
In the early 1990s, it transpired that the reportedly lost or only partially preserved Diaries of Joseph Goebbels, Reich Minister of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment, had been found in one of the central archives in Russia. On the basis of that discovery, an edition of this important resource for the history of National Socialism was published in thirty-three volumes by the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (Institute of Contemporary History). The article comprises a concise description of both the figure of the Diaries’ author and his opus, which encompasses his journal entries from 1923 to 1945. The regularity and profusion of the material are astounding, as is the broad panorama of the issues broached. The focus of interest for the author of the article is the usefulness of the source from the viewpoint of not only modern German history, but also international topics. Of particular importance are those portions of the Diaries which, in the subjective opinion of the article’s author, depict the road that led to the outbreak of World War II and its subsequent course, as well as the events which brought National Socialist Germany to defeat. A part of the Diaries also consists of entries relating to Poland and the Poles and is chiefly focused on the genesis of the war, the Katyn Massacre, the Warsaw Uprising and the process of the Soviet Union’s enslavement of Central-Eastern Europe and Poland as hostilities were coming to an end. A forthcoming Polish publication containing a selection of Joseph Goebel’s journal entries deemed by author of the article and, at the same time, of the Polish edition of the Diaries, to be both representative and cognitive, is announced.

Agnieszka KISZTELIŃSKA-WĘGRZYŃSKA, 1st-3rd March 1960. Bruno Kreisky’s first visit to Poland in the light of Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents

Following World War II, Polish-Austrian relations developed in a climate of mutual interest and political support. Despite finding themselves on opposite sides of the Iron Curtain during the Cold War era, the communist People’s Republic of Poland (PRP) and the Republic of Austria worked for bilateral recognition and opportunities for trading collaboration from 1945 onward. During the early phase of post-1945 Polish-Austrian relations, occasional state visits were made by the highest echelons. The first such event occurred from 1st to 3rd March 1960, when the then Austrian Foreign Minister, Bruno Kreisky, visited Warsaw. On the Polish side, preparations for the minister’s visit were made with extraordinary care. Among the circle of Western states, sui generis breakthroughs which would offer the chance of instigating the economic and political exchange so essential to a new people’s democracy were being sought. The Polish Ministry of Foreign Affairs Archive holds materials giving detailed descriptions of the preparations for, and the course of, the first visit made to Poland by the highest of Austrian echelons. In a document entitled Points for the Talks, we read that the Polish government did not exclude the possibility of cooperation with Western states, including those which belonged to NATO, as well as of its desire to be appropriately prepared for that
collaboration. In the minds of Polish diplomats, the Republic of Austria was to help in breaking the political isolation which afflicted the PRP.

Aleksandra KRUK, Klaus Kinkel’s Political Career

Born in 1936, Klaus Kinkel is a representative of Germany’s Free Democratic Party (FDP). Among the leaders of that party, Walter Scheel and Hans-Dietrich Genscher may have won greater popularity, but even so, Kinkel also exerted an influence on the liberals’ policy line, primarily by means of the Wiesbaden Declaration. Working closely with Genscher, Kinkel amassed the experience of which he would avail himself in heading the FDP, in holding office as the Federal Minister of Justice and, subsequently, in heading the Federal Foreign Office. With his education as a lawyer, Kinkel demonstrated an adroitness and professionalism in carrying out his duties. He gained no renown for charisma and leadership skills, but neither did he ever become implicated in any scandals.

The article presents Kinkel’s path into politics. As a politician, it was not until 1991 that he decided to become a member of the FDP, despite having worked with Genscher since 1968. Because he was the Federal Minister of Justice during the unification of the two Germanys, he was responsible for the restoration of the rule of law in the Eastern part of the new state. Then, on assuming Genscher’s former duties at the Federal Foreign Office, he pointed to the new role to be played by diplomacy following the collapse of the Cold War.

Małgorzata ŚWIDER, The West German Federal Intelligence Service (BND) on the reaction of the citizens of the German Democratic Republic to the Warsaw Pact forces’ intervention in Czechoslovakia. A contribution to the history of 1968

To all intents and purposes, the situation in the German Democratic Republic (GDR) was watched by the Federal Intelligence Service (Bundesnachrichtendienst; BND) from its inception right up until the unification of Germany. Such was also the case in 1968, during the period when reforms were being introduced in Czechoslovakia and the struggle for “socialism with a human face” was being played out. The observation sprang from the disquiet within the government and intelligence service of the Federal Republic of German (FRG) as regards the situation in Czechoslovakia and the GDR, as well as from concerns that the conflict would spread to the other Eastern Bloc countries. There were fears of action being launched against West Berlin and consideration was even given to the possibility of an escalation in tension and the outbreak of World War III. By 23rd August 1968, the BND had already compiled its first report and evaluations of the situation in the ‘Soviet Occupation Zone’ in the context of the intervention by the Warsaw Pact forces. The analyses noted the heated social discussion of the situation in Czechoslovakia and, first and foremost, in respect of the East German army’s participation. The psychological effects of the Soviet intervention were examined, as were their long-term implications. The motif of East German society’s objection to the part being played by the GDR in the intervention is evident in the appraisals. Indeed, as of the end of that August, the BND’s daily reports, accounts and analyses were dominated by intelligence on actions directed against the citizens’ discontent and the waves of protest connected with the Warsaw Pact forces’ operations in Czechoslovakia. Time and again, the appraisals
Paweł POPIELIŃSKI, *The problematics of nationality in the general population censuses of 2002 and 2011, considered in the context of the German minority in Poland*

The two most recent Polish general censuses, carried out in 2002 and 2011, excited numerous controversies among the national and ethnic minorities living in Poland. During the general census of 2002, questions regarding nationality emerged for the first time since the era of the communist People’s Republic of Poland and our country’s socio-political turning-point. Both censuses addressed the matter, providing a foundation, first and foremost, for the size of the German and other national minority groups to be established. On the basis of the results, the Polish government enacted the Act on National and Ethnic Minorities and Regional Languages in 2005. The representatives of national and ethnical minority groups in Poland, including the Germans, had a great many concerns regarding the way in which the general censuses were carried out. They warned the Polish authorities that the data obtained would not be fully objective, nor would they reflect the actual numbers of the groups in question.

In the article, the author details the particulars of the preparation and conducting of both general censuses. He presents the multiplicity of problems with which the national and ethnic minorities, including the Germans, were grappling and shows what the consequences of that fact have been, and are, for that group. He analyses the factors which had an impact on the numbers for the German minority, the reasons why those numbers have decreased with each general census and what has influenced the fact that, in the two censuses, more and more people gave their nationality as Silesian on the form, while fewer and fewer put themselves down as being German. At the same time, he describes the phenomenon of feeling Silesian, explaining how the ‘Silesian’ national and ethnic category came to figure on the Central Statistical Office’s questionnaire and clarifying how it should be defined. In addition, he focuses on what consequences the social manifestation which is the declaration of Silesian nationality, as well as the emergence of organisations centred around the Sileans who do so, might bring for the German minority movement in Poland in the future.