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Status and Prospects for Research on Functioning of the Polish Government from 31 August to December 1939, incl. the Office of the High Civilian Commissioner

*Stan i perspektywy badań nad funkcjonowaniem
rządu Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej od 31 sierpnia do grudnia 1939 r.,
wraz z urzędem Głównego Komisarza Cywilnego*

ABSTRACT

The text reviews the results of research on the activities of part of the central authorities of the Second Polish Republic and is focused on the Government of Prime Minister Sławoj Składkowski at the threshold of World War II and after its outbreak (until the end of 1939). Three periods were analyzed separately: from October 1938 to the outbreak of World War II, during the Polish Campaign of 1939 (until the Government's resignation), and from 30 September 1939 to the end of that year. Within each of three dedicated

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sections, the focus is placed on two categories of publications: studies (books and articles) and editions of sources (ego-documents and archives). The final section presents research postulates.

Key words: Second Polish Republic, Polish Campaign 1939, Sławoj F. Składkowski's Government, Polish Government-in-exile

STRESZCZENIE

Tekst zawiera przegląd badań dotyczących działalności części centralnych władz II Rzeczypospolitej skupionych w rządzie premiera Sławoja Składkowskiego u progu II wojny światowej i po jej wybuchu (do końca 1939 r.). Analiza została wykonana odrębnie dla trzech okresów: od października 1938 r. do wybuchu II wojny światowej, dla Kampanii polskiej 1939 (do momentu złożenia dymisji przez rząd) oraz od 30 września 1939 do końca tego roku. W obrębie każdej z tych części skoncentrowano się na dwóch kategoriach publikacji: opracowaniach (książki i artykuły) oraz edycjach źródeł (ego-dokumenty, archiwalia). W ostatniej części zaprezentowano postulatory badawcze.

Słowa kluczowe: II Rzeczpospolita, Kampania Polska 1939, rząd Sławoja F. Składkowskiego, polski rząd na wychodźstwie

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Issues regarding the functioning of the Second Polish Republic Government during the September Military Campaign of 1939, of the follow-up to the military defeat and consequences of this disaster to people from within or close to the ruling establishment (both in individual and collective contexts), including followers of Piłsudski, so far, have been covered very extensively.

However, available works are still very selective. Till now, researchers have focused on the international (diplomatic) and political dimensions of Sławoj F. Składkowski's Government actions. The last element was understood in most of the cases in the narrower sense of the term – as the next act of rivalry between the Government and 'anti-Sanacja' groupings. Until recently, other dimensions of the central state apparatus functioning and its elements, which had found themselves in the situation of a grave danger to the Nation, have not yet triggered the interest of scientists.

As for this article, works covering the last year before the outbreak of WWII have been taken into account. This is due to assumption that the important turning point in Polish-German relations, which had the decisive impact on many decisions of the Polish Government, in the situation of preparing the Country for the defense against upcoming German military aggression, had been the 26 October 1938 meeting of the Third Reich Minister of the Foreign Affairs with the Polish Ambassador

to Germany. During this meeting, the German side, for the first time, officially presented demands that in practical terms challenged the Polish sovereignty.

Presented analysis was based on two criterions. The first one has a chronological character. Using results of historiographical research, three periods have been identified:

- prewar period: October 1938–August 1939;
- wartime period: Polish September Military Campaign, from 1 September till 17/18 September 1939;
- emigration period: 18 September 1939–31 December 1939.

The second criterion is based on the types of publications. Two of them were identified and used in the article:

- studies;
- source editions.

The second bullet point also includes the category of ‘personal documents’, i.e. diaries and personal notes. As for memoirs, the decision was taken not to include them to the analysis, as most of them had been prepared a long time after the events.

Source editions were included, with a number of first-hand sources (interrogations, hearings and reports). The final part of this text is the diagnosis of existing research gaps and a suggestion of possible actions, possible research efforts to complement the existing knowledge on the Second Polish Republic central authorities, in the context of the Polish September Military Campaign of 1939.

However, it is necessary to make here some remarks and present some explanations. We would mainly refer to the Polish historiography. For the period from the resignation of S.F. Składkowski’s Government to December 1939, only texts with elements related or linked with this Government would be taken into account and for evaluation. This also refers to new Polish authorities led by Władysław Raczkiewicz and Władysław Sikorski. Other domains would not be covered as linked to new political and military realities of the 30 September 1939–4 July 1945 period.

As for publications printed till 1990, specific subjects were covered both by works available in Poland and abroad, prepared by émigré authors. Under the ‘Studies’ category, the main focus would be on prints of the last four decades. Therefore, there is no presentation here of four parts of the *Polskie Siły Zbrojne* (Eng. *The Polish Armed Forces*) Volume I. Reference publications should also be considered as a guide for other dispersed publications, articles, short literary forms, interviews etc.

The selection from this last category would be narrowed down to a group of prints published during the last 15 years that could be considered important for assessment of political and military activities

of the Składkowski's Government. This is due to the fact that at the end of 1990s and in the first decade of next century, many important works saw the publication. They referred to this Government either in the holistic or selective way – through looking into the Government power base, its projects, undertakings and defense preparations, also within the state administration dimension. They systematically reflected the status of research of that time¹.

The next criterion for selection had been the source base for publications. The author preferred source selections and source editions, mainly based on available source materials. What should be mentioned here is the lack of a comprehensive monograph of the S.F. Składkowski. Some works do exist, but they are either fragmentary or very selective. However, although they are very interesting and include useful results of a scientific effort, we are still missing in-depth publication on Składkowski's Government that would use all available sources to present the most important elements of the Government's activities, in the most important analytical domains².

SUMMER 1938–SUMMER 1939

Studies

The literature on last days, weeks, and months of Składkowski's Government could be utilized in three ways. Firstly, as a description and evaluation of projects and activities of central governmental institutions (mainly at the ministerial level), secondly – by using biographies of top governmental officials (ministers mainly), then thirdly – to present different problems the central Government had to deal with. The best general introduction to such a topic is the text of M. Sioma, who described and

¹ Author refers mainly to monographs of M. Dymarski, M. Jabłonowski, J. Piotrowski and M. Sioma; M. Dymarski, *Stosunki wewnętrzne wśród polskiego wychodźstwa politycznego i wojskowego we Francji i w Wielkiej Brytanii 1939–1945*, Wrocław 1999, pp. 13–87; J. Piotrowski, *Piłsudczycy bez lidera (po 1 września 1939 r.)*, Toruń 2004, pp. 17–82; M. Sioma, *Stawoj Felicjan Składkowski. Żołnierz i polityk*, Lublin 2005, pp. 334–399.

² A. Chojnowski, *Felicjan Stawoj Składkowski, premier Rzeczypospolitej 15 V 1936–30 IX 1939*, in: *Prezydenci i premierzy Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, eds. A. Chojnowski, P. Wróbel, Wrocław 1992, pp. 359–373; J. Faryś, *Gabinet Felicjana Stawoja Składkowskiego 16 maja 1936–30 września 1939*, in: *Od Moraczewskiego do Składkowskiego. Gabinety Polski Odrodzonej 1918–1939*, Szczecin 2010, pp. 375–392.

assessed attitudes and activities of different political leaders of the ruling establishment, published in 2014³.

As for the historiography on Polish central institutions of 1938–1939, such resources could be considered as limited for the purpose. This refers not only to ministries, but also to other institutions at the central level. Only works on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Military Affairs in the interwar period, as the most important entities for historiography, saw the official and comprehensive publications. Marek Kornat prepared the monograph on the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, although the publication had not covered the full spectrum of research problems⁴. Wojciech Skóra printed the text dedicated just on Ministry for Foreign Affairs' defense and military preparations⁵.

As for two remaining ministries, they were depicted in publications that included fragments dedicated generally to the period of 1935–1939⁶. Other institutions were presented, described and evaluated in just few monographs, as in the case of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education. It had only got the monograph on its Division of Religious Affairs. However, generally, in any publication the period of the second half of 1930s was not individually introduced, described and evaluated⁷.

The separate category of studies are biographies of the members of the Government as of 1 September 1939. Only four out of eleven ministers have their official profiles. In addition, the most research attention was cast on three officials, who were presented in more than one book. We also have official accounts of the life and political activities of Sławoj

³ M. Sioma, *Polityka władz Rzeczypospolitej w dobie zagrożenia wojennego (październik 1938–sierpień 1939 r.)*, in: *Kampania polska 1939 r. Polityka – społeczeństwo – kultura*, vol. 2, *Polityka i społeczeństwo. Imponderabilia, pamięć, kultura*, eds. M.P. Deszczyński, T. Pawłowski, Warszawa 2014, pp. 7–26.

⁴ M. Kornat, *Polityka zagraniczna Polski 1938–1939. Cztery decyzje Józefa Becka*, Gdańsk 2012.

⁵ W. Skóra, *Przygotowania polskiego Ministerstwa Spraw Zagranicznych do wojny w 1939 roku*, in: *Wrzesień 1939 roku. Geneza II wojny światowej w polskiej perspektywie*, vol. 2, *Wojsko. Wojna. Jeniectwo*, eds. J. Faryś, T. Sikorski, P. Słowiński, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2010, pp. 53–66.

⁶ W. Kozyra, *Polityka administracyjna ministrów spraw wewnętrznych Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej 1918–1939*, Lublin 2009, pp. 517–613; L. Wyszczelski, *Ministerstwo Spraw Wojskowych (1918–1939)*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 183–239.

⁷ P.A. Leszczyński, *Centralna administracja wyznaniowa II RP. Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego*, Warszawa 2006.

F. Składkowski⁸, Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski⁹, Józef Beck¹⁰ and Juliusz Poniąkowski¹¹. As for the Undersecretary of State level we have just the book on Adam Koc¹².

The period of our research has been examined by authors in many different ways. The outcome that would be important for the project depended really on the role and place of politician or commander in the last year of peace. As for the Minister of Foreign Affairs, this period was a key element in his biography. Therefore, it is not surprising that the volume of information on this Minister is the biggest and the relevant part of M. Kornat and M. Wołos book has the size of the monograph itself¹³. The bibliography prepared for this part can be even considered as a kind of bibliographic source guide to activities of the Polish diplomacy in the October 1938–August 1939 period. As for Składkowski, these several months were of less importance, but the author of his biography dedicated to them most of the chapter on his Prime Ministership and focused on the most important political issues¹⁴.

In the case of Poniąkowski and Kwiatkowski, project-related fragments are significantly smaller, and in the biography of the Deputy Prime Minister – they had not even been formally extracted and separately presented¹⁵.

Also, a problem-type approach could be assumed for the project. The subject literature on defense preparations in the civilian domain, including administration is, excluding foreign policy issues, relatively elaborate. However, its status till the end of the first decade of the 21st century was still considered as poor. Such topics had not evoked big interest of historians. As the result, there are just few monographs on particular ministries

⁸ A. Adamczyk, *Generał Sławoj Felicjan Składkowski (1885–1962). Zarys biografii politycznej*, Toruń 2001; M. Sioma, *Sławoj*. Most of the references would be done to the second work, as it was newer, more comprehensive and prepared with much richer source materials.

⁹ M.M. Drozdowski, *Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski*, Wrocław 2001; A. Romanowski, *Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski*, Kraków–Radom 2014, [biographies: pp. 11–143]. As in the case of the Składkowski biography, our attention would be focused on one of the publications, prepared by M.M. Drozdowski.

¹⁰ M. Kornat, M. Wołos, *Józef Beck. Biografia*, Kraków 2020.

¹¹ A. Bienkowska, *Juliusz Poniąkowski. Biografia polityczna*, Warszawa 2012; M.M. Drozdowski, *Juliusz Poniąkowski (1886–1975). Zarys biografii*, Warszawa 2012.

¹² J. Mierzwa, *Pułkownik Adam Koc. Biografia polityczna*, Kraków 2006.

¹³ M. Kornat, M. Wołos, *op. cit.*, pp. 636–761.

¹⁴ M. Sioma, *Sławoj*, pp. 334–346 and fragments from pp. 346–370.

¹⁵ A. Bienkowska, *op. cit.*, pp. 235–239; M.M. Drozdowski, *Eugeniusz*, pp. 100–169 [fragments].

and central state institutions defense-related activities, especially in the context of measures taken to prepare for the upcoming war¹⁶.

Currently, the situation is very different. We have had now, since the last decade, comprehensive publications prepared and/or co-authored by A. Wesołowski. This researcher launched a series of scientific works and projects that resulted in two volumes of source editions. It is also necessary to mention here that introductory parts to these volumes have been prepared with the application of modern research apparatus and an objective scientific approach¹⁷. In addition, the historian presented the topics of interest for the project in a big block of text in the next collective publication printed in 2017¹⁸.

The second most covered domain, after diplomatic activities, is the area of the national economy. The basic position here is the work of Marek Jabłonowski. He undertook an effort to capture all the essentials with regard to relations of the military with economic and social elements in the second half of 1930s. What is also important, available archival files and fonds were generated within or in co-operation with central components of the national administration¹⁹. As for the area of economy issues, monographs or separate chapters had been prepared and published on issues considered as a sole responsibility of national government. This applies to the Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Reforms (food supply²⁰), Ministry of Industry and Trade (raw materials and resource policy²¹; the Central Industrial Region – Pol. Centralny Okręg Przemysłowy, COP²²),

¹⁶ 'It is confirmed by the analysis of available bibliographies [...] related to texts covering the area of defence preparations, and to a lesser extent preparations in the civilian domain' (text prepared by the Translator), *Przygotowania obronne państwa 1935–1939. Państwo i administracja*, ed. A. Wesołowski, "Wojskowe Teki Archiwalne" 2014, 6, 1, p. 23.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 23–40; *Przygotowania obronne państwa 1935–1939. Gospodarka*, ed. A. Wesołowski, "Wojskowe Teki Archiwalne" 2017, 6, 2, pp. 15–52.

¹⁸ A. Wesołowski, *Przygotowanie władz cywilnych II Rzeczypospolitej do funkcjonowania w warunkach wojny ze szczególnym uwzględnieniem okresu 1935–1939*, in: *Bezpieczeństwo militarne Polski 1918–1945*, vol. 3, *Aspekty wojskowe*, eds. M. Fałdowska, W. Nowak, R. Tarasiuk, Siedlce 2017, pp. 337–407.

¹⁹ M. Jabłonowski, *Wobec zagrożenia wojną. Wojsko a gospodarka Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1935–1939*, Warszawa 2001.

²⁰ L. Urliński, *Polski plan aprowizacji wojennej z września 1939 roku*, Toruń 2002.

²¹ Ł. Zamecki, *Polityka surowcowa II Rzeczypospolitej w latach 1935–1939 (analiza decyzyjna)*, Warszawa 2010.

²² W. Samecki, *Centralny Okręg Przemysłowy 1936–1939. Wstępna faza programu uprzemysłowienia Polski*, Wrocław 1998 [the period of 1938–1939 has not been formally singled out].

Ministry of Transport (transport through the Polish–German border²³), the Treasury (Polish–British negotiations on credit lines²⁴).

As for the Ministry of Interior and also, to some extent, the Ministry of Military Affairs, the best researched area is the policy towards ethnic minorities. In this case, there are no separate monographs and prints, but it is necessary to identify related fragments in other more comprehensive publications and in first-hand texts. It is also likely that the period of 1938–1939 did not get equal attention of researchers involved in projects on the Second Polish Republic ethnic minorities.

It is possible to find prints on German²⁵, Ukrainian²⁶ and Belarussian communities²⁷, but the Jewish minority was not really a subject of comprehensive and detailed considerations²⁸. Problems related to functioning of central authorities could also be found in works on relations between the military and communities in rural areas²⁹, and on civilian propaganda activities³⁰. Some works were also published on the attitude of other states and the foreign public opinion towards Polish problems. In this regard, the focus had been on diplomatic and related issues³¹.

Source editions

The basic source edition on functioning of the Polish administration till 31 August 1939 is the already mentioned two-volume publication prepared by the Central Military Archive, Archives of Modern Records, and the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum within the framework of the

²³ M. Przeglądka, *Komunikacja i polityka. Transport kolejowy i drogowy w stosunkach polsko-niemieckich w latach 1918–1939*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 296–315.

²⁴ J. Mierzwa, *op. cit.*, pp. 199–208.

²⁵ A. Kotowski, *Polityka narodowościowa wobec mniejszości niemieckiej w latach 1919–1939*, Toruń 2002, pp. 270–294.

²⁶ R. Potocki, *Polityka państwa polskiego wobec zagadnienia ukraińskiego w latach 1930–1939*, Lublin 2003, pp. 190–227.

²⁷ E. Mironowicz, *Białorusini i Ukraińcy w polityce obozu piłsudczykowski*, Białystok 2007, pp. 70–125.

²⁸ See: Z. Trębacz, *Nie tylko Palestyna. Polskie plany emigracyjne wobec Żydów 1935–1939*, Warszawa 2018, pp. 19–15 [the fragment titled: "Zaostrzenie się stanowiska władz polskich wobec Żydów po 1935 roku"].

²⁹ J. Odziemkowski, *Wież i armia II Rzeczypospolitej*, Wrocław 1988, pp. 36 and next.

³⁰ G. Łukomski, *Propaganda polska u progu II wojny światowej*, in: *Kampania polska 1939 r. Polityka – społeczeństwo – kultura*, vol. 2, *Polityka i społeczeństwo. Imponderabilia, pamięć, kultura*, eds. M.P. Deszczyński, T. Pawłowski, Warszawa 2014, pp. 175–179.

³¹ Only Maria Pasztor separated the periods and evaluated most important issues in the last year before the war, *eadem*, *Polska w oczach francuskich kół rządowych w latach 1924–1939*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 53–62.

project led by A. Wesołowski³². As for the diplomatic domain, the similar role is played by two volumes of the *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne* series (Eng. *Polish Diplomatic Documents*) presenting files from 1938 and 1939 (for 1939 – only till 31 August 1939)³³.

As in the case of the subject literature, most records focus on economic problems and ministries involved in economic activities (e.g. raw materials and resources³⁴, arms industry³⁵). Archival materials of the foreign provenance, but published in Polish, are represented by studies prepared by the American attaché in Warsaw. It is necessary to mention here that Polish internal problems and activities of civilian administration in that case took the second place³⁶.

Fragments on the prewar period are available in diaries of the Government members, S.F. Składkowski, Vice-Prime Minister E. Kwiatkowski³⁷ and Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs, Jan Szembek³⁸. They have different volumes, but they are very useful to extend our knowledge as those people had been on the very top of the ruling establishment. It is right to say that the diary of Szembek, due to obvious reasons, was mainly explored by historians of Polish diplomacy. All diaries are a precious and valid source for research on functioning of S.F. Składkowski's Government and history of the Second Polish Republic. Some information on other members of the Cabinet could also be found in files of the British attaché (including his diary) and the First Secretary of the Embassy of the Kingdom of Sweden³⁹.

³² *Przygotowania obronne państwa 1935–1939. Państwo; Przygotowania obronne państwa 1935–1939. Gospodarka*.

³³ *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne*. 1938, ed. M. Kornat, Warszawa 2007; *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne*. 1939 (styczeń–sierpień), ed. S. Żerko, Warszawa 2005.

³⁴ *Polityka surowcowa polski w latach 1935–1939 (wybrane dokumenty)*, eds. M. Jabłonowski, L. Zamecki, Warszawa 2015, pp. 294–363 [documents 51–63].

³⁵ *Wrzesień 1939. Przemysł zbrojeniowy Rzeczypospolitej w relacjach i wspomnieniach*, ed. W. Włodarkiewicz, Warszawa 2007.

³⁶ W.H. Colbern, *Polska Styczeń–sierpień 1939. Analizy i prognozy*, ed. B. Grzeloński, Warszawa 1986.

³⁷ E. Kwiatkowski, *Dziennik. Lipiec 1939 – sierpień 1940*, ed. M.M. Drozdowski, Rzeszów 2003, pp. 19–149 [section on July–August 1939].

³⁸ [J. Szembek], *Diariusz i teki Jana Szembeka (1935–1945)*, vol. 4, ed. J. Zarański, Londyn 1972, pp. 285–776 [section on October 1938–August 1939].

³⁹ E.R. Sword, *The diary and despatches of a Military attaché in Warsaw 1938–1939*, ed. E. Turnbull, A. Suchcitz, London 2001; S. Grafström, *Polskie stronnice. Dziennik od 5 lipca 1938 do 6 grudnia 1939*, eds. J. Lewandowski, A.N. Ugglä, Warszawa 1996, pp. 45–100.

1-17/18 SEPTEMBER 1939

Studies

Synthetic and monographic approach to Składkowski's Government, to describe the time till members of the Cabinet crossed the Polish border, is presented in the text of Marek Sioma in his biography of the Prime Minister⁴⁰. As for above-mentioned monographs on central institutions of the Polish Government, the period of 1-17/18 September 1939 had been separately dealt with in available publications only in the case of the Ministry of Internal Affairs⁴¹.

Mentioned biographies included fragments covering the period from the outbreak of hostilities till crossing the border on 17/18 September 1939. The historical value of these documents varies. For the most important politicians, i.e. for the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, we have separate subchapters based on rich sources. In addition, for the second official, there is a possibility to utilize texts of S.M. Nowinowski, sizeable and well supported by sources⁴². As for the biography of Kwiatkowski, sources had been carefully chosen⁴³. In the case of the Minister of Agriculture and Agricultural Reforms, it is necessary to indicate that the work had been prepared without proper source materials. Looking at annotations, the text was mostly based on E. Kwiatkowski's diary⁴⁴. The part of the biography prepared by A. Bienkowska on the period in question is not too sizeable but it is much better documented⁴⁵.

Both approaches could be considered as complementary as the second publication do not include references to the diary of the Vice-Prime Minister. Due to the role of A. Koc in evacuation of the Polish gold from Poland, the September 1939 period was covered in a separate part of his biography⁴⁶. As for the Campaign itself, we should mention here the most recent monograph on the political activity of the Polish Supreme

⁴⁰ M. Sioma, *Rząd gen. dyw. Stawoja Felicjana Składkowskiego we wrześniu 1939 roku, "Niepodległość"* 2002, 52, pp. 7-26.

⁴¹ W. Kozyra, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-125.

⁴² M. Sioma *Stawoj*, pp. 380-388; M. Kornat, M. Wołos, *op. cit.*, pp. 761-776; S.M. Nowinowski, *Kampania wrześniowa płk. Józefa Becka (1-17 września 1939 r.)*, in: *Płk Józef Beck (1894-1944). Żołnierz, dyplomata, polityk*, ed. S.M. Nowinowski, Łódź 2017, pp. 319-351.

⁴³ M.M. Drozdowski, *Eugeniusz*, pp. 170-176.

⁴⁴ M.M. Drozdowski, *Juliusz*, pp. 362-363.

⁴⁵ A. Bienkowska, *op. cit.*, pp. 243-245.

⁴⁶ J. Mierzwa, *op. cit.*, pp. 208-212.

Commander. Fragments related to the project are mainly based on the subject literature⁴⁷.

As for the other ministers, we should also take into account books on two officials, who were promoted to the ministerial level just after the breakout of WWII, i.e. on Michał Grażyński – who was assigned as Minister for Propaganda on 2 September 1939, and Waław Kostek-Biernacki – High Civilian Commissioner (Pol. Główny Komisarz Cywilny) at the Office of the Supreme Commander, assigned to the post on 1 September 1939. In case of the Kostek-Biernacki's biography, the period 1–17/18 September 1939 was presented in a separate part of the text. This fragment should also be considered very contributive to description and assessment of the Office of the High Civilian Commissioner⁴⁸. Books on Grażyński and his time on the ministerial post either do not mention this period⁴⁹ or the time is assessed in a simplistic and symbolic way⁵⁰.

Formally, also Lieutenant General Kazimierz Sosnkowski should be included to the group, due to his assignment as the Minister for Coordination of the National War Economy. However, in practice, he did not take up his duties. This explains the lack of this ministerial post-related information in most of published biographies of this General. On the other side, it is necessary to consider findings on this specific topic carefully and with most of the attention to avoid the impression that Sosnkowski did not accept the proposal from Składkowski to join the Government. We have to remember that the General is listed in the presidential act dismissing the Government dated 30 September 1939⁵¹.

As for Government functioning specifics at that time, the most important issue had been the security in front and rear areas. Ministry of Interior activities can be quite precisely described thanks to extensive archival research conducted to prepare the part of the Chief Commander of the National Police biography⁵². Additional information on the functioning the Polish Government could also be found in texts prepared by foreign

⁴⁷ G. Kała, *Sen o potęgę. Plany i działalność polityczna Edwarda Rydza-Śmigłego w latach 1935–1939*, Olsztyn 2022, pp. 497–515.

⁴⁸ P. Cichoracki, *Droga ku anatemie. Waław Kostek-Biernacki 1884–1957*, Warszawa 2009, pp. 369–388.

⁴⁹ H. Rehowicz, *Wojewoda śląski Michał Grażyński*, Warszawa 1988.

⁵⁰ J. Łączewski, *Michał Grażyński (1890–1965). Sylwetka polityka*, Częstochowa 2000, p. 193.

⁵¹ M. Pestkowska, *Kazimierz Sosnkowski*, Wrocław 1995, p. 79; L. Wyszczelski, *Generał Kazimierz Sosnkowski*, Warszawa 2010, pp. 194–195; "Monitor Polski" 1939, pp. 218–219.

⁵² R. Litwinski, *Kordian Józef Zamorski – "granatowy" generał*, Lublin 2018, pp. 223–241.

historians, who analyzed the role and place of the Second Polish Republic in strategies of other countries⁵³.

Source editions

As for the wartime, the most useful and important material is presented in two volumes of the "Wojskowe Teki Archiwalne" series (WTA; Eng. Military Archival Files). The most valuable is the part with testimonies and accounts, based on the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum's resources.

In the Volume No. 1, several documents include accounts of people linked to the Ministry of Internal Affairs (including the National Police). Three fonds are linked with the Ministry of Social Security, one with the Ministry of Justice⁵⁴. The Volume No. 2 is dedicated in most of it to the national economy. Understandably, the part with accounts and testimonies is much bigger. We have testimonies of Ministry of Industry and Trade officials (six of them, including this of Minister Roman), one from the Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Reforms and two from the Treasury⁵⁵.

The diary of the Pomeranian Voivode, Władysław Raczkiewicz (the part on 1–17 September 1939) also proves very useful in gathering knowledge about actions taken within the Ministry of Interior⁵⁶. The diplomatic area is covered by respective parts of the *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne* (Eng. *Polish Diplomatic Papers*) for September 1939⁵⁷.

As for the period 1–17 September 1939, also the notes published as excerpts from diary-type documents could be considered an important element of the source base on actions and decisions of the Polish Government. Still, diaries are only part of such sources. There are also other original documents from the time in question available to historians, as documents generated by J. Szembek, including his personal diary⁵⁸.

Basing on existing source editions, it is possible to assume that the similar character had some fragments from the Diary of the Vice-Premier Minister Kwiatkowski⁵⁹. Still, there is no information on the later

⁵³ *Kampania polska 1939 r. Polityka – społeczeństwo – kultura*, vol. 1, *Strategia*, eds. M.P. Deszczyński, T. Pawłowski, Warszawa 2014, pp. 61–315.

⁵⁴ *Przygotowania obronne państwa 1935–1939. Państwo*, pp. 515–674.

⁵⁵ *Przygotowania obronne państwa 1935–1939. Gospodarka*, pp. 325–630.

⁵⁶ *Dziennik czynności Prezydenta RP Władysława Raczkiewicza 1939–1947*, vol. 1, 1939–1942, ed. J. Piotrowski, Wrocław 2004, pp. 35–48.

⁵⁷ *Polskie Dokumenty Dyplomatyczne. 1939 (wrzesień–grudzień)*, ed. W. Rojek, Warszawa 2007.

⁵⁸ J. Szembek, *Diariusz wrzesień–grudzień 1939*, ed. B. Grzełoński, Warszawa 1989, pp. 19–63.

⁵⁹ E. Kwiatkowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 150–177.

provenance of the Ludwik Łubieński's Diary, who was the Assistant to Józef Beck⁶⁰.

Notes of Tadeusz Katelbach, Senator of the fifth term, had been published in its original form. In September 1939, Katelbach was assigned to support the new Minister for Propaganda. He left the country on 14 September 1939. It should be noted that this text was published in Paris in 1940 and, without a doubt, the author had the possibility to control the form and content of the publication, being its nominal editor⁶¹. As for supporting materials for historical research on Składkowski's Government during the wartime, also notes and documents prepared by Polish diplomats in different embassies in September 1939 could be used for research⁶².

The special group of sources are testimonies that could be considered as quasi-diaries. They often have the form of daily notes, but they had not been prepared at the time of described events, as sometimes indicated by their formal dating. The fact that such papers had been prepared a little bit later could have influenced their content and conclusions. One of such examples are texts by Składkowski. At present, it is difficult to assess to what degree the text corresponded to the original diary that was to be destroyed by Składkowski himself during his escape trip from Romania to Turkey⁶³.

Such documents have been made available to researchers already before 1948, after their publication in "Kultura", in Paris⁶⁴. That event also included notes of Janusz Rakowski, Chief of the Vice-Prime Minister Kwiatkowski from the autumn 1939⁶⁵. Some important pieces of information on actions taken by central civilian authorities during the first week of war could be found in the Diary of Waław Lipiński⁶⁶. He tried

⁶⁰ L. Łubieński, *Dziennik wrzesień-grudzień 1939*, in: *Przed Wrześniem i po Wrześniu. Ze wspomnień młodych dyplomatów II Rzeczypospolitej*, eds. Z. Czeczot-Gawrak et al., Warszawa 1998, pp. 77–84.

⁶¹ T. Katelbach, *Kartki z pamiętnika (1 września–6 października 1939 r.)*, Paryż 1940, pp. 19–82.

⁶² A. Mühlstein, *Dziennik wrzesień 1939–listopad 1940*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 25–43; E. Raczyński, *W sojuszniczym Londynie*, Londyn 1974, pp. 35–42; M. Sokolnicki, *Dziennik ankański 1939–1943*, Londyn 1965, pp. 17–27.

⁶³ M. Sioma, *Sławoj*, p. 407.

⁶⁴ F.S. Składkowski, *Prace i czynności Rządu polskiego we wrześniu 1939 r.*, "Kultura" 1948, 5, pp. 75–127, text with comments.

⁶⁵ J. Rakowski, *Diariusz wrześniowego dramatu*, "Zeszyty Historyczne" 1977, 39, pp. 52–110 [section on 1–17 September 1939].

⁶⁶ W. Lipiński, *Dziennik. Wrześniowa obrona Warszawy 1939 r.*, ed. J.M. Kłoczowski, Warszawa 1989, pp. 51–69.

to precisely recollect the events after September 1939 and write down elements that seemed to him to be utile and significant⁶⁷.

We can also use notes that were prepared daily by diplomats accredited to Poland, who had the possibility for direct contacts with Polish officials. The most sizeable are records of the Hungarian Ambassador András Hora⁶⁸. The other important and unique, from the Polish researcher point of view, is the Report Book of the Soviet Ambassador to Poland that was covering the period till 11 September 1939⁶⁹.

18 SEPTEMBER–31 DECEMBER 1939

Studies

In a very short time, the internment of top Polish officials resulted in the process of rapid disintegration of the state apparatus, marginalization of the most important members of the ruling establishment and losing the importance of 'Sanacja' followers. As a result, we have less works and resources available that covered the fate of Składkowski's Government after 18 September 1939 and also after the Government's resignation on 30 September 1939 than we have of the period till the Soviet invasion. The historiographical pattern that was assumed for above-presented elements – institutions, people, problems – had to be changed and its first piece taken out.

As for this period and related fragment of biographies of governmental ministers, the situation varies. The most sizeable and documented papers had been prepared on Beck, his decisions and actions⁷⁰. The resource base for biographies of the Prime Minister was smaller but was still relatively well-developed and diverse⁷¹. Events at the turn of 1939 and

⁶⁷ Wstęp, in: W. Lipiński, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

⁶⁸ A. Hory, "Martwa placówka". *Wspomnienia i korespondencja posła Królestwa Węgier w Warszawie 1935–1939*, Warszawa 2017, pp. 67–126 [Section on 1–17 September 1939].

⁶⁹ "Z diariusza ambasadora ZSRR w Polsce", in: *Dokumenty do historii stosunków polsko-sowieckich 1918–1945*, vol. 4, 1939–1945, part 1, *Wojna i rozejm (wrzesień 1939–grudzień 1942)*, ed. L. Adamski, Warszawa 2021, pp. 35–41.

⁷⁰ M. Kornat, M. Wołos, *op. cit.*, pp. 778–819; T. Dubicki, *Początek internowania ministra Józefa Becka w dokumentach rumuńskich*, in: *Plk Józef Beck (1894–1944). Żołnierz, dyplomata, polityk*, ed. S.M. Nowinowski, Łódź 2017, pp. 353–375.

⁷¹ M. Sioma, *Sławoj*, pp. 389–404.

1940 had been also well presented on several pages in prints on E. Kwiatkowski⁷² and W. Kostek-Biernacki⁷³.

As for the biography of Juliusz Poniatowski, prepared by M.M. Drozdowski, elements of the first months of internment could not be considered to be fully-researched, described and evaluated. The same assessment refers to wartime Cabinet operations in Poland⁷⁴. The biography prepared by A. Bieńkowska could be considered as the best work on the period in question⁷⁵.

As for the time since 18 September 1939, historians were most interested in two issues related directly to decisions and activities of S.F. Składkowski Government. The first had been the mechanism of incapacitation of the Government on the Romanian territory. This included the process of internment of the Polish President and Government. As such, it had been many times well described, assessed and presented, also with the French and Romanian archival materials⁷⁶. Such appraisal also refers to the operation of taking over powers by political groupings and politicians already present in Paris⁷⁷.

The second issue is launching, by Polish authorities in exile, several actions aimed at determination of responsibilities of the members of the previous ruling 'Sanacja' establishment, including members of the Government, for the 1939 defeat. For the civilian dimension that had been the responsibility of so-called 'Haller Commission', which operated between October and December 1939⁷⁸.

⁷² M.M. Drozdowski, *Eugeniusz*, pp. 178–186.

⁷³ P. Cichoracki, *op. cit.*, pp. 389–391.

⁷⁴ M.M. Drozdowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 365–369.

⁷⁵ A. Bieńkowska, *op. cit.*, pp. 245–249.

⁷⁶ T. Dubicki, *Wojsko Polskie w Rumunii 1939–1941*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 33–60; M. Gmurczyk-Wrońska, *Polska – niepotrzebny aliant Francji? (Francja wobec Polski w latach 1938–1944)*, Warszawa 2003, pp. 178–185; H. Walczak, *Internowanie władz polskich w Rumunii we wrześniu 1939 r.*, in: *Wrzesień 1939 roku. Geneza II wojny światowej w polskiej perspektywie*, vol. 2, *Wojsko. Wojna. Jeniectwo*, eds. J. Faryś, T. Sikorski, P. Słowiński, Gorzów Wielkopolski 2010, pp. 145–153.

⁷⁷ See: M. Kwiecień, *Wśród potępieńczych swarów. Prawne aspekty rozliczeń politycznych wśród uchodźstwa polskiego we Francji i Wielkiej Brytanii 1939–1943*, Kraków 2013, pp. 55–79.

⁷⁸ M. Dymarski, *op. cit.*, pp. 75–87; M. Kwiecień, *op. cit.*, pp. 197–213; A. Adamczyk, *Piłsudscy w izolacji (1939–1954). Studium z dziejów struktur i myśli politycznej*, Bełchatów 2008, pp. 41–46.

Another author, Tadeusz Dubicki, described, evaluated and presented political initiatives proposed by several members of the former 1939 Polish Government during their stay in the territory of Romania⁷⁹.

Source editions

The attitude of the Government-in-Exile during the first months of its existence towards the S.F. Składkowski's Cabinet could be assessed through the analysis of Volume I of W. Sikorski Government meetings minutes⁸⁰. This can be complemented, especially with regard to the former Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of Military Affairs by the assessment of the situation included in the integrated and expanded study of Izydor Modelski from 1941, published in "Zeszyty Historyczne" (Eng. "Historical Notebooks") in Paris⁸¹.

Besides, also less sizeable documents saw the publication, especially those related with the activities of special bodies established to determine 'responsibilities for the defeat of September 1939' and evaluate decisions and actions taken by particular members of the Government⁸². Another group is built with sources generated by foreign elements.

As the Romanian perspective on the Polish Military September Campaign of 1939 has been only partially used by the Polish historiography, it would be particularly useful to explore documents produced by the Romanian intelligence, linked with the process of internment of the Polish Supreme Commander and Minister of Foreign Affairs⁸³. In the 1980s, also the report of the French Ambassador to Romania from the November 1939 was published. Part of this document refers directly to several members of Składkowski's Cabinet⁸⁴.

⁷⁹ T. Dubicki, *Sanatorzy kontra sikorszczycy czyli walka o władzę na uchodźstwie w Rumunii 1939–1940*, Warszawa 1993, pp. 24–42.

⁸⁰ Protocols from 1939: *Protokoły z posiedzeń Rady Ministrów Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej. Październik 1939–czerwiec 1940*, eds. W. Rojek, A. Suchcitz, Kraków 1994, pp. 1–131.

⁸¹ I. Modelski, *Wojskowe przyczyny klęski wrześniowej (próba syntezy)*, cz. I–IV, "Zeszyty Historyczne" 1990–1991, 92–94.

⁸² J. Piotrowski, *Przyczynek źródłowy do prac komisji badającej odpowiedzialność za klęskę Polski we wrześniu 1939 r.*, "Wrocławskie Studia z Historii Najnowszej" 1997, 7, pp. 71–82; *Sprawcy klęski wrześniowej przed sądem historii. Dokumenty komisji badawczych władz polskich na emigracji*, eds. M. Adamczyk, J. Gmitruk, Warszawa 2005, pp. 51–64 [documents 3–10].

⁸³ *W rumuńskiej pułapce. Internowanie Józefa Becka i Edwarda Śmigłego-Rydza w dokumentach rumuńskich służb specjalnych*, eds. M. Kornat, M. Mokrzycki-Markowski, Gdańsk 2011.

⁸⁴ T. Wyrwa, *Raport ambasadora Francji w Bukareszcie o Polakach internowanych w Rumunii jesienią 1939 roku* (eng. *Report of the French Ambassador in Bucharest on Poles interned in*

Also several fragments of above-mentioned diaries covered the same period, i.e. logs by the Vice-Prime Minister E. Kwiatkowski⁸⁵ and Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs J. Szembek⁸⁶. In the latter case, we have to be aware that this document was prepared in the very specific situation as this official had been able to leave Romania just after few days from crossing the border by the Polish Government and other officials. Special attention should be paid to the fragments on the Prime Minister and those covering the period till the end of September 1939, i.e. to the resignation of Składkowski and his Cabinet⁸⁷.

Also, papers of J. Rakowski and L. Łubieński, lower-level officials, should be mentioned here as both of them had direct access to many ministers in the Government. As for the period after Government left the Country, the first document covered time till January 1940. However, it is to note that since October 1939 the text loses the characteristics of a formal diary⁸⁸. Łubieński's text ended on December 1939⁸⁹.

As for 18–30 September 1939, the most important source is the daily notes of the Polish Ambassador to Romania, Roger Raczyński. Most likely, the last version prepared for a publication was ready in the springtime of 1940⁹⁰. As for the other members of the Składkowski Cabinet and other officials, the notes of Katelbach could be used as they covered the period 15–23 September 1939⁹¹. Additional elements that could be used to determine effects of decisions and actions of September 1939 Government and the evaluation of processes launched by the Government-on-Exile in France are available in the diary of Roman Umiastowski⁹².

Romania in Autumn 1939), "Zeszyty Historyczne" 1984, 67, pp. 214–218. It is to note that this print has not been prepared according to established scientific publication standards.

⁸⁵ E. Kwiatkowski, *Dziennik. Lipiec 1939–sierpień 1940*, ed. M.M. Drozdowski, Rzeszów 2003, pp. 177–306 [19 September 1939–6 August 1940].

⁸⁶ J. Szembek, *op. cit.*

⁸⁷ F. Sławoj-Składkowski, *Prace i czynności Rządu polskiego we wrześniu 1939 r.*, [part 2], "Kultura" 1948, 6, pp. 107–127. The full version of this report from the Polish Campaign 1939 with comments: F.S. Składkowski, *Nie ostatnie słowo oskarżonego*, ed. A. Adamczyk, Warszawa 2003, pp. 243–335.

⁸⁸ J. Rakowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 111–161.

⁸⁹ L. Łubieński, *op. cit.*, pp. 84–109.

⁹⁰ R. Raczyński, *Zapiski Ambasadora Rogera Raczyńskiego dotyczące przejścia Naczelnych Władz Polskich do Rumunii i rezygnacji b. Prezydenta R.P. Prof. Ignacego Mościckiego*, "Kultura" 1948, 9–10, pp. 118–129.

⁹¹ T. Katelbach, *op. cit.*, pp. 83–125.

⁹² R. Umiastowski, *Dziennik wojenny 18 IX 1939–19 IX 1945*, ed. M. Żukowski, Warszawa 2009, pp. 121–260 [5 October–31 November 1939].

Research prospects

To fully reconstruct main activities of Polish September 1939 Government, it is necessary to determine basic factors and actions. The most conventional topics selection criterion is the potential to explain and evaluate main issues related to the functioning of individual ministries.

It is necessary to reiterate here that we would have to face difficult situation caused by the modest achievements of the Polish historiography on the history of interwar period Polish ministries, offices and departments. The most important research to support the project should then be comprised by gathering, restoring, collection, and collation of information on the structure, activities and functioning of ministries and central offices that formed S.F. Składkowski's Government.

The main emphasis of the research should be implementing of activities divided into three phases:

- 1) determining the structure of ministries and central offices;
- 2) reconstruction of the Government Personnel Establishment;
- 3) further investigation on the basis of collected and analyzed information.

Firstly, it is necessary to systematize and group information on the structure of particular ministries. Those are basic elements needed to launch effective research on organigrammes, personnel establishments, tasks and activities of specific institutions on the eve of WWII and during the Polish Military September Campaign of 1939. We can start from general findings on the 1920s⁹³ as well as with data and information for the second half of 1930s. The level of detail and the scope of data is different for each element, but they could be found in the subject literature⁹⁴.

After establishing the detailed structure of ministries, the next key task should be the determination of the names and functions for specific ministries and the Praesidium of Council of Ministers. The difference with regard to the historiography on the Polish military in 1939 is clear and easily noticeable. In most of the cases, works on armies, divisions and

⁹³ J. Goclon, *Ustrój Rady Ministrów, ministerstw i system kontroli resortowej w Polsce w latach 1918–1928*, http://www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/Content/42783/PDF/01_Jacek_Goclon.pdf [access: 10.10.2022].

⁹⁴ 1939 organigrammes, down to the Branch level, were reconstructed for Ministry of Internal Affairs (W. Kozyra, *op. cit.*, p. 81), Ministry of Military Affairs (L. Wyszczelski, *op. cit.* [with names, from 1935]), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, down to the section level (K. Szczepanik, *Struktury organizacyjne MSZ w latach 1918–1945. Centrala i placówki*, in: *Ministerstwo Spraw Zagranicznych II Rzeczypospolitej. Organizacja, polityka, ministrowie*, eds. K. Długołęcki, K. Szczepanik, Szczecin 2014, pp. 39–41).

brigades have detailed annexes with names of commanders and other officers. Sometimes, such list even branches out to NCO posts with names.

The effective launching of such an operation for the S.F. Składkowski Government has the fundamental meaning for further source research. Completion of such a task would build the personnel database that could be used for research in two categories: within so-called 'personal documents' and the files of the Soviet and Communist repression apparatus.

The value of sources from the second category comes from the assertion that they been based on testimonies of people arrested by the regime for their actions and activities till 1939. As for the national administration and the central level, it is necessary to find the answer to the question as to which level down such a reconstruction should be conducted. Finding names and functions of the people from the management level should be a priority, for departments, branches and independent sections.

Another task should additionally be launched – to establish the history of evacuation of S.F. Składkowski's Government, both for its main body, and specific ministries and institutions. Such a breakdown, also in the form of a cartographic product should support more detailed analysis of the evacuation process, circumstances, routes, plans, decisions and activities since leaving Warsaw up to the time of the crossing the Polish border.

One of the areas that had not been thoroughly and precisely researched is the question of relations of elements of the central administration with regional and local combined and independent entities (especially with regard to elements of the II degree) from 1 till 17/18 September 1939. Of course, contacts of specific ministries with local elements had been more and more difficult but on 17 September 1939 still a half of the Polish territory was not covered by land military operations. At the moment of Soviet aggression four Eastern voivodeships were in such a situation: Vilnius, Nowogrodek, Tarnopol and Stanisławów.

Local elements of the national administration had still been able to carry out assigned tasks and function in an ordinary, administrative way. However, the aim of a research should not be an analysis of the local administration as such, but an examination of local mechanisms in executing plans and decisions generated by the central State apparatus. This should be complemented by the determination and evaluation of circumstances associated with such situations. Research results should also be supplemented by additional biographical monographs for members of S.F. Składkowski's Government. Seven such projects have not yet been completed – for the Minister of Military Affairs, Minister of Communication, Minister of Justice, Minister of Religious Denominations and Public Education, Minister of Social Security, Minister of Post and Telegraphs, and the Minister of Industry and Trade.

From the project's perspective, the most important figure is the Minister of Military Affairs. This topic still requires more detailed analysis, especially with regard to Tadeusz Kasprzycki⁹⁵.

It should be examined together with an evaluation of decisions and actions of President Ignacy Mościcki, who has not received necessary attention so far and no in-depth biography for this figure has been prepared⁹⁶.

Hypothetically, the major source for the period in question should be mail, communication and correspondence of people, who had been members of the Cabinet, Government officials or just had the opportunity to observe the actions of top politicians and bureaucrats. This was the case of Waław Jędrzejewicz, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, or Jerzy Giedroyc. In the case of the latter, since the 1990s, his letters have been published or cited multiple times in different forms and included to many different publications.

The presented review of publications encourages the assessment that despite the situation that the information of interest and useful for the project is very dispersed, it is still possible to find necessary elements⁹⁷. Taking into account that we might be dealing with the stuff, which had been already initially selected for edition, available works should be rather considered as an indication for further archival research. It refers also to the epistolographic legacy of the main actors in WWII events and similar papers. This is for example the case of 49 letters of S.F. Składkowski and J. Giedroyc as only 17 of them have been included to different works and prints at this moment⁹⁸.

Another research area that could be re-opened and re-examined to prepare new publications on the central elements of the Polish administration, are files and fonds generated by foreign diplomatic missions. Part of the diplomatic staff stayed in Warsaw and then accompanied top politicians and members of the Polish Government during their trip

⁹⁵ Due to limited space available, the topic was also not fully covered by Waldemar Rezmer: W. Rezmer, *Tadeusz Kasprzycki – minister spraw wojskowych 12 V 1935–30 IX 1939*, in: *Ministrowie spraw wojskowych 1918–1944. Z badań nad polityką wojskową Polski*, ed. M. Jabłonowski, Pułtusk 2005, pp. 207–236.

⁹⁶ As the introduction to research, the relatively short work of M. Nowinowski could be used, idem, *Prezydent Ignacy Mościcki*, Warszawa 1994 [the section of September 1939 and the internment, pp. 116–128].

⁹⁷ Remarks of W. Jędrzejewicz on the 1935–1939 prewar ruling establishment: Letter of W. Jędrzejewicz to W. Pobóg-Malinowski, dated 23 January 1957, in: W. Pobóg-Malinowski – Waław Jędrzejewicz. *Listy 1945–1962*, eds. S.M. Nowinowski, R. Stobiecki, Warszawa 2016, pp. 354–356.

⁹⁸ „Mam na Pana nowy zamach ...”. *Wybór korespondencji Jerzego Giedroycia z historykami i świadkami historii 1946–2000*, vol. 3, Łódź–Paryż 2019, pp. 65–73.

out of the country. Some remarks, comments and information provided by members of diplomatic missions and consulates could make a significant contribution to the research with new and original information.

As for potential publications on the Polish national administration, WTAs could be considered a valid reference point. The analysis of content of both parts of the Volume VI could support the process of defining areas that had been only partially covered by publications or not covered at all. This refers mainly to the period of 1–17/18 September 1939. For example, there are few accounts and testimonies of officials from the Ministry of Industry and Trade as well as from the Ministry of Communications. WTA series publications are very important and could be useful but we have to remember that associated search had been conducted only in central national archives, such as the Archive of Modern Records, Central Military Archive, and Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum.

Taking into account the scale of damage the archival resources of the central State apparatus incurred, it is necessary to launch research also in regional archives. It can be used to at least partially restore some fonds and files and their editions could introduce new materials into the scientific circulation. Such an approach applies particularly to entities responsible to archival storage of voivodeship offices documents and their equivalents in non-grouped administration authorities. Author's own experiences and search results (in Brzesc and Lublin) and access to results of other searches (Krakow), allows to draw a conclusion on a prospective direction, especially with regard to the period of 1938–1939. Also the manuscript divisions in libraries should be thoroughly explored and studied.

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