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Watykan o sytuacji w Europie po konferencji monachijskiej

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Artykuł został opracowany do udostępnienia w Internecie dzięki wsparciu Ministerstwa Nauki i Szkolnictwa Wyższego w ramach dofinansowania działalności upowszechniającej naukę.

JERZY TOMASZEWSKI

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Przedstawiony poniżej dokument nie jest zupełną nowością. Po raz pierwszy ogłosił go monachijski miesięcznik „Stimmen der Zeit” w sierpniu 1979 r., po czym fragmenty — w niezbyt dokładnym tłumaczeniu — podał „Tygodnik Powszechny” (1979, nr 35). Uprzejmości dr Milana Haunera zawdzięczam odbitkę kserograficzną oryginału, na podstawie której podaję pełny tekst.

Autorem listu był Francis d'Arcy Godolphin Osborne, który od lutego 1936 r. do czerwca 1947 r. reprezentował Rząd Jego Królewskiej Mości przy Stolicy Świętej. Był to nieoficjalny raport (przyczyny tej nieoficjalności wyjaśnia autor w komentarzu do sprawozdania) przeznaczony dla Sekretarza Stanu lorda Halifaxa, jednego z architektów porozumienia monachijskiego, które zdecydowało o podporządkowaniu Czechosłowacji III Rzeszy. Na pierwszej stronie listu znajduje się adnotacja zaopatrzona literą H, prawdopodobnie inicjałem lorda Halifaxa, który kierował raport do Foreign Office. Obok tego jest komentarz Roberta Vansittarta, który piastował stanowisko Głównego Doradcy Dyplomatycznego.

Dokument ten zasługuje na uwagę z kilku powodów. Przede wszystkim jest interesującym przyczynkiem do wyjaśnienia polityki brytyjskiej w 1938 r. Pouczające są w tym względzie nie tylko opinie Osborna, lecz także dopisek Vansittarta. Po drugie, informuje o stanowisku Piusa XI wobec III Rzeszy pod koniec 1938 r., ukazując je w odmiennym świetle, niż przedstawia to historiografia¹. Ciekawe są wskazówki na temat ewolucji stanowiska Watykanu pod wpływem ekspansji hitleryzmu. Trudno nie zauważyć, że poglądy Piusa XI były znacznie bardziej trzeźwe, niż opinie i nadzieje wytrawnych dyplomatów brytyjskich.

Wreszcie nie mniej ciekawe jest zestawienie wypowiedzi Piusa XI ze sformułowaniami użytymi przez kardynała Pacellego, który wkrótce miał być wybrany papieżem pod imieniem Piusa XII (Pius XI zmarł 10 lutego 1939 r.). Za troskliwie wyważonymi słowami dostrzec można — jak sędzę — różnice poglądów między papieżem a jego sekretarzem stanu. Pius XI krytycznie odniósł się do strategii brytyjskiej, Pacelli kwestionował natomiast tylko taktykę.

Dokument publikuję ściśle według oryginału, opuszczając jedynie jeden całkowicie nieczytelny wyraz dopisany na pierwszej stronie. Jest to maszynopis; pierwszą stronę sporządzono na urzędowym formularzu Poselstwa, z wydrukowanym nagłówkiem. Podpis oraz inicjały autora raportu wykonano atramentem. Od ręczne adnotacje czytelników raportu prawdopodobnie sporządzono ołówkiem, lecz odbitka kserograficzna nie pozwala na niewątpliwe ustalenie tego.

Dokument przechowywany jest w Londynie w Public Record Office. Wszelkie prawa przedruku przysługują Koronie Brytyjskiej. Pragnę podziękować Ambasadzie Wielkiej Brytanii w Warszawie za łaskawe pośrednictwo w uzyskaniu zgody na publikację listu. Wdzięczny jestem również Kontrolerowi Stationery Office Jej Królewskiej Mości za zezwolenie na druk.

¹ Por. E. Rafalski, *Polityka Watykanu w przededniu II wojny światowej (na tle głównych akcji dyplomatycznych)*, Warszawa 1978, s. 55, 88 n.

LIST FRANCISA D'ARCY GODOLPHIN OSBORNE'A

Rzym, 29—30 grudnia 1938

Oryg.: Londyn, Public Record Office, FO 371/23047, k. 141—145.

British Legation
to the Holy See
20, Via Quattro Fontane — Rome (5)

PERSONAL

/4/10/38

December 30th 1938

My dear Secretary of State,

I am sending you privately a brief record of a long conversation I had with the Pope two days ago. I do not want to advertise unnecessarily his rather regrettable views on the Munich solution of the Czechoslovakian crisis. Allowance must be made for the fact that he is an old and ill man, deeply distressed by the German antireligious and racial policy and obstinate and uncompromising in such opposition as he can offer to it. He listened very fairly to all my counter-arguments, but I do not flatter myself that I was able to convince him¹.

Yours sincerely,
D. G. OsborneThe Right Honourable
The Viscount Halifax K. G., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E.
Foreign Office

I was received by the Pope to-day in the course of his usual end of the year reception of the Diplomatic Corps. In order to spare his energies the reception has been spread out over three mornings, during which he sees six Heads of Missions for an allotted time of five minutes each. The time actually varies normally between five minutes and a quarter of an hour. I happened to be the last on the list to-day and he kept me talking for nearly forty minutes. At the beginning of the interview I offered His Holiness the usual compliments of the season of behalf of His Majesty's Government and myself. He reciprocated most amiably, spoke very cordially of Great Britain and her importance and influence in the world, expressed his gratification over the institution of the Apostolic Delegation in Great Britain and thanked me for such part as I had played in the negotiations on this matter.

I then said that I hoped shortly to be bringing the Prime Minister and Secretary of State to see him. This led to a long discussion of the recent crisis, the Munich solution and the world menace of Nazi Germany which lasted for

¹ Na dokumencie widnieje stempel kancelarii z datą rejestracji: 9 stycznia 1939, nieczytelny skrót oraz dwie adnotacje, odmiennymi charakterami pisma: Dep[artment] H[alifax].

The Cardinal Secretary of State's query is unanswerable; better be addressed to the French rather than to us. R[obert] V[ansittart].

over half an hour. He spoke freely and frankly, with energy and decision and sometimes with humour. His health may be precarious, but his mental powers are unimpaired. He feels very strongly indeed on the whole German question and on the world danger that Hitler represents and I am afraid that he regards the outlook with something like despair. He said that he would frankly express to me his views of British policy and he did so, briefly to the following effect.

Mr. Chamberlain had once said in the House of Commons that he would consider war justified to prevent the hegemony of any one Power over Europe. But had not the result of Munich been to establish German hegemony over Europe? He himself firmly believed that Hitler would on no account have risked war² and he could therefore only conclude that the Prime Minister had been outbluffed by Hitler. It had been a conflict between two wills and the stronger will had won.

I objected that I did not agree; that I believed that Hitler had gone so far that he would have gone to war sooner than lose prestige by giving way on his published determination to incorporate the Sudeten territory; that it was not so much a contest between two wills as between two responsibilities: Hitler was quite ready to sacrifice the German people to secure the Sudeten territory and to rescue the Sudeten Germans, while Mr. Chamberlain was reluctant, except in the last resort, to involve the British people in war in a matter in which it could not be denied that much justice was on the German side, whatever might be said of the blackmailing methods of securing this justice; lastly, I believed that the really important thing about Munich was that it had marked a definite cleavage between the two dictators and their peoples and I thought it was vitally essential to play upon this emergent difference of opinion.

I then asked His Holiness how exactly he would have acted otherwise than Mr. Chamberlain and at what point he would have taken the strong line, and just what strong line, that he considered would have been the right answer to Hitler's "bluff". But I received no satisfactory answer to this. After he had repeated to me a number of times that he had always felt sure that there would be no war, because Hitler would not risk war, I reminded him respectfully that at the very height of the crisis he had offered his life to God on behalf of peace. No exception was taken to my reminder, but the point, which I thought a telling one, was not pursued.

In a further discussion of Germany's unreadiness for war, which he said was reported to him from all sides, he quoted from Moltke who had said that for the German army everything must be organised and pre-arranged since the German soldier was incapable of adapting himself to unforeseen circumstances or of improvising any initiative. (Incidentally, I am told that German training of to-day devotes special attention to the development of initiative and improvisation). The German was, he said, sentimental romantic and imaginative, but because of these characteristics weak in will-power. Hence his ready submission to the Hohenzollerns and Hitler. A German professor had expressed to him in the early days of Fascism his surprise at the submission of the Italians to authoritarian control and had added that the German people would never so submit themselves. The Pope had replied that, on the contrary, the Germans would in like circumstances prove far more submissive; subsequent events had proved him right. He also told me that at the beginning of the Great War he had told Pope Benedict, who had believed in an inevitable German victory, in the presence of Cardinal Gaspari,

² *Na marginesie znajduje się znak zapytania, prawdopodobnie ręką R. Vansittarta.*

that unless the Germans could win in the first month of the war, they would ultimately be defeated in spite of their preparedness and the unpreparedness of the Allies.

After leaving the Pope I paid the customary visit of courtesy to the Cardinal Secretary of State. I briefly outlined what the Pope had said and asked His Eminence if he shared these views. He replied that he would tell me frankly that he did not understand why, if we were ultimately prepared to accept the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, for which the Germans had a reasonable case, we had not said so earlier and so avoided Berchtesgaden, Godesberg and Munich and their consequence, which bore the appearance of a diplomatic victory for Hitler.

It is clear from these two conversations that, in the eyes of the Vatican, the German danger to the Church and to the peace of the world has now replaced the former obsession with the Communist menace. And this is very comprehensible. Consequently the increase of German power and Nazi influence through the Anschluss and the incorporation of the Sudeten districts, which means an extension of the Nazi anti-Catholic and anti-religious front, has caused alarm and resentment.

D. G. O.

December 29, 1938.