

KRZYSZTOF SIWEK  
Wrocław

## AMERICAN PLANS FOR THE INTERNATIONALISATION OF SILESIA AND THE GERMAN–POLISH BORDER IN 1945–1949

The internationalisation of territorial and border issues in Europe was a regular trait of U.S. diplomatic efforts from the beginning of the 20th century. American historian William Appleman Williams argued that for the U.S., any closed national border was an obstacle to the development of relaxed political and economic relations, which were a prerequisite for the political security of the U.S. and the expansion of U.S. foreign markets through the Open Door policy.<sup>1</sup> The Open Door idea guided the American foreign policy that aimed to create a lasting peace and an international community of power by breaking European national barriers to facilitate Europe's recovery and its political and economic integration.<sup>2</sup> According to Zbigniew Brzeziński, the U.S. stance on the Oder–Neisse frontier and Silesia after 1945 was a touchstone of the American readiness to deepen the West's cooperation with Poland and other countries in the Soviet sphere of influence.<sup>3</sup>

In Polish historiography, the above has not been the subject of much research, although the issue of the Oder and Lusatian Neisse after 1945 has been discussed by Tadeusz Marczak<sup>4</sup>, Krzysztof Ruchniewicz and Jakub Tyszkiewicz<sup>5</sup> as well as by Grzegorz Strauchold<sup>6</sup>, Mieczysław Tomala<sup>7</sup> and earlier also by Krzysztof Skubisz-

---

<sup>1</sup> Williams critically reviews the Open Door policy and U.S. European Policy in his *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*, New York, 1962, pp. 138-140, 156.

<sup>2</sup> A. Bógdał-Brzezińska, *Globalizacja polityki Stanów Zjednoczonych w latach 1945-1949*, Warsaw, 2001, pp. 263-269.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. refusal to officially recognise the permanence of the Oder–Lusatian Neisse border after 1945 was, in Brzeziński's opinion, one of basic obstacles to efforts aimed at weakening the Soviet influence in Central and Eastern Europe. Z. Brzeziński, *Alternative to Partition. For a Broader Conception of America's Role in Europe*, New York, 1965, pp. 89-91, 123-125.

<sup>4</sup> T. Marczak, *Granica zachodnia w polskiej polityce zagranicznej w latach 1944-1950*, Wrocław, 1995.

<sup>5</sup> K. Ruchniewicz, J. Tyszkiewicz, *Amerykańskie projekty rewizji granicy na Odrze i Nysie Łużyckiej w początkowym okresie zimnej wojny. Materiały [in:] Studia z historii najnowszej. Profesorowi W. Wrzesińskiemu w 65. rocznicę urodzin*, Wrocław, 1999, pp. 66-85.

<sup>6</sup> G. Strauchold, „*To dobra granica, ale przydałby się jeszcze lewy brzeg Odry*”. *Wokół dyskusji na temat polskiej granicy zachodniej w drugiej połowie lat 40. XX w.*, Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka, No. 2 LXVI (2011), pp. 53-67.

<sup>7</sup> M. Tomala, *Zachodnia granica Polski po II wojnie światowej*, Warsaw, 2002.

wski<sup>8</sup> and Wiesław Dobrzycki<sup>9</sup>. Among publications in languages other than Polish, books by Debra J. Allen<sup>10</sup> and Hans G. Lehmann<sup>11</sup> should be mentioned, although these authors do not much discuss the American political-economic ideas concerning Silesia and its place and role in Europe.

The fall of the multinational empires in Central and Eastern Europe and the emergence of new states in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century forced the U.S. to address the issue of border changes in Europe. Already in 1918, the U.S. was particularly interested in the shape of the German–Polish border and the administration of Silesia. This was due to the special role that American diplomacy attributed to Germany and Russia (later the U.S.S.R.) in the building of the European peacetime order.<sup>12</sup> When President Woodrow Wilson announced the reconstruction of the international system on the principle of nations' self-determination and fundamental human freedoms, he intended that frontier issues should be settled by international institutions such as the League of Nations.<sup>13</sup> Although the U.S. eventually decided not to join the League of Nations, it had supported the idea of the Upper Silesia plebiscite supervised by an interallied plebiscite commission.<sup>14</sup> However, contrary to the plan of the U.S., this internationalisation of the dispute over Silesia did not prevent the deepening of German–Polish antagonisms in the interwar period.<sup>15</sup>

The 1941–1945 alliance with Great Britain and the Soviet Union caused the U.S. to become involved in another European conflict, the issue of border revision and creation of a new global order. Although Franklin Delano Roosevelt had delayed a resolution of European border and territorial issues<sup>16</sup> until the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the American administration kept a careful watch over issues relevant to the future shape of Europe. One of the relevant documents is a memorandum to Secretary of State Cordell Hull written by his special assistant Leo Pasvolsky in August 1943, before the first British–American conference in Quebec.<sup>17</sup> It contained

<sup>8</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *Zachodnia granica Polski w świetle traktatów*, Poznań, 1975.

<sup>9</sup> W. Dobrzycki, *Granica zachodnia w polityce polskiej 1944-1947*, Warsaw, 1977.

<sup>10</sup> D. J. Allen, *The Oder-Neisse Line. The United States, Poland and Germany in the Cold War*, Westport, 2003.

<sup>11</sup> H. G. Lehmann, *Der Oder-Neisse Konflikt*, Munich, 1974.

<sup>12</sup> B. W. Winid, *W cieniu Kapitolu. Dyplomacja polska wobec Stanów Zjednoczonych Ameryki 1919-1939*, Warsaw, 1991, pp. 76-80.

<sup>13</sup> W. T. Kowalski, *Zachód a Polska*, Warsaw, 1984, pp. 49-50.

<sup>14</sup> B. W. Winid, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>15</sup> More on the role of international integration in the Upper Silesia dispute in: J. Przewłocki, *Stosunek mocarstw zachodnioeuropejskich do problemów Górnego Śląska w latach 1918-1939*, Kraków, 1978, pp. 25-43.

<sup>16</sup> The American vision of post-war international order was based on the elimination of spheres of influence by the establishment of a world organisation, while British and Soviet diplomacies favoured the traditional principle emphasising the protection of national interests and the balance of power. F. J. Harbutt, *Jalta 1945*, Warsaw, 2012, pp. 191-210.

<sup>17</sup> L. Pasvolsky, *Boundary Problems of Germany*, Memorandum for the Secretary, 18 August 1943, FRUS *Foreign Relations of the United States. Conferences at Washington and Quebec, 1943* <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1943> (accessed 10.09.2014).

comments of the Advisory Committee on Postwar Foreign Policy on the territorial shape of post-war Germany, which covered the issue of the administration of the eastern part of German Upper Silesia<sup>18</sup>. That concerned the entire industrial basin of Upper Silesia, which in a draft of the Versailles Treaty of May 1919 was to be given to Poland.<sup>19</sup> In 1943, the Advisory Committee pointed out that the problem arose “in connection with Polish territorial claims over part of German Upper Silesia” advanced by the Polish government-in-exile in London, justified by the need to obtain the raw materials and industrial resources of the region, a shorter frontier with Germany and a longer boundary with Czechoslovakia<sup>20</sup>. Members of the Territorial Subcommittee dismissed the Polish demands by referring to the population composition in the region, where only 44% of the population used the Polish language<sup>21</sup> and cities like Oppeln were strictly German territory. Thus Pasvolsky’s memorandum assigned to Poland only one half of the area the Polish government wanted, although the whole industrial basin was to be part of Poland. “The subcommittee recommended maintenance of the economic unity of the Upper Silesian industrial area”<sup>22</sup> and its links to the communication links (transport) with Germany and Czechoslovakia. Thus American diplomacy approached the Upper Silesia issue in the terms of international economic needs.

It should be noted that until the autumn of 1943, the U.S. did not take any decision on the shape of Poland’s post-war boundaries, although the U.S. largely accepted the Soviet stance<sup>23</sup>, which might have meant that most of the territorial demands of the Polish government-in-exile referring to Germany would be met. The attitude of President Roosevelt changed during the Big Three conference in Tehran at the turn of November and December 1943. In Tehran, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill’s idea that Poland’s border would be moved to the west was approved.<sup>24</sup> The three powers affirmed the Curzon Line as the eastern border between Poland and the Soviet Union. Poland’s loss of its eastern territories was to be compensated

---

<sup>18</sup> *Memorandum by Messrs. William Koren, Jr. and John O. Campbell of the Division of Political Studies*, Washington, 17 August 1943, FRUS, *op. cit.*

<sup>19</sup> J. Przewłocki, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>20</sup> The proposal to incorporate Oppeln Silesia into Poland and make the Oder river the German–Polish border was contained in a memorandum from Prime Minister W. Sikorski to the U.S. administration delivered in December 1942. K. Skubiszewski, *Zachodnia granica Polski*, Gdańsk, 1969, p. 25.

<sup>21</sup> The analysis of the population structure was performed by the Division of Political Studies at the Department of State, which used data from the 1925 German census. *Memorandum by Messrs. William Koren, Jr. and John O. Campbell of the Division of Political Studies*, Washington, 17 August 1943, FRUS, *op. cit.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>23</sup> For the dependence between Poland’s eastern and western borders see G. Strauchold, *U genezy granicy polsko-radzieckiej po II wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Polska leży na Zachodzie. Studia z dziejów Polski i Europy dedykowane Pani Profesor Teresie Kulak*, W. Wrzesiński, M. Masnyk, K. Kawalec (eds.), Toruń, 2011, pp. 155-156.

<sup>24</sup> This change was approved in confidential and separate conversations of Roosevelt and Churchill with Stalin. F. J. Harbutt, *op. cit.*, p. 206.

via the incorporation of some still unspecified formerly German-held areas into Poland. The position of the U.S. was communicated to Polish Prime Minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk in his conversation with President Roosevelt in June 1944, where the transfer of East Prussia and Upper Silesia were mentioned.<sup>25</sup>

The U.S. approach to the German–Polish border should be viewed in the context of America’s goal of gradually eliminating ideological and political divides in Europe, which would create permanent barriers to international trade.<sup>26</sup> In its memorandum of 5 August 1944, the Committee on Post-War Programs devising the U.S. policy on Germany envisaged that “the significance of frontiers be reduced through the development of international organization and of freer international economic relations.”<sup>27</sup> As far as Poland was concerned, the Committee underlined that Poland needed to be strengthened strategically and economically by its incorporation of Danzig and Upper Silesia, which would ensure stabilisation and prevent ethnic conflicts. Guided by the above, the Committee nonetheless excluded the possibility that territories where ethnic Germans constituted the majority, such as Oppeln and Lower Silesia, could be ceded to Poland. The Committee therefore recommended that “the United States does not encourage the cession of German territories in the lower trans-Oder region.”<sup>28</sup> Actually, it was questioned whether the U.S. should be actively involved in the settlement of the German–Polish border. Shortly after, at the Second Quebec Conference in September 1944, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed to resolve territorial issues by a division of Germany as proposed by U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau. The Morgenthau Plan envisaged that Upper Silesia would be part of Poland, as well as a part of Lower Silesia including Liegnitz and the frontier line along the Katsbach River.<sup>29</sup> The actual involvement of the U.S. in the administration of Silesian territories was contemplated.<sup>30</sup> Thus the U.S. was not against an extension of Poland’s territory at the expense of Germany including Lower Silesia. The condition was that political borders should be transparent, and thus the Open Door policy facilitating international economic cooperation should be feasible.<sup>31</sup> The obstacle was the growing dispute between the U.S.S.R. and the

---

<sup>25</sup> T. Marczak, *Granica zachodnia w polskiej polityce zagranicznej w latach 1944-1950*, Wrocław, 1995, p. 21.

<sup>26</sup> The American proposal to liberalise international economic relations after 1945 was closely related to the U.S. need for export markets. A reduction of trade barriers was essential to prevent future economic crises of the American and world economy. A. Bógdał-Brzezińska, *op. cit.*, pp. 263-269.

<sup>27</sup> *The Treatment of Germany*, Memorandum by the Committee on Post-War Programs, Washington 5 August 1944, FRUS, *Foreign Relations of the United States, Diplomatic papers 1944, General* <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1944v01> (accessed 10.09.2014).

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>30</sup> H. L. Stimson, Memorandum by the Secretary of War (Stimson), Washington, 9 September 1944, FRUS, *Conference at Quebec, 1944*, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1944> (accessed 10.09.2014).

<sup>31</sup> M. K. Kamiński, *Polska i Czechosłowacja w polityce Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii, 1945-1948*, Warsaw, 1991, pp. 17-19.

Anglo-Saxon countries over their spheres of influence in Central and Eastern Europe. This was the reason why, in December 1944, U.S. ambassador Averell Harriman expressed his concern over the Soviet government's concept of extending the western border of Poland further to the west.<sup>32</sup> He referred back to the Soviet proposal of moving the border to the Lusatian Neisse river, presented earlier in December 1944.

The talks of the leaders of the U.S., Great Britain and the U.S.S.R. in Yalta in February 1945 on German territories to be ceded to Poland took place in a different international climate, due to the creation of the Provisional Polish Government in Warsaw, controlled by Moscow.<sup>33</sup> In this situation, Stalin postulated that the Polish western border would be the Oder–Neisse Line, and all territory east of that line would be part of the new Polish state. As Tadeusz Marczak underlined in his 1995 book, the two Anglo-Saxon powers – despite their reservations – did not categorically object to the Soviet proposal, as the issue of the Polish western border was a factor playing an influential role in determining the way a new government in Warsaw was to be appointed.<sup>34</sup> Since at the time Roosevelt was strongly against a lasting division of Germany, the three powers focused on the Polish issue, which affected the future cooperation of the Big Three. Roosevelt's intent was to treat the Yalta solution for Poland as an introduction to the concept of a Europe of regions, which – in contrast to closed spheres of influence – was to eliminate artificial barriers and borders that blocked the evolution of Europe towards its democratisation and commercial expansion.<sup>35</sup> Obviously, this vision, whose realisation was the geopolitical goal of the U.S., was compromised by the later division of the European continent. Nevertheless, it placed the internationalisation of the Silesian borderlands projected by Washington in the context of the American intent to restructure the political order in Europe.<sup>36</sup>

The victory over Hitler's Germany and then the recognition of the Provisional Polish Government of National Unity in July 1945 made Silesia and the German–Polish border the subject of negotiations against the backdrop of the intensifying dispute between West and East.<sup>37</sup> The Potsdam Conference brought the conflicting aims of its participants to the surface. In fact, Silesia was already under Polish administra-

---

<sup>32</sup> A. Harriman, The Ambassador to the Soviet Union (Harriman) to the Secretary of State, Moscow, 19 December 1944, FRUS, *The British Commonwealth and Europe 1944*, <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/FRUS.FRUS1944v03> (accessed 10.09.2014).

<sup>33</sup> More on the U.S. reaction to the creation of the Polish Provisional Government and on U.S. and British preparations for the Yalta Conference in L. Zyblikiewicz, *Polityka Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii wobec Polski, 1944-1949*, Warsaw, 1984, pp. 81-89.

<sup>34</sup> T. Marczak, *op. cit.*, pp. 73-77.

<sup>35</sup> L. Zyblikiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108.

<sup>36</sup> On the U.S. approach to the Declaration of Liberated Europe as a potential instrument of American influence in Poland, see F. J. Harbutt, *op. cit.*, pp. 422-426.

<sup>37</sup> At that time the importance of the Polish issue decreased. The priority was the German problem and a new order in Europe. M. K. Kamiński, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

tion before the Conference started.<sup>38</sup> This situation deeply worried the Department of State, which in a policy paper presented in early July 1945 pointed out that by moving the German–Polish border to the Lusatian Neisse river, Poland would become dependent on the U.S.S.R. and the Soviet sphere of influence would be extended too far to the West.<sup>39</sup> It needs to be underlined that Harry S. Truman, the new U.S. President, was not opposed in principle to the Polish administration of pre-war German territories, but he made it clear that the Polish control was illegal. In his opinion, it represented the unlawful creation of a Polish occupation zone in Germany without the approval of the U.S. and Great Britain.<sup>40</sup> For that reason, he and Churchill insisted that in the disputed territories, the Polish administration would be provisional or the territories treated as an occupation zone agreed by the three powers.

The U.S. stance on the Oder–Neisse Line was rooted in the international economic importance of Silesia and European countries' dependence on Silesian coal and foodstuffs.<sup>41</sup> Truman referred to this issue at the plenary session on 21 July, speaking about the close links between reparations and the border question, because Silesian mines were considered to be within occupied territory, while coal extraction there was an international objective.<sup>42</sup> Churchill was of a similar opinion, emphasising that the German economy needed to be sustained by the Allies, and thus he proposed that the status of the Oder–Neisse territories would be that of a Polish–Soviet occupation zone.<sup>43</sup> The only area of post-war Silesia that the U.S. was ready to award to Poland was the former *Regierungsbezirk* Oppeln, which “had strong ties with the heavy industry of south-western Poland”<sup>44</sup>. Thus U.S. diplomats wanted to reduce Polish territorial acquisitions in the west to the very minimum. For that reason, the Department of State categorically objected to moving the German–Polish border to the Oder–Neisse Line, accepting that the boundary would run along the Oder and no further.<sup>45</sup> This was justified by the need to avoid German “irredenta and population transfers”.

It is clear from the Potsdam Conference documents that the U.S. and Great Britain expressed their strong reservations concerning the territory between the Oder and Lower (Lusatian) Neisse rivers<sup>46</sup> and between the Eastern (*Glatzer*) Neisse and Lusatian Neisse, which included a large part of Lower Silesia. It was recommended that this territory would remain part of Germany not only for historical and ethnic

---

<sup>38</sup> T. Marczak, *op. cit.*, pp. 78–85.

<sup>39</sup> D. J. Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

<sup>40</sup> T. Marczak, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>41</sup> G. Lundestad, *The American Non-Policy Towards Eastern Europe 1943–1947*, Tromsø–Oslo–Bergen, 1978, pp. 212–213.

<sup>42</sup> D. J. Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

<sup>43</sup> T. Marczak, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

<sup>44</sup> *German Upper Silesia*, 30 June 1945, Harry S. Truman Papers, Berlin Conference File, John F. Kennedy Institute, Berlin.

<sup>45</sup> *Suggested U.S. Policy Regarding Poland*, 6 July 1945, *ibidem*.

<sup>46</sup> *Territory between the Oder and Lower Neisse Rivers*, 30 June 1945, *ibidem*.

reasons, but also due to the fear that otherwise Germany would face huge economic and population problems. It was admitted that moving the border to the Oder–Lusatian Neisse line – with Breslau and Liegnitz becoming Polish – would ensure the best situation for Poland in terms of its defence and facilitate better communication (transport) with Czechoslovakia and the Baltic Sea; nevertheless it was argued that, such a boundary line would be the most serious threat to peace in Europe in the near future.<sup>47</sup>

There was no doubt that the U.S. expected some warranty that Silesia would remain part of an international trade system serving the reconstruction of post-war Europe, among other objectives. As the U.S. delegation expected, Stalin insisted on the approval of the Lusatian Neisse Line as part of the German–Polish border as it would match the interests of the U.S.S.R.<sup>48</sup> The task of persuading Truman and Secretary of State James Byrnes to accept this border line was given to the Polish delegation in Potsdam, headed by President Bolesław Bierut, Prime Minister Edward Osóbka-Morawski and Deputy Prime Minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk.<sup>49</sup> Their claims were supported with strategic, demographic and economic arguments including Poland's security, modernisation and urbanisation, and also the importance of the Oder drainage basin for the transport of raw materials from Silesia to Stettin (Szczecin).<sup>50</sup> The U.S. proposals were presented to the Polish delegation on 26 July by Averell Harriman, who pointed out that “the territories Poland claims were an essential source of foodstuffs for the rest of the German population” and also a “source of coal, zinc and other raw materials”<sup>51</sup>. Thus if Poland wished her claims to Silesia to be accepted by the Anglo-Saxon powers, it had to export raw materials to meet the needs of other countries. Polish administration of post-war Silesia was, in Harriman's opinion, possible if not necessary, provided that it would contribute to the economic recovery of Europe.<sup>52</sup>

Byrnes's proposal of 30 July to recognise the Polish administration of all territories to the east of the Oder–Lusatian Neisse Line until the final settlement of the border issue by a future peace conference<sup>53</sup> was a compromise. It was nonetheless in

---

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>48</sup> At the plenary on 21 July, Stalin implied that by introducing provisional Polish administration in pre-war German territories, he was following postulates of the U.S. and Great Britain, and thus the status of those territories remained open. K. Skubiszewski, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

<sup>49</sup> T. Marczak, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-109.

<sup>50</sup> *Summary of the Views Expressed by the Polish Delegation to the Meeting of Foreign Ministers, July 24 1945, on the subject of Poland's Western Frontiers*, Harry S. Truman Papers, Berlin Conference File, John F. Kennedy Institute, Berlin.

<sup>51</sup> *Notatka delegacji polskiej z rozmowy z amb. Harrimanem, 1945, lipiec 26, Babelsberg [in:] W stronę Odry i Bałtyku. Wybór źródeł (1795-1950)*, W. Wrzesiński (ed.) Vol. IV, *Od Poczdamu do Zgorzelca (1945-1950)*, selected and edited by T. Marczak, Wrocław, 1991, pp. 36-38.

<sup>52</sup> A higher level of Silesian coal exports to Western Europe was announced by Polish Minister of Industry Hilary Minc at his meeting with Averell Harriman and William Clayton on 28 July. L. Zyblikiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-191.

<sup>53</sup> *Western Frontier of Poland, U.S. Proposal*, 30 July 1945, Harry S. Truman Papers, Berlin Conference File, John F. Kennedy Institute, Berlin.

line with the earlier formulated objectives of U.S. policy towards Silesia. It met the expectations of the Polish memorandum of 28 July, which read that “Silesian mines and factories [...] owned by Poland will become a strong link in the economic cooperation of the Polish nation with great western Anglo-Saxon democracies”<sup>54</sup>. The former German territories were thus to be “drawn into” the economic life of Europe. President Truman, in line with American policy traditions, did not wish to set barriers to international cooperation, and thus he viewed separately the German–Polish border question and Poland’s administration and (re)development of the former German territory.<sup>55</sup> This solution lay in between the creation of a Polish occupation zone and the demarcation of a border, and thus Washington could still propose alternative projects to internationalise Silesia.

In press reports and commentaries published in the U.S. in 1946, a breakthrough in the German issue and especially in territorial disputes was expected before Secretary of State Byrnes delivered his speech in Stuttgart. At the meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in Paris in May 1946, where the future of Germany was debated, British Foreign Secretary Bevin proposed that Silesian industry be internationalised on the principles laid down for the special status of the Saar and Ruhr.<sup>56</sup> Governments participating in the Paris meeting were informed about apparent plan of Western powers to restore the German–Polish border of 1939.<sup>57</sup> That would mean that the “region of Silesia would be returned to Germany” while Poland would acquire new territorial compensation from the U.S.S.R., in the form of the region of Galicia between Poland and Ukraine.

Byrnes’s much discussed speech of 6 September 1946, did not contain any straightforward proposals for Silesia or the Oder–Lusatian Neisse frontier.<sup>58</sup> On the other hand, the Secretary of State underlined that the Polish administration of Silesia was temporary, since the U.S. “did not agree to the cession [...] of any particular area” but “will support revision of these frontiers in Poland’s favor”.<sup>59</sup> The justification given by Byrnes, and already regularly referred to by U.S. diplomats, was the need to compensate Poland for lost territories east of the Curzon Line.<sup>60</sup> Con-

---

<sup>54</sup> *Memorandum delegacji polskiej na konferencję poczdamską, 1945, lipiec 28, Poczdam, [in:] W stronę Odry i Bałtyku...*, pp. 38–40.

<sup>55</sup> The Secretary of State made the border agreement conditional on the U.S.S.R.’s acceptance that the occupying powers would extract war retributions from their respective occupation zones in Germany. D. J. Allen, *op. cit.*, pp. 27–29.

<sup>56</sup> *Bevin Bid for Role in Silesia is Seen*, The New York Times, 19 May 1946, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>57</sup> H. Callender, *Byrnes is Expected to Make ‘Important’ Talk in Germany*, The New York Times, 3 September 1946, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>58</sup> L. Zyblikiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 270–272.

<sup>59</sup> J. F. Byrnes, *Text of Secretary Byrnes’ Speech on U.S. Policy in Germany*, The New York Times, 7 September 1946, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>60</sup> The border between Poland and the U.S.S.R. was demarcated at the Tehran Conference in 1943 without consulting the legitimate government of Poland. However, Byrnes recognised the Curzon Line as legitimate in the light of the agreement at Yalta.

sequently, Washington reserved its right not to recognise Polish acquisitions in the West formally. It needs to be emphasised that he spoke about territorial issues in the context of the needed reorganisation of economic life in Europe. He did not criticise the concept of the German–Polish frontier along the Oder and Lusatian Neisse rivers, but the ongoing process of creating boundaries which limited trade in Central Europe. Accordingly he spoke about the need to eliminate barriers between the German occupation zones to facilitate “the free exchange of commodities, persons, and ideas”<sup>61</sup>. He did not mention Silesia, but it can be deduced that his approach to former German territories was motivated by the danger that some areas of Germany and in Europe would become isolated.

The speech given by Byrnes was more than just an element of the U.S. strategy of competition with the U.S.S.R. for spheres of influence in Germany, since the speech indicated that the U.S. expected some concessions and cooperation on the part of the Soviet Union on solving territorial and economic issues in Europe. Byrnes gave an assurance that Germany would not lose the Ruhr industrial region, trusting that the Soviet government would be ready to be similarly cooperative on the issue of Silesia. Journalist Harold Callender was of the same opinion when he wrote in the *New York Times* that Molotov’s stance on the Oder–Neisse Line was intransigent.<sup>62</sup> The Soviet government’s lack of flexibility in that respect meant – in Callender’s opinion – that the Iron Curtain divide would apply to a greater part of Europe and result in stronger resistance to the western Open Door policy on free trade.

Byrnes’s speech at Stuttgart basically repeated the solutions of the Potsdam Conference, but it also made clear that the U.S. was willing to debate the international role of Silesia and the status of the Oder–Neisse frontier. In its report of October 1946, the Office of Strategic Services (Intelligence) at the Department of State underlined that some statements in the Potsdam Declaration were vague and the Declaration did not determine exactly what territories were finally to be given to Poland.<sup>63</sup> Consequently, the assumption that the final decisions on the western border of Poland would be taken during a future peace conference with Germany was upheld. For that reason, U.S. diplomats used the phrase “Polish administration” when referring to the territories east of the Oder–Neisse Line, and thus emphasised the provisional status of those territories.<sup>64</sup> In addition, the Department of State almost totally ignored the political and historical arguments about Silesia presented by the Polish side. For the U.S. the territory was merely a part of the territorial compensation awarded to Poland for the territories east of the Curzon Line that had been lost to the Soviet Union. Poland was blamed for its misinterpretation of the Potsdam Declaration as well as

---

<sup>61</sup> J. F. Byrnes, *Text of Secretary Byrnes’ Speech...*

<sup>62</sup> H. Callender, *Paris Sees Shift in Russian Plans*, *The New York Times*, 22 September 1946, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>63</sup> *Problems of the German Territorial Settlement*, Department of State, Intelligence Memorandum, 23 October 1946, OSS State Department Reports Europe, 1945–1961, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*.

decisions taken in Tehran in 1943. As a result of this mistaken interpretation as the OSS claimed, Poland assumed that the Polish zone of administration in the former German territories meant that this area was part of Poland, which resulted in expulsions of the German population.<sup>65</sup>

That was the course taken by the Department of State. The intent was not to revise the German–Polish border in a manner favourable to Germany, but to ensure that in compliance with international law, European countries would have access to the economic resources of Upper and Lower Silesia. Upper Silesia was an important mining area, and Lower Silesia was a rich agricultural area with important transport routes.<sup>66</sup> The U.S. diplomatic stance concerning the provisional status of territories east of the Lusatian Neisse river – that is, their Polish “administration” – reflected an intent to ensure that those territories maintained their links to Western European economies.

The above view of the Silesian issue was confirmed in a report by the Office of Strategic Services in early January 1947 under the telling title *The Polish Zone of Administration in Germany*.<sup>67</sup> Its main thesis was that the Potsdam Declaration was aimed only at separating the territory east of the Oder and Lusatian Neisse rivers from the Soviet occupation zone and facilitating its Polish administration. Nonetheless, the achievements of the Polish authorities in their management of former German territories were recognised, in particular the fact that most mines were already operational and the level of agricultural production was high. The broad involvement of the Polish government in the integration of Silesia with the rest of Poland, which was supported by the people and political organisations, including the legal opposition (the PSL – Polish Peasant Party), made U.S. diplomats aware that the new territorial shape of the Polish state was irreversible.<sup>68</sup> At the same time it was underlined that the processes taking place would not advance without Poland’s international cooperation on infrastructure recovery and imports of necessary products and technologies.

In this situation, the status of Silesia and a revision of the German–Polish border became the focus of the U.S. delegation at the Moscow meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in April 1947. The main issue on the agenda of the Moscow conference was the German problem, the status of the Ruhr region and war reparations.<sup>69</sup> Nevertheless, the U.S. drew others’ attention to the importance for Europe of the former German territories that were under Polish administration. On April 9, George Marshall, the new Secretary of State, delivered a statement repeating the

---

<sup>65</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>66</sup> Special features of both Upper and Lower Silesia listed included their efficient transport system, linking the region with almost all parts of Europe, the communication role of the Oder and its natural connection with the port of Stettin. *Ibidem*.

<sup>67</sup> *The Polish Zone of Administration in Germany*, Department of State, Intelligence Research Report, 7 January 1947, OSS State Department Reports Europe, 1945–1961, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>69</sup> For the President and Acheson from Marshall, Moscow, 18 March 1947, Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945–1953, Subject File, Roosevelt Study Center.

U.S. stance that the Polish territory was merely “compensation” for lost territories east of the Curzon Line. Thus the question was “how and where to draw the final line to avoid unjustified economic upset and to minimize inescapable irredentist pressure in Germany.”<sup>70</sup> Later he elaborated on other issues which covered the interests of “all of Europe” and were related to the territorial question of Silesia. Thus he acknowledged Poland’s entitlement to “adequate” economic resources, but underlined the need to maintain economic relations between Germany, Western Europe and territories under the “provisional” Polish administration.<sup>71</sup> In other words, Europe could not be cut off from agricultural and industrial regions which had until recently been part of the Reich, because if it was, Europe would not be capable of efficiently recovering from wartime destruction. Should the essential conditions for Europe’s recovery not be created, a barrier to American trade and commerce would emerge, while the U.S. was continuing to seek markets for its goods. Thus Marshall called on other powers to consider what kind of border was to be approved, underlining that it should not create a permanent political problem nor be an obstacle to a regular and healthy flow of trade and commerce and peoples’ contacts.<sup>72</sup> He argued that instead of creating “impermeable barriers” to Europe’s development, the principle should be introduced that the management of defined economic resources in the transferred territories should observe the needs of countries that were dependent on those resources.

Speaking about specific territorial questions, Marshall recognised Poland’s full right to the southern part of East Prussia, but had reservations about other territories, Silesia in particular.<sup>73</sup> He did not question the incorporation of Upper Silesia as a whole into Poland, but he promoted solutions ensuring the availability of its coal and other resources to sustain the European economy.<sup>74</sup> On the other hand, he considered Lower Silesia to be a disputed territory. Its status was to be determined by a special Border Commission authorised by the Council of Foreign Ministers. A representative of Poland was to join the Commission, alongside the members of the Council. The task of the Commission was to revise the German–Polish border ensuring fair compensation to Poland and to introduce solutions ensuring the accessibility of raw materials and products of heavy industry to Europe.<sup>75</sup>

Marshall’s statement on the German–Polish border was one of the most important official political declarations laying down the American perception of European territorial problems after 1945. It contained the conviction, characteristic for U.S.

---

<sup>70</sup> G. Marshall, *Polish–German Frontier, Questions Relating to Germany*, Statement by U.S. Delegation, 9 April 1947, Moscow CFM, Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945–1953, Subject File, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>73</sup> D. J. Allen, *op. cit.*, p. 77.

<sup>74</sup> G. Marshall, *Polish–German Frontier...*

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*.

diplomacy, that solutions to border issues should lead to deeper co-dependence of European states and peoples in the economic field, and this should guarantee future peace in Europe.<sup>76</sup> The U.S. Secretary of State approached the problem of Silesia and the pre-war German territories as a pan-European issue because of its long-term relevance to West–East relations and future relations between Poland and Germany. For this reason the U.S. stance was hotly disputed at the Moscow conference and vigorously contested by the U.S.S.R. and Poland. The Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs rightly pointed out to Marshall his lack of consistency in calling for Europe’s economic development while desiring to divide Silesia and the Oder basin.<sup>77</sup> On the other hand, Poland’s concentration on the German issue did not allow Polish diplomats to see the more general intent of the U.S., which was the territorial organisation of Europe in the context of the U.S. plan for the continent’s recovery.<sup>78</sup>

Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Vyacheslav Molotov’s interpretation of border issues in Europe also differed much from that of Marshall. Molotov rejected Marshall’s concept of “territorial compensation”, worrying that the issue of the Soviet gain of Lvov would be disputed, and he instrumentally quoted Polish ethnic and historical arguments referring to the western lands of Poland.<sup>79</sup> He excluded any option of altering the Oder–Lusatian Neisse border, referring to decisions taken earlier by the Big Three and the ongoing resettlement of German and Polish populations in those very territories. On the other hand, British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin approved of Marshall’s proposal, admitting that placing the territory between the Glatzer Neisse and Lusatian Neisse rivers – which included Lower Silesia – under Polish administration had met “serious reservations”<sup>80</sup>. He compared Silesia to the Saar, emphasising the need for a concurrent settlement of all German territorial issues by the Border Commission. After this exchange of opinions, Marshall began arguing with Molotov, unsuccessfully trying to convince him that he did not understand the English meaning of the Potsdam Declaration and decisions on Poland’s western border.<sup>81</sup> Marshall believed that all parties had agreed on the provisional nature of the Polish administration of the pre-war German territories. In this situation no compromise could be reached.

The weight of Marshall’s statement was reinforced by the dependence of the issue of Silesia and the German–Polish border on the American plan for Europe’s

---

<sup>76</sup> L. Zyblikiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 299-300.

<sup>77</sup> *Fragmety i omówienie opracowania pt. „Tezy min. Marshalla w sprawie granic zachodnich Rzeczypospolitej”*, Warszawa, kwiecień, 1947 [in:] *W stronę Odry i Bałtyku...*, pp. 138-141.

<sup>78</sup> In February 1947, President Truman asked Congress to approve \$350 million dollars in aid to Poland, Hungary, Austria, Italy, Greece and China. The division of this aid was then determined by missions which evaluated the needs of particular European countries. L. Zyblikiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 307-308.

<sup>79</sup> W. Molotov, Council of Foreign Ministers, Moscow, *Basic Directives Including Questions of Boundaries, Questions of the Ruhr and Rhineland and Others*, 9 April 1947, Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945–1953, Subject File, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>80</sup> E. Bevin, Council of Foreign Ministers, Moscow, *op. cit.*

<sup>81</sup> G. Marshall, Council of Foreign Ministers, Moscow, *op. cit.*

recovery. George Kennan, who then headed the U.S. Policy Planning Staff at the Department of State, saw a need to reorient the economies of eastern European countries so that they would cooperate both with the U.S.S.R. and with Western states.<sup>82</sup> Kennan – who crafted the Marshall Plan – made it clear that only a gradual integration of European economies through the elimination of economic barriers could ensure a favourable balance of trade and security for the U.S. Geir Lundestad indicated that the primary condition for joining Kennan’s programme for the recovery of Europe, presented in May 1947, was that participating countries agree “to abandon the exclusive orientation of their economies”, which meant acceptance of the participation of international bodies in economic planning in countries covered by the Marshall Plan.<sup>83</sup> The Polish government was very interested in cooperation with the U.S.; however, due to pressure from Moscow and tensions between West and East, it gave up its participation in the conference on Europe’s recovery.<sup>84</sup> Undoubtedly, this decision was also influenced by the position of the Department of State, which prioritised the recovery of Western Europe. Central European states were viewed as structurally dependent on their economic cooperation with the West with or without U.S. aid.<sup>85</sup> This position was confirmed by Colonel R.L. Harrison in his report on the American mission to Poland (July 1947). He wrote that the Polish economy had the capacity independently to produce and export foodstuffs and coal to Western Europe; that is, there was no need for financial support on the part of the U.S.<sup>86</sup>

Poland’s non-participation in the American plan for Europe’s recovery did not exclude the possibility of proceeding with the internationalisation of Silesia and the German–Polish border according to U.S. plans. Before the next Council of Foreign Ministers, held in the autumn of 1947, the Office of Intelligence Research at the Department of State presented its analysis of the current situation. It was decided to uphold Marshall’s proposal presented in Moscow.<sup>87</sup> Since Soviet opposition to the Border Commission project was expected, it was announced that specific border changes were to be introduced. Three alternative modifications of border lines were proposed by the Office of Military Governor United States (OMGUS) in Germany.<sup>88</sup> As far as Silesia was concerned, in the first variant Polish acquisitions were to be limited to Upper Silesia and three counties in Lower

---

<sup>82</sup> L. Zyblikiewicz, *op. cit.*, pp. 311-313.

<sup>83</sup> In Lundestad’s opinion, U.S. diplomacy intentionally imposed “inclusive” conditions on joining the Marshall Plan to make East European states and the Soviet Union subjugate their own economic plans to Europe’s interests or else “exclude” themselves from cooperation with the West. G. Lundestad, *op. cit.*, p. 401.

<sup>84</sup> M. K. Kamiński, *op. cit.*, pp. 262-263.

<sup>85</sup> Lundestad, *op. cit.*, p. 408.

<sup>86</sup> M. K. Kamiński, *op. cit.*, p. 262.

<sup>87</sup> *Territorial Questions in Germany: Background and Documentation*, Department of State, Office of Intelligence Research, 17 October 1947, OSS State Department Reports Europe, 1945–1961, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*.

Silesia: Namysłów (Namslau), Syców (Groß Wartenberg) and Milicz (Militsch).<sup>89</sup> The second variant limited Poland's acquisition to all of Upper Silesia. In the third variant, the Polish border was to be moved most westwards, i.e. Poland was to be given Lower Silesia to the east of the Oder, but the counties of Breslau (Wrocław), Ohlau (Oława) and Ripa (Brzeg) were to be divided between Poland and Germany. In addition, the Upper Silesia region was to be placed under international administration to ensure that its resources and industrial potential served the recovery of the European economy. The authorities of this administration were to facilitate contributions of experienced labour force and management from Germany.<sup>90</sup> As in the case of earlier proposals, the Department of State did not expect that the U.S.S.R. would agree to revise territorial decisions taken in Potsdam but expected fair compensation to Poland, including the best economic use of the disputed area and its value to the Polish and German economies.<sup>91</sup> The American proposal for a "compromise" decision on the division of Silesia, i.e. a compromise between the pre-war German–Polish border and the post-war administrative border (the Oder–Lusatian Neisse Line), meant setting apart the territory under "Polish administration" from the territory of Poland.

The London meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers, however, turned into a dispute between the U.S.S.R. and the Western powers on war reparations and political plans for Germany.<sup>92</sup> On territorial matters, Marshall only managed to signal U.S. support for the proposal, repeated by Bevin, to appoint a Border Commission. At the same time, he opposed Molotov's stance, arguing that the issue of Poland's western border had not been settled but was a question for a peace conference, and its resolution should contribute to the economic and political stability of Europe.<sup>93</sup> The London conference was a fiasco which deepened the division of Europe. U.S. plans for Silesia and its role in Europe turned out to be a form of American pressure exerted on Moscow. This pressure actually strengthened Soviet dominance in Poland, and caused the question of the German–Polish border to become a bargaining lever in the U.S.S.R.'s policy towards Germany.

---

<sup>89</sup> K. Ruchniewicz, J. Tyszkiewicz, *Amerykańskie projekty rewizji granicy na Odrze i Nysie Łużyckiej...*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>90</sup> *Kilka alternatywnych propozycji amerykańskich w sprawie granicy na Odrze i Nysie w latach 1946-1949* [in:] K. Ruchniewicz, J. Tyszkiewicz, *Amerykańskie projekty rewizji granicy na Odrze i Nysie Łużyckiej...*, p. 81.

<sup>91</sup> *Territorial Questions*, Department of State, 1947, OSS State Department Reports Europe, 1945–1961, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>92</sup> At the Council session on 12 December 1947, Molotov accused Western powers of orchestrating a merger of their occupation zones in Germany and demanded Soviet participation in quadripartite control over the Ruhr, which caused severe tensions between the parties and made reaching a compromise on the future of Germany impossible. From London to Secretary of State, Telegram, London, 12 December 1947, Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945–1953, Subject File, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>93</sup> G. Marshall, quoted after: From London to Secretary of State, Telegram, London, 27 November 1947, Harry S. Truman Office Files, 1945–1953, Subject File, Roosevelt Study Center.

The perception of the Oder–Lusatian Neisse Line by the U.S. changed as a result of the perpetuating division of Germany and all of Europe and the beginning of the Berlin Blockade by the Soviet Union in June 1948.<sup>94</sup> U.S. intelligence, in a report of September 1948, foresaw that the control of Western powers over western zones of Berlin would push Moscow to establish a communist government of East Germany.<sup>95</sup> The CIA reported that an agreement between the U.S.S.R. and eastern Germany could create a situation where the Oder–Lusatian Neisse border was to be revised at the expense of Poland, because the Soviet Union was eager to support German hopes for the return of lands given to Poland.<sup>96</sup> These suspicions also showed up in press reports preceding the Paris meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers held in the spring of 1949. Sydney Gruson, in his commentary titled “East Land Return to Germans Hinted”, wrote that in January 1949, Soviet Minister of Foreign Affairs Andrey Vyshinsky had apparently offered Poland, Germany and Czechoslovakia an exchange of disputed territories to settle all border issues.<sup>97</sup> He apparently proposed to Poland that in exchange for transferring the industrial centre of Lower Silesia to the future communist Germany, it would be given the industrial region of Cieszyn Silesia (Teschener Schlesien), which had long caused Polish–Czechoslovak disputes. In compensation, the government in Prague was to be given the Glatz area (Kłodzko).<sup>98</sup> Gruson made it clear that U.S. and British diplomats treated that information with much reservation, but they regarded it as credible that the Soviet Union had experienced negative effects of the West’s counter-blockade on the Soviet zone of Germany introduced in response to Moscow’s activities in Berlin. This made U.S. diplomats suspicious that Lower Silesia and other pre-war German territories might become part of the communist Germany in future.

The U.S. was also aware that for the settlement of the Oder–Neisse border and determination of the status of Silesia, a consensus with the U.S.S.R. had to be worked out. Thus the German–Polish border was discussed at the Paris meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers in May 1949. Guidelines prepared by the Department of State suggested that the American delegation repeated the U.S. position on the provisional administrative status of the German eastern border.<sup>99</sup> The Border Commissions postulated by the U.S. were to deal with the eastern border of Germany in particular, including the territory under provisional Polish administration.<sup>100</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *op. cit.*, pp. 507-509.

<sup>95</sup> *Consequences of a Breakdown in Four-Power Negotiations on Germany*, Central Intelligence Agency, 28 September 1948, Declassified Documents Reference System, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>97</sup> S. Gruson, *East Land Return to Germans Hinted*, The New York Times, 16 April 1949, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>99</sup> *The Position of the United States with Respect to Germany Preparatory to the Sixth Session of the Council of Foreign Ministers*, Memorandum for the National Security Council, 16 May 1949, Declassified Documents Reference System, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibidem*.

That was due to the fact that U.S. diplomats continued to refer to the formal requirement that territorial agreements were not to be reached before the final peace treaty.<sup>101</sup> As regards Soviet–U.S. relations, it is interesting that the Department of State considered exchanging East Prussia for Silesia. The Soviet Union was to renounce its own claims to the northern part of East Prussia, which would be given to Poland to compensate that country for changes along its western border.<sup>102</sup> In the opinion of the U.S. government, such a solution was workable provided that an agreement on a unified Germany was reached. Thus, if Germany was divided, the U.S. proposal was rendered pointless. On the other hand, there was a slim chance of reaching a compromise with Stalin on the conditions put forward by the U.S., because the U.S.S.R. would then have to compensate Poland for its territorial losses out of territories given to the Soviet Union at the Potsdam Conference<sup>103</sup> and approved in 1947.

The decision of the U.S. and Great Britain not to recognise the legality of the Oder–Lusatian Neisse border became a part of West–East rivalry, but remained an important component of U.S. European policy. In November 1949, the CIA argued that the creation of two German states might increase the chance that the border dispute would be settled at the expense of Poland.<sup>104</sup> According to the CIA, Stalin was ready to bribe German nationalists by offering a revision of the Oder–Neisse Line to the benefit of Germany, because the territories occupied by Poland accounted for one tenth of pre-war German industry. U.S. intelligence judged that the Soviets’ purpose to reach a territorial agreement with the G.D.R. was decisive in increasing the communists’ control of public life in Poland and Czechoslovakia up to the end of the 1940s.<sup>105</sup> In this way Moscow prevented all “heresies” and sovereign ambitions of its satellite states when a compromise with Germany was to be negotiated. Though this American perception of the situation was challenged by the border agreement signed by Poland and the G.D.R. in Zgorzelec/Görlitz in 1950<sup>106</sup>, there was no doubt that Moscow used the border issue to satisfy its own needs in Germany.

A characteristic feature of U.S. foreign policy in 1945–1949 was its pan-European approach to the status of Silesia and the Oder–(Lusatian) Neisse border, in which international economic cooperation and trade issues mattered. Consequently there was a reason why the U.S. evoked Silesia’s place and role in the European economy

---

<sup>101</sup> In comparing the issue of Germany’s eastern borders and Silesia with the status of the Saar, it should be noted that the Department of State supported the Europeanisation concept and the place of the Saar in German–French cooperation within the European Coal and Steel Community after 1950. D. Acheson, *The Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom* Washington, 21 June 1952, *FRUS, 1952–1954, Germany and Austria, Interest of the United States in the Status of the Saar*, <http://digicoll.library.wisc.edu/cgi-bin/FRUS/FRUS> (accessed 02.04.2015).

<sup>102</sup> *The Position of the United States with Respect to Germany...*

<sup>103</sup> K. Skubiszewski, *op. cit.*, p. 430.

<sup>104</sup> *Review of the World Situation*, Central Intelligence Agency, 16 November 1949, Declassified Documents Reference System, Roosevelt Study Center.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>106</sup> T. Marczak, *op. cit.*, pp. 552–560.

at the Paris Conference in May 1949.<sup>107</sup> The objective of U.S. diplomacy was not to revise the German–Polish border, but to ensure the border’s greater permeability to trade and commerce – and in the longer perspective, to ideology as well – between Western and Eastern Europe. For this reason, the American administration debated solutions to the border problem, including the creation of a German–Polish customs union and/or total integration of the Polish and German economies with those of Western Europe.<sup>108</sup> Those plans had a slim chance of being realised under the conditions of the Cold War, and thus long remained exclusively a subject of theoretical analyses. It should be remembered that U.S. projects aimed at integration which covered Silesia and the German–Polish border were guided by the long-term orientation of American economic policy after 1945. Needless to say, American programmes for the internationalisation of economic cooperation influenced the economic growth of Europe for many years to come.

**Krzysztof Siwek** PhD, Institute of History, Wrocław University (ksiwek23@wp.pl)

**Keywords:** Silesia, Oder-Neisse, international diplomacy, United States, Europe, Germany

#### ABSTRACT

*The objective of the United States regarding the internationalisation of Silesia and the Polish–German border established in 1945 was based on the needs of European economic recovery, which included international access to Silesian coal and foodstuffs. Despite U.S.–U.S.S.R. tensions, American diplomacy still emphasised the pan-European dimension of the Silesian issue, in particular during the Council of Foreign Ministers’ meetings in Moscow and London in 1947. Accordingly, it was not opposition to Poland’s westward move which determined the critical U.S. attitude towards the Oder–Neisse question, but the resolve to prevent the isolation of Silesian industry behind the Iron Curtain. Nevertheless, U.S. plans concerning Silesia were suspended because of the political division of Germany and Europe in 1949.*

---

<sup>107</sup> *Kilka alternatywnych propozycji amerykańskich w sprawie granicy na Odrze i Nysie w latach 1946-1949*, [in:] K. Ruchniewicz, J. Tyszkiewicz, *Amerykańskie projekty rewizji granicy na Odrze i Nysie Łużyckiej...*, p. 79.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibidem*.

