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Norbert Kasperek

IN QUEST OF SURRENDER. THE NOVEMBER UPRISING ARMY DURING CAPITULATION TALKS OF SEPTEMBER 1831

The November Uprising is generally associated with a series of remarkable victories and the courageous struggle put up by the small Kingdom of Poland against the powerful Russia. It featured the legendary battles of Stoczek, Olszynka Grochowska, Wawer and Iganie. The insurgents, among them Juliusz Konstanty Ordon, have been made immortal by Romantic poetry. The main army participated in capitulation talks on several occasions. Chłopicki did not want the cause to end with a “defeat of Naples”, Skrzynecki was afraid that the uprising would follow the fate of the battle of Maciejowice, while Rybiński was terrified that the armed struggle would conclude with a “second battle of Radoszyce”. Military defeat was not the only thing that concerned Polish generals. They were also intimidated by the possibility that their professional skills could be exposed to ridicule. Those fears were voiced in the final stage of the uprising, and they became intensified near the time of the battle of Warsaw (6–7 September 1831). In the disputes waged by Polish émigrés abroad, capitulation talks were not recognized as a tactical maneuver for fighting the enemy. The attitude displayed by General Hieronim (Girolamo) Ramorino’s second corps was the only exception¹. The discussion surrounding the second corps was ruthless and uncompromising. Ramorino’s retreat was regarded as the direct cause of the

¹ [S. Barzykowski], *Historia powstania listopadowego spisana przez...*, ed. Aër [A. Rządewski], vol. 5, Poznań 1884, p. 215. Barzykowski explains that the commander-in-chief always had higher authority than the chief of staff. Cf. N. Kasperek, *Korpus Ramorino a szturm Warszawy (pierwsza dekada września 1831 roku)*, in: *Od Franciszka Józefa do małych ojczyzn. Tom poświęcony pamięci Zbigniewa Frasa*, ed. M. Górny, Wrocław 2002, pp. 225–235; N. Kasperek, *Powstańczy epilog. Żołnierze listopadowi w dniach kłeski i internowania 1831–1832*, Olsztyn 2001, pp. 117–156.

defeat of Warsaw and the Polish army's march to Prussia. The discussion had a somewhat cathartic effect.

The collapse of the National Government after the events of 15 August brought General Jan Krukowiecki to power². His main aim was to continue the armed struggle. In mid August, the range of insurgent activity was limited to Warsaw and several regions bordering the Kingdom of Poland. The war required the formulation of new goals, and this was the purpose of the great war council that convened on 19 August. Most participants backed Prądzyński's concept of splitting the army³. Members of the high command, Jan Krukowiecki, Tomasz Łubieński, Ignacy Prądzyński and Klemens Kołaczkowski, developed the concept by creating four separate command units for operations groups. General Kazimierz Małachowski was appointed deputy commander-in-chief⁴, and he was also placed in charge of the forces that had remained behind in Warsaw. The Cracow region was assigned to general Piotr Szembek from General Samuel Różycki's corps. General Tomasz Łubieński took command over the unit dispatched to the Płock region. Prądzyński hoped to assume control over the 4th and most populous corps of key operational significance, but this responsible task was ultimately entrusted to a foreign officer, Girolamo Ramorino⁵.

Krukowiecki and Prądzyński looked to capitulation talks as their last resort, and they failed to protect the Polish capital, especially on the second day of the siege. During the siege of Warsaw, Russian commander Ivan Paskevich took the main theater of insurgent operations by storm, capturing military factories, stocks of firearms, ammunition, pontoons and equipment that could no longer be replaced. Paskevich inflicted the final blow on the morale of Polish commanders, robbing them of the remaining shreds of self-confidence, instilling in them a hatred for their own government and the Sejm, and urging them to surrender. Further military activity was out of the question. But one of the most important and still unresolved questions remains. The Polish generals and the Russian envoy, the shrewd General Berg, came to an arrangement, and the fatal night of 7 to 8 September witnessed scenes to which Wacław Tokarz later referred to as "one of the darkest

² Michał Swędrowski's upcoming doctoral dissertation delivers a fascinating account of his involvement in the November Uprising and the events of 15 August and 6–7 September. Cf. M. Swędrowski, *Krukowiecki a wybór Skrzyneckiego na wodza naczelnego*, Meritum, vol. 1, [Olsztyn] 2009, pp. 47–68.

³ W. Węgliński, *Rada Wojenna z dnia 19 sierpnia 1831 r. Próba analizy założeń i realizacji przyjętego planu operacyjnego*, "Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości", vol.18, 1972, part 1, pp. 146–152; [K. Forster], *Powstanie narodu polskiego w r. 1830–1831. Rys historyczny poparty papierami generała hr Krukowieckiego przedostatniego prezesa Rządu Narodowego, skreślił...*, part 3: *Urzędowe papiery generała hr Krukowieckiego, przekazane mi przez samego generała, a doręczone mi przez jego syna Aleksandra hr Krukowieckiego*, Berlin 1873, pp. 97–122.

⁴ Krukowiecki requested General Pac who firmly rejected the proposal.

⁵ Cf. an excellent biography of Z. Zacharewicz – *Ramorino Antonio Girolamo*, in: *Polski słownik biograficzny* ("PSB"), vol. 30, Wrocław 1987, pp. 545–550.

episodes of our history in the 19th century”⁶. The negotiations with Berg⁷ sealed the capitulation of Warsaw and, from the insurgents’ perspective, of the entire uprising. The latter dilemma remains unresolved in historiography, and although many attempts have been made to answer this question, a unanimous solution has never surfaced. It remains unknown whether by surrendering the Polish capital, Małachowski⁸ was signing an act of capitulation for the entire army and, consequently, the uprising, or whether his main intention was prevent bloodshed in Warsaw. This is a complex problem that still awaits its historian⁹. Władysław Zajewski wrote that the signed military convention had no political context. Some generals were of the opinion that Warsaw’s surrender was only a prelude to a general capitulation that “would take place in the coming days”¹⁰. This seemed to be General Małachowski’s main objective¹¹. His orders for Ramorino’s and Różycki’s troops foreboded the concentration of the Polish army with the aim of surrendering (Russian troops were to let through the regrouping Polish troops). These plans were completely inconsistent with the intentions of the National Government, Bonawentura Niemojowski and Sejm speaker Władysław Ostrowski¹². Małachowski denied it in his later letters, but the nightmare of Polish troops that had been disintegrated upon their retreat from Warsaw was a good “excuse” for capitulation. The retreat to the district of Praga¹³ and to Modlin through Jabłonna was a flight in panic. Lt. Colonel Józef Paszkowski, a skilled officer who had fought in the war of 1831 (the last artillery commander in the Modlin fortress) wrote: “Not a single officer accompanied his soldiers on foot. Most infantry officers rode their horses.

⁶ W. Tokarz, *Wojna polsko-rosyjska 1830 i 1831*, Warszawa 1993, p. 528

⁷ The Russians later denied that any arrangements and negotiations had been conducted with the Poles. Shcherbatov (*Kampania polska księcia Paskiewicza*, Warszawa 1899) argued that “a treaty had never been signed with the National Government or Krukowiecki”.

⁸ Małachowski wrote: “I was cursed with the obligation to sign and seal a pitiful document that had been drafted by foreigners whilst I, having no knowledge of the impending disgrace, fought amidst the thundering fire of cannons. But the deed had to be done, as to my best knowledge, there was no other rescue” – [K. Małachowski], *Opowiadanie działań wojennych i wypadków zaszytych od 1 sierpnia do 10 września 1831 roku*, in: *Korpus 2 polski w 1831 roku, od 23 sierpnia do 16 września, czyli opisy działań, rad, marszów, uwagi, recenzje, rozkazy, odezwy*, ed. W. Zwierkowski, Paris 1844, pp. 38–39.

⁹ It has been overviewed by T. Strzeżek in his outstanding work, entitled *Obrona Warszawy 6–7 września 1831 roku*, Olsztyn 1996, pp. 213–216; idem, *Warszawa 1831*, Warszawa 1998, pp. 147–160.

¹⁰ W. Zajewski, *Powstanie Listopadowe 1830–1831*, Warszawa 1998, p. 228.

¹¹ Małachowski never mentioned the meeting with Berg in Praga where a decision had been made to surrender the district to the Russians.

¹² J. Dutkiewicz wrote (*Wybór źródeł do powstania listopadowego*, Wrocław 1957, p. LII) “Małachowski was merely authorized to sign the capitulation of Warsaw; the war was to continue”.

¹³ Praga was surrendered to the Russians together with the bridge, and this fact sealed Warsaw’s tragic fate. This solution had been engineered by General Krukowiecki, and any similarities to the war of 1809 were only too obvious.

Soldiers who wanted to wander off, did. Those who wanted to remain behind, were free to do so. Thousands of camp wagons followed every procession. What's worse, morale was equally low during battle. Those who fought were volunteers, those who did not want to fight [were free to leave – N. K.], and the only punishment they could expect was a bad reputation¹⁴. A nighttime march is very dangerous, even for an experienced army, and it proved to be disastrous for the defeated ranks of various military formations. Upon reaching Jabłonna on 8 September, General Małachowski ordered the concentration of Polish forces in the Modlin fortress. The army counted its losses. The infantry had lost 6471 men (since early September), the cavalry – 200 to 300 swords, and the artillery – 39 men¹⁵. The generals who remained in Warsaw (for various reasons, including wounds) were Jan Krukowiecki¹⁶, Ignacy Prądzyński, Wojciech Chrzanowski, Andrzej Ruttie, Karol Turno (who had been taken ill), Jan Malletski (Mallet), Jakub Redel, Piotr Bontemps, Antoni Darewski, Stanisław Rychłowski¹⁷ Konstanty Przebendowski, Edward Żółtowski and Izydor Krasieński¹⁸.

In Modlin, the inept but righteous General Małachowski resigned from the post of commander-in-chief. His decision enabled him to pull out of the deal with the Russians that had been made on 8 September. The army, in particular lower-ranking officers, were opposed to the capitulation agreement proposed by Małachowski¹⁹. The army was in need of a new and energetic commander. Małachowski rightly concluded that the surrender of Warsaw had disqualified him as a leader. His ultimate defeat was sealed not so much by the capitulation of the Polish capital, but by his meeting with generals Neihardt and Berg in Praga. It was after that meeting that

¹⁴ [J. Paszkowski], *Wojna w Polsce roku 1831 przez oficera polskiego opisana w roku 1832*, Lwiv 1861, pp. 168–169.

¹⁵ Polish Library in Paris (“PLP”), manuscript 397, Documents of the Polish Army Headquarters of 1831, vol. 11: Polish artillery files of 1831, col. 251, 333, 437, 485, 863; B. Niemojowski, *O ostatnich wypadkach rewolucji polskiej w odpowiedzi na biografję generała Macieja Rybińskiego*, Paris 1833, tab; T. Strzeżek, *Obrona...*, pp. 222–223. The “soldiers killed” column in captain Łabanowski’s report of 9 September features the following entry marked as “the camp in Nowy Dwór”: “2nd lieutenant Ordon was ordered to take duty at the telescope; there has been no further news from him”.

¹⁶ W. Zajewski, *Krukowiecki Jan*, in: PSB, vol. 15, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1970, p. 395. On the second day of the battle of Warsaw, Krukowiecki dispatched his troops to Praga. On 7 September, around 8 p.m., he met with General Małachowski in the courtyard of Namiestnikowski Palace. Małachowski dismissed him on grounds of treason, but Krukowiecki had no intentions of leaving the army. Umiński threatened to shoot Krukowiecki if he disobeyed the orders, which is why Krukowiecki remained in Warsaw.

¹⁷ Z. Zacharewicz, *Rychłowski Stanisław*, in: PSB, vol. 33, Wrocław et al. 1992, p. 394. Rychłowski was seriously wounded, but he was one of the few officers who had not renewed his oath of alliance.

¹⁸ Cf. M. Tarczyński, *Generalicja powstania listopadowego*, Warszawa 1980, pp. 214–225; R. Durand, *Depesze z powstańczej Warszawy 1830–1831. Raporty konsula francuskiego w Królestwie Polskim*, translated by R. Bielecki, Warszawa 1980, p. 238

¹⁹ Małachowski’s letter to Paskevich [K. Kołaczkowski], *Wspomnienia...*, vol. 5, p. 120.

Małachowski decided to surrender the bridge and Praga, to free Russian prisoners²⁰ and, in line with the act of capitulation, to march out to the Płock²¹ region with the second corps²². Bonawentura Niemojowski, head of the National Government, convened a council of war in Modlin on the night of 9 to 10 September. The meeting was attended by staff commanders and officers, brigades and independent troops. The council was to select three candidates for commander-in-chief. The meeting was more of a raucous session of a military sejmik. Niemojowski was shouted down by generals Henryk Dembiński²³ and Antoni Wroniecki²⁴, he stepped down, and agreed that the candidates be directly voted on by the participants. Rybiński received 18 out of the 72 votes cast, General Józef Bem – 16, generals Jan Nepomucen Umiński, Dembiński and others received 1, 2 or 3 votes each. After a moment of hesitation Rybiński stated that “there is but a small difference in the number of votes cast in favor of me and the next candidate; therefore, I wave military command on behalf of General Bem”. Bem concluded that he would be honored to serve under a man in whom the participants had vested the greatest trust²⁵. Before assuming command, Rybiński once again inquired whether General Ramorino had received the orders to unite with the main army. Małachowski and General Jakub Lewiński confirmed, adding that a bridge was being built to enable the 2nd corps to cross the Bug River at a safe distance from the Russian-occupied Praga. The chief of staff said: “General Ramorino must have been seen on the road to Siedlce. He was ordered to arrive at Bug on the 10th, and he should have reached Kamieńczyk on the 11th. His adjutants should arrive any moment now”²⁶. Rybiński assumed command after a debate on the state of the army and the enemy’s positions. He officially took control over the army on 10 September at 11:27 a.m.²⁷ when he

²⁰ K. Zieliński, *Wzięcie Warszawy, dalsze losy rządu i armii głównej*, in: *Wypisy źródłowe do historii polski sztuki wojennej*, book 12: *Polska sztuka wojenna w latach 1815-1831*, eds. W. Lewandowski, E. Kozłowski, M. Krwawicz, Warszawa 1959, p. 375.

²¹ This is a reference to the initial “proposals” made by Dybicz at the beginning of the war. Dybicz had suggested that the Polish army concentrate its forces in the Płock province to expose Warsaw. Płock had the worst roads in the Kingdom of Poland which stalled all military operations.

²² The march was divided into the following stages: 8 September - Modlin, 9 September – Czerwińsk, 10 September – repose, 11 September – Bodzanów, 12 September – Płock – W. Tokarz, *Wojna...*, p. 529, footnote 97.

²³ “And what did you do in Warsaw when I fought in Lithuania? I will tell you what – you drank, you ate and you reveled”.

²⁴ “Down with the Kalisz camp, down with Lelewel and the patriotic club. We don’t want the Sejm or civilian authorities.”

²⁵ W. Zwierkowski, *Działania wodza, rad wojennych, parlamentarzy, prezesa rządu i Sejmu od 8 września do 4 października 1831 roku*, Paris 1843, pp. 6–9.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 9.

²⁷ Małachowski (*Opowiadanie...*, p. 45) erroneously noted: “on the same night, i.e. on 10 September, General Rybiński was appointed the commander-in-chief, whilst some claim that the election took place on 9 September”.

was also promoted to the rank of division general²⁸. His biographer, Stefan Przewalski, noted that “by that time, his character had been largely flawed, he was a disheartened man, susceptible to external influences, marked by an absolute lack of initiative and flexibility. In most cases, he was an accurate judge of the situation, and he wanted to amalgamate all forces and incite them to fight, but he was unable to carry his plans through, thus further weakening the army’s morale”²⁹. Lelewel wrote about Rybiński with sarcasm: “as the commander-in-chief, he completed the campaign without firing a single shot”³⁰. Juliusz Falkowski, who participated in those events (wounded in the defense campaign, he remained behind in Warsaw) and kept chronicles towards the end of the uprising, wrote: “Rybiński was not born to be a hetman”, but he did not blame him for the defeat because the army “had already lost its morale, and nobody wanted to listen to his orders”³¹.

Maciej Rybiński “inherited” the problem of Russian negotiations from his predecessors. Theodor (Fyodor) Berg, the skilful and devious Russian general, met with the new commander-in-chief in Nowy Dwór in the presence of the head of the National Government. On 11 September, Rybiński announced to the soldiers: “Yesterday, Russian general Berg arrived in Nowy Dwór to propose changes in the distribution of the army. Having consulted the head of the government, I provided General Berg with a written reply stating that we are ready to embark on negotiations to restore peace in both nations provided that the proposed terms maintain the honor and the interests of our country”³². Rybiński’s intentions became clear already during that first meeting, and he channeled all of his energy to negotiations with the Russians who were very well informed about the condition of the Polish army and were hoping to keep the Polish forces at bay in Modlin³³. After the serious blow inflicted on the Russian army during the siege of Warsaw, every

²⁸ Appeal of the National Government and Rybiński’s orders; Cf. Czartoryski Library in Cracow (“Czart. L.”), manuscript 5312, “Rząd Narodowy. Miscellanea et annexa 1831”. Newspaper clippings, orders, letters and miscellaneous documents, col. 386.

²⁹ S. Przewalski, *Generał Maciej Rybiński ostatni wódz naczelny powstania listopadowego (1784–1874)*, Wrocław 1949, pp. 138–139.

³⁰ [J. Lelewel], *Polska odradzająca się, czyli dzieje Polski od roku 1795 potocznie opowiedziane, przez ...*, in: idem, *Historia Polski nowożytnej* [Dzieła, vol. 8], eds. J. Dutkiewicz, M.H. Serajski, H. Więckowska, Warszawa 1961, p. 160; Z. Fras, N. Kasperek, *Wstęp*, in: [M. Rybiński], *Moje wspomnienia od urodzenia. Pamiętniki ... ostatniego wodza naczelnego powstania listopadowego*, eds. Z. Fras and N. Kasperek, Wrocław 1993, pp. 25, 39. Rybiński retorted by calling him “an intellectual eunuch”, “a political eunuch”, “a man of a foul heart” “who is disgraced by his own stupidity” and who had “entered into a moral brotherhood with Poland’s enemies”, a “calendar historian who is good for nothing but collecting dates”.

³¹ [J. Falkowski], *Wspomnienia z roku 1848 i 1849 przez autora “Obrazów z życia kilku ostatnich pokoleń w Polsce”*, Poznań 1879, p. 166.

³² B. Czart., manuscript 5312, col. 387; Library of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Kórnik (“Kórnik L.”), manuscript 1548, col. 272

³³ Puzyna (Ossolineum, manuscript 16159, k. 133) made a few accurate remarks when writing about the “alleged connections”.

military maneuver spelled danger. This explains the Russians' willingness to enter into peace talks which, starting on 13 September, were conducted by General Franciszek Morawski on Rybiński's behalf. The Polish side dictated the following terms of capitulation:

"1. The Płock province and the Modlin fortress will be evacuated by our forces by Embankment artillery will remain in the fortress, and all fortifications will be maintained in the same condition.

2. The Polish army will occupy the provinces of Cracow, Sandomierz and Lublin.

3. The Kalisz province will not be occupied by the Polish army, but the army will be entitled to all kinds of resources found therein.

4. The part of the Podlasie province adjacent to the Lublin province, with the width of 25 versts³⁴, will not be occupied by either army".

5. The garrison in Modlin will unite with its army.

6. The itineraries of Polish and Russian troops marching to their points of destination will be indicated in the armistice agreement.

7. During the march, Russian guards will not approach the Polish army at a distance closer than 30 versts. The only exception will be the Łowicz³⁵ garrison which will transfer 5,000 infantry soldiers.

8. After four weeks, both parties may resume hostilities upon six days' notice"³⁶.

For the Russians, it was clear that the Poles were attempting to amalgamate their forces. The deployment of the army to the south was an attempt to join forces with Różycki, Ramorino and the reserve. It would have been naive to believe that Paskevich would opt for this solution after the defeat of Warsaw. Polish officers continued to move back and forth between Modlin and Warsaw, and they could have informed Paskevich about the slacking discipline in the Polish army. General Berg formally consented to the terms dictated by Poland with a number of minor adjustments. He refused to acknowledge that the suspension of military activity (that had been enforced) were to be the first step to peace. The Russian general opposed the use of this phrase. "This is not a war between two nations, but an uprising against a legal monarch. Therefore, our aim is not to make peace, but to reinstate order in a rebellious country"³⁷, said Berg. The Russians wanted to prolong the discussion to lock Polish troops in Modlin, deprive them of initiative and keep them motionless. Paskevich could not afford to initi-

³⁴ 1 verst –1066.8 m.

³⁵ Łowicz was situated on the left bank of the river. It had seated the Russian headquarters and large hospitals.

³⁶ [K. Kołaczkowski], *Wspomnienia jenerała...*, vol. 5, Kraków 1901, p. 143; W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, pp. 35–36; [S. Barzykowski], *Historia...*, vol. 5, pp. 344–346.

³⁷ [J. Lewiński], *Jenerała ... pamiętniki z 1831 roku*, published by K. Kozłowski, Poznań 1895, p. 128.

ate more drastic measures due to the losses sustained during the siege of Warsaw³⁸.

On 12 September, the retreating captain Kowalski reported to Rybiński on the situation of the 2nd corps and General Ramorino's insubordination. Although Rybiński attempted to conceal the news from the army, the word quickly spread. The Sejm had been removed from Modlin, and it convened in the Capuchin Friars' church in Zakroczym. Initially, it comprised eight senators and 70 deputies. Stanisław Barzykowski gave a highly accurate account of the negotiations process: "at a time marked by the futile wander of the army, the Sejm, despite clear evidence of its dedication, had to lose its importance... In Modlin and Zakroczym, the Sejm ceased to be the highest authority"³⁹. General Klemens Kołaczkowski noted: "the national representation had no intentions of sanctioning the surrender"⁴⁰. All redundant officers, in particular those who held radical views and were fiercely opposed to capitulation, were removed from the fortress by Rybiński. His efforts received partial recognition. Captain Józef Puzyna, who had reached Modlin from Łubieński's corps, wrote in his dairy (which he continued to keep in the following years) about members of the patriotic club who "stirred anarchy. They claimed that they did not need street lamps to hang prisoners in Modlin. Szynglarski, Pułaski and others were locked in the casemates during the period of recollection"⁴¹. Rybiński gave out a number of orders to discipline the army, reduce the number of vehicles, carriages and prevent wasteful use of ammunition⁴². His aim was to facilitate the talks with the Russians and prepare the army for the ultimate pact with the tsar. Meanwhile, Ramorino's march towards the Austrian border weakened Poland's bargaining power. The Russians did not sleep when the Polish army remained idle. On 16 September, Berg commissioned Morawski to present the Polish army with a new set of terms. Paskevich refused to evacuate the Lublin province and could only be persuaded to preserve the "military route" to the fortress in Zamość. Negotiations were still in progress in Nowy Dwór when the final decision had been made in the south on 17 September.

In consequence of Poland's compliance with the provisions of the capitulation act, the Russians regained the route to Brest, and they began to surround Rybiński's army in Modlin. Russian forces outnumbered Polish troops. On 18 September, General Berg told the Poles that negotiations with the Polish army were futile because the commander-in-chief could be replaced by civilian authorities at any moment. The Paskevich-Berg duo were

³⁸ T. Strzeżek (*Obrona Warszawy...*, p. 222) claims that some 14,000–16,000 had been killed.

³⁹ [S. Barzykowski], *Historia...*, vol. 5, p. 349.

⁴⁰ [K. Kołaczkowski], *Wspomnienia...*, vol. 5, p. 134.

⁴¹ Ossolineum, manuscript 16159, col. 132. Another prisoner confined to the casemates was dr Jan Brawacki who was later denied any help in Prussia, cf. BPP, manuscript 754, col. 141.

⁴² B. Czart., manuscript 5312, col. 389, 391.

hoping to move the Sejm away from Modlin. They were also awaiting the news of Ramorino's ultimate defeat. Niemojowski was fuelling the resistance of Polish officers who were keen to surrender. The Polish camp was still deluded by the hope of a union between Ramorino's and Różycki's⁴³ troops. The Russians were aware that unpredictable events could obstruct the resolution of the conflict in the south. On 19 September, Rybiński began campaigning for a partial cession of Niemojowski's powers, but his efforts met with resistance. The fear of a coup d'état convinced the deputies and the National Government that evacuation should proceed in the direction of Płock⁴⁴. They were tacitly hoping that the Polish troops marching from Płock along the Prussian border would make their way to the Cracow region⁴⁵. Already at the time of the battle of Grochów, there had been plans to convene the Sejm with a reduced composition, further south in Miechów. On 18–19 September, Rybiński realized that capitulation was unavoidable, but an absolute surrender was not an option. After the Sejm had ended its session, Rybiński told Berg that absolute power now rested in his hands, which was an obvious misinterpretation of facts⁴⁶. Berg did not respond, and he left Nowy Dwór where the negotiations had been taking place⁴⁷. The Russians formulated new demands on 20 September after Ramorino's troops had marched out to Galicia. Already on 19 September, the Poles were debating on dispatching a part of their forces to Płock under the command of the energetic and restless General Dembiński⁴⁸. The order was given on 20 September, and the troops set out on the night of 21 to 22 September⁴⁹. On 20 September, Rybiński decided to move away from Warsaw and vacate Modlin which had been previously reinforced with main army troops. Generals Franciszek Czarnomski, Franciszek Młokosiewicz, Antoni Pawłowski, Tomasz Łubieński⁵⁰, Teodor Szydłowski⁵¹ and Józef Zaruski resigned their

⁴³ I am under the impression that the combat ability of Różycki's corps was overrated.

⁴⁴ Cf. W. Rostocki, *Władza wodzów naczelnych w powstaniu listopadowym (Studium historycznoprawne)*, Wrocław 1955, pp. 178–179.

⁴⁵ A. Ostrowski, *Pamiętnik z czasów powstania listopadowego*, published by K. Rostocki and W. Rostocki, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków 1961, pp. 451–452.

⁴⁶ "The Sejm and the government had lost their authority, and now the sole power rests in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief".

⁴⁷ W. Tokarz, *Wojna...*, sp. 534.

⁴⁸ Juliusz Falkowski (*Upadek powstania polskiego 1831 roku. Rys historyczno-pamiętnikowy...* Poznań 1881, p. 308) wrote that the impractical and inept Dembiński who headed an army of 50,000 men "would take any action only when others have lost their heads, when horrible difficulties had mounted". In his scathing (and factually incorrect) account, Rybiński wrote that Dembiński left Modlin already on 15 September and spent the rest of the time in Płock. He did not cross the Vistula "because the water was too cold".

⁴⁹ BPP, manuscript 397, col. 20.

⁵⁰ R. Łubieński, *Generał Tomasz Pomian hrabia Łubieński*, vol. 2, Warszawa 1899, pp. 84, 87 – was down with typhoid in the Modlin fortress. He was officially dismissed by the orders of 28 September.

⁵¹ Only officially – he had left the army already before the siege of Warsaw as a result of Krukowiecki's allegations that he had supported Skrzynecki.

posts in Modlin. In a letter to General Morawski, the commander-in-chief urged him to make concessions, especially that the news of Ramorino's defeat had already reached the Polish camp. On 22 September, Polish troops reached Słupno where they rendezvoused with General Franciszek Morawski carrying new Russian demands:

- “Absolute surrender to the constitutional king;
- A delegation will be dispatched to the Emperor and the king;
- The army will remain stationed in the Płock province;
- Modlin will be surrendered immediately”.

General Berg, who had been clearly informed of the attempted offensive, threatened in Paskevich's name that “every general and every commander attempting to cross the Vistula and initiating hostile action would be proscribed”⁵². This was an actual ultimatum, and the Poles were ready to accept it. Rybiński and his chief of staff, General Jakub Lewiński, were devastated by Ramorino's defeat⁵³, and most commanders, not only those who had remained tacit, were keen on ending the war. Rybiński halted the march across the Vistula River and instructed Dembiński, who was in the vanguard of the troops approaching Gąbin on the left bank of the Vistula, to retreat to the sconce near the bridge.

Rybiński called a council of war in Słupno at 7 a.m. on 23 September. It was the first of the three great councils that convened under his command. In Słupno, the participants were to debate on a formal surrender to Russian demands. The meeting, which greatly resembled the boisterous councils in Ramorino's corps, was attended by 40 to 43 officers who huddled in a small room. Minutes were not officially taken. The majority of participants were infantry officers, not always regiment commanders. The artillery, which had demonstrated very high morale, was represented only by its commander, General Bem⁵⁴. Several commanding cavalry officers also attended. Generals Małachowski, Ludwik Pac, Stanisław Wojczyński and Tadeusz Suchorzewski held no command, and although not formally invited, they arrived at the council. General Dembiński, an advocate of continuing the war, did not participate on account of the inability to vacate his post in the vanguard. Bonawentura Niemojowski, head of the National Government, attended the meeting although he had not been formally invited⁵⁵. General Rybiński was

⁵² W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, p. 59.

⁵³ J. Bem, *O powstaniu narodowym w Polsce*, ed. E. Kozłowski, Warszawa 1956, pp. 157–159; *Korpus 2 polski...*, pp. 57–59 – Małachowski's report; [J. Lewiński], *Jenerała...*, pp. 128–131 – due to his unclear role, he cites the wrong chronology of events.

⁵⁴ Cf.: N. Kasperek, *Armia polska po upadku Warszawy w 1831 roku. Rola gen. Bema*, in: *Cień Generała Józefa Bema. W 150. rocznicę śmierci*, a collection of papers, eds. N. Kasperek and W. B. Łach, Węgorzewo 2000, pp. 49–68.

⁵⁵ Barzykowski (*Historia...*, vol. 5, p. 360) claims that Niemojowski had learned about the council and the first part of the vote from voivod Antoni Ostrowski, and he arrived in Słupno only after that. Blinded by hatred, Rybiński wrote that Niemojowski “had pushed his way through the crowd” in the meeting room.

restrained in nature, and he rarely spoke during the council. He put up the following problem for debate: "whether crossing the Vistula and prolonging the fight held any promise of a positive outcome". The discussion was dominated by those who opposed capitulation. Loud arguments were incited by General Lewiński, quartermaster Lt. Marcin Klemensowski and deputy head of the National Government General Karol Zieliński. The head of government argued in favor of a continued military struggle, but he had left the room before the formal vote. Historians cite various results of the vote. According to some reports, from the total number of 43 votes cast, generals Pac, Małachowski, Wojczyński, Umiński, Bem, Emilian Węgierski and Lt. Col. Mikołaj Kamiński (commander of the 7th uhlán regiment) voted in favor of continuing the war. Some historians also placed General Stefan Ziemiecki in this group. Lt. Col. Bazyli Lewiński (2nd regiment of Krakusi cavalry) supported the plan to cross the Vistula (and continue the fight), but he abstained from voting. A clear voting pattern emerged: nearly all proponents of a continued war effort had never served in Constantine's army⁵⁶. 36 votes were cast in favor of accepting Russian proposals. Rybiński's position was ambiguous, and he sympathized with General Miller, the Skarzyński brothers, generals Wąsowicz and Jagmin who loudly argued in favor of surrender. Years after the council in Słupno, Rybiński wrote in his diary: "We did everything in our power to bring about a peaceful resolution, and now, only death can save our honor"⁵⁷. But those declarations were made much later. The act of capitulation, announced nearly two weeks earlier, was voted through in Słupno! The council appointed a delegation to the tsar which comprised pre-uprising generals: Henryk Milberg, Franciszek Morawski and Kazimierz Dziekoński. The council's decision to surrender came as shocking news, especially for the head of the government. Niemojowski convened the last Sejm session in the 19th century. It opened with private debates to lay down further course of action. Around 2 p.m., 35 members of both houses⁵⁸ arrived at Płock's city hall. They accounted for the so called small quorum which was legally allowed. Niemojowski resigned his office to dismiss the commander-in-chief. The Sejm, presided over by Speaker Władysław Ostrowski, had to adopt "a decision concerning the Commander-in-Chief". Both functions were entrusted to General Jan Nepomucen Umiński⁵⁹ who had filed his resignation and left for Płock after the Słupsk council. Despite the exerted pressure, Umiński declined the nomination for the government leader, arguing that he could not accept a function that had

⁵⁶ Based on W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, pp. 59–69; [J. N. Umiński], *Jenerała ... kilka słów o zaszczytłych wypadkach w Słupniei Płocku w dniu 23 września 1831. Bruksela 1843*, pp. 11–15; M. Tarczyński, *Generalicja...*, p. 222; N. Kasperek, *Powstańczy epilog...*, pp. 187–193.

⁵⁷ [M. Rybiński], *Moje przypomnienia...*, p. 27.

⁵⁸ Including two senators. Most of them represented the Taken Lands, and Rybiński referred to them as deputies "who had been elected in Warsaw's taverns".

⁵⁹ He received 22 votes, while generals Bem and Dembiński – 4 each.

remained beyond his capability. As a result, Niemojowski was reinstated to power. Umiński, an energetic division commander and a fervent opponent of capitulation, did not enjoy a high reputation among his contemporaries. His lack of concern for the soldiers whose lives he had endangered in Liw, his unskilled command in the battle of Warsaw and his well-deserved reputation of a gambler prompted some troops to disobey him. During the Sejm session, Umiński announced that all division and regiment commanders voting in favor of surrender would be removed from command “which should be vested in the hands of eager and enthusiastic men”⁶⁰. General Bem made a similar appeal before parliamentary deputies. When the news on the replacement of the commander-in-chief had unofficially reached Słupno, General Wroniecki was appointed the warlord of Płock, and he was dispatched to the city with colonel Breański’s guards. Breański had been instructed to restore order in Płock⁶¹. A court-martial headed by General Wroniecki passed a default judgment on Col. Antoni Szymański, Franciszek Wiśniowski, Lt. Col. Jan Adam Wyszkowski, captain Szylicki, 2nd Lt. Biłocki (?)⁶² and father Szynglarski⁶³ “depriving them of their military ranks, honors and sentencing them to death” for invading his headquarters and “conspiring to assassinate the Commander-in-Chief”.

Umiński set out on an inspection of the army. He began his tour with General Ambroży Skarżyński’s cavalry regiment that had been stationed in the greatest proximity. Despite the reluctance expressed by General Wąsowicz and Colonel Wojciech Łączkowski, commander of the 4th uhlan regiment, Umiński instilled in the soldiers an enthusiasm for crossing the Vistula. General Skarżyński, who had been reviled by the soldiers for his attitude in Słupno, declared his readiness to obey Umiński’s orders. The 1st and 5th light cavalry regiments of Kazimierz Skarżyński’s division gave Umiński less than an enthusiastic welcome, but the remaining two regiments (10th uhlan regiment and 3rd light cavalry regiment) greeted him with ardor. Although Rybiński placidly accepted the Sejm’s decision⁶⁴ to deprive him of military command, higher-ranking infantry officers began to rebel against the new leader. Night was drawing near, and Umiński did not manage to visit the infantry which outnumbered the remaining divisions. Its officers

⁶⁰ [J. N. Umiński], *Jenerata...*, p. 72.

⁶¹ He gives a highly confusing account of this in his otherwise captivating memoirs [F. Breański], (*Generata ... autobiografia*, ed. J. Frejlich, Kraków 1914, pp. 33–35) he writes about “vodka glass heroes” and a “drinking bar” atmosphere.

⁶² He could be referring to Brawacki.

⁶³ BPP, manuscript 512, General Maciej Rybiński’s files, col. 877, report date 25 September. As lieutenant colonel and former camp master, he stayed in Prussia (where he had problems with accounting for his expenses, BPP, manuscript 349, col. 206, 235) and then left for Bourges. The French police inquired with General Dwernicki about Wyszkowski and the events in Płock – V. Stefanyk National Academic Library in Lviv (formerly Ossolineum) (“Stefanyk Library”), Dwernicki’s files, manuscript 12, col. 53.

⁶⁴ With the following composition: Walenty Zwierkowski, Wincenty Chełmicki and Władysław Plater.

were heard chanting “Long live Rybiński!”. Major Wilhelm Lipiński of the guard regiment threatened to shoot Umiński’s adjutants should they attempt to speak to the infantry⁶⁵. Lt. Col. Antoni Roślakowski’s battalion and the 1st light infantry regiment surrounded Rybiński’s headquarters, threatening to put down any attempts at depriving the former chief of his command. Soldiers and lower-ranking officers were told that although Umiński had been proclaimed commander by members of the patriotic club in Płock, his nomination had not been legally sanctioned. Umiński later wrote in his diary that he initially wanted to “take several cavalry regiments and artillery batteries and bring the opponents to their senses by firing a few missile rounds”, but he concluded that his plans would only deepen the rift in the army, and he resigned his command⁶⁶. Generals Dembiński and Bem were the potential candidates, but on the night of 23 to 24 September, Niemojowski issued a written decree reinstating General Rybiński to the post of commander-in-chief⁶⁷. According to Rybiński, in that nomination, Niemojowski had also vested him with the powers of the head of the National Government. When Rybiński used that title in the *Address to the Parliament of Great Britain*⁶⁸, a controversy broke out among Polish politicians in exile. On 20 February 1843, Walenty Zwierkowski⁶⁹ and Wincenty Chełmicki issued an official protest. In a 16-page pamphlet, they attempted to prove that after 23 September, Rybiński not only had not held the office of government leader, but due to the absence of one signature on his nomination act, Rybiński’s commandership had never been legally sanctioned⁷⁰. They were

⁶⁵ After 3 October, he marched with his battalion straight to the Russians. *Kurier Litewski*, 14 October 1831; [K. Kołaczkowski], *Wspomnienia...*, vol. 5, p. 148; J. Świećicki, *Pamiętnik ostatniego dowódcy pułku 4 piechoty liniowej*, ed. R. Bielecki, Warszawa 1982, p. 155; L. Drewnicki, *Za moich czasów*, ed. J. Dutkiewicz, Warszawa 1971, pp. 230–231; R. Bielecki, *Słownik...*, vol. 3, pp. 43–44.

⁶⁶ [J. N. Umiński], *Jenerała...*, p. 17. His chief of staff, Lt. Col. Feliks Prószyński, convinced him of the infantry’s resistance and the futility of his attempts to enforce obedience. Umiński was forced to leave the army.

⁶⁷ The description of the events in Słupno and Płock on 23 September is based on: [J. U. Umiński], *Jenerała...*, pp. 10–20; B. Niemojowski, *O ostatnich wypadkach rewolucji polskiej w odpowiedzi na biografję jenerała Macieja Rybińskiego*, Paris 1833, pp. 16–19 – it addresses the idealized image of the last commander-in-chief, F. Chotomski, *Mathias Rybiński, dernier commandat en chef de l’Armée Natinale Polonoise*, in: J. Straszewicz, *Les Polonais et les Polonoises de la Revolution da 29 november 1830*, Paris 1832; W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, pp. 59–82; [J. Lewiński], *Jenerała...*, pp. 129–134; K. Zieliński, *Wzięcie Warszawy...*, pp. 378–381; [S. Barzykowski], *Historja...*, vol. 5, pp. 360–368; A. Ostrowski, *Pamiętnik...*, pp. 454–480; W. Rostocki, *Władza...*, pp. 180–187; N. Kasperek, *Powstańczy epilog...*, pp. 187–193.

⁶⁸ Paris 1843.

⁶⁹ Rybiński wrote that Zwierkowski had been drunk on 23 September and couldn’t possibly remember anything.

⁷⁰ [W. Chełmicki, W. Zwierkowski], *Objaśnienia na urzędowych dowodach oparte, tyżące się przywłaszczenia władzy prezesa Rządu Narodowego przez gen. Rybińskiego, które delegowani z sejmu dla wręczenia temuż generałowi dymisji z naczelnego dowództwa dla wiadomości rodaków podają...*, Paris 1843; cf. *Demokrata Polski* 1842/1843, vol. 5, part 3, p. 187; part 4, pp. 230–231.

wrong as regards the latter accusation. Colonel Ferdynand Dienheim Chotomski⁷¹, Rybiński's close aide, Teodor Morawski⁷² and General Jan Nepomucen Umiński⁷³ stood in Rybiński's defense. General Roman Sołtyk⁷⁴ argued in support of Rybiński's case in a series of printed appeals, and he faced opposition from Chełmicki and Zwierkowski⁷⁵. The situation provoked a fervent debate in the press: Rybiński was attacked by *Orzeł Biały* and *Dziennik Narodowy*, and he was defended by Józefat Bolesław Ostrowski, an untiring columnist of *Nowa Polska* (and member of the Military Alliance)⁷⁶. The discussion spread far and wide, it ceased to revolve around the events of 23 September 1831, addressing the general topic of Rybiński's leadership.

After his reinstatement, Rybiński ordered the demolition of the bridge to show the Russians that he was not contemplating offensive action. General Franciszek Morawski, the key negotiator in the talks with Russia after 13 September, had deserted in the most disgraceful manner on 23 September. Morawski wrote a letter of resignation, he placed it on a heap of other documents, and he defected to the Russian side. He crossed the Vistula near Wyszogród, and having arrived in Warsaw, he gave a detailed account of events in the Polish quarters⁷⁷. Not a single word of condemnation came from Rybiński's council, testifying to a dramatic drop in the army's morale. General Umiński was forced to leave the army⁷⁸, and General Henryk Milberg, former commander of the 4th infantry regiment, was appointed the new negotiator. When Dembiński inquired about orders for Milberg, Rybiński replied that a general needed no instructions. In the daily orders of 24 September, Rybiński reported on previous day's events, thus publicly

⁷¹ F. D. Chotomski, *Odpowiedź panom Chełmickiemu i Zwierkowskiemu na broszurę ogłoszoną przez nich w Paryżu 20 lutego 1843 roku pod tytułem: Objasnienia na urzędowych dowodach oparte, tyżące się przywłaszczenia władzy prezesa Rządu Narodowego*, Paris 1843.

⁷² [T. Morawski], *Odpowiedź ... na odpowiedź pp. Chełmickiemu i Zwierkowskiemu ogłoszoną przez F.D. Chotomskiego w Paryżu*, Paris 1843.

⁷³ [J. N. Umiński], *Jenerata...*, passim.

⁷⁴ R. Sołtyk, *Kilka słów na broszurę pp. Chełmickiego i Zwierkowskiego wydana 20 II 1843 w Paryżu*, Paris 1843.

⁷⁵ W. Zwierkowski, W. Chełmicki, *Odpowiedź p. Sołtykowi na jego kilka słów ogłoszonych drukiem 2 V 1843 w Paryżu*, Paris 1843.

⁷⁶ Including *Nowa Polska* 1843, vol. 5, sheet 12, p. 720.

⁷⁷ Barzykowski (*Historia...*, vol. 5, p. 369) wrote: "he surrendered himself to the enemy, and he joined the Moscow camp. What could have prompted this decision? Was it the realization that Umiński's nomination had made any arrangement impossible or, more probably, the fear that the patriotic club would gain advantage under the new reign of the new commander, thus putting him, the negotiator, in danger? We cannot answer this question, but no reasons are sound enough to justify his disgraceful act". Kajetan Koźmian, Morawski's friend who wrote about the "Zakroczym rabble", approved of his desertion. *Pamiętniki*, vol. 3 Wrocław et al. 1972, p. 347.

⁷⁸ He left the army together with his adjutant Stefan Garczyński who had previously served in Dwernicki's corps and had escaped from exile in Galicia. He inspired Adam Mickiewicz to write "Reduta Ordon" (Ordon's Redoubt). Z. Szelaż, *Stefan Garczyński. Zarys biografii*, Kielce 1983, p. 83. Dismissed "for health reasons" – B. Kórnicka 7864, military files up to 1831, col. 10.

acknowledging that he had abandoned any operations “which were deemed to be fruitless by the Commander-in-Chief who focused solely on future negotiations, referring to them as attempts »to reach truce«⁷⁹. During the council of war, Rybiński confirmed that attempts had been made to assassinate him, adding that in order to deprive him of command, a method different than that selected by the Sejm on the previous day was needed. Rybiński argued that only the council of war which had elected him had the authority to remove the commander from power. The council decided that it would not wait for the Sejm’s decision, and it gave its unanimous support to Rybiński. In Płock, discipline was lax and morale was low. Despite the threats made by Płock’s warlord, General Antoni Wroniecki, the town resembled a raucous council meeting where loud arguments, fervent debates mixed with indecision and utter resignation. The Sejm and the government headed for Prussia. Rybiński’s strict adherence to procedural requirements obstructed the recovery of military funds.

The chaos also resulted from the commander-in-chief’s lack of a strategic concept. On 25 September, the headquarters moved from Słupno to Płock. The army’s ranks were depleted by desertion as well as formal “resignations” that had been readily signed by the reinstated chief. Aided by Morawski’s treacherous testimony, the Russians speeded up the march to the north, approaching Płock where the Poles had wasted three days: 23, 24 and 25 September. Meanwhile, Rybiński resolved matters with the National Government. Already on 23 September, the Cossacks detained castellan Narcyz Olizar and Wincenty Niemojowski in Rypin⁸⁰. Niemojowski sent the word to the commander-in-chief with a description of Schrieber’s partisan “exploits”. Niemojowski also pled for the rescue of his brother, former member of the National Government⁸¹. Rybiński dispatched several squadrons to the north to patrol the road to Prussia. He ignored the request to rescue the prisoners. Deputies and members of the National Government left Płock on 24 September, backed by two Krakusi squadrons commanded by deputy Walenty Zwierkowski (National Guard major, former non-commissioned officer of the famous light cavalry regiment) and two squadrons of the 6th uhlan regiment⁸². They were followed by a sizable group of “other men who were not welcomed by the Commander”⁸³. The news of previous day’s events in Rypin reached the party near Sierpc, and it encouraged Niemojowski to write a letter to Rybiński. In Rypin mayor’s residence, the head of the National Government

⁷⁹ S. Przewalski, *Generał Maciej Rybiński...*, p. 156.

⁸⁰ Cf. [N. Olizar], *Pamiętniki kasztelana...*, in: *Pamiętniki Polskie*, ed. K. Bronikowski, vol. 1, Przemyśl 1883, pp. 20–21.

⁸¹ B. Czart., manuscript 5586, col. 493.

⁸² On 25 September, they were instructed to patrol the area of Sierpc, Biezuń, Rypin and Skępe – *Zródła do dziejów wojny polsko-rosyjskiej 1830–1831 r.*, published by B. Pawłowski, vol. 4, Warszawa 1935, p. 244.

⁸³ W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, p. 88.

announced a manifesto in the presence of deputies. The document was countersigned by minister Józef Świrski. Although Rybiński's supporters in-exile had doubted his existence⁸⁴, the last commander-in-chief, shaken by the recent events, had undoubtedly authored the manifesto. The document stated as follows: "In an attempt to place the national army under the control of the commander-in-chief, the Polish Sejm, in a resolution of 24 January, limited his decision-making powers to the armistice issue, and placed the remaining authority in the hands of the National Government. By arriving at a ceasefire arrangement with the enemy in Modlin, Maciej Rybiński had not abused his powers. The Russian field marshal communicated the enemy's position on the matter with the involvement of General Morawski: Russia had no intentions of signing a truce with Poland, the Polish army was expected to surrender unconditionally and dispatch a delegation to the emperor. In a council of war called on 23 September in the headquarters, the commander-in-chief asked his generals and regiment commanders to vote on the delegation request. By doing so, the commander-in-chief had abused the powers granted to him by the aforementioned resolution". This was followed by an account of the events that had taken place in Płock on 23 September and the following statement: "The head of the Government had no other choice but to reinstate General Rybiński he realized that the National Government could not preside over the country with dignity if the Sejm's authority was not respected; he placed the Płock province committee in control of the treasury, he left Płock and the country". The manifesto also read: "the decisions made by the commander-in-chief in violation of his powers may never affect our honor or the nation"⁸⁵. This is a long quote, but it is worth citing. It was a sharp protest against Rybiński's attempts to strike a deal with the enemy. Unaware of Morawski's disgraceful desertion, Rybiński sent his adjutant after him. When the news broke out, General Milberg was dispatched to meet with the Russians. By the time he arrived in Nowy Dwór, General Berg had already left the town. Tipped by Morawski about changes in Polish command, he was afraid that the Polish army would begin its advance. Berg left behind a short statement on the initiation of war operations. The surprised Milberg asked Rybiński for instructions, and General Ledóchowski, the second delegate dispatched for the negotiations, specified their scope in greater detail on the "terms dictated by him [General Berg – N.K.]". Rybiński formulated the following instructions:

1. Absolute surrender to the Constitutional king;
2. A delegation will be dispatched to the tsar;
3. The army will be stationed around Płock (or in the Płock province);
4. Modlin will be directly surrendered to the Russian army.

⁸⁴ Polish émigrés in Paris (Kniaziewicz and Plater) stopped this publication to protect the Polish army's good name in France.

⁸⁵ *Źródła do dziejów...*, vol. 4, pp. 246–247; W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, p. 92.

Other points concerned technical details. Rybiński insisted that the armistice be signed directly, as if fearing that he would not have the time to surrender⁸⁶. His instructions were an actual act of capitulation: no references were made to amnesty, guarantees other than the preservation of the officers' military ranks were not demanded. On 26 September, General Milberg reported from Modlin on the progress that had been made in the negotiations. Initially, Berg had been represented by General Dellinghausen who signed the preliminary arrangement. On 27 September, the Polish army set out on a march along the Vistula River to move away from the advancing Russian troops. The headquarters were moved from Płock to Lenie Wielkie near Dobrzyń on the Vistula. Milberg was greatly relieved when General Berg arrived in Nowy Dwór in the evening with new terms of armistice. Although he assured the army of his willingness to continue the struggle, Rybiński did everything to almost unconditionally surrender to the Russians. The Polish army was seething with turmoil, and it advanced in the direction of Szpetal which was to host the general headquarters on 28 September. The news that two cavalry squadrons had been unexpectedly defeated in Płońsk reminded Rybiński that despite capitulation talks, a war was still on. The news was correctly interpreted by the commander-in-chief. A bridge was built across the Narew River. General Milberg was expected to arrive in Szpetal. Milberg was hoping to finalize the capitulation during a meeting with Berg, meanwhile he was told that Paskevich was no longer willing to negotiate, and that he had demanded absolute surrender. Berg presented the Polish envoy with a *note verbale*⁸⁷ calling for absolute obedience, declarations to be signed by the commander-in-chief and other high-ranking officers, as well as an oath of allegiance. In his *note verbale*, Paskevich expressed his disbelief "that the Polish army would duly observe their duties to the emperor and the king" for as long as the Modlin fortress remained under Polish control. Paskevich demanded an unconditional surrender of the fortress⁸⁸. It remains unknown whether this demand merely echoed the guarantees that had been made by Polish envoys and the commander-in-chief himself. An alternative section of the note called for immediate obedience to Paskevich and direct surrender of the fortresses in Modlin and Zamość. No references were made to amnesty or a return to the status quo from before the revolution of 29 November. The oath of 1815 did not contain the word "Fatherland" or the adjective "Constitutional" to describe the king. A council of war was called at 4 p.m. on 28 September in Szpetal Górny (on the right bank of the Vistula, opposite Włocławek). Rybiński demanded that all military and tactical units share their opinions about Russia's proposals. Milberg was certain

⁸⁶ *Źródła do dziejów...*, vol. 4, pp. 245–250; [S. Barzykowski], *Historia...*, vol. 5, p. 370; W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, pp. 89, 95–96.

⁸⁷ An unsigned diplomatic note written in the third person, exchanged by public institutions in less important matters.

⁸⁸ W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, pp. 89, 95–96.

that Paskevich's ultimatum would be accepted, but his abrasive manner added to the rigidity of the Polish position. Officers opposing capitulation had become mobilized after the events in Słupno. During Milberg's speech in favor of surrender, the disabled General Suchorzewski used a stick to drag himself to the bedside of General Pac, begging the latter to use his authority and rescue the nation's honor. They were joined by General Wojczyński who had been of equally poor health. A touching scene ensued where three sick men, one still suffering from the wounds inflicted on him in the battle of Ostrołęka, slowly made their way to the council, enticing other battery commanders on their way to join them with loud cries "help us save the honor of the nation!". Did the fact that not a shadow of choice had been left have a decisive impact on the council's fate? The meeting opened with a controversy. Some participants were in favor of a secret ballot, and they were keen on beginning the vote with lower-ranking officers. This approach would provide senior officers with an insight into their subordinates' preferences. An open ballot starting with higher-ranking officers was ultimately voted through. The commander-in-chief divided a sheet of paper into two columns marked as "surrender" and "do not surrender". The first five⁸⁹ votes were cast in favor of surrender. The procedure with a seemingly sealed outcome was interrupted by General Ludwik Pac who stormed into the room in the company of Suchorzewski, Wojczyński and Ziemięcki. Pac made several sharp remarks to remind council participants of their duties towards the country. He was followed by General Emilian Węgierski who said: "Gentlemen! This table, these four walls will bear witness of our wicked deeds. Then again, they could testify to our honor". Senior generals Wojczyński and Suchorzewski and General Ziemięcki ceremoniously approached the table and cast their votes. No other votes in favor of capitulation were cast after that. General Miller and Colonel Benedykt Zielonka (commander of the 5th light cavalry regiment) abstained, arguing that they had not surveyed the opinions of the officers they represented. At one point, Rybiński interrupted the vote with the words: "We did everything in our power to bring about a peaceful resolution, and now, only death can save our honor"⁹⁰. Despite that, General Miller was dispatched to inform Berg that the council had requested several modifications to Russian demands. The letter clearly indicated that the Polish army was ready "to observe its duties before the Constitutional king who

⁸⁹ Other reports speak of six or eight votes cast by outstanding division commanders, including generals Milberg, Jagmin, Andrychiewicz, Bogusławski, Muchowski and Colonel Żeleński (Zieliński). Some historians add Colonel Wierzbicki (10th uhlán regiment), Antoni Gałczyński (2nd line infantry regiment) and Jerzy Niewęglowski (grenadier regiment) to this list. 34 votes were cast against the ultimatum.

⁹⁰ W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, pp. 101–104; [S. Barzykowski], *Historia...*, vol. 5, p. 376; M. Kamiński, *Kilka wspomnień starego żołnierza*, Poznań 1872, pp. 41–42; [J. Lewiński], *Jenerata...*, pp. 137–138; [H. Dembiński], *Jenerata... pamiętnik o powstaniu w Polsce r. 1830-1831*, vol. 2, Kraków 1875, pp. 363–364; S. Przewalski, *Generał Maciej Rybiński...*, p. 163; N. Kasperek, *Powstańczy epilog...*, pp. 190–195.

would be assured of the Polish army's full obedience by a military delegation". This declaration marked a return to the provisions of the Słupno council. The council would not do anything to dishonor the nation, which was what Paskevich's latest demands boiled down to. The letter also communicated that the army would be charged with the consequences of new combat or appeals made to the law of nations on foreign ground. The addressee was assured that this was the final decision of the Polish command, but to leave the negotiations open, the letter was signed by General Milberg⁹¹. There is no doubt that its content had been approved by Rybiński, Lewiński and several higher-ranking officers. The letter is the last documented trace of Polish-Russian negotiations, and it was dismissed by Paskevich in silence. On 29 September, officers from different units began to voice their opinions regarding the matters addressed on the previous day. The replies of nearly all units had been documented. Officers of the first horse artillery battery were in favor of a truce with a guarantee of amnesty. Major Jerzy Bułharyn (1st regiment of Augustów cavalry), who was opposed to Russia's ultimatum, added that soldiers could not be counted on, mainly due to desertion. Officers of the 1st and the 3rd light infantry regiments, the 2nd, 12th and 16th light infantry regiments, the 4th, 7th, 10th and 13th uhlán regiments, the 3rd light cavalry regiment, the 1st light foot artillery company, the 3rd horse artillery battery and the 6th foot artillery company rejected Russia's terms in their entirety, claiming that "they would rather be slain in the battlefield as free men than take the oath and be bound by the shackles of tyranny and oppression". Some officers were in favor of entering Prussia⁹². Walenty Andrychiewicz, Ludwik Bogusławski, Kazimierz Dziekoński, Bonifacy Jagmin, Stanisław Wąsowicz, the Skarżyński⁹³ brothers and General Karol Zieliński, deputy head of the National Government, had left the army after the meeting in Szpetal⁹⁴.

On 3 October, another council of war was held in Rypin, and it was attended by all division, brigade, regiment and battery commanders. As most buildings in Rypin were too small to host such a large gathering, the commander-in-chief convened the meeting in a local pharmacy. It was not a typical council of war, and the meeting was called only to hear the officers' replies to the previously formulated questions:

⁹¹ BPP, manuscript 346, col. 49; W. Zwierkowski, *Działania...*, pp. 103, 104.

⁹² Library of the Polish Academy of Arts and Sciences and the Polish Academy of Sciences in Cracow ("PAU and PAN Library"), manuscript 1194; Materials documenting the history of the 1831 uprising, col. 49, 55, 65, 71, 73, 75, 83, 85, 89, 97, 99, 103, 132, 135.

⁹³ Generals Ambroży and Kazimierz Skarżyńscy were in favor of waging a battle with the Russians. Contrary to the others, they left for Prussia. They were probably described by *Gazeta Wielkiego Księstwa Poznańskiego* (1831, issue No. 231 of 5 October, p. 1233) in an article about two generals quarantined in Golub.

⁹⁴ Zieliński, (*Wzięcie Warszawy...*, p. 380) reports that after Umiński had been nominated commander-in-chief, he resigned the post of deputy head of the National Government; M. Tarczyński, *Generalicja...*, s. 403,404.

“1. Should the war be continued without any hope of victory and with much damage for the country?

2. Should the Polish army succumb to the humiliating terms dictated by Paskevich?

3. Should the army enter Prussia?”⁹⁵.

Not all answers had been recorded in the minutes, and those that had been documented show a variety of opinions. Soldiers of the 4th uhlan regiment which consisted of many non-commissioned officers and privates from the former light cavalry regiment of Napoleon’s Imperial Guard⁹⁶ (Kozietulski’s regiment) were keen on remaining in Poland, and they were supported by the regiment’s officers⁹⁷. The majority of officers of the 10th line infantry regiment were against moving into Prussia, although the plan had been supported by the unit’s soldiers. In the 8th line infantry regiment, nearly 1/8 soldiers were opposed to the Prussian plan. The scheme received the support of the officers and soldiers of the 2nd, 4th, 12th, 13th and 16th line infantry regiments, the 1st and 5th light infantry regiments, the 7th, 10th and 13th uhlan regiments, the 1st and 4th light cavalry regiments, the National Guard, the Mass Movement of the Warsaw district, war commissioner corps, engineer corps, sapper corps, the 1st light foot artillery company, the 6th foot artillery company and the 5th horse artillery battery⁹⁸. The responses of the 5th light cavalry regiment, the 9th line infantry regiment and the grenadier regiment remain unknown. Józef Miller⁹⁹ and Henryk Milberg had left the army shortly before it entered Prussia. Generals Maciej Rybiński, Jakub Lewiński, Wincenty Dobiecki, Kazimierz Małachowski, Stanisław Wojczyński, Antoni Wroniecki, Henryk Dembiński Stefan Ziemięcki, Tadeusz Suchorzewski, Emilian Węgierski, Mamert Dłuski, Ludwik Pac, Paweł Muchowski¹⁰⁰ and Józef Bem crossed the Prussian frontier and remained with the army until the very end.

The debate in General Ramorino’s 2nd corps took on a different turn. The news of the siege of Warsaw and the attitudes demonstrated by certain

⁹⁵ S. Przewalski, *Generał Maciej Rybiński...*, p. 170. He quotes a different version with an additional question: “Should we disband the army and surrender in Poland?”

⁹⁶ W. Tokarz, *Armja Królestwa Polskiego (1815–1830)*, Piotrków 1917, p.121.

⁹⁷ For more references to the corps on the last days of the uprising, refer to Puzyna – Ossolineum, manuscript 16159, col. 151–153. Many soldiers exiled to Prussia were reluctant to return to Poland – BPP, manuscript 407: Józef Bem’s files concerning the Polish army’s march through Germany in 1831–1832, col. 259.

⁹⁸ PAU and PAN Library, manuscript 1194, col. 48, 52, 53, 58, 60, 62, 64, 70, 76, 80, 86, 93, 100, 104, 118, 120, 121, 125, 131.

⁹⁹ He had kept the letter from General Miller, commander of the 1st cavalry brigade of the 2nd cavalry division, written during his exile in Prussia.

¹⁰⁰ Before entering Prussia, he had departed with the 1st infantry division. He was deprived of command on account of desertion. He entered Prussia and arrived in Warsaw on 19 October, claiming that he had marched from the Prussian border in Rokitnica – Central Archives of Historical Records in Warsaw, Government Commission of War, manuscript 477, col. 296.

battalions (“mollement”) had taken the command by surprise¹⁰¹. Ramorino called a council of war at 5 a.m. on 9 September in the army’s headquarters in a manor in Opole, near Siedlce¹⁰². The meeting was to be attended by the commanders as well as one lower-ranking officer from each unit. The debate was held with the participation of 17 higher-ranking and 11 lower-ranking officers. It was not attended by the commanders of units stationed further away from Opole, but they forwarded their remarks at a later date. Kruszewski wrote: “with all the strolling, talking and chaos, it hardly resembled a council of war [underlined in the original – N.K.]¹⁰³. New ideas were born, although the main aim of the meeting was to decide whether the 2nd corps should unite with the Warsaw corps or head south. The latter solution received the support of the chief of staff, Colonel Władysław Zamoyski, and lower-ranking officers. Higher-ranking officers, mostly commanders of large units, spoke in favor of marching to Modlin and joining the Warsaw corps¹⁰⁴. Save for the turmoil, the council’s legitimacy was also quite debatable owing to its composition. In principle, the meeting should have been attended by the commanders of all divisions, brigades, regiments, battalions (mostly partisan troops), companies and artillery batteries. The corps had 39 such officers, including the commander and the chief of staff. The list of participants was inclusive of Colonel Gallois¹⁰⁵ who should have never been “ranked as an officer”¹⁰⁶ before the case of Bronisze was cleared. The command ultimately decided to head back south, and at the time the decision was made (around 8 a.m. on 9 September), it was not a mistake or an act of insubordination. Ramorino and Zamoyski could have acted according to their best judgment because the instructions they had received provided them with a vast degree of freedom. The decision was motivated by the prospect of receiving support in the Zamość fortress, accessing the resources of the Zamość constituency and the proximity of the Austrian border. After the orders had been given, an envoy from the commander-in-chief, Captain Józef Kowalski, arrived at the 2nd corps’ quarters. He quickly realized that Ramorino had already made a decision that was contrary to the orders carried. On 6 September, the plan

¹⁰¹ [W. Zamoyski], *O zarzucanem...*, p. 13 (in French); *Korpus 2 polski...*, p. 144 (in Polish).

¹⁰² The minutes taken by Gustaw Małachowski were lost already in 1831.

¹⁰³ B. Kórnicka, manuscript 1473, col.160 (Kruszewski’s report).

¹⁰⁴ Cf. N. Kasperek, *Ostatnie dni II korpusu gen. Ramorino w powstaniu listopadowym (10–17 września 1831 roku)*, in: *Gdańsk – Polska – Europa. Praca zbiorowa pod redakcją Zdzisława Kropidłowskiego ofiarowana profesorowi doktorowi habilitowanemu Władysławowi Zajewskiemu w siedemdziesiątą rocznicę urodzin*, Gdańsk 2001, pp. 145–147; idem, *Korpus Ramorino a szturm Warszawy*, pp. 233–234; idem, *Powstańczy epilog...*, pp. 133–135.

¹⁰⁵ General Małachowski wrote that Gallois, who had been captured in Bronisze, escaped from prison. He arrived in Warsaw on 7 September, shortly after the signing of the capitulation agreement. He took a horse from imperial stables and rode it to meet with Ramorino – [K. Małachowski], *Opowiadanie...*, p. 40.

¹⁰⁶ [W. Horain], *Kilka słów o działaniach korpusu 2 armii polskiej na prawym brzegu Wisły, pomiędzy 22 sierpnia a 17 września 1831 roku*, Poznań 1849, pp. 30–31.

was to unite the Polish army (the 2nd corps and the forces ousted from Warsaw) between Kałuszyn and Siedlce. Acting in agreement with the enemy, Małachowski marched north. To a certain extent, the agreement also concerned the 2nd corps. The majority of officers, including nearly all higher-ranking staff members, instinctively hoped for the concentration of Polish forces. Ramorino and Colonel Władysław Zamoyski, his ambitious chief of staff who had been actively involved in politics since the beginning of the uprising, were afraid of the merger with the main army. They cited military arguments (a flank attack could be directed towards the Polish army from Praga), but their main fear was that the army would capitulate and put an end to the uprising¹⁰⁷. The distribution of Polish troops could be deduced based on observations of the events in Jabłonna and Modlin and the frequent journeys of Polish officers between the “Polish” Modlin and the “Russian” Warsaw. Ramorino was also concerned that the merger with the main army would further deteriorate his troops’ morale¹⁰⁸. In 1832, Boanwentura Niemojowski inquired whether “Ramorino, laboring under the misconception of a disgraceful surrender, could disobey the commander-in-chief’s orders without assuming any responsibility for his actions?”¹⁰⁹. Kowalski brought orders (No. 8748) issued in Jabłonna on 8 September. It was the second set of instructions addressed to the corps. The first order (No. 8744) instructed the unit to march to Stanisławów on 9 September, and then on to Modlin via Kobyłka. The letter never reached Ramorino. The second document ordered the commander to move further east by crossing a bridge in Kamienczyk. Captain Kowalczyk was familiar with the content of the carried orders, and he was to also to provide Ramorino with verbal instructions¹¹⁰. The commander was ordered to set out for Modlin and avoid armed conflict on the way. The commander-in-chief, notified of Ramorino’s and Zamoyski’s decision, approved of the detour to the south. He proved vulnerable to moral corruption. The Russians insisted on not crossing the Vistula, which became a fact due to various circumstances. Ramorino called a council of war on 16 September in Kosin. It was attended by nearly all generals (excluding Sierawski and Konarski who commanded the rearguard), regiment commanders, Czartoryski and Małachowski. The course of the meeting had not been documented. Another council convened on the same day in Borów, but for most participants and historians, the meetings of 16 September in Ramorino’s

¹⁰⁷ Such gossip was spread among the soldiers (Stefanyk Library, Dwernicki’s files, manuscript 3, col.17).

¹⁰⁸ Ossolineum, manuscript 4951/I, Tomasz Skrodzki, General remarks about the 1831 uprising, col. 114. Ramorino was hoping to move the theater of military operations to the Cracow province.

¹⁰⁹ B. Kórnicka, manuscript 1473, col.104.

¹¹⁰ *Korpus 2 Polski...*, pp. 52–55 (Małachowski’s report of 1832); [W. Zamoyski], *O zarzucanem dowódcy korpusu II generałowi Ramorino niedopełnieniu rozkazów danych mu przez naczelnego dowódcę po upadku Warszawy 1831 roku*, Paris 1844, p. 34.

corps have merged into a single event. The following postulates were made at the council in Kosin:

- fight a battle on local ground and take follow-up action based on its outcome;
- make way to Zamość;
- enter Galicia and surrender.

Capitulation was not an option. Information on General Różycki's passive stance had reached the 2nd corps. The council's ultimate decision remains unknown. According to some commentators, the participants had opted for armed conflict¹¹¹. Barzykowski argues that a decision had been made to seek shelter behind the cordon line along the border¹¹², while other sources claim that the commanders were willing to negotiate with General Rosen¹¹³. Colonel Kruszewski, who had left before the end of the meeting, wrote in his diary: "nobody spoke in favor of entering Galicia"¹¹⁴. The first option was rather unrealistic, and only the second and the third scenarios could be considered. Ludwik Nabelak noted that a decision had been made to enter Galicia, and that he had previously attempted to keep the army's position behind Kosin¹¹⁵, which was most likely the case. Adam J. Czartoryski was strongly opposed to a disgraceful solution for Poland, and he left the second corps directly after the council meeting. General Różycki wrote to Ramorino about the armistice on the left bank of the river: "perhaps you shall deem it appropriate to inform General Rosen of the armistice proposal, making it clear that his refusal will directly lead to bloodshed. The offensive will begin tomorrow at 10 p.m.; therefore, it is important that they make their way across at night before the indicated hour"¹¹⁶. The 2nd corps left its position near Kosin, it marched through Borów and crossed the marshy Sanna River. The unit was ready for combat in the vicinity of the Austrian frontier. A parliamentary deputy was dispatched to General Rosen with a proposal of a temporary truce, but the Russian commander rejected the offer¹¹⁷. Many officers were of the opinion that additional combat and bloodshed were completely futile ("The government and the army have surrendered... what can

¹¹¹ Cf. W. Bortnowski, *2 korpus w powstaniu listopadowym (22 VIII–18IX 1831r.)*, "Studia i Materiały do Historii Wojskowości", vol. 9, 1963, part. 1, p. 230.

¹¹² [S. Barzykowski], *Historia...*, p. 392.

¹¹³ This is not mentioned by Wybranowski ([R. Wybranowski], *Pamiętniki generała...*, vol. 2, Lwiv 1882, p. 145).

¹¹⁴ I. S. Kruszewski, *Pamiętniki z roku 1830–1831*, Warszawa 1930, p. 164.

¹¹⁵ The National Library in Warsaw, manuscript 6599/III: Ludwik Nabelak, Notes on military operations in 1831, col. 17.

¹¹⁶ [W. Zamoyski], *Jenerał Zamoyski 1803–1868*, vol. 2: 1830–1832, Poznań 1913, pp. 415–416.

¹¹⁷ Bortnowski (*2 Korpus...*, p. 230) writes that it was major Stahl of Austria, commander of the frontier section, who declared his readiness to mediate between the two parties. Colonel Podczaski visited the Russians and, according to Wybranowski, he delivered the only credible account. Podczaski served as envoy only once, although Wybranowski claims (*Pamiętniki...*, vol. 2, p. 149) that he performed this duty on three occasions.

we do?” “Nobody will fight and put their life in danger for Mr. Zamoyski’s cause”, etc.)¹¹⁸. The corps was decimated by desertion, mainly of officers who defected across the Austrian border. Ramorino convened yet another council of war. This time, lower-ranking officers were invited to the meeting. In a highly boisterous atmosphere, the participants debated on the following matters:

- “Advancing towards Zamość and keeping close to the Austrian frontier;
- Holding the position for three days until the Galicians build a bridge enabling the corps to cross the Vistula;
- Entering Galicia”¹¹⁹.

At this point, most participants were in favor of entering Galicia, although Zamoyski and Ramorino had attempted to push through formal plans of marching towards Zamość. Before the final outcome, General Sznayde had been dispatched to General Rosen¹²⁰. His mission was to negotiate a minimum 2-day armistice by making a reference to the truce reached by Różycki and Rüdiger, Paskevich and the main army. The Polish envoy awaited Rosen’s decision in Borów, probably in General Krassowski’s quarters. Rosen turned down Sznayde’s request and ordered that the envoy be kept until the morning. Sznayde had prepared himself for the worst (“they may kill me”), and he threatened to make a forceful escape to prove that “this procedure... is a violation of wartime conduct and laws”, adding that those complying with Rosen’s orders would be completely disgraced. Sznayde returned to the corps (he crossed the border half past midnight on 17 September), but Ramorino had not waited for the envoy, and the troops had already moved into Galicia¹²¹. Perhaps, Rosen was hoping that by holding the envoy captive, he would stall Ramorino’s advance into Galicia. If the Polish forces had attempted to cross the frontier during daytime, they would be greeted with Russian fire.

The fate of General Samuel Różycki’s corps had taken a completely different turn. In southern provinces, the last stage of the uprising, including the Polish troops’ march into Cracow and Galicia, did not raise controversy and was not widely documented in historical records. General Różycki, the main protagonist of those events, was not politically involved, and he did not have to account for his participation in the uprising. After the collapse of the uprising, Różycki delivered a public “report” on his activities in 1831 which

¹¹⁸ Cf. B. Kórnicka, manuscript 1473, col. 82–84; [W. Zamoyski], *Jenerał Zamoyski...*, vol. 2, pp. 418–419, 423; [R. Wybranowski], *Pamiętniki ...*, vol. 2, pp. 148–149, W. Podolski, *Wyprowa Ramorino (Fragment z rękopisu pamiętnika)*, [ed.] S. Płoski, Przegląd Historyczno-Wojсковy 1930, vol. 3, p. 269.

¹¹⁹ Stefanyk Library, Dwernicki’s files, manuscript 3, col. 18; J. Grabowiecki, *Moje wspomnienia w emigracji od roku 1831–1854 spisane w Marsylii*, ed. E. H. Nieciowa, Warszawa 1970, p. 25.

¹²⁰ Barzykowski (*Historia...*, vol. 5, p. 394) writes that he was accompanied by major Stahl who had undertaken to mediate between the parties.

¹²¹ B. Kórnicka, manuscript 1473, col. 85–86.

was a masterly propaganda move¹²². The modest account submitted by Colonel Józef Zaliwski went almost unnoticed¹²³.

On 6 September, Różycki received orders that had been issued in Warsaw three days earlier before Krukowiecki's communication with Paskevich. The general was instructed to destroy Russian bridges near Janowiec and Zawichost¹²⁴. Those were the only instructions that had reached the corps from Warsaw. With strong pressure being exerted by Rüdiger's forces, Różycki found himself in a very difficult situation.

The Polish camp was visited by a Russian parliamentary deputy with a ceasefire proposal. He based his argument on the capitulation of Warsaw and the agreement reached in the capital. The deputy was initially treated with mistrust, but the veracity of his proposal was soon confirmed by General Malachowski's envoy, Captain Wincenty Nieszokoć, an active participant in the events of the November Night, who was allowed to pass through the Russian cordon line. His mission did not raise any suspicions. He carried with him Malachowski's orders (No. 8751) stating that "all hostilities would cease as a result of the armistice after the evacuation of Warsaw". Nieszokoć added that the commander-in-chief had demanded "that a truce be reached instantly, and that it is not interrupted until the enemy launches a hostile attack. General Różycki shall have full authority to negotiate the terms of the armistice at own discretion. Any other arrangements, including with Russian authorities or new authorities appointed by the Russian army, shall be made at the sole discretion of the commander-in-chief"¹²⁵. In his instructions, Małachowski quoted the agreement signed during the capitulation of Warsaw which had not been mentioned in the orders (No. 8748) addressed to Ramorino. Różycki initially dispatched captain Horain to Rüdiger, but the Russian general refused to speak with the envoy¹²⁶. A truce was reached only through the mediation of Colonel Jan Ledóchowski, Major Adolf Grochol-ski and captain Eustachy Januszkiewicz. The demarcation line cut Ramorino off from the Vistula which was not a good sign. The parties also agreed that the armistice could be called off upon 24 hours' notice. Ledochowski visited

¹²² S. Różycki, *Zdanie sprawy narodowi z czynności w roku 1831*, Bourges 1832. In certain parts, it merely delivers an account of the corps' business.

¹²³ [J. Zaliwski], *Odpowiedź podpułkownika ... na zarzuty jta Różyckiego*, Pamiętnik Emigracji, (Mieczysław III), 2nd annals: 1832, 1 November, pp. 7–8; W. Saletra, *Generał Samuel Różycki w kampanii 1831 roku*, Rocznik Świętokrzyski, vol. 16: 1989, pp. 7–8.

¹²⁴ BPP, manuscript 406, Files from the Polish Army Headquarters of 1831, vol. 20: general Samuel Różycki's corps, ed. Eustachy Januszkiewicz, col. 298; S. Różycki, *Zdanie sprawy...*, p. 34

¹²⁵ S. Różycki, *Zdanie sprawy...*, pp. 40–41.

¹²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 43. Rüdiger did not refuse on account Horain's low rank; he was angered by the fact that the Polish envoy had been transported through his camp without a blindfold. Horain was not blindfolded because the Russians had been convinced that this would be the end of the campaign and the war – M. Budzyński, *Wspomnienia z mojego życia*, vol. 1, Poznań 1880, pp. 85–87.

Rüdiger's quarters several times, and the parties exchanged prisoners, mostly those captured during recent battles. The news of the truce reached General Gabriel Biernacki in the Kalisz province, and he was authorized to take similar action. The proposal to suspend military operations rescued Różycki from his predicament. Facing fierce opposition from a much stronger Russian army, he was forced to seek shelter in the woods. The activation of reserve forces, which were often reluctant to become involved in combat, provided Różycki with hope of reinforcing his position.

Perhaps in the first days that followed the armistice, Różycki and his men were deluded that the war had come to an end. The exchange of prisoners seemed to suggest that the Russians had shared this view. But the battles waged by Ramorino and the refugees fleeing from Warsaw were best proof that the final decision to surrender had not yet been made. Różycki accelerated the reorganization of his corps, and he mobilized all existing forces. At the news that the 2nd corps could arrive in the Sandomierz province, Rüdiger loyally warned the Poles that he would cross the demarcation line, but not earlier than 36 hours after being notified of the Ramorino's arrival. Rüdiger emphasized that Różycki "should not regard this move as an indigent breaking off the truce"¹²⁷. The Russian general hoped to immobilize Różycki and cut him off from the Vistula, the contact point with Ramorino's corps. On 21 September, after defeating the 2nd corps and reinforcing own troops, Rüdiger discontinued his correspondence with Różycki and demanded a surrender from the Polish corps¹²⁸. This explains why Różycki later moved into Galicia.

The remaining Polish troops, mainly rearguard formations, made singlehanded attempts to strike a deal with Russia. General Biernacki, the military commander of the Kalisz province, set out south. In the general chaos that ensued, some "citizens" returned "to patiently await their destiny", while others sought shelter behind the Prussian cordon line. A loose group of cavalry and infantry soldiers, for whom war was an adventure and an excuse to leave home, surrendered to the Russians under General Biernacki's command in Warsaw. This was the first, unfortunately not the last, incident of the type in the history of the Polish-Russian war. General Zygmunt Stryjeński, head of the cavalry reserve stationed in the Cracow province, arrived in Rüdiger's quarters. Stryjeński and his 2000 men¹²⁹ had capitulated on 26 September, and the event had been swiftly used by Nicholas as a propaganda measure. Stryjeński did not share the fate of General Jan Wyssenhoff, co-commander of the cavalry reserve who had been exiled to Kostroma after the fall of the uprising. Colonel Maciej Dembiński, yet another

¹²⁷ S. Różycki, *Zdanie sprawy...*, p. 46.

¹²⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 51.

¹²⁹ Mostly former officers and General Dwernicki's soldiers, volunteers from Galicia and the Kingdom.

er member of this incompetent group of officers, capitulated in Jędrzejów. In late 1831, the official press of the Kingdom of Poland published tsar Nicholas I's manifesto of 3/15 December granting pardon to a single battalion of the 6th line infantry regiment "which had surrendered on 17 September [29 September – N. K.] in Cracow"¹³⁰. Perhaps, the battalion had been assigned the number of a pre-uprising formation to strengthen the manifesto's propaganda effect.

The fortresses in Modlin and Zamość were preparing for surrender¹³¹. Since the beginning of the war, Modlin had remained under the command of General Ignacy Ledóchowski. The artillery unit was large, but deeply divided and somewhat outdated. The garrison had been set up under tents, and the soldiers were nearly completely deprived of winter clothing. Morale was low, desertion was on the rise with entire groups of soldiers defecting to the enemy's side¹³². The Russians informed the commander of the Polish army's retreat to the north. Modlin's soldiers remained under the impression that a part of the army had surrendered in Płock and that only small units had continued their march¹³³. This news seriously damaged the morale of privates as well as higher-ranking officers. A battalion of the 15th line infantry regiment was openly opposed to military engagement. On 6 October, confirmed news about Rybiński's advance into Prussia reached Modlin. A day later, generals Krasowski and Gołowin met with Ledóchowski, Czyżewski and Kołaczkowski and decided that Modlin would surrender to Prince Michał. Their graceful capitulation statement was accepted, and it read as follows: "after the sad reassurance that various corps of the Polish army had capitulated in the face of the enemy's overpowering strength, they are ready to surrender the fight which, although shrouding the Polish forces in glory, is no longer beneficial to the Polish case". Modlin's staff were ready to vacate the fortress and share the fate of their fellow soldiers. In a letter to Prince Michał, Ledóchowski wrote that "they will become faithful servants of His Imperial Highness King of Poland Nicholas I" on condition that "none of our soldiers, regardless of their origin, will be persecuted for their political or military actions". On 9 October, Polish soldiers surrendered and marched towards Wyszogród where most of them were disbanded¹³⁴. The officers proceeded to Warsaw to take the oath of servitude. After the fall of the uprising, Lt. Col. Maksymilian Ćwierczkiewicz (fortress major) discovered Polish regimental banners hidden in the fortress.

¹³⁰ Official Journal of Mazowsze Province, 1832, issue No. 16 of 9 January, p. 25.

¹³¹ This problem is not addressed by J. Feduszek in his book about the fortresses of the November Uprising, *Twierdze Modlin, Serock, Zamość w planach strategicznych powstania listopadowego*, Lublin 1999.

¹³² Cf. BPP, manuscript 397, col. 573-.

¹³³ [E. Iszkowski], *Wspomnienia...*, in: *Zbiór pamiętników do historii powstania polskiego z roku 1830–1831*, Lviv 1882, pp. 445–446.

¹³⁴ Based on: [K. Kołaczkowski], *Wspomnienia...*, vol. 5, p. 140–150.

The dramatic situation in Zamość, which had been blocked since the middle of the 1831 campaign, was coming to an end in the south. After the surrender of Modlin, Jan Krysiński, the commander of the Zamość fortress, was mistrustful of General Kaisarovov and, upon his consent, he dispatched officers to reconnoitre the situation in the country. His decision outraged the Russian authorities who were hoping to score spectacular results, and they ordered an armed siege of the fortress. Their instructions had not been carried out as on 21 October, Zamość surrendered on terms identical to those dictated in Modlin, including a guarantee of amnesty for the insurgents from the taken lands. Obviously, the Russians never fulfilled those obligations¹³⁵. Some officers openly opposed the capitulation, mostly the insurgents from Podole, among them poet Maurycy Gosławski¹³⁶ who composed one of his finest pieces of verse, "Zwątpienie" (Doubt), on 15 October. The officers and the soldiers officially parted on 22 October¹³⁷.

General Ramorino's corps was the only large Polish military unit which had not conducted capitulation talks with the Russian. Although many historians and authors have argued that it was Ramorino who had pushed for surrender of Polish forces, historical records provide evidence to the contrary.

¹³⁵ W. Tokarz, *Wojna...*, p. 553.

¹³⁶ After capitulation, Gosławski made his way to Galicia where he joined the conspiracy movement. He was arrested, and he died in prison in 1834.

¹³⁷ BPP, manuscript 538, vol. 1, col. 31 – the troops' farewell address to Aleksander Wereszczyński.