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POLAND'S AIMS AND POLICY.

PUBLISHED BY
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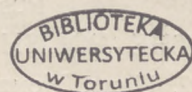
THE conferences which took place in the middle of August of this year at German Headquarters between the representatives of the Polish Government of Warsaw, Prince J. Radziwill, Count Adam Roniker and the German and Austrian delegates have undoubtedly aroused, not only Polish public opinion, but also general public interest among the Allies. The representatives of the Government of Warsaw and the delegates of the Central Powers tried to bring about an actual alliance between Poland and the Central Empires in order to secure Poland's effective co-operation with Germany, Austro-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey, against Great Britain, France, Italy and the United States. It is absolutely necessary that the opinion of the Allied countries should be accurately formed as to the attitude and views of the great majority of the Polish people as to Poland's own politics, and her exact attitude in this war towards the Central Empires and the small number of adepts of an understanding with Germany.

It is difficult to give a more accurate and disinterested account of these conferences than by quoting a verbatim report of the speeches delivered by the three Polish M.P.'s (delegates) Swiężyński, Korfanty and Głabiński, to the three Parliamentary bodies in Warsaw, Vienna and Berlin, showing exactly Poland's aims and the true opinion of the Polish nation.

More attention will be paid to their words by explaining concisely whom and what these gentlemen represent.

Korfanty spoke in the name of the party representing all the Polish M.P.'s in Berlin.

His views legally represent the opinion of the delegates of 5,000,000 Poles living in Polish districts annexed by Prussia. Korfanty represents Upper Silesia, a former Polish province occupied a few centuries ago by Prussia, and so strongly germanised that the



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upper classes in the district have become quite German; but the working classes and peasantry—representing the majority of the population—are entirely Polish. At the beginning of the twentieth century, under the leadership of Korfanty, a Silesian workman's son, and Kowalczyk, the son of a peasant, a strong national movement arose in Silesia, and for the first time in those bygone days, Members of Parliament were elected who stood up for Poland. The Polish population in the annexed provinces hate the Germans, and ever since the very beginning of the war have behaved towards Germany with coolness and restraint, dictated by the present state of war and the powerful German armaments.

Mr. Głabiński, M.P., who, shortly before the war, was the President of the Polish Club in the Austrian Parliament at Vienna, and later State Secretary of Austrian Railways, is the head of the national democratic party in Galicia. The M.P.'s of this party, and the socialist members of the Polish Club, a few months ago retired from the membership of this Club consisting of seventy-eight members, and only fifty-six remained. They retired because they were unable to agree to the policy of an understanding with Austria, represented by the majority of the Club, and also in order to co-operate more closely with the Czechs and Southern Slavs—a policy which the majority of the Club did not approve. But it must be affirmed most strongly that Polish opinion does not agree with the politics of the majority who remained in the Club, but supports those members who left. It must also be said that there are still in the Club delegates of the People's party, who are nevertheless in complete accord with the objects of national democracy, and Socialists.

The fullest co-operation exists nevertheless in the country amongst these three democratic parties. The National Democratic delegates, Głabiński and Skarbek, when appearing at Prague and Laibach, were in complete accord with the democratic representatives of Polish parties.

It can therefore be most emphatically stated that, although the delegate Głabiński, M.P., spoke as representing the minority of Polish delegates in the Austrian Parliament at Vienna, he must nevertheless be considered as representing the enormous majority of Polish opinion in Galicia.

Delegate Swieżyński is the head of the Inter-Party's Club in the State Council in Warsaw.

The State Council consists of fifty-two elected delegates and fifty-five members, by virtue of office and nominated by the Government of Warsaw. Out of fifty-five elected members, forty were proposed by the Inter-Party Club, thus scoring a decisive victory at the elections.

The Polish people have thus approved in the Kingdom of Poland the politics of the Inter-Party Club, which is opposed to a compromise with the Central Powers. The Government of Warsaw, in order to obtain a majority in the State Council, nominated only such members of the Club as had to be elected on account of the positions which they occupy in the country; the other vacancies have been filled by their followers.

It must nevertheless be confirmed that, although the Club possesses at the present time 50 votes out of 107 in the State Council—which is a minority—they represent nevertheless the majority of electors and the country. The opinion of delegate Swieżyński is the opinion of former Russian Poles who are now under German rule and occupation.

What has been said by Korfanty, Głabiński and Swieżyński in Berlin, Vienna and Warsaw?

Korfanty, M.P., illustrated the German management of the Polish districts; Głabiński, M.P., not only confirmed Mr. Korfanty's statement, but asserted formally that the Polish nation is aiming at complete independence and unity, with a free outlet to the sea; delegate Swieżyński pointed out the way in which the Polish nation is going to obtain its aims, laying stress on the declaration of Versailles by the Allies, and spoke of the politics of the Central Powers.

In reading the enclosed original speeches delivered by each of the respective representatives, the reader must feel assured that he is hearing the free voice of the Polish nation, sincere and dramatic in its simplicity.

**SPEECH DELIVERED ON THE 5th OF JULY, 1918,
IN THE GERMAN REICHSTAG BY
Mr. KORFANTY, M.P.**

GENTLEMEN,

During the second reading of the Budget, the majority of this House submitted to a smashing criticism the military Governments in the occupied countries in the East. Although we are the most competent defenders of the interests of the inhabitants of these countries we had no opportunity of speaking.

It is of great interest to our brethren who, on account of the war, are at home and suffering unspeakable tortures within the boundaries of this State.

We must make our voice heard at last during this third reading on this painful question.

We must point out the anarchy created by the military authorities in military occupied countries for a number of years. We stigmatised it from parliamentary platforms, and in private conferences we frequently demanded unsuccessfully a change of these measures. None of you, gentlemen, will find it surprising that we take this opportunity of protesting most strongly against the manner in which the occupied territories, their inhabitants and their property are treated.

We must also protest to the Government against the unheard of proceedings of the military authorities towards Polish working people who are citizens of this country.

We must also protest to the Government because the military authorities are behaving in an unheard of manner towards the Polish working classes who are nevertheless citizens of this State.

Quite recently a number of strikes occurred in the coal mines of Upper Silesia which it is quite easy to understand. The miners suffer from hunger, they have no clothes, the working hours are too long, and wages too low. My friend Mr. Sosinski gave you yesterday an exact account of these conditions.

I need not, therefore, deal with them. I must repeat my statement. In the mines belonging to Giesch's successors, at Szopienice, in the Cleofas mines and Wojka, near Katowice, strikes broke out, originated by hunger, want of clothes, overwork and misery.

In the mines belonging to the heirs of Giesch, the miners submitted their claims and appealed to the Arbitration Board. The Board delayed the examination of the appeal. But when the management of the mines decided to order the men to work one hour longer in the pits, the strike broke out.

Instead of inquiring into the miners' grievances, the military authorities placed the mines under martial law.

Captain Arldt, of Glivice, was appointed high commander of the mines on strike. Here are a few examples of some of his orders after the militarisation of the mines: The adult miner who had wife and children was to receive a daily salary of 53 pf. (Lively shouts by Poles and Socialists—"Unheard of.") The cost of living was fixed at 2 marks per head for the miners, and 10 pfg. for night's lodging. ("Shame, shame," by Poles and Socialists.) The miners' families are to receive war assistance. The alimentary stores, where the miners bought bread and other articles of food, were closed. Besides this, the money already paid in advance for the supply of potatoes was refunded.

This most cruel and brutal behaviour was intended to drive the miners by hunger and starvation to work again.

The Government and the military authorities have the imperative duty of taking rigorous and energetic measures against such mismanagement by employers instead of siding with them. (Great unrest and shouting by the Poles and Socialists.) On the 3rd of July a sitting of the Arbitration Board was to take place at which the miners' resolutions were to be discussed.

Captain Arldt made it known, however, that he exercised full powers, and prohibited the negotiations, and instead of giving the men bread, better wages and shorter hours, the chairman delivered a patriotic speech. (Laughter and shouting by the Poles and Socialists.) As recently as yesterday, the miners decided to oppose by all possible means the militarisation of mines, and prefer to die from starvation rather than to accept work under such conditions. I firmly hope that the Government of the Confederation is going to condemn most severely the manner in which the working men are treated, and is

going to look more attentively to the revictualling of Upper Silesia ; and after such a dispute is going to do—what is necessary—its duty. These few words have reference to internal affairs ; I now resume the main object of my speech.

The question has been frequently discussed in the Prussian and State Parliaments, and relates to the welfare of Polish working men brought over to Germany. Polish working men (labour) detained by compulsion in this country number over 700,000, and the Government expressed at one time the opinion that without such help it could not maintain the war industries and that Germany could not wage war without them.

These 700,000 working men were partly induced to come over under false pretences as to the high wages which they could earn, and other favourable advantages and better conditions of work ; they were allured by fraud and the lies of dishonest agents. Some of them were dragged by compulsion, and they were hunted down in Poland and Lithuania. (" Shame, shame," by Poles and Socialists.)

My hon. colleague Mr. Trąpczyński mentioned these facts during the second reading of the Budget, stating at the same time that the Minister of War some time previously promised help for these wretched men, but he never had serious intentions of doing so, as General Scheuch declared that he could only take into consideration the interests of the State and German Confederation.

We do not recognise any German interests (shouts—" Oho ! Oho ! ") contrary to the notion of rights, duties and Christian principles. (Applause by the Poles.) We recognise only such German interests as are in perfect agreement with the teaching of Christ. (" Quite right," by the Poles.)

Any other German affairs are to be most strongly condemned by any civilised man.

My hon. colleague Mr. Trąpczyński, after the second reading of the Bill on the Budget, had a private conversation with General Scheuch about the Polish workmen. General Scheuch insisted in the course of this conversation that he could only be guided by Might.

Gentlemen, if you are to consider the Polish labour question as one of Might, we shall be compelled to interpret the attitude of the Government in the gravest possible manner.

Do not forget that the strength of 700,000 working men, on whom depends the whole German war industry, is also Might. (Applause by the Poles.) They constitute a determining factor, and we are those who control moral power over such a factor. (" Quite true," by the Poles.) Do not compel us, do not compel the Polish nation to resort to extreme measures over this dispute. I only wish to add a few words as to the manner in which these men are exploited and robbed in Germany. (Loud protest by the members of the Right.) Yes, exploited and robbed. (Shouts of " Quite right, quite true," by the Poles ; the Marshal rings the bell. Marshal Fehrenbach interrupts the speaker and affirms that in Germany the working classes are not robbed and exploited by officials ; therefore the speaker has no right to use such expressions.)

Mr. Korfanty, M.P. : I said that Polish workmen were exploited and robbed. Here the hon. Marshal interrupted me and did not allow me to finish my sentence, as I wanted to say, by unscrupulous employers. (Loud laughter.) I still believe that this can be stated in the Parliament of the German Confederation. (" Quite right," by the Poles.) I must call the hon. Marshal's attention to the fact that I did not use the word *officials*. (" It is so," by the Poles.)

I must only remind you, gentlemen, how these men are compelled by starvation and flogging to resume work, and in what unhealthy conditions they live and dwell. (" Quite true," by the Poles.) And as a proof of what I am saying, I call not only upon the evidence of the members of the Left in this House, but upon the evidence of the dignitaries of the Catholic Church, who wrote volumes about the exploitation and ill-treatment of our poor working population. I call upon the evidence of the M.P.'s of the Centre and the high dignitaries of the Catholic Church. These most disinherited brothers of ours are ruined both in body and soul. This must be plainly stated once for ever before the whole world.

I will also add a few more words about some other activities of the military authorities in occupied territories in the East.

I devote a few lines to the organising departments controlling the raw materials necessary to the war supplies in Poland and Lithuania. Certain M.P.'s who visited some of the occupied territories have been able to see for themselves the scandalous official mismanagement of

supplies of raw material. For the sake of obtaining a few pounds of brass, most expensive machinery, valued at several hundred thousand marks, was wantonly destroyed. ("Shame! shame!" by the Poles.)

The raw material has nearly all been removed, to the extent of 4,000,000,000 marks, and only about 30,000,000 marks have been paid for. Labour communities organised by scores of years of constant work, and representing one of the most important factors of industrial life in the country, were scattered in all directions.

Is there any industry capable of being rebuilt after the war without skilled labour?

We are confronted with a similar problem in reference to agriculture. There are no cattle left, all teams have been removed, and a horse is nowadays a curiosity.

The peasant is robbed of his last cow (Shame! shame! by the Socialists), and the Parliaments have the impudent audacity to vote further laws to commandeer everything in occupied territories. Such reckless commandeering has almost wilfully ruined agriculture.

In Lithuania alone the military authorities have commandeered the management of 17,000 private estates, and these are so mismanaged that the proprietors who are not allowed to return to their homes will not only in all probability lose everything, but will have to actually pay the cost of management.

This is evidently a wanton destruction of private estates by order. The management of the country by military detachments still kept in Podlachia produces such friction as cries to Heaven for vengeance.

There are no words to describe the tortures imposed upon the local population. (Great uproar amongst the National Liberals and shouts of vengeance.) Yes, vengeance, as any crime must be duly punished and avenged, and if you, Sir, are a Christian, then I, being a Christian, must tell you that God is going to punish such criminals.

The forests of Poland and Lithuania are totally devastated. The population in the towns is dying from illness and starvation. There is another illustration: Polish soldiers who have been fighting with the Russian armies were liberated by German authorities after the Brest-Litovsk Treaty had been signed, and allowed to return home. They were disarmed and arrested and sent to German camps, whence they were sent all over the country and compelled to work.

The money unlawfully brought to this country, which these poor men have earned by very hard work in Russia and saved, is now taken away from them and they are not even allowed to send the smallest assistance to their own people, who are starving and suffering untold miseries. This is done under the pretence that they apparently belonged to Bolshevik gangs and that such money was stolen by them. It is not in the least true.

To German-occupying forces in the East there is no such thing as anything sacred. They must therefore interfere with everything. A fortnight ago one of the highest dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church in Lithuania, the Bishop-Prelate R. Michalkiewicz, administrator of the bishopric of Wilna, was apprehended by German soldiers and dragged as a prisoner to Maria Lach, in Germany, where he has been interned for the duration of the war. I must, from my seat here, in the name of the whole Polish nation, express to this high dignitary of our Church and our esteemed compatriot our most heartfelt sympathy, our recognition and deep admiration of and gratitude for, his manly defence of the rights of the Catholic Church and of our nation against the extravagances of German military potentates.

What is the guilt of this high dignitary of the State? He was compelled to administer disciplinary punishment to four Lithuanian priests who had transgressed in a most flagrant manner the order and discipline of the Church by sending a petition to the Chancellor of the German Confederation in the course of 1917.

These priests, in their petition, vilified in a most shameful manner the memories of all the bishops of Wilna up to the present time in a way unworthy of any Catholic priest, the memory of those bishops who for almost a century and a-half were martyrs of the Catholic faith, and who nearly all died as exiles either in Russian prisons or on the icy steppes of Siberia.

Four of these Lithuanian priests committed deliberate slander and perjury against the Wilna clergy, accusing them of abusing their clerical power by furthering political national aims in direct contravention of the Papal edicts as promulgated by Pope Pius X. and Benedict XV. (Here the Marshal rings the bell.)

**SPEECH BY DR. STAN. GLABINSKI, M.P.,
DELIVERED IN THE AUSTRIAN REICHSRATH,
ON JULY 1st, 1918.**

(In Polish.) In order to be thoroughly understood by all those present, I will speak as usual in German. Let me, however, express the hope that very shortly we will be able to use our own beautiful language in our independent Polish Parliament with the feeling of being understood by everybody.

(In German.) For sixteen years I have addressed this honourable House as a member and in the name of the Polish Club. I speak to-day only in the name of my closer supporters, but at the same time from the very depth of the heart of the greater majority of the whole Polish nation which does not share and does not approve of the timorous and senseless policy of Austrian Poles and the *would-be Polish Government in Warsaw*, in such eventful times when the whole future of the Polish nation is at stake, and last, but not least, when our national honour is imperilled. The whole nation expresses freely and frankly its true and real feelings, its grief and aims, and insists upon giving up at once hollow-worded political parliamentarism at this critical period of our history.

I must express deep regret that the President of the Polish Club did not feel inclined to-day to put forward the political programme of the nation as agreed on the 28th of May, 1917, stating that the only aims are the unity of all the parts of Poland and Polish lands to be moulded into one independent state with its own free outlet to the sea. I also regret that he did not take up any well-defined position in regard to the latest declaration on Polish affairs by the Polish Government in Warsaw exacted by the German Government.

We have no time to waste over politics nowadays; we are not a warfaring State.

(Large space censored.)

There was a time in this country during Francis Joseph's reign when a great number of Poles dreamt the happy dream that they had found in Austria a second motherland. In the course of this war, however, this dream vanished never to be dreamt again.

(Censored space.)

In the presence of the exposed secret treaties at Brest-Litovsk and the evident political aims of Germany, which aim at the complete isolation and ruination of the Polish element, this dream appears as an optical illusion, as a kind of *fata morgana* which is to remain as a separate but a bygone period in the history of our country.

On the outbreak of the war, the Polish question was Europe's order of the day. Everybody acquainted with the history and culture of Poland will understand the importance of the Polish question and that it can only be solved in one way, viz., by the Union of all the subdivided parts of Poland into one independent State, with the recognition of its complete independence.

Any other compromise would not mean the solving of the Polish question, but only the approval of its former partitions or a new violation of right.

It was very soon ascertained that Austrian diplomacy did not grasp the Polish question sufficiently well, did not understand its meaning nor take immediately the preliminary steps necessary to find a solution. Any different arrangement would not settle the Polish question but only sanction the former partitions or some new kind of violence.

In their absolutism the old masters of Austrian politics stood infinitely higher intellectually than the present ones, amongst them Metternich, although so unfriendly towards Poland. He is the only one responsible at the Congress of Vienna for the resolution already quoted in the Upper House, an extract of which I herewith quote:—

“Austria animated with the principles of liberty which since 1772 are in accordance with the return of the balance of power in Europe, and which are contrary to the partitions of Poland, is always prepared to agree to the return of this State to its former boundaries which were the same as those prior to its first partition, to be free and independent of any other State and leaves to the agreement of neighbouring states, the ‘delimitation of frontiers.’”

I need not add that in this respect Metternich was not an exception, but was seconded by the celebrated Prussian statesman, Baron Stein, and the whole of the public opinion of Europe, represented by the noblest minds of those times.

In comparison with such distinguished statesmen how short-sighted and faint-hearted German and Austrian politics have proved to be in the course of this war.

It was decided at first to win Poland's co-operation and rouse the fighting spirit of the Poles by publishing a proclamation to the Polish nation from the Austrian and German armies at the time when they crossed the Russian boundaries, promising freedom from Russian domination.

Did the authors of such an appeal realise that the Polish nation is also under another yoke far more dangerous than the Russian one, viz., the Prussian system of laws of exceptions, the cruel net of decrees of expropriation, colonisation committees, settlement restrictions, prohibitions of Polish education in schools and even of the Polish language?

Were Poles to be freed from the Russian yoke to change it for a German one? When this appeal failed the second act of German policy concerning the Poles began.

(Three to four lines censored.)

Poles have been treated as enemies, they were called Russophiles because they did not like to become Prussophiles.

(Four to five lines censored.)

At last the Central Powers decided to moderate their policy towards Poles.

The manifestation of changes towards a betterment were the manifestoes of the Monarchs of November 5th, 1916, on the formation of an independent Polish state from the Russian spoils, to which was added separated Galicia.

(Large part censored.)

After the signing of the Brest-Litovsk treaty, after the separation of the district of Chelm or rather the threatened intention of so doing

and the secret agreements relating to the partitions of Galicia and other secret agreements which I intend to quote, German and Austrian policy lost the right to any good faith on the part of the Poles.

The Polish question is an international question, because it is linked with the interests of the whole of Europe and ultimately with the interests of the whole world.

Before the war all the politicians, historians and other writers agreed and shared the undivided opinion that the Polish question was an international one.

It is only during this war that Imperial Russia brought forth the selfish plea that the Polish question should be considered as a Russian internal one.

It appears also that the Allied Powers formerly shared the same opinion. On the contrary, the politicians of the Central Powers, namely, the Chancellor Bethmann-Hollweg and the Foreign Secretary Burian repeatedly expressed contrary and correct views, viz., that the Polish question is in reality an international question that could only be settled in its entirety at the world's peace congress. In the course of this war however, opinion has changed in this respect, and the position of the fighting powers has also undergone several changes.

First of all when America had not as yet entered the war, President Wilson expressed his opinion that the question of Poland was international, that every nation understood and acknowledged that Poland must be united into one independent country. The Russian revolution also approved by the proclamation of March, 1917, the right of Poland to a complete and united independence.

Lastly, the confirmation by the Allies at Versailles which has been recently published, gives the same expression of views as those of President Wilson, recognising that a free and independent Poland is one of the necessary conditions of peace, order, and justice in Europe.

But, on the contrary, more and more frequently do we hear the voice of the politicians of the Central Powers who only consider the Polish question as a home question, which has nothing to do with foreign policy, and they link the Polish question as being part of Central Europe and the dispose of Poland just exactly as if the Polish nation, which up to the present has never been consulted, had nothing to say about the matter.

In the meantime, the Central Powers rule and dispose as they think fit of everything in Polish countries, in Russian Poland and in Lithuania.

Polish industry has been ruined by the theft of our machinery and raw material, and by the removal of skilled labour into Germany where the working men are imprisoned in barracks just like slaves and are terribly exploited, the Polish mines are expropriated for the benefit of German limited companies. The forests are mostly ruined, the remainder are let on extensive leases. Following the example of Germany the Austrian Government is doing the same, and has recently decided to lease out the forests in Russian Poland for fifteen years to be fully exploited.

The Regency State Council nominated by the Central Powers possesses no power whatever and has no influence. What is worse, the German Government is doing everything possible to check even the moral influence which could be exercised by this institution amongst the population and does all that it possibly can to weaken and suppress it. When the Allied Governments agreed and proclaimed at Versailles the resolution as to the future of Poland it is well known what a rejoicing echo was aroused in the hearts and minds of all Poles, especially those in Russian Poland. Whatever may be the opinion as to the meaning of this proclamation, it is quite clear that when the Polish question comes up for international settlement the Allied Powers will also have a voice in the settlement.

(Part censored.)

There are also in Austria many candid politicians who imagine, that by insinuation and threats people can be encouraged to neglect the national programme of their holiest aims. They are continually remonstrating here against the Allied Powers who have approved and agreed to an independent united Polish state with a free outlet to the sea, and when Poles remain faithful to their national programme they consider it to be treachery against the State.

The politicians of bygone days were of a different and of a more chivalrous mind. It will be sufficient to mention here the decree of the Central State Department of Lower Austria in 1848, which supported the decision as to the restoration of Poland to its former boundaries, and the reporter's beautiful words: "Do not attribute to Austria any intention of violently checking any aspiration of Polish national aims."

Now, Gentlemen, do you really believe that Poles can be made to renounce their own national rights and to oppose the higher principles of morality and the interests of the whole of humanity only because they are approved of by the Allies and looked upon suspiciously as having an understanding with the Allies? No, Gentlemen, we are not a bit frightened by you or your insinuations; the Polish nation is not going to give up its programme and its political aims. Our programme which has been clearly set forth in our appeal of the 28th of May, 1917, contains nothing new, it is only the living Polish ideal which has always lived amongst us, lives and will live, without any dependence on the variable fate of the politics of the Central Powers.

The so called peace signed at Brest-Litovsk is only a provisional peace treaty because it does not mean peace, it is only a preventive from signing a real and definite peace which has been postponed until later in order to create any amount of political complications. This treaty demonstrates quite clearly Germany's aim to rule the whole East, both militarily and politically and, what is most important, economically.

It is not exactly a formal annexation of the Eastern countries because, in case of annexation, Germany would have to lose her national character of the State and would be compelled to create new laws of exception against Eastern countries such as are continually being produced in the Duchy of Posen, in West Prussia and in Silesia against the Poles.

The supposed creation of autonomous states by Germany is only done to deceive the population which is made to believe and rejoice that it is possessed of real independence, although only ruled by Germany and exploited in all its economic sources for the benefit of Germany.

Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria and Turkey are to be closely connected with Germany under the watchword of "Mittel Europa." These apparent states in the East are to be held under the yoke by hate, jealousy, and the desire for revenge, bred amongst them by the unfairness of boundaries and other decisions of the so-called peace treaty. The best example of such tendencies is the resolution of the Brest-Litovsk treaty separating the district of Chelm from the living organism of the Polish nation, and of the many different secret treaties some of them are already known and published. One of



them is the secret treaty referring to the formation of a separate Crown property formed out of Bukowina and that part of Eastern Galicia which is mainly inhabited by a Ruthenian population.

This treaty translated from the authentic French text as published by the newspapers says: "As the Ukrainians have recognised the right of the minorities living in the Ukraine to a wide autonomy, and amongst others to the Poles, and also the possibility of a cultural development, and in order to protect and secure for the Ukrainian people, living within the sphere of Austria, the same cultural development, and as a closer co-operation of both countries is desirable, therefore a project for the formation of a separate free Crown land is to be presented at the latest on the 31st of July, 1918, to the State Council, such Crown land to be formed out of Bukowina and any such part of Eastern Galicia where the majority of the population is Ukrainian.

The Austrian Government will use all the constitutional means at its disposal in order to have this project approved and ratified by parliamentary power.

(Nine to ten lines censored.)

In the meantime, it is universally known that only in Austria and especially in Galicia and Bukowina had the Ruthenian population obtained (not only primary schools) but in Galicia eight high schools, one privileged ladies' public school, a great many professorships in Ruthenian in various universities, quite a number of seminaries, etc., although the Government in the supposed liberated Ukraine has so far not introduced middle or the higher Ruthenian education, but has actually introduced the Russian language as the official language of the country.

(Large space censored.)

I do not wish to give a personal opinion about this treaty, its summary is a sufficient proof of its tendency, the Austrian Government being responsible for the same.

(Large space censored.)

I would like to express in a few words my opinion as to the internal policy of the Government. In that respect, I must state from the very beginning that the whole of our population is defenceless against the arbitrary and usurious institutions and will be defenceless as long as the constitutional rights of liberty remain suspended. By order of

the whole State Cabinet, ever since the 25th of July, 1914, personal freedom has been suspended, private correspondence censored, freedom of speech and meetings prohibited. This notwithstanding that the war is prolonged so long and that Austria is free from enemy occupation, I should therefore like to have these orders suppressed as the Government would always find in case of real necessity and in accordance with the law of the 5th of May, 1869, the possibility of suspending the constitutional rights of citizens for the time being in those localities where unrest or other important causes might necessitate such measures.

As to our position towards the Government, I must express the doubt that any sort of Government exists to-day in Austria, I mean a real Government and not only one in name. If we really possessed a real Government in Austria would it be possible for the German Government to keep in slavery more than 200,000 working people of both sexes, all of them belonging to Galicia, mostly Poles, Austrian citizens, even young girls whose claim to freedom and help have been shown to be without any effect during the last four years. I said Austrian citizens, because apart from these are nearly seven hundred thousand working men from Russian Poland who are to-day slaves in Germany.

If there was really any sort of Government in existence would it be possible to have food daily removed from Galicia by train-loads into Germany?

If there was a Government would it be possible that the taking over by the State of a Polish school in Biala decided and sanctioned by an imperial decree before the war could be withheld because a few Germans in Silesia have protested against such a decree? We do not realise the existence of our Government even when it is efficient, still less do we recognise it when allowed to disregard the fundamental law of the country.

This Government seems to ignore the fact that the Austrian Government is a political entity of countries represented in the State Council and that it is the base of the whole organism and composed of State federation. If the Government knew anything about the matter it could not have made secret treaties for the partition of Galicia, because according to the State Constitution the countries who are themselves concerned, that is to say the local Parliament, possess the deciding voice. If the Government recognised and respected

the law it could not have made any appointments concerning districts in Bohemia, as according to the State Constitution the principles of organisation of State power belong to the competence of a Parliament, and the local Parliaments have the right to be heard when the delimitation of districts is concerned.

This Government has not only been treading upon the rights of autonomy in the country but has taken no consideration whatever of the laws of local autonomy. In Galicia, in many districts State commissioners govern and in the capital Lwów and other cities the Government has invented a new form of county representation by calling it a temporary Town Council nominated by the Government. In all the branches of State management corruption is rampant and is spreading, and the only aim of the Government according to the statement of the President of the Council is the German political orientation. What is the base of the Constitution which empowers the Government to apply German or even Bohemian or Polish political orientation. Does the Government ignore the fact that this State is composed of autonomous kingdoms and countries which should have no political orientation? Does the Government ignore article nineteen of the Constitution, which guarantees to all nationalities equal rights in this State?

It is therefore quite natural, that our party is offering and is going to offer the strongest and sharpest opposition not only to the Government but to the whole State policy, to the system based upon the persecution of Poles and unfriendly tendency contrary to the aims of our nationality. It is therefore obvious that we do not care whether at the head of the Austrian Government is a Mr. von Seidler or any other gentleman. We are forced to defend ourselves and we shall do so; fortunately we are not the only ones who will do so. We shall defend ourselves in strict friendship with representatives of other nationalities who, like ourselves, are persecuted and ill-treated. Our aims are pure and elevated. We must fight like our forbears have fought. We fight for your freedom and for ours.

**THE DECLARATION OF M. SWIEZYNSKI.
MADE IN THE COUNCIL OF STATE IN WARSAW,
JUNE 26th, 1918.**

After having listened to the declaration of the Polish Government which has just been read here, I shall speak on behalf of the Inter-Party Club in the State Council with the object of stating our attitude towards the declaration of the Prime Minister, and at the same time with the object of giving utterance to our views on the present policy of the Government.

We are aware that the State Council ought to be a field of political controversies, because it has been summoned to work out the franchise of the Diet and to make preliminary preparation for the restoration of the Polish State. We are speaking, therefore, not for the sake of polemics with the Government or with the political groups which might differ from us, but merely to give an expression to the sentiments and the views prevailing amongst broad circles of our nation. It must be borne in mind that the support by the bulk of the people of leading persons and circles constitutes the fundamental guarantee of the policy of "circumspectively protecting national welfare from danger in these hard times" as we have heard in the declaration.

We understand perfectly well that this period of our politics is difficult and full of danger, and thus we sympathised completely with our Government when it stated in its declaration that it regretted having been unable during its nearly three months' tenure of office to fulfil those parts of its programme which it considered its first task. With our Government we desire sincerely to restore our State; we realise, however, that the circumstances under which the Government is labouring are so exceptionally difficult that they frustrate the goodwill of our ministers. Taking this into consideration, we do not intend to make any complaints in this matter.

On the other hand, we are greatly astonished by the optimism with which the declaration of the Prime Minister breathes, an optimism which does not correspond to existing reality, and which therefore

may mislead public opinion. There was nothing real laid down before us which could justify the hope that the Polish cause in the present state of affairs and with the sole co-operation of those elements on which the Polish Government unconditionally relies, can be successfully and permanently solved to the benefit of the nation, for the establishment of peace in Europe and for the satisfaction of the new principles of international life.

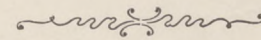
At the same time, when the entire world has recognised the Polish question as an international problem and the Polish national and political aims as just, and their realisation as a condition of the new order of the world, an order based on right and liberty, at the time when the solemn declaration (the Declaration of Versailles) by responsible statesmen has given these aims positive and collective expression (applause), at this moment nothing has taken place on Polish territory to show that the Central Powers which have to-day the practical possibility of confirming their promises by deeds are guided by any real intention of restoring the Polish State. Above all, it is difficult to understand the statement of the Government, which is in reality directed against the recognition of Polish aims and yet professes to be the will of the Nation. (Applause.)

The Act of the 5th November which established the abstract principle of the Polish State did not form a real starting point for the creation of a State, because the problems most vital to us, those of the territory of the Polish State, remain on the whole a riddle and are being decided to the disadvantage of Poland. For example, the Brest-Litovsk negotiations, the official announcements or threats, the administrative instructions which have prevented the admittance of representatives of some parts of Russian Poland to this Chamber. (Applause on all benches.)

The ever-increasing systematic devastation and impoverishment of the country threaten its future economic life, and create conditions favourable to the spreading of anarchy which cannot be checked by our Government, a Government devoid of all power of preventing the terribly increasing misery. This misery in the first place concerns the labouring classes which are deprived of the opportunity to work, it concerns small landholders and labourers without land, as well as our whole enlightened professional class. (Applause.) When I add how deplorable is the fate of thousands of Polish prisoners of war and of all those unfortunate crowds of emigrants on their

way back (applause), when I mention the unbearable conditions of Polish life at the so-called "etapes" and in Lithuania, and lastly, when I refer to the cause of our army and of those units of it which were interned and tried (applause on all benches)—we shall understand that such an atmosphere is hardly suitable for quiet and creative legislative work.

Nevertheless, and notwithstanding the faulty State Council franchise, which has excluded large masses of the nation, the Inter-Party Club will take an earnest part in the true labours of the State Council, for we are anxious to clear the way speedily for the Diet, and we are convinced that all ought to be done to take advantage of the present movement and to strengthen the organising power of our motherland. We firmly believe that the Nation will rightly appreciate these our efforts as a stage in our inflexible endeavour to fulfil the desires and needs of Poland.



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