

THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW

qr. 2. 2018

no. 5

ISSN 2543-9839





**SZCZECIN, POLAND, JUNE 16, 2018.
THE UNVEILING OF THE MONUMENT OF LECH KACZYŃSKI,
PRESIDENT OF POLAND (2005–2010).**

Dear Readers,



Even though it seemed that mercenary armies would lose their *raison d'être* after creating nation states and organizing their armed forces in the form of national armies, the reality has turned out to be quite different. We have entered the era of hybrid warfare, based on the skillful strategic combination of several methods of aggression (such as traditional, irregular, terroristic and cybernetic) in various areas of action. They include military activities (typically warfare, but also comprising irregular forces or even guerrilla ones, acts of terrorism or artificially induced uprisings) and propaganda (conducted both domestically and internationally).

Not only has the profession of mercenary survived but, since the 1990s, it has also been experiencing a renaissance on an unprecedented scale and it is now functioning in the form of privately-owned corporations with the most modern equipment provided by power brokers of a given state. The greatest advantage of the troops is the fact that atrocities and crimes committed by mercenaries are never charged to the responsibility of the intervening state. Moreover, after the death of their soldiers, the number is not even included in any official statistics. Thus, the mercenaries turned out to be an extremely comfortable option as they carry out activities that would not befit nation states. It was no different with Blackwater in Baghdad in the past; today, it is rather the Wagner Group, whose fighters currently operate in Syria. I therefore recommend the article on Russian mercenaries entitled “Putin’s Invisible Army” written by **Grzegorz Kuczyński**, an author of many analyses and an expert of the Warsaw Institute.

THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW

© COPYRIGHT 2018
FUNDACJA WARSAW INSTITUTE,
WARSAW, POLAND

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

ANNA KAROLINA PIEKARSKA

anna.piekarska@warsawinstitute.org

ASSOCIATE EDITOR AND TRANSLATIONS

NICHOLAS SIEKIERSKI

COPY EDITING AND PROOFREADING

ANDREW TUSON

COVER AND LAYOUT

KATARZYNA DINWEBEL

JACEK KOTELA

DTP AND PRINTING

WWW.SINDRUK.PL



PUBLISHER

FUNDACJA WARSAW INSTITUTE
WILCZA 9, 00-538 WARSAW, POLAND

WWW.WARSAWINSTITUTE.ORG
OFFICE@WARSAWINSTITUTE.ORG

EDITORIAL OFFICE THE WARSAW
INSTITUTE REVIEW WILCZA 9
00-538 WARSAW, POLAND

WWW.WARSAWINSTITUTE.REVIEW

The opinions given and the positions held in the materials published in the Warsaw Institute Review solely reflect the views of the authors and cannot be equated with the official position of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Poland and Ministry of Culture and National Heritage of the Republic of Poland.

ISSN 2543-9839

In the era of the Internet and its social media, the notion of information war has also gained wide reach. In this case, the struggle takes place with the use of an impact exerted on mass consciousness in the information space. The mechanism of this action is clarified in the article by **Małgorzata Zawadzka** about examples of Russian disinformation conducted in Poland.

Last but not least, it is also worth emphasizing that history, or even more broadly – the politics of historical memory, constitutes an element that is also brilliantly used in international relations at the present time. Such skillful and manipulative selection and presentation of elements of the so-called “common, difficult past” of nations being at odds, both arouse enormous emotions and raise the temperature on both sides to the conflict as well as generate conflicts in a very efficient way. Such state of affairs is exemplified by Polish-Ukrainian relations and the way they are being conducted with the aid of this powerful tool.

I encourage you to consider the issue of conducting hybrid warfare as well as its tactics. I kindly invite you to read the following publication temperature on both sides of the dispute created and very effectively generates conflicts. A good illustration of this state of affairs is Polish-Ukrainian relations and how they are playing out with the aid of this powerful tool. The issue of the tactics and conduct of hybrid warfare is especially worth broader reflection.

You are invited to read!

ANNA KAROLINA PIEKARSKA
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW

Public purpose co-financed by the
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic
of Poland in the competition “Cooperation
in the Field of Public Diplomacy 2018”.



Ministry
of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Poland

Partner:

POLISH AIRLINES



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER

Co-financed by the Minister of
Culture and National Heritage
from the Promotion of Culture
Fund.

Ministry of
Culture
and National
Heritage of
the Republic
of Poland.

CONTENTS



EASTERN REPORT

GRZEGORZ KUCZYŃSKI:
PUTIN'S INVISIBLE ARMY



ECONOMY

ŁUKASZ SAREK:
POLAND AND THE EU: SEEKING
A TWO-WAY STREET WITH
CHINA



HISTORY

BARBARA RATAJSKA:
KULSKI: A MAYOR FOR
DIFFICULT TIMES

GEOPOLITICS

6 **ANDRZEJ PAWLUSZEK,**
AGREEMENT FOR THE FUTURE

EASTERN REPORT

10 **KSAWERY CZERNIEWICZ,**
THE SUM OF ALL FEARS PUTIN
2018–2024

20 **AGNIESZKA WOJNICKA,**
BUDGET OF NECESSITY

30 **MAŁGORZATA ZAWADZKA,**
TODAY'S POTEMKIN VILLAGE:
KREMLIN DISINFORMATION
AND PROPAGANDA IN POLAND

39 **GRZEGORZ KUCZYŃSKI,**
PUTIN'S INVISIBLE ARMY

54 **PIOTR KOŚCIŃSKI,**
LUKASHENKO IS PLAYING SEVERAL
PIANOS

62 **ALEKSANDER KRÓL,**
KALININGRAD'S ISLAND OF
MISFORTUNES — A RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE
FROM KALININGRAD

EASTERN REPORT

70 **PIOTR KOŚCIŃSKI,**
POLAND AND UKRAINE: HISTORY
DIVIDES

ECONOMY

78 **ŁUKASZ SAREK,**
POLAND AND THE EU: SEEKING A
TWO-WAY STREET WITH CHINA

ENERGY SECURITY

89 **JANUSZ KOWALSKI,**
POLAND'S FUMING COMPETITION
WITH GAZPROM

HISTORY

96 **BARBARA RATAJSKA,**
KULSKI: A MAYOR FOR DIFFICULT
TIMES

HISTORY

102 **BOGUSŁAW KOPKA PhD,**
PAWEŁ KOŚCIŃSKI PhD,
THE CRIMINAL NATURE OF THE
GERMAN AND SOVIET OCCUPATIONS

AGREEMENT FOR THE FUTURE

ANDRZEJ PAWLUSZEK

Signing the declaration by both prime ministers is not only a symbolic termination of misunderstandings concerning the amendment of the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance, but also, and especially, an opening of a new chapter of mutual relationships.

Over the last 30 years, the contacts between our countries have been based on trust and understanding.

Israel and Poland are friends and partners, cooperating closely with each other in the international arena, but also as regards the memory of Holocaust, – underlines Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.

Poland and Israel have a number of common interests. Both countries are

closely linked to their ally, namely the USA, and have convergent interests. The dispute over the amendment to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance was disadvantageous for both parties. It is good that it has finally come to an end.

However, it is worth mentioning that the intentions of the Act were clear and comprehensible – we have wanted to fight with the notion of “Polish concentration camps.” Yet the



WARSAW, POLAND, JUNE 27, 2018. PRIME MINISTER MATEUSZ MORAWIECKI.

© Leszek Szymański (PAP)

Act caused a stir, and the provision on imprisonment led to serious controversies, especially in the US and Israel. A correction was necessary: nevertheless, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki indicates that it was worth going through this difficult time in the past months. Thanks to this, the obvious lie about “Polish concentration camps” will not be neglected any longer. During World War II, Germans murdered 6 million of our citizens, and the accusations of complicity in the Holocaust are especially painful for us. This does not mean that we should close our eyes to the shameful attitudes of numerous Poles. We should rather

seek to thoroughly examine these cases. Despite the narrative spread by some groups, their freedom is not in any way limited in Poland.

The signed declaration takes Polish-Israeli relations to the next level. The honest discussion over the shape of this declaration has brought a very important and unprecedented result. Mateusz Morawiecki and Benjamin Netanyahu have proved that a better future can be built only on the basis of truth and fairness.

Andrzej Pawluszek ■
June 27, 2018

Joint Declaration of the Prime Ministers of the State of Israel and the Republic of Poland

- 1. Over the last thirty years, the contacts between our countries and societies have been based on a well-grounded trust and understanding. Israel and Poland are devoted, long-term friends and partners, cooperating closely with each other in the international arena, but also as regards the memory and education of the Holocaust. This cooperation has been permeated by a spirit of mutual respect for the identity and historical sensitivity, including the most tragic periods of our history.*
- 2. Following the conversation between Prime Ministers Netanyahu and Morawiecki, Israel welcomes the decision taken by the Polish government to establish the official Polish group dedicated to the dialogue with its Israeli partners on historical issues relating to the Holocaust. It is obvious that the Holocaust was an unprecedented crime, committed by Nazi Germany against the Jewish nation, including all Poles of Jewish origin. Poland has always expressed the highest understanding of the significance of the Holocaust as the most tragic part of the Jewish national experience.*
- 3. We believe that there is a common responsibility to conduct free research, to promote understanding and to preserve the memory of the history of the Holocaust. We have always agreed that the term "Polish concentration/death camps" is blatantly erroneous and diminishes the responsibility of Germans for establishing those camps.*

The wartime Polish Government-in-Exile attempted to stop this Nazi activity by trying to raise awareness among the Western allies to the systematic murder of the Polish Jews.

We acknowledge and condemn every single case of cruelty against Jews perpetrated by Poles during the World War II.

We are honored to remember heroic acts of numerous Poles, especially the Righteous Among the Nations, who risked their lives to save Jewish people.

4. *We reject the actions aimed at blaming Poland or the Polish nation as a whole for the atrocities committed by the Nazis and their collaborators of different nations. Unfortunately, the sad fact is that some people – regardless of their origin, religion or worldview – revealed their darkest side at that time. We acknowledge the fact that structures of the Polish underground State supervised by the Polish Government-in-Exile created a mechanism of systematic help and support to Jewish people, and its courts sentenced Poles for collaborating with the German occupation authorities, including for denouncing Jews.*
5. *We support free and open historical expression and research on all aspects of the Holocaust so that it can be conducted without any fear of legal obstacles, including but not limited to students, teachers, researchers, journalists and – with all certainty the survivors and their families – who will not be subject to any legal charges for using the right to free speech and academic freedom with reference to the Holocaust. No law can and will change that.*
6. *Both governments vehemently condemn all forms of anti-Semitism, and express their commitment to oppose any of its manifestations. Both governments also express their rejection of anti-Polonism and other negative national stereotypes. The governments of Poland and Israel call for a return to civil and respectful dialogue in the public discourse.*

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS PUTIN 2018–2024

KSAWERY CZERNIEWICZ

The emperor does not explain himself to his subjects, he does not curry favor with them. The emperor's only role is to ensure safety and peace. How? It does not matter. During the latest presidential campaign, Vladimir Putin did not present any electoral program, nor any comprehensive plans for his fourth term.

Because there will be no major reforms, and no liberalization, either political or economic. It will be six years set towards maintaining the status quo — because Putin is afraid. For his power, for his property, for his life. So even if there are any changes, whether economic or administrative, it will be only for the maintenance of the regime.

In terms of the length of his rule, he passed Leonid Brezhnev, to whom he is

more and more often compared. There is a basis for it after all. What links Putin to Brezhnev is not only the length of his rule and the conflict with the West. In today's Russia, one can already see what was characteristic of the second phase of the rule of the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union: gradual economic collapse, no reforms to prevent it, the retreat from liberalization (Brezhnev withdrew from Khrushchev's "thaw", Putin withdrew the country from the path of democratic reforms, which

**MOSCOW, RUSSIA, DECEMBER 23,
2004. HEADQUARTERS OF THE STATE
OIL COMPANY ROSNEFT IN THE
CENTER OF THE CAPITAL.**

THE SUM OF ALL FEARS



© (PAP/EPA)

had been introduced in Yeltsin's time). Sooner or later, however, reforms and liberalization will be unavoidable. Perhaps after Putin there will be a new Gorbachev. But it will mean for the Russian Federation what perestroika meant for the USSR — disintegration. Putin's policy will be reduced to pushing back the time when it will be necessary to come to terms with the unrelenting logic of economics. The problem with the system created by the former KGB officer is that it is essentially not oriented towards development and

So even if there
are any changes,
whether economic or
administrative, it will be
only for the maintenance
of the regime.

change. It resembles a disposable article — when it stops working, it will go to the trash. The end of Putin's reign will be synonymous with the end of this model of government that was formed in the basic framework of the first two presidential administrations of Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin.

In forecasting the development of events in the next six years in Russia, certainly many more question marks accompany international issues than internal policies — in which much more depends on the Kremlin itself. However what course will be chosen is now quite clear. Putin's fourth term will undoubtedly bring the most challenges. On the international stage, the continuing confrontation with the West awaits the Kremlin, as well as the challenge of China's growing appetite and the still unresolved problems of Crimea, Donbass and Syria. Internally, it will be necessary to deal with the negative effects of economic stagnation, maintaining stability without risking reforms, and at the same time to solve “Problem 2024”; that is the political future of Putin after the end of the term. The latter will be largely influenced by the situation at the highest echelons of power. There is no doubt that the above-mentioned external and internal factors will foster the increase of tensions within the ruling elite. Is it to the point of triggering an open domestic conflict or a rebellion of part of the establishment against Putin? It is unlikely, but the possibility shouldn't be ruled out completely. Over the course of six years, circumstances could drastically change.

THE DOMESTIC SITUATION

This was always a weak point of Putin's Russia. Even the boom from the previous decade, the Kremlin owed not so much to its economic policy as to the high world oil prices. This will not change in the coming years. Especially that every year the efficiency of the economic model

based on the export of energy resources is diminishing. This is a model that will not provide stable growth, and which means that the economy remains dependent on fluctuations in the commodity market (and the long-term prospects here do not look good for Russia) and other external factors. It is enough to mention the panic in Moscow caused by one tweet from Donald Trump on April 20, in which the US president fretted over high oil prices and wrote that “it will not be tolerated”. Washington's policy will certainly

In forecasting the development of events in the next six years in Russia, certainly many more question marks accompany international issues than internal policies — in which much more depends on the Kremlin itself.

continue to be a very important factor affecting Russia's economic situation — it is enough to recall the collapse of financial markets in Moscow after the sanctions package was imposed on April 6, 2018. Americans have a large arsenal in this respect, which could potentially total the Russian economy (even by cutting off the SWIFT system). Besides, problems with sanctions have a very negative impact on the investment climate, and the shortage of foreign investments is one of the reasons for the economic slowdown. At the very least it retards the modern technologies



© MITYA ALESHKOVSKY (PAP/ITAR-TASS)

**MOSCOW, RUSSIA, OCTOBER 18, 2011. ALEXEI KUDRIN,
PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL
GUILD OF FINANCIERS (IFG).**

sector, limiting economic opportunities, that is felt especially painfully in Russia's most strategic sector: oil and gas extraction.

Keeping the dependence of budget stability on world oil prices will put the Kremlin in a difficult situation without a good solution. If it abandons the agreement with OPEC and starts to increase oil production for export, it will provide a much higher budget income initially. But after some time, increasing the supply on the global market (it is hard to expect that other players will stick to a restrictive production policy,

if Russia breaks ranks) will cause a drop in oil prices, and thus a decrease in the petrodollar stream to the coffers of the Russian Federation.

With all of these problems, limitations and challenges for the Russian economy, one cannot forget about two factors — demographics and politics — that Putin must take into account in the next term. If he does not decide on an unpopular move, or raising the retirement age, Russia will face a serious crisis in the already too expensive pension system. With the aging of the population, in 2030, every third Russian will be a pensioner.

Only carrying out structural reforms would stem Russia's decreasing participation in the global economy, but this should not be counted on.

An even bigger brake may be the domination of *siloviki* (strong men) in the economic sphere of the state's operation. They have always been an important voice in determining the state's economic policy, forcing state capitalism and opposing free-market reforms. Along with the adoption of the policy of expansion and aggression since 2014, they have also gained huge influence on the entire economic policy.

Only carrying out structural reforms would stem Russia's decreasing participation in the global economy, but this should not be counted on. Despite this, Putin is reportedly planning to increase spending on health, education and infrastructure by \$160 billion over six years. Where will the money come from? Expenses for defense cannot be significantly reduced, because the *siloviki* will not allow this. A tax increase is all that remains. The government is to consider a completely new, four percent sales tax. Perhaps the flat tax rate will be raised from 13 to 15 percent. Tax hikes increase social dissatisfaction. And again, we return to the key role of *siloviki*. Because they are supposed to quell all types of unrest. And additional funds from raising taxes may well not go to hospitals or schools at all, but into the pockets of Putin's people or to the military.

Economic growth reached as high as eight percent during Putin's first two terms. In 2014, however, lean years began — recession. What of the fact that in 2017 growth was again positive — it was just 1.5 percent. And better results in the next six years are rather not to be expected. Russia owed the recent rise solely to profits from exports of oil, gas and coal. This is a fragile foundation — all it takes is for oil prices to fall. There will not be development, because the conflict with the West means that there will be no investment in the Russian economy, and the ever-increasing isolation from the global economy means no modern technologies. Without them you cannot capitalize on huge hydrocarbon reserves in the Arctic. Economic isolation is not just the effect of sanctions resulting from aggressive external policy. It is also the result of the corruption and domination of *siloviki* in the economy. If the final word belongs to Igor Sechin, who built the Rosneft juggernaut on destroying his subsequent business rivals, commencing with Yukos and Mikhail Khodorkovsky, it is hard to expect that in such a situation a Western company would decide to enter into Russia with investments.

The concentration of capital in the hands of the state and the absence of the rule of law (courts decide in favor of the authorities and their favorites) effectively blocks the development of the economy. Of course, there are people in Moscow who see this. And they even offer Putin a solution. The face of the "reform party" is the former finance minister, who reportedly enjoys the president's confidence, Alexei Kudrin. The main author of the "National Development Strategy in 2018–2024" has urged Putin to reform, to liberalize. Without it, there will be no growth, and without growth there will be no means to implement social promises. Following the road proposed by Kudrin — more spending

on health and education, instead of military and security — would hit the key components of the ruling camp.

The regime is based on the security apparatus, military, arms contractors, and state-owned behemoths, that control about two-thirds of the Russian economy. Kudrin's rivals say that the most important thing is to maintain macroeconomic stability at all costs, low deficits, low inflation. Even at the expense of growth. Instead of developing and modernizing the economy, they want to buy the support of certain social groups, mainly retirees. Maintaining the current policy will ensure stability, but also stagnation. One should not expect a serious fight against corruption. Because it is an inseparable element of the regime's functioning. Bribes and thievish government contracts are the life-blood of the regime: businessmen, the military, the arms industry, Gazprom and Rosneft — entwined by parasites in the form of companies controlled by people close to Putin.

FOREIGN POLICY

Although Putin has had no recent successes on the international arena to boast of, it was generally foreign policy that was always his strong suit. Most Russians evaluate it not only as effective, but also as a reason for national pride. To what extent this is a matter of fact, and how much propaganda is at work here, is another matter. In any case, the president must first of all maintain the conviction among his countrymen that Russia was reborn under his rule as a great state that the entire world has to take into account. Moscow wants the West to recognize Russia's zone of influence and give up the idea of accepting Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia or another post-Soviet republic into NATO in the future. International crises are to be jointly regulated, under the aegis of the UN Security Council.

At the same time, Russia would like to restore normal economic cooperation with the West. The problem of Donbass could be solved on the basis of the Minsk Agreements of 2015, with the participation of a UN peacekeeping mission. Crimea could be recognized as part of Russia. Where Russia's interests coincide with those of the US, the Kremlin expects cooperation (seeking agreement in the fight against terrorism or North Korea). Meeting all these expectations in the fourth term will be extremely difficult. There is no shortage of challenges.

Above all, this is a conflict with the West, whose dynamics indicate that sooner than sanctions being abolished, we can expect their strengthening. With an extremely low level of mutual trust, it will be difficult to change anything. The Trump Administration has not met the expectations of the Kremlin, and attempts to establish good relations with some EU countries may sooner bear fruit than rapprochement with Washington. With his aggressive actions (annexation of Crimea, the war in Donbass, participation in the war in Syria, interference in the democratic processes of Western countries), Putin contributed to the unification of the Western world against Russia. What is worse, the entire western flank of Russia

It was generally foreign policy that was always his strong suit. Most Russians evaluate it not only as effective, but also as a reason for national pride.



© STAFF (PAP/EPA)

A COMPOSITE IMAGE SHOWING LEADING RUSSIAN BUSINESS PERSONALITIES FROM TOP (LEFT TO RIGHT): OLEG DERIPASKA, CEO OF THE RUSSIAN ALUMINIUM GIANT UNITED COMPANY RUSAL, RUSSIAN BILLIONAIRE SULEYMAN KERIMOV, RUSSIAN BILLIONAIRE VIKTOR VEKSELBERG; AND FROM BOTTOM (LEFT TO RIGHT): KIRILL SHAMALOV, MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RUSSIAN OIL AND PETROCHEMICAL PROCESSOR SIBUR, ALEXEY MILLER, CHAIRMAN OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE (CEO) OF GAZPROM AND ANDREY KOSTIN, PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN OF THE MANAGEMENT BOARD OF VTB BANK. THE SIX ARE AMONG A GROUP OF SEVEN LEADING RUSSIAN BUSINESSMEN. TWELVE COMPANIES THEY CONTROL OR OWN AND 17 GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS THAT, ACCORDING TO REPORTS FROM APRIL 6, 2018, HAVE BEEN PUT ON SANCTIONS LIST BY THE US DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY OFFICE OF FOREIGN ASSETS CONTROL (OFAC) IN CONSULTATION WITH THE US DEPARTMENT OF STATE. THE DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY SAID IN A STATEMENT THE RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT "OPERATES FOR THE DISPROPORTIONATE BENEFIT OF OLIGARCHS AND GOVERNMENT ELITES", AND "ENGAGES IN A RANGE OF MALIGN ACTIVITY AROUND THE GLOBE, INCLUDING CONTINUING TO OCCUPY CRIMEA AND INSTIGATING VIOLENCE IN EASTERN UKRAINE, SUPPLYING THE ASSAD REGIME WITH MATERIAL AND WEAPONRY AS THEY BOMB THEIR OWN CIVILIANS, ATTEMPTING TO SUBVERT WESTERN DEMOCRACIES, AND MALICIOUS CYBER ACTIVITIES".

has come under the influence of the West, with the exception of Belarus. At the beginning of his term, Putin is in a worse position as regards Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova than in 2012. On the other hand,

the power of China is growing — not just economically. Beijing has great political and military ambitions. Russia feels this firsthand, if only in Central Asia. In Asia there is also the issue of Kuril Islands,

and the recent warming of relations between the Koreas is also bad news for the Kremlin, which played on Pyongyang's militarism.

Another challenge is to regulate the Ukrainian problem — preferably through the UN peace plan and taking into account Russian dominance. Putin cannot admit to the error of aggression against Ukraine, because that would undermine the historical step that was the annexation of Crimea. This, however, means that the Ukrainian problem will not be solved in this term. And that means that there is no chance to fix relations with the West. And a long-lasting conflict with the West can only end for Russia as the Cold War did — with failure. Alongside Ukraine, the next problem carried over from the third term is that of Syria. The situation is not as rosy as Putin presented it at the end of 2017. The problem is the far-reaching divergence of interests of the participants in the conflict. Added to this is Assad, who does not intend to leave, while the opposition does not want to see him in power. Maintaining Assad's regime does not mean achieving the goals of Russian policy. There are other powerful players there: Iran, Turkey, Israel, the monarchies of the Gulf and, last but not least, the USA.

THE CULT OF PUTIN

The far-reaching personalization of power (everything depends on Putin, the weakness of state institutions outside the presidency) on the one hand ensures current stability, on the other hand seriously hampers any change to improve government and find a solution to the problem of Putin's departure. This will increase the internal, largely hidden competition in the ruling camp. The sacralization of Putin's power, his withdrawal from "mundane matters" carries the danger that he will cease to be an effective arbiter in various conflicts within the elite.

In the new term, Putin will increasingly rely on a new generation of bureaucrats. A very important part of it will be children of "Putin's friends", people like Kirill Shamalov, Igor Rotenberg, Dmitry Patrushev or Sergei Ivanov Jr. They are taking over the management of the fortunes stolen in the first dozen or so years of Putin's era by their fathers. This is how the new Russian aristocracy emerges, the young boyars (pre-revolutionary Russian nobles). But they also include the likes of Anton Vaino, Alexey Dyumin and Denis Manturov. Back-office battles with the use of the intelligence services may prove to be more dangerous for the regime than a transparent democratic competition for the legacy of Putin. All the more so because the radical anti-Western

Putin cannot admit to the error of aggression against Ukraine, because that would undermine the historical step that was the annexation of Crimea.

camp in Moscow is constantly growing, with more supporters of a hard course, "hawks". If Putin decides to follow the path indicated by Kudrin, the party of war may react with provocation, even in Ukraine, to escalate tension on the Russia-West line. In the extreme scenario, you cannot even rule out a military coup. The gradual intensification of competition within the power elite will result from two main reasons. Firstly, the resources that can be used are shrinking, which provokes an increase in competition for state contracts, and at the same time the authorities cannot afford to compensate for losses

Without reforms aimed at the economic modernization of the country, it will be difficult to get out of stagnation.

resulting from sanctions to all aggrieved companies and oligarchs. Secondly, different clans and groups of influence will want to assume a good position or even influence the way of solving the so-called 2024 problem.

When President Putin's term ends, the second in a row, in accordance with the constitution, this means that he cannot run for the seat of the head of state for a third time. There are four options for the development of the situation. Putin may want to maintain his position, but this will mean the need to change the constitution. Second, he may leave for six years, repeating the maneuver of 2008 — only that it is unlikely that he would like to become prime minister at the age of 72 and then seek a return to the Kremlin at the age of 78. Option number three is a change to another position, from which he will continue to rule the state — but this also requires a change to the constitution. Finally, the Yeltsin scenario remains — in case Putin wants to withdraw now. It's about finding someone who will guarantee the safety of him and his Familia.

Unlike the people of Yeltsin, freshly enriched and easy to eliminate (see Berezovsky or Gusinsky), in six years time the “Familia Putin” will be incomparably stronger and will have grown into Russia's economy and policy for good. Yeltsin

and his entourage had less than nine years under their belts, which was too little to perpetuate their position. Putin and his court in 2024 will have had a quarter century of rule and legalized assets transferred to the next generation. In this respect, they can be less afraid than “Familia Yeltsin”. If the main goal in 1999 was to protect the oligarchs and relatives of the president, and to a lesser extent Yeltsin himself, in 2024 it will be the other way around: the most important factor will be peace and security for Putin, because his courtiers will manage just fine.

WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

When will the matter of succession begin to be decided? Certainly not in the first part of the term — Putin will not want to give even the slightest signals in this matter. First, to avoid the role of a lame duck. Second, keeping the elite in uncertainty is beneficial to the ruler. If we can talk about succession at all, then it will not be about the transfer of power by President Putin to a new president, but the transfer of power from President Putin to Putin himself, in a new position. Putin has become the hostage of the system he built. He is already so strongly identified with it that leaving is impossible. And if he even tried, there are the *siloviki*. In 2008, Sechin and his ilk could not block the change in the Kremlin. Today, it is just the opposite. Putin is too dependent on them — a war-like foreign policy gave them full power. Also, there are fears of a revolution in the country and the resulting expansion of the internal apparatus of oppression. Even the replacement of the Kremlin's landlord in 2024, similar to what took place in 2008 with Dmitry Medvedev, will have a completely different character. If Putin's *preyemnik* (successor) is relatively young, he may become a long-lasting fixture in the Kremlin.

Without reforms aimed at the economic modernization of the country, it will



© ANATOLY MALTSEV (PAP/EPA)

ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA, FEBRUARY 25, 2012. DEMONSTRATORS CARRY A POSTER DEPICTING PRIME MINISTER VLADIMIR PUTIN AS THE ELDERLY SOVIET COMMUNISTS PARTY LEADER LEONID BREZHNEV, DURING A MASSIVE PROTEST RALLY AGAINST PUTIN'S RULE. SEVERAL THOUSANDS PEOPLE TOOK PART IN A MARCH DEMANDING FAIR ELECTIONS AND PROTESTING AGAINST RUSSIAN PRIME MINISTER VLADIMIR PUTIN'S RULE. PUTIN WON A THIRD PRESIDENTIAL TERM AS A RESULT OF THE ELECTIONS HELD ON MARCH 4, 2012.

be difficult to get out of stagnation. This would mean the development of modern education and health care, the development of the digital economy, removing the moratorium on unpopular measures such as raising the retirement age. But there will be no money for this if the state maintains its high priority on security; that is high spending on defense and the security apparatus. The ubiquitous corruption and huge influence of *siloviki* on the economy is the factor reducing the probability of reforms. The position of the majority of society unwilling to change also speaks against reforms. Since Putin did not carry out reforms in the fat years, either economically (oil prosperity of the previous decade) or politically (huge social enthusiasm after the annexation of Crimea), then he will not do it now. There will be no liberalization of the system,

as the Kremlin perceives it as a threat to the stability of the regime. In other words, a perestroika complex, about the earlier attempts to modernize the USSR, which ended with its downfall. The awful weeks after the election victory had an impact on Putin's popularity (on the national scene alone: a fire in a shopping center in Kemerovo and social protests in Volokolamsk and other cities of the Moscow region against storage of waste). The level of trust in Putin has decreased by seven percent in a month: from 55.3 to 48.3 percent. Six years earlier, for five weeks after the election, this indicator was rising. This shows how difficult this term may turn out to be.

Ksawery Czerniewicz ■
May 15, 2018

BUDGET OF NECESSITY

AGNIESZKA WOJNICKA

The budget of the Russian Federation invariably depends on the prices of energy products on the global markets. When the value of a barrel of oil drops, anxiety appears in the ranks of Russia's political leaders, as it increases — a relaxed and carefree approach to using state funds returns.

ADDICTED TO RAW MATERIALS

Even in 2001, energy commodity revenues (specifically oil and gas) accounted for nine percent of federal budget inflows.

Since then, this share has increased; in 2012–2014 it exceeded 50 percent. With the drop in oil prices on global markets, the Russian authorities announced a reduction in their dependence on energy commodities. The decrease in the share of oil and gas revenues in budget inflows to below 40 percent was announced as

a success. However, this resulted not from the deliberate and consistent policy of the government, but from the low prices that determined the reduced inflow of petrodollars.

As an example, the anti-crisis measures of recent years have clearly shown that the only plan of the authorities is to wait out bad market conditions and count on higher prices. When Russia gained the possibility of making a real impact on the upward trend in prices (though



© MAXIM SHPENKOV (PAP/EPRA)

MOSCOW, RUSSIA, FEBRUARY 9, 2018. RUSSIAN MINISTER OF INDUSTRY AND TRADE DENIS MANTUROV (LEFT) AND RUSSIAN FINANCE MINISTER ANTON SILUANOV (RIGHT) ATTEND THE CONGRESS OF THE RUSSIAN UNION OF INDUSTRIALISTS AND ENTREPRENEURS (RSPP). THE CONGRESS TOOK PLACE DURING RUSSIAN BUSINESS WEEK THAT WAS ORGANIZED BY RSPP.

not without doubts), it joined OPEC+. However, before it agreed to reduce its output, it increased it to a historic high – 47.5 million tons per month. Even with the limitations resulting from OPEC+ (a reduction of 1.2 million tons), Russia is allowed to extract more than the average 45 million tons of oil per month, extracted before the agreement was signed.

Faced with such conditions, 2017 turned out to be quite unpredictable for the Russian federal budget. This resulted in several amendments to the budget, above all introducing significant changes to the principles of the main financial statute. The projected crude oil price was significantly higher — from \$40 in the original version, to \$49.90 per barrel by the end of the year. The other important factor was the exchange rate of the Russian currency against the United States dollar. In this case, the direction of the change — from 67.5 to 59.4 rubles to the dollar, was not favorable for the income portion of the Russian budget.

Without a strengthening ruble, Russia would have gained over 30 percent more on higher oil prices.

Despite speculation, the authorities have not decided to weaken the exchange rate of their currency. This situation helped importers, which in turn translated into higher revenues from import duties.

As an example, the anti-crisis measures of recent years have clearly shown that the only plan of the authorities is to wait out bad market conditions and count on higher prices.

Despite speculation, the authorities have not decided to weaken the exchange rate of their currency.

Inside the country, higher turnover generated higher than expected VAT income, which together with excise duties (which were raised and had their scope expanded) began to balance the inflows tied to energy products.

It is known, however, that Russia does not plan to depart from the energy commodity model. During a press conference in December 2017, Vladimir Putin stressed that Siberia has long been considered Russia's source of wealth. Currently, the Arctic is to take over this role, because the main supplies of mineral resources are located there. Therefore, to Putin, the deposits possessed there seem to be sufficient to guarantee economic development.

ILLUSION OF SECURITY

The upward trend in oil prices induced the Russian authorities to introduce a new budget rule. According to it, all additional income resulting from the sale of crude oil above the price of \$40 per barrel is to be directed to the purchase of hard currency. It is a repeat of the mechanism of creating a "safety cushion" in the form of stabilization funds. It was thanks to the liquid financial resources accumulated in the Reserve Fund and the National Wealth Fund that the government could cover the budget deficit over the last four years. As a result of such fund management, at the end of 2017 the Reserve Fund had been fully spent.



© YURI KOCHETKOV (PAP/EPA)

A new pool of funds is essential for Russia to maintain financial stability in the event of another economic crisis. Anton Siluanov, Minister of Finance of Russia, pointed to the target level for reserves of seven percent of GDP. In March 2009 in comparison, funds equivalent to twelve percent of GDP were collected in the Reserve Fund, and two years later only a little over one percent remained. The reserves restored in February 2015 to over seven percent



ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA, MAY 24, 2018. FORUM ATTENDEES WALK IN FRONT OF THE EXHIBITION STAND OF RUSSIAN MINERAL OIL COMPANY ROSNEFT DURING THE ST. PETERSBURG INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC FORUM. THE ANNUAL EVENT OF THE RUSSIAN ECONOMIC SECTOR GATHERS POLITICIANS, CEOS, EXPERTS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES FOR A BUSINESS-RELATED EXCHANGE OF VIEWS.

A new pool of funds is essential for Russia to maintain financial stability in the event of another economic crisis.

of GDP no longer exist. Thus, resources of this size would allow Russia to survive only one phase of the crisis.

The Central Bank of the Russian Federation has been purchasing currency for the Ministry of Finance since February 2017. And although monthly statistics are provided on energy commodity surpluses, detailed reporting is missing. No additional funds have been provided to the

Along with the low growth of industrial production, declining investments, prolonged decline in real incomes of the population and the persistence of external conditions, the forecast of stagnation is ever more real.

National Wealth Fund. Formally, they should be on the Federal Treasury's accounts. However, we know that in the 2017 budget amendments, Russia raised the assumed level of oil prices and divided additional revenues, while simultaneously reducing the deficit. The Ministry has already announced a spring amendment to the budget of 2018 and a change in its basic parameters, and probably also the base price of "black gold".

PROSPECT OF STAGNATION

It seems to the authorities that when the prices of raw materials reach a satisfactory level, they can breathe a sigh of relief. Meanwhile, many economic forecasts indicate that this will not significantly influence economic growth. The problems are structural in nature and manifested themselves before 2014 and the introduction of sanctions and counter-sanctions. These predictions are confirmed by preliminary macroeconomic data for 2017. GDP growth was 1.5 percent, significantly lower than the expected 2.1 percent. Russia has been lagging behind the global average (three percent) for yet another year, so in

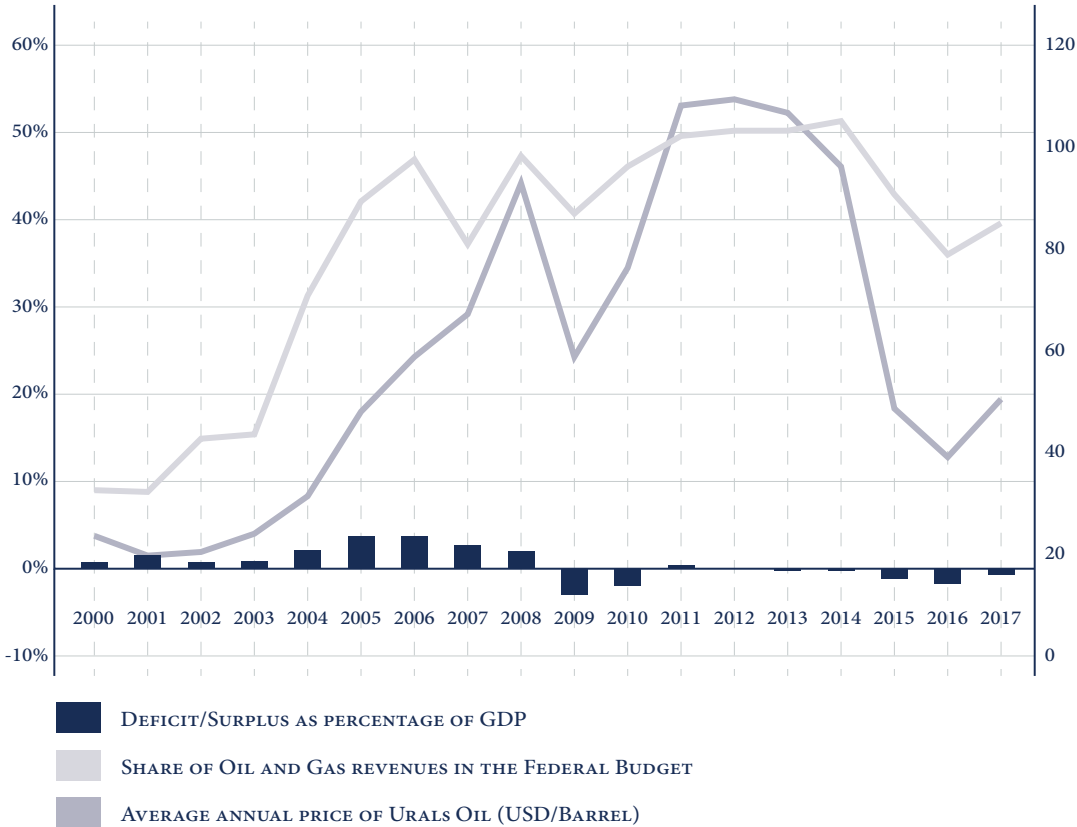
practice its economic development is stagnating. After optimistic indicators at the beginning of 2017, the following months brought only disappointment with the impermanence of the improvement in the economic situation. Along with the low growth of industrial production, declining investments, prolonged decline in real incomes of the population and the persistence of external conditions, the forecast of stagnation is ever more real.

The authorities want the economy to be based on internal demand and investment. However, the crisis has been shrinking the real income of Russians over the last four years — according to official statistics, by more than eleven percent. This has distanced the prospect of a return to the pre-crisis level of 2013. So far, the authorities are counting that in the case of salaries, this will happen by 2022. Worse projections concern retirement funds, which are not expected to regain their real value from before the crisis until as late as 2035, despite the expected increase in the retirement age.

As a result, Russians are saving less and are increasingly living on credit (in January-November 2017, loans were granted for a larger sum than assumed deposits). This limits the possibilities of the second component of growth that the authorities are counting on — investments. To this end, plans were made to encourage Russians to invest. A bond issue program for individuals was launched, which was also supposed to finance the budget deficit. After an

Russians are saving less and are increasingly living on credit.

Impact of Urals oil price fluctuations on budget parameters



www.warsawinstitute.org

WARSAW INSTITUTE

initial wave of interest, demand has begun to fall. The government, however, as if ignoring this issue, plans to triple the annual issue volume.

The large governmental investments, one-off boosts to economic indicators (construction of the Siberian Force, the bridge to Crimea, infrastructure for the needs of the FIFA World Cup), are also coming to an end. The international situation is significantly hampering the

inflow of foreign capital. Gazprom and Rosneft projects relate to the mining sector, and therefore remain selective and support the dependence of the economy on raw materials. Financial sanctions have also drawn out funds from the internal market, reducing the investment opportunities of small and medium enterprises in other sectors.

The loyalty of state-owned companies to the budget also remains debatable.

Only half of the expected dividends which were to be obtained by the federal budget in 2017 materialized. Although a minimum of 50 percent of earned profits should be transferred into the budget, unofficial lobbying within the administration allows state giants to avoid these obligations. The assumed dividend income in 2018 is thus also considered inflated, so the Ministry of Finance must create a reserve for such shortfalls.

EXPENSES BEYOND THE REAL ECONOMY

The expenditure side, similar to income, is quite polarized. More than half of the budget is focused in two basic directions: social policy (mainly social support and transfers to cover the Pension Fund deficit) and national defense. The socio-military character of budget expenditures has been characteristic of Russian policy for several years and is expected to remain so at least until 2020.

The 2018 budget provides for about 30 percent total expenditure on social policy (4.8 percent of GDP, in 2017 it was 5.4 percent of GDP). About 17 percent goes to national defense (3.1 percent of GDP in 2017, 2.8 percent in 2018), and another 13 percent for internal security and public order (2.1 percent of GDP). In the last two years, despite the high level of defense spending, it rose again as part of the amendment to the budget. This was necessary in order to repay bank loans guaranteed by the state, which armaments companies incurred to implement projects for the armed forces.

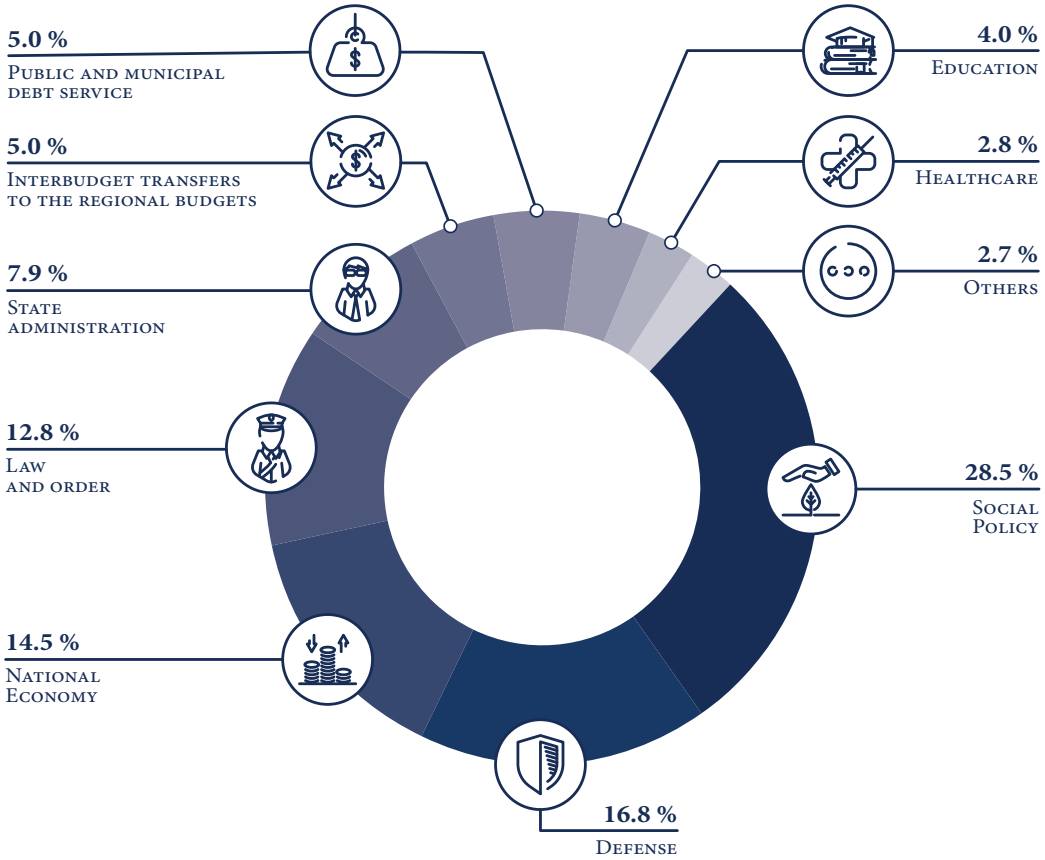
Expenditure to support the national economy is in third place (2.5 percent of GDP). Despite the government's declarations, by 2020 these expenditures are expected to decline, both nominally and in relation to GDP (to 2.2 percent).

Among the five largest departments in terms of the amount of budget funding (they accumulate 70 percent of the budget and about eleven percent of GDP), only this directly relates to the real economy. The budget therefore lacks a clear basis for stimulating economic growth and development of human capital. Although spending on health care and education in 2018 will increase, the trend is not permanent and is only tied to the election season.

The availability of funds through presidential decrees circumvents the need for legislative approval and allows for selective and “manual” control of support for the economy.

A special innovation in the budget for 2018–2020 is that part of the expenditure on the economy, will be at the sole disposal of the president. Its share will increase from year to year, from \$2.3 to \$6 billion. Currently, it is not known exactly what the funds will be spent on, it is speculated that it will be financing for economic reforms. Their introduction is to be delayed only due to the electoral calendar. The availability of funds through presidential decrees circumvents the need for legislative approval and allows for selective and “manual” control of support for the economy. It is also possible that they will be used to support oligarchs loyal to the

Estimated federal budget expenditure in 2018



www.warsawinstitute.org

WARSAW
INSTITUTE

Kremlin, whose number, including on the US sanctions list, is expanding.

A characteristic element of the budget is also a significant share for secret expenses, amounting to 18 percent. This means that almost every fifth ruble of the federal budget cannot be accounted for. The level of secrecy also increases in the sections not directly related to the sphere of security. The financial act for 2018 assumes that part of the cash transfers to Russian entities will be secret. Therefore, it is not known which unit will receive additional

The lack of systemic reforms and a well-thought-out development strategy meant that the basis for financing budget shortfalls was the petrodollar reserves.

funds and how much. Such an action may have several reasons — a desire to hide the difficult financial situation of the regions (which could trigger social tensions) and to thus avoid setting up a queue of governors, demanding similar assistance. At the end of 2017, some of the regional administrations turned to the federal center for additional support, admitting that they lacked money to pay wages in the public sector or service their debts. This is information that the Kremlin would prefer to obtain unofficially, and without the involvement of the media. In turn, in January 2018, the federal tax administration introduced external supervision over the budgets of two entities that are excessively in debt. However, there are more such units, so that further such actions are possible.

MANAGEMENT OF THE DEFICIT PROBLEM

During the period of prosperity on the raw materials market (the first nine years of Putin's rule), Russia was used to ending the budget year with a financial surplus. Since 2009, the situation has been reversed — except for a small surplus in 2011, the Russian budget has been in a permanent deficit. The lack of systemic reforms and a well-thought-out development strategy meant that during the last two crises (2009–2010 and 2015–2016), the basis for financing budget shortfalls was the petrodollar reserves. As already mentioned, one of them has been completely depleted. The deficit of subsequent years (the current budget perspective assumes its maintenance until 2020) is to be covered by the National Wealth Fund and internal debt.

First and foremost, the liquid and reliable National Wealth Fund resources will be used. In 2018, they will cover almost 90 percent of the projected deficit. The Ministry of Finance has

timidly indicated that with current oil prices holding, a budget surplus is even possible. However, certainty in this respect will be possible only at the end of the year. This is indirectly due to the fact that it is still unclear whether the election victory of Vladimir Putin will be followed by changes or whether the conservative approach to the economy will remain. Various kinds of proposals and speculations appeared in the media (including raising the tax on individuals from 13 to 15 percent or the retirement age), but Putin himself did not present a concrete electoral program with proposals for reforms in the next term of office.

If the forecasted level of the deficit is maintained, Russia may have problems with its financing after 2018 due to its focus on internal sources. Foreign debt, due to international conditions, will not play an important role. The problem for Russia is not the debt level, which is relatively low at present (less than 14 percent of GDP, and to increase to 16 percent in 2020), but the fear of insufficient internal market resources. The first factor, noted previously, are shrinking household finances — interest in purchasing Treasury bonds is waning. State-owned companies compete with state securities, also have limited financing opportunities abroad. Large private companies can join the race away from Treasury bonds, which, as the last stage of imposed American sanctions showed, even if they are not their object, are beginning to be treated by investors as "toxic" assets. Competition for limited internal financial resources may also result in an increase in the level of conflicts between the ruling elites.

If, however, the worst-case scenario is avoided, Russia should have the ability to manage its deficit financing. It is also worth remembering that a kind of "life



© BARTŁOMIEJ ZBOROWSKI (PAP)

MOSCOW, RUSSIA, DECEMBER 1, 2017. LUZHNIKI STADIUM — THE FACILITY WHERE THE OPENING MATCH AND THE FINAL OF THE 2018 WORLD CUP TOOK PLACE.

The problem for Russia is not the debt level but the fear of insufficient internal market resources.

preserver", already used in 2016, could be the privatization of state-owned companies that will enrich the federal budget.

Undoubtedly, even by adopting the “wait out the storm” strategy, Russia managed to survive the latest economic crisis. However, the exit from it was to a large extent due to the improvement in the global commodity markets and the stabilization of the economy after the shocks of 2014–2015.

Agnieszka Wojnicka ■
May 15, 2018

TODAY'S POTEMKIN VILLAGE: KREMLIN DISINFORMATION AND PROPAGANDA IN POLAND

MAŁGORZATA ZAWADZKA

In most studies on the resistance of individual states to Russian propaganda, Poland is considered one of the most resilient countries. Indeed, openly pro-Russian narratives find little understanding among Polish consumers.

Similarly, Russian media projects like Sputnik and Russia Today (RT) have not gained in popularity on the Vistula. So why does their message enter the Polish public discourse through the facade media, how does such media falsify the picture of reality?

When Prince Grigory Potemkin wanted to please Tsarina Catherine, he ordered the construction of fake villages along her travel route in the province he managed. The cheerful villagers,

who were greeting the passers-by and the neat facades of the houses, were supposed to give the Tsarina and her companions the impression of efficient and skillful management of the region, and at the same time conceal its poverty. And although some historians argue about whether such phenomenon actually took place, the term “Potemkin Village” has permanently entered many languages as a synonym for mystification, deception and creating a picture of reality quite different from the actual state of affairs.



© LESZEK SZYMANSKI (PAP)

VILNIUS, LITHUANIA, FEBRUARY 17, 2018. PRESIDENT OF POLAND ANDRZEJ DUDA AND PRESIDENT OF LITHUANIA DALIA GRYBAUSKAITE AFTER A JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE. THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND PARTICIPATED IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REBUILDING OF THE LITHUANIAN STATE.

WHY BUILD FACADES?

Deception, disinformation, propaganda or unsophisticated lies — regardless of the name, this tactic of exercising power has been known in Russia for centuries. In 1938, Włodzimierz Bączkowski, a Polish political scientist, in the article “Notes on the essence of Russian power”, defined Moscow’s primary power:

“The main type of Russian weapon, decisive for Russia’s current sustainability, its strength and possible future victories, is not a normal factor for European conditions of military strength, but deep political action,

characterized by a diversionary, decentralized and propagandistic essence.”¹

When discussing the implementation of these assumptions, the author mentions that in 1905, according to statements of the then finance ministry, Russia spent two million francs on subsidies for the French press. Today, the same goals can be achieved at a very low cost — if not for free.

¹ *Uwagi o istocie siły rosyjskiej* in W. Bączkowski, *O wschodnich problemach Polski*, Kolegium Europy Wschodniej 2005, p. 115.

Deception, disinformation, propaganda or unsophisticated lies — regardless of the name, this tactic of exercising power has been known in Russia for centuries.

The world has obviously changed a lot since then. From the point of view of communication, the most important change is first the emergence of the Internet, thanks to which a completely new space of real-time communication was created. This was followed by the conquest of the world by social media, which ultimately blurred the border between the recipient and the sender, also allowing the amplification of the content produced. Cyberspace has affected not only the speed of communication, but also the way of storing data and its illegal acquisition, obtaining of information by individuals and its conversion, and finally the distribution and creation of content through a network of bots and trolls. Naturally, this provided new tools for manipulating the public. And so, the Russian academic, Vladimir Lisichkin, emphasized the destructive action of modern media and the impact of the function of unrealistic symbols on human action, against their interests:

“Media divides people, destroys traditional, direct contacts, changing them through a television or computer. The simultaneous dissemination of contradictory and mutually exclusive worldviews violates a stable world of values, breeds indifference and apathy,

stifles criticism and causes social confusion: a stronger impression is not made by a soundly documented analysis, but by an energetic and self-assured, strong statement, even without evidence... The 'mass' person is impulsive, often changing moods, ready only for short-term action. Often, he prefers an illusion over reality.”²

Media — both traditional and new, including the blogosphere — are therefore an extremely effective and cheap means of manipulating society. Especially when a forum is created, where not only can everyone express themselves, but they can also find a receptive audience.

Poles are convinced that they are immune to Russian propaganda.

HOW TO DRAW POLES TO THE KREMLIN'S SIDE

Poles are convinced that they are immune to Russian propaganda — this belief is grounded in such experiences as a difficult history (including recently), widespread awareness of the country's unfavorable geopolitical position and the unfriendly policy direction of its eastern neighbor's energy companies. Due to these factors, openly pro-Russian narratives find few supporters. It is difficult for the Russian media to break into the Polish infosphere, mainly due to the lack of a natural audience. Only 6% of Poles are fluent in Russian; in 2015, the TNS research agency showed that only 19 percent of respondents to a survey declared a good or very good knowledge of the language³.

² W. Lisiczkin, *Zasada wirusa w wojnie psychologicznej* (tłum. M. Zawadzka), „Frona” 2011, nr 60, p. 117.

³ *Diagnoza Społeczna 2015. Warunki i jakość życia Polaków*, J. Czapiński, T. Panek (eds.), Rada

Attempts to glorify Soviet soldiers, the times of the Polish People's Republic and the depreciation of Polish history, are met with great opposition from Polish society. In the report "Vulnerability Index: Subversive Russian Influence in Central Europe"⁴ from 2017, Poland was rated as the least susceptible to Russian influence. However, this research concerned direct Russian propaganda, but did not include hidden propaganda.

Contrary to appearances, it is precisely the conviction in its own resilience that is a hindrance for Warsaw in the effective fight against more veiled and less obvious messages coming from Moscow through local collaborators. Edward Lucas also noticed this in an interview for *Kultura Liberalna* (*Liberal Culture*):

"The greatest weakness of Poland is the arrogance and certainty that Poles are fully immune to Russian propaganda... But if the Russians tell you that the West will betray you, and Polish culture is being attacked by aggressive, rotten, Western culture, if they say that Ukraine is ruled by people who celebrate the genocide in Volhynia and they will probably incite its repetition, these are the messages that will certainly affect Polish society."⁵

It is true, crude propaganda about the benefits of allying with Russia have been replaced by other narratives. These facades, artificially embedded in or resonated into the infosphere, inevitably

Monitoringu Społecznego, Warsaw 2015; available at http://www.diagnoza.com/pliki/raporty/Diagnoza_raport_2015.pdf.

⁴ D. Milo, K. Klingová, *The Vulnerability Index: Subversive Russian Influence in Central Europe*, Globsec, 2017; available at <https://www.globsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/globsec-vulnerability-index.pdf>.

⁵ Ł. Pawłowski, "Słabością Polski jest arogancja. Z Edwardem Lucasem rozmawia Łukasz Pawłowski," *Kultura Liberalna*, 15/2018, (nr 483), 10 IV 2018; available at <https://kulturaliberalna.pl/2018/04/10/polska-rosja-propaganda-lucas/>.

Crude propaganda about the benefits of allying with Russia have been replaced by other narratives.

support the goals of the Kremlin, i.e. the weakening of the state, while using existing weaknesses and societal fears, to construct an attractive environment capable of drawing in people against their own interests. For example, under the layer of concern for the good of the state (understood in many different ways), there are narratives equating membership in the European Union with the loss of sovereignty, and the presence of NATO troops in Poland to an occupation.

Another important group of recipients are patriotic circles, attempts are made to distort their national pride into chauvinism and nationalism — especially in the context of relations with Ukraine, Lithuania, America, Germany, Israel, etc. This is by no means limited by national borders — just like in Poland, the pseudo-media creates a negative image of the West or dissenters and strives to reopen the old wounds of unresolved historical and economic problems with Kiev and Berlin. Therefore anti-Polish content or that which is unfavorable to Poland and is published abroad, is used to support this thesis. But not only are people with more conservative views the targets of the information war. The key element of this strategy is to identify the ignition point and fuel the dispute on both sides, including winding up extreme positions from the opposite ends of the scale, so that the discourse is as turbulent as possible.



© RADEK PIETRUSZKA (PAP)

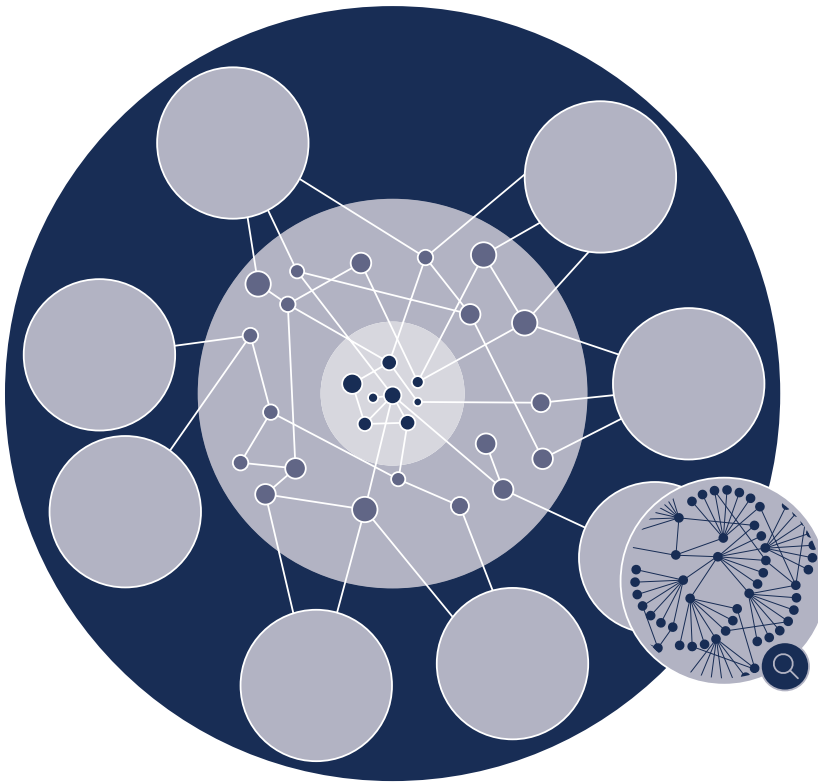
WARSAW, POLAND, MAY 19, 2016. VICE-CHAIRMEN OF THE CHANGE PARTY AL MALAZI NABIL (LEFT) AND JAROSŁAW AUGUSTYNIAK (RIGHT), AND PARTY SECRETARY TOMASZ JANKOWSKI (CENTER) DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNAL SECURITY AGENCY AIMED AT THE MEMBERS OF THE CHANGE PARTY AND THE DETENTION OF MATEUSZ PISKORSKI.

TOPOGRAPHY OF THE POTEMKIN VILLAGE

At the heart of the Potemkin media village are both Polish and English-language Russian media, including Sputnik, RT and others, though they do not promote their ties with the Kremlin. An example is the *Niezależny Dziennik Polityczny* (*Independent Political Journal*, NDP), which regularly fabricates information about American soldiers stationed in Poland. These media channels are buffered by another layer of publishers — sites that knowingly spread given narratives, despite the knowledge of their origin and goals, which allow the narratives to be disseminated into society. These sites

include Kresy.pl, Wolna-Polska.pl, WirtualnaPolonia.com, Obserwator Polityczny (official partner of the Ruskiy Mir Foundation in Poland) and others. They focus primarily on fomenting hatred towards Ukrainians and Americans, posing as good, “patriotic” sources of information. Discussion groups on social media and blog platforms, such as Neon24, but also the huge volume of Wordpress blogs (e.g. Dziennik Gajowego Maruchy, known for spreading Kremlin propaganda) play a huge role. In contrast to the dominant Polish mass media, there you can expect to see much more frequent references to Sputnik. In the distribution chain of malicious content, these are the

The Russian Facade Media Visualized as Layers



■ SOURCES OF NARRATIVES ■ INTRODUCTIONS ■ THE PROPER INFOSPHERE

www.warsawinstitute.org

WARSZAWA
INSTITUTE

1. Sources of narratives
2. Introductions – nodes (media) by means of which narratives are introduced into circulation
3. The proper infosphere - social media, mutual contacts, ordinary sites, media, blogs

key links, because they make it possible to avoid being classified as state propaganda of the Kremlin in the initial stage of distribution.

The second layer also includes Internet forums. There are several forums on which some users regularly post disinformation and propaganda content, quite often from the aforementioned NDP, but also

including local forums for the cities of Orzysz and Tomaszów Lubelski. This choice is not an accident, American soldiers are stationed in Orzysz as part of the Enhanced Forward Presence mission. Tomaszów Lubelski is located less than 100 kilometers from Lviv and Ukrainian military training grounds; a unit of Poland's Territorial Defense is also located there. Other avenues through

The NDP site was created in 2014 and is run in accordance with the principles of a typical source of disinformation.

which agitation is carried out for the Kremlin are esoteric websites, which at the same time spread conspiracy theories and anti-American content. All kinds of "alternative sources of information" are popular among conspiracy theorists, offering a whole spectrum of messages: sites "independent" from the government and the EU, sites that promote freedom of expression, are uncensored, or allow, for example, incitement to racial or ethnic hatred, and transmit "revealed truth", hidden from Poles by the government, Jewish freemasons, aliens, reptilians, Egyptian pyramids or disclosed in magical prophecies.

The media image of mystification is complemented by ordinary members of Polish society, who for various reasons spread Sputnik-like articles. After several high-profile cases highlighting how the mainstream media published false messages and broad criticism of the quality of journalism, more attention began to be paid to the sources of controversial articles. Therefore it has become much more difficult to misinform the mainstream media, thus Russian activities must rely on niche media, blogs and social media.

THE KING IS NAKED

Potemkin websites and networks are really numerous — some are better camouflaged, others worse. However, to realize how deeply a fake information construct can reach, it is worth analyzing the case of

the previously mentioned NDP, described in more detail by the OKO.press portal in 2017.

The site was created in 2014 and is run in accordance with the principles of a typical source of disinformation: the content is mainly copied from other portals, its own articles are classic examples of fake news, the language is strongly emotionally charged — mostly texts ripped off from tabloids. The editor-in-chief, journalists, and moderator of the NDP group on Facebook, all use other people's faces as profile photos and are active on social media.

Initially, attempts were made to create their own content, however, numerous language errors and carbon copies from the Russian language forced the creators to give up this solution. And so, the article "Anakonda-18 — a scenario of the invasion of Russia and Belarus" by Jan Radžiūnas is — literally — a patchwork of other texts on the Anakonda-16 and Dragon-17 military exercises. Fragments of texts have been copied here and there, for example: Polish Minister Michał Dworczyk's statement from 2016 was cited by Radžiūnas as a statement from Minister Bartosz Kownacki in 2017; NDP also increased the number of soldiers participating in Anaconda from 17,000 to 100,000, and called an air raid defense exercise a preemptive raid exercise. A similar method was used when creating the Facebook page "Americans and lawlessness", coupled with the publication of an article on an alleged road accident with fatalities that were to have been caused by American soldiers. Three different cases were mixed up in this article, but neither soldiers nor Americans took part.

The case of the second example of disinformation is, however, more complex. NDP referred to three

NDP As Facade Media

- Creating false profiles on social media and adding credibility using other people's photos
- Impression of correct Polish language usage achieved by constructing articles from other texts
- Reference to patriotic symbolism in the logo
- Regularly publishing information by copying content from other websites
- Operating mainly in the field of social media

www.warsawinstitute.org

WARSAW
INSTITUTE

different sources: two regional sites from Szczecin and Żagań (Szczecin is home to NATO's Multinational Corps Northeast, while Americans are stationed in Żagań), and an inactive link to a blog on the Salon24.pl platform. On the new anti-American Facebook page, however, WojskoNews, an information aggregation portal, was cited as the source. Information about the accident involving NATO soldiers could not be found on these pages, but there were archived copies. Further research has shown, however, that the copies were also specially prepared, i.e. this content probably never appeared on the source pages.

FIVE CHALLENGES

It is doubtful that the NDP is the main center of manipulation of the Polish infosphere. However, it is a preview of the challenges related to disinformation in the future.

The first challenge is the need to find a compromise between democratic values such as freedom of speech, freedom of thought and media pluralism, with the state's obligation to ensure security for

The first challenge is the need to find a compromise between democratic values such as freedom of speech, freedom of thought and media pluralism, with the state's obligation to ensure security for its citizens.

its citizens. If there is any tendency to capture the entire issue of information subversion in axiological terms outside the paradigm of security, it will likely take few slowly implemented countermeasures, especially at the EU and national level, and paralysis will ensue.

This is all the more important because parallel to counteracting disinformation,

The last challenge is to change the attitude of the West itself and to accept the difficult truth: there is no return to the state before the trolls and bots as it is impossible to go back to the times before Facebook.

for example through education in the field of media competences, it is necessary to combat the effects achieved so far through information operations. Bridging the divisions between Poles fueled by the facade media requires a comprehensive approach at all levels: governmental, administrative, third sector and civil society.

Due to nationalistic narratives on both sides of the border and unresolved historical disputes, Polish-Ukrainian relations are much more problematic. In this case, without the will to cooperate on the Ukrainian side, it is impossible to take effective countermeasures.

Second, disinformation is a process. It means that it reacts to the remedies implemented. Society, more and more aware of the nature and mechanisms of information warfare, is also becoming more cautious about Internet sources — that is why new fake sources will appear, as in the case of the NDP.

Thirdly, it should not be forgotten that the Potemkin media are institutionally supported. In order to secure the

presence of the Kremlin vision of world order in the Polish information space, politicians are enlisted or they create their own parties (e.g. Zmiana [Change] in Poland). Also enlisted are social authorities, academics, with networks of organizations fighting for “conservative values” being built. In parallel to building social resilience, it is also necessary to seal the breaches already created within it.

Fourthly, experts in the field of social media are paying attention to the growing importance of video, which is manifested, for example, by the popularization of the story format on Facebook and Instagram. In conjunction with the increasingly advanced technology of replacing faces in movies (“deep fakes”) and virtual reality, the future picture of the fight against disinformation seems quite grim.

The last challenge is to change the attitude of the West itself and to accept the difficult truth: there is no return to the state before the trolls and bots as it is impossible to go back to the times before Facebook. There will always be states or organizations that will try to force a given society to change their perception of the world, its own country, and of the info-aggressor. The disinforming party usually has the advantage: namely it does not have to obey the same principles and operate in the same legal and moral framework as the target of its actions. In order to keep this practice in check, our societies should become indifferent to this type of content on blogs, websites and on television. In such a way, the continuation of this shady business will simply become unprofitable. It is a completely different topic whether such a situation is likely to occur.

Małgorzata Zawadzka ■

May 15, 2018

PUTIN'S INVISIBLE ARMY

GRZEGORZ KUCZYŃSKI

As far as the law is concerned, they are acting illegally, yet the state willingly utilizes them to implement an adventurist foreign policy. Russian mercenaries are “invisible”, and not only to the organs of justice.

Although they fight and die on various fronts — from Donbass to Syria — by following the orders of Russian politicians, generals and oligarchs, officially, Moscow has nothing to do with them. For the Kremlin, this is a convenient situation, so it is not surprising that subsequent attempts to legalize private military companies in Russia have failed.

Such mercenary companies are a way to implement national interests without the direct involvement of the state — Vladimir Putin already spoke of

mercenaries this way in 2011. With the outbreak of fighting in Ukraine, and the unofficial character of Russia's military involvement in Donbass, armed formations not formally associated with the Russian state became even more necessary.

FROM "VOLUNTEERS" TO SECURITY GUARDS

The global market for private security companies is reportedly worth \$244 billion annually. Russia's market share is only five percent, although there is hardly any other country in the world where there is such potential for creating



SYRIA, MAY 5, 2016. RUSSIAN SOLDIERS PATROL THE RUINS OF THE ANCIENT CITY OF PALMYRA IN TADMUR DISTRICT, HOMS GOVERNORATE. THE CITY WAS RECAPTURED FROM ISLAMIC STATE (OR ISIS) MILITANTS BY SYRIAN GOVERNMENT FORCES BACKED BY RUSSIAN TROOPS.

mercenary companies. Russia is a real forge of personnel, according to various assessments, it is able to deliver from 100,000 to 150,000 people with military preparation to the global market for military services. They are often excellent specialists in their field (snipers, combat engineers). There are more than 3,500 French Foreign Legion veterans in Russia alone.

Russian mercenary companies began their activities in the first half of the 1990s. At that time, “volunteers” were leaving to fight on the side of the Serbs in the former Yugoslavia. Among them was Federal Security Service (FSB)

officer Igor Ivanovich Strelkov (born Igor Vsevolodovich Girkin), later known for combat operations in Donbass. From 1992–1995, several hundred Russian mercenaries were constantly active in Bosnia and Herzegovina, taking part in the ethnic cleansing of the city of Višegrad, among other things. These were mostly military veterans employed by the St. Petersburg-based Rubikon security company, supervised by the successor to the KGB, the Federal Counterintelligence Service (FSK), which in 1995 became the FSB. Without the consent and involvement of the security services and the Russian authorities, the activities of these



© SERGEI CHIRIKOV (PAP/EPA)

A step towards regulating this area of security was the appearance of entities on the Russian market that were more specialized than ordinary security agencies.

that Russian law does not provide for the activity of mercenary companies. The private security sector is well developed, but private military contractors directly involved in combat operations remain illegal. That is why, for example, Moran Security Group is registered in Belize, and RSB-Group is registered in the British Virgin Islands. As Viktor Ozerov, chairman of the defense committee in the Federation Council (Russia's upper house of parliament), said: "Private military companies are and will remain illegal in Russia. But if they are registered abroad, Russia is not legally responsible for anything."

"volunteers" would have been impossible. According to the same scheme, the Kremlin later sent mercenaries affiliated with the security services to Transnistria, Nagorno-Karabakh, Georgia, the Crimea, Donbass and Syria.

A step towards regulating this area of security was the appearance of entities on the Russian market that were more specialized than ordinary security agencies. Private military contractors, known as ChVK (Chastnaja Voennaja Kompanija), maintain their headquarters and recruit employees in Russia, but are formally registered in other countries. This is due to the fact

This situation suits some of the companies, because legalization would be tantamount to stronger control by state institutions, and that would limit their freedom. On the other hand, this semi-legal status leaves the perpetual threat of criminal liability hanging over the ChVK personnel. Participation in an armed conflict on the territory of a foreign state, carries a penalty of up to seven years imprisonment, and for recruitment, training and financing of mercenaries — up to 15 years. This is taken advantage of by the security services or even politicians

In the first, activities are organized by FSB special forces veterans from the Alpha and Vypel units. The second is dominated by former special forces soldiers of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) and airborne troops.

and influential businessmen, who use mercenaries for risky operations. As a result, in addition to the sale of their services outside the country on purely commercial terms, mercenary companies must pay off the Russian state — most often by performing combat activities outside of Russia. The mercenaries in Russia can be prosecuted under two articles of the Criminal Code: article 359 (“Mercenary activity”) and article 208 (“Organization of an illegal armed formation”). Of course, mercenary companies in Russia do not have the legal means to buy weapons. Either they buy them abroad or they get them from the Russian army (at least in Syria). The unregulated activity of the ChVKs is even beneficial for the Kremlin, as it facilitates control over the mercenaries, who are reminded that they must obey the orders of the authorities, otherwise they might end up behind bars. This status also makes it easier for the Kremlin and the army to wash their hands in the event of allegations of mercenary involvement in conflicts outside of Russia.

Private military companies in Russia can generally be divided into two groups. In the first, activities are organized by FSB special forces veterans from the Alpha and Vypel units. The second is dominated by former special forces soldiers of the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) and airborne troops. The best known, Wagner ChVK, is included in the second group, while the Moran Security Group, for example, is a “civilian” option. There are also large companies operating across a broad sphere, where there is no shortage of special forces veterans from not only the military and the FSB, but also from the Ministry of the Interior. The most well-known is RSB-Group — founded by former GRU and FSB officers (its chief, Oleg Krinitsyn, is a graduate of the Dzerzhinsky Higher School of the KGB, later renamed the FSB Academy) — which boasts that it operates in politically unstable zones, but only in agreement with the legal government of the country. The question of interpreting the legality of a given government remains unsettled. In Libya, the RSB-Group signed a contract with General Khalifa Haftar, the commander of the armed forces of one of the two warring Libyan governments. In spring 2017, 100 combat engineers planted mines around industrial installations in Benghazi. For the RSB-Group, for example, the “governments” of the so-called “people's republics” are considered legitimate in the part of Donbass that is de facto occupied by Russia.

RSB-Group cooperates with the New Zealand military contractor Navsec Group Ltd. Apart from participating in operations in Syria and Donbass, Russian mercenary companies generally work as subcontractors for Western companies (mainly from the US and UK) — primarily in Iraq and Afghanistan. Entities such as: Centr-Antiterror, Tigr



DONETSK, UKRAINE, MAY 25, 2014. PRO-RUSSIAN MILITANTS FROM THE VOSTOK (EAST) BATTALION WALK IN FRONT OF THE REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING. UKRAINE'S ACTING PRESIDENT HAD REPORTED THAT 14 UKRAINIANS HAD BEEN KILLED AFTER A HELICOPTER WAS SHOT DOWN BY PRO-RUSSIAN MILITANTS OVER SLAVYANSK.

Top-rent Security, Ruscorp or Fort Defense Group specialize in this area of activity. Another main area of activity for the ChVKs is maritime security in regions threatened by piracy. Among the contractors that operate in this area are: VST, Muse Group and the Moran Security Group. Moran focuses on the protection of ships and land convoys. It has a military-maritime training center in St. Petersburg. Centr R, Tigr Top-rent Security and Redut-Antiterror, have sent their people to Yugoslavia, the Caucasus, Iraq and Afghanistan. They specialize in snipers, combat engineers, and more. They deal with the protection of convoys, military facilities, oil company personnel and Russian diplomats in Lebanon, Palestine and Afghanistan. Antiterror

is in turn a group of companies consisting of a training center, a squad of engineers and social organizations gathering former special forces officers. Antiterror deals with the training and preparation of mercenaries to perform special tasks in war zones. The company has direct FSB support, which helped it to establish itself in the Iraq region. Other companies include: Antiterror-Oriel, Ferax and Phoenix. Members of the ATK-GRUPP and Byzantium, were also active in the fighting in Donbass, as well as in Syria. In 2015, the media wrote about another ChVK taking part in the fighting in Donbass. On social media, photos of St. Petersburg-based MAR company members appeared with their flags at the entrance to Donetsk.

Even on their website, they admit that they were involved in combat operations in Donbass on the side of the rebels. MAR advertises itself as providing a full spectrum of “security services” in areas of high terrorist activity or political instability. It sent its people to Donbass for the protection of “humanitarian convoys” meant for the Donetsk People's Republic. ENOT Corp. is based in Moscow and is officially engaged in military-patriotic work and collecting help for the breakaway regions, also known as Novorossiia by the Russians. It is known, however, that the mercenaries of ENOT took part in various military activities in Donbass, including fighting with the rebels against the Ukrainians and securing the aforementioned convoys. ENOT Corp. personnel is recruiting people from Donbass for the war in Syria. The company co-founded the “Donbass Volunteers Union”. At its head is Alexander Borodai, one of the most famous figures of the “Russian spring” in Ukraine in 2014. His presence confirms that ENOT Corp. is in a sense a branch of the Lubyanka (FSB headquarters in Moscow). Borodai, associated for many years with the FSB, was the former “prime minister” of the unrecognized Donetsk People's Republic, and earlier adviser to the prime minister of the autonomous government of Crimea in the period of Russian annexation.



© VALENTINA SVISTUNOVA (PAP/EPA)

But the modern history of the use of mercenaries by the Russian state began before the annexation of Crimea. The aforementioned Moran Security Group was founded by four former FSB officers. Vyacheslav Kalashnikov, a retired FSB colonel, became the head of the company. Moran was half owned by Neova Holdings Ltd., registered in the British Virgin Islands. Moran is engaged in the recruitment and training of security personnel primarily on ships sailing in areas of pirate activity. In the summer of 2013, the company was given a mission of a completely different nature. Syria's Ministry of Oil and Mineral Resources proposed the recruitment, training and sending of “specialists” to protect mining, transport and oil processing facilities. Moran did not directly contract with

The modern history of the use of mercenaries by the Russian state began before the annexation of Crimea.



DONETSK, EASTERN UKRAINE, JUNE 1, 2014. PRO-RUSSIAN MILITANTS FROM THE BATTALION 'VOSTOK' PARTICIPATE IN A MILITARY EXERCISE AT THEIR TRAINING BASE NEAR ROSTOV-ON-DON. AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE WERE REPORTED DEAD AND EIGHT INJURED AS FIGHTING RESUMED ON MAY 31, 2014, BETWEEN UKRAINIAN SECURITY FORCES AND MILITANT SEPARATISTS IN THE COUNTRY'S EAST. NATO'S 28 AMBASSADORS MET THEIR RUSSIAN COUNTERPART IN BRUSSELS ON JUNE 2 TO DISCUSS THE SECURITY SITUATION IN AND AROUND UKRAINE IN THE FIRST MEETING SINCE THE ALLIANCE DECIDED IN MARCH TO SUSPEND ALL PRACTICAL COOPERATION WITH MOSCOW DUE TO THE CRISIS IN UKRAINE.

Damascus. Several company managers registered Slavonic Corps Ltd. in Hong Kong, while the main office began to work in Moscow. The company recruited 267 people who signed contracts with the Syrian ministry for the protection of “facilities for extraction, transport and processing of crude oil”. In September 2013, a group of mercenaries from the Slavonic Corps travelled through Lebanon to reach civil-war-ridden Syria. They ended up at a training center near Latakia. Most of them were former OMON (Special Purpose Police Unit) functionaries and Ministry of the Interior special forces.

If they already had combat experience, it was from the North Caucasus and Tajikistan. They were promised \$4,000 a month, \$20,000 for heavier wounds, and \$40,000 for their family in case of death.

On the spot, in Syria, they learned that before they could protect the oil infrastructure, they first had to retake it from the rebels. On October 13, 2013, the Slavonic Corps was packed into buses and jeeps. They received only light weaponry, and the convoy started east — the targets were oil installations in the province of Deir ez-Zor. However,

It soon turned out that the mercenaries operating in Donbass belonged to a new private military company — ChVK Wagner, also known as Wagner's Company or the Wagner Group.

the mercenaries did not make it there. After four days of travel, the convoy was ambushed near the city of Al-Sukhnah in the central province of Homs. Islamic rebels from Jaysh al-Islam outnumbered them several times over. The Russians were saved from slaughter by the arrival of a sandstorm — without casualties (only a handful were slightly wounded) they broke through the encirclement and made it to Al-Sukhnah. However, one of the mercenaries lost a folder of documents and the insurgents raised the alarm that Russians were fighting in Syria. This was not to the benefit of either the government in Damascus or Moscow and the Slavonic Corps was quickly transported out of Syria. But at the airport in Moscow, no one was waiting with flowers. When the two planes landed, they were immediately surrounded by FSB Alpha special forces and all the mercenaries were detained. Eventually, 265 people were released (with a warning). But the two commanders of the Corps, Vadim Gusev (at the same time the deputy director of Moran) and Yevgeny Sidorov (the head of human resources for Moran) were convicted under article 359 to three years in prison. The files

with the personal details of the rest stayed in the Lubyanka. It is not known if this is the whole story of the Slavonic Corps. (Unconfirmed) reports have also appeared that members of this formation were seen during combat operations in 2013 in Deir ez-Zor, Hama and Aleppo.

However, no more than a few months passed, and the demand for mercenaries returned — with the annexation of Crimea and the use of hybrid warfare methods on a large scale. It turned out that almost all the veterans of the Slavonic Corps found themselves in a training center next to the Molkino (Krasnodar Krai) farm in Russia, from where they would go to Donbass. If someone was not willing enough, he was reminded of the Syrian episode and the fate of the commanders who were serving prison sentences.

FROM DONBASS TO THE EUPHRATES

In the war in Donbass, Russia did not only utilize former members of the Slavonic Corps. For example, in the first weeks of the rebellion, the GRU sent the Vostok Battalion to Donetsk, composed mainly of veterans from the North Caucasus. Much was heard of them during the first battle for the Donetsk Airport in May 2014 — the battalion suffered heavy losses. But the main role was to fall to the veterans of the Slavonic Corps.

When the conflict with Ukraine started, the mercenaries were first trained in Molkino, and then, just before being sent into battle, in a military center near Rostov-on-Don, closer to the Ukrainian border. Training was conducted by experienced special forces and defense ministry officers. In June 2014, the first groups of mercenaries began to cross the border. These were generally tactical, company-sized groups. One of them

was commanded by Dmitriy Utkin. It soon turned out that the mercenaries operating in the Donbass belonged to a new private military company – ChVK Wagner, also known as Wagner's Company or the Wagner Group. The name comes from the pseudonym of the commander of the entire formation, Utkin. The “Wagnerites” were seen as early as February and March 2014 in Crimea, among the “little green men” (masked soldiers in unmarked uniforms). Then it came time for battle — in October 2015, the website Fontanka.ru, wrote that Slavonic Corps veterans were seen fighting in one unit. At the end of 2015, the involvement of the Wagner Group on behalf of the “people's republics” was also written about by *The Wall Street Journal*. The Minsk agreements and the ceasefire in Donbass did not mean the end of the activities of the Wagnerites in this area. The mercenaries were used in internal rebel disputes, for example in Lugansk, where they liquidated recalcitrant field commanders such as Aleksander Biednov, Pavel Driomov or Aleksey Mozgovoy. But it turned out that the mercenaries were more important to the Russians somewhere else — as the core “volunteer” units fighting on the side of Bashar al-Assad.

In 2015, after special training in Krasnodar Krai, the mercenaries commanded by Utkin landed in Syria. Shortly after the launch of an air operation by Russia in autumn 2015, the first reports of the deaths of Russian mercenaries appeared. Mercenaries killed in action are, however, not included in the official statistics of Russian losses in Syria. To this point, the Wagner Group has already lost hundreds of men in Syria, serving as cannon fodder on the most dangerous sections of the front. They played an important role in both the Palmyra battles in 2016

and 2017, and at Aleppo. Supervised by military intelligence (the main training center is located on the military range of unit No. 51532, i.e. the GRU 10th Special Forces Brigade), it is hard to even call the Wagner Group a private military company. Protection and securing of facilities is only a marginal part of their activities in Syria. Above all, they carry out military actions related to the plans of the armed forces of Russia. They are a military group that operates under the orders of Moscow and is overseen by Russia's security services, engaging in combat operations into which Russia officially refuses to engage their regular army. The Wagner Group is a private, illegal special force that secretly carries out the Kremlin's criminal orders.

Dmitry Utkin was born in Ukraine in 1970. He entered the military during the Soviet era and made his career in the Russian army. He reached the rank of lieutenant colonel, and retired in 2013, leaving the post of commander of military unit No. 75143 stationed in Pechory (Pskov Oblast); that is, the 700th Independent Special Forces Detachment of the 2nd Independent Brigade of the GRU. He was hired by Moran — taking part in maritime security operations, and he was one of the participants of the ill-fated Slavonic Corps expedition to Syria. After returning to Moscow, he avoided punishment, and a few months later he ended up on the front in Donbass — at the head of his own group of mercenaries, the Wagner Group. The pseudonym Utkin adopted was supposedly because of his sympathy for the Third Reich (Richard Wagner was considered Hitler's favorite composer). The sponsor of the Wagner Group is businessman Yevgeny Prigozhin. Already in 2015–2016, Utkin and his deputy, Andrei Troshev, were seen with Prigozhin's security staff. Both

At the peak of activity in Syria, there were to have been as many as 2,000 mercenaries from this company (the total strength of the Wagner Group is estimated at around 6,000).

men combined mercenary service with work in the structures of Prigozhin's companies, Concord Management and Consulting and Concord Catering. The latter is a catering powerhouse on the Russian market, including for the Kremlin (Prigozhin's nickname is "Putin's cook"). The company earns a lot of money from servicing schools in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and military units throughout Russia. Prigozhin also finances "troll farms", which have been producing anti-Western propaganda and carrying out disinformation activities for several years. For this reason, among others, the businessman found himself on the US sanctions list, alongside Utkin and the Wagner Group. In Syria, the Wagnerites are paid by the Evro Polis company, controlled by Prigozhin. For service in the "sandbox," the rank-and-file soldiers of the Wagner Group get about \$2,500 a month. The wounded can receive up to \$15,000, and families of those killed in combat get from \$20,000 to \$50,000, depending on the rank of the deceased and the circumstances of their death.

At the peak of activity in Syria, there were to have been as many as 2,000 mercenaries from this company

(the total strength of the Wagner Group is estimated at around 6,000). The Wagner force consists of four reconnaissance-assault brigades (each made up of three companies of up to 100 men), an artillery squadron (three batteries of 100 men each), a tank company (twelve tanks), a diversionary-reconnaissance company (150 men), a combat engineering company (100 men), a communications company (100 men), and staff and support sub-units. Equipment, weapons, and ammunition were provided by the Russian Ministry of Defense. Wagner's battle tasks were also received from Russian army officers. It was the officer corps that coordinated the cooperation of the mercenaries with the air force and the Syrian army. In Syria, the Russian command uses mercenaries as front forces and reconnaissance. One of the important tasks is also to guide air strikes to their targets. Their heaviest weapons are mortars, though they are sometimes supported by artillery and tank sub-units of the Syrian army. The basic tactical grouping of the Wagnerites in Syria is the mechanized battalion: with a company of tanks, a mortar battery, and an artillery division, plus a sub-unit for radio-electronic warfare and reconnaissance. The "eyes" of such a battalion operating within a radius of up to 25 km from the main forces are scouts equipped with drones and a JTAC (Joint Terminal Attack Controller).

Initially, the Wagnerites were sent to Syria from a military airport about 200 kilometers from the Molkino training center, but later, this changed. As the Reuters agency has recently determined, Russian mercenaries are being flown to Syria on board private aircraft of the Syrian Cham Wings airlines, traveling from Rostov-on-Don to Damascus or Latakia. Since the beginning of 2017 to



SIMFEROPOL, UKRAINE, MARCH 14, 2014. A RUSSIAN FLAG BILLOWS IN THE BACKGROUND AS AN ARMED MAN IN MILITARY UNIFORM OCCUPIES A MILITARY VEHICLE OUTSIDE THE TERRITORY OF A UKRAINIAN MILITARY UNIT IN THE VILLAGE OF PEREVALNOYE. RUSSIA MOVED MORE SOLDIERS AND ARMOUR INTO THE CRIMEA REGION ON MARCH 14 AMID FURTHER THREATS TO INVADE OTHER PARTS OF UKRAINE.

the end of March 2018, 51 such flights took place. In 2016, Cham Wings fell under US sanctions for carrying pro-Assad fighters to Syria and assisting Syrian military intelligence in delivering weapons and equipment.

The first reports of the arrival of the Wagnerites in Syria date from October 2015. They participated in the first liberation of Palmyra in March 2016, and then in the Battle of Aleppo. The Wagnerites were then well-equipped and armed. In the spring of 2016, most of these mercenaries got paid and returned home. But at the end of 2016,

the decision was made to strengthen the formation in Syria again. The Wagnerites began to come back, but under different conditions. Now, they were supposed to defend oil fields as formal employees of the Evro Polis oil and gas company associated with Prigozhin. The wages were smaller, and the weapons were not so modern anymore, while casualties mounted. At the end of September 2017, ISIS unexpectedly counterattacked against government forces between Palmyra and Deir ez-Zour. Assad's troops retreated, leaving the Wagnerites by themselves, several of whom were

Among them, scouts, saboteurs, and artillery spotters are in the greatest demand.

captured. The ISIS jihadists showed two of them in a video that was released online. The authorities in Moscow stated that the prisoners had nothing to do with the Russian army, after which they were immediately murdered. Their greatest defeat, however, was at the beginning of February 2018. Several hundred mercenaries were massacred by the US Air Force in the Euphrates Valley as they attempted to take over oil installations. They were most likely acting in the interests of Evro Polis, which signed an agreement with the government of Syria, under which it was granted the rights to a quarter of oil and gas extraction revenues in the areas that were to be recovered from Assad's enemies.

Moscow, of course, claimed that it knew nothing and had nothing to do with mercenaries. However, it is known that the head of the operational department of the Wagner Group, Sergey Kim, planned and consulted the operation with the Russian military command in Syria. Contrary to the Kremlin's intentions, the matter of the slaughter of Russian mercenaries in Syria has gained enormous publicity, damaging Putin's image in Russia during the presidential campaign. The Russian authorities never admitted to the high casualties in the Euphrates Valley, but media reports of up to 200 dead mercenaries were confirmed. Already in April, testifying in a US Senate committee hearing, then CIA Director (now Secretary of State), Mike Pompeo, mentioned the killing

of "a few hundred" Russians by the American forces.

Despite heavy losses, Russian mercenaries are still operating in Syria. At the end of March, they were seen securing Eastern Ghouta. On March 28, the US Secretary of Defense, James Mattis, said that a few days earlier a group of Russian mercenaries had crossed a deconfliction line on the Euphrates and entered an area where they were not to be operating. After a telephone conversation between General Joseph Dunford, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and General Valery Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia, the mercenaries withdrew, avoiding another slaughter. It should be remembered that although the Wagner Group is at the core of the mercenary forces of the former USSR fighting on the side of Assad, there are other, less known formations that are not as subordinated to the Russian military, mainly composed of veterans of the War in Donbass. Among them, scouts, saboteurs, and artillery spotters are in the greatest demand. After training in the Krasnodar Krai and the Rostov regions of Russia, they go to Syria. There is no shortage of mercenaries recruited in other post-Soviet republics, many come from Central Asia and the Caucasus. It is from these regions that the "Turan" formation originates. They have standard uniforms and operate alongside the Syrian army.

A TASTY MORSEL

Russia is beginning to run out of cannon fodder. From one conscription to the next (in Russia there are two per year: in spring and autumn) the number of conscripts is shrinking. It is worth remembering that the death of a soldier always causes political damage for the ruling class. It is no wonder that ideas

for legally regulating private military companies have been appearing in Russia for a long time. One of the first attempts to regulate the problem were amendments to the law “on armaments” in 2008, giving the foreign security agencies of Russian companies Transneft, Lukoil and Gazprom, the right to use service weapons to ensure the safety of facilities. Three years later, the need to form “volunteer units of reservists in the FSB, SWR and the armed forces of the Russian Federation” was discussed in the Russian press. It was clearly a top-down initiative (it was then that Putin mentioned the benefits derived by the state from mercenary activities) and even the law on the creation of “battle reserves in the force structures” was adopted. However, this still did not directly solve the issue, so in 2013, deputy Aleksey Mitrofanov introduced to the Duma the draft law “On the state regulation of the formation and operation of private military companies”. However, it ended up going nowhere.

The outbreak of the war in Ukraine caused the subject of mercenary legalization to return with even greater force. In 2014, the law was not adopted because it was blocked by defense ministry lobbyists. Why? The FSB was supposed to license and control the activities of the private military companies. The FSB would be responsible for the registration of the mercenary organizations and would monitor their activities both in Russia and abroad. The bill provided for the introduction of a single information system, in which the numbers of licenses issued for the companies would be stored, as well as details of their activities. The defense ministry, people throughout the presidential administration and in the government (all those afraid of increasing the power

The outbreak of the war in Ukraine caused the subject of mercenary legalization to return with even greater force. In 2014, the law was not adopted because it was blocked by defense ministry lobbyists.

of the FSB), did not like this idea. The critics of the act indicated that it would give the Lubyanka a private army of thousands of experienced soldiers. Another attempt to legalize these companies in Russia was made in March 2016 — following a wave of reports about the participation of Russian mercenaries in the war in Syria. The draft by deputies of the A Just Russia party, Gennady Nosovko and Oleg Mikheyev was, however, negatively evaluated by both the GRU and FSB. In effect, the government was opposed, so the authors of the bill withdrew the project.

The case returned again this year. During a press conference on January 15, 2018, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov was asked about the fate of two Russians, members of the Wagner Group, who fell into the hands of ISIS and were killed. The head of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs presented the official position that in this case he relies entirely on the military, whose stated position was that the Russian prisoners had nothing to do with the army. But he also began to discuss the legalization of private forces: “In this case, the legislative framework

It is no surprise that the project has gained powerful enemies.

should be clearly improved so that these people are protected in the legal area.” Duma deputies immediately took up the subject. “The activity of private military companies needs legal regulation, because the semi-legal functioning of such companies is too dangerous,” said Andrei Isayev, of the ruling United Russia party. After just a few days, the parliament passed a bill by the leader of A Just Russia, Sergey Mironov and his deputy Mikhail Emelianov. The new law was to allow members of private military companies “to participate in counter-terrorist operations abroad, to defend the sovereignty of allied states against external aggression, as well as to defend various installations”. On January 23, the project was sent to the government for its opinion. On February 14, the initiative was supported by General Vladimir Shamanov, a former commander of the airborne troops, a veteran of the Caucasus wars (known as the “Butcher of Chechnya”) and currently chairman of the State Duma Defense Committee. He said that “Legalization of the ChVK should be carried out by a separate law in line with global practice”. The enthusiasm of the former military men is easy to understand. In the new project, the functions of licensing and control of the private military companies were proposed to be handed over to the Ministry of Defense. Moreover, Chairman of Russia's Federation Council Defense and Security Committee, General Viktor Bondarev (former Commander of the Russian Aerospace Forces) went even further, throwing

the idea of inserting the companies into the military hierarchy and simply subjugating them to the Ministry of Defense.

It is no surprise that the project has gained powerful enemies. Now the FSB, which in 2014 was in favor of legalization when they were to be in control, has come out in opposition to the legalization of the mercenaries. Lobbying from the Lubyanka *siloviki* (strong men) probably sealed the fate of the act. At the end of March, it turned out that the government did not support the project. The written opinion that the government issued stated that the provisions of the draft law conflicted with part 5 of article 13 of the Russian Constitution, according to which the activities of social associations whose goals and activities are directed at the formation of armed

Once again, the conflict between the FSB and the GRU for control over this new military sector proved to be so serious and so evenly matched that the project was set aside, thus postponing the regulation of this problem until later.

groups are forbidden. The authors of the opinion also point to article 71 of the constitution, stating that the issues of defense and security, war and peace, foreign policy and international relations of Russia, are in the hands of the state. The government's opinion could not have been any different — the Ministry of Justice, General Prosecutor's Office, Ministry of Finance, Foreign Intelligence Service, Federal Protective Service, FSB, National Guard of Russia, and the two ministries which initially strongly lobbied for its adoption: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense both assessed the project negatively. Apparently, it was recognized that it is not worth getting on the Kremlin's bad side.

The critics of the project pointed to the vagueness of its provisions, which could raise serious problems in the future. But it was more important perhaps that too many influential people and interest groups recognized that the project in its current form did not suit their purposes. Once again, the conflict between the FSB and the GRU for control over this new military sector proved to be so serious and so evenly matched that the project was set aside, thus postponing the regulation of this problem until later. Two powerful lobbying organizations are in conflict. The defense ministry and the GRU are associated with the Volunteer Society for Cooperation with the Army, Aviation and Navy (DOSAAF), and the FSB with the Union of Donbass Volunteers. The Lubyanka has always been suspicious of all aspects of the GRU's activity. It was military intelligence which maintained a lot of foreign assets after the end of the Cold War, and the GRU is said to harbor the most plots against Putin. It is possible that arguments by the FSB convinced

The realities of the fighting in Ukraine and Syria have quickly shown that their hope that the participation of “volunteers” can free Moscow from responsibility for their actions is illusory.

Putin himself that mercenaries controlled by military intelligence are a potentially serious threat to his power.

The issue of the legalization and widespread use of private military companies in the interests of the Russian state has become very relevant since 2014, with the development of conflicts in Donbass and Syria. The Kremlin might have thought that by hiring private soldiers, the state was freeing itself from any responsibility for their actions. The realities of the fighting in Ukraine and Syria have quickly shown that their hope that the participation of “volunteers” can free Moscow from responsibility for their actions is illusory. This is the second most important reason why the Kremlin has lost interest in legalizing them, along with the GRU and FSB being at loggerheads on this issue. Politicians will not return to this problem before Russia's military involvement in the war in Syria has ended.

Grzegorz Kuczyński ■
March 30, 2018

LUKASHENKO IS PLAYING SEVERAL PIANOS

PIOTR KOŚCIŃSKI

The Belarusian authorities have declared their willingness for rapprochement with the European Union and the West in general, which is worrying Russia. President Alexander Lukashenko and his colleagues have already made similar declarations, later changing course and turning back to Moscow again. Whether this is a serious entreaty or just another political maneuver, remains to be seen.

The internal situation in Belarus remains unchanged, and the expected liberalization, minimal at best. “From an economic point of view, we are heavily dependent on Russia. That is why we have the task of diversifying our relations, first of all economically. We would like to have closer relations with

the European Union. This is our goal and we are actively working on it” — said the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Vladimir Makei in spring 2018. He emphasized that “Belarus is not a part of Russia” and that “Minsk has an independent foreign policy.”¹

¹ Ruslan Szoszyn, ‘Białorusini mówią o dywersyfikacji, Rosjanie niezadowoleni’,



MOSCOW, RUSSIA, DECEMBER 15, 2015. PRESIDENT OF RUSSIA VLADIMIR PUTIN (LEFT) AND FIRST PRESIDENT OF BELARUS ALEXANDER LUKASHENKO (RIGHT) DURING A MEETING IN THE KREMLIN.

The Russian website Lenta.ru declared this is how Belarusian authorities are suggesting to Moscow that they will not be on Russia's side in a conflict with the West. The article titled "Bačka No Longer a Dictator", drew attention to the fact that when Western countries expelled Russian diplomats, showing solidarity with Great Britain, the Belarusian minister was just beginning his visit to London. "The official comments of the Foreign Ministry of Belarus in this matter looked clearly neutral."²

Rzeczpospolita, April 21, 2018; available at <http://www.rp.pl/Dyplomacja/180419287-Bialorusini-mowia-o-dywersyfikacji-Rosjanie-niezadowoleni.html> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

² Bał'ka bolsze nie dyktator, Lenta.ru, April 14, 2018, <https://lenta.ru/articles/2018/04/14/razvernulo/> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

According to Lenta, the change in Minsk's position could already be felt in 2008, during the Russo-Georgian War. Although Alexander Lukashenko praised Russia for "peaceful, wise

From an economic point of view, we are heavily dependent on Russia. That is why we have the task of diversifying our relations, first of all economically.

and beautiful” behavior, he left the decision to recognize South Ossetia and Abkhazia to the parliament, which did nothing. And then the Belarusian president officially stated that recognition of the independence of the self-proclaimed republics would simply not happen. Later, as a matter of fact, there was the presidential election in December 2010, the brutal break-up of an anti-Lukashenko demonstration and Western sanctions. However, the events in Ukraine changed things. Belarus did not recognize the annexation of Crimea and did not support Russian aggression.

Speaking recently, Alexander Lukashenko addressed a statement to the leaders of the European Union. “I just want them to respect us and to be aware that there is such a state in the center of Europe Belarus.” And he pointed out that although in the Belarusian leadership there were “national differences” in the understanding of democracy, “the essence of its foreign policy is multi-vector.”³

THE TRAIN TO GRODNO

A train runs from Grodno, located 25 kilometers from the Polish border, to Poland on European tracks. Until recently, traders were the main passengers, stuffing cigarettes and vodka bottles wherever they could. And it is hardly surprising, cigarettes and vodka have always been undoubtedly cheaper there. Today, most passengers hand over documents to the border guards proving they are allowed to work in Poland and do not think about smuggling at all. On the other hand, Poles traveling to Grodno are surprised by the meticulous customs control that Belarusians are subject to at the station (Poles are

usually allowed to pass without being checked). They stop being surprised when they look into the shops — Belarus has become expensive. Besides alcohol and cigarettes, almost everything is more expensive there than in Poland, even though the citizens of Belarus earn less than Poles. The average monthly salary is €640 (nearly half that of Poland).

“The information that I am getting indicates that people do not feel an improvement to the situation right now. Half of the inhabitants of our country believe that in 2017, the socio-economic situation continued to deteriorate, about 40 percent did not see any changes”, said Lukashenko in March 2018 at a meeting with members of the government.⁴ As he emphasized, over the last seven years, Belarusian GDP has grown less than 6%, so very little. “If our growth is slower than others, it means that we are lagging behind”, he stressed. “We are lagging behind in the field of development, technology and, of course, in terms of living standards. But as president, this is not the only thing that concerns me. You cannot ignore those processes inside the country that have already become persistent. I am talking about interregional stratification”, emphasized Lukashenko.

And indeed, the Minsk region is developing fastest, followed by Grodno; other places are stagnating, and in Mogilev the economic situation has even worsened. There are at least several reasons. Paradoxically, problems are traditionally created by Lukashenko’s closest ally — Russia. Another “milk war” is under way. In 2017, Rosselkhoznadzor, an institution

³ Artiomenko, Siergiej, Otnyt’ dobiela. Łukaszenko wstaje z kolion psle wizita Makieja w Łondon, *Regnum*, May 1, 2018; available at: <https://regnum.ru/news/2398580.html> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

⁴ Łukaszenko potrzebował ustojczego rosta i upreкнуł prawitielstwo w zamusoliwaniu problem, Tut.by, March 2, 2018, <https://news.tut.by/economics/583389.html?crnd=65438> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

controlling food quality and expertly used for political purposes, limited the access of Belarusian food products to the Russian market. In December, it prohibited the importation of products from 54 Belarusian dairies. The Russians are increasingly finding supposedly dangerous ingredients in Belarusian milk. “We will not tolerate this. The intelligence services informed me that Russia imported powdered milk from New Zealand”, said the irritated Belarusian president.⁵

Moscow’s actions result are tied to the persistent attempts to combat “Belarusian shrimp”, that is, goods from the West on which Russian sanctions were imposed, which in Belarus obtain the appropriate stamp and pretend that they were caught in the “Belarusian sea”. If you cannot stop shrimp, you can limit milk purchases. But the “milk war” has more complex causes — this is a form of pressure on Minsk to agree to Moscow’s demands in completely different spheres than the economy. “It is becoming funny. The media publishes jokes about our union [Eurasian Economic Union, EAEU], in which member states act more severely toward each other than with external partners. I am not talking about milk, which has recently become a political instrument. We cannot even easily sell cement”, Lukashenko complained during the aforementioned meeting. And he stressed that the management of the EAEU only “pretended to act”, failing to respond to real problems.⁶ Looking more broadly, the main and insoluble problem of Belarus is that it has largely preserved the former post-Soviet economy, reforming themselves to a relatively

The Minsk region is developing fastest, followed by Grodno; other places are stagnating, and in Mogilev the economic situation has even worsened.

small extent. This limits its growth and makes Belarus dependent upon external support, above all from Russia. This makes reform even more difficult.

MINSK’S WEAKENING POSITION

There has been much talk about Lukashenko and Belarus in the world in connection with the meetings in Minsk, aimed at mediating the conflict in Donbass. Then, quite unexpectedly, the Belarusian capital became a very important place. It was a rare occurrence that Minsk would simultaneously host the presidents of Russia, Ukraine, France and the German Chancellor — as in February 2015. Especially since, following the brutal crackdown against the opposition in 2010, relations between Belarus and the West cooled dramatically. Now in Minsk, experts rarely talk, although the deputy head of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Grigory Karasin, recently said that the next four-party meeting (though it is not clear at what level) could come soon.⁷ The case of Donbass has been overshadowed by the attempt

⁵ Łukaszenko prigrozil’ otwietit’ Rossii na zapriet moloka, Lenta.ru, March 1, 2018, <https://lenta.ru/news/2018/03/01/lukaenraged/> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

⁶ Łukaszenko prigrozil’ otwietit’ Rossii na zapriet moloka.

⁷ Stanisław Chamdochow. ‘Karasin: wopros strieczki gław MID „normanskoj czetwiorki” obsuždajetsja’. *Rossijskaja Gazieta*, May 12, 2018, <https://rg.ru/2018/05/10/karasin-vopros-vstrechi-glav-mid-normandskoj-chetverki-obsuzhdaetsia.html> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

The time when Lukashenko played a role in the international arena, trying to mediate between Ukraine and Russia and hosting European politicians, has definitely passed.

to murder the Russian ex-spy Sergei Skripal in London, which caused a growing conflict between the West and Russia. “Belarusian peacekeepers are ready to stand between the parties to the conflict in Ukraine, if only Poroshenko and Putin could reach an agreement”, Lukashenko recently announced.⁸ And he added that he does not intend to be “anyone’s person”, but only to fulfill an agreement. “If you want me to deploy 10,000 Belarusian soldiers, I will put them on the border wherever you like,” he added.

But perhaps the time when Lukashenko played a role in the international arena, trying to mediate between Ukraine and Russia and hosting European politicians, has definitely passed. Now the head of the Belarusian state is trying to prevent a growing conflict with Russia, an element of which is the “milk war”. According to the independent Belarusian political scientist Uladzimir Padhol, for several years Russia has been increasing pressure on Minsk. Lukashenko himself said in 2014: “We are being threatened that,

tomorrow, Putin will come here and take us over. If they come, we will fight. It is not known yet, on whose side the Russian soldiers will be if they come to Belarus. And I know on which side. So do not threaten us.”

Also last year, an expert from the Minsk Center for Strategic Research and International Politics, Jurij Carik, argued that only Russia was interested in the destabilization of Belarus.

Commenting on a report from the Center (he wrote about the possible triggering of a serious conflict in the state), Carik pointed out that “the leadership of the Russian Federation is interested in transforming Belarus into its military-political bridgehead”. Goal: to create a threat to NATO, so that it will be forced at great expense and effort to strengthen its eastern flank. Lukashenko may be an obstacle to this. If so, the Russians may want to weaken him, and the simplest way is to create internal unrest.⁹ Lukashenko understands this perfectly. As he said recently, Belarus is “an island of stability. If vigilance is weakened for even a minute — they will rip off our heads and we will not even feel it.” Hence the insistence that President Vladimir Putin, fresh off of his election victory, meet him in Minsk. Official reports indicate that such a meeting will take place, although it is not known when. If you read these reports carefully, before the Russian elections it was pointed out that the meeting was to concern in particular “cooperation in the sphere of war and politics”. Lukashenko wants to obtain planes and Iskander missiles from Russia, and Putin wants to get permission to establish an airbase in

⁸ Łukaszenko: Nasi mirotwórcy wstanut między stronami konfliktu w Ukrainie pri zgołasii Poroszenko i Putina, Tut.by, February 18, 2018, <https://news.tut.by/economics/581647.html> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

⁹ Aleksandr Bankowicz. ‘Jurij Carik: Rossiya jedinstwiennaya zainteresowana w destabilizacji Białarusi’, Naviny.by, March 29, 2017, <https://naviny.by/article/20170329/1490784362-yuriy-carik-rossiya-edinstvennaya-zainteresovana-v-destabilizacii> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].



© RAFAŁ GUZ (PAP)

WARSAW, POLAND, NOVEMBER 20, 2013. THE CHAIRWOMAN OF THE MAIN COUNCIL OF THE UNION OF POLES IN BELARUS (ZPB), ANDŻELIKA BORYS, DURING A CONFERENCE ON THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ZPB, DURING THE FIRST DAY OF THE 54TH SEJM.

Belarus and for uninhibited military flights over the country. But the Belarussian president does not want to agree to this, and after the election the “military-political” subject disappeared from the news.

0.02 PERCENT OPPOSITION

Relatively little has changed in internal affairs. The local elections that took place on March 23 this year may have been a surprise to some who were expecting greater (or at least some) democratization of the country. Of the 18,000 newly elected deputies at all levels, only *two* are representatives of the opposition, or 0.02 percent overall. They are Roza Strielchenko, an independent elected to the rural council in the Homel region and Valerij Bilibuch from the

unregistered Belarusian Christian Democracy party in the Brest region. Besides, only a small number of political party representatives were elected — only 2.5% countrywide for all councilors, which clearly shows that the authorities do not want the existence of strong political groups. Pro-Lukashenko communists won a total of 309 seats, doing especially well in Minsk — they have as much as ten percent of the deputies there; another “licensed opposition” in the form of the Liberal Democratic Party of Belarus has only five councilors throughout the entire country.

It is worth noting, however, that only 22,000 candidates campaigned for the aforementioned 18,000 positions,

Polish-Belarusian relations are so limited that possible interventions by the Polish authorities will not gain much.

so there was more than one candidate in only about one-fifth of all election districts. Again, we were dealing with “choices without an alternative”, where voters could only vote “for” or “against”. In reality, they only had one option, because others are very unwelcome: to support the only, right candidate, as in the times of the USSR. “In local elections, the authorities put the finishing touches on options for the parliamentary and presidential elections in the local elections. They tested the effectiveness of falsification schemes and people were checked, ready to carry out violations of electoral law”, Uładzimir Padhol told the *Do Rzeczy* weekly. “The number of oppositionists who made it onto councils did not have any meaning in this context”, he added.¹⁰

Hopes for some positive change seem to be in vain. Several years ago, all political prisoners were released, which allowed for some warming in relations with the West. Today, there are new prisoners, but for some reason the West is quiet. Also the opposition is weak and therefore not very active. It mobilized in March on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the Belarusian People’s Republic (BRL), which existed briefly and was only recognized by Finland (and in practice by the Baltic States).

President Lukashenko, for whom only the Soviet tradition is important, did not say much about the BRL. “On one hand, the creators of the BRL wanted independence, on the other they were ready to ask for help from anyone, and then they would be under someone else’s boot again”, he emphasized recently.

PROBLEMS OF POLES IN BELARUS

A sad example of the behavior of the Belarusian authorities is the situation of the Poles there. According to official data, there are 295,000 ethnic Poles; unofficially there is talk of as many as one million. In 2005, the Belarusian authorities did not recognize the results of the congress of the Union of Poles in Belarus (ZPB), because they did not like the new leadership with Andżelika Borys at the forefront. As a result, there are two organizations.

The Union of Poles in Belarus, recognized by Warsaw, although illegitimate, is tolerated by the authorities. It organizes various activities and meetings in Grodno and beyond. There is also the “Lukashenko” ZPB, which does exist, but does not even pretend to be active; in the Polish Homes purchased with Polish money in over a dozen cities in Belarus, in former classrooms where Polish was taught, commercial companies are now operating. The Polish group in the kindergarten in Grodno, abruptly done away with in 2015 in the middle of the school year, is not allowed to reconstitute itself.

The Association of Poles in Belarus, which is not recognized by the authorities, began collecting signatures to a petition to create a third Polish-language first grade at the Polish school (there are two). The Grodno authorities have not allowed this for another consecutive year, and some children, even taking part in preparatory

¹⁰ Uładzimir Podgot — statement noted by the author, April 2018.



MINSK, BELARUS, DECEMBER 20, 2010, INDEPENDENCE SQUARE.

courses, are not admitted to this school. The Association of Poles in Belarus wants this to change this year.¹¹

There has now appeared, or rather returned, another serious problem. It turned out that the government of Belarus approved changes in the education law, which will make some of the subjects in minority (Polish and Lithuanian) schools to be taught in the state language. And this doubtlessly means in Russian, because the Belarusian language is still in second place behind Russian in schools. On a national scale, 130,000 students

are taught in Belarusian out of every million.¹²

Meanwhile, Polish-Belarusian relations are so limited that possible interventions by the Polish authorities will not gain much. Whereas, the government of Belarus does not concern itself with the activities of the unrecognized wing of the Union of Poles, and the legal faction does nothing. Generally, so far, both Poland and other Western countries were not capable of speaking with Alexander Lukashenko. Just as there were no ideas for Belarus and for Lukashenko, there still are none. Which he knows perfectly well, playing on several pianos at once with difficulty, so as not to lose power — and not lose Belarus.

Piotr Kościński ■
June 1, 2018

¹¹ Wraca groźba rusyfikacji polskich szkół. Andżelika Borys: Związek Polaków na Białorusi zapowiada protesty, jeśli nic się nie zmieni, PolskieRadio.pl, April 13, 2018., <https://www.polskieradio.pl/75/921/Artykul/2101007,Wraca-grozba-rusyfikacji-polskich-szkol-Andzelika-Borys-Zwiazek-Polakow-na-Bialorusi-zapowiada-protesty-jesli-nic-sie-nie-zmieni> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

¹² Nastassija Rouda, Zachowujcie: spis szkół Minska i bujnych haradou Białorusi, dze wuchac' pa-biełausku, Tut.by, July 13, 2017, <https://news.tut.by/society/547152.html> [Retrieved: May 12, 2018].

KALININGRAD'S ISLAND OF MISFORTUNES — A RUSSIAN OFFENSIVE FROM KALININGRAD

ALEKSANDER KRÓL

The Kaliningrad Region, also called Russia's island in Europe, is mainly associated with the military threat it poses. The Russian missile systems deployed there and their fleet operating on the Baltic Sea, act upon the imaginations of its neighbors. As such the issue of further militarization presents a serious threat to NATO countries.

Military and psychological factors, however, are not the only dimension of the challenges to the security of states in the region. The Russian exclave on the Baltic Sea is the staging area for Russian intelligence services operating in Poland and Lithuania, but also the nerve center for the ideological subversion of its neighbors — Poland and Lithuania!

Situated on the shores of the Baltic Sea, Kaliningrad is a Russian island surrounded by NATO and European Union countries. During the Cold War, the region was a heavily fortified Soviet military base, constituting the starting point for any Soviet offensive against NATO. After the self-dissolution of the USSR, the district ceased to fulfill its task. Separated from the Russian center, it needed a new concept for development.



© TOMASZ WASZCZUK (PAP)

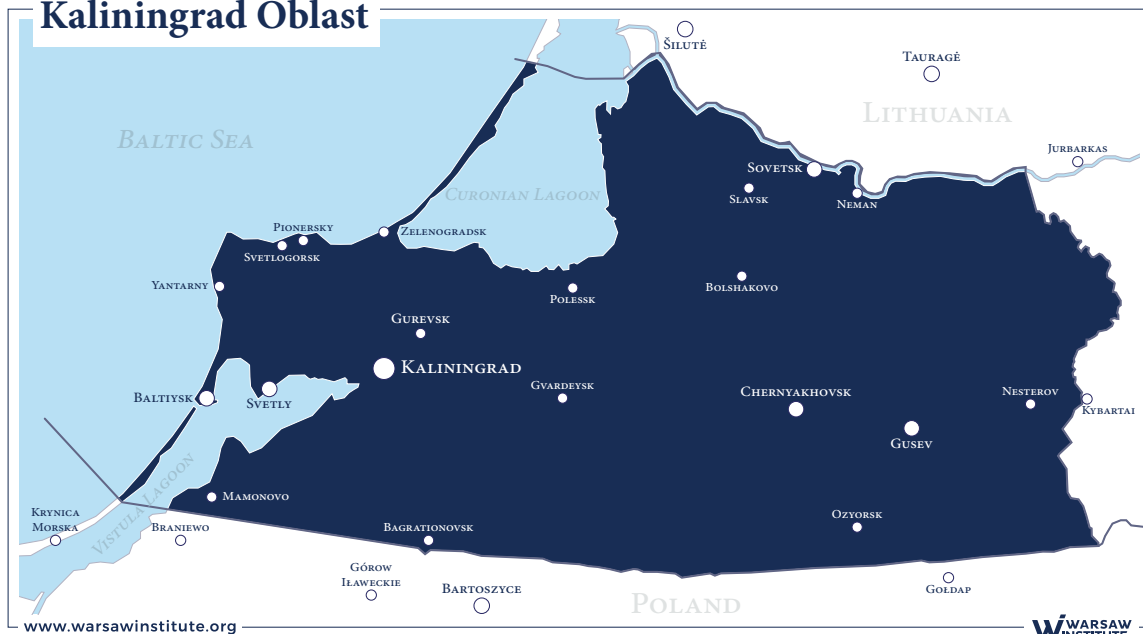
BRANIEWO, POLAND, APRIL 28, 2018. MOTORCYCLISTS ON THE WAY BACK FROM A CEREMONY AT THE WAR CEMETERY IN BRANIEWO, ORGANIZED FOR THE 73RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR II. ABOUT 200 RUSSIANS PARTICIPATED IN THE COMMEMORATION, INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF THE RUSSIAN ADMINISTRATION OF THE KALININGRAD DISTRICT, VETERANS, STUDENTS FROM RUSSIA, AS WELL AS RUSSIAN AND POLISH MOTORCYCLISTS. THE VISIT OF THE RUSSIANS IS PART OF THE CELEBRATION OF VICTORY DAY IN THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR (1941–1945).

Over the years, various ideas for Kaliningrad have appeared in the Kremlin and in the West. Among Russian authorities, two competing concepts arose. One, a “Russian Hong Kong” — a special region that was supposed to be a bridge for contacts between east and west. A place where trail initiatives were to be rolled out — then introduced in Russia itself. The second was a re-development into a strongly militarized strategic base. There were many lesser proposals in the discourse that promised stable development of the region without outside financial help. Unrealistic ideas were often circulated among political scientists, publicists and

officials. Kaliningrad was to become the “Russian Las Vegas” — thus attracting investment from the West. There were even separatist concepts. Kaliningrad

During the Cold War, the region was a heavily fortified Soviet military base, constituting the starting point for any Soviet offensive against NATO.

Kaliningrad Oblast



was to become the fourth Baltic state, or “EuroRussia” independent of the Russian Federation. The often emphasized “specialness” of Kaliningrad’s Russians (more European, less susceptible to Kremlin propaganda), was also supposed to be a cause for local separatism. However, it is a marginal phenomenon.

MILITARIZATION 2.0

With Vladimir Putin’s ascendancy to power, the strategy of Kaliningrad as a “pilot region” in Russia was gradually rejected, and the option of re-militarization was pursued. Although the exclave never completely lost its military role, the return to militarization made it the vanguard of the Russian war machine thrust into the West. The step by step increase of military potential in the region also gave the Russian Federation new foreign policy tools to use against countries in the NATO alliance.

This multidimensional process has gained in intensity, especially over the last decade. One facet is to maintain a military component of strategic

importance; that is one able to engage enemy forces in the event of a potential armed conflict. On the other hand, the militarization of the region has a distinct psychological character.

The armed forces stationed in Kaliningrad conduct regular provocations in the basin of the Baltic Sea, and are also an instrument of “war propaganda”. Provocative operations are carried out from the region’s airports and ports. The Russian fleet regularly approaches or crosses the boundaries of the maritime economic zones of three Baltic countries. Similar activities are carried out using air forces. Russian fighters fly with their transponders turned off or fly dangerously close to Baltic airspace, regularly testing NATO’s readiness in the eastern Baltic region.

Aside from these provocations, war propaganda is also conducted. By means of information campaigns in the media, headlines appear designed to arouse an atmosphere of fear among neighbors. These include news circulating in the infosphere of the latest missile systems,

for example “Warsaw within the range of Russian missiles” or “Russian tanks would take Warsaw in 72 hours.” The crowning example is the information campaign around the cyclical “Zapad” maneuvers, which also take place in Kaliningrad. Broad dissemination of information about certain scenarios and variants has a similar character. Its purpose is to arouse visceral fear of the threat of war among its closest neighbors. In a broader sense, it is the method of deterring the NATO bloc, that is recognized by the Russian Federation as an enemy.

In addition to the psychological factor, missile systems deployed in Kaliningrad pose a real challenge to NATO's eastern flank. The missile systems assembled in the region have led to the creation of a multi-level, anti-access system — the so-called A2/AD strategy. Rocket forces located in the region and the Baltic Fleet create a special zone that prevents the enemy from entering the theater of military activities (Anti-Access) and depriving him of the freedom of operation in the region (Area Denial).

A STRANGE WAR

Tight security associated with the increase of military forces and material in the region or using it for propaganda purposes, are not the only threats to neighboring countries coming from Kaliningrad. Often less visible, but no less dangerous, are Russia's harmful activities using non-military means. The Russian Federation uses a number of tools from the Soviet era to conduct cultural-political aggression. In using agencies close to the Kremlin — so-called GO-NGOs (state-sponsored non-governmental organizations) they are wielding tools characteristic of Western political systems. In contrast to “soft power” (the potential to attract other entities), their actions are actually

Depending on the recipient, an appropriate message is chosen, according to the broad key of the syncretic ideology of Eurasianism — a specific combination of several seemingly different traditions — the great Russian Empire, the Orthodox world, the Russian-speaking community, and neo-Bolshevism.

destructive. The Russian Federation uses tools commonly associated with cultural or public diplomacy to carry out ideological subversion in a target society. Depending on the recipient, an appropriate message is chosen, according to the broad key of the syncretic ideology of Eurasianism — a specific combination of several seemingly different traditions — the great Russian Empire, the Orthodox world, the Russian-speaking community, and neo-Bolshevism.

Overtly destructive activity by political means is supported by the secret activity of the Russian security services. Kaliningrad is the staging area for actions carried out by the Federal Security Service (FSB) in Poland and Lithuania. Despite the fact that the FSB is a counterintelligence organization,

it has the power to act offensively. The FSB and the border guards subject to it, have the authority to conduct offensive operations in the area of the former USSR. The FSB's responsibilities also include "shallow" intelligence conducted on the border area.

According to the annual reports of the State Security Department of Lithuania, the FSB operates in the borderland in two main areas. The Russians are trying to reach both national and local Lithuanian officials. The second goal is to reach local representatives of security services — policemen, firefighters and border guards. In order to reach these groups, citizens of infiltrated countries who travel to Kaliningrad for professional purposes are utilized. The Russians are equally interested in making contact with businessmen staying in Kaliningrad, social activists, and also those involved in organized crime operating on the borderlands.

WHOEVER CONTROLS THE PAST HAS POWER OVER THE FUTURE

For several years, Kaliningrad has been a battlefield for an internal ideological war, which has also spilled over into neighboring regions. After the outbreak of the Euromaidan in Ukraine, the central authorities ceased to focus only on the militarization of the region, but also began to pay attention to the ideological aspect of the region's existence. The remnants of the memory of the former German — "foreign" — past were pushed even further to the periphery, in favour of increasingly promoting "Russian values" in the region. The central authorities expelled the German House NGO from the district — deeming it a "foreign agent of influence". In return, they have supported Russian "patriotic" organizations, e.g. Yunarmia (Youth Army) and the neo-Cossack movement.

The manipulation of history and using the politics of memory to build one's own policy is a tool of long-term influence.

The ideological closing of ranks in Kaliningrad has spilled over the district's borders. It is used both internally to strengthen the ideological influence on the inhabitants of the region, and also on the outside.

The manipulation of history and using the politics of memory to build one's own policy is a tool of long-term influence. The preservation of the remnants of the Soviet past in neighboring countries has two functions. It builds an ideological base in the region and heightens tensions in the enemy's society. That said the Lithuanian and Polish communities neighboring Kaliningrad are quite resistant to the Russian narratives related to the legacy of World War II. Poland's resistance is especially conditioned by historical and cultural factors. In the last few years, however, in Lithuanian society, awareness campaigns and effective action against Russian manipulations have managed to increase awareness of the threat.

In Poland, the audiences for the neo-Soviet historical narrative are marginal political groupings, originating to a large extent from the Polish People's Republic (1952–1990) — veteran's organizations and Eurasian communities. One specific example is the narrative about the Soviet East Prussian Offensive of 1945, used

towards Poland. The symbolic dimension is the protection of monuments in the region, for example, the dispute over the monument to Soviet General Ivan Chernyakhovsky in Pieniężno in the Warmia-Masury Province of Poland. Every year there is also a motorcycle rally¹ from Kaliningrad to Braniewo (also in Poland) to honor soldiers of the Red Army buried in the largest Soviet cemetery in Europe. As part of the narrative about the East Prussian Offensive, the Russians underline not only the liberator role of the Red Army, but also its contributions towards the incorporation of the former lands of East Prussia into Poland.²

In Lithuania, the target is the Russian minority. For example, the narrative about the Soviet liberation of Klaipėda in 1945 is used against the residents of the city.³ In past years, besides local politicians, the Russian consulate and local Russians, pilgrimages of veterans from Kaliningrad went there.⁴ It is

¹ "Rosjanie pogniawali się za 'Nocne Wilki'", Braniewo.wm.pl, May 6, 2017, <http://braniewo.wm.pl/436699,Rosjanie-pogniewali-sie-za-Nocne-Wilki.html> [Retrieved: May 1, 2018].

² "Kaliningradcy pochtili pamjat pogibshih sovetskikh bojcov v Polshe", Den Pobedy, April 29, 2017, <http://www.9may.ru/society/20170429/1493386807.html> [Retrieved: May 1, 2018].

³ Mindaugas Milinis, "Gegužės 9-osios minėjime Klaipėdoje – grėsmingi ženklai", DELFI, May 9, 2016, <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/geguzes-9-osios-minejime-klaipedoje-gresmingi-zenklai.d?id=71219852> [Retrieved: May 1, 2018].

⁴ Vakarų ekspresas, "į Klaipėdą atvažiuos karo veteranai iš Kaliningrado" Vakarų ekspresas, February 7, 2015, <http://www.vl.lt/naujienos/klaipeda1/klaipeda/i-klaipeda-atvaziuos-karo-veteranai-is-kaliningrado-1312863/> [Retrieved: May 1, 2018].

РОССИЯ

ГОСУДАРСТВЕННАЯ ПРОГРАММА ПО ОКАЗАНИЮ СОДЕЙСТВИЯ
ДОБРОВОЛЬНОМУ ПЕРЕСЕЛЕНИЮ СООТЕЧЕСТВЕННИКОВ
В РОССИЙСКУЮ ФЕДЕРАЦИЮ

Соотечественниками являются лица, имевшие гражданство СССР, а также их прямые потомки, владеющие Русским языком.

Калининград и Калининградская область – ближайший регион России, принимающий соотечественников. О других регионах, принимающих участие в Госпрограмме, можно узнать на сайте: <http://www.ruvek.ru/?module=regions&action=list>

Перечень документов, которые подаются для рассмотрения возможности участия в Госпрограмме, а также другая информация: <http://lithuania.mid.ru/gosprogramma>

Консультирование и приём документов по Госпрограмме ведётся по будням с 8:15 до 11:30 и с 13:15 до 15:30 по предварительному согласованию по электронной почте kolatyva@rusemb.lt или телефону (8 5) 272-38-93. Просим сообщить Ваше имя, номер телефона, регион, в который Вы хотели бы переселиться, желаемое время посещения консульского отдела посольства Российской Федерации.

Таблица социально-экономических показателей Литвы и России

| Статистические данные | ЛИТВА | РОССИЯ |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| цена 1 кВтч | 0,12 евро | 0,04 евро |
| цена 1 литра бензина | 1 евро | 0,5 евро |
| коммунальные платежи (за центральное отопление, электричество, воду, вывоз мусора и прочее) 3-комнатной квартиры, в которой проживает семья из 4 человек | в Вильнюсе 280 евро в месяц зимой | в Калининграде 70 евро в месяц зимой |
| цена основных продуктов и товаров (хлеб, крупы, яйца, туалетная бумага и др.) | в 2 раз дороже | в 2 раза дешевле |
| средняя зарплата (на руки) | 500 евро | 430 евро (30 000 рублей) |
| покупательная способность | ниже | выше |
| на содержание семьи остаётся (смотреть подсчёты ниже таблицы) | 120 евро | 310 евро |
| на содержание семьи остаётся от зарплаты, в % | 24 % | 72 % |
| богатство | в 3 раза ниже | в 3 раза выше |
| уровень жизни | ниже | выше |

Если взять семью из 4 человек, живущую в 3-комнатной квартире в Литве и в Калининграде, то получается, что глава семьи зарабатывающий среднюю зарплату в 500 евро в Литве, оплатив коммунальные платежи и 2 раза залив в бак машины по 50 литров топлива, на содержание семьи может потратить только 120 евро (500 – 280 – 100 = 120), что составляет 24% от зарплаты, в то время как в Калининграде россиянин оплатив коммунальные платежи и 2 раза залив в бак машины по 50 литров топлива, на содержание семьи может потратить 310 евро (430 – 70 – 50 = 310), что составляет 72% от зарплаты. Получается, что житель Калининграда богаче жителя Литвы в 3 раза (72% / 24% = 3 раза).

A PROPAGANDA LEAFLET DISTRIBUTED IN LITHUANIA BY THE EMBASSY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION. IT ENCOURAGES LITHUANIANS TO MIGRATE TO THE KALININGRAD REGION.

similar to the case of the “liberation” of Warmia and Masury, though the role of the Red Army in connecting Klaipėda to Lithuania is much more strongly emphasized.

According to the statement contained therein, the standard of living in Kaliningrad is three times higher than in Lithuania, a blatant falsehood.⁵

⁵ Vaidas Saldžiūnas, "Vilniečių pašto dėžutėse - Rusijos kvietimas ten, kur 'pragyvenimo lygis aukštesnis tris kartus'" DELFI, 12 December 2016, <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/lithuania/geguzes-9-osios-minejime-klaipedoje-gresmingi-zenklai.d?id=71219852> [Retrieved: May 1, 2018].



© TOMASZ WASZCZUK (PAP)

PIENIEŻNO, POLAND, MARCH 5, 2016. THE PARTIALLY DISMANTLED MONUMENT OF RED ARMY GENERAL IVAN CHERNYAKHOVSKY, WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LIQUIDATION OF POLISH HOME ARMY UNITS IN THE VILNIUS REGION. IN 2014, THE PIENIEŻNO CITY COUNCIL EXPRESSED DESIRE TO DISMANTLE THE MONUMENT, WHICH TRIGGERED PROTESTS IN RUSSIA. IN SEPTEMBER 2015, THE MUNICIPALITY OBTAINED A PERMIT FOR ITS DEMOLITION AND REMOVED THE BUST OF THE GENERAL FROM THE MONUMENT.

In the Lithuanian case, reinforcing the Soviet past is intended to maintain resentment towards the Soviet era and to divide Lithuanian society internally. In the case of Poland, motorcycle rallies to Braniewo have a different character. The cultivation of Soviet memory is used for the domestic market — consolidating the memories of the people of Kaliningrad. For external use, however, the participants of the event in Braniewo are used in an instrumental manner. For example, as “good Poles” who have not succumbed to “Russophobia”.⁶

A NOT ENTIRELY BENEFICIAL COOPERATION

A significant part of activities related to the politicization of cultural life and/or history on the Kaliningrad-Poland-Lithuania borderland, takes place within the framework of natural cross-border cooperation. It takes place at the level of interchanges between small NGOs from the border area, but also larger institutions. Exchanges between universities or other academic institutions are taken advantage of.

Cross-border cooperation programs, within the framework of the EU, between Poland, Russia and Lithuania are conducive to the politicization process. One of the aspects of this undertaking is cooperation in the cultural arena. These programs are certainly beneficial for both parties (Russia and the EU member countries). However, looking at how Russia is trying to politicize history, among other areas, the cooperation may also have a different, less favorable dimension.

Publicly available reports by the Lithuanian security services indicate the negative aspects of cross-border

cooperation. According to information collected by the Lithuanians, the Russians are trying to abuse the benefits afforded to them under the joint program. There have been cases where officers of the FSB were operating under the cover of regional cooperation to gain contacts on the other side of the border. They presented themselves as project coordinators, or peripheral administrators responsible for the implementation of the program.

While the neo-Soviet, pseudo-historical narrative, seems insignificant and does not pose a serious threat for now, it may make inroads in the long-term perspective. The Russians take the long-view. This is clearly shown in the case of the “Donetsk People’s Republic”, where this moniker and the neo-Soviet narrative of history connected with it was once meaningless and marginal. In 2014, however, it was revived by Russian experts and blown up to the level of an artificial separatist national policy with real consequences.

Linking marginal, local social activists or politicians in the network through various cultural or historical events, builds a network of influence. It gives the Kaliningrad Russians easy opportunities to make contacts in academic or local government circles. Cross-border cooperation taking place within the EU may however be something of a double-edged sword. Projects implemented within it may not only fulfill the objectives of EU policy towards the Kaliningrad Region but also the objectives of Russian actions against European neighbors.

Aleksander Król ■

May 1, 2018

⁶ “Kaliningradcy pochtili pamjat pogibshih sovetskikh bojcov v Polshe”.

POLAND AND UKRAINE: HISTORY DIVIDES

PIOTR KOŚCIŃSKI

Although Polish-Ukrainian relations are more than just good, unfortunately, they have recently found themselves in the shadow of a difficult history between the two nations. In Central and Eastern Europe, history still plays a very important role, and often has a dominant influence on political relations.

Trade between Poland and Ukraine is developing rapidly. In 2017, Polish exports to Ukraine grew by 25 percent. Polish investments in Ukraine are gradually expanding (close to \$800 million). Also, Ukrainians are setting up their companies in Poland, mainly in the commercial and service industries (transportation, gastronomy,

construction).¹ In contrast, a very large group of Ukrainians have found employment in Poland (the number is estimated at two million people), although most of them do not come here permanently, but only temporarily — so the rotation of Ukrainian employees is

¹ E. Bodio, “Polskie firmy z nadzieją patrzą na Ukrainę”, *Rzeczpospolita*, February 21, 2018, <http://www.rp.pl/Biznes/302219959-RZECZOBIZNESIE-Elzbieta-Bodio-Polskie-firmy-z-nadzieja-patrza-na-Ukraine.html> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].



© TOMASZ GZELL (PAP)

WARSAW, POLAND, JULY 7, 2016. A RALLY ORGANIZED BY NATIONALIST, BORDERLAND AND PATRIOTIC GROUPS IN FRONT OF THE SEJM IN WARSAW. THE DEMONSTRATORS EXPRESSED THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE LAW ON THE DESIGNATION OF JULY 11 AS THE NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE VICTIMS OF UKRAINIAN GENOCIDE IN VOLHYNIA.

high. It has been forecast that this number may increase to three million.² In some cities, the percentage of Ukrainian workers is significant, for example in Wrocław, a large city and the capital of Lower Silesia, there are as many as 64,000 Ukrainians, or about ten percent of the city's population.³ Generally, Poles are very positively inclined towards the Ukrainians. The media only rarely reports cases of negative treatment of Ukrainians,

² M. Lis, „Za rok w Polsce będzie pracować 3 mln Ukraińców. Ich pensje rosną szybciej niż przeciętne», Money.pl, October 25, 2017, <https://www.money.pl/gospodarka/unia-europejska/wiadomosci/arttykul/ukraincy-pracujacy-w-polsce-pensja-liczba,118,0,2381430.html> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].

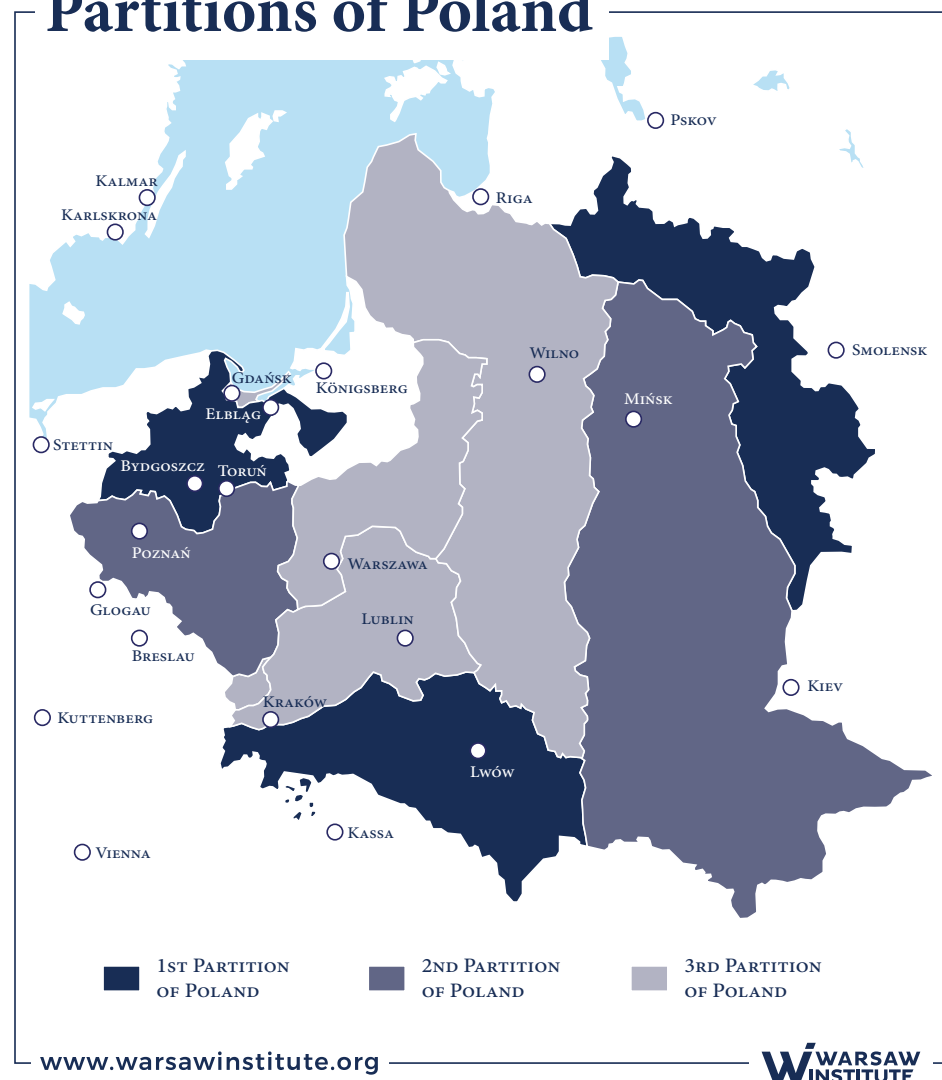
³ B. Organisty, „Co dziesiąty mieszkaniec Wrocławia to Ukraińiec. Są tu bardziej niż mile widziani”, Gazeta Wrocławska, April 19, 2017, <http://www.gazetawroclawska.pl/wiadomosci/a/co-dziesiaty-mieszkaniec-wroclawia-to-ukrainiec-sa-tu-bardziej-niz-mile-widziani,11999288/> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].

A very large group of Ukrainians have found employment in Poland (the number is estimated at two million people).

and the same goes as far as crime by Ukrainians — it is not substantial.

What is more, Poland still enjoys sympathy among Ukrainians — according to the latest research by the American think tank IRI, 58 percent of Ukrainians have a positive or very positive attitude towards Poland, while just over one percent have a negative attitude; the European Union as a whole trails Poland (54 percent to six percent) as does Belarus

Partitions of Poland



(52 percent to one percent), followed by Canada, Germany and Lithuania.⁴ Meanwhile, presidents, prime ministers or ministers of both countries talk primarily about the difficult problems of common history, and parliaments adopt special laws or resolutions on these matters.

A COMPLICATED 20TH CENTURY

After the end of the First World War, the balance of power in Europe changed, with the fall of empires, including the German,

Russian and Austro-Hungarian empires, which in the eighteenth century had partitioned Poland (also known as the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth). Thus, Poland was reborn, and its leaders sought to regain the former pre-partition state borders. So, they aspired to acquire some of the areas from which the Ukrainians wanted to create their state. In 1918, it was impossible to delineate a clear border separating Poles from Ukrainians. The best example is the city of Lviv (earlier Lwów), where before the Second World War most of the inhabitants were Poles, but mainly Ukrainians lived in the surrounding villages.

⁴ Public Opinion Survey of Residents of Ukraine, June 9 – July 7, 2017, http://www.iri.org/sites/default/files/2017-8-22_ukraine_poll-four_oversamples.pdf [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].

Presidents, prime ministers or ministers of both countries talk primarily about the difficult problems of common history, and parliaments adopt special laws or resolutions on these matters.

In November 1918, Ukrainian-Polish battles for Lwów began. Poland was fighting against the newly-created West Ukrainian People's Republic. The Ukrainians lost and in July 1919, the entire area of so-called Eastern Galicia (previously belonging to the Austro-Hungarian Empire) found itself in Polish hands. In 1923, the Council of Ambassadors⁵ recognized the sovereignty of Poland over this territory. Three provinces were created there: Lwów, where Poles accounted for 57 percent, and Ukrainians 34 percent, Stanisławów — 22 percent Poles and 69 percent Ukrainians, and Tarnopol — 49 percent Poles and 46 percent Ukrainians. The Volhynia Province (belonging to the Russian Empire during the First World War) was also nationally mixed, with only 17 percent Poles, and 69 percent Ukrainians.

The policies of Polish authorities towards Ukrainians varied. It was not

⁵ The Conference of Ambassadors of the Principal Allied and Associated Powers, founded in Paris in January 1920, successor to the Supreme War Council.

always characterized by favor or even indifference. There were periods of calm, but anti-Ukrainian repressions also took place, including the limitation of the functioning of Ukrainian schools, institutions and organizations. In retaliation, radical Ukrainian nationalists organized terrorist actions. The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), supported and financed by the USSR, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Germany, carried out bloody attacks. In 1931, Tadeusz Hołówka, a deputy to the Sejm, was assassinated, and in 1934, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Bronisław Pieracki, was also murdered. From 1921 to 1939, a total of 36 Ukrainians, 25 Poles, one Russian and one Jew died at the hands of Ukrainian nationalists.⁶

According to Polish historians, starting in 1943, UPA guerrillas murdered up to 100,000 Poles, mainly civilians.

UPA AS HEROES

During World War II, the nationalists formed the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) in 1942. The UPA leadership decided to eliminate the Poles living in Volhynia. According to Polish historians, starting in 1943, UPA guerrillas murdered up to 100,000 Poles, mainly civilians (including in Eastern Galicia). The Poles responded with force, killing at least several thousand Ukrainians.⁷ But the UPA

⁶ OUN-UPA, Istoriya <http://oun-upa.national.org.ua/history/> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].

⁷ 1943 Volhynia Massacre, Truth and Remembrance, <http://volhyniamassacre.eu/> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].

The Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance halted the exhumation of Polish victims in Volhynia.

also fought against the Soviets;⁸ its units effectively engaged with the Red Army and the NKVD until the 1950s, based in forest hideouts. The Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance gives April 12, 1960, as the date of their last battle, 15 years after the end of the war. In this way, the UPA and its leader, Stepan Bandera, became a symbol of anti-Communism in Ukraine and thus took an extremely important place in the historical policy of today's Ukraine, which is still struggling with Russian influence. In the twentieth century there were many significant Ukrainian activists and organizations, some cooperating with Poland, but the large-scale armed struggle — with the Soviets no less — was mainly led by the Ukrainian Insurgent Army.

The leader of the OUN and the spiritual patron of UPA, Stepan Bandera, who was murdered in Germany by a Soviet agent in 1959, is today put on monuments in Ukraine, and numerous streets are named after him. The case is similar for UPA, which has become the patron of several dozen streets in various Ukrainian cities. For Poles it is almost impossible to accept, because before 1939, Poland was enemy number one to Bandera. He took part in organizing the aforementioned attack on the interior

minister, for which he was sentenced to death (commuted to life imprisonment).

In Poland, non-governmental organizations with the consent of local authorities dismantled an illegal monument in honor of the UPA in the small town of Hruszowice in the east of the country. In response, the Ukrainian Institute of National Remembrance halted the exhumation of Polish victims in Volhynia. This caused outrage on the Polish side, which saw innocent people being deprived of the right to a proper burial. These factors, which have accumulated to the conflict since the end of World War II, led to one of the amendments to the Act on the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN),⁹ introduced into the Polish Parliament by the small nationalist party Kukiz '15. This Act refers to documenting and prosecuting crimes committed against Poles (meaning "ethnic Poles", and therefore not necessarily citizens of the Republic of Poland) and Polish citizens (not necessarily of Polish ethnicity — including Jews) and political repressions in 1917–1990. Up to now, there has been talk of two types of crimes: Nazi and Communist. The amendment also specifically references the crimes of "Ukrainian nationalists and members of Ukrainian organizations collaborating with the German Third Reich". In this way, Ukrainians became the only nation mentioned in the Act.

The Ukrainians reacted very critically to the adoption of the law. The Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted a resolution in which it stated that it "categorically refuses and rejects the policy of double standards and

⁸ Ukrainska Powstanska Armia, UINP, <http://www.memory.gov.ua/page/ukrainska-povstanska-armiya> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].

⁹ USTAWA z dnia 18 grudnia 1998 r. o Instytucie Pamięci Narodowej – Komisji Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu <https://ipn.gov.pl/pl/o-ipn/ustawa/24216,Ustawa.html> [Retrieved: June 30, 2018].



imposing the idea of collective responsibility and attempts by the Polish side to equate all the fighters for Ukraine's independence with the crimes of two totalitarian regimes of the twentieth century, Nazi and communist."

AN ACT TO REVIEW

We already know that the Polish law was formulated incorrectly. First of all, in Ukrainian, "nationalism" has a slightly different meaning than in Polish, though the languages are very similar. Ukrainian Wikipedia defines "nationalism" as an ideology and a socio-political movement "aiming at the creation and development

of a Ukrainian, independent state",¹⁰ and thus something that we would call an independence ideology. In contrast, the concept of a "radical-nationalist" movement is closer to the Polish concept of nationalism. While the OUN was guided by a specific "integral nationalism" that is some type of fascism.

Secondly, the range of years 1925–1950 was used incorrectly. The period 1925–1939 was a time when the Polish state existed, the justice system and the police were functioning, and numerous

¹⁰ Ukrajinskyj Nacjonalizm, Wikipedia, <https://uk.wikipedia.org/wiki/Націоналізм> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].



© ROMAN PILIPEY (PAP/EPA).

KIEV, UKRAINE, JANUARY 1, 2015. SUPPORTERS OF THE UKRAINIAN NATIONALIST PARTIES SVOBODA AND RIGHT SECTOR CARRY TORCHES AND A BANNER WITH A PORTRAIT OF STEPAN BANDERA DURING A MARCH TO MARK THE 106TH ANNIVERSARY OF BANDERA'S BIRTH. BANDERA WAS A UKRAINIAN POLITICIAN AND ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE UKRAINIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT IN OCCUPIED WESTERN UKRAINE (GALICIA), AND WHO HEADED THE ORGANIZATION OF UKRAINIAN NATIONALISTS (OUN). HE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PROCLAMATION OF AN INDEPENDENT UKRAINIAN STATE ON JUNE 30, 1941. SOVIET AUTHORITIES AUTHORIZED THE KGB TO ASSASSINATE HIM ON OCTOBER 15, 1959.

Ukrainian activists were arrested and convicted (including Stepan Bandera, who was released from prison during the German invasion in September 1939). In 1945–1950, the Polish state operated under the control of the USSR, and a policy pursued by the communist regime was the prosecution of UPA guerrillas, as well as the notorious Operation Vistula in 1947, consisting of the forced resettlement of all Ukrainian populations from areas located to the southeast of Bieszczady Mountains to the areas taken over from Germany in the north and west.

These were the circumstances when the President of Poland Andrzej Duda referred the Institute of National Remembrance Act to the Constitutional Tribunal.¹¹

¹¹ Nowelizacja ustawy o IPN skierowana do Trybunału Konstytucyjnego, <http://www.prezydent.pl/prawo/ustawy/odeslane-do-tk/art,6,nowelizacja->

First and foremost he appealed against provisions containing the wording “Ukrainian nationalists” and “Eastern Lesser Poland.” The last term was used by Poles to define Eastern Galicia before World War II, which today belongs to Ukraine; according to some Ukrainians, calling it “Lesser Poland” (Małopolska) could be a manifestation of Polish territorial claims, although in fact there is no such thing.

Nevertheless, the proceedings relating to the IPN Act have inflamed Polish-Ukrainian relations in historical matters. The talks conducted in February 2018 between the deputy prime ministers of Poland and Ukraine — Piotr Gliński and Pavlo Rozenka — did not bring any

ustawy-o-ipn-skierowana-do-trybunalu-konstytucyjnego.html [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].



© MUZEUM NARODOWE W WARSZAWIE, WIESŁAW PRAŻUCH (DAP)

LVIV, UKRAINE, 1956–1957. THE BUILDING OF THE FORMER GALICIAN SAVINGS BANK (CENTER), AT THE INTERSECTION OF JAGIELLOŃSKA AND KAROL LUDWIKA STREETS, CROWNED WITH A DOME WITH LEONARDO MARCONI'S SCULPTURE, SAVINGS, AN ALLEGORY OF THE ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF GALICIA.

results. At first, the Polish reaction was restrained, but later an official communique from Minister Krzysztof Szczerski was released: “The Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland is deeply disappointed by the results of talks between the deputy prime ministers of Ukraine and Poland.” It continued that “the lack of a decision from the Ukrainian side on the fundamental issue of lifting the ban on Polish exhumations on the territory of Ukraine indicates a serious decline in trust”.¹²

NOT EVERYONE LIVES IN THE PAST

Unfortunately, the Polish-Ukrainian historical conflict can be expected to intensify. Judging from the exchange of opinions on social networks, especially on Facebook, the subject of the dispute will not only be World War II, but also the interwar period between World War I and II, and even the time of the so-called First Republic of Poland, i.e. before the

All of this raises hopes that the historical conflict will not prevent normal cooperation between the two countries, and that history will not dominate over the issues that people on both sides of the border live with on a daily basis.

partitions of Poland, until the end of the 18th century. This does not bode well for the future. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that ordinary citizens are not particularly concerned about this. In Lviv, on the centrally located Svobody Prospekt, one of the old buildings has the inscription in Polish: *Galiczyjska Kasa Oszczędności* (Galician Savings Bank). This inscription was painted over through the years, and it has appeared again. Finally, it was restored. Several Polish inscriptions on the walls of the houses have also been restored on the Old Market Square. No one is surprised by the pictures of pre-war Lwów in cafes, just as it is perfectly understandable that in restaurants there are Polish menus alongside Ukrainian ones — tourists from Poland are numerous there. All of this raises hopes that the historical conflict will not prevent normal cooperation between the two countries, and that history will not dominate over the issues that people on both sides of the border live with on a daily basis.

Piotr Kościński ■
March 1, 2018

¹² Oświadczenie Kancelarii Prezydenta RP, February 17, 2018, <http://www.prezydent.pl/kancelaria/dzialalnosc-kancelarii/art,58,oswiadczenie-kancelarii-prezydenta-rp-.html> [Retrieved: February 25, 2018].

POLAND AND THE EU: SEEKING A TWO-WAY STREET WITH CHINA

ŁUKASZ SAREK

The Yalta system, the “Iron Curtain” and membership in the Warsaw Pact, situated Poland as the borderland state at the crux of two hostile camps. Political changes in 1989 opened the possibility of establishing normal relations with Western European countries, and the breakthrough was June 1, 2004, when Poland joined the European Union.

Membership in the EU had a huge impact not only on our relations with Western and Eastern Europe, but also with non-European countries. Poland became a part of the common European market and it has gained the ability to participate in decision concerning European affairs. The West was opened to Polish exports and Poland to Western products and

services. The entry into the EU set the optics of Polish foreign and economic policy. Relations with the EU, its members and the US became priorities for the Polish government. For many years, relations with most non-European countries outside the US were not given enough attention, and if they were, they were often chaotic, without a long-term perspective and consistent implementation.



WARSAW, POLAND, SEPTEMBER 4, 2017. VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S POLITICAL CONSULTATIVE CONFERENCE (CPPCC) MA BIAO AND MARSHAL OF THE SENATE STANISŁAW KARCZEWSKI BEFORE A MEETING IN THE SENATE OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND.

WHAT IS POLAND'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CHINA?

The question of how sustainable and long-term relations between Poland and China should be shaped unfortunately remains an open one. Our country still lacks a consistently implemented long-term and accurate strategy for

the development of foreign policy, including economic policy towards China. The key elements of such a policy should be based on consensus between the main political parties. It is not possible to pursue far-reaching political and economic goals towards foreign partners, if after every election, and

Relations with China are a reflection of wider problems of Polish foreign policy towards non-European partners.

even more often, the governmental team is reshuffled or replaced, and the key elements of Polish foreign policy (just the declarations) are changed. Some issues, such as trade policy, including customs and market protection and the negotiating of an agreement on the mutual protection of investments, have been transferred to joint EU bodies. However, the significant great majority of prerogatives connected with running foreign policy are still in the hands of Poland. Relations with China are a reflection of wider problems of Polish foreign policy towards non-European partners.

In the first phase of their governance, the Civic Platform (PO) and Polish People's Party (PSL), maintained a cautious stance towards developing cooperation with China. In 2008, despite strong pressure from Beijing, Prime Minister Donald Tusk met with the Dalai Lama, and earlier, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Radosław Sikorski, pointed to the need to press China on human rights. The cautious distance in political relations had no effect on economic relations. Trade with China grew dramatically, but the increase in imports far outpaced export growth. This trend was not unique to Poland. The situation was similar in other Central and Eastern European countries. The most substantial increase in trade with China was recorded by the Czech Republic during the presidency of Vaclav

Havel, who openly raised the issue of human rights violations in the Middle Kingdom.

The second term of PO-PSL governance marked the beginning of an intensification of economic cooperation and a warming of political relations. In 2011, President Bronisław Komorowski signed a strategic partnership agreement during his visit to China. Deputy Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak was already a supporter of the revival of cooperation with China in the first years of the coalition government. In 2012, under his patronage, the Go China program was launched. The issues of China's violation of human rights and threats from the authoritarian regime in Beijing to the world of liberal democracy were strongly downplayed in the rhetoric of the Polish authorities. Emphasis was placed on pragmatic economic interests, but the political rapprochement with China and change in rhetoric did not result in a strong enough growth in exports that would compensate for the increase in imports in terms of value. Chinese investments in Poland did not take off either.

UNSOLVABLE DIFFICULTIES?

Initially, the Law and Justice (PiS) government continued PO's policy towards China, but with greater involvement and enthusiasm. The visit of Andrzej Duda in China in 2015 and then Xi Jinping in Poland the following year, were to open a new chapter in relations between Warsaw and Beijing and create new economic opportunities for Polish exporters. However, the visit of Prime Minister Beata Szydło to Beijing in May 2017 during a forum devoted to the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), despite meetings with the President of the PRC, Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Li Keqiang, did not bring any significant economic agreements. The pace of

cooperation at the government level has begun to slow down, weakening hopes for significant benefits from cooperation with Chinese partners. At the end of last year, current Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki declared that economic relations with China are difficult, and the Chinese market is hermetic and closed.

The inconsistency of policy towards China results from differences in the goals and methods of conducting foreign policy by individual political parties and factions within the parties, as well as the lack of cross-party agreement regarding the main principles governing relations with Beijing. The discrepancy between the expectations related to cooperation with China and their effects, results from insufficient consideration by some decision-makers in Poland of the goals and priorities pursued by the Communist Party of China (CPC). China's rapid economic development, huge share in global trade, technological development, emergence as one of the world's leading investors and bold economic initiatives, obscure the fact that we are dealing with an authoritarian regime that pursues its goals, often at odds with the goals of potential partners.

The Chinese economic system, known as state capitalism, or a Market-Leninism model, gives Chinese party leaders the opportunity to control the economy at the central level and, in recent years, also more and more effectively, at the local and individual enterprise level. This was especially apparent after 2013, when the fifth generation of rulers under the leadership of Xi Jinping took power in China. The CPC has increasingly effective mechanisms for interfering in the economic life and business decisions of individual enterprises, and the possibility of subordinating their activities to party strategy and ideology.

The inconsistency of policy towards China results from differences in the goals and methods of conducting foreign policy by individual political parties and factions within the parties, as well as the lack of cross-party agreement regarding the main principles governing relations with Beijing.

Currently, China is implementing its Made in China 2025 program, as well as many other similar projects aimed at modernizing the industrial base and implementing modern technologies. The latter will be supposed to maintain the competitiveness of domestic industry, both on the domestic market and on foreign markets. There is also often a lack of reflection that despite many advantages, Poland is at best a secondary partner to the Chinese government, mostly due to its limited possibilities for negotiating terms of cooperation.

Beijing is both playing the role of a leading defender of globalization and free trade, while at the same time making it difficult for foreign companies and products to access China's own market through formal and informal barriers. Forcing foreign enterprises to

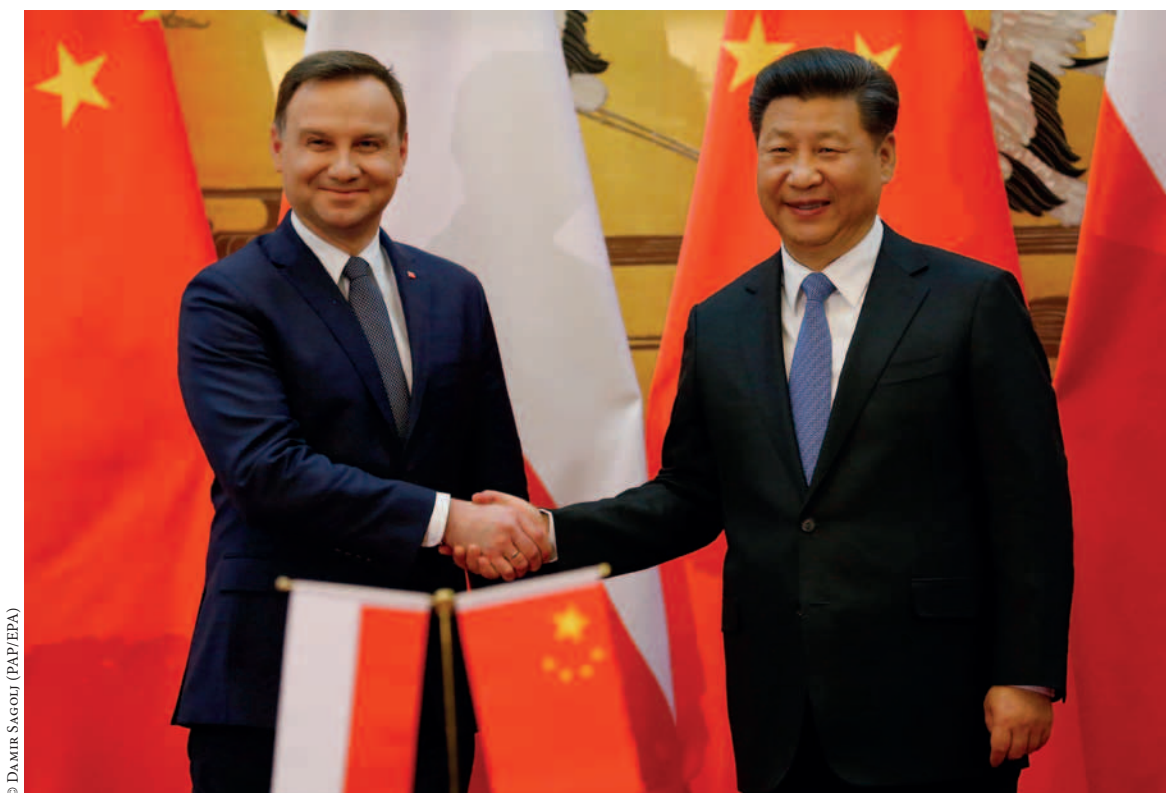
sign joint venture agreements with a majority share held by a Chinese partner, forcing technology transfer to companies located in China, preventing or hindering participation in public tenders to Wholly Foreign-Owned Enterprises (WFOE) or companies with foreign capital, these are just some of the elements blocking the development of foreign companies in China. At the same time, the Chinese authorities support Chinese enterprises by means of various forms of subsidies and legal regulations as well as actual actions, that give them an unfair competitive advantage on the domestic market. The special requirements imposed on imported products and services (in fact, some of them are not applied to Chinese producers) or limits in access to the market for specific groups of foreign products, constitute an additional barrier. There is great hope in the transformation of China's economy from an investment model to a consumer model. One should be however aware that the increase in internal consumption does not mean that the authorities are willing to accept a significant increase in imports. In the food sector where the Polish government sees the competitiveness of Polish producers, the Chinese authorities have implemented a number of programs focused on increasing the efficiency of agriculture and at the same time the competitiveness of the domestic processing industry.

THE BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE

Poland was one of the countries that quite enthusiastically adopted the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) announced in 2013. The Belt and Road Initiative is said to serve the development of economic cooperation between states through the creation of a network of economic links between them, through the coordination of the strategic development plans of

The Belt and Road Initiative is said to serve the development of economic cooperation between states through the creation of a network of economic links between them, through the coordination of the strategic development plans of individual countries, the development of transport and energy infrastructure, a network of trade agreements, financial integration and standardization and the development of interpersonal relations through cultural and academic exchange.

individual countries, the development of transport and energy infrastructure, a network of trade agreements, financial integration and standardization and the development of interpersonal



© DAMIR SAGOLJ (PAP/EPA)

BEIJING, CHINA, NOVEMBER 25, 2015. PRESIDENT OF POLAND ANDRZEJ DUDA (LEFT) AND PRESIDENT OF CHINA XI JINPING (RIGHT) SHAKE HANDS AFTER A SIGNING CEREMONY FOLLOWING THEIR MEETING AT THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE.

relations through cultural and academic exchange.

The authorities in Warsaw were counting on this initiative and Polish activity to grow Polish exports, decrease the trade deficit. They also hoped for Chinese investments to flow to Poland. Chinese companies are interested in participating in infrastructure projects in Poland, but more as contractors, not as investors who are responsible for their market success, and derive profits from current operating revenues. The export of infrastructure construction services was one of the objectives of the BRI, which would create an outlet for Chinese overproduction and at the same time allow state enterprises to survive the transformation period. Chinese companies are bidding for contracts in Poland, competing with

domestic Polish enterprises or Polish branches of foreign companies, while Polish companies do not have similar opportunities in the Middle Kingdom. Big Chinese direct investments have still not emerged. Polish Investment and Trade Agency (PAIH) announcements about untying the bag of Chinese investments got stuck in the realm of declarations. The few investments of private enterprises, however welcomed, have not reached a critical mass that would create a snowball effect. Also, Poland's participation in another Chinese initiative, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), has not brought any tangible effects to date, apart from only obligations to pay the share in initial capital, despite the fact that a Pole, Radosław Pyffel, is the deputy director of this institution. Among AIIB projects implemented in Asia, the ones closest to Poland are in

Development of railway connections is a chance for Poland within the framework of BRI, thanks to its geographic location, its already existing railway infrastructure and new investments, Poland may become a logistics hub for Chinese goods shipped to Europe.

the Caucasus, and Polish construction companies are left with little chance of signing lucrative contracts in the near future.

In 2017, the Polish trade deficit with China amounted to over 94 billion PLN (~\$26 billion) — three times more than with Russia, our largest supplier of energy, and higher than in 2016, which means a continuation of the unfavorable trade trend with China, despite more dynamic export growth. According to some analysts, an increase in the trade deficit with China should not be a cause for concern. Some of the deficit-increasing products are components manufactured in China by international corporations, e.g. from the automotive industry, which bring them to Poland as a component to manufacture a finished product, which is then exported to Western European countries. Development of railway connections is a chance for Poland within

the framework of BRI, thanks to its geographic location, its already existing railway infrastructure and new investments, Poland may become a logistics hub for Chinese goods shipped to Europe. Analysts also indicate that Poland has a significant deficit in trade with other Asian countries. However, it should be taken into account that in many industries in which Chinese imports are growing, it competes with domestic Polish producers and it does not serve as support for export competitiveness by supplying cheaper components. There is an increase in pressure from Chinese importers on industries such as: textiles and clothing, metal products, leather footwear, aluminum products, tires, bathroom ceramics, fittings, some product groups of household appliances and many others. In these industries, the increase in imports means, at least in part, the displacement of Polish products by Chinese producers. It has also not been demonstrated that the potential benefits resulting from the increase in revenues of the logistics industry and customs and other levies will outweigh the costs associated with the growth of imports from China. They do not solve the problem of pressure felt by Polish producers related to asymmetric mutual access to both Chinese and Polish markets.

Cross-border e-commerce is considered a serious opportunity to introduce foreign products into the Chinese market.



WARSAW, POLAND, JUNE 25, 2014. PRESIDENT OF THE CENTER FOR POLISH-ASIAN STUDIES RADOSŁAW PYFFEL DURING THE "POLAND-CHINA – TOWARDS AN EFFECTIVE MODEL OF ECONOMIC DIPLOMACY" CONFERENCE, ON THE SECOND DAY OF THE 70TH SITTING OF THE SEJM.

PROSPECTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF E-COMMERCE

Cross-border e-commerce is considered a serious opportunity to introduce foreign products into the Chinese market. Indeed, E-commerce could also be an opportunity for small and medium-sized Polish enterprises, especially in narrow or niche industries, or those for which barriers created by the Chinese authorities significantly impede export. However, in terms of actually opening this trade channel, Polish companies need to have the same opportunities to offer their products and services to Chinese customers, as those available to Chinese companies in Europe and Poland. Increasing numbers of Polish consumers are making their purchases through the Alibaba-owned AliExpress. The Chinese platform is, however, only available to Chinese exporters. The leading platforms offering foreign companies cross-border, retail sales to China through e-commerce,

such as Tmall Global, JD Worldwide, Kaola and others, are not an attractive channel for Polish micro-enterprises and small companies. The seller selection process favors large, recognizable, premium or luxury brands. Also the deposit amounts needed and the high level of formalization of cooperation, as well as the required selection of products offered, are serious impediments to entry.

Poland is not alone in its disappointment in cooperating with China. Hindrances to European companies accessing the Chinese market, public procurements, and many lucrative industries as areas for investment, have led to growing dissatisfaction in the capitals of Old Europe. Frustrations in Germany, France and other countries, are raising because of formal and informal barriers to the export of European products. Berlin's anxieties have been amplified by China's acquisitions of German companies with their modern

In December 2017, a EU regulation, aimed primarily at China, entered into force. The law provides the Commission with new instruments to protect the European market against the influx of subsidized and dumping-priced imports.

technologies, with threatens the loss of the competitive advantage of German industry. President Emmanuel Macron also points out that France and Europe may lose the technology race with the US and China, and states the need to increase spendings on science and technology development and to start cooperation in this area with other European countries. Both these countries, along with Italy, were in favor of last year's proposals to change the rules on foreign investments and the powers of Member States to control countries that limit investment opportunities for European companies or hinder access to public procurement. In September 2017, the European Commission presented its proposal for unified rules on the control and assessment of foreign investments in Member States, which was in fact aimed at China.

The dissatisfaction of many European capitals is amplified by the inflow of heavily subsidized Chinese products, in industries such as steel, aluminum,

chemical and ceramic products. The EU authorities have decided to confront Beijing in the fight to stop unfair Chinese expansion. In December 2017, a EU regulation, aimed primarily at China, entered into force. The law provides the Commission with new instruments to protect the European market against the influx of subsidized and dumping-priced imports. The regulation was accompanied by a comprehensive report devoted to the mechanics and effects of the influence of the CPC and state administration on the Chinese economy. Unfair Chinese competition also affects the competitiveness of Polish companies. This applies to the steel industry, the ceramics industry, the production of tires, niche industries, such as electric bicycles or industries that are being rebuilt in Poland, such as the clothing industry. In industries in which Polish companies are trying to become European leaders, such as the industrial application of graphene or railways, unfair Chinese competition may become a threat in the coming years.

In Western European capitals, dissatisfaction is also growing with Chinese actions treated as political expansion. Chinese investments and infrastructure projects as well as loans to the Balkan countries go hand in hand with growing political influence. Albania, Bosnia, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia are striving to join the European Union. There is concern that if China gains a lasting influence among the political elites of these countries, before entering the European Union, it will allow Beijing to influence the decision-making processes in the European Union. Western politicians are increasingly claiming that China is breaking up the unity of the EU. They attach particular concern to the 16 + 1 initiative, a platform for cooperation between China and the Central and Eastern European group of states comprising the Visegrad Group

countries, the Baltics and Balkans. Poland was treated by the Chinese side and by Western European states as a significant member state and potential block leader. The rapprochement between Warsaw and Beijing was perceived in the West as a threat and an attempt to build a bloc connected to China within the EU.

This point of view is understandable to some extent. Chinese investments and inflows to the Czech Republic have increased significantly in recent years. The former head of CEFC China Energy, Ye Jianming, until he was detained in China, was an adviser to President Milos Zeman. In 2015, Greece and Hungary, tempted by Chinese investments, were said to have blocked tougher EU resolutions calling for China to recognize the South China Sea ruling. In June last year, Greece blocked an EU initiative to criticize China for violating human rights. In the middle of April this year Hungary was the only EU country to reject the text of the report criticizing the Belt and Rail Initiative for violating international standards of transparency and serving only Chinese purposes. Not without significance should also be the fact that China and Russia are currently developing a quite close political cooperation. Russian and Chinese intelligence services were also considered as the most active in Germany, France and the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (especially in the Czech Republic and Hungary).

Real Prospects for Cooperation with China. Poland should strive to maintain good relations with Beijing, which is beneficial for the intensification of economic cooperation. On the other hand, it is also necessary to convince European partners that Poland will not be a Chinese bridgehead in the EU and the regional initiatives in which it participates will not serve as a tool to break down intra-Union unity. Bilateral relations with China should be

developed as far as possible without affecting the relations and position of Poland within the EU. Warsaw should use its position and look for partners and build alliances within the Union in order to have the greater impact on the shape of a common EU policy towards China. Maintaining relations with Beijing should not obscure Polish politicians' prospects for cooperation with Taiwan. In terms of absolute values it gives way to the PRC, but it is also a significant economic partner of Poland, and in terms of GDP and population and market openness — it is also quite promising.

Threats tied to China's foreign and economic policy should not completely shut off the possibility of cooperation. Lack of huge investments from Chinese state giants can be at least to some extent compensated for through investments made by private enterprises. However, attracting them requires a completely different strategy. Instead of relying on intergovernmental relations, investment offers targeted specifically at Chinese investors and communication channels should be created to reach Chinese entrepreneurs, trade unions, companies and agencies dealing with foreign investments.

Bilateral relations with China should be developed as far as possible without affecting the relations and position of Poland within the EU.

Poland does not have many companies with technologies that would be attractive

The Polish government should work as closely as possible with the EU authorities and other Member States in order to press Beijing to actually and definitely lasting market opening for European products and services. Similarly, they should strive for protection against the arbitrariness of the authorities and they should advocate the idea of equal treatment between foreign investments and Chinese domestic enterprises.

for Chinese investors, although the number of enterprises creating and introducing innovative solutions is still growing. Poland, on the other hand, has a qualified labor force, industrial facilities and a network of specialized suppliers and subcontractors in many industries, as well as constantly improving transportation and industrial infrastructure. It also offers its own sizable market and good access to Western European markets. These are favorable conditions for investment in the manufacturing sector. If trade tensions

between the EU and China worsen, an additional incentive for Chinese investors may be to avoid the effects of EU market protection instruments by locating production within the EU. At the same time, Warsaw should cooperate with Brussels and the Member States on the issues of controlling and limiting investments threatening Europe's competitive advantage, of course, taking into account the differences in interests between Poland and more advanced economies such as Germany or France.

Poland is not a country significant enough to be able to force concessions from China regarding access to their market by enterprises and products. Many other EU members face similar problems. The Polish government should work as closely as possible with the EU authorities and other Member States in order to press Beijing to actually and definitely lasting market opening for European products and services. Similarly, they should strive for protection against the arbitrariness of the authorities and they should advocate the idea of equal treatment between foreign investments and Chinese domestic enterprises. For Poland, it is not good in the long term to serve as a Chinese gateway to Europe. It is not beneficial to open logistic centers, to create transport hubs and to improve transport infrastructure, only to increase imports from China. Forcing China to make real concessions may be a long-term process with an uncertain outcome. Before this objective is achieved, concrete support should be provided to the widest possible groups of exporters, also in narrow or niche industries, where Polish companies have a chance to gain a competitive advantage in the Chinese market.

Lukasz Sarek ■
March 30, 2018

POLAND'S FUMING COMPETITION WITH GAZPROM

JANUSZ KOWALSKI

The consistent efforts of the conservative Polish government, conducted since winter 2015, to build a free market in gas in East-Central Europe, are effectively hindering Russian Gazprom from maintaining its dominant position in this part of Europe.

Poland is the cradle of the global oil and gas industry. This is symbolized by the fact that it was in Poland in 1854 that Ignacy Łukasiewicz invented the kerosene lamp. Also in Poland, the first gas pipeline in Europe was built in 1912. Despite this proud history, Polish energy policy as implemented in free Poland after the fall of communism, including in the gas sector in particular, has been saddled with many handicaps. The lack of a strategic vision, lack of courage to take on the burden of carrying out large, ambitious projects, and the lack of

ability to build coalitions with Poland's allies in the region and the world, caused Poland to gradually lose its energy independence. At the same time, Gazprom's web increasingly entwined Europe, and the specter of Europe's total dependence on Russian gas became ever more real.

In recent years, Poland's role as a regional leader in the energy market has been restored. This process was initiated by the late Lech Kaczyński, who in December 2005 became the president of the Republic of Poland. Thanks to his

In recent years, Poland's role as a regional leader in the energy market has been restored.

initiative in 2006, Poland began a 10-year-long (and ultimately successful) project to build a terminal for receiving Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in Świnoujście on the Baltic Sea. It was on the initiative of the Polish president in May 2007 in Kraków and in October 2007 in Vilnius that Poland, Ukraine, Georgia, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Lithuania, agreed on the necessity of building a corridor for the transport of Caspian oil. The corridor would pass through Odessa–Brody–Płock–Gdańsk, thus bypassing the territory of Russia. The tragic death of the President on April 10, 2010, in the Smolensk catastrophe, interrupted this project, and it lost its biggest promoter. To understand the significance of Polish reforms that have been implemented by the Law and Justice (PiS) government since 2015, it is necessary to describe the situation at the start and indicate key changes and further directions of development.

THE 2010 GAS SUPPLY CONTRACT

At the end of 2015, Polish gas imports came almost entirely from Gazprom. The position of the Russian monopoly was strengthened by an annex to the Yamal agreement of 2010, by the government of Donald Tusk, which increased Poland's dependence on Russian supplies until 2022. The Yamal contract still contains a number of adverse provisions for the Polish side, including price indexation for crude oil prices and ToP (take or pay) clauses, i.e. the provisions which shortly thereafter triggered the effective

resistance of Gazprom's leading European contractors¹. Poland's weak position on the basis of the Yamal contract is also evidenced by the fact that, according to Interfax, in 2014 Poland paid more than ten percent over the EU average for gas and as much as twenty percent more than neighboring Germany; despite the obvious fact that the cost of gas transport to Poland was lower than to most of these countries. Significantly, this contract was concluded after the supply crises of 2006 and 2009, when it became clear to everyone that Putin's Russia was not a reliable supplier and not long after the Security of Supply (SoS) Directive² was adopted on measures to ensure security of electricity supply and infrastructure investments. Poland was not the only country to have such an agreement, but due to the lack of alternative sources of supply and neglected infrastructure, the sensitivity of our country to Russian blackmail was particularly high.

BALTIC PIPE AND OTHER DIVERSIFICATION ATTEMPTS — IN THE PAST

The decision of the post-communist government (2001–2005) to withdraw from the construction of the gas pipeline linking our country with Norway, turned out to be particularly negative for the independence of Poland from the supply of Russian gas. If this project had been implemented in accordance with the 2001 agreement then in 2008³ Poland would have had an

¹ Today, two-thirds of contracts signed by this company in Europe are indexed to prices in hubs or they contain a hybrid formula that is even more beneficial to the recipient.

² European Union, Security of supply of electricity, EUR-Lex, October 18, 2008, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISUM%3A127016> [Retrieved: June 1, 2018]

³ i.e. one year before the Ukrainian gas crisis and two years before the renegotiation of the contract with Russia.



© PAWEŁ PAWŁOWSKI (PAP)

BÓBRKA, POLAND, SEPTEMBER 11, 2011. THE IGNACY ŁUKASIEWICZ MUSEUM OF OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY IN BÓBRKA IS LOCATED AT THE BÓBRKA MINE – THE OLDEST OIL EXTRACTION PLANT IN THE WORLD.

alternative source. Better still, the supplier would have been one of the three largest gas producers in the world, as well as Poland's ally and a much more credible partner than Russia. With regard to this contract, it is often claimed that gas imported from Norway would be more expensive than Russian gas. However, this is denied by Polish Petroleum Mining and Gas Industry (PGNiG) authorities, who confirm that for north-west Poland, Norwegian gas would not be more expensive than gas purchased from Gazprom. Obviously, the possibility of obtaining supplies from two sources would also generate a positive external effect, in the form of improving Poland's negotiating power with Russia.

The Polish negotiating position in 2010 could also have improved by the possession of physical reverse flow service on the Yamal pipeline, which only appeared in 2014, or the construction of the LNG terminal in Świnoujście, which was not put into operation until 2015 and where the first LNG carrier was received in June 2016.

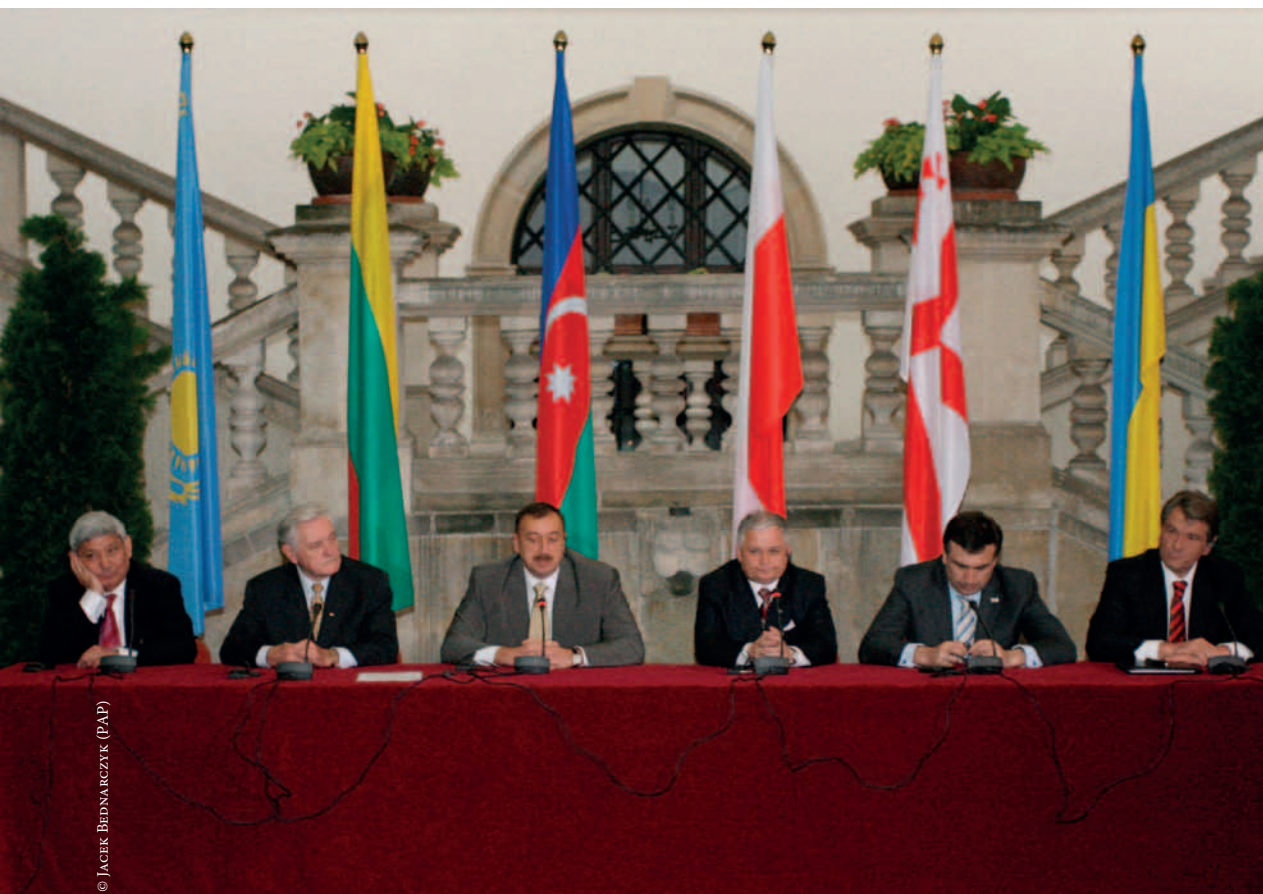
At the same time, Gazprom successfully diversified its transmission channels and undertook other activities aimed at strengthening its position vis-à-vis EU countries, including Poland.

RUSSIA'S GROWING INFLUENCE

At the same time, Gazprom successfully diversified its transmission channels and undertook other activities aimed at strengthening its position vis-à-vis EU countries, including Poland. In 2011, the company commissioned a study for an expansion of its pipelines, what was later named Nord Stream 2, a project that is obviously not economically defensible in the absence of regulatory preferences from the European Union, and whose only purpose is to allow Gazprom to circumvent transit through the Brotherhood and Yamal pipelines. The harmful impact of the Nord Stream pipeline on the European gas market is intensified by the partial exemption granted to the OPAL (Ostsee-Pipeline-Anbindungsleitung) pipeline from the requirements of TPA (Third Party Access), or the takeover by Russian entities of key infrastructure in Europe, such as underground gas storage in the Czech Republic and Germany. For years Gazprom has also avoided the closure of the proceedings conducted by the European Commission regarding competition violations — thus delaying the change of its abusive practices.

BALTIC PIPE AND OTHER DIVERSIFICATION ATTEMPTS – TODAY

In this context, one should look with great pride at the achievements of the last two years. First of all, we should point to the huge successes in completing the diversification of natural gas supplies to Poland and this part of Europe. A “game changer” (in the words of the Minister for Energy Security Piotr Naimski in the PiS government, who is responsible for the construction of the northern gas connection) will be the Baltic Pipe gas pipeline, which will allow Poland to receive ten billion cubic meters of gas annually. It is expected to be



© JACEK BEDNARCZYK (PAP)

KRAKÓW, POLAND, MAY 11, 2007. (LEFT TO RIGHT) SPECIAL ENVOY OF THE PRESIDENT OF KAZAKHSTAN, LYAZZAT KIINOV, PRESIDENT OF LITHUANIA VALDAS ADAMKUS, PRESIDENT OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV, PRESIDENT OF POLAND LECH KACZYŃSKI, PRESIDENT OF GEORGIA MICHEIL SAAKASHVILI, PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE VIKTOR YUSHCHENKO, DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE AT THE COLLEGIUM MEDICUM OF THE JAGIELLONIAN UNIVERSITY, PART OF A TWO-DAY ENERGY SUMMIT ORGANIZED BY PRESIDENT LECH KACZYŃSKI THAT HAD BEGUN AT THE WAWEL CASTLE.

finished by 2022, i.e. by the time the gas supply contract with Russia expires. Analyses also confirm that, contrary to disinformation being spread, it is economically justified. At the same time, actions were taken to expand the Lech Kaczyński Gas Terminal, whose regasification capacity is to be increased to 2.5 billion cubic meters by 2021. In the LNG arena, Poland has not only developed cooperation with Qatar, but also as the first company in East-Central and Northern Europe, PGNiG signed a contract for LNG supplies from the USA, showing a complete change in the way that the company

sees its role. The company, which for years has played the part of a local distributor for Gazprom, has recently become an entity ready to look for

The “game changer” will be the Baltic Pipe gas pipeline, which will allow Poland to receive ten billion cubic meters of gas annually.

By the end of 2021, a gas pipeline connecting Poland and Lithuania (GIPL) is to be opened, which, together with the LNG terminal in Klaipeda, may be an alternative to Russia as a source of supply for the Baltic States.

global opportunities and able to think innovatively, so as to provide solutions for Poland's energy security, while allowing maximization of shareholder value. Implementation of diversification projects by the PiS governments since 2015 (such as expansion of the LNG terminal and construction of a gas connection with Norway) will lead to a situation where the expiration of the quasi-monopolistic, long-term contract with Gazprom after December 31, 2022, will allow Poland to become completely independent of Russian gas and become a gas hub for East-Central Europe.

POLISH ENERGY POLICY IN THE REGION

Thanks to the actions described above, for the first time in its history Poland will not only be able to search for the most stable and beneficial solutions for Polish customers, but also to start acting as a gas supplier to Polish allies. This philosophy was reflected in Poland's plans. By the end of 2021, a gas pipeline connecting Poland and Lithuania (GIPL) is to be opened, which, together with the LNG terminal in Klaipeda, may be an alternative to Russia as a source of supply

for the Baltic States. After the eventual conclusion of the Stork II project, linking Poland with the Czech Republic, our country will be on the route connecting the Baltic countries and Poland in the north, with Hungary and Croatia in the south. Cooperation with Ukraine has also been strengthened in recent years, and PGNiG sells this country over 700 million cubic meters of gas annually.

UOKiK AND NORD STREAM 2

In the legal sphere, Poland is also now behaving in a more proactive way than ever before, vociferously expressing disagreement wherever Poland's essential interests are at stake or where the law may be breached. With reference to Nord Stream 2, UOKiK (Office of Competition and Consumer Protection of Poland) has made an initial determination on its negative impact, examining its influence on competitiveness on the Polish gas market at the request of the consortium members involved in the project. In order to avoid further substantive assessment of the applicant's project (i.e. companies tied to Gazprom, Uniper, ENGIE, OMV, Shell and Wintershall groups), they withdrew their application. However, UOKiK decided to continue to consistently defend competitiveness in the domestic market and, in view of the further involvement of these entities in the Nord Stream 2 project, launched precedent proceedings to impose a penalty, stating that the activities of Gazprom and its consortium members are trying to circumvent the law.

OTHER LEGAL MEASURES TO PROTECT POLISH INTERESTS

Poland also strongly protested against the idea of extending the exemption from the requirements of the TPA for the OPAL gas pipeline. This strategically harmful decision, contrary to EU law, is now being questioned before the EU and German courts. Poland and domestic companies have a clear position on

© RAFAŁ GUZ (PAP)



WARSAW, POLAND, JULY 8, 2016. PRIME MINISTER OF POLAND BEATA SZYDŁO (LEFT), GOVERNMENT SPOKESMAN RAFAŁ BOCHENEK (TO SZYDŁO'S RIGHT) DURING A MEETING WITH NORWEGIAN PRIME MINISTER ERNA SOLBERG (RIGHT), IN THE CHANCELLERY OF THE PRIME MINISTER. THE TALKS FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON PLANS TO ESTABLISH THE BALTIC PIPE GAS PIPELINE.

matters concerning our interests, including in relation to the planned amendments to the Gas Directive. PGNiG is in a dispute with Gazprom over the way gas prices are shaped, which will — hopefully — deprive Gazprom of part of their illegally obtained advantages.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, if the current direction of change is maintained, then in 2015–2022, the situation of Poland on the gas market will be completely different. In 2015, Poland bought gas almost exclusively from one source, a state with fundamentally hostile intentions towards Poland, and which has repeatedly showed that it is not a reliable supplier. In 2022, Poland will be able to obtain stable supplies from our allies, the US, Norway or Qatar. In 2015, the backbone of supplies was the Yamal gas pipeline, in 2022 Poland should have the Baltic Pipe and an expanded LNG terminal in Świnoujście, along with a network of interconnectors. In 2015, Poland's voice in the international arena was muted,

If the current direction of change is maintained, then in 2015–2022, the situation of Poland on the gas market will be completely different.

today Poland is able to assertively defend its rights and build coalitions with the Three Seas countries, with Ukraine, and with energy suppliers around the world. In 2010, Poland accepted a contract imposed on it by Russia, a contract with grossly excessive prices and unfavorable provisions for it. If the plans to expand the north-south gas infrastructure over the next four years are realized, this will not only never happen again, but most importantly, it will end Poland's decades-long dependence on Russian gas supplies.

Janusz Kowalski ■
June 1, 2018

KULSKI: A MAYOR FOR DIFFICULT TIMES

BARBARA RATAJSKA

In the most tragic period in the history of Warsaw — the German occupation, the capital city had its own hero, who is forgotten today, who showed great courage and dedication. It was thanks to Julian Spitosław Kulski that Warsaw still had its mayor, who after the arrest of Stefan Starzyński, for five years and until the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, continued his and Starzyński's common vision and mission.

On September 1, 1939, the Second World War erupted. The first German bombs fell on the Polish capital, burying President Stefan Starzyński's dream of a great Warsaw. When the Gestapo arrested him over a month

later, his deputy, Julian Spitosław Kulski, took over the helm in Warsaw. Known today as the Mayor (Polish: *Prezydent*) of occupied Warsaw, he was recognized by the Polish government-in-exile and the Polish Underground State.



© FAMILY ARCHIVE

WARSAW, POLAND, NOVEMBER 30, 1939. JULIAN S. KULSKI IN HIS OFFICE IN WARSAW CITY HALL.

On October 27, Julian S. Kulski received from the German occupation authorities “an offer he couldn’t refuse” — taking the position of custodial mayor of Warsaw. From then on, he would play a dual role — an administrator subject to the occupation authorities and a Polish mayor cooperating with the underground. He was supposed to

—
**Though the Germans
Saw Kulski as Mayor.
Poles Invariably
Addressed Him as
“Mr. President.”**



FAMILY ARCHIVE

JULIAN S. KULSKI DURING A VISIT TO HIS SON JULIAN IN WASHINGTON D.C. THEY MET 15 YEARS AFTER HAVING BEEN SEPARATED.

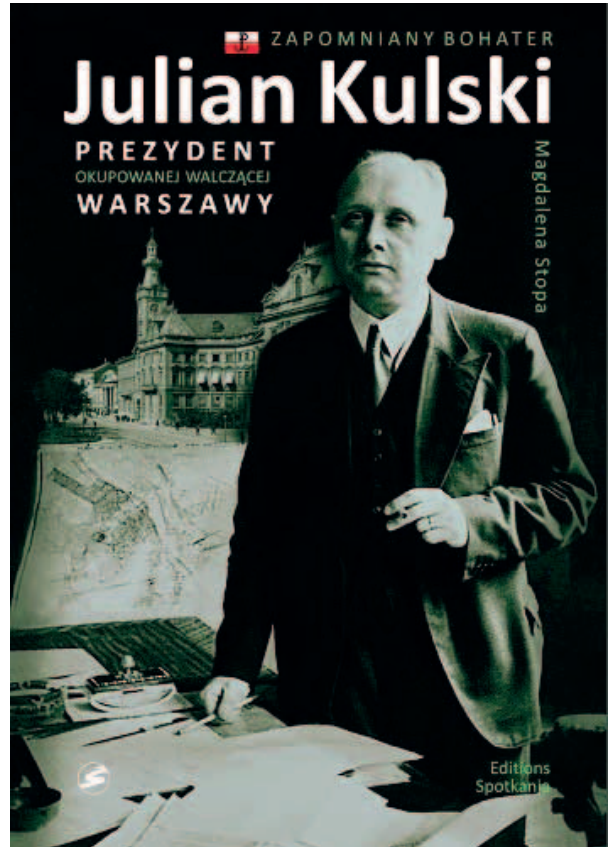
operate at the junction point, under the supervision of Governor Ludwig Fisher himself, backed by his entire police and military apparatus. Finally, with the consent of the authorities of the Polish Underground State, the delegate of the Polish Government to Poland, Cyril Ratajski, and with the approval of the underground military authorities, General Michał Tokarzewski-Karaszewicz, commander of the Service for Poland's Victory, Kulski embraced this position and fulfilled it until the first days of the Warsaw Uprising in August 1944. However, the Germans still only saw Julian S. Kulski as the mayor, while the Poles invariably referred to him as "Mr. President."

The Polish Underground State, still treated Warsaw as the capital of Poland, and after the Germans took over the city, the administration and services had to continue normally. The key role in keeping "tight reins on Warsaw" was played by Kulski himself. He supervised the administration of individual districts, municipal enterprises (including transportation, the electrical power and gas plants) and services — including the fire brigade. It is not difficult to conclude that keeping these institutions in Polish hands and ensuring the proper course of action was of great importance, not only for the residents of the city, but it provided great opportunities for action and security for

members of the underground. Thanks to Kulski, many members of the resistance had real or fictitious employment in the municipality. This guaranteed security against arrest during round-ups or from being deported to forced labor in Germany. Kulski was a soldier of the Legions of Józef Piłsudski, a recipient of the Virtuti Militari medal and an efficient leader of the administration. This was appreciated by the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army himself, General Stefan Rowecki, who recognized that thanks to Kulski, they had a chance to preserve some control over substantive matters and decisions regarding the city in Polish hands. It meant maintaining a limited and constantly threatened, but still free from the direct actions of the Germans, breathing space in Warsaw.

The Preservation of Institutions in Polish Hands Gave Great Opportunities for Action and Security for Members of the Conspiracy.

Nearly 20,000 people were employed in the city structures at the peak of this period. Another 5,000 were fictitious jobs, created only for members of the underground or people sought by the Germans. Many false identities were thus obtained by Polish citizens of Jewish origin who were hidden from the Germans or escapees from the ghetto. Thus, “President” Julian S. Kulski and his family risked their lives on a daily basis. The Germans would not have had



THE BOOK BY MAGDALENA STOPA **JULIAN KULSKI. PREZYDENT OKUPOWANEJ WALCZĄCEJ WARSZAWY (JULIAN KULSKI. PRESIDENT OF THE OCCUPIED FIGHTING WARSAW)** PUBLISHED IN 2017 AND AWARDED THE PRESTIGIOUS KLIO PRIZE.

any difficulties arresting him if he was exposed. One of Kulski’s associates, Dr. Stanisław Lorentz, Director of the National Museum in Warsaw, wrote after the war: “My cooperation with Julian Kulski, who was a prisoner of the Warsaw City Hall for five years, could not have been better than it was. Julian Kulski is a righteous man, very intelligent and capable of quick decisions, full of talent for administration, he made cooperation under his guidance easy.”

PRIVATE DRAMA

While in office in occupied Warsaw, “President” Julian S. Kulski experienced many dramatic moments — his



A PLAQUE AT THE JABŁONOWSKI PALACE ON SENATORSKA STREET IN WARSAW, THE FORMER CITY HALL, UNVEILED IN 2017 AND DEDICATED TO THE HEROIC PRESIDENT JULIAN KULSKI.

arrest, interrogation at the Gestapo headquarters on Szucha Avenue, the arrest of his 14-year-old son and many associates (like Deputy Mayor Jan Pohorski, executed in the Palmiry Forest). The cooperation with the Jewish council of the Warsaw Ghetto at the time became very dramatic when, thanks to the occupiers, it gradually became a place of execution for hundreds of thousands of Jewish residents of Warsaw.

On August 5, 1944, together with deputy Stanisław Podwiński, he submitted his resignation to Marcel Porowski, District Government Delegate for the Capital City of Warsaw. He spent a few weeks in the Old Town, and just before the capitulation of the district, he made it through the sewers to Żoliborz, where he lived and fought in the ranks of the Home Army's "Reaper" assault company, with his fifteen-year-old son, Julian. After the fall of the Uprising, he shared the fate of thousands of civilians, passing through the transit camp in Pruszków. He managed to escape and reach his wife Eugenia and daughter Wanda in Baniocha near Warsaw. After the

After the Fall of the Uprising, He Shared the Fate of Thousands of Civilians, Passing Through a Transit Camp in Pruszków.

capitulation, his insurgent son was deported to a prisoner-of-war camp in Germany along with other Home Army troops.

After the war, despite many years of effort, the Mayor of Occupied Warsaw, as well as his associates, did not live to see their work given its due by the new authorities. The documents of the city council from the occupation period, hidden in the basement of the city hall, also disappeared under mysterious circumstances. From 1946, he was employed in the freight forwarding company C.H. Hartwig in Gdynia, then in 1947 in the Social Construction Company (BSR) in Warsaw, and then in the Workers' Housing Development (ZOR). From 1960, then retired, he devoted himself to academic, historical and opposition activities. He died in Warsaw on August 18, 1976, and was buried in the Avenue of the Meritorious in Warsaw's Powązki Cemetery.

Juliusz Spitosław Kulski's service must not be forgotten. We have an obligation to restore his rightful place in history and to recall the role he played in building a free Poland. He is also a tragic figure in his own way — a man who became a "prisoner of the town hall", surrounded by both the Gestapo and officers of the Home Army. For a man who sacrificed his entire life for Poland and its independence, it was undoubtedly terrible, hard and dilemma-filled work. However, he did not lose his "honorable ability". Until the end he was faithful to his values and enjoyed great respect among his relatives. In closing, let us recall the words of the underground resistance fighter and "Courier from Warsaw" Jan Nowak Jeziorański: "During the occupation, the town hall became a stronghold of the Underground State. Without the heroic President Kulski, it would not have been possible to persevere until the end of the Uprising."

Barbara Ratajska ■
June 1, 2018

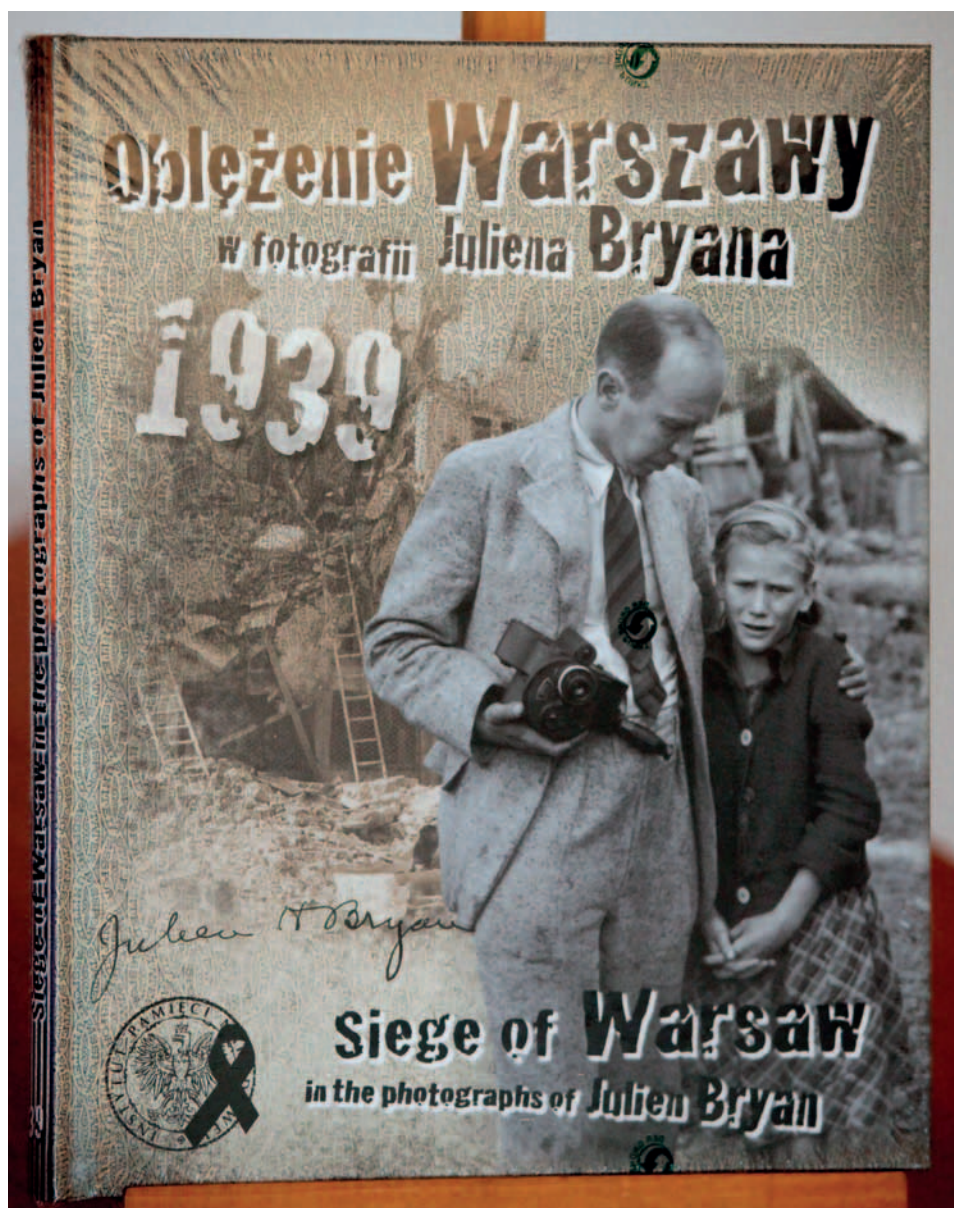
THE CRIMINAL NATURE OF THE GERMAN AND SOVIET OCCUPATIONS

BOGUSŁAW KOPKA PhD, PAWEŁ KOSIŃSKI PhD

All of the political and military actions of the Poles to regain independence and sovereignty, conducted in 1939–1945, took place in conditions of unusually brutal war campaigns rolling through Polish lands and cruel occupations of Poland's territory.

Regular military operations conducted by the *Wehrmacht* and the Red Army in Poland were characterized by numerous attacks on public infrastructure (even hospitals) and the mass murder of prisoners of war and the civilian population; these were in violation of the laws of war and regulations on the treatment of prisoners adopted at the Hague Convention of 1907 and the Geneva Convention of 1929.

The American journalist and filmmaker, Julien Bryan, found himself in besieged Warsaw from September 7–21, 1939. After returning to the United States, his unique and shocking photographs were published in *Life* and *Look* magazines, and then later in the form of an album. They are piercing images of massacred, dead and desperate people, who lost everything that was most important to them in a matter of moments, and also the destroyed buildings of the city by German bombing. A photo of Kazimiera



WARSAW, POLAND, SEPTEMBER 3, 2010. DURING THE SIGNING OF THE CONTRACT TRANSFERRING DIGITAL COPIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF AMERICAN FILMMAKER AND PHOTOGRAPHER JULIEN BRYAN TO THE INSTITUTE OF NATIONAL REMEMBRANCE, THE PRESENTATION OF THE ALBUM "SIEGE OF WARSAW IN THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF JULIEN BRYAN" TOOK PLACE.

Kostewicz, crying over her sister's lifeless body, became one of the symbols of September 1939. The short documentary *Siege*, filmed by Bryan in Warsaw, was released in 1940.

Before the suppression of the last centers of resistance of regular units of the Polish Army, Germany and the Soviet

Union signed the Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Demarcation on September 28, 1939 (an amendment to the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed in August). In it they assert that the Polish state had ceased to exist as result of its disintegration, proceeded to determine the new shape of the territory, and also promised each other the closest

The long-term goal of German policy in the occupied and annexed territories of the Republic of Poland was their Germanization.

cooperation in combating all Polish aspirations for independence. During the first weeks of occupation, breaking all the rules of international law and war, Germany and the Soviet Union decreed the annexations of Polish territories and of the Free City of Gdańsk, and the Reichstag passed a law on the legal recognition of reunification with the Reich. On October 8, Chancellor Adolf Hitler issued a decree on the division and administration of the eastern territories. A further decree was issued on October 12, on the administration of the occupied Polish territories (creation of the General Government). On November 1, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted a resolution to join “Western Belarus” to the Belarusian SSR. In addition, the two aggressors transferred parts of the Polish territory to third countries: on October 26 the USSR signed an agreement with Lithuania to incorporate the city and region of Vilnius (on August 3, 1940, all of Lithuania was annexed by the USSR), and on November 21, Germany signed an agreement with Slovakia on the incorporation of 52 communes in the Spiš and Orava regions. It can be said without exaggeration that it was the fourth partition of the Republic of Poland (the first three were carried out from 1772–1775).

Within a few weeks of the German invasion of the USSR on June 22, 1941, the entire territory of the Republic of Poland came under German occupation: Białystok District was incorporated into the Reich; Lwów, Stanisławów and Tarnopol Voivodships into the General Government as the District of Galicia; finally, the remaining areas to the *Reichskommissariat* Ukraine and Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories. This situation lasted until the beginning of 1944, when the Red Army gradually began to occupy Poland. By early May 1945, the entire territory of the Republic of Poland was under the control of the USSR. The eastern boundary was dictated by Stalin to the Polish puppet government, the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN), and codified in the “Agreement on the Polish-Soviet Border”, signed in Moscow on July 27, 1944, although the PKWN had no authority to conclude such an agreement. Another agreement on the course of the Polish-Soviet border was concluded by the PKWN in Moscow in August 1945. The new border of western Poland was then arbitrarily drawn by the Soviets, Americans and the British during the Potsdam conference on August 2, 1945.

The entire German and Soviet occupation of Poland was marked by violence and crimes. In 1946, the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg described the German crimes as: planning, commencing and conducting an aggressive war; murders carried out on prisoners of war and civilians; mass extermination in camps; demonstrative executions; street roundups; slave labor; displacement of the population; deliberate demolition of cities, villages and housing estates; plundering of cultural property and destruction of the treasures of national

culture; denationalization and Germanization; political, racial and nationalist persecution; destroying all traces of Polish culture and art.

The long-term goal of German policy in the occupied and annexed territories of the Republic of Poland was their Germanization. The process would start in areas incorporated into the Reich, then move to the General Government region, then to more economically attractive areas further to the east. The Germans divided the citizens of Poland according to Nazi racial criteria: at the bottom of the ladder were Jews, on the second rung were ethnic Poles, next were Belarusians, followed by the artificially categorized *Goralenvolk* (Polish Highlanders), Lithuanians and Ukrainians, and highest, the *Volksdeutsche*, non-citizen Germans living outside of the Reich.

According to this division, the Jewish citizens of Poland were the first ones destined for mass extermination, ethnic Poles were mainly to be exploited as forced laborers, and subsequently resettled to some unspecified east. Slavic minorities, Highlanders loyal to Germany, and Lithuanians, found themselves under special protection. On the other hand, the *Volksdeutsche* (depending on the category) were to receive the full rights of citizens of the German Reich (*Herrenvolk*) in the future. The development of events during and after the war was foreseen in the *Generalplan Ost* (Master Plan for the East). It was set into motion by virtue of a decree by Hitler on October 7, 1939, creating the office of Reich Commissioner for the Consolidation of German Nationhood, with SS chief Heinrich Himmler at its head.

The Germans began to implement their plans for the Polish territories with

massive secret executions — without any court rulings — of the population. They especially targeted the intelligentsia, political and social activists of Pomerania, Silesia and Greater Poland. The executioners were members of the *Einsatzgruppen* of the German police, local Germans from *Selbschutz*, and even soldiers of the *Wehrmacht*. Later, overt and secret executions — mainly members of underground organizations — intensified in the General Government (including in Warsaw and the surrounding areas). Executions were also carried out during pacification actions in villages (sometimes people were burned alive).

The most important role in implementing of the German policy of the extermination of Polish society was played by the system of camps, which after the outbreak of the war began to develop quickly and acquired a genocidal character. The camps were subordinated to the Reich Security Office (*Reichssicherheitshauptamt*), the SS and Main Economic Management Authority (*Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt*) and the Concentration Camp Inspector (*Führungs und Aufsichtshauptamt — Inspektion der Konzentrationslager*). In occupied Poland, the Germans established four concentration camps: the Auschwitz-Birkenau-Monowitz complex, Majdanek, Płaszów and Warsaw. While Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek were both extermination and labor camps; four separate extermination centers — Kulmhof, Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka; as well as many detention, resettlement and transit camps, forced and special labor camps, were introduced.

The first transport of 135 Poles from Gdańsk reached the new German Stutthof camp on the same day that it opened, September 2, 1939. A completely

General Government 1939–1944/1945



unheard-of German action carried out at the beginning of the occupation was the arrest and deportation of over 170 professors from Kraków (mainly from the oldest university in Poland, the Jagiellonian University) to the concentration camp in Sachsenhausen. Some of them were murdered or died of exhaustion. These were but a fraction of a large number of Polish intellectuals targeted by the Germans (victims of the *Intelligenzaktion*) and also included

the Catholic clergy¹. The Germans were vicious towards the Poles who most strongly identified with their nation, representing its ruling class.

Founded on the initiative of the SS-*Obergruppenführer* Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, Konzentrationslager Auschwitz was built in spring 1940.

¹ Particularly those sent to Dachau — out of 2720 Catholic priests imprisoned in the camp 1,780 were Poles, and 868 of them died.

In the following years, this camp was transformed into a complex, which grew to unprecedented proportions. Its first prisoners were 728 Poles arrested for political crimes as part of the “emergency pacification action” (*Ausserordentliche Befriedungsaktion*) carried out in the General Government. One of the prisoners of KL Auschwitz was later canonized as a saint of the Catholic Church, Franciscan friar, Father Maximilian Maria Kolbe, who sacrificed his life for a fellow prisoner.

Another prisoner, Witold Pilecki, allowed himself to be arrested in September 1940 in order to get into Auschwitz and establish a military conspiracy there. Its main task was to prepare a great revolt of prisoners. Pilecki, who was in the camp under an assumed name and constant threat of discovery, escaped the camp in the spring of 1943. As a Home Army soldier, he fought in the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. After the capitulation, he was held in German POW camps in Lamsdorf and Murnau, and after the war he joined the Polish II Corps in Italy. There, in 1945, he wrote down his famous report on his nearly three-year stay in Auschwitz. In 1946, as a captain, he returned to Poland with a secret mission of establishing contact with the independence underground. He was arrested by operatives of the Ministry of Public Security, and after a long period of interrogation and torture, was sentenced to death and murdered with a shot to the back of the head in the Mokotów Prison in Warsaw.

The fates of the majority of Polish Jews ended in the German camps from 1942–1944. They were usually murdered immediately after arriving, while a small remnant was temporarily allowed to live to work on disposing of the bodies and cleaning up the things left behind. Many

The discovery of the graves of Polish officers by the Germans in spring 1943 and the amplification of the Soviet crime committed in the Katyń Forest, made them realize how important it was to hide the truth about their own crimes from the world.

Polish Jews also died in individual and mass executions in homes and in ghettos. A similar fate befell Polish Roma and Sinti and all mentally ill and old people². Mass killing of people took place within the framework of the powers granted in the form of oral or written orders by the leaders of the Third Reich with Adolf Hitler, Hermann Göring, or Heinrich Himmler in the lead. Germany derived concrete financial benefits from the procedure of organized plundering of their victim’s wealth.

The discovery of the graves of Polish officers by the Germans in spring 1943 and the amplification of the Soviet crime committed in the Katyń Forest, made them realize how important it was to hide the truth about their own crimes from the world. Crematoria served this in the camps to eliminate the bodies of those killed. Other masking activities

² For example, those staying in institutions in Chełm, Kobierzyn, Choroszcz, Dziekanów, Kocborów, Kochanówek, Odrzyca and Zofiówka

The Polish Underground State treated this phenomenon as ordinary banditry. It was clearly written in the underground press that “Every Pole who cooperates with their [German] murderous action, whether by blackmailing or denouncing Jews, whether exploiting their terrible position or participating in looting, commits, a grave crime against the rights of the Republic of Poland and will be punished immediately.”

were conducted as part of an extensive campaign marked with the code name 1005. The verbal camouflage of the crime used by the German bureaucracy also served to blur its traces. In classified documents, the mass murder of people was referred to as “special treatment”, “purge”, “exclusion”, “executive activity” or “direct action”. To the same end, operational codenames were used, such as: “Malaria Action”, “Harvest Festival”, “Altona”, “February” or “Nuremberg”.

The bodies of the murdered were called “figures”.

A particularly refined racial crime was to take away children deemed suitable for Germanization from their parents. Of about 200,000 of the children kidnapped during the war, only about 30,000 were found after hostilities had ended. The German resettlement was coordinated by the Office for the Displacement of Poles and Jews (*Amt für Aussiedlung von Polen und Juden*), renamed the Resettlement Center (*Umwandererzentralstelle*). The Germans massively displaced Poles from Silesia, Greater Poland and Pomerania, from the regions of Radom, Dębica and Lublin, as well as from the Zamość region. Another manifestation of the German terror against the inhabitants of Polish cities were random round-ups, in which victims — like slaves from Africa centuries earlier — were sent to forced labor in the Reich. Among the deportees were many juveniles, some as young as twelve.

The Germans planned to liquidate Warsaw as the center of Polish identity and transform the capital city into a provincial German city. The preliminary stage was the ban on the reconstruction of buildings destroyed during the siege of the city in September 1939, followed by the destruction of the Warsaw Ghetto after the suppression of the 1943 uprising and the rest of the city after the fall of the Warsaw Uprising in 1944. The Germans interfered with religious practices and persecuted the clergy, plundered and destroyed cultural goods, liquidated centers of intellectual and artistic life, and transformed Polish lands into an international cemetery where the ashes of most European Jews rest, along with many hundreds of thousands of Soviet soldiers, thousands of Italians, and several thousand French and British prisoners of war.

German racial policy and occupational lawlessness led to the phenomenon of *szmalcownictwo* — blackmailing and extorting ransom from Jews in hiding or reporting them to the Germans. The Polish Underground State treated this phenomenon as ordinary banditry. It was clearly written in the underground press that “Every Pole who cooperates with their [German] murderous action, whether by blackmailing or denouncing Jews, whether exploiting their terrible position or participating in looting, commits, a grave crime against the rights of the Republic of Poland and will be punished immediately”. Underground courts that issued sentences on behalf of the Polish state sentenced these criminals to death, carried out by special units of the Home Army. The racist German system and the application of the “divide and rule” principle, contributed to the mass murders committed on the Polish population by Ukrainian nationalists in Volhynia and Galicia in 1943–1944. As a result of this barbaric “wild genocide”, tens of thousands of people were killed. The anti-Polish action of the Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA) was an ethnic cleansing, which led to permanent changes in the national structure of the south-eastern areas of Poland.

The long-term goal of the USSR’s policies in the occupied and annexed territories of Poland was their Sovietization and de-Polonization. In the areas occupied and annexed by the USSR, all Polish citizens, regardless of their ethnicity, were subjected to brutal repression, especially on the basis of: political views (loyalty to the Polish state and all anti-communist attitudes), affluence (the wealthier the worse), the place of residence (the border zone along the demarcation line between Soviet and German spheres of influence), and profession (policemen, judicial employees, professional soldiers,

The long-term goal of the USSR's policies in the occupied and annexed territories of Poland was their Sovietization and de-Polonization.

foresters). Stalin’s apparatus of violence tried to break social morale and destroy all forms of resistance at the root.

At the beginning of the war, about 250,000 Polish soldiers and policemen were taken into Soviet captivity. Approximately half of the prisoners (including all police officers and army officers) were transferred to NKVD concentration and labor camps, a small number were murdered on the spot, and the rest released. Shortly after the Red Army occupied the eastern provinces of Poland in September 1939, Polish citizens who were considered a “counter-revolutionary element” or “undesirable”, began to be sent to Soviet prisons and camps, sentenced under paragraph 58 of the Criminal Code of the USSR. As in the case of the German invader, political and social activists, officers, and especially the Border Protection Corps, were first in line for arrest. Up until the outbreak of war between Germany and the Soviet Union, about 100,000 people had been imprisoned.

Acting on the recommendation of the highest state authorities (decision of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of March 5, 1940 — signed personally by Stalin), the NKVD began the systematic execution of prisoners from camps in Kozielsk, Starobielsk and Ostashkov and

from prisons in West Belarus and Ukraine. They were all either captured policemen and Polish Army officers (mostly reserve officers, i.e. people enlisted into the army in connection with the outbreak of war, and civilians from various professions requiring at least secondary education). In total, at least 25,000 people were murdered: over 14,000 prisoners from the aforementioned camps were killed and buried in Katyń, Kharkov and Kalinin (today Tver) and about 10,000 prisoners in Bykovo near Kiev and Kurapaty near Minsk. Mass murders also occurred during the evacuation of Soviet prisons in summer 1941. The tragic fate of many prisoners remains unknown to this today.

From 1939–1941, the Soviets carried out four mass deportations to the East to Siberia and Central Asia. It started in February 1940 with military settlers, state officials, then through to April 1941 it covered civil servants, military officers, police officers, and other public workers, social activists, merchants, industrialists and bankers. Families were not spared either, especially of those persons previously arrested by the NKVD, or detained while trying to illegally cross the Soviet border. In that summer, deportations were extended to refugees from central and western Poland who came to the East during the war of 1939. Finally, in May–June 1941 attention turned

to intellectuals (including people with at least a secondary education), other refugees, railway workers, skilled workers and craftsmen. According to Soviet data, in total about 325,000 Polish citizens were deported: 210,000 Poles, 70,000 Jews, 25,000 Ukrainians and 20,000 Belarusians.

The Soviets persecuted churches regardless of religion, although mainly Roman Catholic, as a mainstay of Polish identity. To this end, about 150 priests were murdered, and twice that many were transported to the East. Also, all priests were subjected to surveillance, numerous churches were desecrated, worship was limited to only the inside of churches, teaching religion to those under the age of 18 was banned, and church institutions were robbed. In 1940 and 1941, about 150,000 Polish citizens of draft age were forced into the regular units of the Red Army and sent to war against Finland in 1940, and then against Germany. About 100,000 people were incorporated into the engineering battalions of the Red Army.

As a result of the signing of the agreement between the Polish and Soviet governments (Sikorski-Majski Agreement of July 30, 1941), the remaining Polish citizens were released. This action was halted in mid-1942. In 1943, as a result of “passportization” (the re-enforced imposition of Soviet citizenship), several thousand Poles were sent to labor camps again. After the Red Army crossed Poland’s pre-war border in January 1944 and in the following years, the Soviet apparatus of repression continued the policy of 1939–1941. The victims of these actions were mainly soldiers of the underground Home Army. In the so-called “Augustów manhunt” in July 1945, about 2,000 people were arrested, of which 600 went missing without a trace. It is estimated that about 50,000 people were deported to the labor camps from the territories incorporated into the USSR and

According to Soviet data, in total about 325,000 Polish citizens were deported: 210,000 Poles, 70,000 Jews, 25,000 Ukrainians and 20,000 Belarusians.



WARSAW, POLAND, APRIL 13, 2018. NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR VICTIMS OF THE KATYŃ MASSACRE. PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF THOSE MURDERED, PRESENTED AT THE KATYŃ MUSEUM IN WARSAW.

about 40,000 from post-Yalta Poland. Some of those who survived did not return home until a few years after Stalin's death in 1953. No Soviet criminal was ever tried for the deaths of Polish citizens.

THE SCALE OF LOSSES SUFFERED BY POLAND DURING WORLD WAR II

Although Poland belonged to the victorious, anti-Hitler coalition, it emerged from the Second World War as a country without its sovereignty and territorially truncated. It became a client state of the Soviet Union for decades and irretrievably lost the cities of Lwów and Wilno, both extremely valuable to the national culture and heritage. As a result of war and occupation, Poland suffered huge losses in people, national wealth and cultural achievements. If they are taken proportionally to the size of the population, Poland suffered the

It is estimated that about 50,000 people were deported to the labor camps from the territories incorporated into the USSR and about 40,000 from post-Yalta Poland. Some of those who survived did not return home until a few years after Stalin's death in 1953.

As a result of war and occupation, Poland suffered huge losses in people, national wealth and cultural achievements. If they are taken proportionally to the size of the population, Poland suffered the largest losses among all countries in the Second World War. Almost all Polish Jews died, the intelligentsia (doctors, lawyers, teachers and engineers) was painfully decimated, and large landowners practically ceased to exist.

largest losses among all countries in the Second World War. Almost all Polish Jews died, the intelligentsia (doctors, lawyers, teachers and engineers) was painfully decimated, and large landowners practically ceased to exist.

To this day, there is no precise data on this subject, which results from many reasons. These include the mass character of the crimes, the anonymity of the victims and the obliteration of the evidence by

the perpetrators; the extreme example of which is the victims of gas chambers, immediately burned in crematoria, then their remains obliterated in industrial grinders. The shifting of borders was another factor especially given that the borders from 1939–1989 were heavily guarded, and foreign contacts limited as much as possible. There also was large-scale population displacement — apart from resettlements and deportations, after the war there were “repatriations” of Polish citizens from East to West and vice versa. Finally, the communist political system itself played a role, by limiting the freedom of research, access to archival sources and censoring publications, and also sowing fear in witnesses against the disclosure of facts uncomfortable for the communist authorities.

The regaining of freedom and sovereignty after 1989 allowed Poland to finally begin formerly banned studies on Soviet crimes, however the passage of time meant that many witnesses were already gone. Therefore, despite the efforts made in recent years, many victims of Nazi and Stalinist regime repression are still unknown. This is also the case for material losses. The only wide-ranging study on Polish war losses prepared by the Bureau of War Compensation and issued in January 1947 (Report on losses and war damages of Poland in 1939–1945), is far from exhaustive. Whereas later studies on losses and war damage are an important supplement to our knowledge, they refer only to specific issues. These include the “Report on the War Losses of Warsaw” from 2004, developed by the team headed by Wojciech Fałkowski; the “Report on the War Losses in Poznań in 1939–1945” from 2008, edited by Andrzej Sakson and Andrzej Skarzyński and “Personal Losses and Victims of Repressions under Two Occupations” in 2009, edited by Tomasz Szarota and Wojciech Materski. A report prepared by a team of historians and

architects commissioned by Warsaw's then Mayor Lech Kaczyński clearly shows that the capital of Poland "suffered the highest percentage of losses during World War II of all European cities." According to the Polish Institute of National Remembrance, in 1939–1945, the total loss of Polish citizens under German occupation amounted to about 5.5 million people (including about 2.8 million Polish Jews, of which nearly 1.9 million were killed in concentration camps). Estimates of the Polish victims of the USSR amount to no less than 150,000 dead.

Bogusław Kopka, Paweł Kosiński ■
March 1, 2018

A report prepared by a team of historians and architects commissioned by Warsaw's then Mayor Lech Kaczyński clearly shows that the capital of Poland "suffered the highest percentage of losses during World War II of all European cities."

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bartoszewski Władysław, *The blood shed unites us; pages from the history of help to the Jews in occupied Poland*, Warszawa, Interpress, 1970.

Eberhardt Piotr, *Ethnic Groups and Population Changes in Twentieth-Century Central-Eastern Europe: History, Data, Analysis*, translated by Jan Owsinski, London, Routledge, 2015.

Eberhardt Piotr, *Political Migrations In Poland 1939–1948*, Warsaw, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 2015.

Gniazdowski Mateusz, *Losses Inflicted on Poland by Germany during World War II. Assessments and Estimates—an Outline*, "The Polish Quarterly of International Affairs", 2007 (16), no. 1, p. 94–126 — This article is available from the Central and Eastern European Online Library at <https://www.ceool.com/search/article-detail?id=152061>.

Lukas Richard C., *Forgotten Holocaust. The Poles Under German Occupation 1939–44*, New York, Hippocrene Books, 2012.

Mauldin Wayman Parker, Akers Donald S., *The Population of Poland*, Washington, U.S. Govt. Print. Off., 1954.

1939–1945 *War Losses of Poland*, ed. Roman Nurowski, Warsaw, Zachodnia Agencja Prasowa, 1960.

Piesowicz Kazimierz, *Social and demographic consequences of World War II and the German*

occupation in Poland, "Oeconomica Polona. Journal of the Economic Committee of the Polish Academy of Sciences and of the Polish Economic Society" 1983, Vol. 10, nr. 1, p. 65–94.

Piotrowski Tadeusz, *Poland's Holocaust. Ethnic Strife, Collaboration with Occupying Forces and Genocide in the Second Republic, 1918–1947*, Jefferson (North Carolina)-London, McFarland Publishing, 1998.

Poles Victims of the Nazi Era — This article is available from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum at <https://www.ushmm.org/m/pdfs/2000926-Poles.pdf>.

Proch Franciszek, *Poland's Way of the Cross, 1939–1945*, New York, Polish Association of Former Political Prisoners of Nazi and Soviet Concentration Camps, 1987.

Righteous among nations. How Poles helped the Jews, 1939–1945, edited by Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewin, London, Earls court Publications Ltd., 1969; *The Samaritans. Heroes of the Holocaust*, by Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewin, New York, Twayne Publishers, [1970].

Statement on war losses and damages of Poland in 1939–1945, Warsaw, Poland Bureau of War Damages (BOW), 1947.

Zieliński Henryk, *Population changes in Poland, 1939–1950*, New York, National Committee for a Free Europe, 1954.

General information

The Warsaw Institute is the first conservative geopolitical think tank in Poland. The main areas of our interest are: geopolitics, international relations, energy security, defence, history, culture and any other issues crucial for Poland and East-Central Europe. We are proudly supporting the 3 Seas Initiative and transatlantic relations.

The Warsaw Institute develops and provides innovative and practical recommendations based on the wide experience of its experts (over 40 cooperating experts). The Warsaw Institute helps to improve public policy and decision-making through research and analysis. Our activities are dedicated to government organizations and agencies as well as non-governmental organizations, think tanks, research institutes, academic communities, opinion-forming media and experts.

The Warsaw Institute is an independent, non-profit, nonpartisan organization supported by contributions from individuals.

Goals and objectives

- strengthening the position of the Polish state by preparing and providing its partners with analyses and studies concerning economic policy, international relations, security policy, the use of soft power and more
- international cooperation of states, societies and NGOs
- supporting the development of democracy, economy and entrepreneurship
- energy security and military security
- cultivating and promoting Poland's national and state traditions and developing national, civic and cultural awareness

The Warsaw Institute Review

Free Polish quarterly, prepared essentially for English-speaking readers around the world. Main goal is to present a broad spectrum of topics concerning Poland, a leading East-Central European country, in the form of analytical articles on political, legal, economic, social, historical and institutional issues.



Subscribe to the printed edition of The Warsaw Institute Review on our website.

Programs

Ukraine Monitor - Warsaw Institute experts monitor and analyse information on Ukrainian politics and business with the view to anticipating the main medium- and long-term changes that can occur in a country playing a key role for many stakeholders.



Romania Monitor - the first platform that would bring together think tanks and analysts from both countries, interested in geopolitics, energy security and military cooperation between Poland and Romania.



Disinformation Program - this program involve carrying out professional analyses on the identification and creation of methods for combating organised disinformation and training against disinformation threats.



Baltic Rim Monitor - this program offers the analysis of the newest events concerning Baltic basin countries.



RUSSIA MONITOR

Review of the most important events relating to Russian security. Warsaw Institute experts monitor and analyze activities of the Kremlin and its subordinate services to anticipate their short-term and long-term consequences, particularly for neighboring countries and the Western world.

download
mobile
application



WARSAW INSTITUTE | SUPPORT US

The Warsaw Institute is the first conservative geopolitical think tank in Poland. The main areas of our interest are: geopolitics, international relations, energy security, defence, history, culture and any other issues crucial for Poland and East-Central Europe. We are proudly supporting the 3 Seas Initiative and transatlantic relations.

The Warsaw Institute develops and provides innovative and practical recommendations based on the wide experience of its experts (over 40 cooperating experts). The Warsaw Institute helps to improve public policy and decision-making through research and analysis. Our activities are dedicated to government organizations and agencies as well as non-governmental organizations, think tanks, research institutes, academic communities, opinion-forming media and experts.

The Warsaw Institute is an independent, non-profit, nonpartisan organization supported by contributions from individuals.



DETAILS FOR THE FOREIGN TRANSFER:

USD account number: PL 82 1020 4900 0000 8502 3060 4017

EUR account number: PL 85 1020 4900 0000 8902 3063 7814

GBP account number: PL 18 1020 4900 0000 8302 3069 6641

PLN account number: PL 41 1020 1097 0000 7202 0268 6152

Beneficiary name: THE WARSAW INSTITUTE FOUNDATION

Beneficiary bank name: PKO BP SA

SWIFT bank code: BPKOPLPW

Payment title: Donation

A RECURRING DONATION HAS THE BIGGEST IMPACT.

THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR YOUR COMMITMENT.

JOIN US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



@WarsawInstitute

www.warsawinstitute.org



Warsaw Institute events in 2018

„Poland and Romania: energy and infrastructure – roundtable meeting”

The Warsaw Institute alongside with the SNSPA Bucharest hosted more than 60 speakers and guests in the Romanian Senate.

Bucharest, April 24th



„Századvég Summer School”

Project hosted by the Századvég Foundation and co-organised by the Warsaw Institute which aim was to find prospects for the V4 and the CEE region concerning the current challenges of the EU: migration, society, economy.

Budapest, July 9th-14th



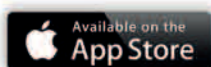


RUSSIA MONITOR

RUSSIA MONITOR OFFERS:

- Analysis of forces in the ruling elite of Russia
- Forecasts of political developments in Russia
- Assessments of Moscow's moves on the international scene and their impact on Russia's economic policy
- Analysis of connections between business circles and policy makers
- Assessment of the risks associated with Russia's energy expansion
- Information about the situation in Russia's security apparatus

new version of mobile application



Russia Monitor is a review of the most important events relating to Russian security. Warsaw Institute experts monitor and analyze the activities of the Kremlin and its subordinate services to anticipate the short-term and long-term consequences not only for Russia, but also for neighboring countries and the Western world. Therefore, the subjects of our analyses are both events and phenomena closely related to the internal situation in Russia, as well as its foreign policy. We are interested in Russian politics behind the scenes, changes in security forces and special forces, and the driving factors behind offensive activities, including military operations. Our analytical experience, including the ability to form in-depth assessments and forecasts, is here to serve you. Our experts, who have been monitoring the situation in Russia for years, provide an unmatched quality and depth of analysis. We want *Russia Monitor* to help politicians and businessmen in making decisions, while bringing the attention of all concerned to the reality of Putin's Russia.



