

J E R Z Y   G A U L

## The Austro-Hungarian Empire and its political allies in the Polish Kingdom 1914–1918

The Austro-Hungarian declaration of war against Serbia on July 28, 1914 caused very important but unintentional consequences. The civil and military authorities of the Empire expected the conflict to be substantially successful and to increase their influence in the Balkan area. The situation changed radically at the beginning of August 1914 with the transformation of the local conflict into a great war in which all the European powers were involved. In the years 1914–1915 the fight on the Eastern front against the Russian armies took place mostly on the soil of Galicia and within the Polish Kingdom. This brought the Polish Cause into the limelight. The Polish Cause was determined in 1881 by the alliance of the Three Emperors, which guaranteed Austro-Hungary, Russia, and Germany the continuous possession of the Polish territories, which had been captured in the partitions of Poland between 1772–1795. In the years 1915–1918 the occupation of the Polish Kingdom's southern territories by the Austro-Hungarian troops and the creation of the General Military Governorship in Poland forced the political elite of the Empire to rethink Poland's future. This occurred because of the great pressure exercised by the representatives of the Polish nation with their political, economical, and cultural demands. It was necessary to create a political program to realize those demands and to identify its opponents as well as to find political partners within Polish society.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the political situation in the Polish Kingdom after the outbreak of the First World War, the solution to the Polish Cause proposed by the authorities of the Habsburg monarchy, and to look at its potential allies. Also considered will be the question of the opponents to the solution and the political options that were open to them.

The problem of political parties in the Polish Kingdom and the actions of Austro-Hungary in the First World War regarding the so called "Polish Cause" have been a popular subject in historical literature<sup>1</sup>. The author will therefore focus mainly on the subject of political alliances, trying to highlight the lack of consistency and the prejudice of the Empire in its choosing of political allies,

<sup>1</sup> Andrzej GARICKI, Geneza Legionów. Zarys dziejów Komisji Tymczasowej Skonfederowanych Stronnictw Niepodległościowych [The origin of the Polish Legions. Outline of the History of the Temporary Committee of the Confederated Independent Parties]. Warszawa 1964; Leon GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych wobec sprawy polskiej w latach 1914–1918 [The policy of the Central Powers towards the Polish cause]. Warszawa 1962; Czesław KOZŁOWSKI, Działalność polityczna Koła Miedzypartyjnego w latach 1915–1918 [Political Activity of the Interparties Circle 1915–1918]. Warszawa 1967; Janusz PAJEWSKI, Polityka mocarstw centralnych wobec Polski podczas pierwszej wojny światowej [The Policy of the Central Powers towards Poland in the First World War], in: *Roczniki Historyczne* 28(1962), 9–56; IDEM, Odbudowa państwa polskiego 1914–1918 [The reconstruction of the Polish State 1914–1918]. Warszawa 1978; Jan MOLENDA, Piłsudeczycy a narodowi demokraci 1908–1918 [Piłsudski's men and the National Democrats]. Warszawa 1980; Włodzimierz SULEJA, Próba budowy zrębów polskiej państwowości w okresie istnienia Tymczasowej Rady Stanu [The Attempt of Building the Framework of Polish State in the time of the Temporary State Council]. Wrocław 1981; IDEM, Orientacja austro-polska w latach I wojny światowej (do aktu 5 listopada 1916 roku) [The Austro-Polish Orientation in the First World War (until 5<sup>th</sup> November 1916)]. Wrocław 1992; IDEM, Tymczasowa Rada Stanu [The Temporary State Council]. Warszawa 1998; Roman WAPIŃSKI, Narodowa Demokracja 1893–1939 [The National Democracy 1893–1939]. Ze studiów nad dziejami myśli nacjonalistycznej [On the history of the national thought]. Wrocław 1980.

despite the accurate analysis and reports made by both the civilian und military intelligence services.

#### THE POLITICAL PARTIES IN THE POLISH KINGDOM

Before the First World War several political camps existed on Polish soil – Conservatives, National-Democrats, Peasants, and Socialists. The growing tensions in the international relations and the perspective of the conflict between Austria-Hungary, Germany and Russia opened up the possibility of cooperation with the occupiers as a way to resolve the Polish Cause. The Conservative parties intended to stay loyal to the government of the state within which they acted – the Galician Conservatives to the Austro-Hungarian Emperor, the Conservatives from Poznań (Posen) to the German Emperor and the Party of the Real Politics (the Realists) to the Russian Emperor. The Russia-orientated camp which consisted of the legal Realists with its contacts to aristocracy and the bourgeoisie as well as the Polish Progressive Federation to which the intelligentsia belonged were joined by the non-parliamentarian and nationwide National-Democratic Party (that hoped for the unification of all the Polish territories with Russia). The Austria-Hungarian orientation was popular among a wide range of parties spanning from the Right to Socialist and Peasants. Their political representation “the Temporary Committee of Confederated Independent Parties” was created on November 10, 1912 and renamed (as of November 30, 1913) “The Committee of Confederated Independent Parties”. A German orientation did not attain much success before the outbreak of the War and never managed to enjoy a wider popularity<sup>2</sup>.

During the First World War various political parties and their fractions, circles and groups encompassing the Polish society were active within the occupied territories of the Polish Kingdom. The factors which most differentiated them were their relationships to the warring powers and their ideas about how to resolve the Polish Cause. The advocates of collaborating with Russia took a passive (but hostile) position towards the Central Powers and were called “the Passivists”. The National-Democratic Party played the most important role among them. In October 1915 the National-Democrats brought together political representatives of the parties opposed to the cooperation with the Central Powers and created the Interparty Political Centre, the members of which included: the National-Democratic Party, the Party of the Real Politics, the Polish Party of Progress, the National Party, the Polish Unification of Progress and the Group of National Work. The advocates of active cooperation with the Central Countries were called “the Activists”. Beginning in August 16, 1914 they were represented by the Leading National Committee (NKN) and had a pro-Austrian orientation, but did not (officially) go beyond the concept of an independent Poland interconnected with Austria-Hungary. The Leading National Committee had the greatest influence in the political, financial, and military organization of the Polish Armed Forces (the Polish Legions) fighting at the side of Central Countries. The members of the NKN included the anti-Russian Conservatives, Nationalists, Socialists, and Peasant parties from Galicia. On October 20, 1914 the members of the Galician National-Democratic Party left the NKN along with a party of so called ‘East Conservatives’ who returned in 1916. In the Polish Kingdom the NKN was supported by the Polish National Organization. Its creation on September 5, 1914 was inspired by Józef Piłsudski and it became a member of the NKN on November 20, 1914. Other supporters of the NKN included the Union of Independent Organizations, the Union of Independent Parties and the Polish Confederation, as well as the Peasant Party and the Alliance of the Polish Statehood<sup>3</sup>.

Most political parties in the Polish Kingdom dreamed of the creation of an independent country and of the unification of Poland into one independent state, however, for tactical reasons, the official

<sup>2</sup> Jan HOLZER, Jan MOLENDA, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej [Poland in the First World War]. Warszawa 1967, 11ff.; MOLENDA, Piłsudczycy a narodowi demokracji, 7ff.

<sup>3</sup> MOLENDA, Piłsudczycy a narodowi demokraci, 15f.

line did not go beyond the demanding of some kind of autonomy within the existing political system<sup>4</sup>. There were, however, some parties and organizations which did have Poland's independence on their agenda. This Independence Movement consisted of two camps. To the Socialist-Independence camp belonged: the Polish Socialist Party—Revolutionary Fraction (PPS-FR), the Polish Socialist-Democratic Party of Galicia and Silesia (PPSD), the Peasant Union (ZCh), the Galician Polish Party of Progress (PSP), the League of the National Independence (LNN), the group "Zaranie" (from December 1915 the Polish Peasant Party – PSL and from November 1918 PSL-Wyzwolenie), the Union of Patriots (ZP and from November 1917 the Party of National Independence – PNN) and the Union of Progressive-Independency Youth (UMPN). Parties which broke away from the National-Democratic Camp and belonged to the National-Independence camp included: the National Workers Federation (NZR), the National Peasants Union (NZCh), the Union of Independents Intelligentsia (ZIN), and the "Zarzewie" ("Fire-Brand").

Pilsudski and his closest confidants who were called "Piłsudski's men" or "Piłsudski's group" had a special place in the Independence Movements. They did not form a classic party, but brought to life two military organizations: before the war the Shooting Union and after the outbreak of the War, the Polish Military Organization (POW). Piłsudski's men took a very active part in the work of other parties and political organizations, creating blocks, alliances and representations – for example "The Leading Committee of the Unified Independent Parties" (KN ZSN), the "Polish National Organization" (PON) and the "Central National Committee" (CKN)<sup>5</sup>.

The Austro-Hungarian Intelligence Services were especially interested in all the political parties and organizations which strove towards independence. They were called the "anti-Russian group" (antirussische Gruppe), the parties struggling for independence (Unabhängigkeitsparteien) or the movement for independence (Unabhängigkeits-Bewegung). They made a distinction between parties promoting full sovereignty in union with Austria (trialism, personal union, sekundogenitura) and the radical groups who spoke publicly of full independence and revolt. The later were for example the PPS-Right and other radical Workers as well as Peasant Parties unified in the Central National Committee. They all saw Piłsudski as their spiritual leader and the I Brigade as well as the POW as their military organization. Perceptive Austrian observers of the polish political stage had no illusions that Piłsudski's group was the only group continuously advocating the full independence of Poland and embracing only tactical alliances with the invaders<sup>6</sup>.

#### AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AND THE AUSTRO-POLISH PROGRAMME

The authorities in Vienna had no clear political vision concerning the Polish Cause<sup>7</sup>. The Foreign Minister István Burián admitted in his memoirs that with the outbreak of War and the conflict between the European powers, none of the occupying states felt any need to tackle the Polish Cause.

<sup>4</sup> Jan MOLENDA, Koncepcje polityczne i wojskowe Władysława Sikorskiego w latach 1908–1918 [Political and war-concepts of Władysław Sikorski in the years 1909–1918], in: Czesław Bloch (ed.), Władysław Sikorski – Ignacy Paderewski. Lublin 1988, 80–85.

<sup>5</sup> Julian KADEN-BANDROWSKI, Piłsudecy [Piłsudski's men]. Warszawa 1936; Konrad WRZOS, Piłsudski i piłsudecy [Piłsudski and Piłsudski's men]. Warszawa 1936; GARICKI, Geneza Legionów, 9; MOLENDY, Piłsudecy a narodowi demokraci, 12–15.

<sup>6</sup> Arthur HAUSNER, Die Polenpolitik der Mittelmächte und die österreichisch-ungarische Militärverwaltung in Polen während des Weltkrieges. Wien 1935, 38–44; Włodzimierz SULEJA, Spór o kształt aktywizmu: Piłsudski a Sikorski w latach I wojny światowej [A quarrel about activism: Piłsudski and Sikorski in the years of the First World War], in: Henryk Zieliński (ed.), Polska myśl polityczna XIX i XX wieku, vol. V. W kregu twórców myśli politycznej. Zbiór studiów. Wrocław 1983, 165ff.

<sup>7</sup> Jan DĄBROWSKI, Wielka wojna 1914–1918 [The Great War 1914–1918]. Warszawa 1937, 143ff.; Jan RZEPECKI, Sprawa Legionu Wschodniego 1914 roku [The question of the Eastern Legion in 1914]. Warszawa 1966, 72f.; HOLZER-MOLENDY, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 59; PAJĘWSKI, Polityka mocarstw centralnych wobec Polski, 14–19; IDEM, Odbudowa państwa polskiego, 54, 81f.; PAJĘWSKI, Pierwsza wojna światowa 1914–1918, 92f.; Artur DMOCHOWSKI, Dlaczego nie powstała Austro-Węgiersko-Polska? [Why Austria-Hungary-Poland did not appear?], in: *Tygodnik Powszechny* 50(1986).

Although during the first months of war Poland was merely a battlefield, the Polish Cause came into focus (according to Burián) on the very day of the Austro-Hungarian and German invasion of the Polish territory<sup>8</sup>.

That the political solutions did not accord with Polish aspirations was due to the occupiers' rejection of the idea of an independent Polish state. The Foreign Minister Leopold Berchtold was aware of the Polish Cause, but saw its solution according to the outline of the Hungarian Prime Minister István Tisza and was against the threefold structure of state. The Polish Kingdom could not be incorporated into Austria-Hungary, but only into Austria<sup>9</sup>. In his telegram of September 20, 1914 to the Austro-Hungarian ambassador in The Hague, Berchtold declared that Austria-Hungary did not support the Polish Independence Movement<sup>10</sup>. Only a few politicians, for example the Hungarian Julius Andrassy, declared it a necessity to address the Polish national aspirations in a positive way<sup>11</sup>.

The Polish Cause was not of major importance; to the highest commander of the Army freedom of movement for the military as well as the administration of the occupied land under martial law were critical. Military success came first; the political plans should be left for the future – an outlook which suited Austria-Hungary's German ally and its own position regarding the Polish Cause<sup>12</sup>.

At first there was no major controversy between the civil and military circles about the Polish Cause. The military fully supported Berchtold's position regarding the Polish Independence Movement and, after the collapse of Pilsudski's anti-Russian plans for an uprising in the Polish Kingdom, they turned their backs on him, growing increasingly suspicious of even the High National Committee. It was Berchtold's opinion as expressed in his note to the Chief of the General-Staff, that *an independent Poland cannot be acceptable to us, because it means the inevitable loss of Galicia* that was accepted (on October 20, 1914) by General Conrad<sup>13</sup>. The order of the highest Command of Stage, signed by the General Franz Kanik and directed to the I Army Command fighting in the Polish Kingdom, displayed Austria-Hungary's interest in winning the sympathy of the local people and in taking into consideration their hopes and wishes. The Polish people were, however, not to be under the false impression that their position could prove decisive for Austrian success; this was inevitable with or without their support. The military administration of the occupied territories, despite their kindness to the people, should never lose sight of the fact that Polish land was not being occupied for Poland, but for Austria, because it was necessary as a base of operations in the fight against Russia<sup>14</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Stefan BURIÁN, Drei Jahre aus der Zeit meiner Amtsführung im Kriege. Berlin 1923, 64 ff; Gyula ANDRÁSSY, Dyplomacja i wojna światowa [Diplomacy and World War], in: Michał Sokolnicki (ed.), Polska w pamiętnikach Wielkiej Wojny 1914–1918. Warszawa 1925, 419f.; HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 1; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 17ff.

<sup>9</sup> Leon BILIŃSKI, Wspomnienia i dokumenty [Recollections and documents], Vol. 1. 1846–1914. Warszawa 1924, 294; Emeryk LUKINICH, Stanowisko rządu wegielskiego wobec kwestii polskiej w pierwszych latach wojny światowej [The attitude of the Hungarian Government to the Polish Cause in the first years of the World War], in: *Kwartalnik Historyczny* 52 (1938), 612–616; ANDRÁSSY, Dyplomacja i wojna światowa, 421f.; Ottokar CZERNIN, O wojnie światowej [About the World War], in: Sokolnicki, Polska w pamiętnikach Wielkiej Wojny, 505; HOLZER–MOLENDY, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 58f.

<sup>10</sup> Mieczysław WRZOSEK, Problem zbrojnego powstania przeciw Rosji w 1914 r. [The problem of the armed uprising against Russia in 1914], in: *Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości* 32 (1989), 280, 290; also Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv (HHStA) Wien, Politisches Archiv (PA) I, box 899, fol. 169: Berchtold, Wiedeń, 20 IX 1914; Mieczysław WRZOSEK, Polski czyn zbrojny podczas pierwszej wojny światowej 1914–1918 [The Polish armed action in the First World War]. Warszawa 1990, 76f.

<sup>11</sup> Josef REDLICH, Schicksalsjahre Österreichs 1908–1919. Das politische Tagebuch 1908–1919, bearbeitet von Fritz Fellner, Vol. 2. 1915–1919. Graz–Köln 1954, 14–16; Werner CONZE, Polnische Nation und deutsche Politik im ersten Weltkriege. Köln–Graz 1958, 73.

<sup>12</sup> Kriegsarchiv (KA), Nachlass Paić, B/1438/ 33: Joseph Paić, Das austropolnische Problem im Weltkriege, 1f.; Franz CONRAD, Feldmarschall Conrad. Aus meiner Dienstzeit 1906–1918. Wien 1921–1925, Vol. 1, 23; Vol. 4, 184; Konstanty SROKOWSKI, NKN. Zarys historii Naczelnego Komitetu Narodowego [The outline of the history of the Directing National Committee]. Kraków 1923, 172, 311f.; Janusz PAJEWSKI, Odbudowa państwa polskiego 1914–1918 [Reconstruction of the Polish State]. Warszawa 1978, 80; CONZE, Polnische Nation, 46.

<sup>13</sup> GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 28f.; SULEJA, Orientacija austro-polska, 86f.

<sup>14</sup> KA, Neue Feld Akten (NFA), 1. Armee-Kommando (AK), box 256: K.u.k. 1 AK, K Nr 225, 11 X 1914: K.u.k. Armeeoberkommando (AOK), Etappenoberkommando (EOK), Op Nr 5994, An das k.u.k. 1. Operierende Armeekommando,

The Polish Cause did not lose its importance even after the definite front shift away from the Polish territory brought about by the successful offensive of the Central Powers. The creation of a regular administration in August 1915 in the form of the Governor-Generalship in both the German part (as Emperor-German's General Governor-Generalship in Warsaw) and in the Austrian part (as General Governor-Generalship in Lublin) of the Polish Kingdom only further prevented a solution to the Polish Cause. Polish aspirations could not be harmonized with the official anti-Polish policy of the occupying authorities, who treated the Polish territories like enemy territory, and carried out, for example, requisitions, restrictive tax-policy measures, forced labor, removal for forced labor, repressions, arrests, treason trials<sup>15</sup>.

The succession of military defeats resulting from the Russian offensive under Gen. Alexej Brusilov's command in the summer of 1916 forced the Austro-Hungarian authorities into action to prevent an impending catastrophe<sup>16</sup>.

The creation of the Polish Kingdom on the basis of the November 5 Act by the two Emperors – Wilhelm II and Franz Joseph was greeted with enthusiasm by most Polish political parties and organizations. The announcement of a Polish State with a hereditary monarchy, a constitutional political system, a Polish Army and the Temporary State Council in place of a parliament, gave hope for a genuine solution to the Polish problem. The true intentions of Austria-Hungary and Germany were a far cry from the expectations of the Polish side; the political reasoning on the part of Austria-Hungary and Germany remain controversial to this day. One can speculate whether they wished to recruit more people for the war effort or more likely to realize the German project for the creation of a Polish buffer state as a part of a 'Mitteleuropa'. It is beyond doubt that the political dimension of the Polish Cause was overshadowed by its military aspects. The prolonged war depleted the military reserves of the Central Powers and made it necessary to find new recruits<sup>17</sup>.

The creation of the Polish Kingdom was greeted with joy by the Poles as the first step to the realization of their dream for independence and with the skepticism by some representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Empire's authorities. Colonel Max Ronge, who was from 1917 the Chief of the General Staff's Intelligence Services, thought that the negotiations between Berlin and Vienna should be broken off and the creation of the independent Polish Kingdom postponed. He believed that

<sup>15</sup> X 1914, Kanik; Jan LEWANDOWSKI, Królestwo Polskie pod okupacją austriacką 1914–1918 [The Polish Kingdom under the Austrian Occupation 1914–1918]. Warszawa 1956, 27f.

<sup>16</sup> GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 81ff.

<sup>17</sup> Archiwum Akt Nowych w Warszawie (AAN), Zbiór fotokopii, F 14, nr. 5: K.u.k. Ministerium des k. und k. Hauses und des Äußern (M.d.Ä.), Nr 5471, Geheim, an den k.u.k. Chef des Generalstabes Generaloberst Franz Conrad von Hötzendorf, Wien, 8 XI 1916; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 163; Edmund GLAISE-HORSTENAU, Die Katastrophe. Die Zertrümmerung Österreich-Ungarns und das Werden der Nachfolgestaaten. Zürich–Leipzig–Wien 1929, 71; Ignacy DASZYŃSKI, Pamiętniki [Memoirs], vol. 2. Warszawa 1956, 249; Zbyněk A. ZEMAN, Der Zusammenbruch des Habsburgerreiches 1914–1918. Wien 1963, 118f.

<sup>17</sup> DASZYŃSKI, Pamiętniki, Vol. 2, 247ff.; Paul ROTH, Die politische Entwicklung in Kongresspolen während der deutschen Okkupation. Leipzig 1919, 43–52; IDEM, Die Entstehung des polnischen Staates. Eine völkerrechtlich-politische Untersuchung. Berlin 1926, 23–26; IDEM, Deutschland und Polen. München 1958, 47f.; HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 87; Eduard MEYER, Grundzüge der Geschichte Polens. Darmstadt 1977, 98f.; GLAISE-HORSTENAU, Die Katastrophe, 71; ZEMAN, Zusammenbruch des Habsburgerreiches, 111–120; Werner BASLER, Imperializm niemiecki i akt 5 listopada [The German imperialism and the act of 5 november], in: *Przegląd Historyczny* 53(1962), 273–280; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 156 ff.; Fritz FISCHER, Griff nach der Weltmacht. Die Kriegszielpolitik des kaiserlichen Deutschland 1914–1918. Düsseldorf 1964, 592f.; Ryszard ŚWIĘTEK, Lodowa ściana. Sekrety Polityki Józefa Piłsudskiego 1904–1918 [The ice wall. The secrets of Józef Piłsudski's policy]. Kraków 1998, 81ff.; SULEJA, Tymczasowa Rada Stanu, 17f.; Szymon ASKENAZY, Uwagi w czasie wojny 1914–1918 [Remarks about the time of war]. Warszawa 1924, 91–109, 272f.; ROTH, Die Entstehung des polnischen Staates, 23; Michał SOKOLNICKI, Sprawa polska na terenie międzynarodowym [The Polish Cause in the international area], in: *Niepodległość* 1(1929), 195–209; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 156–172; HOLZER-MOLENDY, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 197–210; KOZŁOWSKI, Działalność polityczna Kola Międzypartyjnego, 115f.; PAJEWSKI, Odbudowa państwa polskiego, 125–129; Henryk JABŁOŃSKI, Polityka Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej w czasie wojny 1914–1918 [The policy of the Polish Socialist Party in the War 1914–1918]. Warszawa 1978, 290–301; SULEJA, Próba budowy zrębów polskiej państwowości, 25–35; Tomasz NALEJCZ, Polska Organizacja Wojskowa 1914–1918 [The Polish Military Organisation 1914–1918]. Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1984, 80–84.

after the prevention of danger in the East the cooperation of the Polish Army would not be so necessary<sup>18</sup>.

The same position was also represented by the newly appointed foreign minister Ottokar Czernin. During the conference of January 20, 1917 with the officials of the Polish section III/P as well as the representatives from Warsaw and Lublin, Czernin advocated the Austro-Polish solution and the continued possession of Galicia, which was threatened by a Polish autonomy in Russian Empire as well as by a German buffer state<sup>19</sup>. Emperor Karl did not attach great importance to the incorporation of the Polish territories into Austria, and instead desperately tried to end the war. In his new plan of March 1917 he proposed territorial concessions to the Germans (benefiting France), compensating them with the Polish Kingdom, which under the rule of Archduke Karl Stephan would become part of the Reich. In the protocol signed on 27 March by Czernin and Bethmann-Hollweg in Berlin, the Polish Kingdom was exchanged for Romania. In the next proposal from April 1917 he was ready to renounce Galicia in compensation for a German renouncement of Alsace and Lorraine to France<sup>20</sup>. Such an attitude towards the Polish Cause excluded any tighter cooperation with the Polish Independence Camp.

The conduct of the military authorities was also hardly pro-Polish and the sporadic friendly gestures towards the Poles were subject to criticism. When in 1917 Emperor Karl wanted to release all incarcerated citizens of the Polish Kingdom and lift the ban on changing of dwelling places, his wish was executed, but military Intelligence decided that people dangerous to the State would not show it any gratitude, and therefore they were put under surveillance (this was an additional burden to the much strained Counter-Espionage department)<sup>21</sup>.

Czernin's desperate move, in the Peace Treaty with Ukraine at Brest-Litowsk, of exchanging part of the Polish territory (district of Chelm and parts of Podlasie) for a delivery of corn was a great shock for the Activists. In May 1918 Emperor Karl's visit to the German Headquarters revived the Polish hope for an Austro-Polish solution supported by the new Foreign Minister Burián. But this plan collapsed due to German opposition and German plans of creating a Polish buffer-state within 'Mitteleuropa'<sup>22</sup>.

At the beginning of October 1918 Austria-Hungary, in accordance with Germany, approached the Entente-States, offering an armistice and peaceful negotiations on the basis of Wilson's 14 points. Point number 13 spoke about the creation of the independent Polish State with access to sea. This meant the cancellations of the hitherto existing Austrian and German projects regarding the Polish Kingdom and opened the door to the Polish Cause for the Poles themselves. As a consequence the

<sup>18</sup> Max RONGE, Dwanaście lat służby wywiadowczej [Twelve years of secret service]. Warszawa 1992, 159f.

<sup>19</sup> AAN, Zbiór mikrofilmów, M-447/4: Ergebnisse der Besprechung Seiner Exzellenz des Herrn Ministers mit dem Referenten III/P und den Vertretern in Warschau und Lublin, Geheim. Wien, 29 I 1917, Andrian; Władysław Leopold JAWORSKI, Diariusz 1914–1918 [Diaries 1914–1918], ed. Michał Czajka. Warszawa 1997, 158f.: record from 26 and 29 I 1916; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 181ff.

<sup>20</sup> ASKENAZY, Uwagi, 282–286; CZERNIN, Im Weltkriege, 282f.; Theobald BETHMANN-HOLLWEG, Sapostrzeżenia o wojnie światowej [Notices about the World War], in: Sokolnicki, Polska w pamiętnikach Wielkiej Wojny, 24f.; Erich LUDENDORFF, Moje wspomnienia wojenne 1914–1918 [My memories of the World War 1914–1918], in: Sokolnicki (ed.), Polska w pamiętnikach Wielkiej Wojny, 54–156; Karl HELFFERICH, Wojna światowa [World War], in: ebd., 247f.; ROTH, Die Entstehung des polnischen Staates, 22; Marian SEYDA, Polska na przełomie dziejów. Fakty i dokumenty [Poland on the turning point of History. Facts and Documents], vol. II. Od zbrojnego wystąpienia Stanów Zjednoczonych do końca wojny [From the armed intervention of the United States to the end of war]. Poznań–Warszawa–Wilno–Lublin 1931, 29f.; CONZE, Polnische Nation, 278f.; PAJEWSKI, Odbudowa państwa polskiego, 169f.; IDEM, Pierwsza wojna światowa, 440–446; JABŁOŃSKI, Polityka Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, 380f.; Manfried RAUCHENSTEINER, Der Tod des Doppeladlers, Österreich-Ungarn und der Erste Weltkrieg. Graz–Wien–Köln 1994, 520; Ingeborg MECKLING, Die Außenpolitik des Grafen Czernin. Wien 1969 und 1993, 183, 314–354; Ludwik BAZYLOW (ed.), Historia dyplomacji polskiej [History of Polish diplomacy], vol. III. 1795–1918. Warszawa 1982, 878f.; Eva DEMMERLE, Kaiser Karl I "Selig, die Frieden stiften...". Die Biographie. Wien 2004, 121ff.

<sup>21</sup> RONGE, Dwanaście lat służby wywiadowczej, 177; DEMMERLE, Kaiser Karl I., 143f..

<sup>22</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1015, k. 83: Der Vertreter des k. u. k. M.d.Ä. beim k. u. k. MGG in Polen, Nr 70-P-A, Zur Situation nach dem Besuch im deutschen Hauptquartier, Streng vertraulich, Freiherr von Hoenning an Graf Burián, Lublin, 18 V 1918; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 291–306; DEMMERLE, Kaiser Karl I., 154ff.

Polish Regency Council proclaimed on October 7, 1918 the creation of an independent Poland to the Polish people and on October 12 issued a decree subordinating troops to the Polish state authority<sup>23</sup>.

On October 14, 1918 the Austro-Hungarian authorities informed their representatives in the Polish Kingdom of their willingness to relinquish their military administration of the Polish Kingdom and their support for the creation of a Polish civil administration<sup>24</sup>. Emperor Karl's manifesto from October 16 to "my faithful people", announcing *the building of a new country on the natural basis* did not reverse, but accelerated decentralizing tendencies<sup>25</sup>. The Polish Liquidation Committee, which was brought into existence on October 29 in Kraków (Krakau) as an initiative of Ignacy Daszyński and concentrated all political parties with the exception of the Conservatives, was one of the first institutions of the independent Polish State in Galicia. The last Austro-Hungarian Governor Gen. Lipóscák relieved all the Polish officers from their oath to the Emperor and transferred power of the occupied territories to the Polish Regency Council on November 3. On November 8 he left Lublin<sup>26</sup>.

#### THE ACTIVIST CENTRE AND RIGHT

After the outbreak of First World War Austro-Hungarian authorities did not undertake any significant diplomatic initiatives in the Polish Kingdom, but relied more on the strength of Austro-Hungarian and German military power. In the long term, however, managing the political affairs of the occupied territories required allies who supported their political and military goals. The most important Austro-Hungarian allies in Galicia and in the Polish Kingdom were parties orientated towards Austria-Hungary. These were of an activist orientation and were assembled in the High National Committee. This Committee was dominated by moderate and conservative politicians who supported the Austro-Polish solution and assured the realization of the Monarchy's interests.

In the Polish Kingdom members of the NKN and advocates of the unification of Russian territories with Galicia created the League of Polish Statehood (LPP) in March 1915. According to Maj. Gustaw Iszkowski, Chief of the Intelligence Service in Lublin, the LPP was the only independent organization which envisioned the solution of the Polish Cause within the framework of an unconditional dependence on the Austro-Hungarian monarchy<sup>27</sup>.

However, the League did not gain much support within Polish society. Continuous German efforts to win the Right weakened the position of activist parties in the Polish Kingdom. In addition, the lack of any convincing policy towards the Polish Cause on the part of Habsburgian monarchy only complicated their situation. The Austrian policy was characterized by mistrust of its greatest Polish allies and allegations that they had a hidden agenda of Polish independence. Reservations about the NKN were expressed even by the representatives of the Foreign Office. Andrian maintained in Oc-

<sup>23</sup> HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 287; LEWANDOWSKI, Królestwo Polskie pod okupacją austriacką, 133ff.

<sup>24</sup> HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 288–292; Rudolf MITZKA, Die k.u.k. Militärverwaltung in Russisch-Polen, in: Die Militärverwaltung in den von den österreichisch-ungarischen Truppen besetzten Gebieten. Wien 1928, 50ff. ZEMAN, Der Zusammenbruch des Habsburgerreiches, 225–252; PAJEWSKI, Pierwsza wojna światowa 1914–1918, 732–749; LEWANDOWSKI, Królestwo Polskie pod okupacją austriacką, 134f.

<sup>25</sup> Hugo KERCHNAWE, Der Zusammenbruch der österreichisch-ungarischen Wehrmacht im Herbst 1918. München 1921, 53ff.; Jerzy MADEYSKI, Z przełomowych dni 1918 roku [From the turning days in 1918], Kraków 1920, 10f., 17–20; Henryk BATOWSKI, Rozpad Austro-Węgier 1914–1918 [The Desintegration of Austria-Hungary] (=Sprawy narodowościowe i działania dyplomatyczne). Kraków 1982, 238ff.; DEMMERLE, Kaiser Karl I., 161f.

<sup>26</sup> Jerzy JAMPOLSKI, Wspomnienia z czasów okupacji austriackiej w Królestwie Kongresowym [Recollections from the time of the austrian occupation in the Congress Kingdom]. Kraków 1924, 43; GLAISE-HORSTENAU, Die Katastrophe, 384; Tadeusz BOBROWICKI-LIBCHEN, Sily okupacji austriackiej w przeddzień przewrotu [The Forces of the Austrian occupation on the eve of upheaval], in: *Niepodległość* 5(1931/32), 400–417, NALECZ, Polska Organizacja Wojskowa, 210; Dariusz GÓRECKI, Powstawanie władz naczelnich w odradzającej się Polsce [The origin of chief authorities in the reviving Poland] (1914–1919), Acta Universitatis Lodzienensis, Folia Iuridica 13. Łódź 1983, 80f.; LEWANDOWSKI, Królestwo Polskie pod okupacją austriacką, 139–142.

<sup>27</sup> AAN, Kolekcja akt różnej proveniencji, I/80, 33: K.u.k. Militärgeneralgouvernement (MGG) Lublin, Nachrichtenabteilung (NA), Beilage Nr 2 zum Wochen Berichte Nr 36: Politischer Bericht; HOLZER–MOLENDA, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 163f.

tober 1915 that the NKN, although undoubtedly consisting of parties with pro-Austrian sympathies, needed stronger control as an organization<sup>28</sup>.

As time passed, the social support for the NKN ebbed away, partly as a consequence of the Austro-Hungarian policy towards the Polish people in Galicia and in other occupied territories<sup>29</sup>. The representatives of the Foreign Office in the Polish Kingdom were fully aware of that fact. Hoenning informed Burián that he never doubted either the LPP's reliability or its attachment to the monarchy and thought it to be one of the most important political groups with members from the best circles of the society. However, he stated that he could not be sure about its influence and popularity in the Polish nation. There was still a possibility for it to regain its influence if it initiated the reconstruction of the Polish State instead of following a 'wait-and-see' policy, which benefited Germany and meant a change for the worst in its future position in Poland. Hoenning admitted that the Austrian policy concerning Poland with its constant dissimulation about its intentions could not be perceived as genuine and could be understood and appreciated only by old supporters and a few insiders. In the eyes of many Poles the NKN's policy seemed to have been dictated by Austria and their military use of the Polish Legions showed no signs of understanding for the ultimate Polish goal, that being the creation of a Polish Army<sup>30</sup>.

There were accusations coming from the Activist movement that some representatives of the occupied administration, for example the Civil Commissioner Jerzy Wysocki and the Police Superintendent Franciszek Charwat, were under a great deal of influence from the independent Left; in addition the Civil Commissioner Jerzy Madeyski maintained contact with the National-Democratic politician Jan Stecki. In this way the radical Left and Right movements which were propagated in Lublin harmed the pro-Austrian Central Party the most<sup>31</sup>.

The proclamation of November 5, 1916 did not bring the expected break in the political life within the Polish Kingdom, because the Temporary State Council did not have sufficient authority in Polish society. The declaration of the Parliamentarian Polish Club of May 28, 1917 demanding a united and independent Poland with access to sea brought not only into question the Austro-Polish solution, but also "the whole anti-Russian orientation, which for the Poles was in fact becoming useless"<sup>32</sup>.

The elimination of Piłsudski from the political scene, which resulted from his arrest by the Germans in July 1917 gave, according to the Austrian authorities, new hope for an Austro-Polish solution. On August 23, 1917 Lago informed Czernin that many activists and other representatives of upper-middle classes were very satisfied with Piłsudski's removal. In private conversations the opinion prevailed that had Piłsudski remained in the country, the realization of the 5th November Act would have been impossible<sup>33</sup>. The events surrounding the withdrawal of the Polish Legions from the Polish Kingdom and the Temporary State Council's demission have been generally judged as a cancellation of the November 5 Act and the end of an important period in the Polish history. In the opinion of the Military Intelligence Service in Lublin it was characterized by the defeat of the political Centre. The old activism died and a new social conservatism seemed only to have slowly emerged. This did not mean that there was a renouncement of state-building activities. The Right wanted to arrange Poland on the terms of the act, while the Left watchful, and distrusting, did not want to lose the

<sup>28</sup> AAN, Zbiór mikrofilmów, M-485/6, 287: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k. u. k. AEK, Pol. Ber. Nr 64, Das Oberste Polnische Nationalkomitee, Die Warschauer Delegation in Krakau, streng vertraulich, an Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Minister Freiherrn von Burián, Warschau, 14 X 1915, Andrian.

<sup>29</sup> HOLZER-MOLENDA, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 114f.; MOLENDA, Piłsudczycy a narodowi demokraci, 248f.

<sup>30</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 928, Krieg 11 o, fol. 374–387: Freiherr von Hoenning an Baron Burián, Nr 9, Polnische Stimmung, Geheim, Lublin, 10 VIII 1916.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., PA I, box 930, Krieg 11 x: Bericht über das Pressbureau des MGG in Lublin, Wien, 20 X 1916.

<sup>32</sup> Henryk WERESZYCKI, Historia polityczna Polski 1864–1918 [Political History of Poland 1864–1918]. Wrocław–Warszawa–Kraków–Gdańsk–Łódź 1990, 263f.

<sup>33</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1011, Krieg 56 a, fol. 274–282: Nr 8193: Der Delegierte des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. in Warschau, Nr 145 P A-B, Vorgänge innerhalb der hiesigen politischen Parteien, An Seine Exzellenz Ottokar Graf Czernin, streng vertraulich, Warschau, 23 VIII 1917, Lago.

opportunity for building Poland on a democratic basis and the Centre wanted to keep all of its power. However, there were a few positive factors which spoke in favor of Austria-Hungary: the Polish Legions, the better economic situation in the occupied territories, and the tradition of dynastic philanthropy towards the Poles. There were also some negative factors including the growth of hatred for the Germans due to economical reasons. The Poles resisted the Habsburgian monarchy for political reasons<sup>34</sup>. The positive side of things was impossible to convert, because the Centre, the monarchy's main ally, as admitted by Hoenning in September 1917, almost did not exist in the Austrian occupation territories and did not play a sufficient role in the political life of Poland<sup>35</sup>.

The creation of the "Polish Regency Council" did not significantly increase Austro-Hungarian influence in the Polish Kingdom. In the opinion of the Military Intelligence Service in Lublin in November 1917, the ever increasing difficulties in political struggles for the "Polish Regency Council", the Government, and the occupation authorities resulted from the impossibility to harmonize the political aspirations of social classes and groups within the occupational system. Polish society, in the absence of democratic structures of power, such as a parliament, showed no interest in state activity. The Polish Regency Council relied only on one part of the Centre, which had very little public support and was being blamed by the Left and the Right for the critical political and economical situation. The Military Intelligence Services predicted that the Centre would only introduce second-rank politicians into the Polish Government, as it did not want to compromise its leaders and in this way create *a real cabinet of mediocrities* without any social support *with the germs of approaching death*. The report can be recapitulated in the following way: 1) the Polish Regency Council's authority was decreasing as result of its indecisive policies; 2) the Government would not achieve a political consolidation and would only be a temporary cabinet; 3) Polish social forces and their increasing political influence would aim at giving Poland a conservative constitution; 4) the Austrian-Polish solution still had its supporters<sup>36</sup>.

The Jan Kucharzewski's government, which was still supportive of the Central Powers, was hindered by the anti-Polish German policy on the Eastern territories and was sunk by the signing of the Brest-Treaty in February 1918<sup>37</sup>. This could not have been prevented by reassuring efforts of

<sup>34</sup> Archiwum Główne Akt Dawnych w Warszawie (AGAD), Militär General Gouvernement in Polen (MGGL), 2156: K.u.k. NA des MGG, NA Nr 3371/res ex 1917, Politischer Bericht vom 6 September 1917.

<sup>35</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1020, fol. 66 ff: Nr 9053: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k.u.k. MGG in Polen, Nr 103, Eindruck des Aktes vom 15. September, Streng vertraulich, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Ottokar Czernin, Lublin, 18 IX 1917, Hoenning.

<sup>36</sup> AGAD, MGGL, 2156: NA des MGG in Polen, NA Nr 4733 res/1917, Politischer Bericht vom 5 XII 1917; KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2580: K. u. k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 60/9, geheim.

<sup>37</sup> AAN, Zbiór fotokopii, F-23, Vol. 4: Wolfgang KRIES, Deutsche Polenpolitik im Weltkriege, Kapitel IV, 60ff.; Halina JANOWSKA, Tadeusz JEDRUSZCZAK (ed.), Powstanie II Rzeczypospolitej. Wybór dokumentów 1866–1925 [The Origin of the Polish Republic. Selection of documents]. Warszawa 1981, 394f.; ASKENAZY, Uwagi, 317–332; DASZYŃSKI, Pamiętniki, Vol. 2, 288–298; CZERNIN, Im Weltkriege, 284–287, 291–347; ROTH, Die politische Entwicklung, 96–99; GLAISE-HORSTENAU, Die Katastrophe, 151–152; Pamiętniki generała Rybaka [Memoirs of General Rybak]. Warszawa 1954, 133; Imre GONDA, Verfall der Kaiserreiche in Mitteleuropa. Der Dreikind in den letzten Kriegsjahren (1916–1918). Budapest 1977, 376–385; ZEMAN, Der Zusammenbruch des Habsburgerreiches, 165–168; MECKLING, Die Außenpolitik des Grafen Czernin, 150–313; Winfried BAUMGARD, Deutsche Ostpolitik 1918. Von Brest-Litowsk bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkrieges. Wien–München 1966, 13–28; Wilhelm GROENER, Lebenserinnerungen. Jugend – Generalstab – Weltkrieg, hrsg. von Friedrich Hiller von Gaertringen. Göttingen 1957, 385 ff; SEYDA, Polska na przełomie dziejów, Vol. II, 239–269; CONZE, Polnische Nation, 340–341; KOZŁOWSKI, Działalność polityczna Koła Młodzianego, 205–217; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 271f.; HOLZER–MOLENDY, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 276–279; MOLENDY, Piłsudczycy a narodowi demokraci, 429–434; BATOWSKI, Rozpad Austro-Węgier, 188–191; PAJĘWSKI, Odbudowa państwa polskiego, 229–239; Historia dyplomacji polskiej, vol. III, 878f., 915f.; JABŁOŃSKI, Polityka Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, 548–550; BETHMANN–HOLLWEG, Sapożrzenia o wojnie światowej, 24f.; LUDENDORFF, Moje wspomnienia wojenne 1914–1918, 54–156; HELFFERICH, Wojna światowa, 247f.; ROTH, Die Entstehung des polnischen Staates, 22; SEYDA, Polska na przełomie dziejów, 29f.; CONZE, Polnische Nation, 278f.; PAJĘWSKI, Odbudowa państwa polskiego, 169f.; IDEM, Pierwsza wojna światowa, 440–446; JABŁOŃSKI, Polityka Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, 380f.; RAUCHENSTEINER, Der Tod des Doppeladlers, 520; MECKLING, Die Außenpolitik des Grafen Czernin, 183, 314–354; DEMMERLE, Kaiser Karl I., 217; LEWANDOWSKI, Królestwo Polskie pod okupacją austriacką, 117ff.; IDEM, Okupacja austriacka w Królestwie Polskim, 40; IDEM, Masowe wystąpienia antyokupacyjne, 7; GÓRECKI, Powstawanie władz naczelnich, 60ff.; Marek PRZENIOSŁO, Stosunek

Ugron, who despite losing the Chełm territory, still saw signs of hope and sympathy for the Austro-Polish solution among people like the Regents, Kucharzewski, and the other sensible politicians. This was based on the fact that Brest was considered a German act. In reality, after the conclusion of Brest-Treaty protest engulfed wide circles of the Polish society; and disgust was expressed even by the Activists. To the former Chief of the Military Department of the NKN Colonel Sikorski it was incomprehensible: *how could Count Czernin accept in such a way German political plans aimed so strongly against Austria, how could he be so disloyal to the Polish Cause?* Sikorski thought that Emperor Karl had been misled in this matter. During the Officers' meeting called on February 17, 1918, in the center of recruiting of the Polish Auxiliary Corps in Bolechów, Sikorski put forward a proposal for a declaration (voted for by all present officers) expressing solidarity with the II Brigade, which was under the Commando of Gen. Józef Haller and had moved to the other side of the front near Rarańcza, breaking away from the Austro-Hungarian Army. As a result of this declaration Sikorski and other officers and soldiers were arrested and detained in the Camp in Dulfálva, Hungary<sup>38</sup>.

The Brest-Treaty created a political vacuum in the center of the political scene, which was usually ready to cooperate with the Habsburgian monarchy, and this was very difficult to fill. This fact was stated in the report of the Intelligence Service of Military Command in Przemyśl and showed that even moderate parties could no longer be counted on to support a satisfactory solution of the Polish Cause by the Central Powers<sup>39</sup>.

Due to the threat of Bolshevism, the Austro-Polish Cause gained a few supporters among the propertied classes. Activism became decidedly conservative in its character, which opened the door for cooperation with the Habsburgian monarchy, especially after Czernin's resignation and Burián's succession to the Foreign Office. Burián wanted the traditional agreement with the Poles. The Activists could not offer Austria-Hungary much support, because of the constant hesitation of the Austrian Government towards the Polish Cause and the military defeats in summer 1918 on the Western front<sup>40</sup>.

#### THE PASSIVISTIC RIGHT

The biggest enemies of the Austro-Polish solution and an orientation toward the Central Powers were parties connected with Russia – the National League, the National-Democratic Party, and the National Union, which formed the Rightist National-Democratic Camp. The National Democracy, which were created in November 1914, the Polish National Committee (KPN), the Party of Real Policy, and a group of independent politicians were also involved in it. The KPN's policy identified Germany as the main enemy of Poland and other European nations, and called for support for the Entente and for uniting Poland under the Tsar; this policy was aimed against Austria-Hungary<sup>41</sup>.

chłopów Królestwa Polskiego do wojsk i władz rosyjskich, niemieckich i austriackich w latach 1914–1918 [The relations of the peasants in the Polish kingdom to the Russian, German and Austrian troops and authorities], in: *Dzieje Najnowsze* 30(1998) 59f.; ŚWIĘTEK, Lodowa ściana, 847; Włodzimierz MĘDRZYCKI, Niemiecka interwencja militarna na Ukrainie w 1918 roku [The German military intervention in the Ukraine]. Warszawa 2000, 17ff.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in Jan RZEPECKI, O Władysławie Sikorskim w Legionach [On Władysław Sikorski in the Legions], Part II, in: *Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny* 11(1966), 237; Jan MOLENDŁA, Tymczasowa Rada Stanu i Rada Regencyjna wobec polskich aspektów rewolucji w Rosji oraz radykalizacji nastrojów społeczeństwa w kraju [The Temporary State Council and the Regency Council on the Polish aspects of the Revolution in Russia and the radicalization of the public feeling in the country], in: *Dzieje Najnowsze* 21(1989), 25–30; Andrzej ZATORSKI (ed.), *Materiały archiwalne do historii stosunków polsko-radzieckich*, vol. I, Warszawa 1957, 230–236; Jerzy GAUL, Na tajnym froncie. Działalność wywiadowczo-informacyjna obozu niepodległościowego w latach 1914–1918 [On the secret front. The intelligence activity of the independent camp]. Warszawa 2001, 437f.

<sup>39</sup> AGAD, 1 Korpskommando / Militärkommando Krakau, 6: N-Stelle des k.u.k. Milkmdos Krakau, NA Nr 4495 res, 11 VII 1918; N-Stelle des k. u. k. MilKmdos Przemyśl, NA Nr 2376 res, Gesamtsituationsbericht pro Juni 1918, streng geheim, An N-Stelle des k.u.k. MilKmdos, Przemyśl, 9 VII 1918, Huczala.

<sup>40</sup> WERESZYCKI, Historia polityczna Polski, 274ff.

<sup>41</sup> MOLENDŁA, Piłsudczycy a narodowi demokraci, 135ff.

The Russia orientated parties adopted a passive position towards the occupational authorities, did not cooperate with them in a political sense, but only on social-economical terms while at the same time avoiding political controversy and persecution. Despite losing some prominent party members after Russia's withdrawal from the Polish Kingdom in May-September 1915, which presented it with personnel as well as organizational difficulties, the National Democracy remained a political force to be reckoned with. The representatives of the Austro-Hungarian Foreign Office realized that the National Democracy was one of the strongest political parties<sup>42</sup>. They also realized that the more pro-Austrian position of the Right parties was greatly influenced by German policy. The more probable it seemed that a solution of the Polish Cause would follow German wishes, the clearer were offers for cooperation with Austria on the part of the National-Democrats (Jan Stecki) and the Realists (Prince Lubomirski, Archbishop Kakowski)<sup>43</sup>.

The Central Powers' relationship with the Passivists was mixed and often paradoxical. An example of this would be the German authorities' more friendly and less rigorous policy toward the pro-Russian parties than to Piłsudski's group and the NKN supporters. This resulted from the German hope of separate negotiations with Russia and their opposition to the Austro-Polish solution. The Austrian authorities, however, treated supporters of the Russian orientation with great distrust. There were cases of arrest and incarcerations of National Democrats.

After the announcement of the November 5, 1916 Act and the possibility of creating a Polish Government, the National-Democratic policy became more flexible, out of fear that being politically passive would return the political initiative to the Activists<sup>44</sup>.

Austro-Hungary's relationship with the Passivists also underwent a significant evolution. They were now perceived as not merely as an enemy, but as politicians with great influence, and worth cooperating with. One of the reasons for this change was the fact that this circle brought together members of aristocracy, freeholders, factory owners, industrialists, and prominent personalities. After the announcement of November 5 Act, the Passivist's Right wing was invited to take part in the Polish Temporary State Council. The negotiations were tiresome and in the end collapsed as a result of demands from the most radical Right for voting power in the Council<sup>45</sup>.

Among the Austrian authorities were also the opponents of any cooperation with the Passivists. The delegate in Lublin, Hoenning, was of the opinion that the Right would be an unreliable ally, because the Polish aristocracy cared above all for their properties, estates, family interests; these things connected many of them to Russia and in the event of war would lead them to protect themselves in every way they could<sup>46</sup>.

Hoenning's reports and the intervention of the Foreign Office, disgusted by the actions of the National Democrats, who were agitating strongly and efficiently against the Temporary State Council and for creation of the Polish Parliament, caused the highest Army Commando to speak out. General Conrad, in his letter of February 14, 1917 to Gen. Governor in Lublin, Karl Kuk, stressed the importance of strengthening the position of the Temporary State Council, which was made up of parties friendly to the Austrian Army and a Monarchy in the Habsburgian Empire's interest and in favor of taking steps against the National-Democratic agitation in the Polish Kingdom. Conrad

<sup>42</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 928, Krieg 11 o, 511–518: Nr 6064: Der Delegierte des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. in Warschau, Nr 72 /P B, Die Berichte des Gesandten Baron Hoenning betreffend, streng vertraulich, An Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Minister Stephan Baron Burián von Rajecz, Warschau, 25 VIII 1916, Andrian.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., PA I, box 928, Krieg 11 o, 511–518: Nr 6064: Der Delegierte des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. in Warschau, Nr 72 /P B, Die Berichte des Gesandten Baron Hoenning betreffend, streng vertraulich, An Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Minister Stephan Baron Burián von Rajecz, Warschau, 25 VIII 1916, Andrian.

<sup>44</sup> HOLZER–MOLENDA, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 205f.

<sup>45</sup> HHStA, PA I box 1017, Krieg 65 b/2, 35: Nr 318: Telegramm Graf Thurn, Nr 1410, 10 I 1917; HOLZER–MOLENDA, Polska w pierwszej wojnie światowej, 210ff.

<sup>46</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1016, Krieg 56 c/2, 67f.: Nr 9159: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k. u. k. Militär-General-gouvernement, Nr 25, Kandidaten für den Staatsrat, geheim, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Stephan Baron Burián von Rajecz, Lublin, 16 XII 1916, Hoenning; ibid., PA I, box 1017, Krieg 56 b/2, 15–17: Der Vertreter des k. u. k. M. d. Ä. beim k. u. k. MGG in Polen, Nr 1, Staatsrat und Polenpolitik, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Ottokar Grafen Czernin von Chudenitz, Lublin, 7 I 1917, Hoenning; HAUSNER, Die Polenpolitik, 186; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 194.

recommended treating the party with greater reserve, because of its dependency on Russia and of looking for ways of improving communications with Activists as well as Realists<sup>47</sup>.

The February Revolution of 1917 and the collapse of Tsardom in Russia were great shock for the Right and National parties in Poland. These events affected the position of the Passivists; there followed a political life of active cooperation with the Central Powers. Under these circumstances Hoenning saw a possibility of pacifying the revolutionary sentiments in the Polish Kingdom and winning political opponents to the Austro-Polish solution, especially Prince Lubomirski and a majority of the Right. Hoenning felt that the Right feared the increase of the political influence of Pilsudski and his supporters and looked for protection against both Russian revolutionary ideas and German despotism as well as wished for the encirclement of Germany; therefore they desired to improve their position with help from Austria-Hungary or the Entente-States<sup>48</sup>.

In August 1917 the Police Superintendent Franciszek Charwat from the Intelligence Service (NA MGG) in Lublin interestingly analyzed the political situation in the Polish Kingdom. Supporting the idea of a friendly administration in the occupied territories and ruling together with the majority of population, he indicated the need of differentiation between quality (the Right) and quantity (the Left). The necessity of choosing an ally between them caused him to consider the political consequences of such choices. If winning the support of the Right for the Austro-Hungarian policy was guaranteed, it could be worth (so Charwat), to limit the political activity of the Left. But there was no doubt that the Right, with the exception of a few Realists, would remain neutral. Other important considerations were as follows: the enormous hatred towards Germany which for the Right was an impossible barrier to overcome, meant an orientation towards Entente and neutrality till the peace congress. Charwat anticipated that the Right would deploy some clever governmental policy to give the appearance of submission in order to achieve economical concessions, without making any important deviation from their program. It was also possible that the Right, threatened by the Left and their street demonstrations against them (the Right were called 'bloodsuckers') would budge and support some democratic solutions. If it would be possible to take advantage of this situation and with certain concessions to force the Right to issue an openly pro-Austrian declaration, a political experiment could take place. Because it would be almost impossible for the Right to accept a programme friendly to the Central Powers, rejecting the Left was not an option because this would mean losing both the qualitative or quantitative majority. Charwat was concerned that the Polish Government and the State Council would be considered a sham if not at least one big political group – the Right or the Left – supported it<sup>49</sup>.

In September 1917, as anticipated by Charwat, the National-Democrats did not participate in appointing the Polish Government. According to the Military Intelligence Service in Poland, the Right, being partly in opposition, stayed neutral knowing that the conservative views of the Polish Regency Council made the building of the Polish State impossible without the Rightist parties' support. There was hope that Poland would be built by the Centre, although according to the Right's wishes<sup>50</sup>.

Were there any possibilities to cooperate with the Passivist Right in the Polish Kingdom? There were no class barriers, because Czernin kept in touch with estate owners and Gen. Governor Stanisław Szeptycki, who himself was a Galician nobleman, and was afraid of the Left consulted mainly with

<sup>47</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1017, Krieg 56 b/2, fol. 142f.: Nr 1283: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k. u. k. AOK, Nr 17124, Bekämpfung der nationaldemokratischen Agitation in k.u.k. MGG Lublin, zu Telegramm Nr 33 vom 10 II 1917, streng vertraulich, An Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Minister Grafen Ottokar Czernin, Baden, 15 II 1917; K.u.k. AOK, MV Nr 6864 /res/P, Tätigkeit der Nationaldemokratie im k.u.k. MGG Polen, An Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Karl Kuk k.u.k. MGG in Lublin, Zur eigenhändigen Eröffnung, 14 II 1917, Conrad.

<sup>48</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1017, Krieg 65 b/2, fol. 215–224: Nr 5830: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k.u.k. MGG in Polen, Nr 52, Rechte und Linke Parteien für Österreich, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Ottokar Grafen Czernin von Chudenitz, streng geheim, zur Weitergabe nicht geeignet, Lublin, 20 VI 1917, Hoenning.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> AGAD, MGGL, 2156: NA des MGG in Polen, NA Nr 4733 res/1917, Politischer Bericht vom 5 XII 1917; KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2580: K. u. k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 60/9, geheim.

the representatives of his class<sup>51</sup>. But the most likely and natural Polish rightist allies of Austria-Hungary – Conservatives and Realists – did not have sufficient political influence in the Polish society. It was an astounding political preference, despite all realistic reports sent by the Intelligence Services about the actual political situation of the polish territories, which as the situation of the Central Powers deteriorated in favor of the Entente, to support the National-Democracy. An example of the accuracy of the Military Intelligence Service can be seen in the report from June 1918 of the Military Command in Przemyśl, which indicated that Poland was under the influence of national ideas. These ideas were supported by the larger part of the civil servants and intelligentsia, whereas the national-radical ideas were massively spread by the Catholic priests among the populace, especially in the countryside. The leadership of the Polish Cause was ever increasingly in the hands of citizens in the Polish Kingdom, while Galicia was becoming an operational territory for the National-Democrats from Congress-Poland<sup>52</sup>.

The diagnosis of the Austrian Intelligence Service was accurate. At the end of the occupation the National-Democrats had great influence, especially in the German and Russian sectors and among propertied classes and the priesthood, the lower middle classes, and the majority of peasants. Only a faulty interpretation of possibilities regarding Entente and the inability to create a coalition cabinet in October 1918 cost the National-Democrats power in the country in favor of the Independent Left. Their Government, however, proved short lived and the first free Parliament in 1919 was won by the Rightist Parties. Their supremacy was only ended by Pilsudski's Coup d'Etat in May 1926.

#### THE INDEPENDENT LEFT

For Austria-Hungary the political alternative to the moderate and rightist parties in the Polish Kingdom could have been in theory the Independent Left, especially Józef Piłsudski's group and the Polish Socialist Party-Revolutionary Fraction. They were, for tactical reasons, inclined to cooperate with Austria-Hungary. However, one must keep in mind, that it was very difficult for the Austro-Hungarian authorities to be serious about partnership with the Left, since the revolutionary movement was regarded as the main enemy of the Monarchy and Piłsudski was closely connected to socialist ideas. The cooperation of the Austro-Hungarian Intelligence Services with Polish socialists before and after the outbreak of war was of a tactical character and was used to acquire the necessary intelligence information that could lead to a diversion on the home front or to cause an anti-Russian uprising in the Polish Kingdom<sup>53</sup>.

The temporarily cooperation in September and October 1914 between the German authorities and the Polish National Organization which included the radical and independent elements connected with Piłsudski, was observed with anxiety by the leading circles of the Empire. The merger of the PON and the NKN at the end of November 1914 was met with distrust by the Austro-Hungarian authorities to the Committee, despite the withdrawal of the group of pro-Russian members at the end of October<sup>54</sup>.

Some representatives of Austria-Hungary were skeptical of the policy of depending only on the Centre and of taking action against radical elements. Ignacy Rosner, a polish conservative in the Austrian service, wrote in his secret letter from June 18, 1915 to the Foreign Office that he considered the assumption that winning support of the moderate elements in the Polish Kingdom meant going against the Radicals to be wrong. Politics during a time of peace could not be associated with radical elements, whereas during the war the masses became important. Winning political battles required

<sup>51</sup> HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 186.

<sup>52</sup> AGAD, 1 Korpskommando / Militärkommando Krakau, 6: N-Stelle des k.u.k. Milkmdos Krakau, NA Nr 4495 res, 11 VII 1918; N-Stelle des k. u. k. MilKmdos Przemyśl, NA Nr 2376 res, Gesamtsituationsbericht pro Juni 1918, streng geheim, An N-Stelle des k.u.k. MilKmdos Przemyśl, 9 VII 1918, Huczala.

<sup>53</sup> HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 46; CONZE, Polnische Nation, 224f.; Ryszard ŚWIĘTEK, Polityka Piłsudskiego wobec aktu 5 listopada 1916 [Piłsudski's policy towards the act of november 5<sup>th</sup> 1916], in: *Przegląd Historyczny* 57(1986) 1, 76.

<sup>54</sup> Michał SOKOLNICKI, Rok czternasty [Year Fourteen]. Londyn 1961, 234–282.

supporting radical forces, because moderate elements did not have much influence. Rosner anticipated that having the support of the mob at the entry to Warsaw would attract the moderate elements, while securing only the sympathy of higher classes would mean the opposition of the masses and of radical elements<sup>55</sup>.

Rosner's forecast proved correct, but the aversion of the Austrian authorities to the socialists was too strong, especially after the August 25, 1915 publication of the Federation of Independent Parties (to which the PPS belonged) of the Independence proclamation of the Polish States within its most extended borders. The secret congress of the PPS at the beginning of 1916 only deepened this aversion, especially because reports about this congress were delivered by the representatives of the NKN hostile to the socialists. They negatively assessed the decision of withdrawing support for the Austro-Polish solution and the recruitment of the Polish Legions, being correct, that from the point of view of the political interests of the Monarchy, the evolution in the PPS was decidedly unfavourable<sup>56</sup>.

Some Austrian diplomats (Hoenning, Andrian) were, however, inclined to contact the representatives of the Independent Left<sup>57</sup>. Hoenning thought the propertied and conservative classes were most susceptible to influences of the Monarchy's enemies, because their property interests could very quickly change their political conviction, whereas the radical elements were more resistant. Their hatred of the Russian Regime and rule and their fear that it might return made it easier for them to look upon Austria-Hungary as a partner. Hoenning emphasized that he never thought about a rapprochement with the Leftist-democratic CKN in order to fight against the pro-Austrian LPP or NKN, but shared the opinion that gaining the sympathy of the most influential radical party leadership was a necessary condition of Austria-Hungary's future influence and success<sup>58</sup>.

Andrian's activity in Warsaw was parallel to Hoenning's in Lublin, as both were trying to win the support of the Leftist parties in the Austrian occupied territories. Adrian saw the idea of a rapprochement with the Left as the best possibility, negotiating with not only Piłsudski, but also other leaders, mainly Artur Śliwiński, Bolesław Lutomski, and Witold Jodko-Narkiewicz. However gaining the support of the Left could not happen at the cost of the moderate parties of the Centre and the Right, because at the beginning of the new phase in the solution of the Polish Cause Austria-Hungary was now even more interested in maintaining good relations with parties which were less aggressive on matters like nationality and politics and more inclined to concentrate on economical and religious matters and therefore less likely to support irredentism than the parties of the extreme Left. The parties of the extreme Left which had always had extreme aims and violent methods, could, in a free Poland, very easily replace the old slogan 'Fight with all your strength against Tsarism' with the new one 'Fight with all your strength for Galicia'<sup>59</sup>.

The representative of the AOK in Warsaw, Colonel von Paić, was aware that only attracting the radical elements and especially the appointment of Piłsudski as minister of war could bring the desired military effects and in summer 1916 proposed a project for the enlargement of the Polish Legions. The Chief of the Intelligence Service, Colonel Oskar Hranilović, supported the military

<sup>55</sup> AAN, Zbiór fotokopii, F-17, 110–123: Denkschrift des Abgeordneten Ministerialrats Dr. Rosner, streng vertraulich, Wien, 18 VI 1915; GROSFELD, Polityka państwa centralnych, 28f., foot-note nr 45.

<sup>56</sup> KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2375, K.u.k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 16090 P, Pol. Berichte, 7 II 1916: Naczelnny Komitet Narodowy Departament Wojskowy, L 399/16, Piotrków, 22 I 1915, An das k.u.k. AOK im Wege des k.u.k. MGG in Lublin; AAN, Zbiór fotokopii, F-26: Nachgelassene Schriften des wirkl. Geh. Rates Dr Wolfgang von Kries, Vol. 7. KRIES, Deutsche Polenpolitik im Weltkriege, Kapitel VIII, Die polnische Legion, 25; JABŁOŃSKI, Polityka Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, 238–244; SULEJA, Orientacja austro-polska, 201; IDEM, Polska Partia Socjalistyczna 1892–1948. Zarys dziejów [The Polish Socialist Party 1892–1948. A Short History]. Warszawa 1988, 119–120; GAUL, Na tajnym froncie, 306f.

<sup>57</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 928, Krieg 11 o, fol. 142–146: Der Delegierte des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. in Warschau, Nr 56/P, A-C, Die gegenwärtige politische Lage in Warschau, geheim, An Seine Exzellenz Stephan Freiherrn Burián von Rajecz, Warschau, 11 VII 1916, Andrian.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., PA I, box 928, Krieg 11 o, fol. 137f.: Nr 7/P-A, Das polnische Problem, Freiherr von Hoenning an Baron Burián, Lublin, 11 VII 1916.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., PA I, box 928, Krieg 11 o, fol. 511–518: Nr 6064: Der Delegierte des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. in Warschau, Nr 72 /P B, Die Berichte des Gesandten Baron Hoenning betreffend, streng vertraulich, An Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Minister Stephan Baron Burián von Rajecz, Warschau, 25 VIII 1916, Andrian.

initiative of Paić, but rejected his political proposals. The AOK's project to corrupt Piłsudski with land and property was ludicrous and inappropriate<sup>60</sup>. The position of the diplomatic circles concerning the enlargement of the Polish Legions was more realistic. Andrian took into account, in case of an unfavorable turn in the war, the possibility of Poland's armament and the creation of a Polish Army, but only under the condition of winning over the support of intelligentsia in the towns, the creation of government with Piłsudski's participation and the PPS participation in finding a formula of statehood that would gain the support of the Polish society. Andrian's goals were, on one hand, to eradicate conflicts between the NKN and Piłsudski's group and on the other hand, together with Colonel Paić – to improve a very often tense relations between the AOK and Piłsudski<sup>61</sup>.

In the opinion of some Foreign Office representatives (Andrian, Burián, Musulin and Ugron) Piłsudski would cooperate with Austria only if the authorities would treat him with the respect which reflected his expectations and his fame in Poland. They proposed therefore winning him over not with land and property (as suggested by the military authorities), but by conferring on him a General title and e.g. the Order of Leopold. These proposals of the Foreign Office did not meet with the approval of the Army's Highest Command. The promotion of Piłsudski to the General rank was not acceptable to all the important military authorities. They feared that this promotion would glorify him and his Legions and therefore strengthen the idea of an independent Polish Army. The military authorities also had failed to consult with the diplomatic circles about many important decisions, which resulted in political repercussions: one of these was the dismissal of Piłsudski on September 26, 1916 under German pressure<sup>62</sup>.

After the announcement of November 5, 1916 Act, the Austrian authorities tried to consolidate all of the Polish political parties and all of Polish society in the Temporary State Council and to secure the majority of pro-Austrian candidates<sup>63</sup>. Burián and Paić advocated introducing the representation of the Left with Piłsudski to the Temporary State Council<sup>64</sup>. That idea was supported by Hoenning, who saw a chance for improving relations in the occupied territories and winning over radical politicians representing the PPS, the POW, the Central National Committee and the National Department in Lublin to the Austro-Polish programme. Hoenning criticized the opinion that any orientation towards the Left was impossible, because it would anger the moderate and rightist activists, by posing the following question: What did Austria-Hungary expected from the Poles? If, according to explanations of the highest Austro-Hungarian and German Army Commands, the main goal was to create a Polish Army or at least numerous auxiliary troops, then they should not attach great importance to the whims of 'our Poles' and concentrate on recruitment only. Hoenning, who

<sup>60</sup> Jerzy GAUL, Józef Piłsudski i order Leopolda [Józef Piłsudski and the order of Leopold], in: *Przegląd Historyczny* 94(2003), 155f.

<sup>61</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 502, Geheimakten, Krieg 1914–1918, Liasse XLVII 3 (12–14), fol. 221–231: Der Delegierte in Warschau, geheim, Warschau, 26 VI 1916, Andrian (without number) to Burián; Ibid., PA I, box 928, Krieg 11 o, 511–518: Nr 6064: Der Delegierte des k. u. k. M. d. Ä. in Warschau, Nr 72 /P B, Die Berichte des Gesandten Baron Hoenning betreffend, streng vertraulich, An Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Minister Stephan Baron Burián von Rajecz, Warschau, 25 VIII 1916, Andrian; GROSFELD, Polityka państw centralnych, 118f..

<sup>62</sup> GAUL, Józef Piłsudski a order Leopolda, 153ff.

<sup>63</sup> KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2418: K.u.k. MGG in Polen, ZLK Präs Nr 16110, Staatsrat, Kandidatenliste, An das k.u.k. AOK, Lublin, 17 XI 1916; HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 106; LEWANDOWSKI, Królestwo Polskie pod okupacją austriacką, 86; Jerzy KOCHANOWSKI, Powołanie Józefa Piłsudskiego do Tymczasowej Rady Stanu w świetle korespondencji władz austriackich [The appointment of Joseph Piłsudski to the Temporary State Council in the light of the correspondence of the austrian authorities] (na marginesie artykułu Ryszarda ŚWIĘTEK) [Footnote of the article of Ryszard Świętek], Polityka Józefa Piłsudskiego wobec aktu 5 listopada 1916, in: "Przegląd Historyczny" 77(1986), 71–95, in: *Przegląd Historyczny* 79(1988), 531f.; SULEJA, Tymczasowa Rada Stanu, 34.

<sup>64</sup> KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2418: K. u. k. AOK, QuAbt, MV Nr 116648/P, Telegramm an FZM Kuk, 20 XI 1916, Conrad; Ibid.: K. u. k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 116650/P, Baron Hoenning Heranziehung durch FZM Kuk zu den polnischen Verfassungsarbeiten, An Seine Exzellenz den Herrn Karl Kuk, 21 XI 1917; Arthur HAUSNER, Józef Piłsudski o budowie wojska polskiego i Radzie Stanu [Józef Piłsudski on the building of the Polish Army and the State Council], ed. Wacław Lipiński, in: *Niepodległość* 19(1939), 88; AAN, Kolekcja akt różnej proveniencji, I/74, 84–87: ŚWITALSKI, Materiały, Vol. 2; HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 108; KOCHANOWSKI, Powołanie Józefa Piłsudskiego, 533.

was regarded as a Social-Democrat (though he absolutely rejected this assertion), could not understand personal prejudices against an Austria-Hungarian orientation towards the Left, when it came to acting in the interest of the Monarchy<sup>65</sup>.

The talks between the Austrian authorities and the Right collapsed and further negotiations were conducted only with the representatives of the Activists – from the Right to the Left. It was presumed that the Left would be focused in the creation of the Polish Government, but there was also hope of their active support for the creation of the Polish Army. On January 10, 1917 the Emperor approved a list of candidates which included the representatives of the Left with Piłsudski<sup>66</sup>.

The collapse of the Russian Empire in March 1917 complicated the situation in the Polish territories. The radicalization of the public mood demanded the use of unconventional political methods. Hoenning was the supporter of political solutions, instead of severe orders, and suggested relieving the tension by improving the material condition of the people and favoring the leadership of the radical parties in order to win them over to the Austro-Polish solution. In his letter from March 28, 1917 to Baron Andrian he appealed for the radical elements to be brought in before it became too late<sup>67</sup>.

The Military Intelligence Service in Lublin confirmed that the political activity of the Left was turning increasingly hostile to the Central States. This was a consequence of socialist elements prevailing over the bourgeois. Previously it was the middle-class radicalism pushing the Left towards realization of the national agenda, participation in governmental activities, and cooperation with state institutions created as a result of compromise with the other parties. The more significant part of the population, who at first supported this direction, was now increasingly exposed to the influences of socialism, and social matters became more important to them than political issues. This tendency was exasperated by the difficult economic situation<sup>68</sup>.

However, in June 1917 a change occurred in the Leftist's Independence circles as a result of a conflict with the Germans over the oath of the Polish Legion that led them to reconsider the Austro-Polish solution<sup>69</sup>. In the light of Piłsudski's and Kunowski's declarations about the possibility of unification with Austria, Hoenning could not see any obstacles to a rapprochement with the Independent Left; however he had no illusions about the previous biased activities of the Austrian authorities. To bring about some kind of reconciliation confidential negotiations had to be undertaken. This would be difficult to do in Austrian territories, because Polish political life was concentrated in Warsaw and this was where valid decisions were being made. It was therefore necessary to send a reliable man with good contacts to the Independent Camp as a delegate to Warsaw, especially to the Leftist parties. Hoenning recommended to Czernin sending the Police Superintendent F. Charwat

<sup>65</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1016, Krieg 56 c/2, fol. 67f.: Nr 9159: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k.u.k. MGG in Polen, Nr 25, Kandidaten für den Staatsrat, geheim, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Stephan Baron Burián von Rajecz, Lublin, 16 XII 1916, Hoenning; ibid., PA I, box 1017, Krieg 56 b/2, 15–17: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k. u. k. MGG in Polen, Nr 1, Staatsrat und Polenpolitik, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Ottokar Grafen Czernin von Chudenz, Lublin, 7 I 1917, Hoenning; HAUSNER, Polenpolitik., 186; GROSFELD, Polityka państwa centralnych, 194.

<sup>66</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1017, Krieg 56 b/2, fol. 15–17: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k.u.k. MGG in Polen, Nr 1, Staatsrat und Polenpolitik, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Ottokar Grafen Czernin von Chudenz, Lublin, 7 I 1917, Hoenning; ibid., PA I box 1017, Krieg 65 b/2, 35: Nr 318: Telegramm Graf Thurn, Nr 1410, 10 I 1917; HAUSNER, Polenpolitik, 124; JABŁOŃSKI, Polityka Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej, 343f.; SULEJA, Tymczasowa Rada Stanu, 48; LEWANDOWSKI, Królestwo Polskie pod okupacją austriacką, 86 f; GÓRECKI, Powstawanie władz naczelnego w odradzającej się Polsce, 23; KOZŁOWSKI, Działalność polityczna Koła Miedzypartyjnego, 129–138.

<sup>67</sup> Materiały archiwalne do historii stosunków polsko-radzieckich [Archival Materials on the history of Polish-Soviet relations], vol. I, 6f.: O. Hoenning's letter to Andrian, Lublin, 28 III 1917; GROSFELD, Wpływ rewolucji lutowej, 383; IDEM, Polityka państwa centralnych, 194ff.

<sup>68</sup> KA, AOK QuAbt, box 1442: K.u.k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 62048 P, 10 IV 1917: K.u.k. MGG in Polen, NA Präs Nr 4358, Stimmungsbericht (abgeschlossen am 4 IV 1917), An das k.u.k. AOK QuAbt, Lublin, 7 IV 1917, Kuk; AGAD, MGGL, 2156: K. u. k. MGG in Polen, NA Nr 299/res ex 1917, Politischer Bericht vom 29 Juli 1917, Lublin, 31 VII 1917.

<sup>69</sup> AGAD, MGGL, 2156: K. u. k. NA des MGG, NA Nr 2357 res vom 1917, Politischer Bericht vom 26 Juni 1917, 21.

who worked in the Intelligence Service of the Military Governorship in Poland and maintained confidential links to all the Leftist parties to Warsaw for a secret mission lasting 3 to 4 weeks<sup>70</sup>.

This was approved by Czernin and Gen. Kuk (General Governor in Lublin). Charwat stayed in Warsaw from July 9 to August 5, 1917. To fulfill his mission he tried at first to ascertain what the political plans of the Left were and if any possibilities existed for cooperation with Austria-Hungary in regards to the Polish Cause. For this purpose he came into contact with the representatives of the PPS-Revolutionary Fraction. A conference with the participation of K. Sosnkowski, who was a close confidante of Piłsudski, and probably Piłsudski himself was arranged to take place on July 22. However Charwat's hopes of finding out more definite details about the possibilities for an agreement were astonishingly dashed by Sosnkowski's and Piłsudski's detention by the Germans on the night of July 21/22<sup>71</sup>.

Although the arrests of Piłsudski and Sosnkowski did not put an end to Charwat's mission, they complicated it a great deal. The Superintendent still held talks and meetings with the representatives of the Left<sup>72</sup>. According to Charwat, despite the lack of any common ground between Austria-Hungary and the Left and given the political radicalization at that time, it was not an option to introduce the same system of repression as under the German occupation. He recommended some tolerance towards the Left, allowing some freedom in the political arena and keeping a watching brief continuing to take into account the military situation<sup>73</sup>.

If the history of the Polish Legions proved how dangerous a military organization could be in the hands of improper people, then more caution had to be exercised regarding a revolutionary organization. Charwat recommended a policy of engaging the Left in its legal political life and of tolerating it only in a legal form. Charwat brought up the fact that Austria-Hungary was now on the way to internal democratization, so the Austrian policy in Poland should be adjusted accordingly and should not be reactionary against the Left and bent on gagging democratic forces<sup>74</sup>.

Charwat informed the authorities about the revolutionary mood of the public and about the change in the tactics of the leadership in the radical Independent Camp who exchanged a policy of negotiations for one of opposition and obstruction. Charwat came to the conclusion that it was the Left's plan to revolutionize the masses as much as possible in order to have a broad support in the event of revolutionary action. The outbreak of revolution was expected in the coming weeks, because of the growing political turmoil and a deepening hostility against the Germans. That meant not only fighting with the invaders, but also against Polish parties like the Centre, whose supporters, in the eyes of the Left, were on the side of the Central Powers. A revolutionary action could be quashed with military power, but it was expected that this would compromise the Central Powers, taking the solutions of the Polish Cause away from them and even forcing them to accept the November 5 Act. Strong support for an uprising in Galicia, as well as criticism of the situation in Austria and an increase in revolutionary plotting were to be expected. Charwat was also informed that it was not possible to contact the Austrian authorities, although it would have been difficult to achieve, since the PPS did not wish to be seen as an initiator. However at that time there was a chance for Austria to form a political relationship with the Left in the Austrian occupied territories because of the good intentions manifested by the policy of Gen. Szeptycki, who was also very respected by the Left. The Left had two other reasons as well. The first reason was objective (a decreasing fear of Russia after

<sup>70</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1017, Krieg 65 b/2, fol. 215–224; Nr 5830: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k.u.k. MGG in Polen, Nr 52, Rechte und Linke Parteien für Österreich, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Ottokar Grafen Czernin von Chudenitz, streng geheim, zur Weitergabe nicht geeignet, Lublin, 20 VI 1917, Hoenning.

<sup>71</sup> KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2580: K.u.k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 60/3, geheim, 26 VII 1917: K.u.k. MGG für das österr.-ung. Okkupationsgebiet in Polen, Gstdchef Präs, Nr 9974, Vorgänge in Warschau – Bericht des Polizeiobekommissärs Charwat, Verschluss, geheim, An das k.u.k. AOK QuAbt, Lublin, 24 VII 1917: Bericht über die momentane Situation in Warschau, Warschau, 23 VII 1917, fol. 3.

<sup>72</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1017, Krieg 56 b 2, fol. 319–338: Bericht Charwat, Lublin, 6 VIII 1917, 1.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., fol. 19f.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 20.

the revolution) and the second was subjective (a deeply ingrained hatred of the Germans that could not be overcome)<sup>75</sup>.

The announcement of the warrant for the Regency Council and the Polish Government on September 15, 1917 opened a new chapter in Poland's political life. For the Socialists participation in the new government depended on the fulfillment of their fundamental conditions: the release of Piłsudski and Sosnkowski and of all the arrested members of the Polish Legions, the restoration of removed officers and soldiers to service, demission of the actual command of the Legions and the handing over of responsibility of the Legions to the Polish Government<sup>76</sup>. The Austrian authorities, under Germans pressure, were not inclined to fulfill these conditions.

According to the Intelligence Service in Poland, the Left was hanging on to its former positions regarding Piłsudski's cause and the internal situation, but also was engaged, with the help of legal and illegal media, in a very lively propaganda campaign to win the hearts and minds of the Polish people and create a counterweight to the much criticized Regency Council. The Left, having refused to participate in the Government, could not accept the new Polish state's elements growing into a reactionary and conservative stronghold and therefore intended to oppose it with mass support. The report's conclusion was that all the political activity of the Left was concentrated on propaganda and organizing young people as well as broad masses of people into legal and illegal organizations. It was doubted that they would have any success in that undertaking, because of the Left was a melting pot of different civil and social groups lacking only the groups from the Bourgeoisie to the Centre<sup>77</sup>.

At the beginning of 1918 Hoenning saw the chance for an Austro-Polish solution increasingly decreasing, because of resistance of three opponents: the National-Democracy, which was very well organized, the groups of the radical Left, which were increasingly inclined towards taking extreme measures, and the Germans. The moderate groups of the Left were still willing to accept an Austro-Polish solution, but were losing ground to the radical elements. The only practical solution, according to Hoenning, was to consolidate power in the hands of a Regent from the Habsburg dynasty, to proclaim the Polish Kingdom to be an independent state and to make the regulation of the Eastern boundaries entirely a Polish-Russian or Polish-Ukrainian affair. Hoenning's plans were not only very adventurous, but also visionary; he envisaged Piłsudski entering Minsk with Polish troops, organizing a Coup d'Etat and announcing the independence of the territories with a mixed population, forcing the Bolshevik's influences to the East<sup>78</sup>. A similar scenario was realized by Piłsudski after the First World War in Wilno (Wilna, Vilnius), which was incorporated into Poland. The treaty negotiated in Brest-Litowsk in February 1918 ruled out the possibility of a compromise with the Independent Left despite attempts on both sides to overcome the deadlock.

The unsuccessful attempt by the National-Democrats to create a coalition cabinet with the participation of all Polish parties resulted in creation on November 7, 1918 of the People's Government in Lublin with the Socialist Ignacy Daszyński as Prime Minister. Despite this success, there was no politician in Poland with the authority to integrate all Poles into the building of an independent state. However, they did not have to wait very long for that, because as the consequence of the outbreak of the revolution in Germany on the morning of November 10, 1918 Brigadier Piłsudski arrived in Warsaw. As Ugron reported, all went very quietly, yet this brief telegram meant that the rule of the Central Powers over the Polish territories had at last come to an end<sup>79</sup>.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>76</sup> KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2474: K.u.k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 161465/P, 13 IX 1917: K.u.k. Militärkommando Krakau, Nachrichtenstelle, NA Nr 4523 Res, Politische Situation in Polen – Bericht, An das k.u.k. QuAbt des k. u. k. AOK, Krakau, 10 IX 1917.

<sup>77</sup> AGAD, MGGL, box 2156: NA des MGG in Polen, NA Nr 4733 res/1917, Politischer Bericht vom 5 XII 1917; KA, AOK QuAbt, box 2580: K. u. k. AOK QuAbt, MV Nr 60/9, geheim.

<sup>78</sup> HHStA, PA I, box 1012, Krieg 56 a/2, fol. 32–39: Nr 902: Der Vertreter des k.u.k. M. d. Ä. beim k.u.k. MGG in Polen, Nr 16, Die Aussichten für die austro-polnische Lösung, streng vertraulich, Seiner Exzellenz Herrn Ottokar Czernin, Lublin, 16 I 1918.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., PA I, box 1075, 489: Nr 18177: Telegramm von Ugron, Nr 959, Warschau, 10 XI 1918; AAN, Zbiór fotokopii, F-25, Vol. 6: KRIES, Deutsche Polenpolitik im Weltkriege, Kapitel VII, 40f.

The leadership of the Foreign Office in Vienna had been very conservative in choosing political partners in the Polish Kingdom, since they saw the Monarchy's allies mainly in the pro-Austrian upper classes. Clearly they did not realize that these parties represented only a very small part of the Polish nation, which at the time of mass political movements and universal elections could not bring the much desired results. The choice of the National-Democracy as a political partner was a very difficult one, because of their orientation towards Russia and Entente. The Austrian authorities only saw in Socialists the radical and suspect elements. In contrast to the Head Office in Vienna, the representatives of the Foreign Office in the occupied territories adopted more flexible positions. That applied to Andrian in Warsaw and Hoenning in Lublin. Especially Hoenning was a constant supporter of seeking in Poland real political allies who had authentic support from the society, unlike the Activist parties with their convenient, shallow pro-Austrian propaganda. Realizing their scant influence in the Polish society, Hoenning urged the authorities in Vienna to get in touch with the Leftist Independence parties and cultivate a good relationship with Piłsudski. In July 1917 Charwat's secret mission in Warsaw, initiated by Hoenning, was the last chance, but it did not achieve much and eventually collapsed as a result of German repressions. It led, however, to an accurate analysis of the situation and all the right conclusions, which if fulfilled (it is open for debate to what degree it was still possible at that stage of war and at what price) could have contributed to finding a strategic partner for the falling monarchy. The plans of Andrian, Charwat, Hoenning, or Paić also required the fulfillment of another important condition: abandoning the Germans, who were in reality the only ally of the disintegrating Monarchy. When the peaceful negotiations with Entente collapsed, Austria-Hungary was sentenced, not by choice but rather by necessity, to submit to the German "Reich", where military factors overruled the diplomatic actions. The catastrophic situation for the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy in the last stage of the War and the uncompromising position of Germany ruled out the possibility of a compromise with the radical independent movement in Poland. The fundamental weakness of new political initiatives put forward by the representatives of the Austrian authorities was the fact that they represented the lower tier of power and political influence, being merely functionaries of ministries, delegates, or in the case of Charwat a functionary of the territorial agency of the Intelligence Service. Despite their efforts and interesting statements, reports and memoirs, neither were they able to convince the important civil and military authorities in Vienna of their concepts and ideas, nor could their pragmatism and good will break the routine and the political and social prejudices of the leading circles of the Empire. This resulted in the policy of the Monarchy being always 'too late' to react to the ever increasing chains of events which occurred until it at last broke down in autumn 1918 as the result of the final collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

