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DIPLOMATIC CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE LIQUIDATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KRAKOW

Introduction

The Republic of Krakow or officially The Free, Independent, and Strictly Neutral City of Krakow with its Territory was founded by the Congress of Vienna in 1815. It was the last independent part of divided Poland. Krakow was located between three world powers of that time – Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Those countries were protectors of the small city-state and had a significant influence on it. And they finally led to its disestablishment in 1846.

Here are some definitions of main terms and proper names used in this paper. The Congress of Vienna is the conference of the big countries of Europe held in 1815 to restore a balance of power after Napoleonic Wars. The Great Emigration is Polish emigration in Western Europe formed after the November Uprising in 1830. Hotel Lambert is a conservative camp of the Great Emigration headed by politician and diplomat Prince Adam J. Czartoryski. "Northern states" is an informal common name for Prussia and Russia and in this context also Austria.

The main idea of this work is to prove that the liquidation of the Republic of Krakow was illegal, but the international community did not react to it in an appropriate way. The significance of this study lies in the fact that the mentioned problem had never been seriously analyzed before from the point of view of diplomatic history. This paper is aimed at examination of all available documents on this topic for compliance and legality. In addition, though it is not needed for a historical research, the question of the legitimacy of annexation of an independent state territory is very topical now.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

A. Analysis of The Act of occupation of the city of Krakow and its district

This section examines the documents approving the accession of Krakow Republic to Austria. One of them was *The Act of occupation in the possession of the city of Krakow and its district*, signed by the Emperor Ferdinand of Austria on 11 November 1846. The very first striking fact about this act is the statement that Krakow was declared a free city only by tripartite agreement of Austria, Prussia, and Russia. There is no mentioning of the fact that the agreement was one of the treaties of the Congress of Vienna which were coordinated with all European states. So it is argued that the agreement was legitimately broken of the will of all three parties who entered into it.

As the reason for liquidation of the Krakow Republic was called violation of the constituent agreements. It is alleged that an obligatory condition of independence of Krakow was the issuance of any fugitives who were the subjects of protector countries. Instead, the city had become since the November Uprising, "a hotbed of intrigues against three patron states" [3, p. 462].

Uprising of 1846 surpassed all previous riots because revolutionary government was established in Krakow, self-proclaimed in defiance of the constitution of the republic. It urged all residents of the former Polish lands not to obey legal authorities, and its armed forces have attacked neighbouring states. Therefore, in order to ensure their own safety, three courts decided to return Krakow and its provinces to Austria as it used to be before Napoleon.

B. Analysis of The Announcement of the accession of Krakow to Austria.

In more details formal motives of “northern states” are described in *The Announcement of the accession of Austria to Krakow* from November 16. This day is considered the final end of the Krakow Republic. The document explains that since Krakow became the organizational centre of armed revolt that included also Grand Duchy of Poznań as well as Galicia, it thus found himself in a warlike situation with Austria, Prussia, and Russia. So those states had every right to act according to the laws of war.

At the same time, it is alleged that they had no intention to take revenge or to act by the right of the stronger, but only wanted to bring peace and security to their subjects, who were threatened by Krakow’s unrest. It is said that Krakow for already twenty years had been a source of troubles and disturbance. And its recent actions that openly contradicted the neutral status finally destroyed the basis of its existence.

The protector states are portrayed as benefactors who repeatedly sought to support and help the Krakow Republic and were very moderate in conflict situations. However, “Krakow as a political body proved to be too weak to resist the constant disturbances of Polish emigrants who keep this free city in the moral yoke” [3, p. 467].

It is important that this document has a reference to the treaties of Vienna, however, it is declared that the agreement between Austria, Prussia, and Russia were included to them only in order to bring them into the international circulation. Therefore, it was decided to break bilateral agreements between Austria and Russia and between Russia and Prussia, as well as additional tripartite treaty on Krakow.

Discussion

A. Diplomatic reaction of Great Britain on annexation of Krakow

So, on the 16-th of November 1846 Krakow with its district was annexed to the Austrian Empire, which instead gave up some parts of Galicia in favour of Prussia and Russia. Democratic circles of the whole Europe condemned these acts which destroyed the last piece of once great Rzeczpospolita. Special arrogance of this act was that the tiny republic, sandwiched between three powerful states, was not creating for them any serious threat and simply had no chance to fight off the aggression. But the most important was that Vienna treaties were openly violated by those who supported their signing in that form the most and those who voluntarily pledged to preserve the independence and neutrality of Krakow [1, p. 397-398].

But Paris and London at that time had no desire to unite in order to ensure fulfillment of resolutions of the congress. Only a week after the annexation of Krakow, Palmerston sent the letter of protest to Vienna. However, it implied that London has no intention to take any serious measures to protect the offended country. In this dispatch he pretended that he considered joining Krakow only a project but not an accomplished fact and urged Austria to abandon their “plans”. He explained that such a small state would not

be dangerous to empires and called to listen to the authority of the signatories of Vienna treatise.

Then in early December, Lord Palmerston sent a brief instruction to the British diplomatic mission in Vienna. In it he gave an order to convince the Austrian government that the cancellation of Krakow's independence is not only unjustified step that violates the Vienna treaties, but it is also harmful for European trade, particularly for British commercial interests [3, p. 475].

B. Diplomatic reaction of France on annexation of Krakow

French Foreign Minister François Guizot did not want to conflict with Austria. But under the influence of public opinion at the end of November he appealed to Lord Palmerston with a proposal together to make a diplomatic note on violence against Krakow. But his colleague refused, arguing that Great Britain has announced their protest before.

François Guizot in his protest, sent to Vienna on 3 December, expressed himself much more seriously, using strong arguments against the liquidation of the Free City of Krakow. French minister wrote that if the main reason for dissatisfaction of neighbouring states were armed riots, so they should be aware that the destruction of the republic would not lead to their decline. He claimed that parts of the old divided Poland rebel, because of injustices inflicted on its people. So to calm the Poles they should use soft and fair policies and stick to their promises. A free city elimination can only increase revolutionary sentiments that would threaten the entire European order.

Guizot argues that protector states were able to force Krakow to fulfill its duty of extraditing the fugitives without the destruction of the republic. It is enough to consider that free city sandwiched between the three great powers, which also still had some patronage rights. So they could solve the problem without resorting to extreme measures, "which while eliminating some of the risks, are often creating new, more threatening ones" [3, p. 472].

He emphasizes that in any case any important decisions regarding Krakow should have been resolved with the participation of all countries that took part in the Congress of Vienna. Guizot denies the idea that The Additional treaty was signed between the three countries and was included into Congress resolutions only for information. Due to the European law independent states are not required to register their agreements anywhere as well as to sign someone else's. Also the Polish question was one of the key at the Congress of Vienna: the first five articles of the General Treaty are about the dividing of Polish lands, next four – specifically concern the Free City of Krakow, and the tenth equates the power of Additional treaty on Krakow to the General one.

Finally, François Guizot is protesting against the violation of resolutions of the Congress of Vienna, which were the guarantee of peace in Europe, and the negative precedent was untying hands for all. At the same time, the decisions of 1815 were mostly unfavourable for France, but it executed them faithfully for the common good. So should "Northern states" which got the most good of them.

So it can be seen that both France and Great Britain, though expressed their indignation, but in reality had no intention to threaten Russia and Austria and defend free Krakow. And Antonin Debidour notes that Klemens von Metternich, Austrian minister of foreign affairs, understood this very well but had to write another note to report the unconvincing motives of his government once more just for politeness [1, p. 399].

Conclusion

We have analyzed the documents relating to the final disestablishment of the Republic of Krakow and have identified the essence of the arguments of the Austrian Empire and diplomatic reaction of France and Great Britain. The formal reason for the liquidation of a free city was violation of the conditions for extradition of refugees from neighbouring countries. Also they claimed that the Additional Treaty and agreements between Austria, Prussia, and Russia were just the decisions of the three countries, not the whole Congress of Vienna, and so they had the right to terminate these agreements by the common decision.

Europe reacted to this undisguised violation of the international order only with diplomatic notes. Even though some of those memorandums were very determined, they made it clear that nobody was going to take serious measures to protect Krakow.

That findings show that the so called "right of the strongest" had a great impact on international relations and diplomacy. And that should be taken into account when analyzing historical and contemporary events. So this research can give historians and political analysts a better understanding of the reality of international affairs and correlation between the power of law and the power of strength.

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