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THE BRITISH POLITICAL STANDPOINT CONCERNING THE JANUARY  
UPRISING UNTIL APRIL 1863

The paper attempts to discuss the British policy towards the first weeks of the January Insurrection in Poland until the note sent on March 2, 1863 to the British ambassador at St. Petersburg, Lord Napier by Lord Russell, the British Secretary of State, and it does not include the British note of April 1863. The paper initially presents the formal premises upon which the British foreign policy was based, then examines the British Policy of Good Advice to Russia and the British proposed solution for the Polish question. It ends with a three-part discussion. First, it explores the Russell's note of March 2, 1863. Second, it considers an evaluation of the British policy by the Russian officials, and third, it presents the reports by Sir Andrew Buchanan, the British ambassador at Berlin, Lord Bloomfield, the ambassador at Vien, and Earl Cowley, the ambassador at Paris, which reveal the real aims of the British foreign policy.

It must be admitted that there are hardly any reference books on the problem under consideration. The historians mentioned the British-Polish relationships while talking about the Polish diplomatic activities in London. However, there is a rich source of documents which have hardly been made use of by the Polish historians. It is The Confidential Correspondence of the British Government Respecting the Insurrection in Poland 1863 edited by Tytus Filipowicz<sup>1</sup>. It is a reprint of confidential documents of the British Foreign Office. There was also other edition of these documents

called Parliamentary Papers (so called Blue Book) published by the British government in April 1863. The volume reproduced by Filipowicz differs from the Parliamentary Papers in that that it was confidential and it contained 443 documents of the diplomatic correspondence regarding the Polish insurrection whereas the Blue Book contained only 170 documents and many of these were fragments. Probably Filipowicz reprinted his volume from the copy used by Earl Russell; there was the name "Earl Russell" in pencil on the front page.

There are two Polish publications on insurrection of 1863 besides the book published by Filipowicz. Jan Stella Sawicki edited Dyplomacja Europejska w Sprawie Polski podczas Wypadków od Roku 1861 do 1864<sup>2</sup> (European Diplomacy Concerning the Polish Question During the Events from 1861 till 1864). This publication does not contain the official documents of the British government; however, it contains the talks between the Polish diplomats and Russell, British Secretary of State, and Palmerston, British Prime Minister.

Adam Lewak's publication Polska Działalność Dyplomatyczna 1863-1864. Zbiór Dokumentów<sup>3</sup>. (Polish Diplomatic Activities 1863-1864. The Documents), is similar to Sawicki's publication in that that it contains no official British documents. These are reports of Polish diplomatic agents from the capitals of France, Britain, Austria and Prussia. The correspondence from London is edited by Henryk Wereszycki. These documents come from the Czartoryski's collection and most of them are published for the first time.

The documents included in the publications both by Lewak and Sawicki contain the agents' reports concerning the Polish question. These agents expressed their own opinions or the opinions of the persons with whom they talked and they had nothing to do with the official statements of the British government on the Polish issue and for this reason the basis for the paper is the volume of the documents edited by Filipowicz.

The basic monographs used in dealing with the problem under discussion are the following: Anglia a Polska w Latkach 1860-

-1865<sup>4</sup> and Great Britain and the Polish Question in 1863<sup>5</sup> both by Henryk Wereszycki. These problems are also discussed in Information and Foreign Policy: An Aspect of the British Official Attitude Towards the Polish Question 1856-1865<sup>6</sup>. and in Reform and Insurrection in Russian Poland 1856-1865<sup>7</sup> both by R.F.Leslie.

Some information about the attitude of Britain towards the Polish question is given by Karl Marx in his Przyczynki do Historii Kwestii Polskiej. Rękopisy z lat 1863-1864<sup>8</sup>. (Contributions to the History of the Polish Question. Manuscripts from 1863-1864). However; it is an illustration of Marx personal and emotional attitude towards the Polish question rather than a monograph on the problem.

There is not much information on the first weeks of the January Uprising in the following books: Feldman's Mocarstwa Wobec Powstania Styczniowego<sup>9</sup> (The Powers and the January Uprising), Handelsman's Anglia a Polska 1814-1864<sup>10</sup> (Britain and Poland 1814-1864) and Sawicki's Dyplomacja Europejska. Wstęp do Dokumentów<sup>11</sup>. (European Diplomacy. Introduction to the Documents) and in Anglia a Polska by Tyszka<sup>12</sup>.

There is hardly any mention about the attitude of Britain towards the beginning of the Polish Insurrection of 1863 in Kieniewicz's Powstanie Styczniowe<sup>13</sup> (The January Uprising).

On the basis of study concerning the British and Polish relationships at the outburst of the Insurrection of 1863 one may risk an inference that some aspects of this problem have been omitted. It must be stated that there has been any book based on the documents edited by Filipowicz.

The outbreak of the January Uprising forced the government in London to take an official stance regarding it. The decision of the cabinet in this matter was influenced by the reports of the British consuls in Warsaw, the cautious reports and opinions of Lord Napier, the British ambassador in St. Petersburg and the *raison d'état* of London<sup>14</sup>. The reports of the British diplomats residing in different capitals of Europe also contributed to the official standpoint of London. The British

government in its policy concerning the Polish question had to consider the favourable public opinion towards Poland. The friendly public opinion to the Poles also had the additional sympathy on the part of the Catholic Irish in reference to religion which they believed be oppressed in Poland by the Orthodox Russians<sup>15</sup>. It is possible that the situation in Ireland forced the British not to intervene very energetically in favour of the Polish issue. The active pro-Polish policy of Britain, apart from its international aspects, might have increased the Irish national aspirations.

The strength of feelings in favour of Poland which would not be ignored was shown during Parliamentary debates for instance on February 27, 1863<sup>16</sup>. This intense interest in favour of Poland among the middle and lower classes was noticed by Palmerston and for this reason any attempt to bluff Russia into further concessions to the Poles was taken for the purpose of appeasing public opinion<sup>17</sup>.

The leaders of the British Foreign Office realized the danger of such a policy which threatened Great Britain with serious involvement in Polish affairs. Furthermore, any official announcement of the British government might have increased the Polish hopes for the Great Powers' help against the Russians and hardened the Polish demands. The reports informed Russell that the granting of a given amount of political freedom and administrative reforms would not satisfy the Poles; the feelings of all the Poles against Russia was so strong that any offer of political liberty short of actual independence, if made by Russia herself, would not pacify the country<sup>18</sup>. The only exception was made for the peasants<sup>19</sup>. The Bloomfield's report to Russell included the clear statement that "the object of their desires is the re-establishment of an independent Poland"<sup>20</sup> with the old Polish provinces annexed into the new Polish state<sup>21</sup>.

The aims of the Polish patriots were contradictory to the policy followed by Britain from 1815, when she wished to preserve peace and maintain a status quo in Europe. The

reconstruction of Poland would have weakened Germany and increased France's influence on the Continent. This would undermine the British policy of maintaining a balance of power<sup>22</sup>.

The discrepancies between the Polish and British *raison d'état* were clearly seen in the reports of the British diplomats for Russell. Cowley, the British ambassador in Paris, in talks with Count Goltz, the Prussian ambassador, let him understand that Her Majesty's Government had no other object in view than the amelioration of the condition of the Polish subjects of Russia and had no desire to see any territorial changes<sup>23</sup>. Count Manderstörn giving a speech in the Swedish Chamber of Nobles quoted the Prime Minister of Great Britain who, when the Polish question was discussed in the British Parliament, did not hesitate to state that Britain "considered she was bound by no guarantee whatever as regards Poland and declared that in his estimation Britain had indeed the right, but was under no obligation to interfere in the question"<sup>24</sup>.

This statement revealed very clearly the essence of the British policy concerning Poland. The government in London reserved to itself the right to interfere in the Polish question getting in this way a means of influencing the situation in Europe in order to preserve the system of balance of power convenient to Britain.

A very frank confession about the British attitude towards the Polish question was made by Napier, the British ambassador in St. Petersburg. He stated that Great Britain abided by the Treaty of Vienna Settlement and the British Government looked to the regulation of Polish affairs contemplated by the Treaty, to the establishment of national institutions and of a representation conformable to the engagements to which Great Britain was a party. The Vienna Settlement, in British opinion, had lost nothing of its validity. By conforming to the Vienna engagements the British government wanted to prevent any changes in European system and actually was against restoration of the Polish state. Napier stated this truth very clearly in his despatch to Russell; he wrote: "With the restoration of an independent Poland in its ancient limits, or other scheme

of that nature, Her Majesty's Government had as far as I know no concern"<sup>25</sup>.

This document also contains his private impressions concerning the solution of the Polish question. They are interesting, since Napier as the member of the British high society and of the diplomatic elite, shared the opinions of other British diplomats and might have influenced their opinion. He approached the problem keeping in mind the profits which the solution of the Polish problem might have brought to Great Britain. He desired the establishment in the Kingdom of Poland of those national and representative institutions which were prescribed by the Treaty of Vienna but as an Englishman and as a Protestant he did not see what Britain had to gain by the constitution of a great Catholic and military monarchy with strong French sympathies at the back of Protestant Germany. He desired the freedom and welfare of the Poles but he sympathized with Russia, too. Napier avowed that Great Britain and Russia might be divided and estranged by the jealousy of Russian aggrandizement in the East Europe but apart from this question he thought that if Britain looked to the religion of Russia and the material interests that united the two countries, Britain might have more points of sympathy with Russia than with Poland<sup>26</sup>. He also admitted that he "preferred the interests of Britain and Germany to the aspirations of the Polish race"<sup>27</sup>.

The British policy was not limited to the officials' statements; Britain in fact followed this policy. It must have been really helpful to the enemies of Poland since the Prussian king conveyed to the Queen his thanks for the conciliatory and friendly conduct of Her Majesty's Government during the discussions in Paris of the Polish affair, and "for moderation with which the French government, under the influence of Her Majesty's Government had hitherto acted"<sup>28</sup>.

The secret diplomacy of the British government contains many documents which reveal the instruction of London for its diplomats in European capitals in regard to the Polish issue. Russell in his instruction to Cowley, the British ambassador

in Paris, dated March 19, 1863, presented to him the essence of the British policy following the British *raison d'état*: "If the Poles can make anyhow an independent state, it ought to be acknowledged. But I do not think that we ought to spend 100 million of money in restoring Poland. There is no saying where we should apply our efforts, who would be our allies nor what sort of government it would be possible to set up in place of the Russian despotism"<sup>29</sup>.

This opinion refers to the Russian Poland. Her Majesty's Government concurred in the view of those responsible for partitioning Poland, that the rest of the Polish state territory ceased to be Polish in character. Earl Russell in his instruction to Earl Cowley (Foreign Office, February 28, 1863) expressed his opinion that the Duchy of Posen (Księstwo Poznańskie) was becoming more and more germanized and nearly half of the population and more than half of the property was German. Dantzic (Gdańsk) was still more German in character. He also characterized the situation in Galicia; he said that the Austrian policy in Galicia created the political band of union between this province and Austria<sup>30</sup>.

Quite a different situation, according to Russell, was created in Russian Poland. The tension was brought about by non-observance of the principles of the Treaty of Vienna with respect to the Kingdom of Poland. Her Majesty's Government was of the opinion that the simple demand that the Treaty's stipulations should be carried into effect would probably tend to a renewal of formal controversies without producing any result advantageous to Poland<sup>31</sup>. The only way to help Poland was, according to Russell's note, to submit the British considerations to the Russian government which might lead that government to reflect and conclude that Polish independence might be beneficial to Russia and Poland and to the rest of Europe, without wounding the Russian government pride nor creating needless irritation in St. Petersburg<sup>32</sup>.

Such an instruction of the British government to its diplomats meant that the first and all important imperative for

Britain was the preservation of the good relationships between Russia and Great Britain. The Polish question was left to the Russian government to deal with; however, the British government following the policy of friendly notes to Russia had means of avoiding any accusations on the part of the opposition and means of appeasing public opinion favourable to Poland.

So, it must be stated that the British official standpoint regarding Russian Poland followed the policy of good advice to Russia in methods of governing Poland. Such a policy was meaningless and harmless as far as the relationships between Russia and Britain were concerned and still might have been the effective shield against the attacks of the opposition and public opinion.

According to Russell's advices to Russia, the government in St. Petersburg could govern Poland in one of two ways. The first one was that of the Emperor Nicholas; that is, keeping Poland submissive and degraded, extinguishing her language and compelling her by force to change her religion. This mode was repugnant to all received notions of justice and clemency. However, there was the other mode, that of Czar Alexander I. The Emperor should protect Poland from the hatred and revenge of the Russians by giving her the guarantee of popular institutions and a local administration entirely separate from that of Russia. The latter way of governing Poland was more effective. Nothing less would suffice and there was no middle line between a system of oppressions and a system of free and just government. There would be a possibility for Poland, if she was to flourish under such a system, to entertain the idea of independence in 15 or 20 years<sup>33</sup>.

Russell also avowed that the British government would prefer an immediate peace, with a bright period of justice, happiness and freedom, with a prospect of ultimate independence and the restoration of Poland, to a condemnation of Russian Poland to a dark and sullen period of slavery and submission to be followed by an outbreak of hatred and revenge<sup>34</sup>.

The British diplomats strongly advised the Russian government



to follow Alexander I's policy in Poland and were of the opinion that there would not have been the insurrection had the government fairly tried this policy. They also wondered why, if the Polish provinces of Austria and Prussia could be governed with justice and humanity, it should be considered impossible to apply the same system to the Polish Kingdom<sup>35</sup>.

The first formal expression of the British stance regarding Poland took place in the note sent by Russell to Napier, the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, dated March 2, 1863<sup>36</sup>. The note was to be read to Gortchakoff and the copy of it given to the Russian minister. The note started with an expression of deep concern for the state of things then existing in the Kingdom of Poland. The natural and probable result of the contest between the insurgents and the military forces, according to the note, had to be the success of the latter but the success inevitably would see atrocities, bloodshed, a deplorable sacrifice of life, wide-spread desolation and impoverishment and ruin, which would take many years to repair. The struggle would be followed by mutual hatred which would embitter for generations to come the relationships between the Russians and the Polish race.

The note stated that the present situation in Poland was due to the fact that Poland was not in the condition which the stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna required. For this reason Great Britain as a party to the Treaty and as a power deeply concerned about the tranquility of Europe deemed itself entitled to express her opinions upon the events then taking place. The note emphasized that Great Britain was anxious to do that in the most friendly manner<sup>37</sup>.

The note ended with the British proposal of a solution to the conflict; the Russian government should put an end to the bloodshed by proclaiming an immediate and unconditional amnesty to the Polish subjects in revolt, and to announce its intention to reinstate without delay the political and civil privileges which were granted to Poland by the Emperor Alexander I in execution of the stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna.

Russell ended his despatch by expressing his hope that if this were done a National Diet and a National Administration would in all probability content the Poles and satisfy European opinion<sup>38</sup>.

The British note did not mention granting Poles full independence. The area of the Kingdom was to be the part of the Russian Empire; however, there were fantastic plans of creating the independent Poland by Palmerston, but there were no chances of its being implemented. He planned to create an independent Polish state from the Congress Poland which ought to be peaceful and not aggressive and the best chance of giving it that character would be to place at its head an Austrian archduke who would bring Kraków (Cracow) as a restitutionary gift. Palmerston hoped that the Poles would be satisfied with such an arrangement and it would have the advantage of not disturbing the territorial arrangements of the Vienna Treaty further than by cutting the link between the Russian Empire and the Polish Kingdom<sup>39</sup>.

This project by Palmerston had not the slightest chance of realization and probably it was not treated seriously by Palmerston himself. Also the British officials expressed their negative attitude towards any idea of an independent Poland. For instance Napier, in his report stated that the independent Polish state would be a citadel of revolutionary forces, a camp and a place of exercise in which Poles of every origin would organize their military strength for vaster enterprise<sup>40</sup>. He also added that it would be a foundation of a great Catholic military and aggressive state animated by all the incitements of vengeance and of hope inspired by the strongest animosities against Russia and Germany, and by the warmest sympathies for France. He did not see any sufficient compensation for the aggrandizement of French power resulting from the restoration of independent Poland and abridgement of the Russian territory or the diminution of Russian influence<sup>41</sup>.

Rejecting the idea of granting the independence to the Poles Napier discussed the concessions to be granted to them. He was

of the opinion that concessions should be made both to the Poles and to the Russians; refusing them to Russia would arouse the strongest resentment among the educated Russians<sup>42</sup>.

The British diplomat also expressed his point of view on the representation given to the Poles. He said that the convocation of a Representative Assembly at the present conjuncture in Poland might be attended by the beneficial results for Poland. It might be an opportunity of a reconciliation between Poland and Russia and a chance of giving the functions to the greater Polish nobility and of gaining their support for the government which gave them functions in the state worthy of their position<sup>43</sup>. However, Napier declared that the new experiment of Representative Assembly and Government should be made under favourable circumstances and in the manner advantageous to Poland and acceptable to Russia<sup>44</sup>. The concessions to the Poles concerning representation and national institutions were to be within the frames set by the Treaty of Vienna<sup>45</sup>.

The next problem emphasized in the British note dated March 2, 1863, and in the secret correspondence between Napier and Russell was amnesty for the insurgents. Napier pointed out that a great deal of good might be done by the offer of an amnesty to the Polish insurgents. Such a step would place the policy the Imperial Government in a favourable light before the British public opinion and would be agreeable to the wishes and counsels of Her Majesty's Government. He also alluded to an amnesty as a measure calculated to improve public feelings abroad and as one which London desired to see adopted<sup>46</sup>.

The amnesty, in the opinion of Napier, was due to the Poles from the moral point of view; it should have been a manifestation of repentance on the part of the Imperial Government, which were guilty of a grievous injustice to the Poles by the military recruitment. The amnesty should be associated with the withdrawal of the order for an arbitrary military levy. Also some public and pacificatory assurance should be offered that the conscription would be suspended and would be eventually put in effect on the equitable terms<sup>47</sup>. Nevertheless, it was to be

feared that the Poles themselves would refuse to lay down their arms unless induced to do so by some stronger guarantee for their liberties than the promises of the government in St. Petersburg<sup>48</sup>.

Napier also stressed the advantageous aspects of the amnesty for the Russians themselves; many of the Polish patriots took to the woods and fields because they were afraid of being carried off to serve in the Caucasus or in the interior of Russia. They prefer to fight rather than to submit to that miserable fate. To such a class of people an offer of pardon might be welcomed and they might avail themselves in large numbers of an opportunity to return to their homes. This act of clemency would not only propitiate public feelings abroad but also the numbers of the insurgents might be thinned and the force of the movement be seriously diminished<sup>49</sup>. The offer to receive a free pardon from the Emperor would give to many the opportunity of withdrawing from the contest.

Napier stressed in his despatches to Russell the negative aspects of the possible amnesty act for the Poles. He pointed to the sudden re-admission of all exiled or imprisoned Poles of every political opinion to their country in absolute freedom. He also stressed that that would precipitate the explosion of a new revolt. The most dangerous class of political enthusiasts should be exonerated from the actual rigour of personal confinement, penal labour or military services, but remaining subject to some local restraints<sup>50</sup>.

Neither Napier nor the British government, advising the Russian government on amnesty did not propose any definition nor fixed any limitations with reference to the extent of the amnesty<sup>51</sup>.

Napier was the only one from amongst the British diplomats who wrote Russell about some doubts concerning the amnesty. The doubts arose whether the amnesty was intended to apply to those who already had been caught on the battlefields or only to those who were still in arms and who might come in before the expiration of the term of grace<sup>52</sup>. He also expressed his regret in his

despatch to Russell that the Imperial Government's Manifesto although conceived in a tone of humanity and clemency referred the discontents in Poland to the instigation of foreign or exiled revolutionary agents and that no mention was made of military recruitment which had been the provocation of the revolt<sup>53</sup>.

The British government in recommending the Russians to publish the amnesty aimed at putting an end to the insurrection in Poland by diminishing the number of insurgents at arms. Such statements may be found in the secret correspondence of the Foreign Office<sup>54</sup>, but a far more important aspect of the British attitude towards the amnesty and insurrection was to maintain the status quo and to guarantee the safety of Britain and Prussia. The direction of the British friendly admonitions to Russia was conformable to the general line of the British foreign policy. The British ambassador in Berlin, Sir Andrew Buchanan, during the talks with Bismark made a remark that Prussian own interest should induce Prussia to concur with Her Majesty's Government in recommending the Russian government to publish an immediate amnesty. The amnesty would be a means of re-establishing the peace in Poland and securing Prussia against a great danger threatening her on the part of the Polish insurgents. Buchanan explained to Bismark that if the insurrection became general and outbreak of the uprising took place in the Prussian Polish provinces, circumstances might arise in which Prussia would find herself opposed to France and she could not expect any support or assistance from Great Britain<sup>55</sup>.

The British policy of non-intervention and friendly admonitions in reference to the Russian policy in Poland may be further established by the evidence found both in statements made by the British and Russian officials. Russell in his despatch to Cowley, the British ambassador in France, advised him not to make any representations the rejection of which would put the government in London in the alternative of war or humiliation<sup>56</sup>. The character of any representation to Russia worked by Cowley, Drouyn de Lhuys were to be, according to Russell's instruct.

to Cowley, dated March 19, 1863, "mild, strong, conciliatory, threatening, saying more than it means and meaning more than it says"<sup>57</sup>. The essence of the British demarche was also explained by Gortchakoff who said to the Grand Duke Constantine that it was not a serious demarche but a formal note to quieten the Parliamentary conscience. He was sure that neither France nor Britain wanted to go too far<sup>58</sup>.

The same or even more clear statements concerning the possible war against Russia were made by British diplomats in their correspondence with London. Bloomfield, the British ambassador in Vienna, during a conversation with Count Rechberg stated that there were no question of the British taking up arms for the Poles; what Britain wanted were the peaceful negotiations<sup>59</sup>.

The possibility of war for the Polish independence was also rejected by Cowley who expressed in talks with the French Emperor Her Majesty Government's opinion that if any further step was to be taken it had to be carefully and cautiously considered. He added that neither the British government nor the British nation considered that the Polish question was a cause which demanded an armed intervention. He pointed out that the care had to be taken that no demands were made on the Russian government the refusal of which would inflict on the cabinet in London a sense of humiliation or a necessity of further action.<sup>60</sup>

Very strong objections against the possible war were put forward by Cowley during the negotiations in Paris. He said that he regretted to see in the report made to the Senate by the Committee of Petition a paragraph which seemed to contemplate the possibility of war and stated that Her Majesty's Government would certainly not engage Great Britain in such a war. The preoccupation of every person with whom he had met in Britain was lest France should go for war. Such a war, according to Cowley, would only be undertaken for selfish purpose. Such a war was a threat to the British policy of maintaining status quo; the vindication of the rights of Poland by force meant the acquisition by France the frontier of the Rhine<sup>61</sup>.

On the basis of the discussed documents one may risk an inference that the British policy was basically hostile towards the favourable solution of the Polish issue. According to the British *raison d'état*, the independent Poland would be a threat to Protestant Germany and would be the ally of France. Such political changes could not be agreed upon by the British government.

Any British political step concerning Poland depended upon the mutual relationships between Russia and Great Britain and upon the international situation. However, there were chances for the British intervention in favour of Poland but it was strictly connected with the military success of the Poles. The failure of the Polish military force meant no British intervention.

Analysing the British secret correspondence concerning the January Uprising one may come to the conclusion that from the very beginning of the insurrection the British officials were sure of the movement's failure. They supported their opinion with the comparison of the Russian and Polish troops. However, they were forced to admit that in spite of their supremacy the Russians failed to suppress the insurrection immediately.

The secret correspondence of the British diplomats also reveals the real aims of the British policy towards Poland; it was maintaining the status quo in Europe and guaranting the safety of Britain and Russia, paying no attention to the Polish question.

This hostile policy of the British government concerning the Polish problem was fatal to the Polish attempts to regain the independence throughout the 19th century. None of the Polish national movements was successful; perhaps the Poles might have achieved their political aims with the British assistance. The history of the British-Polish relationships influenced the Polish tendencies to regain independence. It was the best example that Poles could not count upon the help on the part of Great Britain. It strengthened the alliance between Poland and France and put Poland to the sphere of the French influence.

However, the British policy turned out to be in the long run unfavourable to Great Britain herself. The government in London lost a potential ally in the Eastern Europe, the ally which might have been useful in guarding the British interests in this part of Europe.

It must be added that the support of Prussia against the Poles and France brought about the enormous increase of the Prussian power and allowed the Prussian politicians to unite Germany into one powerful state under the Prussian leadership. This policy led to the defeat of France which eventually unsettled the British policy of balance of power and was a serious threat to Great Britain herself.

The increase of the powerful German state finally ruined the basic principle of the British foreign policy throughout the 19th century. Germany, due to the British policy, changed from the state which could not threaten the British interests into the power which was able to endanger the existence of the British Empire.

On the basis of the documents from the British secret correspondence it may be stated that the government in London took up the Polish question whenever it was helpful to the realization of the objectives of the British foreign policy. The Polish problem throughout 19th century was only a means of exerting an influence on the political partners of Great Britain. Whenever the support of the Poles was not suitable, Britain gave it up notwithstanding the results which her policy might have brought upon Poland.

The aim of the British policy was to favour Prussia and to make the Central Europe as strong as possible in opposition to the development of France and Russia. For this reason the rebirth of Poland was against the British *raison d'état*. The independent Poland would have weakened Germany and strengthened France.

There was one more aspect of the unfavourable attitude of Great Britain towards Poland. The Poles could regain their freedom by means of European war which would have changed the



borders of Europe. This was contradictory to the British policy since the Congress in Vienna, when Great Britain tried to preserve peace and to maintain the status quo in Europe. For this reason any attempt of the Poles to regain their independence could not be supported by Great Britain<sup>62</sup>.

NOTES

- 1 The Confidential Correspondence of the British Government Respecting the Insurrection in Poland 1863. ed. Tytus Filipowicz. Paris 1914
- 2 Dyplomacja Europejska w Sprawie Polski podczas Wypadków od Roku 1861 do 1864. ed. J.S. Sawicki. Lwów 1894
- 3 Polska Działalność Dyplomatyczna 1863-1864. Zbiór Dokumentów. ed. A.Lewak. Warszawa 1937
- 4 H.Wereszycki, Anglia a Polska w Latach 1860-1865. Lwów 1934
- 5 H.Wereszycki, Great Britain and the Polish Question in 1863 English Historical Review, vol.50
- 6 R.F.Leslie, Information and Foreign Policy; An Aspect of the British Official Attitude Towards the Polish Question 1856-1865. Wiek XX. Prace Ofiarowane St.Kieniewiczowi w 60 Rocznicę Urodzin. Warszawa 1967
- 7 R.F.Leslie, Reform and Insurrection in Russian Poland 1856-1865. London 1963
- 8 K.Marx, Przyczynki do Historii Kwestii Polskiej, Rękopisy z Lat 1863-1864. Warszawa, 1971
- 9 J.Feldman, Mocarstwa wobec Powstania Styczniowego. Przegląd Współczesny. R. 8, vol.28
- 10 M.Handelsman, Anglia-Polska 1814-1864. Warszawa-Lwów 1917
- 11 J.S.Sawicki, Dyplomacja Europejska, (Wstęp do Dokumentów), Lwów 1894
- 12 H.Tyszka, Anglia-Polska. Warszawa 1922
- 13 St.Kieniewicz, Powstanie Styczniowe. Warszawa 1972
- 14 R.F.Leslie, Information and Foreign Policy. p.351
- 15 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.274, p.284
- 16 R.F.Leslie, Reform and Insurrection, p.186
- 17 Ibidem., p.186  
The attitude of the British working class towards Poland is presented by H.Katz, Robotnicy Angielscy wobec Powstania Styczniowego. Łódź 1964

- 18 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.371, p.563-564  
no.373, p.367
- 19 Ibidem
- 20 Ibidem., no.373, p.367
- 21 Ibidem., no.370, p.357
- 22 H.Wereszycki, Great Britain and the Polish Question, p.108
- 23 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.283, p.296
- 24 Ibidem  
inclosure to no.265, p.268
- 25 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.274, p.285
- 26 Ibidem
- 27 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.370, p.362
- 28 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.161, p.161
- 29 R.F.Leslie, op.cit., p.183-184
- 30 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.102, p.98
- 31 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.102, p.99
- 32 Ibidem
- 33 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.206, p.219
- 34 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.206, p.220
- 35 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.262, p.263
- 36 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.108, p.103-104
- 37 Ibidem
- 38 Ibidem
- 39 R.F.Leslie, Information and Foreign Policy, p.352
- 40 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.370, p.355
- 41 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no,370, p.357
- 42 Ibidem., p,359
- 43 Ibidem., p.360
- 44 Ibidem., p.361
- 45 Ibidem., p.357
- 46 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.275,p.284
- 47 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.370, p.358
- 48 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.292, p.303
- 49 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.274, p.284
- 50 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.212, p.226
- 51 Ibidem

- 52 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.419, p.403  
53 Ibidem., p.403-404  
54 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.356, p.349  
no.274, p.284  
55 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.151, p.154-155  
56 R.F.Leslie, Reform and Insurrection, p.184  
57 Ibidem., p.183  
58 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.188, p.186  
59 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no.240, p.242-243  
60 T.Filipowicz, op.cit., no 221, p.232  
61 T.Filipowicz, op.cit.  
62 H.Wereszycki, Great Britain and the Polish Question in 1863,  
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POLITYKA WIELKIEJ BRYTANII WOBEC  
POWSTANIA STYCZNIOWEGO DO KWIETNIA 1863

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest omówienie polityki Wielkiej Brytanii wobec powstania styczniowego podczas pierwszych tygodni walk, to jest do dnia 2.III.1863. W dniu tym Lord Russell przesłał ambasadorowi brytyjskiemu w Petersburgu Lordowi Napierowi notę wyjaśniającą stanowisko rządu brytyjskiego w kwestii polskiej. Napier miał wręczyć notę Gorczakowowi.

Artykuł zawiera krótkie omówienie źródeł i literatury oraz przedstawia przesłanki polityki brytyjskiej wobec powstania 1863. Realizację tej polityki przedstawiono na przykładzie noty Russella z dnia 2.III.1863, raportów Sir Andrew Buchanana, Lorda Bloomfielda i Lorda Cowley'a, ambasadorów brytyjskich w Berlinie, Wiedniu i Paryżu. Ukazano również ocenę tej polityki przez rosyjskich mężów stanu.

Na podstawie omówionych źródeł można stwierdzić, że polityka brytyjska była zasadniczo wroga wobec powstania 1863. Zgodnie z brytyjską racją stanu niepodległa Polska stanowiłaby zagrożenie dla brytyjskiej zasady równowagi sił, dlatego też próby odzyskania niepodległości przez Polaków nie mogły być popierane przez Wielką Brytanię.