World War I, so stubbornly fight to regain the lost Eastern territories. For these reasons, the Reich for decades sustained great financial sacrifices in order to keep these territories though they always were a liability and caused it great financial and demographic worries.

As far as the population was concerned, for a hundred years it migrated **en masse** from Eastern Germany to the West. According to official German statistics from 1840 to 1925, i. e., during only 85 years, 2,559,300 persons left these territories. According to Volz this means that "during three generations Germany lost in the East quantitatively the population of one province."

To the policy of "Drang nach Osten," for centuries proclaimed

and pursued by the Germans, the population of the Eastern German provinces opposed, on account of the poverty and bad economic conditions of these territories, what the Germans called "Ostflucht" (flight from the East).

As a result of this emigration the Eastern territories became depopulated. The Germans were fully aware of this and the often quoted Dr. Volz pertinently formulated the phenomenon as follows:

"Our nation is referred to as "people without space" (Volk ohne Raum). But here in the East these words should be reversed, for here we have "space without people" (Raum ohne Volk), and this unfortunate situation is caused basically by the fact that these large areas have been meagerly equipped by Nature."

However, the emigration from Eastern Germany was of extreme importance to the German state. It provided the best soldiers for the German army as well as cheap and little-demanding labor for German industry. Therefore Volz states on p. 42:

**"The East became an important and irreplaceable reservoir of manpower, indispensable for the West (emphasis by Volz).**

Moreover, these territories played a most important role from the strategic point of view, constituting, as has been proved by World Wars I and II, the only perfect base for aggression directed towards the East.

Last, but not least, these provinces were the seat of the powerful Junkers who played a leading role in the most reactionary nationalist Pan-German policy, and whose sons occupied posts in the General Staff, in the army and in the highest bureaucracy.

These were the real reasons why it paid the Germans to spend enormous sums to maintain the Eastern provinces. It must be emphatically stated that **the German East did not contribute to the maintenance of the Reich but, on the contrary, was maintained by it.**

#### AN AGE-OLD FINANCIAL BURDEN FOR GERMANY

Due to the reasons mentioned above, the eastern territories were treated specially by the German Government, and the economic difficulties caused by the unfavorable natural conditions were compensated by enormous subsidies and all kinds of financial reliefs.

According to German statistics, cash assistance granted by the Weimar Republic to the Eastern German provinces on the basis of laws, decrees and so-called programs for the Eastern provinces, amounted from 1922 to 1932, i. e., during less than a decade, to two billion 600 million Reichsmarks in gold.

It is a very characteristic fact which deserves special attention that all items with reference to help for East Prussia appeared in the Reich's budget under the highly significant heading of "domestic war burdens" (Innere Kriegslasten).

In addition, these provinces obtained considerable assistance in other forms, such as special transport rates, tax reductions and lower interest on debts.

After Hitler's seizure of power this help reached enormous sums, no longer made public, for Hitler attached to these territories utmost importance as a war base, and, moreover, was in this way winning over to himself the local Junkers and nationalists.

It should be observed that this help was not in any way new or transitory, or caused by the conditions after World War I, but had been a permanent phenomenon for over a century.

However, in spite of the billions in subsidies and reliefs, the indebtedness on farms in Eastern Germany increased continuously.

According to the book by Dr. Flescher and Dr. Padberg, **Zahlen und Bilder aus dem deutschen Landbau**, published officially in Berlin in 1936, farm debts in Eastern Germany increased from 316 Reichsmarks per hectare (2.471 acres) in 1924 to 705 Reichsmarks in 1934, i. e., they more than doubled.

On a percentage basis, the debts increased in proportion to the value per hectare from 35% of the value per hectare in 1924, to 79% in 1934. This means that the average farmer in Eastern Germany had only a one-fifth equity in his property, while four-fifths of it mainly belonged to government credit institutions.

It follows from the above facts:

1) that despite the constant flow of enormous subsidies and government reliefs, the debts of East German agriculture kept increasing and were the highest not only in Germany but in the whole of Europe.

2) that this agriculture was extremely poor, inefficient and unable to feed even itself.

3) that it was absolutely unable to supply from 20% to 25% of the food needed by the rest of Germany, as the Germans today undertake to convince the world, as a pretext for recovering these territories from Poland.

#### THE REAL AIM OF GERMAN PROPAGANDA

When the Germans were not yet thinking of the possibility that they might lose the Eastern provinces, but when all their efforts



were directed towards increasing Germany's power and preparing for another war, German scholars as well as statisticians and military leaders were fully aware that the Eastern provinces were poor and barren, requiring enormous outlays and subsidies. However, they had to be maintained at all costs, as a reservoir of recruits and industrial labor, a center of German nationalism and, most important of all, a base for attack against the East.

But when the situation changed and these territories were lost, obviously the same reasons could not be advanced to regain these provinces. In view of this, another propaganda slogan was quickly found, one which could be more easily swallowed by the victorious powers, and the Germans suddenly began to claim that the lost territories were a breadbasket for the whole of Germany and an inexhaustible reservoir of food.

### AN INDISPENSABLE BASE OF GERMAN AGGRESSION

The increase of German power through the conquest of new territories in the East, the use of Eastern Germany as a springboard in all military undertakings, has been for centuries the leading principle of German policy.

These ideas were eagerly adopted by the Nazis, who strove to put them into practice with fire and sword. The policies and military campaigns of the Teutonic Knights, who marched eastward in search of prey, were the ideals which always guided the Germans.

In *Mein Kampf* Hitler expressed this in the following words:

**"Thus we National Socialists put an end to the prewar tendencies of our foreign policy. We begin the work where it was left six hundred years ago. We stem the eternal Germanic migration to the South and West and direct our eyes forward, the land in the East. (the emphasis is Hitler's own).**

Germany's centuries-old urge to conquer the Eastern territories was partly fulfilled through the partitions of Poland which were initiated by Frederick the Great. The loss of part of this loot after World War I, and the re-establishment of an independent Poland worried Hitler, who constantly thought of conquests in the East.

The Germans, both the "good" ones of the Weimar Republic and the Nazis, found it profitable to "sustain bitter sacrifices for our East," and therefore they now conduct such a vehement campaign for its return. The possession of the Eastern territories is a premise in all German military undertakings and, therefore, their recovery must continue to be a guiding principle of Germany's policies.

After the defeat of 1918, the Germans created the slogan "never again war," which was to deceive the world.

In exactly the same way as today, they assumed the role of angels of peace and started a campaign of mercy to which the statesmen of the victorious powers fell victims. It seemed then that a militarily defeated Germany, economically devastated and disarmed, "poor and weak," was no longer dangerous.

However, hardly fifteen years passed when these "poor and defeated" Germans gathered around the Fuehrer and gave his aggressive designs, aiming at world domination, a still more enthusiastic, even fanatical support.

After Hitler's plans failed, the Germans began to renounce him, but Germany's neighbors know that it might not take even fifteen years before the Germans find a new Fuehrer to whom they will accord the same full support as they did Wilhelm II and Hitler, should they think that he could lead Germany to victory, avoiding the mistakes of both his predecessors.

William L. Shirer, one of the best experts on German conditions and psychology, says in his recently published book, *End of Berlin Diary*, on the basis of his postwar visit to Germany:

"What the German people regret, you soon find, is not that they made this war, but that they lost it. If only the whole world hadn't ganged up on poor Germany, they whimper, Germany would have won and been spared the present sufferings. They are sorry only for themselves not for all those they murdered and tortured and tried to wipe off this earth. There is no sense of guilt or even remorse. Most Germans you talk to merely think they have been unlucky." (p. 24).

### SECURITY OF FRONTIERS

After World War I the Poles tried to obtain a strategic frontier protecting them against German aggression, but all their efforts were met, under the influence of German propaganda, with the assurance that Germany was weak and devastated. The mere thought that after such a defeat Germany would ever again become a threat to her neighbors was considered folly. Then, just as now, the Germans tried to convince the world that it had nothing to fear from them, but that the Eastern territories, which the Poles claimed already at that time, were indispensable as a German food source.

When Roman Dmowski, chief of the Polish delegation at the peace conference after World War I, in a conversation with President Wilson demonstrated the necessity of giving Poland a Western frontier, that would give her safe strategic protection against Germany, the President who, incidentally, sympathized with Poland's demands, replied:

"My dear Mr. Dmowski, after this war who will talk any more of strategic reasons? We shall have the League of Nations..."

Reality has shown how the optimism of that great idealist looked in the light of history.

As after World War I, Germany now exploits the good faith, confidence and compassion of the Western Powers. But Poland and Germany's other neighbors know very well that in the present propaganda, conducted under the pretext of economic considerations, lies the threat of a new German expedition for world domination, and the time when it will take place is dependent only on the chances which the Allies will give Germany in this respect.

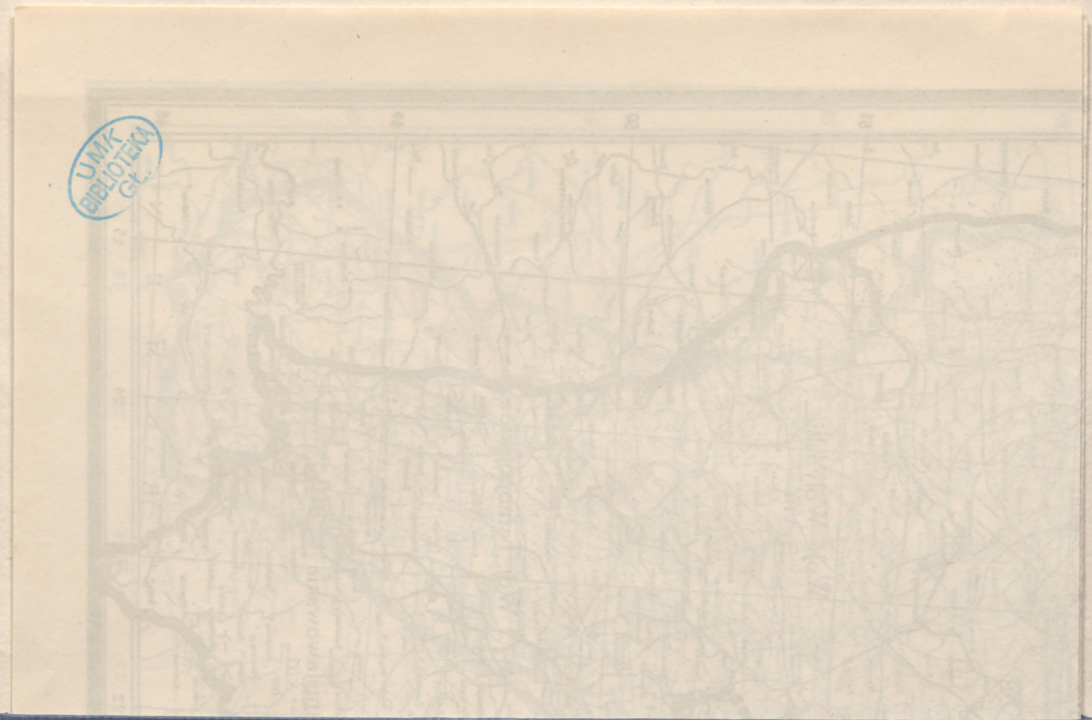
A partial protection against Germany is provided by the present Polish-German frontier, which has considerably shortened the old boundary, changing it from an open into a natural one. In 1939 Poland's land frontiers were 5,394 km. long, out of which 1,912 km. or 34.5% was with Germany. At present the length of the land frontier is 3,064 km. out of which only 426 km., i. e., not quite 14% is with Germany.

Thus the frontier has become 4.5 times shorter and while formerly it was open, it is now natural, because it is formed by the Oder and Neisse rivers.

The Vistula and the Oder, the two principal Polish rivers and their tributaries, form a basin in which Poland is situated as one coherent geographical entity. How very natural a frontier the Oder river is for Poland becomes apparent when observing the phenomenon of Nature, that from the confluence of the Neisse up to its estuary the Oder does not have in its entire further course a single tributary from its left, the German bank, but is fed only from its right, i. e. the Polish bank.

Within those boundaries Poland now forms an economic and national unit which can resist all German temptations.

By their Yalta decisions, the Allies deprived Poland of her natural boundaries in the East and Southeast. By depriving her now of her natural boundaries in the West, should Poland become completely unprotected and fall prey to a new German aggression?



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# POLAND

## Before and After 1939

Solid line shows Poland's 1939 boundaries. The dotted line in the West and in the North indicates boundaries of territory recovered from Germany by Poland. Vast, indisputably Polish territory to the right of the East-erly dotted line was forcibly grabbed and illegally incorporated into the Soviet Union.

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