

THE INFLUENCE OF POLISH AMERICANS ON THE SHAPE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND BORDERS AFTER WORLD WAR II

After the outbreak of World War II, the political situation in Europe, including in Poland, was not indifferent to the vast majority of Poles living in the American continent. Polish diaspora in the United States consisting a few million people, as an important ethnic group, many times spoke on the post-war Polish borders. Almost all Polish community organizations and associations, except for a small group sympathizing with the Soviet Union, were in favour of the position of the Polish Government in Exile and the eastern border before September 1, 1939. Due to the fact that this subject is not well known, and the only elaboration of Władysław Zachariasiewicz does not contain details of the problem, I thought it would be appropriate to show it, taking into account the archival documents of the Polish Government in Exile based until 1940 in France and then in London.

Key words: Europe, Polish American, organization, nationality, border, the Polish Government in Exile.



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After World War II broke out, the vast majority of Poles residing in North America was not indifferent to the political situation in Europe, including the one in Poland. The Polish Diaspora of several million was a significant ethnic group whose opinion had to be taken into account by the President and other politicians, considering, among others, its electoral potential.

Since the subject is not well known in Poland and the only study by Władysław Zachariasiewicz¹ does not provide many details of the matter, it seems advisable to discuss it including the archive documents of the Polish Government in exile, based in France until 1940, and in London afterwards.

Within the documentation of Polish diplomacy, one of the first document referring to the matter, of June 14th 1940, saw Dr. Karol Ripa the Polish Consul General in Chicago inform the Polish embassy in Washington that the Executive Board of the Polish Americans Council had passed a resolution to prepare a letter to President Roosevelt assuring him of their total support. Additionally, the board of The Polish Roman Catholic Union of America

¹ W. Zachariasiewicz, *Etos niepodległości Polonii Amerykańskiej*, Warsaw 2005, p. 358.

sent a memorial to the President „to pay him special tribute for his efforts to maintain World peace and for his stand on defending democracy against the totalitarian deluge.¹

On November 11th 1940, the «Days of Brotherhood of the Allies» took place in Chicago and were organized by the Polish Americans. The participants passed a resolution that emphasized the role of allies in the fight against the invaders. The document was sent to: Gen. Władysław Raczkiewicz, the President of the Republic of Poland Władysław Sikorski, the Polish Prime Minister, W. Churchill, Great Britain's PM, E. Benes, PM of Czechoslovakia, J. Metaxas, Norwegian MP, E. N. Von Kleffens, Netherlands' PM and McKenzie King, PM of Canada².

Between 30th and 31st of May 1941, the meeting of the board of American Association for Poland Liberation (AAPL), presided over by Dr. Piotrowski, voted for a plan of action. The first point stated that the goal of the Association is to «help the Polish nation in their fight for liberation of Poland from the invaders and enemies». An interesting part involved the paragraph entitled «The fight against Russia», which reads: «1/ In the fight against Russia, through press, leaflets and booklets we need to expose to American public the age-long rapacity of the white and red czarism, point out the barbarism of Russia expelling 700 thousand Polish men, women and children into Siberian ta-

igas and steppes to suffer hunger, freezing cold and atrocious misery. 2/ we will strive to cooperate with those groups of our fellow-countrymen who descend from the nations also oppressed by Russia, in order to join our forces against the invader and establish a neighborly coexistence»³.

It needs to be explained that the AAPL was a union created by Father Giowacki from the national Church and the Polish Consul General of Pittsburgh described its program to be in complete accordance with the attitude of the Polish Consul General in Chicago⁴.

An indirect conclusion may thus be drawn that the Association, at least at that time, was not hostile to the London Government, and by seeking and establishing contacts with the Polish diplomats, it wanted to cooperate for the sake of the country.

Admittedly, it is possible that its members acted that way in order to influence a part of the Polish Americans.

When Gen. Sikorski, the Prime Minister of the Polish Government in exile visited USA and Canada, he met with the council of Polish Americans, which held a special convention attended by all of the most prominent heads of Polish organizations in USA including most notably Franciszek X. Hwietlik, the president of the council and the censor of the Polish National Association.

In his speech, «the Prime Minister presented the council with the requirements of the Polish Government. He spoke boldly and demanded that the council act not speak. He promised to send

¹ Archiwum Akt Nowych (further: AAN), Archiwum Instytutu Hoovera (further: AIH), Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych (MZS), sygn. 120, o. (o.) 725.

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 120, o. 727. The Polish consul general in Chicago Dr. K. Ripa was one of the participants of the festivities.

³ AAN, AIH, MZS, Central organization of Poles abroad, sygn. 121, fig. (o.) 233, 235, 236.

⁴ Ibidem, o. 237.

the council a number of his remarks in writing. The speech left the gathering greatly impressed, and the Presidium (of the council AW's note) had to understand that operating methods would have to be changed¹.

On September 26th 1941, the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America expressed its stand on the Polish authorities in exile. The document sent to the Polish Embassy in Washington reads: The 43rd convention of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America meeting in the city of Baltimore, sends its assurance that our organization wishes to further cooperate in and contribute to the great work of liberating Poland and extending the material and spiritual help for the unfortunate victims of the war and plunder perpetrated by the enemy on the Polish land².

On 18th and 19th of November 1941, the report no. 105 sent by the Polish Embassy in Washington to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London states that «Nowy Hwiast», a Polish journal, published a resolution by the National Defense Association named after Jyzef Piisudski, passed on the conference on November 16th 1941 in New York, attended by 50 delegates from New York, Massachusetts and New Jersey. The resolution expressed the need for immediate help to be provided to the refugees in Russia, regretted the introduction of the principle of partisan proportionality in the Government, the dissolution of the National Council in the moment

of governmental crisis, the fight against Jyzef Piisudski, the biased changes in the US outposts and demanded a thorough revision of the recruitment of the Polish Army in America by dissolving all of the propaganda centers and examining the matter anew «in order to create such a recruitment organization which would assure that the action was not compromised by the elements indirectly harming the recruitment process». After expressing the faith in the worth of the alliances with Great Britain and USA and in the triumph of democracy in the postwar Poland, the resolution closes paying tribute to the President of Poland as the guardian of the Constitution and the Homeland's representative. It should be noted that the resolution does not mention Soviet Russia at all, except for the passage referring to the help to be provided to the Poles in Russia³.

In the report no. 105 involving the press publications in a number languages, the Polish Embassy in USA referring to the period of 18-19th November 1941 states that «In relation to the vote on the abolition of the neutrality act «Dziennik Polski» enumerates following congressmen of Polish descent who voted for the abolition: Dingell and Lesicski of Detroit, MI, Kocioikowski and Maciejewski of Illinois, Maciora of Connecticut and Wasilewski of Wisconsin. But there was one among the congressmen of Polish descent who voted against the bill which disturbed Germany and Hitler. It was Dr. Rudolf Tere-nowicz of Hamtramck, MI, who already voted against previous bills aimed at fighting Hitler. Congressman Terenowicz

¹ AAN, AIH, MSZ, Political relations with Poland in general, sygn. 41, o. 781.

² AAN, AIH, MZS, Central organization of Poles abroad, sygn. 121, o. 579. Document signed by B. L. Smykowski, the speaker of the convention of the Polish Roman Catholic Union.

³ AAN, AIH, MZS, Polish diplomatic outposts, sygn. 55, o. 1230, 1231.

voted against the bill on military recruitment, as well as against the lend-lease bill, requiring that help be provided to the nations fighting against Hitler's aggression, including Poland as well. Tere-nowicz acted against both Polish and US interests. Especially fierce fight related to the vote on the abolition of neutrality act involved congressman Wasilewski of Wisconsin who was the only representative of that state supporting the foreign policy of President Roosevelt¹.

On November 30th 1942, Stanisław Angorman, Polish Consul in Detroit, MI, notified the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London that as a result of voting for members of legislative, federal and state bodies, Polish representatives won 14 seats, including newly appointed congressmen: George G. Sadowski, Jan Dingell and Jan Leńniewski. Additionally, the following became senators: Leon Wilkowski and Stanisław Nowak (a communist). New members of state legislatures included: Adam Summeracki, Marcin Kronk, Franciszek Nowak, Józef J. Leszczyński, Stanisław Bemkowski, Józef Kowalski and Walter Stockfish of Hamtramck, MI.

At the same time, the Consul reported that the action against congressman Tenerowicz was a great success of Polish Americans who supported G.G. Sadowski almost unanimously².

According to the Polish Embassy, the Polish press published in USA on November 27-28th 1941 «represents a heated discussion between the pro-government but anti-socialist «Przewodnik Katolicki» and the organ of PPS

(Polish Socialist Party) – «Robotnik Polski», the latter accusing the former of ties to the National Party. Such ties are also noticed by the «Ameryka Echo» newspaper. Whereas «Dziennik Związkowy» opposes the journalistic activity of the former minister Ignacy Matuszewski, and following the Bostonian weekly «Czas» links it to the attempts of organizing opposition with the help of the National Defense Association³.

The issue of «Nowy Świat» of November 27th or 28th points out that Matuszewski arrived in America as a war refugee and benefits from the hospitality of the country, asking whether «the law of the country allows war refugees to hostilely agitate against Sikorski's government recognized by the US. At the same time, the newspaper opposes Matuszewski's activity among American citizens of Polish descent and links his journalistic activity with the convention of the National Defense Association named after Józef Piłsudski. «Czas» also opposes the newly established organization and the activity of former ministers in USA stating that although Polish refugees are not part of the organization's board, they constitute its brain⁴».

At the same time, «Przewodnik Katolicki» in reference to the composition of the Polish Government in Exile, stated there was no Government of National Unity but the government of the Center-Left, that is the organization which was opposed by Polish Governments beginning in May 1926 up to September

³ Ibidem, o. 1233, 1274.

⁴ Ibidem, o. 1303. The information based on the report no. 102 of the Polish Embassy addressed to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London for the period of November 27-28th 1941, hence no precise date of the publication.

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, Polish diplomatic outposts, no. 55, o. 1233, 1234.

² Ibidem, o. 1323.

1939. «Przewodnik» wrote additionally: «Only now have the catholic leaders realized that the government contains socialists, not all of Sarmatian origins, and they began to heavily bombard the government». «Ameryka Echo» considered the attacks on socialists, and on minister Stacczyk in particular, that had appeared in «Przewodnik Katolicki» to be «flank attacks on the Polish Government» which it saw as a sudden change of front¹».

From the Polish perspective, the crucial information appeared on November 27-28th 1941 in «Wiadomości Codzienne», where the author of one of the articles «points out that Russia would be willing to federate with all of the west Slavic lands and that the German propaganda, under the guise of justice, tries to convince the world that it is enough to remove Hitler and the German nation would change». The author claims that Russia will not fail to demand the borders of 1914. The same newspaper writes that «although Stalin surrendered the idea of worldwide revolution he is inclined to create a great Slavic federation that would include Russia, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria and under special conditions – Greece, Hungary and Romania. The journal also writes: «England is supposedly not opposed to that, because it would allow it to shed the responsibility for the reconstruction of POLAND (emphasis from the original text - AW), with which it is in alliance, as well as the responsibility for Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia²».

¹ Ibidem, o. 1302.

² Ibidem, o. 1303, 1304.

According to the chronological record of the events related to Poles and Americans of Polish descent residing in USA, the first to openly defend Polish borders on May 21st 1942 was the National Committee of Americans of Polish Descent³ (NCAPD) in the appeal to President Roosevelt which read that «Poland needs to rise entirely, not diminished in its forces or lands». Another important paragraph of the appeal stated that «the security of Poland, Europe and the world needs to be based on changing the borders between Germany and Poland⁴».

The first official stance of the Polish Americans on the defense of Polish borders was the protest of the mentioned Committee published on October 11th 1942 in relation to the map of central eastern Europe included in the «Encyclopedia Britannica» on which, according to the yearly report: «Poland was erased entirely, and the Ribbentrop-Molotov line was recognized as valid, despite the fact that the German-Russian fighting front was at the time situated way to the east of Dnieper. It is worth reminding that the Polish lands to the west of the Ribbentrop-Molotov line were marked on the map as German, the lands east of the line as Belarus and Soviet Ukraine and the three Baltic states as Soviet republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. This first sign of the increasing influence of Russian propaganda in USA

³ The wire from J. Ciechanowski, the Polish Ambassador in USA to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London shows that NCAPD was an organization competing with the Polish Americans Council and was organized by the «Nowy Swiat» group. Vide - AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 103.

⁴ Instytut Jyzefa Piłsudskiego w Londynie (IJPL), Polacy Amerykańscy, zeszyty 45, kolekcja nr 45/7/2/C/1/,teczka 5, bp.

met with our immediate reaction, which was supported by the opinion of the majority of Polish Americans and understandably caused an uproar, which was quite effective because «Encyclopedia Britannica» added a number of maps of this part of Europe, neutralizing the effect of the first assault on Poland among the American society¹».

It is worth noting that the Poles associated within this organization were the first to openly describe the action as an assault on Poland. It is also puzzling that despite the censorship existing at that time in Great Britain, such a prominent publisher could print a map glorifying the state of borders established as a result of the Ribbentrop-Molotov pact of August 23rd and September 28th 1939.

It should also be emphasized that according to data of the first annual convention of NCAPD, which took place on July 3rd and 4th 1943, the committee consisted of 50 divisions with 884 members.

One might conclude that it was not a massive organization, but, at that time, an exclusive one. Its members and supporters included such people as its first president Maksymilian Wkgrzyn, the owner, publisher and editor of «Nowy Hwiat», Frank Januszewski, editor of «Dziennik Polski» of Detroit, both active in the American politics too, as well as the group known within the political circles: Paul Faulk, Joseph Piech, Ignacy Morawski, Walter Cytacki, Stephen Lodzieski, John Kosieski, Dr. Edwarda Nowicki, Lucjan Nowicki, Leon Koziowski, S. Schoen, L. Kruszewski, W. Urbanowski, and the representatives of the latest emigration – Ignacy

Matuszewski², Wacław Jędrzejewicz³ and Henryk Froyar-Rajchman⁴ from the New York environment.⁵

On January 11th 1942, on the conference of Polish Unionists⁶, Andrew Bie-miller, a special delegate of the Office of Production Management – Direction of Labor of Washington «heatedly appealed to emotions of the Polish workmen towards their Homeland. He also argued that the US were fighting and would be fighting for Poland, which after the victory had to be free and powerful again, as the Polish nation deserved it through its suffering and immense sacrifice and heroism of its soldiers. It should be noted that the conference appointed the Polish-American Council of Trade Unions which extended a resolution to Gen. Władysław Sikorski, the Prime Minister of the Polish Government in London, which read, among other things: «As the American citizens of Polish descent, we

² The treasurer of the II Republic of Poland, diplomat.

³ A Polish military and navy attaché in Tokyo, director of the administrative and consular departments of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, undersecretary of state in the Treasury of II RP. Since 1941 in USA. In 1942, one of the founders of NCAPD and in 1943 – the Pilsudski Institute in America based in New York. Since 1944 a member of its council and since 1947 – vice president of the board. Cf. *Parlamentarzyści RP*. Sys. No. 000000406.

⁴ Vice minister and minister of the industry and commerce, member of parliament of II RP, IV term.

⁵ W. Zachariasiewicz, *Etos niepodległościowy Polonii Amerykańskiej*, Oficyna Wydawnicza „Rytm”, Stowarzyszenie „Wspólnota Polska”, Warsaw 2005, p. 23.

⁶ Unionists – the members of the trade union including union of bakers, farmers, steelworkers, tailors and packers. According to the statement by J. Lichniak, S. Hliwa, J. Dorwalski, J. Pyziak i J. Stefanski – heads or representatives of the mentioned unions, during the meeting in Consulate General in Chicago, the unions associated a total of 300,000 Polish workers. Cf. AAN, AIH, MZS, Central organization of Poles abroad, sygn. 122, o. 415.

¹ Ibidem.

express our trust in the Prime Minister of Poland and the commander in chief of the Polish Army, Gen. Władysław Sikorski, on the occasion of the agreement between Poland and the Soviet Russia, our fraternal nation, with which the geographical position of Poland and a political sense requires an agreeable coexistence. We condemn any assaults on the Polish Government in London on the side of the scarce Sanation and National Democracy movements, members of which still dream of the long gone slavery of the workpeople of Poland¹».

On March 23rd 1942, Dr. Karol Ripa, Polish Consul General in Chicago, in an extensive document addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London wrote, among other things, that the president of the Polish Americans, being invited by Mrs. Roosevelt, attended a meeting with a hundred high officials. In his speech, the President stressed that the Polish Americans Council stands to protect Poland in every direction²».

On June 30th 1942, the Polish Consulate General in Chicago informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London about the statement by the President of Polish Americans regarding the first anniversary of the Polish-Soviet pact, in which Franciszek Hwietlik stated that «the Polish Americans Council supports and will be supporting the policy of the Polish Government in London as regards the Soviet Russia.» Another passage of the statement is also important: «The pact was historically necessary and was dictated by the reason of state, which, as far as fundamental questions

go, should always prevail over the suggestions of the aching heart. There are moments, in which both personal and general grievances should be forgotten for the higher and more remote goals to be achieved: for the future wellbeing of the Nation. It is the wellbeing and future of the Polish Nation that drove General Sikorski when he signed the Act on behalf of the Polish Government.³»

On September 11th 1942, Americans of Polish descent living in Los Angeles, CA, gathering on the third anniversary of the treacherous Nazi Germany invasion of Poland expressed their deepest respect and admiration for the Polish Nation. Moreover, they pledged to provide help in the fight against the enemies of the humankind until the victory is reached⁴.

On October 17th and 18th 1942, the third convention of the Polish Americans Council took place in Buffalo. 179 delegates attended, representing the central Polish organizations in USA, districts of the council and Polish press. It is worth noting that it was the first time the convention was largely attended by the Polish Roman Catholic clergy – 58 priests including most notably Bishop Włoniński. Moreover, the convention was attended by 26 representatives of the national Church and the editor of «Głos Ludowy» seen by the convention as the representative of the communist party⁵.

The convention appointed the Presidium of the Council, which included:

³ Ibidem, o. 315, 316. The cited document and the appendix was sent on behalf of the consulate by Dr. Kipa, the consul general.

⁴ Ibidem, o. 217. Resolution signed by F. Daniel-ski, the president of the proceedings.

⁵ Ibidem, o. 259.

¹ Ibidem, o. 432, 442. Dokument signed by J. Pyzik, the president and M. Stefanski, secretary.

² Ibidem, o. 353.

Franciszek X. Hwietlik, the President, HM Bp. Woynicki, vice president (Detroit), Honorata Woiewska, vice president (Chicago) – Association of Polish Women, Dr. Teofil Starzycski, vice president (Pittsburgh), president of the Polish Falconers Association, Kazimierz Miodowicz, attorney, vice president, (Chicago), syndic of the Polish National Association, Jan Olejniczak, treasurer, (Chicago), president of the Polish Roman Catholic Union of America, Wojciech Soska, general secretary (Chicago), president of the Polish Educational Society¹.

The adopted resolution expressed gratitude to Franklin D. Roosevelt for his attitude towards Poland, for recognizing Poland's contribution and most of all for the words: «POLAND SHALL RISE AGAIN».

The deepest recognition was also addressed to the Polish Government with President Wiadyslaw Raczewicz and Prime Minister Gen. Wiadyslaw Sikorski, for the worthy, practical and prudent leadership and defense of the Polish Nation.

The resolution contained an appeal for «the highest possible effort and sacrifice for the war to be won, because the freedom and future not only of the United States but of the whole world depended on it, as well as the freedom, independence and security of the Motherland – Poland²».

It should be added that during the convention, the president of the council, while delivering his report, stated: «that

the Polish Americans stand firmly by the Government of Prime Minister Sikorski», which was enthusiastically received by the convention and today one can safely conclude that the percentage of the Polish Americans in the opposition is minimal.³

The content of the mentioned document was of paramount importance to the Polish Government in London, because, in particular, it showed the connection and support of broad circles of Polish Americans for the authorities in exile, as well as the recognition of the work of the highest authorities of the country. There is another aspect of the document, namely the declaration of the President of the United States that «Poland needs to be resurrected», which was addressed to the members of the Polish Americans Council, and through their agency to all the Poles in the world. It is therefore not surprising that the words were received with great enthusiasm and hope.

The support of the Polish Americans for the Motherland was also expressed by the rally that took place on December 20th 1942 in Detroit, in the Masonic Temple. Reporting on this important event the following day, «Dziennik Polski» «emphasized the forceful declaration by the Prime Minister regarding the matter of the eastern border of Poland». The same newspaper, in the issue of December 29th, reports following the a telegraphic agency that «according to London, Poland needs first to agree with Russia before it can gain the support of the Allies⁴».

¹ Ibidem, o. 270.

² Ibidem, o. 98-101. Resolution signed by: Karol Rozmarek, Jan J. Olejniczak, Col. Dr. Teofil A. Starzycski, Wojciech S. Soska, Father Walenty Teciaw i Dr. Jan Dziura.

³ Ibidem, o. 272. Information from the report of Dr. Kipa

⁴ AAN, AIH, MZS, Polish diplomatic outposts, sygn. 55, o. 1326.

A vast collection of correspondence materials regarding the Polish Americans issue is found in the files no. 800/42/0, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, ref. no. 123 Hoover Institute Archives.

The documentation dates back to 1943, but the descriptions contain information from previous years as well, and what is most important, pertaining to particular Polish organization in the US. Therefore, for a researcher of the history of Poles living in the US and their relations with the Motherland the files are priceless, considering the fact they were prepared by the diplomats and representatives of the Polish Government. The files include documents describing Polish organizations and press articles of 1943-1944.

The first document states that the Polish Trade Union existed in USA in 1942, presided at the time by Leon Krzywicki, while the council of the union in Chicago was headed by Mr. Pyzik¹.

There is an important reason for which I am mentioning the document. It contains information regarding the attitude towards Poland of a member of one of the most important social organizations. Leon Krzywicki, was heard saying that he would be seeking audience with President Roosevelt, during which he intended to describe Prime Minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk in very positive terms.

The author of the document, Dr. Karol Lipa, the Polish Consul General in Chicago reported to Ciechanowski, the Polish Ambassador in Washington, that «Krzywicki proposed that I bring into being a committee, consisting of influential people, mainly Polish Americans,

which would offer Prime Minister comprehensive assistance in all the fields he deems necessary, and assistance with the Polish matter wherever it is required, that is, mainly with shaping both liberal and conservative opinions in favor of Poland and winning over prominent American figures and initiating action for securing peace²».

On February 6th 1943, Stanisław Angerman, Polish Consul in Detroit sent the Ministry of Information and Documentation in London a review of Polish American press, in which he reports that in the previous days the Polish American press was addressing the problems of the borders of Poland. The mentioned document cites «Dziennik Polski» of February 18th 1943, which contained an extensive article of Tadeusz Bielecki, the leader of national democrats, who once again «discussed the issue of Polish borders. On behalf of his political party Bielecki states that «several times during the ongoing war, the National Party stated in its principal addresses a general stance that the main goal of the policy of the government in exile is to fight for the territory of the Polish state. The National Party demands that the internal affairs not be discussed on the London ground amidst international squabbles, and that all the attention be focused on the issue of reconstruction, leaving the political, social and economic system to be decided upon by the state. In the broad article the author defines in detail how far the borders of Poland should reach, in or-

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 7, 8. Beside handing the cited declaration, L. Krzywicki expressed his wish to become a member of the committee to serve the Polish government with all of his persona.

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 4.

der to prevent a similar catastrophe in the future.¹

On February 27th 193, Dr. Karol Ripa, Polish Consul General in Chicago informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Londong that «Polish Americans through the agency of their central institution, the Polish Americans Council, and additionally the Syndicate of Polish Journalists in America and the Association of Polish Women declared before me their willingness to engage in a far reaching assistance to the Polish Government in its current discussions with the Soviet Government regarding the eastern borders.²»

The paper attached to the mentioned document listed particular undertakings that might be carried out by the Council. Considering the significance of the problem, I am citing the whole of it: «The president of the Council remarked that the council is ready to undertake following steps: 1/ address a memorial to the White House and the American figures indicated by the Polish Government, 2/ initiate a press campaign on the whole territory of the US, 3/ pass a resolution on the matter, the text of which would be sent to the Polish, American and international press, 4/ in the event of receiving instructions, the Council is ready to organize protest rallies against the leanings of the Soviet Government³».

It should be emphasized that the steps taken by the council were not inspired by the Polish side, which is proven by the fact that they were made fol-

lowing the publication of a message in the bulletin of the Soviet Embassy in Washington, the correspondence from London regarding the statement of the Polish Government and the declaration of City Council in London, which was also mentioned by the press on February 27th 1943.

Talking to the consul, the vice president of the council, Mrs. Woiewska stated that «any action involving the matter is advisable, except for the protest rallies since they would be turning the American public against the ally – Soviet Russia».

The Syndicate of Polish Journalists, through the agency of its president, asked for clarification of «how far the press campaign regarding the eastern borders should go and asked for instructions whether a decisive anti-Soviet action could be initiated. He remarked that the attitudes among the Journalists Syndicate regarding the issue were quite radical and that the Syndicate believed that, at that moment, it was the duty of Polish Americans to throw heavy weight into the scale and spare no effort in fighting off the assault on the Polish territory by our eastern neighbor.⁴»

On the conference of the Polish National Alliance, in Cleveland, on April 3rd and 4th 1943, a resolution was passed which preceded the incoming 29th convention of the organization and was the alternative to the official program of the

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, Polish diplomatic outposts, sygn. 55, o. 1331-1333.

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 29.

³ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 30. The document marked with a no. T-49-Sow-6 and tagged «top secret»

⁴ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 31. The document shows Dr. Kipa adding that the council Polish Americans and all centers of the Polish organizations will do anything the Polish government requires in the mentioned matter. It is also noted that the president of the council is willing to go to Washington in relation to the matters discussed in both documents, under the condition that he is summoned by the Ambassador.

authorities of the Alliance to be presented on the convention.

From the perspective of the subject of this paper, the most important passage, which was at the same time proposed as the motto of the convention, was as follows: «The land of our People shall never be surrendered! We will not allow for the Land of our Fathers and Grandfathers to be diminished within its borders¹»

On April 12th 1943, the board of the Polish Roman Catholic Union discussed, on its plenary session, the problem of «the Soviet government imperatively claiming rights to half of Poland, including cities of Lvov, Tarnopol, Stanisławów, Vilnius, Białystok, Nowogródek and Polesie.» Considering the above, the board of the Union «decided that the stance of the Soviet government and the communist press in the US is aggressive and is causing disharmony within the common efforts of the United Nations aimed at defeating Germany, Japan and Italy and the barbarian conduct of the German authorities violates all Christian principles and disgraces humankind.»

The above considerations were the basis of the resolution addressed to Pre-

sident Roosevelt, the congressmen and senators and to the press as well. I am citing the most important passage of the document: The board to the Polish Roman Catholic Union «expresses great hope that the United States together with England and other United Nations shall defy the designs of both their foes and allies, who today, or in the future, should attempt to seize foreign land and cause the disquiet of fighting and war for achieving their own goals².»

On May 16th 1943, the resolution of the local convention of the VIII district of the Polish National Alliance (an organization consisting of 30 thousand members) which preceded the national convention, included a passage referring to the eastern borders of Poland. The relevant text was as follows: «as the American citizens of Polish descent we hereby declare, that Poland, which was the first to resist Hitler in his plans to conquer the world and is still fighting a heroic war within the ranks of Free Nations, deserves proper respect and recognition of its borders from before 1939 including East Prussia. Hence we appeal to the government of the United States of America for it to be a genuine advocate of the Polish Nation and Poland³.»

It was an important statement, especially so since it was adopted before the president of the union, Kazimierz Rozmiarka.

On June 3rd 1943, the Polish Ambassador in the US, J. Ciechanowski infor-

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 86-90. The conferences attendees included: W. Cytacji of Detroit, S. Jodzieski of Cleveland, J. Habuda of Youngstown, Ohio, Dr. M. W. Wiczorek of Chicago, Cz. Jukaszewicz, editor of „Ameryka Echo”, F. Januszewski, publisher of the Detroit „Dziennik Polski”, J. A. Kurdziel, co-publisher of „Wiadomości Codzienne” in Cleveland, Z. B. Dybowski, editor of „Wiadomości Codzienne”, S. Trojanowski, journalist of Detroit, F. Barż, editor of Chicago „Przyszłość”, Cpt. S. A. Gutkowski, of Puławski Foundation, J. Romaszewicz, E. Jaworek of Massachusetts, H. Nowak of Chicago. The list of the attendees taken from the paper by the Polish Consul in Pittsburgh. In 1942 the Polish National Alliance celebrated its 62nd anniversary.

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 59-61. The information from the letter by Dr. Kipa, Polish Consul General in Chicago, no. T. 49-So-SZ-58, addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London.

³ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 95. The people mentioned at the end of the resolutions as the authors were: J. Filipowicz, K. Wojtanowski, A. Borkowska, T. M. Kortz and F. H. Szymczak.

med the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London that «some American political circles voiced concerns whether Polish Americans, majority of whom supported the democratic party and President Roosevelt, would still be in favor of the party and the President considering the lack of evidence that the American government defended Polish interests, but seemingly – at least on the outside – supported Soviet Russia¹».

On June 5th 1943, the communist weekly «Głos Ludowy» in a constant direct contact with the Moscow «Wolna Polska»² informed that a group of Polish Americans expressed their confirmation and compliance with the statement of professor Oskar Lange of Columbia University, which was announced in relation to the Soviet-Polish dispute and was published in the «New York Herald Tribune» on April 29th 1943. The text of the statement of Polish Americans from New Jersey was as follows: «We the undersigned, members of the Polish organizations and trade unions, touched and alarmed by the requests of the Polish government in exile (original spelling) AW's note) counter to the interests of the Polish people, breaking the unity of the United Nations, confirm and support the stance presented in the statement».

«At the same time the undersigned agree the only ones to be held responsible for the breaking are the supporters of Hitler inside the Polish government which in no way expresses the true feelings of the majority of the Polish people, who are fighting for unconditional surrender of the Axis powers». The document was signed by: Joseph

Psolka, Jean Kobyliski, J. C. Aleksander, George Gocski, Stanley Sztaba, John Hrabal, Stanley Krzywonos, Laura Niebergall, Walter Jegielski, Alfons Kobyliski, Bronislaw Wojkowski, Hubert Obarski, Joseph Kaster, J. Liniewski, Tony Gniewek, Adam Lutkowski, J. Krasowski, F. Jukaszewicz, A. Jackowski, C. Demkowski, Maria Wojkowska, K. Wasilewski, Walter Felicki and Julia Jukaszewicz³.

With a great deal of probability it might be concluded that the above supporters of various organizations in reality represented associations or unions which considering the number of its members are described in political science as «sofa» associations.

To prove the above, it might be mentioned that the protest addressed to the Polish President regarding the German persecution of Polish children of September 26th 1943, contained the signatures of the members of following women organizations: Association of Polish Women in America (5500 female members), Polish National Alliance (5000 female members), the Polish Roman Catholic Union (7000 female members), Polish Women Relief Committee (500 female members), League of Polish Affairs (2000 female members), Polish Women Charity Union (250 female members), Polish Women's Auxiliary Corps (1000 female members), Mercantile Women Association (110 female members), Federation of the Polish American Youth (300 female members),

³ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 1374, 1380, 1381. The signatories of the document represented among others: Polish American Civil Club, Association of the Sons of Poland, Polish Educational Club, International Workingmen's Union, St. Thomas Union, Polish Working-class Relief Fund, Polish Ladies Club.

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, Polish diplomatic outposts, sygn. 54, o. 217.

² Ibidem, o. 103.

Maritime League (1000 female members), Soldier's Friends Center (2000 female members), Polish Falcon Association (2000 female members).

Additionally, the analysis of the archives related to Polish Americans allows a conclusion that the other representatives had the support of a limited number of people.

Thus, the initiators of the above proposal were a numerically heavy group, which – at least so it seems – represented a minor circle of Poles, if not only their own interests. It is also possible that such actions were supported by the official representatives of the diplomatic corps of USSR in USA.

On June 8th 1943, J. Ciechanowski, the Polish Ambassador in USA through the agency of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London, informed the Headquarters of the Polish Army in the East that the council of Polish Americans assigned funds for the purchase of books for the Polish Army in the East¹.

The above fact was mentioned because it is an indirect evidence of the support of the Polish Government in Exile, considering, among others, the Sikorski-Majski agreement with the Soviets and its implementation in practice.

On June 27th 1943, the Polish Roman Catholic Union in America, the second largest Polish organization in the US, celebrated its 70th anniversary. The number of its members amounted to over 150 thousand and it was headed by President Jan Olejniczak, and its secretary general was Stefan S. Grabowski. Reporting to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London on the celebration, the Consul General in Chicago noted that

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, Polish diplomatic outposts, sygn. 54, o. 221.

the archbishop Samuel Stritch, speaking on behalf of the American clergy declared «their far reaching readiness to assist Poland in its current situation and their belief that the merits of Poland for the world throughout the millennium are too great for it not to be able finish the fight strong and victorious²».

From the perspective of the subject of this paper it is important to also discuss the «top secret» report on the talks that took place on July 24th and 25th 1943 between the Polish Consul in Chicago, and the advisor of the American government on the Polish Americans, the employee of the Office of War Information and the publisher of the «Opportunity» magazine – Adam Kulikowski, in his estate in Virginia. A record of the talks includes the following: «A. Kulikowski (...) let me in on a number of issues related to internal affairs of the American Government in which he is involved. He informed me about the attitude of those circles towards Polish Americans; he tried to explain in detail his actions as far as the issues of the eastern borders of Poland and the Polish-Soviet relations are concerned³».

In another document the consul explains what his collocutor meant by talking about his attitude towards Poland. «Mr. Kulikowski is of the opinion that debating the issue of the Polish eastern borders in the press and in public meetings is according to American authorities turning the United States against one of the allies which consequently may diminish the common effort of the allies to defeat Hitler. He believes that

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 55, 56, 64. Samuel Stritch was at the time the archbishop in Chicago.

³ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 7, 8, 39.

the issues should be discussed through direct correspondence or talks between the chief instances of the Polish Americans organizations and American government representatives and not through public rally resolutions and press articles. In his opinion, if Poland was accused of turning the Polish Americans against Russia it would discourage the US and would risk being suspected of inciting disagreements, disregarding the general interests of the Allies and considering only its own benefits. On the other hand, Mr. Kulikowski believes that when the scales visibly tip in the US and the Allies favor, the Polish issue will resurface on its own and then America will use all of its might to support Poland in the Polish-Soviet conflict¹»

On August 15th and 16th 1943, the XV Convention of the Polish Women Association took place in Cleveland under the auspices of The Holy Family. The organization, established on December 8th 1913 and consisting of around 6000 members, appointed its leaders during the proceedings – the president

¹ Ibidem, o. 19, 20, 40-45. The role that Mr. Kulikowski played in the Polish issue is difficult to judge today, even more so because one of the fragments of the cited document shows that several weeks before meeting the consul he hosted Oskar Lange in Virginia, and the part summarizing the visit the consul writes: "I did not get the impression that Mr. Kulikowski is consciously trying to hamper the Polish matter, but there is no doubt that his emotions gravitate towards Soviet Russia, whom he is trying to help." It should be also noted that the report gives and opinion on NCAPD stated by Mr. Kulikowski, who supposedly said (pic. 41): "NCAPD is considered by the American government to be a fascist organization and Col. Matuszewski is despised within their circles to the point that his every article and appearance are closely watched. Mr. Kulikowski believes that the action of NCAPD as far as its relation to the Polish government is considered, especially in the past, and to some point even today, is remarkably harmful to the Polish case."

Franciszka Tesny and secretary general A. C. Pletta. The association had its own weekly magazine «Jednoньж Polek» and quite good financial condition². The resolution adopted by the attendees of the convention mentions the love of the Homeland and the people oppressed by the enemy but it does not clearly address the already known information regarding the subordination of the Polish eastern lands from before 1939 by the Soviets.

Between September 19th and 26th 1942, a convention of the Polish National Alliance took place in Boston, attended by around 1000 people, mostly Americans of Polish descent. It was the biggest Polish American organization at that time. It consisted of about 300 thousand members and its official organ was the weekly «Zgoda».

The postulates for the convention were prepared by the F. X. Hwietlik, the censor of the union. One of the paragraphs referred to the most important issue pertaining to the Polish reason of state: «Poland is now going through a phase of difficult test. It is at a turning point of its history and it needs to consolidate all of its powers and resources. The Polish nations resist Nazis and the polish air force and navy skirmishes daily with the hordes of Hitler. In such an important moment all Polish Americans need to unify and unanimously support the activity of the legitimate Polish Government in London lead by President Raczkiwicz and gen. Sikorski³ which strives

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 33, 34. Information on the convention was passed to the Polish Embassy by Heliodor Sztarak, Polish Consul in Pittsburgh.

³ The postulates were written on June 1st 1942, when the Prime Minister post was filled by Sikorski, who died on July 4th 1943, that is during the campaign preceding the convention

to reinstate democracy on Polish territory according to the noble recommendations of the Atlantic Charter outlined by President Roosevelt¹».

In the pre-reporting period the leaders of the union included, among others: Karol Rozmarek, the president, J. S. Świerczyński, the chairman of the development committee, Stanisław Basicski, the chief executive of the union.

The attendees of the convention received congratulations letters from the Polish President Władysław Raczkiewicz² and the Prime Minister of the Polish Government in Exile³, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, and the Polish state was represented by Jan Ciechowski, the Polish Ambassador in the US, who addressed the convention on the opening day pointing out that the proceedings were taking place at the turning point for all the world adding that «in this final phase of the war, the fate of Poland was at stake.» Significant words were also contained in the last paragraph of the address: «(...) Poland has the right to expect – if not the active support of all of her sons, then at least the silence of those who for any purposes, personal ambitions or private grievances are not able to appreciate with whole their hearts her difficult situation and support those whom she deemed suitable to interpret her soul and aspirations to the world in a time when it is not po-

ssible for the entire Nation to be heard⁴.

It is noteworthy that the convention was also attended, among others, by the governor of Rhode Island, J. J. McGraw, who said at the end of his address: «the right of Poland to the entirety of its prewar territory is so holy and legitimate, that America should not only defend it but also fight for it if it was necessary⁵».

On October 27th 1943, consul general Ripa informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London that two political factions were created in Chicago: the Polish People's Party was formed in August and was named «the Association of the Polish People and Friends of the Polish Countryside». Stanisław Mermer was assigned the president of the faction. The party consisted at the time of 30 members; in September, the Polish Socialist Party was also established in Chicago and was led by Jan Kudeiko as the secretary general. The Consul General in Chicago added that «Polish Americans are rather reluctant to welcome the formation of political parties in the US and both in the press and at the meetings during the unofficial talks they clearly emphasize their links to the two main American political parties: the Democratic and the Republican party and the issues of the Polish parties are becoming less important to them⁶».

On May 18th 1943 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that on 14th of

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 128.

² Ibidem, o. 129. In his address to the convention, the Polish president noted that «the resolutions passed by the biggest organization of Polish Americans reflect its attitude to both their most important problems and to the Polish Motherland, especially during the hard time of war being fought by United States and Poland against the common enemy.»

³ Ibidem, o. 128.

⁴ Ibidem, o. 73-77.

⁵ Ibidem, o. 72. The information taken from the letter by J. Ciechanowski, Polish Ambassador in USA to the Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, marked with a no. 299/SZ-71.

⁶ Ibidem, o. 18. The «top secret» note was also received by the Polish embassy and Consulates in USA

May of that year a meeting convened by the Regional Committee of the Polish American section of the International Workingmen's Association took place in New York and was attended by around 150 people. The article of professor Oskar Lange was read at the meeting and the editor of «Głos Ludowy» gave a communist speech praising Wanda Wasilewska and colonel Berling who was also sent a tributary telegram, allegedly on behalf of the Polish Americans¹.

Another attempt by the left-wing organizations to win support for the Polish communist activities, which in my opinion equaled agreeing on the eastern borders of Poland, was reported by the Polish Ambassador in USA, Sylwester Strakacz, the authorized minister and the Polish Consul General in New York, who, in a document of June 25th 1943, stated that on June 20th a meeting of Polish communists took place in the National House in New York, attended by around 250 people. According to the Consul, «the number included 40 representatives of the local Polish Americans uncompromisingly hostile towards the communist action, who attended the meeting to hamper possible resolutions or to prevent the banner being dedicated to the so called Końciuszek's Division in USSR².

The document cites Mr. Copert, the editor of «Głos Ludowy» of Detroit, to be the leader of Polish communists in USA. It also contains unconfirmed in-

formation that the banner dedicated to Russia was funded by two left-wing Polish women organizations of New Jersey and Philadelphia³.

On May 11th 1944, Prime Minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk, through the agency of Tadeusz Romer, the minister of foreign affairs, sent Ambassador Ciechanowski a telegram addressed mainly to the Poles in USA. The wire reads, among others: «Since the horrible September days of 1939 we have been waiting for your response. We strongly believed that in your well-tested organizations: the Polish National Alliance, the Polish Roman Catholic Union, the Association of Polish Women in America, the Falconers and Scouts, the Polish Educational Society, the Union of Polish Technicians, the Union of Polish Merchants, the Trade Unions, Professional Bodies, Parish, Cultural, Economic, Political and other unions, the press editing offices, private homes and families and most of all the hearts Americans, in whose veins the Polish blood flows – we could expect your cooperation. (...) We now count on your support; we hope you will not allow for Poland – which was recently called by the great American President Roosevelt – the Inspiration of Nations – to pay the costs of the war with its ancient eastern lands. Do not let the bloodstained and martyred Polish homeland of Końciuszek, Paderewski, Mickiewicz, Siomacki, St Andrzej Bobola, Traugutt, Orzeszkowa, Rodziewiczówna, Piłsudski and such cities as Lvov, Vilnius, Krzemieniec and Grodno to be severed from Poland⁴».

¹ Ibidem, o. 22. The document addressed to the Ministry of Information and Documentation in London. The archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs includes a wire by the Consul General in New York notifying the ministry about the event – pictures 23-26, signed «Strakacz 302».

² Ibidem, o. 19, 20.

³ Ibidem.

⁴ Ibidem, o. 404-407.

Between 28th and 30th of May 1944, 2500 delegates of 22 states representing 1063 organizations including 700 parishes brought into being - as they called it - a permanent initiative of the Polish American Congress. The first leadership of the newly established organization included: the president: Karol Rozmarek, the president of the Polish National Alliance, the vice presidents: Honorata Woiewska, the president of the Association of Polish Women in America, Maksymilian Wkgrzynek, the president of NCAPD, Dr. Teofil Starzycski, president of the Polish Falconers union, Franciszek Januszewski, editor of «Dziennik Polski» in Detroit, Jan Mikuta, the treasurer of Polish scouts and a social activist; the treasurer - Jan Olejniczak, the president of the Polish Roman Catholic Union and the secretary general - Stanislaw Gutowski, the director of the Puławski Foundation.

The congress included, among others, the addresses of the following: Senator James M. Mead, a New York democrat who «expressed his belief that the debt to Poland would be repaid. There is hope that with the assistance of Great Britain and the US the Polish-Soviet conflict would be favorably resolved¹».

Bolesław J. Monkiewicz, the member of the Congress and the representative of New Britain «demanded justice for Poland». He furthermore stated that deprivation of land equals deprivation of existence, and a permanent peace could not be reconciled with the denial of a right of handling internal affairs without the pressure of the outside states²».

¹ Ibidem, o. 743.

² Ibidem, o. 743.

The importance of the Congress is emphasized by the fact the attendees received a wire from President Franklin D. Roosevelt, from the Authorities of the Eastern Land District in Jerusalem and beside that, the guest speakers included: J. J. Kelly, the mayor of Buffalo and Jan J. Dingell, the member of the Congress, a democrat from Chicago.

An important element of the proceedings, both for the members of the Congress, and for all the Poles in the world, was passing a manifesto directed to the President of the US, in which the delegates, referring to the historical relationship between Poles and Americans, at the same time pointed out that «United States are morally responsible for the actions of their allies and that the occupation of Poland would only be a prelude to further aggression, as the occupation of Rhineland was the first act of the German aggression.» It was also added that «the Congress requests the President not to allow the United States being dragged into any scheming against Poland³».

Beside the above document, upon the motion of Mrs. Kuropatwa, the vice president of the Polish Falconers union in America⁴, a manifesto addressed to the fighting country was passed which read: We, the Americans of Polish descent, with a deep sense of fulfilling our public duty and understanding of the common fate of all the nations cherishing freedom send you - the Brothers

³ Ibidem, o. 744, 763, 764.

⁴ According to W. Zachariasiewicz - Polish Falconers in America stem ideologically from the Gymnastic Association «Sokry» which was created after the January Uprising on Eastern Malopolska and since 1867 acted mainly in Lvov and Cracow. Cf. W. Zachariasiewicz, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

fighting in the Country – our solemn assurance that according to our rights and as far as our strengths allow we shall fight for the American ideals expressed in the Atlantic Charter, for the recognition of the principle «The law above the violence» and for the principle to be applied in the proper commitments for the sake of the equality of all free nations, the recognition of the sacrifice, the reparation of the damages through the triumph of justice, for the victory of democracy, the secure future of the world and the security of America¹».

The message published after the Congress by the Presidium also stressed that it was convened mainly to support Poland and its territorial inviolability, because the partition of Poland is an insult to the American sense of justice and integrity. Additionally, the Polish Americans' stance on the Polish issue was presented in the memorial addressed to President Roosevelt, which read: «Seizing and keeping the Polish lands by the trespassing Russian army would be a fait accompli, which would disturb the future of Europe and would be a complete negation of morality and justice». The cited document also states that: «Subjugation of half of Poland would be a serious iniquity. Poland was of great service to the US. Poland has the right to be free, independent and for its territorial integrity to be retained. It has earned the right to appeal to the US for its rights to be safeguarded and deserves the privilege of shaping the future as an equally rightful member among the nations fighting beside America²».

¹ Ibidem, o. 738.

² Ibidem, o. 738, 739.

The congress enthusiastically received the content of the letter from the Council of Lithuanian Americans, which sent its greetings and ensured its «total support for a decisive resolve of the Polish nation to defeat the enemy and reinstate an independent country, liberated from the present reign and willing to cooperated amicably with its neighbors on the stabilization of postwar Europe and maintaining world peace³».

During the congress, many voices could be heard saying it had been «staged» by the Polish government and its representatives, which was supposed to discredit the significance of the congress.

Illustrations of such reasoning could be found in press articles. For example: T. Dombrowski, an activist of «Kościuszko's League», attacked the congress of Polish Americans in a «Daily Worker» issue of May 21st for their disloyalty to the US and their connections with the isolationists (republican lead).

«Detroit Times» of May 30th doubted that the loyalty to United States could be reconciled with the love of Poland».

«Detroit News» of May 30th as well, believed that the Polish Government would not return home, that Great Britain was already withdrawing its support and that United States should be doing the same.

The British daily press was dominated by short pieces of news (e.g. «Times» and «Daily Express»). «News Chronicle» stressed the «anti-Russian character».

Whereas the «Observer» published an article entitled «Polish Extremists»

³ Ibidem, o. 741.

Anti-Roosevelt Move fails». The article was described as an «attack on the anti-Russian activity of NCAPD, the members of the Congress of Polish descent and alleged ties to the reactionary American groups. The correspondent stressed the alleged address against democratic authorities and concluded that «the Congress does not represent the opinion of Polish Americans, that their number is not quite significant and that the Congress did not take any action. Hence the disappointment».

«Reynolds News» treated the Congress issue as a background to stating that the Soviets still demanded the Curzon line and that the journey of father Orleacski¹ had a great impact on the Polish and American opinion. The congress was supposedly convened to erase those influences².

The appeal of the Prime Minister of the Polish Government in Exile was not left without response. For example, the plenary session of the XVII District of the Polish Americans Council passed a resolution on October 29th 1944 which read, among others: «Long live the Free and Independent Poland within the borders which she rightly deserves».

The author of the above also added that «the left-wing press had used him as yet another occasion to attack Poland³».

¹ An unknown person. No information regarding both the person and his mission in the USA. It may suggest it was an irrelevant episode.

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 123, o. 745. All opinions come from the mentioned document. No name of the authors given, except for the note: „5.VI.1944 Ref. M. Prase”.

³ Ibidem, o. 724. The resolution signed on behalf of the convention by: B. Meklemburg, Father J. Choromacski, Angelina C. Pletta, K. J. Zielecki and J. A. Ćebrowski.

It should be added that NCAPD protested fiercely in 1944 in a resolution addressed to Lord Halifax, the British Ambassador in the US which stated that: «The delegates of the Polish American organizations in the East gathered at a convention in New York are sending the Ambassador their words of protest against the passages of Churchill's address of February 22nd 1944 infringing on the rights of the Polish nation. The Polish-English treaty is a clear and unclassified document known to the world. Trusting in the document, millions of Poles died defending England as well. The treaty does not entitle any of the signatories to offer the invader the lands of its allies. On the contrary, it requires for the borders of the ally to be protected as one's own. Hence, supporting the rapacious Soviet claims by the great authority of the British Prime Minister is a grave injustice to the Polish nation⁴».

On April 15th, the Central Civil Committee convening in Detroit sent a telegram to Stanisław Mikołajczyk in which the newly appointed leadership representing over two hundred Polish organizations, beside words of respect and sympathy towards the Prime Minister, expressed its firm belief that after five heroic years of sacrifice Poland shall be reborn without losing its territory and that fair resolutions shall be adopted⁵.

⁴ IJPL, Polacy Amerykańscy, zeszyty 45, kolekcja nr 45/7/2/C/1/,teczka 3, bp. In his address in the House of Commons Churchill said about the agreement by the allies expressed in Tehran to disconnect Poland from the USSR influence. The document signed by the resolution committee: M. F. Wkgrzynek, Father Dr. A. W. Lekarczyk, S. J. Bryda and F. J. Wazeter.

⁵ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 411. The wire signed by R. Cegiowski, the president of the Central Civil Committee.

On July 28th 1944, at the convention of the council of Polish Associations and Clubs, in Wilmington, Delaware, a resolution was passed which noted that «the world is aware the Soviet Russian authorities of the day made a pact with the Polish government in London in July 1941 rejecting the treaty with Hitler of 1939 regarding the territorial changes in Poland. In 1943 the treaty was breached proving that the treaties, agreements and declarations were only scraps of paper.»

Another passage of the document points out that «the support of the actions of Soviet Russia and Germany against Poland and other occupied European countries would be a support of the Soviet-German treaty of 1939, including the territorial changes in Poland. That would be a betrayal of everything that was so far declared and would mean the war in Europe is being fought in vain, if it results in the victory of Soviet Russia and its totalitarianism¹».

On July 30th 1944, the Polish Government in Exile received support from the attendees of the plenary convention of the Polish Falconers union in America whose guests included among others Jan Ciechanowski, the Polish Ambassador and congressmen: Jan Lesicki and Bolesław Monkiewicz, the president of the Polish National Alliance and the president of the Congress of Polish Americans Henryk Majchrzak.

During the convention, the chaplain of the Falconers, Father Prelate Seweryn Niedbalski received an Officer's Cross of the Order of Rebirth of Poland awarded by the Polish President.

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 515, 516. Resolution signed by: V. J. Kowalski, the president and A. J. Rosiak, secretary.

The convention involved «a violent incident, when a local filmmaker (an American of Polish descent) announcing a screening of Polish movies, began to screen a Soviet movie about the Berling army. The attendees in no time realized what the character of the movie was and began to protest noisily. Such was the commotion that there were attempts to break the cine-projector and to batter the filmmaker. Thanks to the lucid mind of president Starzynski the agitation of the audience had been contained. The frightened filmmaker hastily left the building carrying the movie equipment to the sounds of menacing exclamations of the gathered²».

The cited situation was presented to prove the dislike of the proposals of Soviet Russia. The movie was treated as propaganda. On the other hand, the event shows the attitude of the falconers towards Poland and its legitimate authorities.

The fifth plenary session of the delegates of the Maritime League in America, which took place between 2nd and 4th of September 1944, passed a resolution «expressing admiration and recognition for the fight of Polish Army against the German enemy and paying tribute to heroic Warsaw, which despite the bloodshed of its best sons and daughters is breaking the shackles of bondage imposed by the savage enemy to show the world the limitless being of the nation. To the Polish infantry, navy and air force fighting shoulder to shoulder beside the United Armed Forces of the Allies against the savage enemy, we pay tribute and sympathetically reassure that they shall gloriously return to their

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 552.

free and independent Polish Homeland, not diminished and rested broadly against the Baltic sea¹».

The convention also sent a wire to Prime Minister Mikoiajczyk which beside the encouragement to persevere in defending the legitimate Polish rights also mentions Poland «not diminished and with a broad access to the seaside²».

The gathered delegates also sent a telegram to president Roosevelt appealing «for the justice to be served and for the Polish People to regain its rightful nest including the Baltic coast³».

On September 26th and 27th 1944, the first National Convention of the Catholic League took place in Cleveland. Similar to other Polish American organizations, the Catholic league also passed a resolution supporting the fighting country and the government in London. Two most significant passages from this extensive document are cited below: «We hereby send greetings, thanks and encouragement to persevere to the hard-working Polish Government in London, the command of the Polish Army and the Polish soldiers fighting gloriously at all the world's ends and trails». The second paragraph refers to the pre-war borders of Poland: «As American citizens, we protest against the plunder and partition of the country in 1939 and against interfering in the internal affairs of any country.»

¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 473. The resolution committee included: R. Matuszczak, the president, M. Dąbrowski, M. Chomicki, W. Wittenberg, M. Leszczycski, B. Skowronek and S. Kubicki.

² AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 474. The document signed by those mentioned in the above footnote. The wire was also received by the Commander in Chief and the Polish President. However they were only courtesy wires.

³ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 474. The document signed by committee resolution members mentioned in the above footnote.

These were very significant words, all the more so because they were received by the Catholic circles representing both Polish and American parishes. It is proven by the content of the resolution, which repeatedly expresses gratitude and solidarity with the whole hierarchy of the Roman Catholic church together with the Pope. The resolution was signed by two clergymen: Wincenty Bor-kowicz, Wincenty Stancelewski, Mother Marcella of the Sisters of St. Felix, Dr. Franciszek Fronczak and Katarzyna Bajdek.⁴

On October 15th 1944, the convention of the K. Pulaski Center in Milwaukee also sent a wire to Prime Minister Mikoiajczyk which, among others, read: «We oppose firmly to any cutting down of the Polish eastern lands and decidedly support attaching the ancient Polish lands in the west to Poland, such as Silesia, East Prussia and the whole Polish Pomerania».

It was one of the most radical stances on the eastern borders of Poland adopted by Polish American Circles at that time. It is noteworthy that the political decisions were at the time already made by the three superpowers: Soviet Union, Great Britain and United States, regarding the Poland's territory whose eastern border would be the Curzon line. A considerable reluctance of Great Britain to further support the Polish Government in Exile is also worth noting. It was even suggested that the Government should no longer be recognized at all. That is why another passage of the wire mentioned above is quite significant: «We firmly believe that the Polish Government

⁴ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 468.

in London and the Polish nation it represents will triumphantly emerge from the turmoil of the war and Poland will take the place it deserves, and paid for with the Polish blood, among the free nations of the world¹».

Meanwhile Ciechanowski, Polish Ambassador in the US, in his telegram of November 10th 1944 addressed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in London, wrote that «he spoke to B.,² who conclu-

ded that obtaining the American guarantees on a territory of any particular country was out of the question³».

The long-standing efforts of the Polish Diaspora in USA did not yield the expected results.

It could only be deliberated, whether without the support of Polish Americans, the Republic of Poland would be granted the post-war borders in their present form.

Вавринюк А. А. Вплив польських американців на форму кордонів Республіки Польща після Другої світової війни.

Після початку Другої світової війни політична ситуація в Європі, зокрема в Польщі, не була байдужою для переважної більшості поляків, які проживали на Американському континенті. Польська діаспора у Сполучених Штатах складається з кількох мільйонів людей, і як важлива етнічна група мала вплив на формування післявоєнних кордонів Польщі. Майже всі польські громадські організації та об'єднання, за винятком невеликої групи симпатиків Радянського Союзу, виступали на користь польського уряду у вигнанні. У зв'язку з тим, що ця тема не добре відома, і тільки розробка В. Захарясевича містить деякі деталі проблеми, думаємо, що було б доречним показати це питання, беручи до уваги архівні документи польського уряду у вигнанні (з 1940 року у Франції, а потім в Лондоні).

Ключові слова: Європа, польські американці, організація, національності, кордони, польський уряд у вигнанні.

Вавринюк А. А. Влияние польских американцев на форму границ Республики Польша после Второй мировой войны.

После начала Второй мировой войны политическая ситуация в Европе, в том числе в Польше, не была безразлична подавляющему большинству поляков, проживающих на Американском континенте. Польская диаспора в Соединенных Штатах, состоящая из нескольких миллионов человек, как важная этническая группа имела влияние на формирование послевоенных границ Польши. Почти все польские общественные организации и объединения, за исключением небольшой группы симпатиков Советского Союза, выступали в пользу польского правительства в изгнании. В связи с тем, что эта тема недостаточно известна, и только разработка В. Захарясевича содержит некоторые детали проблемы, думаем, что было бы уместным раскрыть этот вопрос, принимая во внимание архивные документы польского правительства в изгнании (до 1940 года во Франции, а затем в Лондоне).

Ключевые слова: Европа, польские американцы, организация, национальности, границы, польское правительство в изгнании.

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¹ AAN, AIH, MZS, sygn. 129, o. 416.

² Bohlen E. Charles, the advisor to President Roosevelt, former US Ambassador in USSR, participant of the Yalta and Tehran conferences.

³ The Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum Londyn (further: IPiMSL), Akta Prezydium Rady Ministrów, PRM.Z, sygn. k. 55k