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THE SILESIAN SANATION ON THE GREAT ECONOMIC CRISIS OF THE 1930s

| Abstract

- ▶ *Goal* – the article analyzes the anti-crisis policy of the Silesian Sanation. In this challenging period for the economy, the Silesian provincial authorities had to counteract the crisis's adverse effects and defend themselves against attacks from the opposition, mainly the Silesian Christian Democrats and socialists, who criticized their actions.
- ▶ *Research methodology* – source analysis, comparative, and description methods were used. This investigation is based on pre-and post-war studies on the discussed topic.
- ▶ *Score/results* – during the crisis years, the Silesian authorities extended the public works system and triggered the Polonization of the Silesian industry. Contrary to the central government, the active involvement of the state in economic life was accepted by the Silesian Sanation. The state was taking over indebted German enterprises because of the weakness of the Polish private capital.
- ▶ *Originality/value* – the article is based on source materials, i.e., Prints and Transcripts of the Silesian Parliament, materials from the National Christian Labor Union congresses, and the Sanation press. The Silesian Sanation stance towards interventionism was stated, which is often forgotten when writing about the government's attitude (as a representative of the total authorities) to the state's role in the economy.

| **Keywords:** Silesia, Silesian Sanation, crisis policy, polonization, Michał Grażyński, The Second Polish Republic.

1. Introduction

The Silesian Province stood out from other provinces of the Second Polish Republic in many respects. It was established as the last one, in June 1922, the smallest (it occupied only 1.1% of the country's area – 4.2 thousand km²), the most densely populated (1.1 million inhabitants – 4.4% of the country's population) [Janicki, 1932: 36; Popiołek, 1972: 401] and the most industrialized [Popkiewicz, Ryszka, 1959: 69–71; Jędruszczak, 1958: 387]. It consisted of two regions: a part of Cieszyn Silesia and a part of Upper Silesia. It was the only one with autonomy, within which it had its own legislative body – the Silesian Parliament and an executive body – the Silesian Provincial Council.

After the May Coup d'État in 1926, the Sanation took over the country's rule. Józef Piłsudski appointed Michał Grażyński, a resident of Małopolska, to the position of the Silesian Provincial Governor. For the Silesian provincial authorities, the challenging period of the great economic crisis became a test of the effectiveness of their efforts to mitigate its effects and, at the same time, an increased attack from the opposition, mainly the Silesian Christian Democrats and socialists, who criticized their actions.

2. Characteristics of the Silesian Sanation

The May Coup d'État opened a new stage of economic policy in Upper Silesia, especially in the industrial policy. The Sanation found many supporters here as the May Coup d'État was supported by, among others, the Association of Silesian Insurgents (ZPŚI) and the Association for the Defense of the Western Borderlands. Also, many unaffiliated Silesians favored Piłsudski. Meanwhile, the Association of Silesian Catholics (ZŚK), the National Workers' Party (NPR) since 1920, the National Workers' Faction, National Democrats (endecja), and Christian Democracy in Upper Silesia did not support the coup. Under the influence of political sympathies, the Christian Democrats split into three groups: the Lviv group, which strongly supported the coup, the Warsaw group – hesitant, and the Silesia group, which unequivocally condemned the Coup d'État [Rechowicz, 1965: 112].

Grażyński's arrival in Katowice and taking up the position of the provincial governor was not convenient for many Silesians. The inhabitants of the province were divided into supporters and opponents of the Sanation, fighting each other

in the Silesian Parliament, in the press, and at organized rallies. The Sanation had its daily *Polska Zachodnia*, the Christian Democrats *Polonia*, and NPR *Polak*. These newspapers published articles strongly criticizing political opponents.

Provincial Governor Grażyński was well acquainted with the realities of this region. Participating in the Silesian uprisings and performing various functions between the second and third uprisings, he got acquainted with the opinions and moods of the Upper Silesians, becoming increasingly convinced of the need for an armed solution to the issue of Upper Silesia belonging to Poland. Already at that time, he came into conflict with Wojciech Korfanty, who delayed the outbreak of the uprising and was a supporter of resolving contentious issues in politicians' offices. During the third uprising, Grażyński commanded the "Wschód" Group, whose members were recognized as rebels, and several commanders were even arrested by Korfanty leading the uprising [Rechowicz, 1988: 40]¹.

Grażyński's conflict with Korfanty resulted to a large extent from their great political ambitions. In his memoirs, P. Dubiel wrote that Korfanty always spoke of Grażyński with irony and called him not a provincial governor but a "shorty" by his short stature [Dubiel, 1973: 203], "both of them acted without scruples, not restricting themselves in methods they employed" [Ibid.: 175]. This was evident in the propaganda campaigns before the upcoming municipal elections in November 1926. Korfanty even accused ZPŚI of being controlled by a gang of criminals, for which the provincial governor was responsible. Furthermore, in the Silesian Parliament, the opposition deputies in a preponderance attacked the Sanation. Only the 4th term Parliament, composed almost exclusively of Sanation deputies, supported the policy of the Silesian authorities.

It is also worth mentioning the Sanation in Cieszyn Silesia. Perhaps due to their devotion of Zaolzie to the Czechs, the attitude of the inhabitants towards Piłsudski was rather reluctant. The legionary tradition was strong here, but only partly related to the person of Józef Piłsudski. Piłsudski's troops taking an oath of allegiance to the Central Powers aroused mixed feelings here and cooled the desire of Cieszynians to enlist in the Legions in Krakow. They preferred to go to Mszana, where they took an oath of allegiance to Austria. Piłsudski had the greatest support among PPS activists and members [Długajczyk, 1983: 40–41]. This changed after the May Coup d'État when the number of Sanation supporters increased significantly. Długajczyk [1980: 23] can be quoted in this respect: "if

¹ For details of the conflict, see the work of Rechowicz, 1988: 34–41.

Piłsudski had sought the Polish western lands with the same will with which he pressed east, things might have turned out differently.”

The May Coup d'État took place in favorable economic conditions. The years of prosperity were used by the Sanation camp to proclaim slogans that it was thanks to the new authorities and their economic policy. The strike of English miners mitigated the effects of the tariff war with Germany, and until 1929 macroeconomic indicators were satisfactory. Only the outbreak of the great economic crisis posed real challenges to the Sanation. In Upper Silesia, due to the industrial character of the region and the anti-Polish activity of foreign (especially German) capital, the standard of living of workers fell, unemployment increased, and attacks from the opposition intensified, which also vented their frustrations in parliamentary debates.

3. Anti-crisis debate in the Silesian Parliament

Printouts and transcripts from the sessions of the Silesian Parliament provide a lot of interesting information. Political struggles intensified as the economic situation continued to deteriorate. Opposition deputies accused the Silesian provincial authorities of the lack of an effective program to counteract the crisis.

While in 1930 the Silesian economy was not in a poor condition, the following years brought a significant decrease in production and the related consequences. The economic downturn reduced budget revenues and the deteriorating market situation encouraged MPs to criticize foreign capital in Upper Silesia. From the benches of the left-wing deputies, accusations were made against the activities of German industrialists and the government's conciliatory stance towards their claims. The granting of concessions, demands for tax breaks, reduction of railway tariffs by entrepreneurs, decline in employment, and, at the same time, high salaries of directors were criticized [13 pos. III S. Śl., 24.11.1931, MP Roguszczak: 10–12]. The left even demanded the nationalization of factories and mines [10 pos. II S. Śl., 17.09.1930, MP Wiczorek: 38]. The Sanation deputies defended the line of budget savings policy, emphasizing its advantages [4 pos. III S. Śl., 13.02.1930, MP Witezak: 32]. Refuting accusations of “squeezing economic life into the tight framework of the current system,” limiting investments, lowering civil servants' salaries, dumping exports, raising prices of industrial goods, etc. [11 pos. III S. Śl., 30.09.1931, MP Glücksmann: 19] argued that although the chosen policy course forces one to make sacrifices, it is effective. At the same

time, they criticized the foreign capital's policy of ignoring the needs of the Polish State and boycotting Polish products. Therefore, they put forward the postulate of "control and interference of the state factor in the matters of production and private capitalist economy and the need to adapt the private economy to the needs and requirements of our country" [13 pos. III S. Śl., 24.11.1931, MP Kapuściński: 21]. The accusations of the socialist Glücksmann of colluding with the owners of heavy industry resulted in attacks on Korfanty for receiving subsidies for the promotion of German capital in his newspapers [Ibid., MP Kapuściński: 18–21]. At this meeting, three Sanation's motions were also submitted by deputies from the National Club of the Christian Labor Union (NCZP), the equivalent of the Nonpartisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government (BBWR), on state control over the economy of heavy industry and the establishment of the institution of an extraordinary commissioner to combat unemployment in Silesia [Druk nr 149 /III], on the removal of foreigners from industry in Silesia and replacing them with Polish citizens [Druk nr 151/III] and on the statutory termination of all private law contracts involving disproportionately high service salaries in the industry [Druk nr 152/III]. It should be explained that the Sanation authorities in Silesia, headed by the provincial governor, expressed a reluctant attitude towards foreign capital, especially German. Grażyński stated this many times in his speeches. In December 1931, the Labor and Social Welfare Committee dealt with the motion of the Christian Democrats and the NDP deputies regarding the catastrophic economic situation of the Silesian Province [Druk nr 148/III], and conclusions were presented at one of the sessions of the Parliament in January 1932. The Committee's deliberations with the representatives of employers' and employees' unions resulted in a resolution calling on the provincial governor to submit to the government of the Republic of Poland the opinion of the Silesian Parliament regarding:

- disastrous export policy (dumping), for which the whole society puts money up;
- need to strengthen the internal market and increase the purchasing power of Polish farmers;
- reduction of taxes and their fair distribution;
- return by the state treasury of PLN 300 million in tax surplus² collected from the province, which can be used to finance large-scale public works;

² In response, Stefan Starzyński, who was then an official in the Ministry of Treasury, claimed that the Silesian treasury owed the state treasury PLN 200 million. See Rechowicz, 1965: 257.

- developing a plan to settle the unemployed on small plots of land;
- limiting excessively high salaries of civil servants in industrial concerns;
- stop imposing by the central authorities people who do not have the appropriate qualifications and are overpaid for high positions in the Silesian industry;
- cutting down the commercial costs by reducing sales offices, e.g., creating a single coal syndicate under government control and with the participation of employee unions;
- granting cheap loans for housing construction and public works;
- halting further labor mechanization in industry;
- suspending the collection of overdue taxes from enterprises because enforcement threatens to bankrupt them;
- banning the use of holiday leaves, shortening working hours, and the use of a four-shift system in plants with continuous operation, so that more workers can be hired without lowering wages;
- awarding government contracts in the first place to the Upper Silesian industry [14 pos. III S. Śl., 14.01.1932: 13–14].

When the crisis hit its rock bottom and the plight of workers, especially the unemployed in Silesia, was deteriorating, the Sanation deputies louder and louder began to demand state control over the industry. The intensifying industry monopolization and the dangerously widening “price scissors” gave reason for this. Józef Witczak, MP, argued: “It is the policy of cartels and trusts that has stemmed the economic development cogs of classical capitalism, and thus the economic system of Europe has been distorted. The cartel policy hampered the free competition principle, which, on the one hand, strengthened the value of money, but on the other, there was no reduction in prices. This cannot occur due to the cartel policy of big industry. It is clear that in the first place all efforts must be directed to the struggle against the existing price policy of big industry” [14 pos. III S. Śl., 14.01.1932, MP Witczak: 38]. MP Stefan Kapuściński spoke in a similar tone, believing that the crisis could be mitigated by exerting strict control over the economy of heavy industry. At the same time, he emphasized that it did not have to be only government control but state control with the support of social factors such as trade, labor unions, and staff associations. Furthermore, such control cannot be retained without the presence of a commissioner to fight unemployment, as some suggested [16 pos. III S. Śl., 22.01.1932, MP Kapuściński: 37–38]. Both deputies also argued about maintaining a budget

balance and reducing spending to avoid the crisis. At the next parliamentary session, Witczak declared that his club, within its autonomous powers exercised, would take special care of the unemployed by allocating possible savings to emergency help for them and support for the investment program submitted by the provincial governor. "Apart from the framework of autonomous powers, the MPs' Club of the NChZP will persistently strive to strengthen state interference over Silesian industry, obtain non-tax funds for public works in Silesia from other sources, and will make efforts to find a practical solution to the settlement issue" [17 pos. III S. Śl., 26.01.1932: 14]. The latter proposal was seriously considered by the Silesian Sanation. High unemployment among workers forced them to look for various forms of solving the problem, and one of them was the proposal to settle the unemployed on small plots of land to alleviate their plight. The Sanation deputies called for the introduction of public works on a large scale in Silesia due to the high concentration of the unemployed. Kapuściński reported that the provincial authorities were trying to collect funds for this purpose and obtain government orders for the Silesian industry. The club applied to the marshal's staff for the Silesian Province Council to allocate funds for the launch of intervention works [17 pos. III S. Śl., 26.01.1932: 19–20]. After its submission to the Department of Public Works of the Silesian Province Office, a separate commission was established to develop a plan for public works and to obtain government funds. Almost a year later, Kapuściński assured that road construction work would begin in March. Still, he did not specify the amount, which the opposition commented on as an agitational slogan presented by the government club that had no basis in practice [28 pos. III S. Śl., 16.02.1933: 10–12].

The deflationary policy was not conducive to boosting the economic situation – the budget estimates were very low. After many corrections and attacks on the Sanation, the Silesian Parliament finally approved the budget estimate in March 1932, but there was no money for unemployment benefits that year. In addition to the implementation of the government program, which resulted from the social legislation, the province authorities also used special regulations on economic demobilization. Thus, despite the opposition's discrediting of the anti-crisis policy, the scope of public works was expanded. On the other hand, the action of settling the unemployed on the land brought mediocre results.

The crisis made itself felt in 1933 with changes for the worse in the legislation on working time, annual leave, and sickness insurance. Expenditure on nurseries, kindergartens, and housing construction was reduced. Wages and remuneration for overtime hours decreased by 50% [Wanatowicz, 1974: 85–86].

Poland's clinging to the gold currency system paid off with an economic collapse. However, most politicians and economists believed that this was the right direction. Even at the beginning of 1935, Provincial Governor Grażyński, speaking in the Parliament, emphasized: "The stability of the currency, the balance of the budgets of public authorities, the maintenance of capitalization processes, (...) the maintenance of the trade balance surpluses, and the creation of a soft loan – these are the essential milestones that constitute the framework of our state economy" [47 pos. III S. Śl., 7.01.1935: 5].

As in the Parliament of the Republic of Poland and the Silesian Parliament, there were disputes about whether the ruling party had a program to fight the crisis. Andrzej Wierzbicki, the president of "Lewiatan," accused the government of the lack of a program. At the same time, he presented the Central Union of Polish Industry program, which he submitted in 1933. In the Silesian Parliament, the opposition also accused the Silesian provincial authorities of inefficiently combating the crisis and the lack of a long-term program. "We have not heard any creative ideas on how to get out of this situation," concluded the socialist Glücksman in one of his speeches [20 pos. III S. Śl. 22.03.1932: 39–40], accusing the government of running a contradictory policy both statist and free-trade. He warned that the Sanation's inactivity in combating the crisis could lead to an economic catastrophe and the death of economic life [Ibid.: 42]. He was echoed by his club colleague, MP Józef Machej, who alleged the Sanation: "Gentlemen, you are waiting for the economic upturn, until the crisis overcomes itself, or you are waiting (...) until other countries experiments and outcomes of Roosevelt's plans in the United States or the plans of the English economy yield results" [48 pos. III S. Śl. 21.01.1935: 33–34]. MP Alojzy Prus from the Club of Christian Democracy went even further in his criticism accusing the authorities of the lack of a national economic policy. Polish enterprises united in "Leviathan," which are represented by Poles, even princes, and counts, are only Polish in name, "the capital is Jewish, German, and generally foreign." "These leviathan servants of foreign capital are to a large extent Poland's misfortune. For all the mistakes and abuses committed in Poland (...) they are to be blamed much more than the foreign capitals themselves" [Ibid.: 45–46]. The attacks targeted various forms of monopoly agreements that the state willingly accepted. Korfanty was against state monopolies and competition between state and private enterprises. He accused the government of not having an anti-crisis program and acting ad hoc [38 pos. III S. Śl., 19.01.1934: 6]. MP Witczak, repelling the opposition's attacks, emphasized that the Sanation had a crisis-fighting program under which,

among other things, it sought to remove the overgrowth of organizational forms in industry and to nationalize the capital [Ibid.].

The Silesian Parliament was therefore an arena of political clashes and the opposition used the great crisis to prove the incompetence of the provincial authorities in combating it. On the other hand, the Sanation deputies proved the effectiveness of the taken anti-crisis measures. Nonetheless, verbal scuffles lasted until the end of the third term of the Parliament.

4. Anti-crisis program of the Silesian Sanation

During the crisis, under the current economic doctrine, the government adopted a deflationary policy, the effects of which turned out to be deplorable. In the years 1932–1933, the crisis reached the bottom. In Silesia, talk about the fiasco of liberal politics began to be louder and louder. The statist tendencies of the Silesian authorities were visible. The anti-Polish activity of the German capital, and at the same time, efforts to obtain tax breaks, subsidies, and false accounting showing losses, in the face of the social consequences of the situation, made Silesian society more radical regardless of political views. The Silesian Sanation called for the establishment of state control over the economy of heavy industry and the appointment of an extraordinary commissioner to combat unemployment, demanding a more decisive reaction from the central authorities. Many times before, the provincial authorities sent requests to Warsaw for government representatives to come to Silesia and take a closer look at the activities of big industry. Warsaw, however, remained deaf to these invitations for a long time, not wanting to spoil relations with Germany. Therefore, in 1931, Grażyński took action to remove dishonest German directors from their positions to curb the harmful activity of the German capital. The following people lost their jobs and were imprisoned: the director of the mines in Pszczyna, the directors of the mines and steelworks of Prince Donnersmarck, the director of “Huta Królewska,” the financial director of the “Wspólnota Interesów,”³ the directors of the joint-stock companies “Godula” and “Wirek.” All of them were proven to act to the detriment of Poland [Długajczyk, 1983: 198].

Even though on the eve of the crisis Sanation’s daily newspaper *Polska Zachodnia* assured that an effective and detailed economic policy program had been

³ CEO Walter Tomalla managed to flee to Germany.

developed [*Polska Zachodnia*, January 28, 1929], the crisis negatively verified these claims. The Silesian Sanation only partially developed a joint program. Its supporters approved of syndicalism, corporatism, socialism, and even nationalist-fascist concepts, which made it difficult to develop a coherent long-term program and forced the implementation of short-term goals with a chance of success [Długajczyk, 1983: 191].

However, during the provincial congress of NChZP held in Katowice on October 23, 1932, many program postulates were put forward. Most of them, though, were slogans and lofty, patriotic ideas. There was talk of the need to unite the forces of people with divergent interests and views to achieve the overriding goal, which is the good of the state [*Założenia i postulaty...*, 1932: 3]. Speaking about the crisis, Alojzy Pawelec emphasized its global nature resulting from the lack of trust in the stability and certainty of political forces. At the same time, he praised the currency policy adopted by the Sanation. "We are proud that thanks to the economic policy of the post-May governments, today's Poland belongs to the very few countries in the world whose currency is sound and stable, where there are no foreign exchange restrictions. Therefore, we demand that the Polish government, as so far, strives to maintain a stable currency and does not take into account the suggestions of the interested spheres in the direction of inflation" [Ibid.: 18]. At the same time, he favored equalizing cartelized and non-cartelized prices. Due to the industrial nature of the province, he demanded an increase in government orders [Ibid.: 21]. His latter request was supported by MP Kapuściński, who also drew attention to the need to develop a plan to expand and improve roads, settle the unemployed on the land and control the economy of the heavy industry due to foreign capital dominating in Silesia. He demanded that the Polish State authorities, with the participation of social agents, take a closer look at the industrial economy and create legal conditions enabling them to exert a compelling influence towards adjusting its national and Silesian needs. "When we closely observed the policies and tactics used by the Silesian industry in times of economic crisis, we have found beyond any doubt that they often turn against the economic and even political interests of the state that the Silesian industry has entered the easiest way for itself to transfer all the effects of the crisis either to the state or to the working masses by not seeking and not using deliberate ways to fight the crisis" [Ibid.: 30–31]. He emphasized that "big industry in Silesia is an object of play and speculation by foreign financial tycoons" [Ibid.: 31]. Once again, he repeated the demand for state control over the economy of heavy industry in Silesia concentrated in

the hands of an extraordinary commissioner to combat unemployment, limit excessive salaries in the industry, and remove foreigners [Ibid.]. Another Sanation representative, Rudolf Kornke, recognized the need to reduce production costs, especially with regard to coal, to combat the crisis, which was to occur when the government influenced the heavy industry organization and applied anti-cartel measures [Ibid.: 40]. The economic policy resolutions focused on the following issues:

- maintaining currency stability,
- leveling the price spread between cartelized and non-cartelized production at a low level,
- significantly reducing the spread between the interest rate of the Bank of Poland and the private loan,
- discounting penalty interest for late payment on tax arrears and public benefits,
- activating government orders for Silesian industry,
- rebuilding the internal market by lowering coal and iron prices,
- consistently implementing agricultural reform
- sustained and effective fostering of Polish trade, crafts, and handicrafts in Silesia [Ibid.: 53–55].

The most mature program for fighting the crisis was presented by the Silesian Sanation at the congress of economic and social activists of the Silesian Province, convened in Katowice in September 1933. Tadeusz Lechnicki, the Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, was present on behalf of the central authorities. The congress was attended by almost 1,500 representatives of all social and economic strata of Silesia. The point was:

- to highlight the economic situation of Silesia and its role in the economic life of Poland,
- to present the activities of the government and Silesian authorities in the economic field,
- to set the direction of economic and social work in Silesia to increase its economic value and take more proactive steps in economic life [*Zjazd działaczy gospodarczych...*: 5].

In the address inaugurating the congress, Provincial Governor Grażyński clearly emphasized the structural nature of the crisis resulting from the collapse of the economic liberalism foundations, and thus the need for planned action with substantial state influence. He argued that “the principle of the free play of

economic elements based on an individualistic economy has completely outlived itself and is an anachronism,” therefore the economic policy should be based on “offensive and planned action” aimed at transforming organizational forms in industry and increasing control over it [Ibid.: 17–18]. Deputy Minister Lechnicki agreed with the previous speaker, stressing at the same time that Silesian industrial spheres had to implement the recommendations of the Congress of Economic and Social Activists, which took place in May in Warsaw [Ibid.: 25–26]. Many harsh words were spoken about the destructive policy of German industrialists and the need to introduce government commissioners into the industry. Poland needed foreign capital, but not such that worked to its detriment. Almost all speeches emphasized the overriding interest of the state. Talks were held in several committees: Industry, Labour, Agriculture, Craft, and Trade. The Industry Committee developed program theses, in which the postulate of industry nationalization or at least the replacement of German capital in joint-stock companies with a domestic or foreign one, but favorable to Poland, was prominent. It demanded that the industry’s charges on loans should be reviewed to detect fraud. It repeated earlier demands for control over the industry, reduction of German personnel, too high wages and excessively developed administration, increasing government orders for the Silesian industry, reliefs for exports, reduction of railway tariffs for coal exports to Kresy, and the creation of a single sales office. The Committee proposed establishing controllers who would have insight into all enterprises and would provide the government with data on the situation in individual industry sectors [Ibid.: 60–64]. Chairman Rudolf Kornke argued the Labor Committee needed a regulated and planned economy. Monopolization had led to excessively high and rigid prices, and an increase in production beyond the capacity of demand, which resulted in the need to reduce production costs by cutting wages. This, in turn, downscaled consumption, i.e., sales, and entailed employment contraction, leading to a deep economic depression. Therefore, the program postulate had to be the idea of planning, which should be applied first in heavy industry, and then in other important branches of production. He proposed shortening working hours to counteract the employment reduction as a result of mechanization and labor productivity increase [Ibid.: 68–72]. The implementation of these postulates could be ensured by state control and by the participation of employees in enterprise management. The Silesian legislation on economic demobilization and works councils enabled government agents to intervene more than in other provinces. Therefore, the congress participants demanded to keep and even extend it, against industrial spheres’ efforts to change

the regulations. The recommendations set out in the speech were included in the program theses of the Labor Committee [Ibid.: 98–99]. All the postulates previously reported in the Silesian Parliament and the press were resounded at the congress. It was an important stage in the search for practical solutions to combat the crisis. More importantly, all committees indicated the need for the greater government control and direct state interference in economic life.

An active role in the fight against the crisis was played by the Provincial Governor Grażyński, who was personally involved in the battle against closing plants, lowering wages, reducing employment, and counting many victories in this field. On his initiative, in March 1931, the Committee for Helping the Unemployed was established, gathering funds and gifts in kind. In the fall of 1931, he ran 69 kitchens for the unemployed, spending about 25,000 lunches daily [Długajczyk, 1983: 189–190]. Under the influence of the Silesian authorities, the government became interested in the fate of unemployed youth, organizing the so-called labor camps starting in 1933. The need to plan economic life came to the forefront of his agenda. He supported the plans of Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski, seeing them as an opportunity for Poland's social and economic transition from an agricultural country into an industrial and agricultural one. He attributed a leading role to public works in mitigating the crisis effects. The authorities of the Silesian Province accumulated financial reserves in times of prosperity so that they could be used during the crisis. The province's budget spent significant sums of money annually on the struggle to maintain jobs [Expose Wojewody Śląskiego...: 40–49]. Although the expenditure of the Silesian treasury fell from 92 million PLN in the 1928/1929 budget year to 66.4 million PLN in 1934/1935, at the bottom of the 1932/1933 crisis it amounted to 82.5 million PLN [www 1].

In the 1930s, Grażyński sprang into the Polonization of Upper Silesian industry, which was proven to be detrimental to the Polish State. In this way, the largest corporation, the Community of Interests, the "Pokój" steelworks, were Polonized, the property of the Duke of Pszczyzna was taken over and the Polonization of the Hohenlohe Plant began, which was interrupted by the war [Popkiewicz, Ryszka, 1959: 411–412]. This action was possible thanks to the help of trusted friends, i.e., Engineer Wiktor Przedpeński, Attorney Mieczysław Chmielewski, Engineer Bronisław Kowalski, and the support of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Treasury Eugeniusz Kwiatkowski and the President of Bank Gospodarstwa Krajowego Roman Górecki [Zagóra-Jonszta, 1996: 59]. Grażyński was convinced that ownership relations in Upper

Silesia could be changed only through the active role of the state. Thus, he consistently implemented this policy, although it was not always accepted by the government and the Christian Democrat opposition, despite the obvious abuses of the capitalists.

In the ranks of the Silesian Sanation, the slogans of replacing the capitalist system with a system based on democracy, the so-called syndicalism, were popular. Grażyński was associated with the left wing of the Sanation – the fixers, for whom the principles of syndicalism had a state, national character. Rejecting political struggle, they sought to introduce a socialized economic system based on economic and professional self-government [Długajczyk, 1983: 122–123] in conditions of cooperation between capitalists and workers. They supported the government's active policy and Kwiatkowski's careful management of the economic situation. For this reason, the program of the Silesian Sanation had a clear social overtone. This was repeatedly pointed out by Grażyński, who believed that the state's economic development required an improvement in the economic situation of the working masses [*Programowe wskazania...*]. At the same time, in the field of financial policy, he showed a liberal approach, standing on the position of maintaining the stability of the currency, deflation policy, and a positive trade balance. However, this strange duality of views was not unique among politicians and economists of the Second Polish Republic.

5. Conclusions

The presented position of the Silesian Sanation on the great economic crisis of the 1930s and attempts to improve the economic situation of the society undertaken by the Silesian province authorities lead to several conclusions:

1. despite criticism from the Christian Democrats and the left-wing opposition, the Silesian Sanation, led by Provincial Governor Grażyński, tried to effectively fight the crisis by organizing public works and carrying out the Polonization of key enterprises;
2. the position of the Silesian province authorities on the active participation of the state in economic life was more favorable than that of representatives of the central authorities;

3. statism, officially rejected by the central authorities, was an important form of taking over enterprises from the hands of German capital for the Silesian Sanation;
4. unlike the representatives of the central government, who cared about good relations with Germany, Grażyński was a great enemy of the German capital, seeing its fraud and activities to the detriment of the Polish State. Striving to eliminate it, or at least significantly reduce it, was one of the basic tasks of his policy. However, his anti-German attitude did not always bring the desired results.

| References

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- 4 pos. III S. Śl. 13.02.1931 r., Sten. S. Śl., MP Witczak.
- 11 pos. III S. Śl. 30.09.1931 r., Sten. S. Śl., MP Glücksmann.
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- 14 pos. III S. Śl. 14.01.1932 r., Sten. S. Śl., MP Witczak.
- 16 pos. III S. Śl. 22.01.1932 r., Sten. S. Śl., MP Kapuściński.
- 17 pos. III S. Śl. 26.01.1932 r., Sten. S. Śl., MP Witczak.
- 28 pos. III S. Śl. 16.02.1933 r., Sten. S. Śl., MP Kapuściński.
- 38 pos. III S. Śl. 19.01.1934 r., Sten. S. Śl., MPs Korfanty and Witczak.
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