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Senator, former Polish Minister
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The political plans of Germany as regards Poland went through various phases during the Great War: a revival of Friedrich-Wilhelm's I ideas of annexation as far as Courland and Lithuania took place, to be supplanted by returns to the old conceptions of a personal or dynastic union according to the tendencies expressed by the Great Elector, by Wilhelm II and by Wilhelm III.

All these projects, possible of execution only in the event of an overwhelming victory of the Quadruple Alliance, were counterbalanced by reversions to quite different plans whenever even the possibility of a compromise with Russia arose. In such cases, Germany returned to the Knesebeck Plan of 1813, whereby the Russo-Prussian frontier was to run along the line of the Pilica, Vistula and Narva rivers. This plan, to which the Prussian government reverted later in 1831 and in 1863, consisted in the incorporation of the north-western part of Congress (Russian) Poland into Prussia, thus creating not only a much more valuable strategical frontier (and what was more important, consolidating the German hold on the Polish provinces of Pomerania and Poznan) but also abolishing the wedge of territory cutting in be-

tween West Prussia and Silesia, and considered by the Germans to be menacing.

The idea of carving out a border protective zone from Polish territory was, according to Gen. Ludendorff, not only discussed by the highest authorities of the German Army but was even seriously considered by the heads of the German government in the autumn of 1914 and during the whole of 1915. Deliberations on this subject found their expression in a constant exchange of views between the German Government and the General Staff of the Army, as also with a number of other influential persons and institutions. On the newly-occupied territories of Poland, the chief spokesman for these ideas was Governor-General v. Beseler, whose plans and projects were inspired, for that matter, by General Falkenhayn, Chief of Staff at that time.

In this connexion, it would not be amiss to mention General von Beseler's memorandum entitled "On the principles of fortifying the country," presented to the Kaiser towards the end of 1914, his special report to the German Emperor on the same subject at the end of January 1916, and finally, the detailed projects presented at the beginning of February in the same year to Gen. Falkenhayn and to Bethmann-Hollweg, the Chancellor of the Reich.

Gen. von Beseler, emphasising the moderation of his plans, proposed the annexation to Prussia of a belt of Polish territory (about a third of the area of Con-

gress Poland) the area of which would be about 35,000 square kilometres, inhabited by a population of 3,500,000 souls.

The heavy losses suffered during the Serbian campaign towards the end of 1915, the opening of a new Russian offensive in Eastern Galicia and in Bukovina, as also the imminence of an offensive on Verdun prepared by the German Staff, — all these factors made it a highly tempting and opportune proposition to profit by the man-power left behind on Polish soil by the retreating Russian armies. Polish soldiers were desirable simply as cannon-fodder.

According to a conservative estimate, it was expected to enroll half a million soldiers, not even taking into account raw recruits from the class of 1917.

With this purpose in view, the German General Staff was prepared to grant all possible concessions to and to agree to every compromise proposed by the Austrian government: it was even prepared to accept the idea of a triple state (Austro-Hungarian-Polish) being formed under the Austrian sceptre, i.e., that Congress Poland would be united to Galicia with the Austrian Emperor as king.

This plan of the Austrian government had excellent chances of achievement in Berlin during 1915 and 1916, whilst it was closest to realisation during Count Burian's (the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs at the time) visit to Berlin in April 1916.

In exchange for its agreement to the idea of a triple

monarchy, Berlin was, however, firm in demanding the ceding of a frontier zone carved out of Congress Poland as an essential compensation. The object in view was, as already stated, to consolidate Germany's position in her eastern, Polish provinces and to link up Brandenburg and Pomerania with Silesia.

At that time, that part of ethnically Polish soil was evidently considered by the competent authorities of Germany as being a "corridor" separating the provinces of Poznan and of West Prussia from Silesia — a corridor which the German state policy of the time demanded should be abolished.

Simultaneously, however, Germany calculated that the changes in the Russian cabinet brought about by the accession of Stürmer to power might possibly permit a Russo-German compromise to be attained and would facilitate the realisation of a separate peace with the Russian Empire. In such case, it was argued, it would be more advisible not to take on the handicap of projects for territorial aggrandisement and annexations, but rather to wait for a division of territory with Russia at the cost of Austria-Hungary.

But it so happened that the Russians inaugurated a new offensive and signally defeated the Austrian forces in June 1916, thus cutting short at one blow any possibility of Berlin consenting to the triple-state solution of the Polish question. In August 1916, during Bethmann-Hollweg's and Jagow's visit to Vienna, an agreement was signed with Count Burian providing for

the creation of an "independent" Kingdom of Poland, directly dependent on Germany in military matters and moreover deprived of the right to its own independent foreign policy. As regards questions of territory, the signatories specifically excluded any possibility of the ceding of land in favour of the projected "independent" Kingdom from the provinces of Poznan and Galicia; the contracting parties likewise mutually guaranteed each other the inviolability of their respective partitioned Polish provinces. In addition, Prussia reserved the right of conducting "frontier-rectifications.... essential for her military security."

Thus, in the eyes of the German General Staff the question of the "frontier protective zone" and of recruiting Polish man-power appeared to be nearing solution, the more so as, after the resignation of Gen. Falkenhayn towards the end of August 1916, the command of the German Army passed into the hands of the new Chief of Staff, Field-Marshal Hindenburg and of his Quartermaster-General, Ludendorff.

In order to secure the rapid realisation of the plans envisaged in the Vienna Agreement, a joint conference of representatives of the General Staffs of both powers was held at Pless. Governor-General von Beseler bound himself to furnish four or five divisions of Polish soldiers by April 1917 at the latest, with a further 1,000,000 recruits in the event of compulsory military service being introduced in Poland. With

this in view, he insisted on the earliest possible proclamation of an independent Kingdom of Poland in order thereby the better to gain the sympathies of the Poles.

Since these chances of mobilising fresh man-power appeared to be so promising, the German government applied considerable pressure on the Austrian authorities with a view to realising the terms of the Vienna Agreement. As a first result, the Polish Legions were placed under German command.

But at this juncture, the realisation of these plans suffered a sudden setback due to the rise of new hopes for a separate peace with Russia in connexion with the projects set up on Minister Protopoff's entry into the Russian Cabinet. With circumstances thus changed, both the political and the military authorities of Germany immediately decided to shelve their Polish plans. The Polish Legions were recalled from the Russian front and the Chancellor made a markedly conciliatory speech intended for Russian consumption; but these were only the outward signs of the sudden change in tactics.

These hopes for a separate peace, however, proved groundless once again and in October 1916 the German General Staff, always having in mind the acquirement of fresh contingents of recruits, again resumed its pressure on the German government, demanding that the proclamation of the Polish state be hastened, with the result that this took place in November 1916.

Austria was far from gratified by this step. Thus, in January 1917, Count Czernin, then Minister for Foreign Affairs, during a Cabinet meeting at Vienna, declared himself as being opposed to the idea of creating "*faits accomplis* during the war." Count Tysza even plainly advised an abandonment of the Polish "enterprise". He showed himself disposed to evacuate the territory of the occupied province of Lublin and to cede it to the Germans in exchange for economic compensations.

The Emperor Charles and his consort visited the Kaiser at the German Headquarters at Homburg in April 1917. They were accompanied by Count Czernin who seized the opportunity of endeavouring to convince Bethmann-Hollweg and Ludendorff as to the advisibility of concluding peace at the price of restoring Alsace-Lorraine to France. Germany would find compensation by having a free hand in Poland, not only within the boundaries of the Congress Kingdom but also within those of Galicia. The Kingdom of Poland, so constituted, would be "united" to the German Reich.

These projects, by the way, served to mask Austria's secret tentatives for arranging a separate peace, as also her hidden hope of recompensating her losses at the cost of Roumania.

But the failure of the Anglo-French offensive

in Flanders during April had evoked a more confident spirit in the German camp. Count Czernin proceeded to the German Headquarters at Kreuznach, where, together with Gen. Ludendorff, a new Austro - German accord was concluded. By that agreement, spheres of influence were delimited whereby Roumania was to be left under Austrian influence, whilst territory to the east, including Poland, was to fall under German influence. Moreover, by this agreement, Austria, who retained Galicia, was to transfer the zone occupied by it in Congress Poland to Germany; in addition, Austria declared her political and military *désintéressement* as regards the Kingdom of Poland. Finally, Germany assured for herself the right to seize Lithuania.

Gen. Ludendorff has expressed his ideas on this subject with force and clarity in his memoirs. He foresaw the need of annexing colonisation terrain and thereby at the same time to minimize the "Polish danger." He held a number of conferences in April 1917 with Field-Marshal Hindenburg and succeeded in putting through his project for a "Duchy of Courland and for a Grand Duchy of Lithuania," both states to be very closely bound with the Reich by a personal union with the Kaiser, either in his capacity of King of Prussia or of Emperor of Germany.

When Kierenski's offensive in Galicia during June had been checked, Gen. Ludendorff decided it was time to end Germany's vacillating policies as regards

Poland. He commenced by striking a blow at the Polish Legions. The Commander - in - Chief and the organiser of the Legions, Joseph Pilsudski, was interned at Magdeburg and his formations were again placed under Austrian command.

Following subsequent successes on the Eastern front and expecting other victories in the West, the German Chancellor, Michaelis, paid a visit to Vienna in August 1917 with the intention of definitely ending Austrian political conceptions regarding the interdependence of the problem of Alsace-Lorraine with that of Poland.

Count Czernin did not appear to be greatly opposed to this change of policy. He feared to do anything which might compromise his plans concerning Roumania and at the same time had certain new projects as regards the Ukrainan question: he was therefore only too glad to be able to withdraw his offer of ceding Galicia to Germany.

Upon his return to Berlin, the German Chancellor, writing to Count Czernin, clearly confirmed in his letter what had been decided during the course of their conversations. He reminded the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs that they had both agreed that the idea of an independent Poland was inadmissible and dangerous to the German state. He asked if "it would not politically be more advisible for Germany, after having retained certain frontier regions of Poland, indispensable for the strategical

defence of the German frontier, to abandon Poland to her own fate, leaving her at liberty to unite with Russia." This meant that in practice, he was ready to return to Russia those parts of Poland which had ceased to be of interest to Germany, and, so, in this manner, even the very possibility of any kind of independent Polish state arising disappeared. But, in view of the necessity for augmenting the man-power of the Central Powers, these projects were, for the time being, pigeon-holed, and Austro-German negotiations were commenced for the purpose of discussing what measures to take in connexion with the creation of a Regency Council in Poland.

Gen. Ludendorff understood the motives for such action and did not oppose it in principle, since he well realised that he was in a position to demand certain conditions in exchange for his consent. He demanded the cession in favour of Germany of certain territories of Congress Poland, so chosen that the projected state would be in effect deprived of all possibility of independent existence.

It was in such an atmosphere that the proclamation constituting the Regency Council was announced on September 15th., 1917. Only the day before, Gen. Ludendorff had written in his memoirs: "We must secure territorial gains *(Zuwachs an Land)*. We will find them in Courland and in Lithuania... In view of the attitude of Poland, we must, for military reasons, advance the Lithuanian frontier more to the south

through Grodno, as also somewhat extend *(verbreiten)* the area of East and of West Prussia. It will be only then that we shall be in a position to assure the defence of Prussia. In the same way, at certain points of the province of Poznan, the frontier-line is too disadvantageous... The German government and parliament understood the difficult situation of the Silesian mining district even before the war. We must therefore likewise assure ourselves of Upper Silesia by territorial acquisitions. This would be facilitated by the liquidation of the mining and industrial enterprises situated on the other side of the frontier (in the Dabrowa mining area and under foreign control) or by their transfer to German ownership. The extension of the southern side of the narrow wedge between Torun and Danzig, as also the creation of a protective defence area for the Silesian basin are strategical necessities... Courland and Lithuania would be called upon to augment our food supplies during the future war... All these postulates are closely connected with the condition that the Austro-Polish solution should not be realised and that Poland on the other hand should be joined to Germany or, perhaps, that she should again return under Russian rule."

For all these reasons, an active policy as regards the plans concerning Courland and Lithuania was all the more energetically pushed ahead.

On November 5th., 1917, a Crown Counil meeting, at which the Kaiser himself presided, was held at the

Palace of Bellevue in Berlin. It was devoted to a discussion of Polish affairs, or, more exactly speaking, to the Austro-Polish solution, which was approved of, but with the reservation best expressed in Gen. Ludendorff's own words: "The Emperor has ordered the Supreme War Council to examine under which military conditions the Austrian solution would be acceptable to us. In accordance with this order, we have made due search for a solution. And this solution can only be found in the extension of the protective defence area along the whole length of the Polish frontier."

The demands presented by Germany as the price of her consent to the Austro-Polish solution likewise included a number of economic and railway-transport facilities of such a nature that Germany's domination over Poland would be assured even if the latter were to be united to Austria-Hungary.

When it came to discussions with Count Czernin as to the realisation of the decisions taken during the meeting at Bellevue, it became clear that the Austrian government evinced no eagerness to arrive at a clear-cut solution. It was therefore with mutual satisfaction that both parties agreed to postpone discussions to a later date when a common conference would be convoked, and at which the plenipotentiaries of both General Staffs and the prime ministers of the two governments would be present.

There was another reason why no haste was shown:

important news was expected from Russia at any moment. And thus it was, that at the very hour of the Berlin conversations with Count Czernin, the distant thunder of the Bolshevik *coup d'état* was resounding in the streets of Petrograd.

It seemed probable that Russia, one of the three historical partners in the partitions of Poland, was to disappear for good. At the same time, the possibility of peace upon the Eastern front at last appeared to be approaching realisation.

No time was lost in preparing for the conclusion of a separate peace with the Bolsheviks. A council of war, held at the Headquarters of the General Staff at Kreuznach on December 18th., 1917, was devoted to a discussion of the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk; at this meeting, all the political postulates formulated by Gen. Ludendorff were unequivocally accepted.

Thus, it was decided to annex Courland and Lithuania; a resolution was passed that a Hohenzollern would be placed on the throne of Lithuania, and, finally, it was unanimously determined, in view of the need for a protective defence area, to annex territory along the whole German-Polish frontier. Gen. Ludendorff remarked on this occasion that: "the Emperor has consented to a zone, the area and extent of which has been deemed sufficient by the Supreme War Council." Further, added the General, there was absolutely no mention made at the time as to the future of Poland.

Shelved in this manner at Kreuznach, Poland nevertheless appeared on the agenda of the Brest-Litovsk *pourparlers*. General Hoffman, one of the German delegates and Chief of the Eastern Occupation Zone *(Oberost)*, later expressed the following opinion: "I considered then and still consider that an independent Poland is an utopian idea."

The negotiations at Brest-Litovsk were commenced on December 22nd., 1917 and concluded on March 3rd., 1918 by the signing of a peace treaty based upon the provisions of a German ultimatum.

The task imposed on von Kühlmann, one of the German secretaries of state, had by no means been an easy one during the first stages of the negotiations. The Russians had proposed that their armies would evacuate the invaded territories of Austria, Turkey and Persia in consideration of which the troops of the Quadruple Alliance would simultaneously evacuate Poland, Lithuania and Courland.

Von Kühlmann, who was obliged carefully to mask the real aims of German policy, juggled with legal formulae and alleged that he was backed up by the will of the peoples inhabiting the territories occupied by the German forces.

The only person present at the discussion who tried to present the matter clearly and frankly during the first phases of the Brest-Litovsk negotiations was Gen. Hoffman. He declared privately to Joffe, the Russian delegate, that the fate of Poland, Lithuania

and Courland would have to be settled by the governments of the two Central Powers. In answer to this frank declaration, the Russian delegation threatened to leave Brest-Litovsk.

During the first interruption of the negotiations (in January 1918), rather drastic scenes had place at Berlin amongst the political and military leaders of Germany as a result of the Polish policies outlined.

Gen. Hoffman, strongly in favour of the ceding of the Polish province of Chelm and its incorporation within the Ukrainan Soviet Republic, held that this annexation would at the same time permit Germany without danger to diminish the area of the protective zone which the Reich intended to annex for herself from the territory of Congress Poland.

This attitude of the Reich's delegates evoked a severe reprimand from the Supreme War Council. A violent controversy broke out between Gen. Hoffman and Gen. Ludendorff, the latter even demanding such an extension of the protective defence zone that an additional 7,000,000 Poles would thereby have fallen under German rule.

A new meeting of the Crown Council was summoned at Bellevue in order to deal with the situation. Gen. Ludendorff, supported by Field-Marshal Hindenburg, refused to modify his standpoint. When the argument was raised that the Polish population in the area proposed for annexation was too strong and numerous, he indicated a very simple way out of the

difficulty, namely, that the inhabitants be expelled by force from the projected area.

The Emperor, who, under the influence of von Kühlmann, agreed with Gen. Hoffman's views, approved the future frontier-line between Poland and Germany as proposed by the latter. In consequence, Field-Marshal Hindenburg and Gen. Ludendorff tendered their resignations (January 7th., 1918), giving as their motive that the Emperor had consented to such a frontier, which "menaced the very existence of the German nation." The Kaiser refused to accept the resignations and on January 12th., 1918 ordered that preparations be commenced for the realisation of the protective area plan.

It is noteworthy that this took place four days after the publication of President Wilson's historic message to Congress, the thirteenth point of which called for the restoration of an independent Poland with free access to the sea.

In the meantime, the negotiations at Brest-Litovsk were resumed. The conflict within the political commission became acute. Trotsky demanded a clear and straightforward declaration that the German and Austrian governments had no intention of annexing invaded territories or of "rectifying" their frontiers. Von Kühlmann replied evasively that the new nations had the right to contract such agreements as they thought fit and opportune, even if such dealt with territorial questions.

The will of the nations in question was, according to the German plenipotentiary, to be expressed by the various councils, committees, governments and assemblies artificially created by the authorities of occupation and having nothing in common with the free expression of the actual will of the populations concerned. These various bodies, set up by the German authorities on the soil of Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic states were in effect only organised in order to mask the real aims of annexation on the part of the Germans.

At all costs, von Kühlmann wanted the Russian delegation to recognise the bodies created by the authorities of occupation as the actual representatives of the nations which had through them ostensibly expressed the desire to unite their fates with those of the Central Powers.

General Hoffman, however, had received instructions to adopt "a more energetic attitude" and he informed the Russian delegation that he could not recognise Russia's right to intervene in "the affairs of countries occupied by the Central Powers." Some days later, he presented the Russian delegation a map on which the new frontier had been indicated as also which territories were to be ceded by Russia. The Russian plenipotentiaries simply affirmed the annexationary character of the terms demanded by the Central Powers and requested a suspension of

negotiations pending arrival of fresh instructions from Moscow.

In the meantime, Germany and Austria were, to the great dissatisfaction of the Russian authorities, negotiating a separate peace with the Central Ukrainan Council. Although this body already then represented no one, it was none the less in course of arranging a peace which was to deprive Poland of her province of Chelm and to set up Eastern Galicia as an autonomous unit within the Hapsburg monarchy.

Polish public opinion was kept in the dark regarding all these events. But it felt that something was happening behind the scenes. On December 18th., Mr. Kucharzewski, the Polish Prime Minister, approached the Chancellor of the Reich and the Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs with the request that Poland be represented at the Brest-Litovsk conference. It can be imagined how embarrassing a request this was for the Central Powers.

The Polish government then sent a note to the governments of the Central Powers in which it declared that "any agreement deciding the future of Poland and concluded without its consent will not be considered as binding by the Polish nation."

Negotiations at Brest-Litovsk were resumed, but the Russian delegation declined to treat simultaneously as a whole the fundamental question of the recognition of Poland's independence with that of recognising the Kucharzewski cabinet as the accredited representative of the Polish state. Von Kühlmann and Count Czernin seized the opportunity, in view of this attitude, to throw the onus of responsibility for Poland's non-admission to the Conference upon the Russians.

The negotiations were again interrupted and during the interval which followed, discussions were again held at Berlin by the Central Powers. The German General Staff, conscious of its strong position and being on the eve of a great offensive prepared by it on the western front, considered itself master of the situation.

Count Czernin then finally abandoned the Austro-Polish solution; as compensation for the planned Russo-German frontier as outlined at Brest, he obtained Germany's consent to his own frontier plans. At the same time, however, the German Supreme War Council presented Marshal Hindenburg's detailed plan regarding the Polish frontier zone, — a plan based, by the way, on that which had some time before evoked such a violent controversy at Bellevue.

The peace-treaty with the Ukraine was signed on February 9th., 1918. When the news of its terms leaked out, a wave of indignation swept Poland from end to end. All shades and groups of political opinion made common cause in heated protests. The Polish deputies to the German and Austrian parliaments likewise protested. Kucharzewski and his cabinet resigned. Strikes broke out and spontaneous demon-

strations were held in every part of Poland. The occupation authorities mounted machine-guns in the streets.

Very characteristic were the words spoken in the Prussian Landtag by the vice-chairman of the Council, Herr H. Friedburg, who, replying to Mr. Seyda, one of the Polish deputies (March 6th.) declared: "Mr. Seyda has presented himself as the representative of the Polish population of Prussia.. I know no 'firm' of that name. Here I know only Prussian deputies. No representatives of the Polish nation exist, whether from the point of view of constitutional law or from the national point of view."

The Polish Legions protested in forceful manner. A part of them succeeded in crossing the demarcation line to the east whilst another, disarmed by the armies of occupation, was interned.

In the meantime, at Brest-Litovsk, Trotsky had rejected all the German demands and on February 10th. he made a declaration which can be epitomised in these words: "We will not sign peace; we will not continue the war; we appeal to the revolutionary conscience of the German proletariat." He then left Brest-Litovsk.

After this rupture of the negotiations, the German armies continued their onward march. They occupied Dunaburg and Pskov without difficulty and marched for Petrograd. Such an argument could not fail to produce results and on March 3rd., the Russian dele-

gates signed the peace-treaty imposed upon them.

Article 3 of the treaty is noteworthy. It envisages the stipulation that "the territories situated to the west of the frontier established by the contracting parties and which had formerly belonged to Russia, shall no longer be subject to the sovereignty of the Russian state. The territories in question shall be freed of all obligations towards Russia. Russia renounces all right of interference in the internal affairs of these territories. Germany and Austria-Hungary intend to settle the future fate of these territories in concert with their populations."

In this manner Germany secured complete liberty of action.

It it clear how the Reich understood the term "settle the future fate" of these territories, and any possible uncertainty on that point was quickly cleared up by the Prussian Minister for Agriculture, Herr Eisenhardt. Speaking before the Upper House *(Herrenhaus)* a little later, he assured his hearers that: "the military interests of Germany will be duly taken into consideration when the time comes for the determination of the Polish frontier and for the incorporation of an important number of the Polish population."

Such was the situation when the Council of Ambassadors, in the name of France, Great Britain and Italy and in accordance with the the thirteenth point of President Wilson's programme, met at Versailles

in June 1918 and resolved "to create a united and independent Polish state with free access to the sea."

At Berlin, however, such an eventuality was not yet counted upon. It had not been and was not even taken into consideration. The Germany government did not admit the possibility of ceding even a foot of the Polish soil seized by the Prussian state during the partitions.

The programme of the German government was still one based on annexation and partition. Thus it was that, whilst the western world was resounding with important and far-reaching declarations, the Prussian Minister for the Interior was assuring the Landtag that the policy of extermination as regards the Poles in the province of Poznan would be continued with unabated force by the Prussian government. The last German offensive on the Western front was imminent. Discusions on the Polish question were resumed at the General Staff Headquarters at Spa and, in the expectation of certain victory, the Supreme War Council was authorised still further to extend the frontier protective area.

Some days later (July 5th.), Field-Marshal Hindenburg sent to Chancellor Hertling his celebrated memorandum on the "rectifications" of the German frontier at the expense of Congress Poland. In this document, entitled "Memorandum on the Polish boundary zone" *(Denkschrift über den polnischen Grenzstreifen)*, the Marshal occupied himself with

the future eastern frontier of the Reich. Besides the annexation of a wide strip of Polish territory stretching to the east from the Bedzin—Herby—Kalisz line, along the Warta river, through Kolo, Plock, Mlawa and Augustow, the author also demanded the annexation to Germany of Lithuania and the Baltic countries. About 20,000 sq. kms. of Polish territory should be seized; the Polish population inhabiting that area should be evacuated and the territory so cleared settled by a million and a half German colonists with their families. The legal basis for such action, was furnished by the Brest-Litovsk peace-treaty, since, as Field-Marshal Hindenburg stated: "in the Russo-German treaty of peace (annexe 2, art. 2) the principle is already recognised that in those portions of the territory destined for the protection of the frontiers, exceptional measures may be applied."

This celebrated memorandum also proposed that an identical zone be created in the west, on French soil; that the French population there be likewise evacuated, its land-holdings there be liquidated and in its place a living barrier of German colonists be established. These plans were but supplements to the projects relative to France and contained in the memorandum dealing with the necessity of destroying the French industries, — a memorandum drawn up by order of the German General-Staff Headquarters in 1916. The plans in question were also contained in an *aide-memoire* addressed to the Ger-

man government (December, 1917) and to the General Staff by the heavy industries of Germany in respect of the annexation of the French coal-mining district.

The authors of these projects demanded that "the German statesmen who would decide the fate of the country should, on the day that peace be concluded, keep careful watch, in the realisation of their personal responsibility, that all the foreign territories necessary to the existence of the Reich should be annexed... Properly speaking, it would not be a war-indemnity of any kind... *but a guarantee for a lasting peace and for the security of the German Empire.*"

The same arguments, meant to justify future annexations by setting up the need for creating favourable conditions for a lasting peace and a feeling of security, crop up in all the German memoranda written at that time, not excepting that of Field-Marshal Hindenburg, who demanded the extension of the eastern frontier protective area at Poland's cost, since "the guarantee of security for the future is an efficacious means of assuring a lasting peace based henceforth exclusively upon Germany's strength."

In was in this wise that, on the eve of Germany's collapse, the heads of the German government and of the Army were preparing the future map of Europe, — strictly in accordance with principles based on the programme of the famous German "Commission of Inquiry on the Purposes of the War." This commission,

which published, amongst others, the celebrated memorandum of the German university professors, had as its secretary-general the future laureate of the Nobel peace prize — Herr Gustav Stresemann.

On the eve of the greatest *débacle* known to history, the heads of the German state were formulating projects which appeared to be word for word quotations from the fantastic works of chauvinistic authors and the apologists of Pangermanism, — works still considered in 1913 as the product of a literature lacking in serious purpose, inoffensive and generally disregarded.

But even, however, when the decisive events on the banks of the Marne had become known, German policy still stubbornly clung to its old principles. During the whole course of the Great War, the idea of a revision of the territorial *status quo* by annexations of the territory of other nations, was the impelling and guiding force of all the political acts of the Reich. And all the time this policy was embellished with slogans and watchwords to the effect that the only way to secure the foundations of true security and peace in Europe was that Germany be permitted to annex its neighbours' territories. Every project for the annexation of foreign soil was always motivated by the vital interests of the German people, for whom all territorial aggrandisement constituted an essential condition for its normal national development.

The seizure of Polish territory was, according to

these grandiose projects, to be only a fragment of the whole plan. It was indispensible for the realisation of these plans, according to Field-Marshal Hindenburg's own words, to erect "a wide and sure barrier between the Poles in Prussia and their racial brothers."

During the deliberations of the German General Staff, the Polish question still continued to occupy the minds of the German political and military leaders. Gen. Ludendorff reserved to himself the right of arranging for an even greater extention of the frontier protective area and moreover expressed the desire that the rest of Poland be united to the Reich in an *Anschluss*. Secretary of State von Hintze, together with Count Burian, once more mutually guaranteed each other the inviolability of the annexed provinces. The Supreme War Council demanded in addition the annexation of the Dabrowa coal basin, the Kalisz district, the Podlasie and Lomza areas in Poland. It was even determined that the future Poland would have to pay a war indemnity and that the exact figure would be fixed by the two Central Powers.

And all the time, the final catastrophe of Germany's collapse on the western front was becoming more and more imminent.

The German plans concerning Poland are now only a matter of history. The barrier dreamed of by Hindenburg was never put up. On the contrary, the barrier separating the Poles under Prussian rule from

their countrymen in other Polish territories was cast down by the restitution of the provinces of Poznan and Polish Pomerania (Pomorze) to the Polish state.

As the only palpable results of Germany's Polish policies during the Great War, nothing remains but the memory of what Germany requisitioned and sent out of Poland to the Reich: viz., 153,497,286 kg. of raw materials, 1,232,732 kg. of fats and greases, over 7,000,000 cubic metres of timber, 74,000,000 kg. of foodstuffs, the destruction of 674 factories, i.e., 85% of the industrial establishments on the Polish territories occupied by the Germans, and the carrying off of 150,000 workers for compulsory labour in Germany.

Since then many years have passed. But looking back on what has been presented in these pages and bearing in mind the present circumstances, it would perhaps be useful and timely to quote the words of one of the pre-War German political authorities, — those of General von Bernhardi, who stated the following in 1913:

"In politics, in order to attain an object, it is not an axiom that recourse must be always had to a rupture of diplomatic relations. A simple menace of war and an inflexible determination to appeal to force of arms in case of need, will cause the adversary to submit."

DRUKARNIA WE. ŁAZARSKIEGO w WARSZAWIE