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## The New Poland

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## THE NEW POLAND

In the year 1795 the "Republic" of Poland disappeared from the face of the earth. Despite her thousand years of independent existence, and an enviable record for remarkable achievement along many lines of human endeavor — political, religious, literary, artistic, and other — this ancient state fell ingloriously, an inert, helpless victim, to the merciless rapacity of her neighbors, Prussia, Russia and Austria, each of them with vulture instincts but greedy enough for their sorry repast. Despite the fact that Poland displayed some of her old time militancy, and tried to fight to the last, she was not really conquered by her enemies. She was simply "partitioned." The shameful spoliation began in the year 1772, under the able auspices of that ruthless autocrat, Frederick II. With a blasphemous humor characteristic of his age, this cynical Hohenzollern writes to his brother, Henry, on April 9, 1772, as follows: "The partition of Poland will unite three religions, the Catholic, the Orthodox, and the Protestant; Poland will thus be for us a sort of Holy Communion of which we shall all partake. If this act does not bring salvation to our souls, it will at any rate contribute considerably to the prosperity of our realm." — An observation entirely worthy of Voltaire himself!

Substantially a century and a half have elapsed since this grim tragedy was begun, but who can read to-day, without recoil, that amazing manifesto addressed to the Poles by Catherine II, announcing the first partition, and inviting their assistance in this major operation on their own body politic and fatherland! Asserting as causes for so drastic a procedure that turbulent Poland was a constant menace to the well-being of adjacent peoples and that these same neighboring peoples had, each of them, old claims on parts of her territory, therefore, this terrible proclamation continues "... his Majesty the King of Prussia, her Majesty the Empress, Queen of Hungary and Bohemia, and her Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, having mutually set forth their rights and claims, and having come to an agreement, will each take an equivalent of the district to which they lay claim, and will put themselves in effective possession of those portions of Poland which are calculated to serve hereafter as the most natural and secure boundary between them."

Such was the preliminary move in this altogether shameful transaction. A second operation, in 1793, lopped off additional segments of



the then moribund state, while a third act of partition, in 1795, completed the work, concluding as clear-cut a drama of survival as was ever played amid the political creations of men.

Students of Polish history find the remarkable weaknesses directly responsible for the ruin of this, one of Europe's greatest states, in Poland itself. Poland is a land of plains, with no really satisfactory frontiers, thus inviting attack by any aggressive neighbor with predatory inclination; a land made through conquest, and ill pieced together, lacking racial homogeneity with its Lithuanians, Ruthenians, and other peoples, different from the warrior Poles in language, religion, manners, and customs, never really assimilated, always mindful of their one-time independence and chafing to regain entire liberty; a land of two social classes only — a proud, fighting, proprietary nobility, and, ultimately, a degraded, utterly subservient, blackly ignorant serfdom with no stabilizing middle stratum such as makes back-bone for most states; a land, finally, with a political system as strangely and completely decrepit as any deteriorated governmental machinery told of in human history: a Republic with an elected monarch at its head, a kingship reduced, through the jealous tear of possible royal power, on the part of an independent nobility, to nonentity, to an empty manifest of rule, grasped at now and again even by venturesome foreigners. Full as serious a flaw as this was that curious *liberum veto*, formerly a staunch bulwark of their liberty for the nobles, now an abused institution, constantly operated by these utterly selfish, utterly unpatriotic lords of the land to thwart every act of the government. Some writers, noting the dark havoc wrought for Poland by a state of affairs so bad and so long enduring, affirm that the Poles deserved their fate; and these same students, observing the seventeen odd political parties vigorously flourishing in Poland to-day, gloomily shake their heads over this ruinous twentieth century recrudescence of the ancient national malady — assertive individuality and otherwise-mindedness — and assert that an independent Poland is an utter impossibility.

As a matter of fact it is highly probable that Poland could have amended her vicious system, had the time been afforded. Eighteenth century Poland, keenly aware of many of her problems, was indeed striving quite vigorously to handle them; unfortunately for her, other statecraft was at work, far stronger at the time than her own with its depleted vitality: mighty, uncouth Russia with her irresistible surge towards the attractive west, where alone chance for development seemed to lie; vigorous, half barbarous Prussia, with her ragged, piecemeal



snippets of territory, pointing for any dullard of a king an obvious policy of consolidation — and Frederick II was as alert and unscrupulous a monarch as ever growing state could desire.

Upon the annihilation of her state a strange chapter in Polish history opens. Approximately 300,000 square miles of territory with an estimated Polish population of 11,500,000 souls had been divided by Prussia, Russia, and Austria. To cut up and apportion was one thing, to assimilate, however, quite another accomplishment, as the three powerful and guilty states were to discover. The years from 1795 to 1914 mark in Polish annals a period during which those hapless people, existing perforce under three alien regimes, developed a more vivid national sense than ever they had known before; and when in the fullness of time the great war broke upon a horrified humanity, the Poles, Prussian, Russian, and Austrian, knew to a man that their hour of deliverance was at hand.

This strengthening nationalism presents an interesting study. Of the three groups of submerged Poles that under the Dual Monarchy tared the best, and nearly attained, in late years at least, a complete autonomy. On the other hand, the Poles under the iron heel of Prussia endured most from their rulers, for, while the Russian autocracy was by instinct cruelly brutal, it was too poorly organized to be perpetually ruthless, and bore but fitfully on its victims; whereas the highly organized Prussian regime followed practically from the beginning a consistent policy of the sternest denaturalization or Germanization of the Poles.

Ex-chancellor von Bülow, an able exponent of the Bismarckian theory in this regard, well expresses the spirit and purpose of Prussia's policy as follows — "No concern for the Polish people must hinder us from doing all we can to maintain and strengthen the German nationality in the former Polish provinces. It is the duty and the right of the government to see that the Germans do not get driven out of the east of Germany by the Poles. The object is, to protect, maintain, and strengthen the German nationality among the Poles. . . . In the struggle between nationalities one nation is the hammer and the other is the anvil, one is the victor and the other is the vanquished."

To play her rôle successfully in this awful smithy game, Prussia fashioned for herself characteristic instruments; restrictions on the use of the Polish language, German only passing current in the schools, law-courts, public meetings, and finally in the church services; bans on Polish songs and the Polish national dress; reservation of governmental



offices for Germans or dependable Germanized Poles; and finally a drastic policy of German colonization in the Polish provinces which ultimately resulted in the harshest legislation, like those laws compelling Poles to sell out their land to Germans, the whole unnatural process heavily subsidized by the state.

And the Poles? So vigorously did they react, once they caught the tune, that before the Prussians were aware, this despised people matched case-hardened steel to Junker iron, and von Bülow himself didn't know whether the state were hammer or anvil. Statements like the following from the Polish press reflect the temper and purpose of these determined Slavs after one hundred years of Prussian control: "To-morrow the Kingdom of Prussia celebrates the second century of its existence. We cannot manifest our joy, because Prussia's power has been erected chiefly upon the ruins of ancient Poland. Prussia's history consists of a number of conquests made by force and in accordance with the old Prussian principle revived by Bismarck, 'might is better than right.'" And again, this violent diatribe: "If one asks a Pole whether he would rather live under German or under Russian rule his reply will be 'I would rather a hundred times have to do with Russians than with Germans, and the Prussians are the worst of Germans.' . . . The Russian is our Slavonic brother, and in his heart of hearts every Pole is glad if his brother is prospering and when he can tell the world, 'There you see our common Slavonic blood'. The more we hate the Prussians the more we love the Russians." Or, finally, this suggestive excerpt: "Take heed, you Polish women and Polish girls! Polish women and Polish girls are the strongest protectors of our nationality. . . . For a Polish woman it is a disgrace to marry a German or to visit German places of amusement or German festivals. So long as the Polish wife watches over her husband and takes care that he bears himself everywhere as a Pole, so long as she watches over his home and preserves it as a stronghold of Polonism, so long as a Polish Catholic newspaper is kept in it, and so long as the Polish mother teaches her children to pray to God for our beloved Poland in the Polish language, so long Poland's enemies will labor in vain."

Meanwhile, the Poles were doing something besides talking, and nursing a deeply burned hatred. They learned thrift from their German masters, formed remarkable co-operative organizations, and developed, under the management of their priests who well understand their people and their needs, an excellent banking system, conforming rigidly to the very letter of the Prussian banking laws, and able to pay a slightly



better rate of interest than the German banks. Thus they have sustained themselves under the heavy economic pressure of the state. In 1912, deposits in the co-operative organizations stood at the handsome figure of £46,970,354, as against £12,420,057 in 1900 — an amazing development — while deposits in the Polish banks reached a total of £6,150,000 in 1907, representing a per capita wealth of nearly \$15.

Through the success of these co-operative organizations is reflected that sturdy determination of the Polish peasant to get ahead — an ambition envisioned nearly always in terms of land ownership. Helped by his bank, and willing to assume a debt for land purchase he cannot live mayhap to wipe out — glad to whittle down such a staggering obligation by long years of labor in the industrial regions of Western Germany (Westphalia) separated from his family perhaps eight or ten years at a time, he was rapidly making his laborious goal, economic independence. Whereas the Prussian State expended \$170,000,000 to quarter Germans on Polish land, the Poles since 1896 have secured fully 250,000 acres of land from the Germans, and in May of 1903 the Prussian Minister of Finance, Herr von Rheinbaben, complained that in fifteen years the German population in Prussia diminished by 630,000, while in five years as many as 300,000 Polish immigrants had settled there! Von Bülow himself finally admitted that the scheme for colonization had failed owing to the fact that the German was apt to lose his nationality if not continually subsidized by the state, or even in spite of such support, since he was always ready to dispose of his land for a good figure, whereas the Pole "thought it shameful to sell land to the Germans" and "held fast to the land."

Under these hard circumstances, the Prussian Poles, faithful to human nature, have become the most Polish of the Poles. They have benefited greatly from the rigid disciplining of their stern masters, and now, chastened in temper, steadfast, thrifty and aggressive, they have their reward: leadership in the new Poland must devolve on them — an amazing retribution for Prussia!

This new Poland has come into being to-day by processes which it is not possible to follow carefully now, through want of information on the one hand, and lack of comprehension of such reports as are forthcoming on the other. Therefore, a bare outline of what appear to be the principle events in the intricate story must suffice here.

Despite the fact that from the outbreak of the war a bewildering number of forces as well within the old Poland as over the rest of the world — National Committees, Democratic Congresses, Armed Legions,



Polish Bureaus, and the like — concentrated on the great objective, Polish union and independence, the career of one man from 1914 to this moment lends a remarkable coherence to the entire process. And thus featuring in this great crisis in her history, the activity of Joseph Pilsudski, Poland plays true to her great past in the narrative of which lie revealed the beloved achievements of other national heroes like Sobieski and Kosciusko.

Born at Vilna, in 1867, of noble Lithuanian-Polish stock, young Pilsudski, while a student of medicine at the University of Kharkov, became intensely interested in the social problems of Russian Poland — too keenly interested indeed to suit the ever watchful, suspicious Russian police who in 1888 sent the vehement young fellow to Siberia. Returned to his native land after five years of banishment, an aggressive socialist, Pilsudski aided in the organization of that party among his countrymen. Constrained always to dodge the police, now by so desperate a ruse as feigned insanity — a policy bringing him a year's sojourn in a mad-house — now by flight to England — he busily developed his program: armed revolution against Czarist Russia. Efforts to further Polish independence in this wise, like those abortive movements at the time of the Russo-Japanese war, failed through inadequate support and the opposing strength of a better organized party intensely hostile to the Socialists, the National Democrats.

Whereas Pilsudski's group — working-men, for the most part, are described at that time (1904-1906) as more socialistic than national, with a hatred for the Polish capitalistic, landholding element, akin to their abhorrence of Russian autocracy, and with small respect for the Church, the National Democrats, on the other hand, representing landholders, bourgeoisie, peasants, and like their opponents with a scattering of intellectuals, were strongly national, but pro-Russian, with the hope of securing an autonomous Poland.

This latter party, able, after the Revolutionary crisis following the war with Japan, to control the Polish seats in the Duma, made his home land too warm for Pilsudski, who forthwith migrated to that stamping ground for disaffected Poles of all persuasions, Galicia. Here through his organization of the Polish Legions, subsequently so famous, this persevering patriot continued his revolutionary work. An original group of these Legionaries, some 400 strong, mostly Russian Poles of strongly anti-Russian sympathy, created a tremendous sensation, when, in August, 1914, they boldly sallied across the Russian border. From that time on, the Legions, supported by representatives of all Polish



parties in Galicia, and by many Russian Poles, through an organization known as the Supreme National Committee, made an attractive appeal to all Polish patriots, even to the National Democrats, in whose hearts the war had stirred vast hopes of independence.

The Central Powers were only too glad to work hand in hand with the Legions, whose leaders, like Pilsudski, saw in such an unholy alliance but opportunist means to a noble end. Russia appeared to them to be the great enemy. Once get her out of the way, then were there time enough to grapple with the next obstacle to Polish Independence. Behold this arch-patriot then, become a Brigadier-General by order of the venerable Franz Joseph; his Legions enrolled in the armies of the Central Powers, all fighting the while, like tigers, winning iron crosses with the best of them, in that hideous surging see-saw of those vast hordes of men back and forth across Poland, ultimately establishing German control over the devastated land in the fall of 1915.

Upon this success, Pilsudski became restless, anxious to secure assurance of a free-Poland from the triumphant Central Powers. Therefore, when the armies of the Central Powers were facing Brusilow's offensive in 1916, Pilsudski played a bold stroke. His purpose to resign his command being thwarted by Austria's refusal to accept the resignation, at a critical juncture he simply withdrew from the front with an entire brigade. While this act cost him considerable prestige, it did precipitate a crisis which was probably the greatest factor in forcing the Central Powers to issue their decree of November 4, 1916, proclaiming with flourish an independent Poland.

The manifesto was read in the Royal Palace at Warsaw on November 5, by Governor General von Beseler "in soldierly ringing tones," and then was re-read in Polish, by the Palace Commandant, Count Hutten-Czapski. This act proclaimed that Russian Poland was to be a National State in the form of an Hereditary Monarchy with a constitutional government. For the time being, the Central Powers were to administer the new State, pending the gradual development of her proper public institutions. Careful determination of the frontiers also could only come later. Subsequently a provisional government was set up. Its principal organs were an all-Polish Council of State of twenty-five members, which in turn nominated an Executive Committee, the members of which had ministerial functions. Pilsudski had a seat on the minority Left in the Council, and also presided over the Army Committee.



This regime was at best a makeshift arrangement, but, even so, it endured too long to suit Pilsudski. Ordered to develop a Polish army to fight with the Central Powers, the General refused unless he could receive assurances that such an army would operate under the direction of a real National Polish Government. This was a mean impasse, and when the Central Powers failed to yield his point, Pilsudski used his popularity with his countrymen to hinder the formation of a Polish army.

Then came the Russian Revolution, with *its* recognition of an Independent Poland. Here at length was a capital opportunity to strike. Under Pilsudski's supervision an ultimatum was addressed to the Central Powers by the Polish Council of State. Unfortunately, however, his colleagues on the Council were not of their leader's fibre, and unable to co-operate with them, he and the Left resigned. Next, as another step against furthering the interests of the Central Powers, Pilsudski began to disband his Legions. Nearly four-fifths of their members refused to take the oath exacted from them by the Austro-German governments. This was rebellion. The disaffected Legionaries, therefore, were interned, and Pilsudski, himself, was sent a prisoner to Magdeburg.

So the situation stood near the middle of 1917. In September of that same year, it is asserted that Austria sent Polish troops raised ostensibly for a home army to the Italian front, whereupon the Polish Council of State resigned. Then by another decree (September 12) the Austro-German rulers promulgated a new constitution for Poland. According to this instrument the principal organ of government was a Council of Regency, whose personnel of three was appointed by the Central Powers; this body had certain legislative functions; its decrees were to be countersigned by a Premier likewise under the control of the Central Empires; with the Regency were to operate a Cabinet and a Council of State.

Meanwhile other forces were beginning to effect developments in Poland. In March, 1915, Sir Edward Grey had proclaimed to the world one of England's ideals in these words: "We wish the nations of Europe to be free to live their independent lives, working out their own forms of government for themselves, and their own development, whether they be great states or small states, in full liberty — that is our ideal." The Allies, however, so far as they had a distinct Polish policy, shaped it perforce with reference to their great eastern member. Thus, for example, France had a secret agreement with Russia which recognized Russia's "complete liberty in establishing her western frontier." Therefore Russia's open declaration proclaiming an autonomus Poland, issued



by the Grand Duke Nicholas shortly after the beginning of the war, stood as the manifesto of Entente agreement as to Poland's future down to the time of Russia's collapse.

After the Russian debacle it was necessary for the Entente Powers to state anew their attitude towards Poland, and on January 8, 1918, in his address to Congress embodying the ever famous "fourteen points," Mr. Wilson affirmed as his 13th article in a real peace program that "An independent Polish State should be erected which should include the territory inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose social and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international agreement." The clearest definition of a real future status vouchsafed to the Poles up to that date! The declaration of Allied representatives at Versailles, on June 3, 1918, in favor of "a free and independent Poland with access to the sea" demonstrated substantial unanimity of intent among all the Entente Powers. These manifesto had, all of them, a powerful reaction in Poland.

On June 26, M. Swiezuski, representing three-fourths of the elected members of the Warsaw Council of State, and the "overwhelming majority of Poles" addressed the council on behalf of the Inter-Party Club, concerning the Versailles declaration:

"At the same time," said he, "when the entire world has recognized the Polish question as an international problem and the Polish national and political aims as just, and their realization as a condition of the new order of the world, an order based on right and liberty; at the time when the solemn declaration [that of the Allies] by responsible statesmen has given these aims positive and collective expression — at this moment nothing has taken place on Polish territory to show that the powers which have to-day the practical possibility of confirming their promises by deeds are guided by a real intention of restoring the Polish State."

Subsequently the Inter-Party Club published the following declaration: "Taking into consideration the declaration made after the meeting of the Prime Ministers of France, England, and Italy . . . the undersigned parties belonging to the Inter-Party Club declare that the above statement will meet with a sincere response in the souls of the Polish Nation, the Nation which during more than a century of slavery has always longed for the restoration of Poland (censor) independent and united (censor)."

Indeed it was but a short step in this humor, (and one must remember the perilous condition of the Central Powers at the time) to the demands made by the Poles at a conference at German Headquarters in August, 1918, including a change in the administration, cessation of the joint Austro-German control of the country, recognition of certain territorial claims in Lithuania, access for Poland to the Baltic via Danzig, and the like. This outspoken bid for independence, was presently followed by the demand itself emanating from the Regency Council, that the new



state must embrace all the territory inhabited by Poles. Subsequently a separate manifesto, on October 13, by the Prussian Poles asserted that "nothing but the union into one State of all peoples living in Polish lands, a State which shall possess full rights, can guarantee a lasting League of Nations."

Such was the tense state of affairs when the collapse of the Central Powers shook the world. From then on developments moved rapidly in Poland, the three sections of which were now working practically together. Pilsudski was released in Germany. Frail, nervous, bent with ill health, but with all the old indomitable energy, he hastened back to Poland where he refused to co-operate as Minister of War in a weak Government of the National Democrats hastily formed by the Regents. Soon afterwards that ephemeral creation fell, and the Regency Council through two decrees of November 11 and 14, 1918, pronounced the dissolution of its own body, and "in view of the threatening dangers from within and without" transferred the sovereign power to Pilsudski, his dictatorship to endure until a National Government could be formed.

The excellent temper of the now all-powerful patriot may be judged from his own statement to the people issued likewise on November 14, upon the assumption of his great responsibility — "Upon my return from Germany," this frank manifesto reads, "I found the country in a most chaotic state in the face of exceedingly difficult tasks, for the performance of which the nation must reveal its best organizing abilities. In my conversations with the representatives of almost all the political parties in Poland, I found to my delight that the great majority share my opinion that the new Government should not only rest on democratic foundations, but be composed in a considerable porportion of representatives of the rural and urban masses. . . ."

The new Cabinet, set up under the direction of Andrew Moraczewski as Premier was described by Moraczewski himself towards the end of December, 1918, as " . . . . a truly national one," but in almost flat contradiction to this statement stand the assertions of many Poles, and others apparently in a position to know, that the new regime was decidedly Socialistic. However this all may have been, Pilsudski presently faced a grievous difficulty on the score of his government's composition. At eleven o'clock on the night of January 1, 1919, Ignace Jan Paderewski, renowned the world over as the greatest living pianist, and also more recently known as a vigorous Polish patriot, arrived in Warsaw. According to the press dispatches Paderewski upon his



arrival was greeted with wild enthusiasm. The newspapers expressed the hope that he would be able to strengthen the patriotic elements in Poland and "undo the efforts of those who have been working towards disorder." "The *Maire* predicts that his arrival will precipitate certain changes in the Ministry which the Conservatives desire, so that they may secure full recognition from the Allies."

As a matter of fact, Paderewski represented a powerful element among the Poles — the Conservative, or National Democratic group. The principal organ of this party after the establishment of German control over Russian Poland was the so-called Polish National Committee at Paris, under the Presidency of M. Roman Dmowski, a powerful and in many respects a very able man.

The energetic efforts of this Committee in the Allied capitals and at Washington, in the summer and fall of 1918, secured from the Allies and from the United States recognition of the Polish National army, under the supreme political authority of the Polish National Committee as an associated force, co-belligerent, the product of a belligerent State, acts again, which aroused high enthusiasm among Poles everywhere.

What, however, of Paderewski? All in America to-day know his zeal on behalf of a beloved cause — united and free Poland. A remarkable series of "benefit concerts," interspersed with eloquent addresses, and the writing and publication of excellent articles—these activities, together with the expenditure of his personal fortune, bear true witness to a sincere devotion on behalf of this lofty ideal. After more than three years of such yeoman's service, Paderewski left America, on November 23, 1918, for England, arriving at Warsaw, finally, as observed, on New Year's Day, 1919.

He himself declares that he carried with him a power of attorney to act for all the Polish Committees in the United States, representing some 4,000,000 Poles, also that he was empowered to make loans to the Polish Government. It is alleged, furthermore, that full authority was conferred upon him by Austrian and Prussian Poles "through legally organized organs of Polish opinion which had been created by regularly appointed delegate conventions in both territories" to speak and act for them, and that he bore messages from the Allies to the effect that the Pilsudski Government was not to be recognized, as it represented less than one-tenth of the people.

Despite such powerful assets, however, the accomplishment of Paderewski's purpose, namely the organization of a coalition Government in Poland which should be more broadly representative of all



parties there, was a difficult task. Both of the great leaders were apparently suspicious of each other's motives; Pilsudski, too, was fearful lest any readjustment of the government at such a critical time should precipitate a revolution. Unfortunately a *modus vivendi* was not expedited by an abortive attempt on the part of Conservatives and Liberals, under the leadership of Count Eustache Sapieha, to overthrow the Pilsudski regime by force, on January 5: a hazardous undertaking at best, and entirely thwarted by the loyalty of the troops, with ludicrous and very disconcerting developments for the perpetrators.

And then, just as the Journalistic Prophets everywhere were getting up a lachrymose unison "We told you so" — the horizon cleared. After all, on the deeper issue — an independent, united Poland — both patriots were agreed; the threatening dangers to the nascent State likewise urged compromise, which both Pilsudski and Paderewski say they desired. Therefore, about the middle of January, Paderewski's plan for the formation of a new Ministry, representing Russian, Prussian, and Austrian Poland, began to materialize. In fact, Pilsudski signed an agreement to reorganize the Government at midnight on January 16, while the new Ministry, then in formation, was definitely announced on January 19, Paderewski being the Premier and holding the portfolio for foreign affairs, while Pilsudski remained still "head" of the Nation and Commander-in-Chief of the army.

Complete recognition of this new provisional Government by the United States was officially announced on January 22, this brisk act being re-inforced by a similar Allied pronouncement on February 21. Meanwhile, the elections for a Polish Constituent Assembly, held late in January, gave Paderewski's party a considerable victory, the National Democrats claiming ninety-one seats out of two hundred odd in the first meeting of the Assembly, held February 9.

Such, then, is the coalition Government in Poland which is now grappling with a great round of decidedly baffling and dangerous problems, intensely interesting, but too detailed and intricate for even survey consideration here. Among these problems, however, the question of new Poland's frontiers, while all told the most perplexing, is of such vast importance to the entire world, as well as to Poland, that a brief consideration of its principal features is essential in concluding this narrative.

It is not difficult to ascertain the desires of leading Poles everywhere, in regard to this all-important matter; they have expressed themselves fully; and to the great jeopardy of their best interests, forces among



them have gone out to secure what they desire, quite on their own advices, it appears. Even before the armistice was signed, Poles and Ruthenians flew to arms over the disposition of Lemberg and Eastern Galicia, and they are still fighting. Since November 11, the world at large has been following sympathetically, or with irate disapproval, the alternate advance and retreat of Polish forces at all points of the compass about their distracted land, not only in bitter contest with Germans in the Prussian Polish provinces of East Prussia, Posen, and Silesia, to the north and northwest, and in Lithuania to the northeast, but also with the newly liberated Czecho-Slovaks on their southwestern border, where the tiny region of Teschen, with its coal fields, is in hot dispute between the two peoples. There is also conflict with Bolshevik Russians wherever the two encounter, and under cover of this Red bugaboo, new Poland announces that at the request of the President of the new Lithuanian Republic, Poland has taken over "provisionally" the administration of Lithuania.

Thus the impetuous energy of the Poles forges a fiery circuit of Mars about them welded complete and fast but for that uncongenial segment in the due north — the Baltic Sea! And for the most part this militant aggressiveness is on behalf of that "large, strong Poland," economically independent, capable of sustaining the powerful forces which must in future be brought to bear on a buffer state so strategically placed — nay, in the magnified imaginations of the truly far-visioned, a state virile enough to assume henceforth great Russia's mighty rôle as leader of the Slavonic peoples!

More specifically, what of the New Poland as the now dominant party group would have it? Paderewski himself expresses the opinion of a very large number of his fellow-countrymen when he writes as follows:—"The interests of peace require a large, powerful, and economically independent Poland. This can be attained through a complete union of all provinces once belonging to the Polish crown. Only a Poland with access to the sea through Danzig will be able to maintain direct relations with England, France, and America. . . . And only with the mines of Silesia, her ancient province, will Poland be able to acquire economic independence of Germany, to support her surplus population, and to check excessive emigration. . . . A New Poland should be a continuation of that which she has been, otherwise she cannot find again the ideal which she has in her own soul. If one should plan to cut out a certain part of the former Poland to make a new one, if instead of erasing the artificial confines, one should only modify their



direction, it would be creating irredentism which would fatally lead to a new crisis. If we are to have a lasting and durable peace, we must reunite in the New Poland all the Polish land."

Can such a Poland as is here envisioned be re-established? Emphatically no! Not if the now classic norm of President Wilson be used as the gauge in rehabilitation. Founded strictly on the basis of massed majority Polish population the New Poland would constitute a country roughly one-third the size of Poland at the time of the first partition. Or, in terms of Russian-Prussian-Austrian political geography, such a new State of Poland would include the so-called Congress Kingdom of Poland, Russian since 1815, Western Galicia and a small part of Silesia, formerly Austrian, together with territory formerly Prussian — the southern part of East Prussia, a considerable area, the heart of West Prussia (but without the land about the mouth of the Vistula, consequently without Danzig), by far the largest part of Posen, and a section of upper Silesia. This more modest Poland would not include any such large number of other nationals as Paderewski's state must control if it were established, all of which aliens are determined to be independent, and strong enough to breed a considerable amount of trouble if their desires for separate statehood are thwarted.

Furthermore, the re-establishment of an indisputably Polish Poland will be difficult enough to erect and maintain. One resultant alone, the separation of German East Prussia from the mother country, presents a very grave menace for the future — to say nothing of the threat involved in the violent German opposition to the loss of any Prussian territory whatever, Polish or not. Paderewski calls East Prussia the centre and stronghold of Hohenzollern support, and tho it is German he says, "... to lop this limb from the German body-politic, would be a political surgery of the highest order. Until that major operation is performed, we can hardly hope to witness any true democratization of the German system." He proposes to perform this operation by uniting West Prussia together with Danzig to Poland, and suggests several proposals for the future status of isolated East Prussia. It might be erected into a small independent Republic, "connected to Poland by a customs union, and amply safe-guarded as to its administrative integrity," or it might be united to Poland on the basis of home rule.

What an assumption of inordinate responsibility for Poland this solution of the problem would involve! Paderewski, with all respect for his great enthusiasm, fails to recollect that under the best of cir-



cumstances 75,000,000 Germans versus 22,000,000 Poles may become a most sinister ratio!

Finally, in view of these considerations, what shall be said for the mounting ambitions of the Polish leaders, surely not desirable in their entirety? Indeed their glorious vision of a mighty Poland is very comprehensible. A proud race, capable of the best achievement, so long submerged, has turned the while for solace and bright hope's sake to an ardent study of its ancient, more auspicious past. Polish leaders well know what old Poland was. How can the new-born State be less than the old!

This sentimental force is obviously strong in their calculations; but these are shaped again, and colored by many other forces, less worthy perhaps, but vigorously insistent, notwithstanding. Since the partitions all the Poles built up instinctively a powerful strength of opposition against their oppressors; suddenly the dominant alien Governments are crashed down, and forthwith the unrestrained tide of long-pent Polish rancor breaks like a devastating flood sweeping all before it, and scarce to be checked.

Again, Polish patriots, without exception, declare that they face in their country "black with famine and utter destruction" the near and constant menace of Bolshevism, a terror to them all with their vehement Catholicism and their peasant lust for land ownership; this real danger from their point of view seems to them to warrant the large armies and the Allied support which they so insistently demand.

Lastly, purely selfish interests play also their lusty rôle. Wealthy Polish landlords in Lithuania and East Galicia, heretofore the dominant class in a peasant population, see with dismay their all on the brink of ruin in the developing independence of these regions.

Surely when these elemental currents are sounded, and it is borne in mind that by no means all of the Poles are carried away by them, unthought, harsh criticism of this truly great but threatened and bewildered people dies on the lips. Poland to-day, like all of the new-born nations of Europe, must have the unselfish support and firm guidance of a sympathetic world. Only a true League of Nations can guarantee her that beneficent future of which her peculiar genius is so eminently deserving!

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