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GERMAN POLICY IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR — PROBLEMS IN HISTORY AND MODERN POLITICS

The new German Reich of 1871 had scarcely been established when some of the German authors began to dream about an expansion which would include the Crimea and the whole of the Ukraine into the Reich. There was only a small step from the last of such dreams to the first actual plans of expansion during the First World War. Sometimes the authors were the same as in the case of the leader of the Panteutonic League, Heinrich Class who worked out some "utopian" plans for the future, and a very concrete although maximalist memorandum on German war aims dating from the autumn of 1914.

Among other authors of annexionist plans, there was the Reich Chancellor von Bethmann-Hollweg who issued a memorandum, of September 1914, containing official and not very moderate plans and aims. It remained unknown for a long time and was discovered not before 1961, by the West German historian, Professor Fritz Fischer.

His great and magnificent work on the German annexionist policies in First World War, with its huge documentation, was met by an almost unanimous, more vociferous than substantiated, protest from the older generation of his colleagues. It has also been attacked by the official circles of the Federal Republic.

In the face of the mentioned huge documentation of Fischer's study, the conservative and nationalist West German authors cannot deny the only, too obvious facts. They try to give these facts an interpretation more in agreement with the conservative and nationalist views, if not with simple truth, and the undisputed meaning of the sources. Sometimes they dare not deny the facts but try to question them by means of rhetorical questions. This is mostly the individual method of Professor Gerhard Ritter. Some versions remind more of a fairy-tale than a history (e. g. Prof. Walther Hubatsch). The most frequently used method could be called "antipremeditative": the plan and the deed are being separated, the former is treated as some irresponsible and inconsequential talk the latter as a spontaneous, unpremeditated reaction in an unexpected situation.

German imperialism and its efforts to subjugate the whole of Europe neither began nor ended with Hitler.

JERZY MARCZEWSKI

BASIC AIMS OF THE NAZI OCCUPATION POLICY CONCERNING THE POLISH PROBLEM (SEPTEMBER—OCTOBER, 1939)

German policy in respect to occupied Poland took form essentially in the period from September until October of the year 1939. Important decisions then took place on establishing, for the first time, of the national-socialistic concept of the German "Lebensraum" in eastern Europe. It was supposed to consist in a Germanization of the western and north-western regions of Poland by way of German settlement and expropriation of the local Polish and Jewish population.

Furthermore, German "Lebensraum" was to be gained by placing the Polish nation into a position of modern slavery and the latter was to be achieved by an intentional policy of social and national destruction, of terrorism, and of physical extermination of the Polish intelligentsia. A political solution of the "Polish problem" — if only in part — was totally abandoned in view of the above course of action.

WALENTY DASZKIEWICZ

THE PROBLEM OF GERMANY BEFORE THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS (1945—1949)

The article deals with one of the stages of development of the German problem, namely the period of the more or less regular and intensive activity of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the four great powers, in the years 1945—1949. That was one of the most important chapters in the history of the German problem. For this reason a thorough knowledge of the then attitude of the governments of the Soviet Union, the United States, Great Britain and France towards the German problems makes it easier to understand the later standing of the great powers in this respect.

In the first part of the article the author discusses the foundation of the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, its competence and the main stages of activity of this cabinet of the four powers. Then comes a detailed consideration of the standing held by representatives of different countries at the sessions of the CMFA in discussing the most important questions associated with the German problem, namely demilitarization and democratization of Germany; economic problems; indemnities; interim political organization and the social system of united Germany; the boundaries of the German state — particular concern being given to the Polish-German and French-German frontiers; the procedure of preparing an international conference for signing a peace treaty with Germany. Furthermore, the author reminds the Potsdam Treaty terms on the problems in question as well as the policy of the great powers enacted beyond the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs.