

Chapter 6
Poland and Soviet security plans
(April-July 1934)

I

If the middle of April 1934 was a critical time for Soviet negotiations with Poland and Germany, the same held true for the French foreign policy and military debates over the course to pursue. On April 16, Lois Barthou bent to Premier Gaston Doumergue's arguments that the three-fold increase in German military expenditure, announced in late March, manifested the Reich Government's intention to rearm within the limits which it would establish itself, and that from this time on, France had to concentrate her efforts on her own security. The minister withdrew the conciliatory draft of a reply to British enquiry as to guaranties of execution in a disarmament convention. A Doumergue-Barthou note of April 17, 1934, though not a decisive break from the traditional disarmament policy, had liberated the French energy¹.

Three days later, the Soviet *chargé d'affaires*, Marcel Rosenberg, was invited to hear from the minister about the French government's decision "to continue negotiations" begun by Paul-Boncour. However, Barthou told Rosenberg nothing about the nature of French plans for a new security agreement with Russia, partly because he had not studied the whole issue sufficiently². Drawn by the MAE's Political Directorate under Léger's supervision and submitted by him to Barthou on April 16³, the scheme envisaged an Eastern Locarno and thus differed significantly from the original Soviet idea. The project laid out two sets of obligations, which were to be tied together by a concluding general protocol. The proposed regional pact of mutual assistance was to include the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Germany, while France was left outside its framework. This Eastern pact was to be complemented by a bilateral Franco-Soviet guarantee agreement, which assured Russia of French assistance if she became the victim of an unprovoked attack by a participant of the regional pact. The Soviet Union, in her turn, was to pledge herself to aid France if the latter was subjected to German aggression, committed in violation of the Locarno treaties. To make the Soviet guarantee to France compatible with the latter, the USSR was to become a member of the League of Nations.

Although skillfully constructed, the Léger scheme multiplied the weaknesses inherent in the Soviet proposals. Apart from inevitable complications of a legal nature, the French put Germany in the center of the entire project, thus making its realization dependable upon her consent. This approach was in agreement with Barthou's desire not to alienate Germany and to garner British support which was crucial for creating a favorable political atmosphere for the project and for giving legacy to French modifications of the Rhineland guarantee pact. The position to be adopted by Poland was decisive both in diplomatic and strategic terms, a fact Barthou and his office seem to have recognized at an early stage of their preparations. Among French motives for German membership in a regional pact was the intention to facilitate Poland's joining it⁴. Before going to Warsaw or initiating security discussions with Moscow, Barthou wished to know, as his questionnaire presented to the Polish Embassy on April 13 suggests, what Poland's attitude was to the "question of the entry of the USSR into the League of Nations," and whether the Poles would consider joining "a system of General Pact of mutual assistance or of non-aggression, including, in particular, Germany and the USSR"⁵. The *aide-mémoire* not only informed the Polish government of new French plans towards the USSR, but also made the exact form which they should take conditional upon Warsaw's attitude to them⁶. No serious discussion on the matter followed when Chlapowski met Barthou on 20 April; however, the Polish ambassador told Barthou about his chief's acceptance of the whole proposed agenda for the negotiations in Warsaw⁷. Anticipated consultations with the Poles were probably another reason for the French reluctance to tell the Soviets about the Eastern Locarno scheme until April 28.

The setback the French Foreign Ministry suffered on April 16-17, when the Council of Ministers refused to follow its advice to continue disarmament negotiations with Germany, prompted it to accelerate the tempo of security discussions. Barthou's trip to Warsaw and Prague, which coincided with the major reversal in French policy, could provide an ideal opportunity for consultations with the French allies. On April 20, the Soviet *chargé d'affaires* in Paris raised the Polish issue before Barthou, who assured that the main goal of his trip was to undertake "a test of the political atmosphere" there⁸. Such were immediate French plans in regard to Poland, as on April 20, Litvinov invited Alphand to tell him about "a communication", which had reached the Narkomindel and "deserved special attention". The declaration of January 26, Litvinov insinuated, was complemented by an agreement, which provided for Polish support for the *Anschluss*, German rearmament demands, and Italo-German projects for reform of the League of Nations as well as for Polish obligation to maintain neutrality in case of a preventive war against the Reich. Litvinov also referred to information about a *rendez-vous* between Pilsudski and Hitler⁹. This set of allegations seems quite fantastic¹⁰ — the more so, since there is no evidence to substantiate the view that the NKID did receive any convincing information about such a

broad agreement. The *résumé* of the only report along these lines received by the Soviet military intelligence in spring 1934 reads:

"According to information from the circles, connected with the [E]astern [D]epartment of the [M]inistry for [F]oreign [A]ffairs and with the Polish General Staff, the Polish-German pact has two or three secret articles. The first deals with Austria, the second — with the issue of German equality of rights in armaments. The content of the third article is unknown."

The distribution indicates that the report, which largely conformed to press rumours, was not delivered to Litvinov's Secretariat¹¹. Another "well informed source" of the RKKA Staff's Fourth Department "categorically denied" the rumours about a meeting between Pilsudski and Hitler¹². Although materials of the Second Department of the Soviet General Staff and of the Foreign Department of the OGPU¹³ are not available, there are no serious reasons to suppose that Moscow was unduly alarmed by intelligence reports and vague rumours to this effect. There are still fewer reasons to believe that Litvinov himself found them credible¹⁴. Intimately familiar with Pilsudski's approach to foreign relations since the early 1920s, the Foreign Commissar was able to understand his determination about Poland's independence better than most of his colleagues abroad and in Moscow, and, to a certain degree, appreciate it¹⁵.

By supplying the French with rumours of more than dubious value, Litvinov, as he admitted to ambassador Alphand, wanted to induce Barthou to achieve full clarification of the Polish position in the context of Russo-French security plans¹⁶. He apparently wished the French Government to make up their minds as to the practicable methods of Franco-Soviet *rapprochement*. Apart from a desire to attain this largely negative (so far as Poland was concerned) goal, Soviet diplomacy had little to offer to the French. Litvinov hardly wanted to sow distrust in Poland's intentions or to discourage France in her regard; he expressed to Alphand his conviction that "la Pologne ne peut être vraiment penser à compromettre son alliance avec la France et que vous [Barthou] pourrez encore la retenir dans le voie dangereuse où elle s'est engagée et obtenir les garanties nécessaires"¹⁷. Reiterating similar hopes in interviews with Barthou and Léger, on April 20 and 24, the Soviet *chargé* told them about some other "deliberations, which were presented" in Litvinov's letters to the Paris Embassy: "we ourselves considered Poland's participation as indispensable condition for the conclusion of a [security] convention. But it does not look like Poland intends to seek for new guaranties against the danger of aggression from the side of Germany, which seems to Poland not real at all for the next years". Then M. Rosenberg tried to soften Léger's counter-remarks that the "real configuration of the frontiers is such that without Poland's cooperation the convention can not be realized"¹⁸.

Litvinov was aware of the danger and recognized the possibility that a negative attitude of Poland towards cooperation with the USSR within the wide security framework might lead to "a liquidation of Boncour proposals" and France "might lose interest in cooperation with us on the previously planned scope, and this might also affect the Little Entente's position with regard to us"¹⁹. But the NKID neither wished to induce France to bring pressures to bear on Poland nor to campaign in favor of her exclusion from potential participants in Franco-Soviet security schemes²⁰. While doing his best to complete non-aggression negotiations with Poland and to persuade the Politburo to look more favorably on prospects of bilateral cooperation with her, Litvinov hoped to prevent further deterioration in Soviet-Polish political relations and keep the door open for resuming *rapprochement* with her.

"The prolongation of the pact, the importance of this act notwithstanding, can not change the fact that the Soviet-Polish *rapprochement* at the present stage might be considered completed. To all evidence, Pilsudski does not wish further *rapprochement* with the USSR," Stomoniakov explained to the ambassador in Warsaw²¹. The NKID's unwillingness to approach the Poles with the proposals amounting to an alliance, in these circumstances reflected its realism and showed the intention to avoid putting unbearable burden on Soviet-Polish relations. If "France succeed[ed] in persuading Poland" to join a mutual assistance pact, "we [would] be very glad, but we [were] not going to raise the issue before her ourselves," the Soviet *chargé d'affaires* in Paris, M. Rosenberg summarized the Narkomindel's position in April 1934²².

On April 5, official statements announced that Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko would return to Moscow. The Polish press almost unanimously praised the good will and tact displayed by the former envoy on his post in Warsaw. A liberal Jewish daily characterized him as "the man, who tried to understand all [realities] and to persuade the over-suspicious specialists of the Narkomindel of many [of these realities]. The circumstances of the conclusion of the Polish-German pact had strengthened the positions of sceptics in Moscow, that undoubtedly speeded up replacement of the Soviet envoy..."²³. Senior officials of the ATE news agency, close to the Polish Main Staff, predicted, that the nomination of Jacob Davtian as the first Soviet ambassador to Poland, meant "a friendly noncommittal course [of the USSR towards Poland]. Changes will come in two or three months"²⁴. This assessment proved to be surprisingly accurate.

II

The visit of the French foreign minister to Poland on April 22-24 did not bring a decisive change in Franco-Polish relations. Although his lengthy

conversations with Pilsudski and Beck seemed to be all-encompassing, Barthou avoided discussing major security problems. He failed to dispel in a practical way the Marshal's belief that reemergence of French virility was a short-lived phenomenon and France would continue to yield to Germany. The French minister's suggestion of a visit from General Petin, a military agent in Romania, to reexamine the Franco-Polish military convention irritated and further discouraged Pilsudski. The second major point of interest in view of Franco-Soviet security plans was Poland's difficulties with Prague and Kaunas. The old problem of Polish-Czechoslovak relations was not thoroughly discussed and "the dilemma of having two mutually antagonistic allies in the east left Barthou as baffled as his predecessors", while the Lithuanian dimension was barely touched upon. Nor did Barthou make any serious attempts to explain the motives for the forthcoming inclusion of the Soviet Union in France's system of alliances. Following Litvinov's advice in the narrowest sense, the minister confined his enquiries as to Poland's orientation *vis-à-vis* her great neighbors to questions about possible secret cooperation between Warsaw and Berlin, and about Warsaw's views on the prospects of Soviet entry into the League. Barthou's treatment of security problems later gave Beck some reasons to maintain that "if it were not for the phantom of the Russian policy which was to appear before long, Barthou's visit might have been a step towards a radical improvement in our relations with France"²⁵. The outcome of Franco-Polish discussions seemed to be largely confined to receiving assurances from Poland about the strictly limited nature of *détente* with Germany. It might have seemed that Barthou missed a chance to achieve the verification of the Polish attitude which his predecessors had been postponing since November 1933. In fact, he had little reason for doubt. As far as France saw the extension of her alliances as a method of withdrawing from the obligations she had assumed previously, Poland could hardly welcome French security plans. Rosenberg was probably correctly informed when he wired the Narkomindel that Barthou "did not raise before Beck the issue of mutual assistance with our participation because he did not want to give Beck an opportunity to state his negative attitude [towards such plans]"²⁶.

The results of the Franco-Polish discussions did not induce the MAE to reassess chances for implementation of the Eastern Locarno project. They fortified France's belief that Germany must be invited to participate in the scheme since "la Pologne en tout cas ne paraît pas disposée à entrer dans un système qui la mettrait politiquement en opposition directe avec l'Allemagne et dans une situation où elle serait la plus exposée"²⁷.

On April 28, a detailed outline of the Léger scheme was presented to the Soviet Embassy in Paris. By May 1, it was endorsed by Barthou, though not by the cabinet, as a basis for forthcoming negotiations with Russia. Two days later Litvinov wired Rosenberg that the Politburo had considered the Eastern Locarno plan "acceptable," but some of its points would have to be clarified²⁸. Thus the

NKID was invited by Barthou and instructed by Stalin to solve the equation containing two unknown quantities. Possible consequences of either Polish counter-maneuvres or German refusal – both seemed to Litvinov most probable – were not easy to predict.

It was with mixed feelings that the Foreign Commissar met the French ambassador, Alphand, on May 7, for an exchange of information about recent developments in Soviet and French relations with Poland. Litvinov "did not conceal his satisfaction" over its improved atmosphere. His views on forthcoming security talks, however, might be summarized in Laroche's words to Davtian that "for this issue the Poles have definitely not ripened". Litvinov asked the ambassador to communicate to Paris "his live desire to have conversations on this topic" with Barthou²⁹.

The most important of their discussions took place at Mentona, on May 18, and was devoted mainly to the problem of Polish policy in the context of Eastern Locarno negotiations. Litvinov refrained from voicing objections to an invitation being extended to Germany. He asked Barthou whether he thought "that Poland would be disposed to accept this pact and also take a clear attitude". The only possible answer to both questions was to be negative. The French minister preferred to avoid it; instead he concluded his detailed account of the talks in Warsaw by a remark that, "en ce qui concerne les rapports de la Pologne avec vous, je n'as pas voulu aborder la question." Litvinov resumed his attack, enquiring if the Poles had been informed about Franco-Soviet security consultations. Barthou's reply was no less evasive. Unsatisfied by the reticence displayed by his interlocutor, Litvinov returned to his insinuations about a Polish-German collusion (this time he referred to "two sources", which had provided him with the "precise" information to this effect). If taken at face value, Litvinov's insistence should look the more absurd since the minister had informed him that the French considered those accusations unfounded at least twice – through Rosenberg and at the beginning of the discussion at Mentona³⁰. After Barthou had reiterated his conviction that any secret collaboration between Berlin and Warsaw was out of the question and their ties did not exceed what met his eye, the Foreign Commissar lost any visible interest in discussing the Polish theme.

Bargeton's minutes of the interview indicate that Litvinov tried to find out if the French scheme might be modified in view of anticipated "difficulties from the side of Poland". He either wanted to see the project redrawn in a way which would lead to exclusion of Poland and Germany from the new security pact, or else he wished to specify reciprocal Polish-Soviet obligations within the framework of the Eastern Locarno to make them acceptable both for Warsaw and Moscow³¹. His hands tied by the Politburo decision of May 3, which instructed the NKID to accept the French collective security plan, Litvinov could not put the issue plainly³². Barthou, however, did not fail to discern his colleague's in-

tentions³³. From this time on, the French minister on numerous occasions in negotiations with London, Berlin and Warsaw employed an argument about the compromise nature of the Eastern Locarno project. He formulated his main achievement in discussions with the Foreign Commissar in Switzerland as following: "la suggestion initiale du gouvernement de Moscou *tendait* à la conclusion d'accord exclusivement franco-soviétique ...j'ai pu rallier M. Litvinov à une conception limitative et strictement régionale..."³⁴.

Until the Litvinov-Barthou talks in Mentona, the Narkomindel did not recognize the French conception of the security agreement as an accomplished fact. Davtian, having handed his letters of introduction to the Polish government on April 13, lost no time in sounding out the tendencies of its policy towards the USSR. Although his half-hour conversation with the Marshal was devoid of political content³⁵, Davtian's courtesy visits to other Polish leaders offered him an opportunity to find out their reactions to the possibility of resuming Russo-Polish *rapprochement à deux*. In the conversation with the influential leader of the Non-Party Bloc Davtian expressed his belief that

"the most close cooperation between the Soviet Union and Poland would be quite natural and possible. I even intentionally used the expression "common front". Slawek, continuing to speak in the same tone of friendly benevolence, operated, however, with very vague expressions. [...] I failed to evoke any anti-German remarks from him"³⁶.

At a reception given by the Chief of the main Staff on May 4, the *polpred* was introduced to K. Fabrycy, the First Deputy Minister for War, and "slipped a remark, in return to a *réplique* from the General, that, it seems, there [had been] a project of more intimate contact between our and Polish military. The general shrunk and replied evasively that the Marshal had not given him any instructions"³⁷.

The caution which the majority of Davtian's interlocutors showed in those weeks was partly to be explained by gossip and press allegations about Russo-French security plans. Davtian was not only aware of the rumours circulated to this effect, but had been properly informed about such development before his departure from Moscow³⁸. Nevertheless, asked by Suster, an Italian correspondent and the President of the Union of Foreign Journalists in Warsaw, if Barthou had broached something of this kind to the Poles, Davtian "expressed surprise, having remarked that these rumours are hardly grounded and I [Davian] personally do not see any need for such an agreement"³⁹. He followed the same line in more consequential talks as well, as if to demonstrate that security negotiations between Moscow and Paris had nothing to do with the Soviet-Polish relationship, which must develop independently of France and on which the Soviet leadership in its search for security was pinning its main hopes. Davtian was satisfied when he managed to receive Beck's consent with his opinion

"that reinforcing peace in this [Eastern] region of Europe depends primarily on the USSR and Poland, and their joint efforts might have decisive influence in this regard"⁴⁰. This approach was even more explicit in Davtian's report of his talks with Lukaszewicz, held in Moscow, where the *polpred* had been summoned for consultations. The Polish ambassador

"alluded to the proposals, which France raises in regard to mutual actions in the field of international relations. It is quite natural that Poland with a certain prudence determines her attitude towards such proposals. France, by making them, risks nothing, while Poland, receiving them and if nothing would come of it [sic], deteriorates her position. [...] I remarked that we must rely mainly on ourselves. There is no doubt that only Polish-Soviet cooperation can guarantee peace in Eastern Europe. Here I [Davtian] recalled the words of Beck, who told me that Poland and the USSR, contrary to the expectations of Western Powers, had independently achieved *détente* in their relations. We ought to seek similar results in the future as well"⁴¹.

The ambassador made those bold statements as late as May 21, thus testifying that oral instructions which he got from the NKID around April 5-7, at the early stage of the Soviet-Polish negotiations about the prolongation of the non-aggression pact, remained in force until then. Most surprisingly, no instructions to Davtian to modify his statements about the Soviets' wish for exclusively bilateral cooperation with Poland were issued after the Politburo's endorsement of the Léger scheme for the Eastern Locarno. Set against the program of Soviet-Polish cooperation, which Litvinov had submitted for the Kremlin's approval before leaving for Geneva, and the language the ambassador was told to be held in Warsaw, the Foreign Commissar's efforts to sound out Barthou as to adjusting his ideas on the reorganization of European security meant an attempt to preserve relations with Poland, still relatively good, as a valuable asset for the Russian future in Europe. The Polish reaction to the Soviets' sounding out of prospects for further political cooperation was reserved, but not entirely discouraging.

Pilsudski's anxiety over the precariousness of Poland's position between her neighbors was revealed at a conference of the former premiers (attended also by the President, the Prime-Minister and the Foreign Minister) on March 7, and again at meeting of high military officials, with the participation of the Foreign Minister and his de-puty, on April 12. Although the Marshal, praising Colonel Beck, characterized the conjuncture which recent developments created for the country as exceptionally favorable, both meetings were dominated by the concern about and necessity for constant reassessments of Poland's position in view of the internal dynamics of the USSR and Germany. Pilsudski thought that Russia might become an immediate danger to Poland's independent existence sooner than Germany would. It is not clear what effect his belief in an early

Russian menace (with which most of the Army Inspectors disagreed) was to have on the making of the Polish foreign policy in the following months. Focusing the attention of his subordinates on the question of which of two great neighbors would first become an immediate threat, Pilsudski not only yielded to his usual temptation to introduce simplified military criteria into the estimation, but also forewarned the Polish élite against self-satisfaction. Sitting on two stools could not last for ever, was his message, watch and see⁴². The NKID was correct in its assessment that no political initiative in Soviet-Polish relations was likely to come from Warsaw.

Nor could such impetus come from the Kremlin. The details of Stalin's reaction to the letter from Litvinov of May 13, in which he argued for promoting Soviet-Polish cooperation in all spheres, are not known. Whether the Commissar's proposals were rejected outright or their implementation were made conditional upon Poland's stand on the Eastern Locarno, no decision to remove obstacles to bilateral cooperation were taken by the Soviet leadership in the following months.

Barthou's explicit deafness to the insistence that Litvinov displayed at the Mentona meeting meant the Eastern Locarno scheme was to be presented to the states concerned as the basis for discussion. The only serious concession the Foreign Commissar gained in his exchanges with the Frenchman was a promise that if the proposal were rejected by Germany, France would not resign from conclusion of a mutual assistance accord with the USSR⁴³.

After return to his Warsaw post in late May, the Soviet ambassador did not seek further exchanges about Soviet-Polish partnership in Eastern Europe. As the former instructions to this effect were cancelled, and Moscow committed itself to the support for the Eastern Locarno, the Soviet relations with Poland entered a new phase.

III

By the end of May 1934, L. Barthou and A. Léger, Secretary-General of the MAE, had acquainted the Poles with the Franco-Soviet agreement about the main elements of the proposal for Eastern Locarno⁴⁴. Coupled with the preliminary exchange on the subject between Barthou and Beck on June 4, those contacts provided a background for encounters the latter had with the Soviet Foreign Commissar. No information on the first two meetings, on May 29 and 31⁴⁵, is available. The same is largely true for a discussion they continued at a dinner for Litvinov and Stein at the Polish delegation in Geneva; a short note dictated by the Polish foreign minister to E. Raczynski remains the only source on this exchange.

Beck attributed importance to the fact that Litvinov had stressed the necessity for isolating Germany and Japan. This the Commissar saw as "the only method" to prevent a new war and the main goal of the steps he has been taking for the last year. Probably in order to make his point more convincing, Litvinov told Beck about his uneasiness over "Geneva methods". The Foreign Commissar stressed that the talks about mutual assistance between Paris and Moscow had started on the French initiative, and that he had "rejected Titulescu's project concerning guarantee agreement *à trois* — Poland, Romania, the Soviets". Thus the origins of the Eastern Locarno were described in a way that should have brought the Poles some satisfaction. Beck's only remark, which is clear from the record available, was his statement about "impossibility" for Poland to extend "any action in the Baltic to the state which does not maintain relations with her". Litvinov, signalling understanding for this attitude, "recalled, that he had already given Karski (the Soviet envoy to Kaunas) instructions to this effect"⁴⁶. It seemed as if Litvinov intended to invite Poland to bargain over terms for joining the Eastern pact. This approach implied too serious a change in the Soviet position to be received with sympathy in Moscow.

Its attitude had considerably hardened by the beginning of June. Stomoniakov, now the Second Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs⁴⁷, revealed this change in his letter to Davtian, dated June 4:

"The emergence of issues of our active cooperation with France and the League of Nations in strengthening peace on the agenda left Poland with no opportunity to continue her double game in regard to the USSR..., completely revealed Poland's hostile attitude to us and her bonds with Germany... Poland has conducted and is conducting an active struggle against our admission to the League of Nations, and also intrigues through French right-wing circles against France's active cooperation with the USSR. Poland is concerned, of course, not by the prestige of the League of Nations, about which Beck spoke on several occasions with great malevolence, but primarily by the fact that the USSR's belonging to the League of Nations would have created new... obstacles to realization of Pilsudski and Hitler's adventurous dreams in regard to the USSR."

Rejecting an assumption that there had been any major or sudden change in Poland's foreign policy during the last months, Stomoniakov stated bluntly that recent reports "just proved officially what had officially been hidden by her". He saw these conclusions as final and added to them his "confession": "I must recognize that, although I never had illusions about Poland's feelings to the USSR, the development of the Polish-German rapprochement has exceeded the worst prognosis, which I voiced in the period of the dispute with the comrades, who cultivated with us illusions concerning the Polish policy"⁴⁸.

The nature of Stomoniakov's lengthy letter indicates that those views had ultimately taken shape after Davtian's departure from Moscow on May 23. Nothing dramatic happened in the following days either in Warsaw or in Geneva. The Deputy Commissar supported the opinion expressed in his letter by referring to the Polish minister's speech before the General Committee and his conversation with Litvinov on the previous day, May 31. It is true that on June 1, 1934, J. Beck spoke against Litvinov's new proposal for transforming the decaying Disarmament Conference into a "permanent peace conference" as implying the reform of the League. This Soviet initiative, however, had not been supported by any delegation in Geneva. Nor was anything new or particularly annoying for the Soviets in the Polish minister's unenthusiastic reaction to the sensational attacks delivered by Barthou on procedural propositions put forward by Sir John Simon at the Disarmament Conference. Beck's stand in the debates at the General Commission might easily be explained as one more manifestation of Poland's desire to formulate her foreign policy herself⁴⁹.

Although Litvinov's telegraphic report on his conversation with the Polish minister is not available, it might be deduced from other sources that Beck appeared sceptical on the prospects for the Eastern Locarno and reserved Polish reply to the Franco-Russian proposals. He obviously had not rejected the idea outright; Litvinov did not consider their preliminary exchanges as having been completed, and the atmosphere at the dinner at the Polish delegation was friendly enough to let him speak freely to the Poles about Soviet intentions. It might well be that the NKID was disturbed by reports concerning Poland's reluctance to support Soviet entry to the League, but it certainly was receiving news which put Poland in a more favorable light. *Polpred* Alexandrovski wrote in those days from Prague that Beck "used all his influence in order to move Titulescu to immediate recognition of the USSR"⁵⁰. There was no apparent reason to spur a drawing up of new formula for Soviet policy towards Poland (Stomoniakov did not instruct the *polpred* to take any actions in Warsaw). The normal procedure was to wait until the return of Litvinov from Geneva and consultations with him. The only plausible explanation for the unusual "political letter to Warsaw" of June 4 seems to be the conclusion that this line was authorized by the Acting Foreign Commissar, N. Krestinski, who, being in close touch with the Kremlin during Litvinov's absence, was aware of its attitude at this particular time. Stomoniakov, therefore, had no reasons to wait for the arrival of his chief to acquaint the ambassador with the conclusions reached in Moscow higher echelons.

Although gossip about Pilsudski's hopes for federation with the Ukraine and Lithuania never ceased circulating in the NKID, since early June these alleged plans began to be interpreted as the basis of actual Polish policy and treated concurrently with Hitler's plans concerning the dismembering of the USSR. The NKID correspondence shows how quickly the short but impressive history of

the Polish-Soviet *rapprochement* was rewritten to suit a new canon. Even before Warsaw had received the official communication from the French government concerning Franco-Soviet security plans and the Eastern Locarno negotiations had started, Stomoniakov believed that "it could not be subjected to any doubts" that Germany and Poland "regard this plan extremely negatively and that they will do all in their power to put it down. From the point of view of Soviet-Polish relations these negotiations were of a certain negative service, namely, by unmasking the Polish policy in regard to the USSR completely"⁵¹.

Such an approach rendered further Soviet exchanges with the Poles about the Eastern Locarno useless in advance. Litvinov did not probably think so when, on June 14, on his way from Berlin to Moscow, he met Davtian for a brief interview. At this time he could not yet answer the question, which the *polpred* was forced to repeat in his telegram to the NKID a week later, "who [were] to conduct negotiations with the Poles, we or the French"⁵². The Foreign Commissar replied immediately, giving no motives: "I consider it appropriate to leave further negotiations with the Poles for the French and suggest that, for the time being, you do not speak with Beck on your initiative"⁵³.

Davtian understood this instruction as confining his activity to probing Poland's attitude unofficially in conversations with Schaetzel and Matuszewski. In early July, Beck invited the ambassador "to clarify an issue, which [was] unclear to him in connection with the proposal for a mutual assistance pact", i. e. Soviet intentions concerning the League of Nations. Davtian used this occasion to unfold arguments in favor of Polish participation in the Eastern pact. Reiterating the statement he made to the chief of the Eastern Department of the Foreign Ministry, Schaetzel, on June 26, the *polpred* went as far as to tell Beck that the conclusion of the pact would guarantee the existing Polish-German border⁵⁴.

From the beginning of June 1934, the Narkomindel and its head, engaged in vivid and intimate exchanges with Benes on the prospects of the Eastern Locarno, stood aside from the negotiations with Warsaw. Increased hostility of Stalin to maintain friendly, if not really close, relations with Poland virtually excluded seeking for a compromise with her in the field of security. Given the Kremlin's attitude, Litvinov might have come to the conclusion that browbeating the Poles would only do harm. Silence on the issue of the Eastern Locarno, while offering Warsaw little ground for complaint, would have been the best course for the time being. Since it was the French who had insisted on their scheme for security in Eastern Europe and who were Poland's allies, it looked even natural to wait until they would start the official discussion and make some sacrifices in readjusting their commitments to meet her wishes.

In addition, the Foreign Commissar probably found his tactical options restrained by opposing views among the Soviet leadership as to the desirability of German participation in the Eastern Locarno system. Having received assur-

ances from Barthou that Germany could not veto a mutual assistance agreement between France and the USSR, Litvinov did not try very hard to convince Neurath of the advantages of joining the Eastern pact and he evidently disliked an idea of entering into negotiations with the Germans⁵⁵. He openly revealed his thoughts to Bullitt, telling him that "he did not believe that Germany would consent to any Eastern Locarno agreement", but "there was no chance of any military alliance between the Soviet Union and France or [a pact] of mutual help outside an Eastern Locarno agreement"⁵⁶. It would have been easier to offer the Kremlin to display coolness before both Poland and Germany than to ask it to show preference for the former. The eventual German rejection of the scheme would also create a more favorable atmosphere for frank discussions with the Poles.

Whatever hopes the Narkomindel might have pinned on French ability to dispel Poland's objections and induce her to support the principle of an Eastern Locarno⁵⁷, Litvinov's thought went in another direction. At the end of June, the Soviet envoy to Prague called on E. Benes to inform him about the response from the Foreign Commissar to the opinion expressed earlier in their previous conversation, when, on June 15, the Czechoslovakian Foreign Minister told the *polpred* that he had serious doubts as to positive effects of the anticipated British *démarche* in Berlin and French representation in Warsaw concerning the Eastern Locarno would have on the chances for its realization. Benes thought the most appropriate method "to unite those interested within the framework of the 'Eastern pact'" must be the "creation of such an atmosphere and situation in Europe as to demonstrate convincingly the firm will of the main participants in the 'Eastern pact' to create necessary guarantees for their security despite those who stood in their way, even by means of their passive resistance"⁵⁸. Litvinov, the *polpred* told the minister, was glad to state "complete concurrence of our trends of thought and proposals in this field. Narkom Litvinov [had] with great satisfaction found out from my report that propositions of both Litvinov and Benes, concerning further endeavors towards realization of this task, appeared to identical"⁵⁹.

This tactic combined restraint in approaching Poland with security proposals, which was dictated both by the necessity to follow Stalin's wish to bring pressure to bear on her, with preparations for a close understanding among anti-revisionist states. The latter motive was evident as Litvinov spoke in the interview to a leading French journalist, J. Sauervain, which the Soviet press ran on June 29.

The following day brought the news of dramatic changes on the German political scene. Taken in context of the failure of Franco-Polish military talks in late June and the outcomes of Barthou's visit to London two weeks later, the Röhm-Schleicher purge had created a new situation for all states concerned but primarily for Poland.

IV

In retrospect, Poland's motives for opposition to the Eastern Locarno look clear. Following the pioneering works by T. Komarnicki and H. L. Roberts, studies in Poland's relations with the Great Powers revealed both deep concerns of her leaders and the tragic choice she faced in the mid-30s in an attempt to retain her hard-won independence. In a condensed form the reasons for Polish rejection of the Eastern pact were rationalized as follows⁶⁰. Its acceptance was to pave the way for increased Soviet influence in the East Central Europe and the Baltic region. Russia would have replaced Poland as France's principal ally in the East. Since Germany's consent to join the security system was improbable, by entering it Poland would have to rely on Russia and deprive herself of freedom of decision. The guarantees for Polish security which the Eastern pact could provide were largely illusory. Had Poland assumed obligations to allow the passage of troops through her territory, or were she to receive assistance from either Germany or the USSR, possible consequences would be incalculable.

Undoubtedly, those factors strongly influenced the Polish attitude to the plan for Eastern Locarno. One may ask, however, to what extent this reasoning influenced the decision-making, whether these deliberations dominated Pilsudski's thinking, at least, at the early stage of negotiations, in late May — early July 1934. Reliable evidence, pertaining to that particular period, is scarce; and many historians follow the example of J. Beck, whose memoirs by omitting the dates made one story out of his encounter with Barthou on 4 June and of the Polish note of 27 September⁶¹. Scarcity of sources prompts one to explain the reserve displayed by the Poles over Eastern Locarno as merely first signs of the negative tactic which Poland applied later to sabotage the negotiations.

Other solutions are also possible. Count Raczynski, the young and able Polish delegate to the League of Nations, who witnessed his minister's encounters with Barthou and Litvinov, remarked later: "Our decision was to depend on Belweder. Evidently, in June Beck had no instructions in this regard"⁶². Such a decision was not taken until early July. On June 25, Laroche presented the Polish foreign minister with a French text of the proposed security agreement. Responding to this *démarche*, Laroche reported to the Ministry, Beck explained that he needed to discuss it with the Marshal and "il demande donc quelque jours de délai avant de nous donner une reponse. *Il m'a assuré qu'elle définirait nettement l'attitude de la Pologne et a émis l'espoir qu'elle serait positive*"⁶³.

One of the reasons for Pilsudski's "initial hesitations"⁶⁴ probably arose from the fact that alliance with France remained of considerable importance for Polish foreign policy. The determination of the French government to seek for se-

curity cooperation with the USSR was by then an accomplished fact; and outright rejection of such plans to this effect might have only make the situation worse for Poland. Meanwhile, tacitly established linkage between Eastern Locarno talks and readjustment of the Franco-Polish military convention could promise Poland some material profits. The Marshal's flat refusal to mix military and civil matters in negotiations with France meant in practice little more than that any discussion about reducing Franco-Polish military arrangements to those applicable exclusively to operations against Germany was to be out of the question. That was exactly what the French wished to achieve in forthcoming military talks. But having stated his position to Barthou in April 1934, Pilsudski had some reasons to hope that France would withdraw from diluting her obligations to Poland in the case of Russian attack, and that forthcoming military negotiations might result in strengthening the alliance. After his visit to Poland, Barthou on several occasions, including the speech before the Chamber of Deputies, emphasized the "grandeur and the national force of Poland", and admitted that France had been too arrogant to her. The news that General Debeney, the former chief of the General Staff, would represent France in the negotiations must have created favorable impressions in Warsaw. If Pilsudski hoped that France would reaffirm in a practical way that she continued to regard the alliance with Poland as of primary importance, his expectations were betrayed. Debeney was not to enter negotiations; the proposals he brought "in reality constituted an interpretation of the treaty itself". The only outcome of his conversations with Pilsudski was that the latter lost "the remaining illusions about the object of Barthou's trip and about the foreign policy of the Doumergue cabinet". The timing of the French military mission would have been excellent (Debeney met Pilsudski on 25 June), if it were not for the modifications he offered to discuss. For the indignant Poles, Debeney's mission made the Eastern Locarno dilemma more painful and a positive response to it even less attractive. Since France had preferred a new friendship to the old one, Warsaw had little to lose by opposing her schemes⁶⁵.

The reply delivered by Beck to the French on July 5, was cool and non-committal⁶⁶. Six weeks after the decisive Litvinov-Barthou interview, the prospects for Eastern Locarno looked gloomy. Mussolini was averse to the proposal, and the NKID believed that the Eastern pact "would hardly be likely to be pleasing" to the British cabinet⁶⁷.

The results of French-British colloquies in London, July 9-10, surpassed all expectations⁶⁸. The British ministers showed understanding for France's security concerns and her campaign to return Russia to Europe. The only important British objection to the mutual assistance scheme was the lack of reciprocity envisaged in the guarantee convention. To make a real "second Locarno" of it, France and the USSR were to extend their mutual guarantees to Germany. Such provisions were secretly agreed to by Moscow and Paris in advance⁶⁹, and

Barthou promptly handed Simon this seemingly empty concession. The joint *communiqué* declared that

"1. In the view of the French government, Russia ought to be prepared to give to Germany as well to France the same guarantees against non-provoked aggression as those which she would be bound to give if she were a signatory of the Treaty of Locarno.

2. In regard to the proposed Eastern Pact, France would be prepared to give the same guarantees to both Germany and Russia".

After provoking a small controversy with Simon over the exact terms in which the connection between security and "equality of rights" issues was to be fixed, Barthou achieved a formula which was very much in accordance with his unpublicized hopes for eventual Franco-German reconciliation⁷⁰. Both governments agreed that

"the conclusion of such a pact [Eastern Pact] and Germany's participation in the system of reciprocal guarantees now contemplated would afford the best ground for the resumption of negotiations for the conclusion of a convention such as would provide in the matters of armaments for a reasonable application of the principle of German equality of rights in a régime of security for all nations"⁷¹.

Neither side hid their joy over the agreement, which seemed to restore Anglo-French *entente* by reconciling traditional differences between British preoccupation with armaments control and France's search for additional security⁷². The British government greeted eventual Soviet entry to the League of Nations and promised to recommend Eastern Locarno to Germany and Poland. On its own initiative the Foreign Office also made strong representations to this effect in the Baltic capitals and in Rome. Britain's enthusiasm over the newly found remedy for a major European problem forced Mussolini to reverse the Italian position momentarily and declare his sympathy for modified proposals for the Locarno of the East. Supported by the Little Entente, both guarantors of the Rheinland pact, thus, joined Franco-Soviet front⁷³.

This sudden change in the diplomatic situation filled the Soviet Foreign Ministry with optimism. British public support for the Eastern pact was of "colossal significance", Litvinov wrote to the Soviet ambassador in London⁷⁴. Soviet diplomats were aware that Beck had previously told the British about his scepticism over Franco-Soviet proposals; this fact made Ambassador Erskine's *démarche* in favor of Eastern Locarno even more valuable in the eyes of Moscow. Stomoniakov believed that Britain enjoyed "considerable influence in Warsaw"⁷⁵. On July 13, the day the British views were declared by the Foreign Secretary in the House of Commons and a day after Sir William Erskine had communicated them to Beck, Davtian informed the Narkomindel: "Today's edi-

torial of the *Kurier Poranny* with praise for the mutual assistance pact represents a decisive turn from the Polish position in the past [...] Thus, England's favorable attitude already, it seems, had an influence on Warsaw"⁷⁶. In a note, prepared for Stomoniakov few days later, E. Konits stated:

"C. Davtian in his letter expressed an opinion that if England really put pressure on Poland, the latter, having raised some conditions aimed at making the content of this treaty insipid, would nevertheless agree to join it. This judgment of C. Davtian seemed correct and his prognosis probable.

Nevertheless, the contrary happens. Despite all expectations, Poland after the *démarche* of the English ambassador not only has not changed her negative attitude to Eastern Locarno, but with [the publication of] the article in *Gazeta Polska* [of July 14, which thoroughly criticized this plan] has dotted all the i's"⁷⁷.

This description of the change in the Polish position in mid-July seems to be perfectly correct. Subsequent events proved that the Polish attitude toward Eastern Locarno had ultimately been defined immediately after and in direct connection with the proclamations of British support for it. The Polish views remained basically the same until the project was buried in April 1935.

Pondering over this paradox, Konits concluded the deliberations over Warsaw's motives: "At present it is difficult to say if the attitude of Poland on this issue results only from pathological stubbornness of the old man Pilsudski or whether there are other factors at play"⁷⁸. The Deputy Commissar was disposed to accept the most simple explanations; he did not believe that the Marshal was "going to sacrifice Beck" for "all his policy is clearly that of a gravely ill person, obsessed with absurd ideas"⁷⁹. The inability of B. Stomoniakov and N. Krestinski (which they, actually, shared with R. Vansittart, A. Léger, and F. Suvich, their opposite numbers in Britain, France, and Italy) to penetrate into deeper Polish motives in regard to the proposed security schemes and Pilsudski's foreign policy in general, was further evident in their beliefs that combined Western pressure, championed now by Great Britain, would bring a positive change in Warsaw and pave the way for bargaining with her⁸⁰.

Reasons for Pilsudski's decision to decline British requests could be found in a significantly new international and legal context, to which the Anglo-French agreement contributed heavily. For the first time a link was officially established between the destiny of the proposed security pacts and negotiations on German rearmament. Pilsudski's recent prophesy — "you will yield, gentlemen, you will yield" — was becoming reality sooner than one might have expected. J. Beck "made no comment" to W. Erskine "on the proposal in connection with German rearmament", but the *démarche* of the British ambassador left him in a state of "undisguised surprise". No assurances on the part of J. Laroche made him believe that Barthou had not sold the Eastern Locarno to the British for

consent to resume talks on legalization of German armaments⁸¹. Beck immediately sent instructions for the Polish *chargé d'affaires* to call on the NKID, probably to sound out the Soviet attitude in this matter. On July 15, Henryk Sokolnicki approached the Second Deputy Commissar with a request to inform the Polish Foreign Ministry about the London negotiations since Erskine's clarifications were not explicit. He asked then, Stomoniakov recorded,

"what our [Soviet] position would be in regard to rearmament of Germany, if France conceded to it. I [Stomoniakov] said that our old position in this issue is well-known, it had not been reconsidered anew because there had been no particular reason for such reexamination"⁸².

This forthright admission that this issue was still open could not help but stir Polish suspicion and increase anxiety as to where the Soviets stood. Despite Litvinov's eloquent speeches in Geneva, no official statement had defined the new Soviet position in this regard. The Soviet press expressed concern over territorial revisionism, but remained markedly non-committal as to the fifth chapter of the Versailles treaty⁸³. In previous confidential exchanges with Poles the Narkomindel did not dare to go beyond consent to hold consultations between the two delegations at the disarmament conference. By the summer of 1934 Poland felt increasingly isolated there, her position of rejecting massive German rearmament was becoming an anachronism in the eyes of most other participants⁸⁴.

Thus, the Polish enquiry about the Soviet attitude towards this problem reflected both the permanent interest in arresting the process of restoring the German military might and the concerns over the implications for Anglo-French agreement. The last formula of the London *communiqué* concerning Germany's equality of rights ominously resembled the declaration of December 11, 1932, was soon followed by the Four-Power Pact and renewed efforts to flatter the Germans. At that time Poland had found valuable insurance in the Soviet hostility towards the Western Powers' plans to settle disputes among themselves. Now the reply the Second Deputy Commissar gave to Sokolnicki left the question of Soviet reaction to a possibility of rearmament discussions in the context of the Eastern Locarno talks open. The desire to isolate Germany, voiced by Litvinov, seemed to find little support in Moscow. Had the Polish Foreign Ministry had after July 13-15 any illusions that the security negotiations might be kept apart from legalization of German rearmament, they were definitely dispelled by clarifications (provided to Polish diplomats by E. Drummond in Rome and R. Wigram in London⁸⁵) of the London *communiqué* and the basic British approach to achieve both aims.

Another aspect of the Franco-British agreement, which was to fortify Polish reluctance to bless the idea of Eastern Locarno and join the Eastern pact, was the modification of the text of a guarantee convention. By July 16, the Soviet

leaders agreed to change its provisions in the spirit of "reciprocity of obligations"⁸⁶. Half-deceived by Poland's anxiety to prevent deterioration in her relations with Germany which could result from talks on the proposed Eastern pact, French and British diplomats piously presented the modified scheme of the convention as a step towards meeting Polish wishes. Responding to these *démarches* Warsaw broke the silence it maintained hitherto on the issue of troops passage through Polish territory.

The conception of the Eastern pact left it to Poland to decide if and when an aggression were committed against her, whether to ask a party to the pact to give assistance and what sort of help was to be provided. The situation would change had her great neighbors been at war with each other. "Do you see a German-Russian war and the Russian troops demanding a passage through our territories?" Szembek asked Laroche in the mid-July. However, it was obvious that, having no common frontier, neither Germany nor Russia could really attack each other through either the narrow Baltic corridor or Czechoslovakia. Indeed, it was the Poles themselves who pointed out not once that as long as Poland remained neutral, as she wished to do, such a war is completely unimaginable⁸⁷. So the French might allow themselves to keep silence on the last point and laugh away Polish fears. On August 1, Alexis Léger instructed the French ambassador in Warsaw:

"To the objection that in event of a German aggression on Poland, it would be dangerous for Poland to be overrun by Russian troops coming to her assistance the answer was to be that Poland might be very glad of such assistance, despite its dangerous character and that in any case she was not obliged to apply for it, though Russia would be bound to give it if she did. It was like having an account at a bank on which a cheque can be drawn or not at will. Even if a cheque were not drawn in the form of troops, it would be of great advantage to Poland to be able to draw one in the form of military supplies, particularly aviation material. Further it would be of advantage to Poland if France were able to furnish her with supplies through Russia in circumstances in which she were debarred from sending them through Germany"⁸⁸.

The Poles did not need to be persuaded of the values of a limited Soviet co-operation had they been subjected to German attack; from the Radek-Miedziński conversations in July 1933 to the Beck-Sharonov exchanges in the early September 1939 they probably never lost sight of this value. What Szembek and his superiors really had in mind was a possibility of military conflict in the West which through the mechanisms of Franco-Soviet convention might inflame Eastern Europe as well. Such a war could arise from a German attempt to tear away the provisions of Versailles and Locarno, for example, for demilitarization of the Rheinland. The original version of the Eastern Locarno envisaged Soviet interference in a war against Germany on France's side and on her re-

quest. In such a case, France, vitally interested in the maintenance of Polish independence, could impose necessary limitations on alleged attempts of her potentially "impatient" ally to move troops through Poland. Poland was entitled by the Franco-Polish treaty to demand that a guarantee convention must not be contrary "either to text and letter of the Treaty or to Polish interests"⁸⁹. London modifications to a guarantee convention implied a more dangerous eventuality. Now in a hypothetical case of Franco-German conflagration it was to the USSR, especially if the Council of the League debates would be protracted, to decide who was right or wrong. It might well be that French reprisals against violations of the Versailles would be considered in Moscow a good pretext for attacking Poland in order to fulfill its obligations to Germany. In 1934 this scenario was, perhaps, more probable than any other one⁹⁰.

In the summer of 1934, no responsible European politician dismissed the possibility of a new Soviet-German *rapprochement*. It was the solution the Italians worked for, the Frenchmen intimidated their partners with, the British were inclined to believe in, and Litvinov used in his diplomatic game not without success, while the Poles watched the developments vigilantly. In late April, Pilsudski forewarned Barthou against relying on Russia: "Il ne croit pas que les dirigeants soviétique aient une ligne de politique étrangère très ferme et dit que Rapallo n'est pas encore si éloigné"⁹¹. J. Beck, however, throughout the spring had refrained from supporting this opinion⁹². In conversation with Laroche on 25 June, "le ministre a insisté sur la antagonisme de plus en plus grand qui se manifeste entre Berlin et Moscou"⁹³. It was in mid-July that Deputy Foreign Minister made an allusion to Laroche that realization of the plans for Eastern Locarno might have led to a new Rapallo; some days later, on July 22, Beck, reiterating Pilsudski's previous remarks almost to a word, told the French ambassador that he was not convinced of the stability of the policy of Russia, which had in the not too distant past aligned itself with Germany against Poland⁹⁴. This shift in emphasis was undoubtedly connected with the events of June 30, which restored the Russo-German alliance "to the realm of practical politics"⁹⁵.

This development was generally believed to be combined with the Reichwehr becoming the real master of Germany and the "Prussian spirit" dominating her political scene again. Speaking before the presidium of the Society for cultural and political rapprochement between the CSR and the USSR on June 30, Benes admitted a possibility of a "regress" in Soviet foreign policy, "had the menace from the Far East suddenly decreased or had Germany come closer to France. Here Benes foresaw a military dictatorship in Germany, which would make concessions to France's demands"⁹⁶. This very day the growing tensions between the new Nazi establishment, supported by the Reichwehr, and the paramilitary formations of the party were solved by Hitler's decision to carry out a preventive elimination of the SA leadership. The military heads accepted the murders of Generals Schleicher and Bredow as a small price to be paid for

averting dangers of a "Second revolution" and for destroying its rivals. The key role the military played in the preparations for the bloody purge was apparent, and to most contemporary observers the Reichwehr seemed to be the main winner. Integration of the German army into the National Socialist regime was underestimated and the whole phenomenon of the Fuhrer state was perceived in old categories; it seemed "to be generally conceded that the events of June 30 have much increased the Reichwehr power"⁹⁷. It was also generally held view that C. Krofta, Czechoslovakian Deputy Foreign Minister, expressed to Alexandrovski on July 3: "the Poles concluded their January agreement exactly with that Germany of Hitler, which has burst on June 30. The Germany of the Reichswehr is no partner for the Poland of Pilsudski"⁹⁸.

Soviet diplomats were well aware about Polish sensitivity to the danger of such reversal in the German policy. Speaking to Beck in early July, Davtian played on Polish worries. The ambassador "cautiously insinuated" that recent events "might bring changes also for the German government's foreign policy[...] It seems the real control over the country is exercised by the Reichwehr and the circles behind Papen". Beck retorted that "the situation is clear yet", but, to Davtian's satisfaction, could not conceal his anxiety. The Foreign Minister could not help but notice a new note in the Soviets' explanations for their basic attitude to security plans for Eastern Europe. The ambassador further "clarified that we always considered the pact as that with German participation and we are alien to that "policy of encirclement [of Germany]", which some German newspapers tendentiously ascribe to the initiators of the pact"⁹⁹. This statement was neither correct (and Davtian knew that¹⁰⁰), nor — what mattered most — was it in accordance with the outline of the Soviet policy, which Litvinov offered in an interview to J. Sauerwein of the *Paris-Soir* in the end of June. The Commissar, after paying lip-service to the distinction between military alliances and pacts of mutual assistance, characterized the latter as follows:

"Having equal rights and duties and an equal measure of security, no signatory of such a pact should consider itself encircled or subject to any danger if it shares the other signatories' desire for peace. Of course, it is different when one State, anxious to have its hands free, deliberately refuses to participate in the proposed regional pact; *but in this case it has no right to complain of encirclement, if by its own desire, a pact is concluded without it*"¹⁰¹.

Davtian played on fears of Soviet-German collaboration apparently on his own initiative. But did the difference between Litvinov's statement and his remark suggest a real change in Soviet policy in Central Europe? Until W. Krivitski's narrative of the Politburo meeting, which allegedly considered the probable consequences of the Röhm purge and its effects upon the USSR and decided to seek a *rapprochement* with the internally consolidated Hitler regime, would be confirmed or denounced by authentic sources, one could hardly offer a final

judgement on this issue¹⁰². Soviet anticipations for a reshuffle in Germany to have influence on her foreign policy were, however, almost common knowledge in diplomatic circles, if only for the reason they were transparent from the Soviet press comments¹⁰³. Until August, Beck did not believe that the Soviet lead-

ers were disposed to align with the League of Nations¹⁰⁴. Polish leaders had also to draw conclusions from the rumors begun by the German Foreign Ministry about impending changes in its approach to the USSR.

According to reports the NKID received in the beginning of August from Berlin and Prague, Bülow, Köpke and Meyer¹⁰⁵ during their encounters with envoys of the smaller Central East European states tried to create "the impression that in the nearest future there will be radical improvement in the German-Soviet relations". The head of the Second Western department of the NKID D. Stern forewarned S. Alexandrovski that German diplomats were at pains to prove the seriousness by referring to the Soviet-German negotiations about the Reichsbank credit of 200 mln Rm. Other reports indicated "that Germany will make an attempt to oppose the Eastern Pact by a project for a narrow pact, without Czechoslovakia"¹⁰⁶. On August 4, visiting the German Embassy to convey official condolences on the death of Hindenburg, Counsellor Podolski met there his opposite number von Scheliha. A German patriot, who actively worked for the Soviet military intelligence, he intimated to Podolski that "he is awaiting from the Government changes in its course in regard to the USSR. It is quite probable that the German government itself will make a proposal to the USSR of such character, which guarantees its security without participation of and help from France"¹⁰⁷. A week later Davtian reported to the NKID the rumours circulating among diplomatic corpse in Warsaw that since the political influence of the Reichswehr had increased considerably Germany was inclined to come out with her own Eastern pact plan¹⁰⁸.

It is difficult to say to what degree Warsaw had knowledge of the forces at work for Soviet-German *détente*, but how far its suspicions went is evident from an approach of a member of the Polish Embassy in Moscow to his American colleague:

"The Polish official... manifested great curiosity to learn if the American Embassy had any information with regard to conversations being carried on at present between the Reichswehr and the Soviet authorities. He explained that there was a strong movement against Litvinov and Litvinov's policy within the Communist Party. It was felt that the *rapprochement* with France was going too far, that the Soviet Union was being drawn into the French orbit in order to satisfy the Semitic vengefulness of Mr. Litvinov and his associates, all Jewish in the Narkomindel"¹⁰⁹.

What Poland must do to prevent a development mortally inimical to her very existence depended largely on the answer to the question: on what basis could an agreement between Berlin and Moscow be worked out? Both British and French statesmen and diplomats believed that the best method, the only one indeed under given circumstances, to neutralize this danger consisted in dragging the Soviets into cooperation with the West and the League of Nations by ad-

vancing the Eastern Locarno¹¹⁰. Mussolini supported an idea for Eastern Locarno mainly because its realization promised to bring *détente* in Soviet-German relations and diminish the significance of the Polish-German declaration of January 26, which threatened Italian ambitions in Central and South Eastern Europe¹¹¹. Although pursuing the opposite goals, Poland shared the Italian view about favorable effects the Eastern Locarno should have on easing Soviet fears of Germany and Soviet-German relations in general. This opinion was explicitly presented by Berson (Otmár) in the *Gazeta Polska* later that year. This mouthpiece of the Polish government opined that

"considerable improvement of the Soviet-German relations might have come within the framework of the proposed "eastern pact" which certain French factors reinforce... out of fear for this improvement".

The Polish correspondent in Moscow then broke the story about a trip to the Soviet capital of "a known emissary of the Foreign department of the National-Socialist party". He apparently referred to Oberlander, a young professor of the Eastern Institute in Königsberg and a trusted friend of East Prussian *gauleiter* Erich Koch. Oberlander, who shared the latter's belief in furthering friendly relations with Russia, met Radek and Bukharin in the outskirts of Moscow in the late August¹¹². No names were mentioned in Berson's correspondence; a German representative spoke with "the very influential, though unofficial, factors about improvement in relations between Berlin and Moscow. *Representatives of the latter made further negotiations conditional upon... German entry to the "eastern pact". Gazeta Polska concluded: "Therefore, it is on this basis that actual "restoration of Rapallo" could be achieved, because both sides would put away many of their existing fears of each other"*¹¹³.

This was the crux of the matter as far Poland was concerned. These considerations more than anything else had contributed to Poland's opposition to the proposed security system, which she consistently maintained from July 1934 on. Poland adopted "a policy of 'containment' towards the USSR as the best deterrent to Soviet-German cooperation"¹¹⁴.

V

Whatever responsibility France and Britain took for sponsoring the Eastern pact, Soviet diplomatic activity was of no little importance, especially from the Polish point of view. At a crucial moment of preliminary negotiations, on July 14, the Polish Government party organ appealed to Moscow to let its position be known and clarified:

"Poland, as usual, does not wish to decline to participate in a project the aim of which is to guarantee enduring peace. But the necessity for a thorough in-

vestigation of the proposal is as evident as is the fact that at present not all the points on which it is necessary to base Poland's decision are entirely clear. The position of Germany is not yet clear; *we do not yet know the attitude of Russia*, and we are not yet aware why Rumania has been omitted"¹¹⁵.

The Soviets reaction came two days later with leading articles in *Pravda* and *Izvestia*. After informing of Moscow's acceptance of the British reservations to the guarantee convention and dealing with German demands for "equality of rights" in a superficial manner, *Pravda's* editorial turned to Poland:

"But there are other claimants to objections against the draft of a East European pact. It cannot be said that these objections are in any way better grounded than the first. These critics to whom we refer, who do not formulate their objections openly, nevertheless make it sufficiently clear that their agreement to the draft of an East European pact depends upon the acceptance of a number of conditions that concern prestige, *which have no direct bearing on the East European pact* [italics in the original]"¹¹⁶.

The tone of Carl Radek in *Izvestia* was notably more friendly. He expressed hopes that "the political common sense of Colonel Beck would prevent Poland from procrastination and from imposing impossible conditions which would be equivalent to a negative answer"¹¹⁷. Which Polish conditions Russia considered impossible to discuss remained obscure. Moscow declined to clarify this problem through direct talks with Warsaw, which the NKID considered being "apparently worthless in view of the present position of Poland"¹¹⁸. In the encounters with Davtian, following the exchange of press articles, the Polish foreign minister (July 21) and his deputy (July 17) listed the arguments, which by this time were common knowledge among diplomats in Warsaw, about the necessity of further examination of the plan and the objections concerning Polish participation in a pact together with Czechoslovakia and Lithuania. "Beck dwelt upon the defects of the pact in different ways, in fact finding no positive argument in favor of it"¹¹⁹. If the minister regarded his expose as a prelude to business-like discussions, he must have been disappointed. In the following weeks Davtian avoided any talks with officials of the MSZ. When they met again on September 4, "Beck did not say a word about the pact, and I [Davtian], of course, also did not touch this question either"¹²⁰.

Informed observers found it difficult to explain the Soviet refusal to continue diplomatic discussions with Poland about the proposed security pacts. The Soviet Union should not have entrusted France with negotiating the Eastern pact in Warsaw, the Estonian *chargé d'affaires* Schmit persuaded Podolski in August, because of the rapid deterioration in Franco-Polish relations "these negotiations only make the Poles nervous". They are "offended that the USSR does not want to discuss questions of grand policy with them"¹²¹. Steadily Davtian was coming to similar conclusions. A year later he wrote the NKID:

"The Poles were very offended (and angry) not only because of the substance of the Eastern pact project itself, but also because the negotiations with them were conducted through Frenchmen and we did not discuss the issue directly with them. There was, of course, an intention to separate us from the French, but there was also a feeling of insult for maltreatment, as it seemed to them, from our part"¹²².

Extreme reserve of the Soviet diplomacy *vis-à-vis* Poland in July and early August, until vacations brought diplomatic activity to a halt, resulted from Moscow's general deliberations over the problem of which line to follow in the Eastern Locarno matter. After the Anglo-French conversations of early July, the great powers, which declared their support for the revised security plan faced a choice between two options.

The first course consisted in taking Germany's argument about her disarmed position as the main obstacle to participation in an Eastern mutual assistance pact seriously, and trying to work out a compromise with Berlin. This approach constituted a natural continuation of the policies embodied in the declaration signed by representatives of Great Britain, France, Italy, the United States and Germany in December 1932. By the middle of July, all Western powers clearly demonstrated that they were anxious to resume negotiations with Germany on the basis of granting her concessions in the field of armaments in return for an agreement to participate in additional security guarantees¹²³. It led to presenting Germany both the dangers of eventual Franco-Soviet alliance, had the wider security plan failed, and the advantages of accepting the proposals for Eastern Locarno¹²⁴. Adherence to this strategy meant no additional guarantee to Poland against German aggression should be contemplated or discussed with her. In fact, the logical consequences of the Western approach, championed by Britain, were to give Germany a preferential treatment in order to induce her join the Eastern pact. Poland, facing eventual isolation, would have to bend to the combined pressures and to retreat from most of her objections to the new security arrangements.

There was another option, which the Soviets might have favoured. Instead of following the West, Moscow could have tried to bring pressure to bear on Germany, while flattering the Poles into agreement. The Soviet Union could have offered Poland to return to their agendas of 1933: no legalization of German rearmament, firm Soviet opposition to any revision of the western frontiers of Poland, coordination of their policies in the Baltic region, Soviet withdrawal from support for Kaunas and forcing it to recognize the existing Polish-Lithuanian frontier, non interference in each other's domestic affairs. Had Warsaw received material compensations for a decline in her status in Eastern Europe, effective guarantees against a revision of her frontiers as well as assurances in Soviet interest in cooperation with her on the basis of equality, her more favorable posi-

tion would have led to isolation of Germany and forcing the latter into the Eastern Locarno¹²⁵.

None of these scenarios was flawless, but the first one seemed to Moscow more realistic and promising. Litvinov charted his course between the two, but obviously preferred not to depart too far from the first method. In the conversation with Bullitt on July 20, the Foreign Commissar showed his satisfaction over the British and the Italian *démarches* in Berlin aimed to "advise the German Government in the strongest possible terms to accept the Eastern Locarno" and

"expressed the opinion that there was a good chance that Germany would accept after bargaining with the French calling for an increase of German armaments. He said he felt that the Poles also could not in the long run afford to stay out, that Polish-German flirtation was based on some sort of a gentlemen's understanding between Pilsudski and Hitler... Litvinov said Pilsudski had been greatly upset by the decrease in Hitler's power as he had based his policy of the past few months on the assumption that Hitler would control Germany for the foreseeable future"¹²⁶.

No longer did Litvinov wish to oppose plans for German participation in the Eastern Locarno. Always attractive, in the previous months it seemed to be a wishful thinking, the probable outcome of which would have been the suspension of further Franco-Soviet *rapprochement*. By the mid-July, Britain and Italy declared their support for the revised plan and Germany was expected to be less reluctant to discuss it. The same factors blocked the way to direct Franco-Soviet *rapprochement*. Moscow could no longer resist the temptation to see the Barthou-Simon plans becoming reality. Had the scheme had materialized, it would most probably have placed the Soviet Union in the key position *vis-à-vis* Germany. Any eventual German moves would have depended mainly on Soviet approval and Moscow would have held the balance in the Eastern Europe. All Soviet leaders, whatever divergences in their visions of the Soviet strategy in the future might have been, could not remain aloof to such perspectives. It seemed as if the Eastern Locarno mirage not only reunited Paris with Rome and London, but for some months brought reconciliation among the Moscow leadership.

The Eastern Locarno talks also promised to reconcile the USSR with the West on the condition the Russian policy would not run counter to Western efforts in Berlin. Resumption of Soviet-Polish exchanges concerning their mutual interests to keep Germany in check would have provided her with a good reason for an outright rejection of the scheme and might become disastrous for Soviet relations with the West. On the other hand, a mere consent to wait for results of the French, British and Italian *démarches* before the German government opened the League of Nations for the Soviets and made them a more respectable partner for

the three Western powers. In the first half of 1933, the USSR and Poland led the opposition to Western pact campaign because both had been left outside the club.

In the middle of 1934, Russia reentered it after almost twenty years of partly self-imposed humiliation. To demand full membership in the Great Powers' concert the Soviet Union had to give up, at least for the time being, the idea of undermining the fragile agreement of the West by a means of anti-German cooperation with Poland. It was the point where Stalin's pro-German sympathies met the sentiments of Litvinov, which he later expressed to Anthony Eden: "I wish you success. Your success will be our success"¹²⁷.

Soviet suspicions about Poland's alleged motives in seeking better relations with Germany, which the latter deliberately paraded in June having insisted on Goebbels semi-official trip to Warsaw, played a considerable role in spoiling the general atmosphere of Soviet-Polish contacts. But these misgivings seem to be of secondary importance for the decision-making in Moscow in the summer, at least, as far as the Narkomindel was concerned. Statements to the contrary, which Litvinov, Stomoniakov, Potemkin and other Soviet representatives made to foreign leaders and diplomats probably reflected less their true apprehensions or beliefs in the existence of a German-Polish secret plot than their desire to justify Soviet reluctance to negotiate with Warsaw and mobilize others to exert pressure on her. It was the line the Soviet press clung to as well, often quoting such allegations from the French newspapers¹²⁸. Openly expressed, Soviet fears concerning the direction of Polish policy might have been the result of the Moscow's political decision rather than the reason for arriving at it.

The attitudes adopted respectively by Poland and the USSR as to the Eastern Locarno negotiations could not help but lead to resuming their acute rivalry in the Baltic region. All four states of theregion had been invited to participate in the Eastern pact. There never were doubts as to Finland's negative attitude to it. The governments of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia reserved their replies and were waiting for further development. After French and unanticipated Bri-tish *démarches* in the Baltic capitals Litvinov thought that Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia would pose no problem in forthcoming negotiations, "when they realized that a pact could be concluded either with or without them"¹²⁹. The Polish leaders, in their turn, felt that discrepancy between Poland's position and those of Riga and Tallinn was a potential threat to her influence in the region. In late July, Beck went for an exchange visit to Estonia and appeared to have achieved complete success in persuading Selijamaa of the necessity of coordinating their positions towards the Eastern pact proposals¹³⁰.

Litvinov effectively countered Polish activity in the Baltic by arranging visits of Estonian and Lithuanian foreign ministers to Moscow only few days later. On July 29 Selijamaa and Bilmanis, the Latvian envoy in Moscow, signed identical declarations about the "favorable attitude" of their respective governments to the Eastern pact of mutual assistance, provided Poland and Germany would

participate¹³¹. That night the Foreign Commissar met Bullitt "in a state of triumphant delight at the defeat he had administered to Beck", while Lukaszewicz began a conversation with Radek with the remark, "I am interested to see clearly that the Soviet Union has now disinterested itself entirely in the maintenance of friendly relations with Poland"¹³².

Simultaneously Pilsudski and Beck renewed attempts to win Lithuanian consent to normalization of relations between Warsaw and Kaunas. The former Prime Minister, Colonel Prystor, and the Counsellor of the Polish Embassy in Paris, Muhlstein, were sent on an unofficial mission to the Lithuanian government. According to its foreign minister both Poles "were profuse in professions of friendship", but "every concrete proposition made to him was one which involved a greater or lesser infringement of the sovereignty of Lithuania"¹³³. "However, Prystor's talks with Smetona, the President of Lithuania, apparently led to a draft arrangement that would establish normal relations between the two countries"¹³⁴. Soviet overtures to Kaunas to state publicly its predisposition to the Eastern pact undoubtedly had made it easier for the Lithuanians to break off the informal talks with Polish emissaries¹³⁵. Minister Lozoraitis' visit to the USSR in early August was of particular importance for her relations with Poland. The Lithuanian pro-government press did not hide the fact that the foreign minister achieved in Moscow the goal of selling the Soviets his almost unconditional agreement to help the USSR to bring about the Eastern Locarno for the "stabilization" in the relations between Kaunas and Moscow. At the official reception for his guest Litvinov played down the significance of the Soviet-Polish final protocol of May 5 concerning the Vilno question and in fact acknowledged the Lithuanian rights in the territorial dispute over it. Upon concluding negotiations with the Foreign Commissar Lozoraitis told the American Ambassador that "he would base his policy in the future on the closest possible cooperation with the Soviet Union and that as long as he was sure of Soviet friendship he believed that Lithuania would be immune from German or Polish hostility"¹³⁶.

These manoeuvres and counter-manoevres were the almost inevitable outcome of the positions Poland and the USSR adopted in previous weeks in regard to the Eastern Locarno talks. Litvinov's triumphs over Beck further reduced chances of avoiding an open confrontation between the two states. Speculations in the German and French press, provoked by the latest Soviet moves, contributed to widening the gap between Poland and Russia on European issues.

The summer of 1934 was also inauspicious for the projects of the bilateral cooperation. Paradoxically the only one which was partly implemented related to the promotion of military contacts¹³⁷. During the spring, the Politburo several times reconsidered the March 27 decision to bring about the visit of the Soviet Air Force delegation in return for L. Rajski's trip to Moscow in November 1933. Poland's wish to see Soviet aviators at the traditional parade in Warsaw

on May 3, was refused along with the Narkomindel's opinion that the delegation must be headed by J. Alksnis, the Chief of the Air Force¹³⁸. By July 15, Stalin and Voroshilov agreed that, while Alksnis was to go to London, the Deputy Chief of the Red Army Staff S. Mezheninov should fly to Poland together with the Chief of the Air Force V. Khripin¹³⁹. The Soviet side displayed a similar intention to lower the ranks of its representatives in talks concerning preparation for the Baltic navy visits¹⁴⁰, about which the Politburo finally decided on July 15. Litvinov supposed "that since we have already decided to carry out the exchange of navy visits, we ought to receive from it the largest possible effect"¹⁴¹.

In the end of July, the Soviet air wing flew to Warsaw as the Commander of the Polish Navy, Unrug, and his officers were treated to banquets and tours in Leningrad and Moscow. Five weeks later three Soviet vessels arrived to Gdynia. The First Western Department of the NKID was satisfied with the reception the Polish authorities extended to Mezheninov and the Commander of the Baltic Fleet, Galler, as well as to their crews¹⁴². The atmosphere at official festivities in both countries was warm, but neither side experienced relaxation. Unrug and Lukasiewicz did not respond to references in Tukhachevski's speech to Gdynia and its importance for Poland¹⁴³; Soviet naval officers refrained from supporting Polish allusions to further military exchanges. Those of July—September proved to be the last gasp. The Soviet leaders decided in the summer against a trip of the Deputy War Commissar, M. Tukhachevski, to Poland and an invitation of General K. Fabrycy to the Soviet Union¹⁴⁴. When the Poles approached counsellor Podolski with this question again, Berezov and Konits passed to him the NKID's instruction to "sabotage it"¹⁴⁵.

The main motive for the Kremlin decision not to withdraw completely from the program of military exchanges might have been a desire to give some encouragement to the National-Democratic and Socialist opposition to Pilsudski's foreign policy. At the same time, some high officials in Moscow showed anxiety over poor results of the ruthless tactic Barthou and Litvinov applied to Poland. Radek expressed to Bullitt "the fear that Litvinov's triumph over Beck [in the Baltic] had been too dramatic and wounding and that wounded pride might lead Poland to hysterical opposition to the Eastern Locarno"¹⁴⁶. (This did not avert this remarkably flexible politician from formulating simultaneously the most pronounced threats to Poland, if she failed to side with the Eastern pact or opposed other "valid interests" of the Soviet Union¹⁴⁷). Later in August, at a private lunch with "a high official of the Soviet Government"¹⁴⁸, an American diplomat heard, "with regard to the proposed Eastern Pact, that the attitude of the French press had been unfortunate, had unduly wounded Polish *amour propre*". A Russian official then referred to *gaffes* committed by Laroche¹⁴⁹ and expressed an opinion that "it would be simple" for his successor

"to start *ab initio*, laugh away the present difficulties which existed between the two countries and greatly improve the prospects of Polish collaboration.

As things now stood, it looked as though Poland might sign an Eastern Locarno, but only for the purpose of 'sabotaging' it from within just the way France had 'sabotaged' the Four Power Pact, but if one made haste slowly and tactfully he was sure Poland could be brought into line"¹⁵⁰.

Whether or not these remarks revealed elements of self-criticism, Bullitt reasonably concluded that they basically departed from the official line and usual assessments; an informant, he wrote, "did not believe, therefore, that the eastern Pact would be 'railroaded through'"¹⁵¹.

As the turbulent summer wore on, little of the Soviet-Polish relationship survived. In the rising conflict between orientation on Poland as the Russia's most important partner in Eastern Europe, whose friendship was of key significance for a real Soviet-French rapprochement, and Soviet policy accommodation to the Western powers's approaches to European settlement, Moscow chose to side with the latter. The Litvinov strategy for "encirclement" of Germany turned out to result in the estrangement of Poland. Nevertheless, on both sides of the Bug¹⁵² not all hopes for a compromise and reconciliation had been abandoned.

Notes to chapter 6

1. For the most penetrating analyses of the origins and implications of "the Note of 17 April", see J.-B. Duroselle. *La Décadence*. P., 1979, 92-99; M. Vaïsse. *Op. cit.*, 567-568. Both prominent historians spoke about "délivrance" and "liberation". There is no convincing evidence concerning how the French note affected Pilsudski's policy. While M. Vaïsse suggests that it was "very well received in Poland" (*Op. cit.*, 575), R. Young doubts if "the April note had brought any satisfaction to Warsaw" (*In Command of France*, 66).
2. Léger's indulgent remarks in the conversation with Rosenberg, 24 April, 1934 (DVP: 17, 296).
3. R. Young. *Power and Pleasure*, 213-215.
4. DDF: 6, 133-135; N. Jordan. *The Popular Front and Central Europe: The Dilemma of French Impotence, 1918-1940*. Cambridge, 1992, 30.
5. DTJS: 1, No 61.
6. Ibid, 153. Cf. L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 35-36.
7. P. S. Wandycz *Op. cit.*, 347.
8. DVP: 17, 280.
9. DVP: 17, 277; DDF: 6, 306.
10. See St. Gregorowicz. *Op. cit.*, 188-189.

11. "Purport Lists of most important materials of the IV Department of the Staff of the RKKA", RGVA: 37977, inv. 5s, f. 335, p. 172.

12. IV Department report to Mezheninov, May 15, 1935, *ibid*, p. 168. The suspicions that this interview was arranged, allegedly near Danzig, might have originated from the proposal H. Rauschnig intimated to the Marshal on December 11, 1933. Pilsudski definitely refused to discuss this idea (DTJS: 1, No 45).

13. Since May 1934, the Foreign Department of the Main Administration of State Security of the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (INO GUGB NKVD).

14. He expressed to Bullitt his apprehensions "that Pilsudski had decided that Germany would become the strongest power on the continent and that it would be necessary for Poland to cooperate with Germany and not with France or the USSR. I replied that I was under the impression that Poland merely trying to retain complete liberty of action in order to rush to the rescue of the probable victor in any future conflict. He agreed that this was the basis of Poland's policy" (W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, May 9, 1934, SDNA: 760c. 6111/68).

No direct allegations concerning Pilsudski's commitments to Germany were, thus, made by Litvinov and the main stress was laid on the independence and unpredictability of Polish foreign policy.

In July 1934 Litvinov and Stomoniakov told the ambassador about their belief in the existence of a "gentleman's agreement" between Warsaw and Berlin. Asked "whether they had any evidence as to a meeting between Pilsudski and Hitler", "they both said they believed that such a meeting had taken place in the neighborhood of Danzig, but had no evidence to substantiate this belief [!]" (W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 23, 1934, SDNA: 761. 00/245).

15. When during the conversation with him on 20 February Lukasiewicz broached the theme of Warsaw's independence in her foreign affairs, Litvinov showed complete understanding. "Being under the impression of his talk with C. Litvinov", the envoy called on Stomoniakov, who later noted:

"Lukasiewicz was especially satisfied by the fact that C. Litvinov recalled that many years ago he had expressed the opinion to an authoritative conference that Poland must not be regarded as an appendix to France and the Pol[ish] gov[ernment] had its own interests and conducts its own policy. Not all were in agreement with that at that time" (AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 4, p. 48).

A couple of days later at a meeting with Antonov-Ovseenko in Moscow Lukasiewicz again "dwelt upon the theme that Poland even in 1920 did not wage a war of intervention, recalled that M. M. [Litvinov] had agreed with him in this point, having referred to his report (in 1924), in which he had developed the same theme" (*Ibid*, folder 168, f. 7, pp. 275-276).

16. DVP: 17, 277.

17. DDF: 6, 307.

18. DVP: 17, 297, 794.

19. *Ibid*, 306, 302.

20. Cf. St. Gregorowicz. *Op. cit.*, 188. On April 20, Litvinov reaffirmed to Alphand his belief that "la France et l'U.R.S.S. ont un intérêt commun majeur à leur bonne relations respectives avec la Pologne, conditions nécessaire au rapprochement désirable de nos pays" (DDF: 6, 307).

21. Stomoniakov's letter to Davtian, May 5, 1934, AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 2, p. 100).

22. DVP: 17, 297. For an abridged version of Rosenberg's report on this controversy, see *ibid*, 794.

23. *Nasz Przegląd*, 15. 04. 1934. These remarks deserve attention, for Antonov-Ovseenko was on friendly terms with its journalists, in particular, B. Singer.

Upon his return to the USSR, Antonov-Ovseenko applied for a military post, but refused a half-humiliating offer to serve as Deputy Chairman of the Soviet defence society, Osoaviakhim (L. I. Sidorovski. "Ostalsia bol'shevikom do poslednego dnia (O V. A. Antonove-Ovseenko), " in N. V. Popov (ed.). *Op. cit.*, 297). Appointed Procurator-General of the Russian Federation, since that time he was not able to influence Soviet relations with Poland.

24. AVP RF: 05, inv. 14, folder 100, f. 65, p. 10.

25. On Barthou visit to Poland, see: DDF: 6, Nos 133, 299; DIA, 1934, 306-307; DTJS: 1, Nos 63, 64; DVP: 170, No 154; J. Beck. *Op. cit.*, 53-56; P. S. Wandycz. *Op. cit.*, 341-350, 353-354; L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 39-41; R. Young. *In Command of France*, 66-67. Citations are from R. Young. *Op. cit.*, 67; J. Beck. *Op. cit.*, 56.

The enigmatic omission of the issue of Eastern Locarno during Barthou's visit continues to puzzle students of his policy (L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 41; R. Young. *Op. cit.*, 67).

26. DVP: 17, 795. On May 1, the Soviet *chargé d'affaires* wired Litvinov that in his last conversation with Barthou the latter, in fact, confirmed the previous communication (*Ibid*, 313).

27. Bargeton's note, 28. 4. 1934, DDF: 6, 376. See also DDF: 10, 487.

28. DVP: 17, 309-310, 312-313, 795. Hurriedly taken by the Politburo, this decision might have resulted both from fear of eventual isolation of the USSR if the preliminary negotiations with France were protracted further and satisfaction over an opportunity to play the German card.

29. DDF: 6, 436-437; AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 168, f. 7, p. 233.

30. DVP: 17, 313; DDF: 6, 498.

31. See also the paragraphs dealing with Poland in a *résumé* of the conversation between Litvinov and Gilles, a correspondent of the Havas agency, April 10, 1935 (DDF: 10, 291).

32. Judging by Litvinov's telegram of May 18 (DVP: 17, 340) and by the commentaries by the editors of the Soviet official publication (which quote from his dispatches of May 19 and 22), the Commissar reported home nothing about the discussion of the Polish problem at Mentona.

33. They could be detected at first from Alphand's dispatch, May 7, 1934. Litvinov expressed then the opinion that Poland wished good relations with France and the USSR, but she was unlikely to help their intimacy (DDF: 6, 437).

34. Barthou to Laroche, June 21, 1934 (DDF: 6, 749). There is no evidence that such suggestions were ever made except for Litvinov's utterances in Mentona. All diplomatic reports from published collections of the French, British and German documents as well as the Department of State records concerning the reorientation of the Soviet policy in 1933 mention multilateral character of plans for Soviet *rapprochement* with France (see, for example, Laroche's communication about Radek's propositions in July 1933 in DDF: 4, 60).

Baron Aloisi told his American colleague, at the Disarmament Conference "in strict confidence that he had reasons to believe" that among Litvinov's proposals at Geneva would be drafting of a pact of mutual assistance. "Apparently the scheme is to be worked out by special agreements binding Russia and the Baltic States on the one hand and France and the Little Entente on the other hand" (H. Wilson to the Secretary of State, May 16, 1934, FRUS, 1934, v. I, 64). The Italian representative probably based his communication on a report from Attolico. The omission of Poland from the project, which the Italians expected Litvinov would bring to Geneva, might have originated from a Narkomindel source, if not from the Commissar himself.

It is also extremely unlikely that centre-left politicians as Herriot, Paul-Boncour, Daladier, who had been engaged in the early discussions with the Soviets, were in touch with Barthou on the issue (see, for example, Barthou's request to Rosenberg to keep their negotiations secret from Herriot, DVP: 17, 312). Nor is there any evidence that permanent officials at Quai d'Orsay were in possession of information to this effect (cf. DDF: 3, 81).

In her analysis of the Mentona discussions L. Radice expresses the opinion that Litvinov "would probably have preferred a less complex proposal" than the Eastern Locarno (*Op. cit.*, 46). She supposes, however, that "Barthou's description of the early negotiations", as presented to the British, "was disingenuous" (*ibid*, 48).

35. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 168, f. 7, p. 217.

36. *Ibid*, pp. 216-217.

37. *Ibid*, p. 177.

38. See his enquiries at Laroche, April 27, 1934, whether *assistance mutuelle* had been discussed in the course of Barthou talks with the Poles (*Ibid*, p. 233).

39. *Ibid*, p. 174.

40. DVP: 17, No 165.

41. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 168, f. 7, p. 158-159.

42. DTJS: 1, No 62; J. Beck. *Op. cit.*, 56-60; K. Glabisz. "Laboratorium", *Niepodległość*, t. 6, 1958, 220-227; H. Bulhak. "W sprawie oceny strategicznego zagrożenia Polski z maja 1934 r.", *Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny*, No 4, 1970, 370-372; P. S. Wandycz. "Wypowiedzi Marszałka Piłsudskiego na konferencji byłych premierów 7 marca 1934", *Niepodległość*, t. 9, 1975, 345-350.

43. DDF: 6, 498. At his encounter with Litvinov on June 4, Barthou modified this assurance. He "promised to declare at least his personal opinion on the possibility of some sort of agreement between the U. S. S. R. and France in the event of refusal of Germany and Poland" ("The Struggle of the USSR for the Collective Security in Europe during 1933-1935", *International Affairs*, No 6, 1963, 113).

44. DTJS: 1, No 65; J. Jurkiewicz. *Pakt wschodni*. Warszawa, 1963, 139; P. S. Wandycz. *Op. cit.*, 358.

45. See AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 2, p. 92; *ibid*, folder 168, f. 12, p. 31.

46. DTJS: 1, No 67. According to Litvinov's interpretation of this episode later that year, he made "an allusion to a possibility of freeing Poland from an obligation in regard Lithuania" (DVP: 17, 618).

47. On May 10, the Politburo of the VKP(b) Central Committee passed a resolution on reorganization of the Narkomindel. Its Collegium was disbanded and the number of Litvinov's deputies reduced from four to two. Krestinski retained his position, Stomoniakov assumed the newly created post of the Second Deputy Commissar with responsibility for departmental matters concerning Poland, the Baltic and Scandinavian regions, the Far East and the Middle East. For the full text of the resolution, see RTsKhIDNI: 17, inv. 3, f. 945, p. 16.

48. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 2, p. 91-92.

49. J. Beck. *Przemówienia*, 118-119; W. Michowicz. *Genewska konferencja rozbrojeniowa 1932-1937 a dyplomacja polska*. Lodz, 1989, 361; W. E. Scott. *Op. cit.*, 170; F. P. Walters. *A History of the League of Nations*. In 2 vols. L., 1952. Vol. II, 552-553.

50. AVP RF: 0138, inv. 15, folder 122, f. 2, p. 313.

51. Stomoniakov to Davtian, 19. 6. 1934, AVP: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 2, p. 85. For more balanced opinion of the Soviet Embassy in Berlin, see W. Dodd to the Secretary of State, Berlin, June 20, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/4.

52. DVP: 17, 804.

53. *Ibid*, 404.

54. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 168, f. 7, p. 108; DVP: 17, 439. The NKID gave him no instructions to this effect. Disturbed by Davtian's cajoling the Poles by such arguments, Stomoniakov agreed with the proposal of his aide to explain to the *polpred*: "The conclusion of the [Eastern] pact leaves it to its participants to raise an issue about a revision of borders, in accordance with Art. 19 of the Covenant" (AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18,

folder 167a, f. 2, pp. 65, 50-51). It is unclear with what source did Davtian's idea of frontier guarantees under the eastern pact originate; he received the text of the French draft from Laroche on July 7 (Ibid, folder 168, f. 7, p. 97).

Tefvik Ruštu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, offered an interpretation of the Eastern Locarno provisions similar to the Davtian's assurances to the Poles, as he told Sir John Simon on 31 May that the Soviet-French proposals for an Eastern Pact envisaged "a general guarantee of the common frontiers between any two" of its future participants, Poland and Germany included (L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 55). Radice's remark that this version of the agreement was that of the Russians seems well-substantiated (ibid, 56); probably it was supplied to Tefvik Ruštu by Litvinov.

Davtian might have based his statements concerning possible guarantees for the Polish-German frontier on his conversation with Litvinov, June 14 (of which no records exist).

55. DVP: 17, No 197.

56. W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, tel., June 16, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011/3. For the brief account of Davtian, which accentuated the same points of the original approach of his chief, see J. Cudahy to the Secretary of State, Warsaw, Oct. 10, 1934, ibid/66.

57. DVP: 17, 393, 412-413. It is difficult to say what made Litvinov hopeful about French influence in Warsaw, despite innumerable proofs to the contrary prior to Barthou's visit there. There is a slight possibility that these hopes might have been founded on the confidential exchanges between Barthou and his Polish and Russian colleagues. After official receptions in Warsaw the French foreign minister, accompanied by Colonel Beck, went to Krakow by train. According to a Soviet military intelligence report, which referred to P. Dehillot, a correspondent of *Journal des Débats*, the most important conversation between Barthou and Beck had taken place in their car that night (RGVA: 37977, inv. 5s, f. 335, p. 164. Compare with Dehillot's correspondence, April 26, 1934, cited in P. S. Wandycz. *Op. cit.*, 354). Nothing so far is known about this conversation. L. Barthou told N. Davis that "he had discussed this project [Eastern Locarno] in his late visits to Warsaw and Prague" (N. Davis to the Secretary of State, May 26, 1934, FRUS, 1934, vol. 1, 72. American diplomats heard from a well-informed Polish official that Barthou had raised the issue before the Marshal (S. L. Crosby to the Secretary of State, Warsaw, Aug. 23, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/43). If there was any truth in these reports, Barthou might have gained the impression from a confidential meeting in the course of his visit that under specified conditions Poland would not be averse to accepting the Eastern Locarno plan and then shared them with Litvinov).

This hypothesis, though insufficiently substantiated, could help to explain some seemingly illogical episodes in the Franco-Polish-Russian diplomatic triangle and, in particular, the exaggerated Soviet hopes for successful French pressure in Warsaw.

58. DVP: 17, 392. See also P. S. Wandycz. *Op. cit.*, 361.

59. AVP RF: 0138, inv. 15, folder 122, f. 2, p. 405.

60. For the most authoritative accounts see: R. Debicki. *Op. cit.*, 83; P. S. Wandycz. *Op. cit.*, 363.
61. See J. Beck *Op. cit.*, 69-70. The unsigned memorandum, prepared by the section of International Treaties and Western Section of the Political department of the Polish Foreign Ministry, August 15, 1934, represents the first detailed record of Polish objections to the Eastern pact proposal and is cited extensively by many Polish authors (see, for example, M. J. Zacharias. *Op. cit.*, 158-160).
62. E. Raczyński. *Od Narcyza Kulikowskiego do Winstona Churchilla*. L., 1976, 80.
63. DDF: 6, 781.
64. W. Michowicz. *Op. cit.*, 368.
65. This paragraph is based mainly on P. S. Wandycz. *Op. cit.*, 353-356. See also paragraph IIc of the Polish memorandum of 15 August, 1934 (DTJS: 1, No 66), Stomoniakov's minutes on his conversation with Alphand, July 4, 1934 (DVP: 17, No 235), J. Ciałowicz. *Polsko-francuski sojusz wojskowy 1921-1939*. Warszawa, 1970, 203-204, P. le Goyet. *France-Pologne: de l'amitié romantique à la méfiance réciproque*. P., 1991, 129, M. J. Zacharias. *Op. cit.*, 149-150. Quotations are from J. Laroche. *Op. cit.*, 167; P. S. Wandycz. *Op. cit.*, 365. Piotr Wandycz also notes that by the end of June "Polish hopes for 'grand-scale' negotiations over economic issues, half-promised by Barthou were deceived" (*ibid*, 354).
66. DDF: 6, No 431.
67. "The Struggle of the USSR", 114. For Litvinov's bad expectations on the eve of Barthou's trip to London, see DVP: 17, 489.
68. For the London negotiations, see W. E. Scott. *Op. cit.*, 178-181; L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 72-75; O. N. Ken. *Velikobritania i evropeiskaia bezopasnost', 1933-1935*. (Cand. of Sc. thesis). Leningrad, 1990, ch. II (2).
69. DVP: 17, 310-311.
70. "From French sources it is reported that the larger plan is that France will recognize German rearmament as a further inducement to Germany to enter the Eastern Locarno and then return to the conference and the League of Nations on an equal footing and with equality of rights thus recognized", the head of the American delegation at the disarmament conference reported home in the early June (N. Davis to the Secretary of State, Geneva, tel., June 6, 1936, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/2). See also N. Davis to the Secretary of State, Geneva, May 31, June 2, 1934, SDNA: 500. A15A4 General Committee/937, 944. E. Benes, the closest French ally in Eastern Europe, was hopeful that the conclusion of the pacts would "make it possible for France and Germany to enter into direct negotiations with one another, which is necessary for a real understanding in Europe". An Eastern Locarno, he said to the American *chargé d'affaires* in Prague, "would give France sufficient security to permit her to accede to Germany's desire for equality in armaments, and make possible the latter's return to Geneva as well as the conclusion of a disarmament convention" (J. Webb Benton to the Secretary

of State, Prague, June 27, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/6).

71. DBFP: 6, 821-822.

72. FRUS: 1934, v. 1, 494; G. Tabois. *They Called Me Cassandra*. N. Y., 1942, 204; L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 75.

73. See O. N. Ken. "Velikobritaniia i Vostochnoye Locarno (leto 1934)," in V. K. Fouraev (ed.). *Mezhdunarodnye otnoshenia nakanune vtoroi mirovoi voiny*. St. Petersburg, 1993, 20-21; V. I. Mikhailenko. "Proekt Vostochnogo pakta i pozitsia Italii" in *Politika velikikh derzhav na Balkanakh i Blizhnem Vostoke v noveishee vremia*. Vyp. 9. Sverdlovsk, 1981, 46-48.

74. DVP: 17, 489.

75. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 168, f. 7, p. 99; DFPF: 6, 839-840; DVP: 17, 445.

76. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 3, p. 61.

77. *Ibid.*, f. 2, pp. 24-25.

78. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

79. Stomoniakov to Davtian, Aug. 3, 1934 (*ibid.*, p. 62).

80. Stomoniakov to Davtian, Aug. 19, 1934 (*ibid.*, p. 68); DVP: 17, 486; DBFP: 6, 893. See also L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 65.

81. DBFP: 6, 840; J. Laroche. *Op. cit.*, s. 167. See also M. J. Zacharias. *Op. cit.*, 171-172.

82. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 4, p. 7.

83. For signs of remaining duplicity in the Soviet approach to the problem of German rearmament and the Stalin-Litvinov controversy in this matter, see DGFP: 2, Nos 12, 122; DVP: 18, Nos 148, 180.

84. W. Michowicz. *Op. cit.*, 388-389.

85. A. Wysocki. *Tajemnice dyplomatycznego seffu*. Warszawa, 1974, 304; G. Laz'ko. *Polsko-germanskie otnoshenia v gody podgotovki Germaniei agressii v Evrope (1933-1937)*. Minsk, 1978 (Cand. of Sc. thesis), 106.

86. DVP: 17, 478.

87. J. Karski. *Op. cit.*, 182.

88. DBFP: 6, 894. See also R. Wigram's comment on these instructions (*ibid.*, 898-899).

89. DTJS: 1, 169.

90. If these fears would turn out to be unjustified, the result of Soviet guarantee for signatories of the Locarno treaty of 1925 was likely to be increasing security on the West as compared with the region east of German frontiers. It goes without saying, Poles were gloomy over prospects of increasing security asymmetry between East and West.

91. DDF: 6, 638.
92. Barthou noticed the difference in this respect between Pilsudski and Beck and told Litvinov about it (*ibid*, 498).
93. *Ibid*, 782. Cf. *ibid*, 877.
94. *Ibid*, 977, 1022.
95. Léger's words to Sir G. Clerk, August 2, 1934 (DBFP: 8, 893). Such possibility was taken "utterly seriously in the Foreign Office" at this time (R. Manne. "The Foreign Office and the Failure of Anglo-Soviet Rapprochement", *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 16, No 4 (Oct. 1981), 729-730).
96. Prohaska's account to the Soviet envoy in Prague (AVP RF: 0138, inv. 15, folder 122, f. 2, p. 391). For Benes's expectations in June for establishment of a "regime of the German Reichwehr" in the near future, see *ibid*, p. 399.
97. W. Dodd to the Secretary of State, Berlin, July 24, 1934 (FRUS, 1934, v. 2, 243). See also the excerpts from Simon's report to the Cabinet, July 4, 1934, in R. Manne. *Op. cit.*, 752-753. For modern assessment of the Hitler-Wehrmacht relationship after June 30, see H. Mommsen. "Hitler's Position in the Nazi State", *From Weimar to Auschwitz*. Princeton, N. J., 1991, 164, 166.
98. AVP RF: 0138, inv. 15, folder 122, f. 3, p. 36.
99. DVP: 17, p. 439. Compare with Davtian's deliberate remark in his conversation with the former of the Marshal of the Sejm M. Rataj in February 1935: "I reply to his enquiries about German-Soviet relations I gave to understand that the Reichswehr, which is in fact the master of the country, would like to see good relations with the USSR restored" (AVP RF: 0122, inv. 19, folder 170, f. 8, p. 58).
100. For his explanations of the original Soviet ideas, see J. Cudahy to the Secretary of State, Warsaw, Oct. 10, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Lorcarno)/66.
101. *Izvestia*, 29. 6. 1934; for translation, see J. Degras. *Op. cit.*, 82.
102. According to the *exposé*, first published in April 1939 by defected senior intelligence officer, on the night of June 30 an extraordinary session of the Politburo was held, to which Litvinov, Radek, Berzin, and Artuzov were also summoned. Convinced of Hitler's strength, Stalin lead the Politburo to the decision to induce Germany, "at all costs", "to make a deal with the Soviet government" (W. G. Krivitski. *In Stalin's Secret Service*. Frederick (Maryland), 1985, 1-3). Recently a Soviet historian, B. Starkov, repeated it with some new details. Starkov had an opportunity to study classified files in the State Archives of the Russian Federation. An interview with him did not, however, bring sufficient clarification on the nature of the sources he had used on this issue. See B. A. Starkov. "Sojusz czy konfrontacja? Kwestia polska w historii stosunkow radzieckoniemieckich w latach 1933-1937", *Problemy granic i obszaru odrodzonego państwa polskiego. 1918-1990*. Poznań, 1992, 156. For criticism of this version, see J. Haslam. *Op. cit.*, 249.

103. See, for example, the press sources cited by J. Haslam (*Op. cit.*, 39-40). On July 12, Litvinov reportedly told Attolico that the events of June 30 had delivered "a mortal blow" to Hitler's rule and he would be no more than an instrument in the hands of the Reichwehr and big business, "a sort of MacDonald", as Krestinski put it (*ibidem*). "Following the events in Germany of June 30, several leaders were outspoken in this sense," the American *chargé d'affaires* in the USSR wrote later. "Soviet policy since then has been clearly that of avoiding irritation of public opinion in Germany in anticipation of a possible new order of things in the Reich" (J. C. Wiley to the Secretary of State, Moscow, Dec. 1, 1934, SDNA: 751. 61/169).

104. DDF: 6, No 491.

105. G. Köpke was Director of the *Abteilung II* of the Foreign Ministry, R. Meyer – his deputy.

106. AVP RF: 0138, inv. 15, folder 122, f. 4, p. 117.

107. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 168, f. 8, p. 32.

108. *Ibid*, folder 167a, f. 3, p. 43. In August, Soviet military intelligence sources brought the news that, although Hitler and Neurath continued to oppose the Eastern pact, Dr. Schacht campaigned for its acceptance as indispensable for improvement of the economic conditions of the country (RGVA: 37977, inv. 5s, f. 335, p. 311). About an aborted attempt undertaken in mid-July by the military group, headed by Field-Marshal von Mackensen and General von Hammerstein, to reorient the German attitude toward the USSR and Poland, see J. W. Wheeler-Bennett. *The Nemesis of Power: The German Army in Politics 1918-1945*. N. Y., 1967, 329-331. For hesitations in the *Auswärtige Amt*, see DGFP: 3, No 162; DDF: 6, 1002.

109. W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, Aug. 31, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/53.

110. Alphand's reply to a question, put by Bullitt, "what sort of assistance France could expect to get from the Soviet Union in case of a German attack" is quoted by the latter as follows:

"I will tell you the bottom of my thoughts and the thoughts of my Government on this agreement with the Soviet Union. We do not expect any active help from the Soviet Union in case of an attack by Germany but we do believe that if the Soviet Union is bound to us by either an Eastern Locarno agreement involving participation in the Western Locarno or by a defensive agreement between the Soviet Union, France and Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union will certainly not help Germany" (W. C. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 23, 1934, SDNA 761. 00/245).

111. J. C. Clarke III. *Op. cit.*, 48.

112. G. Hilger, A. J. Meyer. *Op. cit.*, 267-268. The press *attaché* of the German Embassy Baum, who was present at the meeting, was Hilger's only source on this event. His memoirs do not mention any exchanges on the specific issue of the Eastern pact. Berson's account seems to be indirectly confirmed by the counsellor of the embassy Twardowski,

who mentioned in a private conversation with his American colleague in March 1935 that "*for the last six months* the Soviet Government had not raised the subject [of an Eastern Locarno], either in Moscow or in Berlin, or for that matter any other political topics with the German Government" (J. C. Wiley to the Secretary of State, Moscow, March 22, 1935, SDNA: 740. 00 Mutual Guarantee/Eastern Locarno/434).

113. *Gazeta Polska*, 14. 12. 1934. Stanislaw Mackiewicz (Cat), a leading conservative publicist of the 30s and an early critic of Beck's foreign policy, echoed this idea ten years later: "An anti-German structure of which Poland would be the most advanced blockhouse could only encourage Hitler to a return to the Rapallo policy... The Eastern pact would have put an end to the German-Soviet antagonism already in 1934, and it would bring with it a new German-Russian solidarity, invariably fatal to Poland" (St. Mackiewicz. *Colonel Beck and His Policy*. L., 1944, 53).

114. S. Stanislawski. *Op. cit.*, 33.

115. *Gazeta Polska*, 14. 7. 1934. It was the first editorial comment with regard to the Eastern Locarno to appear in the Polish press since the Barthou-Simon negotiations (J. Cudahy to the Secretary of State, Warsaw, July 19, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/24).

116. *Pravda*, 16. 7. 1934. For the full translation, see Eudin X. J. *Op. cit.*, No 132.

117. *Izvestia*, 16. 7. 1934; also cited in J. Karsky. *Op. cit.*, 253.

118. Stomoniakov to Davtian, 4. 8. 1934 (AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 2, p. 60).

119. *Ibid*, folder 168, f. 7, p. 84.

120. *Ibid*, p. 70.

121. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 168, f. 8, p. 30.

122. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 19, folder 170a, f. 3, p. 52.

123. In his Bayonne speech of July 15 L. Barthou stated that "once these regional pacts are concluded it may be possible to hold that a new era is opening which will make it possible to examine the bearing of these pacts on disarmament". He, however, demanded that the completion of the Eastern Locarno talks must precede "equality of rights" negotiations: "That negotiations can be opened as a result of the conclusion of regional pacts, yes, but that they should start as a condition of these pacts, I say, definitely, no" (DIA: 1934, 183). This declaration should hardly be seen as a proof of a significant "discrepancy between the British and French positions" (L. Radice. *Op. cit.*, 79). Both Simon's and Barthou's public statements about the intentions of their respective governments were very much for domestic consumption and were aimed at appeasing the public opinion in their countries. Litvinov refused to take the Bayonne speech seriously and saw it in the light of forthcoming Franco-German bargaining (W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, tel., Moscow, July 20, 1934, SDNA: 740: 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/15).

124. See DBFP: 6, 840-841; DGFP: 3, 203.

125. Since most historians entirely omit such a possibility, it is worth quoting from A. Gilmour, the US military *attaché* in Warsaw, who thought that "Pilsudski's attitude has, in general, resulted from a feeling that France and Russia seem to get all the benefits of the Pact at the expense of Poland and Germany; that, instead of making an effort to adjust the quid pro quo a little more to Poland's advantage, France and associated powers were using "Strong-arm" methods to force the Pact through in its present form" (A. Gilmour's G-2 report, Warsaw, Sept. 7, 1934, WDNA: 2657-DD-479/14).

126. W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, tel., Moscow, July 20, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/15.

127. At the Byelorussian railway station, as the British minister departed for Warsaw on March 31, 1935 (W. P. and Z. K. Coates. *A History of Anglo-Soviet relations*. Vol. 2. L., 1944, 543).

128. For good description of the course taken by the Soviet press and Polish objections to it, see the statements by Sokolnicki to Berezov, Aug. 20, 1934 (AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 6, p. 22).

129. W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, July 20, 1934 SDNA: 740. 011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/15.

130. B. Budurowicz. *Op. cit.*, 58; H.I. Rodger. *Op. cit.*, 100.

131. DVP: 17, Nos 280, 283.

132. FRUS, 1934, v. 1, 505; W. C. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Aug. 4, 1934, SDNA 740. 011. Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/38.

133. W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, tel., Moscow, Aug. 3, 1934, SDNA: 740. 011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/20.

134. R. Debicki. *Op. cit.*, 87. For an outline of the agreement, which seemed to emerge in Polish-Lithuanian talks, see H. I. Rodgers. *Op. cit.*, 99.

135. Some contemporaries described the failure of the Prystor-Smetona negotiations as the outcome of France's moves (In July 1934, Pfeiffer, a vice-chairman of French Radical-Socialist party, went on an unofficial mission to Kaunas). H. Rodgers gives credit to this explanation and suggests that the French acted on Soviet request (*Op. cit.*, 99). No reliable source seems to support this version (Cf. S. Champonnois. "The Baltic States as an Aspect of Franco-Soviet relations 1919-1934: A Policy or Several Policies?", in J. Hiden and A. Loit (eds.). *Contact or Isolation? Soviet-Western relations in the Interwar Period*. Stockholm, 1991, 411).

136. *Ibidem*; DVP: 17, No 295; S. L. Stafford to the Secretary of State, Aug. 9, 1934, SDNA: 760m. 61/67 (see, in particular, the translation from the leader in the *Lietuvos Aidas*, 7. 8. 1934 in Enclosure 2 to this dispatch).

137. The reasons for this move seem to be two-fold. The resolution of the Politburo of March 27 was not easy to abandon and the decision concerning the exchange of military

visits with Poland was still abiding. In spring 1934 both military intelligence reports (in particular, concerning the disbandment of large moto-mechanized units of the Polish army in peacetime (RGVA: 37977, inv. 5s, f. 335, p. 107) and good reception extended by the Polish military of different ranks to the new Soviet *attaché*, N. Semenov (Ibid, p. 90) might have contributed to the allegedly more favorable response of the Commissariat for Defence to the idea of strengthening contacts with the Poles. At least such were Semenov's recommendations to Moscow (ibid).

138. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 1, p. 49; ibid, f. 2, p. 86.

139. Other points (if there were any) of the Politburo resolution No 244/228 of July 15 are unknown.

140. In conversations with the Polish *chargé d'affaires* in mid-July 1934, Berezov insisted that the Soviet navy wing, which was to visit Poland, should be not a Commander-in-Chief of the Soviet Navy V. Orlov, but the Commander of the Baltic Fleet L. Galler (AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 6, p. 35). Simultaneously, Soviet diplomats repeatedly asked for a reception to be given to Soviet navy officers by Pilsudski (ibid, pp. 33-35). Cf. DVP: 17, 440.

141. Stomoniakov to Davtian, Aug. 4, 1934 (ibid, p. 82).

142. AVP RF: 0122, inv. 18, folder 167a, f. 1, p. 25.

143. Ibid, folder 168, f. 14, p. 34.

144. The NKID considered those visits possible until the mid-July (Ibid, folder 167a, f. 1, pp. 49, 43).

145. Ibid, folder 168, f. 14, p. 27. Cf. I. V. Mikhutina. "Sovetsko-pol'skie otnoshenia v period peregovorov o Vostochnom pakte (aprel-sentiabr' 1934)," in I. I. Kostiuszko *et al.* (eds.). *Op. cit.*, 137.

146. FRUS, 1934, v. 1, 506. "Mr. Litvinov's optimism exceeds somewhat the consensus in Soviet official circles," the Ambassador added few days later (W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, Aug. 4, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Lorcarno)/38).

147. See his article in the *International Press Correspondence*, v. 14, No 45 (Aug. 24, 1934), 1169-1170 (cited in B. Budurowicz. *Op. cit.*, 60).

148. Exceedingly well informed references to the French policy and diplomatic service, Chambrun and Laroche, suggest it was Evgeniy V. Rubinin. As the head of the NKID's Third Western Department, he was in constant and sometimes intimate touch with the US Embassy. Cf. W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, June 15, 1934, SDNA: 800. 51. W89 USSR/71.

149. The French ambassador probably had similar misgivings about Soviet diplomatic methods as he drew the attention of Barthou to particular "sensitiveness of Beck to the manner in which the proposal is presented and explained to him" (DDF: 6, 781).

150. W. Bullitt to the Secretary of State, Moscow, Aug. 31, 1934, SDNA: 740. 0011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/53.

151. The Soviet Ambassador to Sweden, A. Kolontay, who talked with Stalin in the end of August, told the Italian ambassador in Stockholm that he had little hope for success of the Eastern pact negotiations (J. Haslam. *Op. cit.*, 41).

152. The American *chargé d'affaires* in Warsaw, referring to the Librarian of the Sejm, whom he characterized as an "unusually well-informed person", reported in the late August:

"...it is now believed that as a result of recent conversations between France and Poland and a rumoured agreement on the part of the former to make certain changes in the provisions of the pact, Poland will in the not distant future announce that it is prepared to become party to the agreement. There is reason to believe that Poland would obtain something in return for its consent, and it is reported that this compensation will take the form of an undertaking by France to employ its good offices of the Soviet Government, in persuading the Lithuanian Government to meet Poland's desire for a marked improvement in the relations between these two countries" (S. L. Crosby to the Secretary of State, Warsaw, Aug. 23, 1934, SDNA: 740. 011 Mutual Guarantee (Eastern Locarno)/43).