

Summer Welles Papers
Box 165 Folder 15
Europe Files 1933-1943
Poland. 1942-1943

MEMORANDUM

Poland is interested both in the German problem as a whole, and in the particular conditions which will come into being in the Reich as a result of the victory of the United Nations. Moreover, as one of the largest and most directly threatened neighbours of Germany, Poland has her own immediate problems in relation to that country, without a favourable solution of which Poland's lasting independence cannot be assured.

The claims postulated in the present Memorandum are not formulated with the view of furthering exclusively Polish interests. They are intimately related to the need for the creation of such political, economic and other conditions as to facilitate the realization of a constructive plan for the federation of the countries of Central Europe after the war. This federation will rest on lasting foundations only if the security of the member-states is fully assured and if the federation will be enabled - in close collaboration with the Anglo-Saxon democracies - to develop freely, both politically and economically, without any dependence on Germany arising from an onerous conditioning of circumstances. Experience has shown that Germany is a past master in exploiting, for purposes of her predatory policy and by means of pressure or extortion, every opportunity open in the field of economics or communications, even if her own economic interests should thereby be adversely affected.

In the present stage of a war, which will cause far reaching transformations in the moral and material systems of all nations it is impossible to forecast accurately the post-war configuration of Europe, or the relative power of individual states. To anyone still habitually thinking in terms of pre-war realities, certain claims postulated in relation to Germany might appear difficult of achievement. However, after the defeat of Germany, which will shake to its very foundations the machinery of state and the entire economic and demographic system of the Reich, many problems will lend themselves to considerably easier solutions than before.

As part of the preparatory work for the reconstruction of

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Europe, the Polish Government deem it desirable at this juncture to submit to the United States Government a confidential survey of the range of direct Polish interests in relation to Germany, viewed in conjunction with the far reaching changes anticipated in future.

Poland's line of national security in relation to Germany is that of the Oder. This line may be compared with that of the Rhine as a line of national security for Belgium and France. Like the Rhine in the West, so in the East the river Oder with its tributaries /flowing from the Czech frontier/, and with the gulf of Stettin form a vital strategic axis. The Prussian offensive bases directed against Poland were all situated to the east of this line, namely East Prussia, the Silesian salient and Prussian Pomerania. <

In the interests of general security this state of affairs should be fully taken into account when the foundations of the future Federation in Central Europe will be laid and when, ⁱⁿ fulfillment of the stipulations of the Atlantic Charter, concerning the total disarmament of Germany, the principles of the military occupation of the Reich, including the zone of Polish occupation, will become a subject of discussion.

The Treaty of Versailles failed to take into account the indispensable conditions of Poland's security. By a half-hearted settlement to the disadvantage ^{of Poland} of the questions Danzig and Upper Silesia, ^{East Prussia} by leaving ~~it~~ to Germany and by inadequately securing the Polish sea coast from the west, it produced an altogether abnormal situation on the Western and North Western frontiers of Poland. The Powers were influenced in their decisions by considerations of international relations not directly connected with the vital interests of the Polish State.

The consequences of such a settlement weighed heavily on the whole complex of Polish-German relations. Germany gained a series of important political, economic and other advantages in her aggressive activities directed against Poland, and exploited these advantages to the full at each stage of her policy. The extremely

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unfavourable strategic position of Poland vis à vis the Reich, tragically recoiled on the campaign of 1939.

The war provoked by the Reich for the second time within a generation, inflicted on mankind the most grievous sufferings and will demand a great common effort on the part of the United Nations if foundations of a lasting peace in Europe are to be laid. The total disarmament of Germany has been recognized as one of the principal war aims in the Atlantic Charter /Art.8/ and in numerous declarations by leading statesmen of the United Nations. It is not only the destruction of the material means for waging war, and the prohibition to Germany of the right to maintain armed forces that is involved in the notion of disarmament. The principle of total disarmament must also deprive the German State of its main offensive bases, the possession of which assures to Germany in time of war an absolute strategic ascendancy in that part of Europe - an ascendancy all the more marked, as these territories have always been centres of hostile propaganda/^{directed} against neighbouring states, thus creating a permanent obstacle to moral disarmament. Once in the possession of the peace-loving neighbours of the Reich those areas would provide them with favourable conditions of defence. This in turn would contribute to the strengthening of the foundations of the future international system of security in Europe.

The Baltic and the Security of Europe.

The principle of the Freedom of the Seas reaffirmed again in the Atlantic Charter /Art.8/ - requires that the Baltic should become an open sea. It is the only water way linking Poland, the countries which will form the federation and other countries of Central Europe with the West and with the major sea routes of the world.

During the second half of the nineteenth century the Baltic was being rapidly transformed into a German lake. Bismarck began the process by the invasion of Denmark in 1864 and by the annexation of Schleswig Holstein, after which the Kiel Canal was constructed, entirely within Prussian territory. From that moment the Germans gained full military control of Denmark and thereby of the Danish

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straits. German naval forces were enabled to move from one sea to the other within a few hours.

The consequences ^{of these events made themselves} were seriously felt during the First World War. In September 1939, the German control of the access to the Baltic prevented any British naval help ^{being given to} for Poland and in the spring 1940 it enabled Germany to conquer Denmark and Norway with lightning speed. In 1941 the German Navy played an important part in mastering Latvia and Estonia, thus enabling German land forces to menace Leningrad. From the naval and air bases in Norway the Germans attempted to cut off the Northern route linking Russia with the West via the ports of Murmansk and Archangel. The same German bases in Norway may be regarded as a spring board for an invasion of the Scottish coast.

All this shows clearly that the German domination of the Baltic would invariably, in the event of war, threaten Europe with disruption into two isolated parts - the Western and the Eastern, with all communications between them completely paralysed.

In order to safeguard effectively the freedom of the waterways between the Baltic and the North Sea and to exclude German control, it is essential to establish an adequate defence of these routes. This aim can be achieved only in full cooperation with Great Britain and with the support of the United States.

The settlement of these problems might ^{attempted} be/along the following general lines:

1. The Kiel Canal should be internationalised. The best solution would be for Britain to accept the responsibility for the administration and defence of the Canal. All the Baltic countries would participate with Great Britain in the commercial exploitation of the Canal. On both sides of the Canal there should be sufficiently wide defence zones, freed from German sovereignty.

2. The Sund should be deepened to admit the passage of the largest warships.

*British and
Washington
D.C. office
to be
Helsinki*

3. British or British-American fortified naval and air bases should be established on the islands of the North Sea situated in the proximity of the German coast, especially near the mouth of the Elbe, as well as on the Danish and German islands. Poland, desirous to

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participate in the international defence of the freedom of the seas, would like to possess bases in the Western Baltic /Bornholm, Fehmarn, Rugen/. The north-eastern Baltic would in the nature of things remain mainly under the control of the countries adjacent to its waters.

East Prussia and Danzig

East Prussia is the most easterly German offensive base, which represents an artificially created enclave within ethnically alien territory.

For the German mentality East Prussia constitutes an incentive for new conquests. Every project for the partition of Poland from Frederic the Great to the present day had been associated with the problem of East Prussia and of Danzig.

The unchanging German endeavours to achieve territorial connection between East Prussia and the Silesian salient along the line Konigsberg - Oppeln has manifested itself again recently in the incorporation into the Reich of the Polish western provinces/^{of Poland} and/or a great part of central Poland in order to provide the narrow Prussian with a hinterland enclave. As a further manifestation of the same design the district of Bialystok has now been made part of the Eastern Prussian province.

From the military point of view East Prussia together with Danzig form a classical place d'armes, a starting point of outflanking operations aiming at:

1. The severance of Poland from the Baltic and the disruption of her sea-borne communications with the West.
2. A threat to Warsaw, the capital of Poland, situated only about 75 miles from the frontier of East Prussia.
3. The encirclement/^{of} Polish armies in western and central Poland by an attack in/^s south-easterly and easterly direction ~~in the direction~~ ^{towards} Brest on Bug ~~of Brest on Bug~~ and Vilno; and the penetration into the eastern provinces of Poland.

East Prussia had already served the Hohenzollern Reich as the base for the main attack against Russia in 1914. It was from East

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Prussia, too, that the German Baltic Corps /Baltikum/ operated against Soviet Russia after 1918. When as a result of the military clauses of the Treaty of Versailles the German Army was dissolved, many secret German detachments /Freikorps, Schwerze Reichswehr/ were billeted throughout that province on the large estates disguised as labour battalions, thus evading the Allied commissions. Several years before Hitler came into power the existing fortifications of Eastern Prussia were considerably strengthened. Their centre was the so-called ~~Exixexhxxrxkx~~ Heilsberg triangle.

When Hitler broke the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, the strongest army corps in Germany was created in East-Prussia /I Armee Korps/ and its commander was the future Field Marshal was appointed to the Command. von Brauchitsch. This army corps was kept permanently on a war footing and intensive work on fortifications and preparation for war was continued.

In September 1939, the German attack against the flank and rear of the Polish armies, which faced westwards, was engineered from East Prussia. This attack, in conjunction with the German advance from Slovakia, acted as pincers/which From the outset threatened the entire depth of Polish territory, and enabled the Germans to achieve a quick decision.

The First German Air-Army operating from East Prussia had its task facilitated to an exceptional degree. The proximity of the air-fields enabled every German air-craft to make several sorties a day.

From a military point of view therefore, East Prussia and Danzig which if left in German hands constitute a permanent threat to Polish independence and to Europe as a whole, should be united with Poland.

The economic wellbeing ~~structure~~ and the transport needs of Poland and the entire group of adjoining countries suggest the same solution.

At the outbreak of the present war Poland had a territory of over 150,000 square miles and a population of more than 35,000,000. Thus

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she ranked among the largest nations in Europe. Nevertheless Poland possessed only ^{about} 40 miles of effective sea coast. By way of comparison it may be mentioned that the German sea coast was nearly 1,100 miles long. It will be seen, therefore, that the Polish sea coast was totally inadequate for the needs of the Polish State, both from the military and the economic point of view. The turnover of the two ports of Gdynia and Danzig was increasing at an unprecedented rate. The turnover in Gdynia, which amounted to 1,958,000 tons in 1928, reached 9,174,000 tons in 1938. That of Danzig, extended and modernised with considerable assistance from Poland increased from 2,112,000 tons in 1913 to 7,127,000 tons in 1938. By 1938 over 75% of Poland's total foreign trade passed through these two ports.

Looking forward to the post-war years it is clear that much of the trade, not only from Poland but from the whole future Central European Federation will pass through both Polish ports.

Gdynia and Danzig will not be capable of handling this traffic. If the countries situated between Russia and Germany are to maintain the essential of their economic independence they must be safeguarded a much wider access to the Baltic sea than hitherto and, moreover, one completely free from German control.

Owing to the separation of East Prussia from its natural hinterland, the province represents an economically passive and ~~was~~ deficient area with no prospects of development whatsoever. The efforts of the German government in the form of lavish subsidies and ~~attempts~~ at the industrialisation of the province, especially during the period of the manipulated boom after 1933 failed to alter this state of affairs, ~~o~~ to improve ~~But~~ the conditions prevailing in East Prussia, ~~did not improve~~. The efforts of the Hitler Government, such as the much advertised Annual Königsberg Fair - which apart from their propaganda value failed to produce any economic advantage in the form of an increase in the foreign trade, were to a large extent calculated to bolster up the spirit of this province against the time when the predatory designs of the Third Reich could be executed.

The economic stagnation of East Prussia led to a steady drift

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of population to Central and Western Germany. In spite of all the preventive measures applied, over 1,000,000 people left East Prussia between the years 1840 - 1938. Out of a total of 31 districts the emigration from 18 was so marked that even the absolute number of inhabitants declined.

By the union of East Prussia with Poland, the economy of the province would be placed on a sound basis as Poland will be able to turn to the best advantage the maritime position of the province. East Prussia would also benefit through the influx of agriculturists from the overpopulated areas of Poland.

Historically speaking, East Prussia became something in the nature of a colony exploited by the Teutonic Order, invited and endowed by Duke Conrad of Mazovia in the thirteenth century for the propagation of Christianity. The German soldier-monks displayed all their native aggressiveness, exterminating mercilessly the local population and threatening both Poland and Lithuania. It was in conformity with this tradition of the Order, that the Bradenburg princes of the House of Hohenzollern succeeded by intrigue and guile in depriving Poland of her rights over East Prussia. After the partitions of Poland the province became the very core of the Prussian spirit.

Both the Teutonic Order and the German Dukes and subsequently kings of Prussia, carried out a systematic germanisation of the indigenous population. They succeeded to a greater degree in the parts inhabited by the Lithuanian tribe of the Prussians or Borussians, but in the southern part of the province the homogeneous bulk of the Polish population representing a majority, preserved its language and customs up to the present day.

The influence of Polish civilisation was very considerable throughout all East Prussia. There existed numerous Polish schools, and Polish books and periodicals were being published. From the nineteenth century onwards, an ever more ruthless extermination of the economic and cultural life of the Poles set in. All the Polish

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schools were closed down, the teaching of the Polish language was prohibited, Polish economic enterprises and intellectual centres were systematically destroyed. Nevertheless, the official census of population taken by the Prussian authorities in the year 1910 showed that the whole southern part of East Prussia is inhabited by a predominantly Polish population. The union of the province with Poland will unfailingly reveal the non-German character of considerable part of East Prussia.

It may be added that in the north-eastern part of East Prussia considerable ethnic groups of Lithuanians still survive. It is obvious that after centuries of oppression no plebiscite could possibly show the true ethnic character of East Prussia. The plebiscite in the southern part of the province, held in 1920, could not be regarded as an expression of the real will of the people. Furthermore, it took place at a time when the Soviet armies were approaching Warsaw. Moreover, all the administrative officials in direct contact with the people were German and the population in the plebiscite area were terrorised by gangs of such secret German organisations as the Schwarze Reichswehr, while at the same time subjected to a ruthless economic pressure on the part of German junkers and employers generally.

After the profound convulsions and transfers of populations caused by Hitler's New Order, after the deportations and massacres all moral and political foundations for holding any plebiscites in that area of Europe will be completely lacking.

 The Union of Danzig with Poland should be effected ^{at the same time as} ~~together with~~ that of East Prussia. As a Free City, Danzig failed to live up to its obligations, lending itself as a lever for the disturbance of Polish German relations and the subversion of international institutions. The Free City became a hot-bed of German Fifth Column malpractices and espionage. The present gaulsitters of Occupied Poland Greiser and Forster gained in Danzig the training for their future tasks. The militarisation of Danzig, completed in violation of international

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treaties, was carried out from the East Prussian base.

In spite of the enormous benefits which accrued to Danzig from Poland's over-seas trade, and which restored the Free City to its pristine prosperity, Danzig, under orders from Berlin, sabotaged all economic agreements with Poland, violating the rights of Poland as established by the Peace Treaty and by a series of conventions and preventing Polish industrialists, merchants and artisans from settling in Danzig.

The indigenous Polish population was subjected to continual chicaneries. Poles were prevented from following their professions, Polish artisans were refused employment and the establishment of new commercial firms was ^{being} made impossible. Polish cultural activities were systematically suppressed.

In short, Danzig rather hindered than facilitated Poland's access to the sea, obstructing the mouth of her main water-way, the Vistula.

As far as international affairs are concerned, the question of Danzig intruded its importance only in conjunction with the problem of East Prussia. After the incorporation of that province with Poland the problem of Danzig will vanish automatically.

THE SILESIA OF OPPELM

Silesia is second only to the Ruhr as a principal German centre of war industries. The part played by Silesian industry, "one of the largest arsenals of the Greater German Reich" as it was described by Goebbels in a speech on April 20th 1941, - is all the more important in the present conflict as owing to its geographical position it remains outside the operational range of the Allied Air forces.

This state of affairs was not anticipated at Versailles, when the original project before the Peace Conference for the transfer to Poland of the entire Silesian industrial region, was abandoned.

Moreover, it ought not to be forgotten that within less than 80 years /1864-1942/ Germany carried out /including the seizures of Austria and of Czechoslovakia/ seven military aggressions, two of which

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developed into world-wars.

After such an experience, German Silesia, with its great industrial potential cannot be left in Germany's hands for, even apart from all other considerations, Europe's common interests require that this territory should be transferred to Poland.

German Silesia /the Oppeln district of Upper Silesia and Lower Silesia/ is an extremely important base for the offensive military operations. It represents a wedge driven in to considerable depth between Poland and Czechoslovakia. The salient thus formed runs from the north-west to the south-east, being 185 miles long and on an average 75 miles wide.

The wars waged by Frederic the Great for the foundation of the power of Prussia at the expense of Austria and indirectly also of Poland were fought over this territory. At the time of the Prussia's war against Austria in 1866, which ended with the battle of Sadowa, the main thrust debouched from the Silesian wedge into the Czech plain. This salient represents also a standing menace to the Polish coal-fields and industrial area, paralysing the possibilities of successful Polish-Czechoslovak military co-operation.

The distance separating the south-eastern end of the Silesian wedge from the Austrian frontier is relatively short and covers one of the strategic keys of Europe, namely the Moravian Gate - a belt of rolling valleys connecting the Sudeten Mountains with the western end of the Carpathian range. Without forecasting the future status of Austria, or without answering the question whether the dangers threatening on this side shall be permanently eliminated, it must be remembered that a German attack from Silesia and the Austrian frontier may threaten Bohemia with being suddenly cut off from Slovakia and Poland.

It was precisely from the Silesian salient that the Germans carried out their military operations, which led to the seizure of Bohemia in the spring of 1939. In the autumn of the same year the main German attack against the heart of Poland carried out by General von Reichenau and Blaskowitz, was launched from Silesia. As a result of this attack the Polish Central Industrial district exposed from

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the South was threatened by German armed forces on the very first day of the war.

From a military point of view only a considerable shortening and narrowing of the Silesian salient can ensure the necessary territorial coherence of Poland and Czechoslovakia and their mutual security in the event of war.

From the national point of view, the Silesian salient has been for centuries predominantly Polish over the major part of its territory.

Despite forced Germanisation the Polish language continues to be spoken in many parts of central Silesia, while in ^{the} south-eastern part /district of Oppeln/ the population is predominantly Polish. During the second half of the nineteenth century, and in spite of the oppression practised by the Prussian authorities and of the economic dependence of the workers on the Prussian "Coal Barons" the revival of the Polish national spirit and civilisation ^{took place} in this province. It manifested itself for example in the election of Poles as members for Upper Silesia to the Reichstag and to the Prussian Diet.

Accordingly, the stipulations of the original draft of the Treaty of Versailles, submitted to the German Delegation in May, 1919 were entirely justified when they required the cession to Poland of nearly the whole of Upper Silesia including the district of Oppeln. The decision of the Allied Powers was subsequently modified and a plebiscite in Upper Silesia was instituted.

In the absence of conditions enabling the population to give free expression of their desire, the Plebiscite which took place on May 20th 1921, failed to reflect the true ethnic character of Upper Silesia. The officials of the ^{local} German administration exerted pressure on the people, aided by a considerable part of the Catholic clergy belonging to the German Centre Party. Polish workmen were hampered by their dependence on their German employers. German armed bands terrorised the population. Finally, the results of the Plebiscite were decisively falsified by the voting of nearly 200,000 persons imported from the Reich, whose only link with the province was the

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accident of their birth as the offspring of the innumerable Prussian civil servants, military officers, school masters and other Prussian officials, who at one time or another were posted temporarily in Upper Silesia during any of the 70 odd years which preceded the outbreak of the world war.

Last though not least, the disunity of opinions among the Western Powers in the question of Silesia, as in other matters, enabled Germany to reap her crop of advantages.

It may be emphasized that the parts of Upper Silesia joined to Poland blended with the mother country very rapidly indeed, spontaneously shedding off the superficial non-Polish crust super-imposed during a long period of persecution and germanisation.

Economically, Upper Silesia gravitates eastwards. Agriculturally it formed a unity with the adjacent country districts of Poland. Industrially, its mines and foundries are indisputably ^{part of} ~~an~~ with the Polish industrial basin, of which Katowice, Sosnowiec and Cracow are the centres. Out of 43.3 million tons of coal produced annually before 1914 in the Silesian industrial district, as it then was, only 12.5 million tons were consumed inside the Reich, while 25 million tons found a market in territories, which after 1918 became part of the Polish Republic. About 80 per cent of the timber used in the mines was at that period /before 1914/ supplied from the same Polish lands.

German economic and industrial experts fully realised the dependence of Silesia on Polish economy, as instanced in the "Handbuch des Oberschlesischen Industriebezirkes" 1913, or even more clearly in a series of memoranda submitted during the first world-war to the Reich's supreme civil and military authorities ^{by} ~~the~~ the German economic interests. These memoranda demanded that Polish territories, which could provide at a low cost good ores and timber, should be united with Upper Silesia, offering at the same time irreplaceable natural markets for Upper Silesian industry. In fact, the Upper Silesian output of pig iron and steel, as well as of other smelting products was always below the average European standard, particularly below that

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of the German Reich. The production of pig iron, which in 1913 amounted to 331,313 tons did not reach that level even in the record year 1928, when 247,755 tons were produced in German Silesia. In the subsequent years the output declined still lower, because German Silesia was unable to compete with the more conveniently situated industries of the Ruhr. In 1932 the foundry/^{furnaces}were drawn. In the year immediately preceding the outbreak of the present war the production of coal and iron increased considerably in German Silesia but this was due mainly to the rearmament of Germany.

At the beginning of 1941 the Germans divided Silesia into two provinces: Gau Niederschlesien with Breslau as the capital and Gau Oberschlesien with Katowice as the capital. The province of Oberschlesien includes the former German Regency of Oppeln, the Polish county of Silesia, the districts of Dąbrowa Górnicza and the frontier zone of the county of Cracow, namely Jaworzno, Chrzanów, Bieles and Zywiec.

According to the remarks of Bracht, the Gauleiter for Silesia, made in connection with the Four Years Plan on April 20th, 1941, Upper Silesian industry still remains an economic burden on the Reich. "However" Bracht declared, "the support and development of this Silesian industry are indispensable for the German raison d'etat" that is for motives of expansion by conquest.

To leave Oppeln Silesia with Germany, therefore, would be contrary to the tendencies, which will undoubtedly prevail after the war, and which require that production should be based on the most natural conditions and economic factors which, as far as this region is concerned, exist only in union with Poland.

Finally there is the question of Poland's western frontiers. In connection therewith it should be borne in mind that before the occupation of Czechoslovakia by Germany, the Polish-German frontier measured 1253 miles. By way of comparison the length of the Franco-German frontier was 215 miles, of which half was formed by the natural barrier of the Rhine.

The Polish sea ports, already the largest overseas trading centres on the Baltic, will become still more important in the future.

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They are adjacent to the Western Pomeranian salient which threatens Poland's access to the sea from the West. It is imperative that Germany should be prevented from using Western Pomerania for military concentrations and as an offensive base for attacking the lower Vistula and the Polish ports from the West. Western Pomerania together with the bay of Stettin is of vital strategic importance for Poland. It forms a defensive terrain vis a vis Germany. This is why the lower Oder was defined in the introductory remarks of the present memorandum as forming the natural line of security of Poland and the Central European Federation.

The question of Poland's western frontier has not been fully discussed in this memorandum. It will suffice to state at the present juncture that that frontier should be straightened and shortened through indispensable displacement westwards, with a view to giving Poland well-earned security.

The Problem of the German population

The solution of the problem of the German population on the territories which should be incorporated into Poland will be facilitated by a number of favourable factors.

From the last few decades of the nineteenth century onwards, a gradual migration of Germans, particularly farmers from the eastern provinces of the Reich ^{has been} taking place. This demographic trend from East to West continued in spite of drastic measures applied by the German Government, especially in recent years, such as subsidies, the establishment of hereditary farms /Erbhof/, attempts at the industrialisation of East Prussia, and the pressure of administrative and party authorities.

To-day that drift of population from East Prussia, from Silesia as well as from the district of Koszalin continues unabated. Reports published in the German press concerning the results of the census of 1939, confirm these facts.

This migration caused an acute lack of agricultural labourers in the eastern part of the Reich, so that in order to maintain their farms on the required level, German landowners were compelled, before 1914, to hire annually 40,000 workers from Polish territories, which

were then under Russian or Austrian domination. In the post-Versailles period, right up to the present war, the different German Governments constantly endeavoured to attract seasonal agricultural labourers from Poland, for work in the eastern parts of the Reich. Even during the period of economic depression, the demand was maintained, although unemployment was seriously increasing in German industries. The Poles were employed not ^{only} on large estates ~~alone~~, but on small farms as well. The reliance of German agriculture in the eastern provinces on Polish man-power became more obvious as war brought in its wake additional difficulties to German economy. The German authorities embarked on the policy of forcibly deporting to Germany hundreds of thousands of Polish workmen. And to-day large masses of Polish farm-hands are densely settled in the eastern provinces of Germany, forming essentially Polish communities, on thousands of farms.

It may be added that the native population of the eastern territories of the Reich, is of Slav origin and ^{that as} ~~max~~ a result of German conquest it underwent methodical germanization.

Prussia introduced into her administrative practices a complicated system calculated to bring about the denationalisation of the local Polish population. Nevertheless, the native population, especially in the rural districts did not lose its national characteristics. Many people, who have only recently begun to use the German language would spontaneously return to Polish nationality. This process will most certainly be favoured by the psychological shock which will be caused by the military collapse of the Reich with all the consequences which it will entail.

As far as the undoubtedly German part of the population is concerned, it may be expected ^{that} many will depart from the territories concerned of their own free will, especially during the period immediately following the cessation of hostilities. It should be remembered that after the first world war several hundred thousands Germans, representing the majority of the German element residing in these parts, left the western provinces of Poland ^{and} emigrated to the Reich without any pressure on the part of the new Polish authorities.

In connection with the problem of population it will be importan

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to reach definite conclusions on the problem of the transfer of German population as a means of protecting the State against Fifth Column activities, and of eliminating from international relations sources of recurring friction due to the activities of the German minorities.

The notions of compulsory transfer of population were conceived in Germany before Hitler came into power. As will be remembered the German General Staff elaborated during the last war a plan, sanctioned in writing by Fieldmarshal v. Hindenburg, concerning the transfer of population from a wide belt of territory situated between the Polish provinces formerly under Prussian domination and those of "Congress" Poland. The plan aimed at the creation of a German barrier separating the lands then still in Prussian possession from the rest of Poland and was frustrated only by the defeat of Germany. The methods of deportation applied in Poland by the Hitlerite Government during the present war are too well known to need detailed discussion. Compulsory deportations are not applied only to Poles, but affect other nationalities as well. These deportations were adopted as a political method aiming at the systematical establishment of a new order in Europe. German public opinion not only accepted this procedure but Germans of all ^{political} opinions cooperate efficiently with the authorities by taking over private property left behind by the deportees.

However, German deportation practices are not limited to other nationalities only. They have been applied to German nationals as well. The Italo-German agreement of 1938, concerning the Brenner frontier, stipulated a compulsory transfer to the Reich of Germans inhabiting in a compact mass Italian Southern Tyrol. Enforcement of this agreement begun long before the outbreak of war. Moreover the German-Soviet agreement which supplemented the German-Soviet non-aggression pact of August 23, 1939, provided for the evacuation of the Germans from the Baltic countries, Bessarabia, Bukovina and Eastern Poland.

The facts adduced above lead to the conclusion that the method of transfer of populations has already been sanctioned by Germany as applicable to Germans. It would, consequently be neither just

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nor appropriate to hesitate with regard to the transfer German populations, whenever overriding considerations, such as those which involve restoration and maintenance of peaceful conditions in Europe ^{should demand it}.

Apart from the voluntary emigration from the territories which should be united with Poland, it will be essential to transfer the residue of the German population to Germany. To a certain extent this transfer could take the shape of an exchange of populations, as the Polish population, chiefly workers, who resided in Western and central Germany before the war would be given the opportunity of returning to Poland.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

CONFIDENTIAL

DATE:

February 17, 1943

SUBJECT: Mistreatment of Polish refugees in the Soviet Union

Poland
2-17-43

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador of Poland, Mr. Jan Ciechanowski;
Under Secretary, Mr. Welles

COPIES TO: ²⁻¹⁹
The Secretary, Eu - Mr. Atherton

*** 1-1483

The Polish Ambassador called to see me this morning at his request.

The Ambassador handed me the memorandum attached herewith which deals with recent incidents involving the mistreatment accorded Polish refugees in the Soviet Union by Soviet authorities.

Declassified
E.O. 12958
State Dept.

By PK NARA Date 11/9/95

U:SW:GES

CONFIDENTIAL

As a consequence of the Soviet attitude in the matter of Polish citizenship, the GPU has begun the registration of Polish deportees. The registrants are deprived of their amnesty certificates which had been issued to them upon release from prisons and compulsory labor camps in the Fall and Winter of 1941 in accordance with the Polish-Soviet agreement of July 30, 1941. The registrants are forbidden to leave their places of residence.

The registration is being motivated by the necessity of providing the deportees with new passports, but it is clear that the real purpose of this procedure is conscription into the Soviet army.

In its issue of February 4, 1943, the Communist paper "New Horizons", published in Polish at Kuybishev, contains an appeal to form a Polish Red army consisting of Polish deserters from the German lines, prisoners and deportees from Poland. It is suggested that this army be placed under the command of General Rokossowski, the defender of Stalingrad. (Before the revolution Rokossowski's father, of Polish extraction, was a Notary Public in the Ukrainian town of Winnica).

Further arrests of men of trust of the Polish Embassy in Kuybishev are reported.

Relief distribution for Polish deportees is prevented by the Refusal of railway authorities to accept shipments of relief supplies without special permits from the GPU.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE:

February 17, 1943

SUBJECT: Ambassador's conversation with the President regarding Soviet action in declaring Polish refugees within Soviet territory to be Soviet nationals

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador of Poland, Mr. Jan Ciechanowski;
Under Secretary, Mr. Welles

COPIES TO: ³⁻²⁴
S, PA/D, Eu

POLAND 2-17-43

*** 1-1000

The Polish Ambassador called to see me this morning at his request.

The Ambassador told me that he wished to report to me his conversation yesterday with the President when the President received him in order that he might make reply to the messages sent to the President by General Sikorski regarding the recent action of the Soviet Government in declaring all Polish refugees within Soviet territory to be Soviet nationals.

The Ambassador said that the President, as always, had received him most sympathetically and had expressed the desire of this Government to do anything it could to be of help. The President had stated, however, that the matter would have to be handled very carefully inasmuch as the President was unwilling to take any action which could be misconstrued as an interference on the part of this Government in domestic questions in the Soviet Union.

The President had stated that he would immediately consult Mr. Churchill as to the possibility of some friendly joint representations being made by the British and American Governments.

-2-

The Ambassador then said that the President had asked him if he had any suggestions. The Ambassador had replied that he felt that, in the first place, this Government had recently, as had the British Government, taken too much the position that it was anxious to find out what the Soviet Government planned to do, and that a better trading position would be for this Government to maintain the position that its own policy with regard to principles was unalterable, thus creating a "stone wall" against which the Soviet Government would knock its head and be obliged, on Soviet initiative, to ask for an opportunity of discussion with the British and American Governments.

The Ambassador said further to the President that on several occasions either the President or responsible officials of this Government had publicly stated that the United States would not recognize territorial changes brought about by force and that it would enter into no commitments with regard to territorial changes during the war, believing that such adjustments should be solved at the end of the war. The Ambassador had said that if the President would now reiterate this statement in a public manner it would create the kind of a situation in which the Soviet Government would be obliged to come to us rather than for us to go to the Soviet Government. The Ambassador said the President had asked him to discuss this with me and to make specific suggestions as to what should be said.

I told the Ambassador that I would be very glad to look up the references which he had in mind and then lay the matter before the President for his further consideration.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE: January 30, 1943

SUBJECT: Jewish refugees from Poland.

PARTICIPANTS: Mr. Jan Ciechanowski, Polish Ambassador;
Mr. Welles, Under Secretary.

COPIES TO: S, A-B, PA/D, Eu, ~~KEYXRX/M~~

1-30-43

*** 1-1400

The Polish Ambassador called to see me this morning at his request.

The Ambassador handed me the memorandum attached herewith having to do with the representations made to the Polish Government by representatives of the World Jewish Congress. I stated that Rabbi Wise had approached me some time ago to ascertain whether this Government could not be helpful in obtaining from the neutral governments in Europe a more lenient attitude so that Polish refugees, and particularly Jewish refugees from Poland who were able to escape to the frontiers of these neutral countries, could be given refuge and shelter until they could be taken care of by refugee organizations under the control of the United Nations. He had also suggested that some joint representations be made to the German Government but I had told him that I did not think that it was desirable for the United Nations to make any representations to Germany at this stage, particularly when it was clearly known beforehand that such representations would not have the slightest practical effect.

I said that the other points covered in this memorandum had not been mentioned to me by Rabbi Wise.

U:SW:IJ

Count Raczynski has been informed by the World Jewish Congress of a planned international action tending to obtain the agreement of Germany for the evacuation of a large number of Jews, especially women and children, from occupied Poland. It is apparently the suggestion of the initiators of this plan to obtain for these Jews, likewise for the Jews who are being brought to Poland from other parts of Europe, - temporary asylum in neutral European countries, on the understanding that the necessary food would be supplied to such neutral countries for the purpose. In further development of this plan negotiations are to be started to obtain right of asylum for the duration of the war for these Jews in allied and neutral countries outside Europe and to ask the U. S. Government for the grant of financial aid for their upkeep. The Governments of the countries of which these Jews are citizens would be requested to promise their repatriation after the war.

Count Raczynski requests the Polish Ambassador to ascertain whether such negotiations have been initiated with the Government of the United States by the World Jewish Congress. Count Raczynski adds that he is informed that the British Government has approached the U. S. Government on this subject.

January 30th, 1943.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

DATE:
January 6, 1943

SUBJECT: Polish-Mexican agreements regarding admission of Polish
refugees, at present in Iran, to Mexico

PARTICIPANTS: Ambassador of Poland, Mr. Jan Ciechanowski;
Under Secretary, Mr. Welles

COPIES TO: S, A-L, Eu, PA/LD, RA

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*** 1-1403

The Polish Ambassador called to see me this morning.

The Ambassador handed me the Spanish texts of the agreements covering Polish refugees entered into between the Polish Prime Minister and the Mexican Government during the recent visit of the former to Mexico City. These documents are attached herewith.

U:SW:GES

January 6, 1943

A-L - Mr. Long:

PA/LD - Mr. Duggan:

RA - Mr. Boneal:

For your information.

U:SW:GES

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COPY

The Polish Ambassador handed to the Under Secretary of State on January 6th, 1943, copies of the notes exchanged between the Polish and Mexican Governments regarding the admission of Polish refugees, at present in Iran, to Mexico.

COPY

ODPIS

México, D.F.
diciembre 30 de 1943

Excelentísimo señor Ministro:

El Gobierno de mi país con profunda satisfacción ha tomado nota de que el H. Gobierno de México se ha servido brindar asilo a individuos de Polonia que se encuentran actualmente en el Asia y que por varias razones tienen que ser trasladados al Continente Americano.

Con relación a este asunto tengo el honor de puntualizar lo que sigue:

- 1.- Se trata de cerca de veintiocho mil personas que se hallan ahora en el Irán y el Gobierno de Polonia queda entendido de que, de esta suma, será admitida aquella que resulte adecuada a la capacidad migratoria de México.
- 2.- El Transporte de dichos ciudadanos se efectuará sin ninguna carga financiera para el H. Gobierno de México.
- 3.- Los gastos de la estancia de dichos elementos serán pagados por el Gobierno de Polonia sin ningún desembolso por parte del H. Gobierno de México.
- 4.- La estancia ne durará sino hasta el momento en que, terminada la guerra, haya la posibilidad de transportar a Polonia el conjunto de los ciudadanos poloneses recibidos por el H. Gobierno de México; en la inteligencia de que los gastos de repatriación y connexos correrán a cargo de mi Gobierno.
- 5.- La Legación de Polonia ha recibido instrucciones de cooperar estrechamente con el H. Gobierno de México, a fin de que los ciudadanos poloneses acogidos queden distribuidos en zonas apropiadas, para que los diversos grupos elijan a sus propios representantes, que colaborarán con los respectivos funcionarios mexicanos, y especialmente para procurar el asentamiento de aquellos

Excelentísimo señor Licenciado
don Ezequiel Padilla
Secretario de Relaciones Exteriores,
Ciudad.

-2-

elementos inmigrados que puedan desarrollar diversas actividades en beneficio de la economía agrícola e industrial de México y sin hacer competencia a ciudadanos mexicanos; materia ésta que quedará sujeta en todo a la determinación de las autoridades correspondientes de este país.

Aprovecho esta oportunidad, Excelentísimo señor Ministro, para reiterarle las seguridades de mi más alta y distinguida consideración.

General Wladyslaw Sikorski
Primer Ministro de Polonia.

COPY

Odpis.

Núm. 345

México, D.F., diciembre 30 de 1942.

Excelentísimo señor Ministro:

Tengo el honor de referirme a la atenta nota de Vuestra Excelencia, de esta misma fecha, en la que se sirve manifestar la satisfacción con que el Gobierno de su país ha tomado nota de la disposición del Gobierno de México, en el sentido de brindar asilo a ciudadanos de Polonia que se hallan actualmente en el Asia y que por circunstancias creadas por la guerra necesitan ser trasladados al Continente Americano.

En efecto, el C. Presidente de la República tuvo a bien acceder a que parte de los mencionados elementos sean desplazados hacia este país. Al proceder así, el Primer Magistrado ha tenido en cuenta la tradicional política de asilo que México viene observando en favor de los perseguidos por regímenes tiránicos y de las víctimas de la expansión nazifascista; y al afirmar, con este acto, la cordialidad de las relaciones que siempre han existido entre Polonia y México, ha querido rendir al pueblo polaco justo tributo de admiración por la actitud heroica que ha mantenido contra la invasión de que es víctima su país, y ayudarlo a resolver los problemas que de esta misma situación se derivan.

El Gobierno de México, a su vez, ha tomado nota de la puntualización que Vuestra Excelencia tiene a bien hacer sobre este asunto migratorio, en la siguiente forma:

1.- Se trata de cerca de veintiocho mil personas que se hallan ahora en el Irán y el Gobierno de Polonia queda entendido de que, de esta suma, será admitida aquella que resulte adecuada a la capacidad migratoria de México.

2.- El transporte de dichos ciudadanos se efectuará sin ninguna carga financiera para el H. Gobierno de México.

3.- Los gastos de la estancia de dichos elementos serán pagados por el Gobierno de Polonia sin ningún desembolso por parte del H. Gobierno de México.

Excelentísimo Señor General

Wladyslaw Sikorski,

Primer Ministro de Polonia.

Presente.

-2-

4.- La estancia no durará sino hasta el momento en que, terminada la guerra, haya la posibilidad de transportar a Polonia el conjunto de los ciudadanos poloneses recibidos por el H. Gobierno de México; en la inteligencia de que los gastos de repatriación y conexos correrán a cargo de mi Gobierno.

5.- La Legación de Polonia ha recibido instrucciones de cooperar estrechamente con el H. Gobierno de México, a fin que los ciudadanos poloneses acogidos queden distribuidos en zonas apropiadas, para que los diversos grupos elijan a sus propios representantes, que colaborarán con los respectivos funcionarios mexicanos-, y especialmente para procurar el asentamiento de aquellos elementos inmigrados que puedan desarrollar diversas actividades en beneficio de la economía agrícola e industrial de México y sin hacer competencia a ciudadanos mexicanos; materia ésta que quedará sujeta en todo a la determinación de las autoridades correspondientes de este país."

Al tener el honor de comunicar a Vuestra Excelencia la conformidad, en principio, del Gobierno de México, con los puntos reproducidos, me es grato expresarle mi personal satisfacción por este feliz arreglo, que implica una nueva aportación de mi país a la causa de las naciones aliadas, y aprovecho la oportunidad para reiterar a Vuestra Excelencia las seguridades de mi más alta y distinguida consideración.

E. PADILLA