

**FUNDAMENTAL
CONDITIONS OF THE
ECONOMIC INDEPENDENCE
OF POLAND**

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Fundamental Conditions of the Economic Independence of Poland by Józef Frejlich

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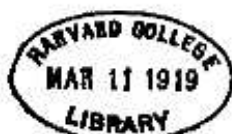
BY JOSEPH FREILICH, PH. D.

(Translated from the French)



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1918

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PREFACE

The problem of the economic independence of Poland, as the question of economic independence of state organisms, in general, is one of the most complicated problems of political economy.

For it is certain that now, in this economic period of the twentieth century, characterized by a world-wide exchange of merchandise, there does not exist a single state organism which is economically independent in the strict sense of the word. Even the most powerful contemporary states, from an economic point of view, that possess enormous forces of production and consumption, are not self-sufficient and can barely carry on an isolated economic life. They are obliged to depend to a great extent on the politico-economics of other organisms, either as consumers or as producers but generally as consumers and producers at the same time. Only the earth, considered as a whole, constitutes a complete economic organism which is sufficient unto itself, since naturally, it is forced to be so.

But, the different parts of this organism, the states and countries that make up its constituent parts, cannot possess absolute, economic independence: they are political organisms endowed only with relative economic independence.

So examining, in our study, the conditions and factors of economic independence in Poland, we can have in view only those elements that, deciding the degree of her independence, result chiefly from the favorable situation of the elementary factors that, in the largest sense of the word, determine modern production, that is: **natural resources, human work and capital**. In addition to these principal factors there are still other important elements that must be considered, namely: the geographical situation of the country, access to the sea, and general means of communication with the world at large, that is to say, with all the other economic organizations of our globe.

The Polish lands, at the present divided between the three partitioning States, Prussia, Russia and Austria, condemned for more than one hundred and forty years to vegetate in political and economical conditions entirely different, often opposed, considered as a whole, as one political and economical unit, undoubtedly respond to the conditions required by theory and practice, for the existence and development of independent, economic organisms. All of these conditions and factors, especially the natural wealth of Poland, and her geographical situation, by virtue of which her natural and artificial ways of communication connect western Europe with the Orient, the Baltic Sea with the Black Sea, all these essential and secondary

factors show that the Polish lands, as a whole, consolidated into a state organization, will form a great economic organism, in the center of Europe endowed with a serious force of expansion, possessing a degree of independence equal, at least, to that of the other countries of Europe which have been looked upon as economic organisms eminently independent.

The aim of this work is to retrace and to determine the conditions and factors which constitute the basis of the economic independence of Poland. It is proposed to show the industrial evolution of Poland and to place in evidence the principal conditions that would considerably accelerate and facilitate this evolution.

The degree of economic development of every politico-economic organism depends essentially upon its industrial development in quantity as well as in quality. The more a state possesses the character of an industrial organism, the more apt will its industrial production be to meet the competition of the world markets with success; the more will such an organism be considered as developed, firmly established and as possessing in itself the elements of its future expansion.

Although before the European war, Poland did not have a distinctive industrial character, although much of her territory was agricultural, still taken as a whole, she possesses the fundamental conditions necessary to become an immense European industrial workshop. But, in order that this may come to pass, the political and economic causes that have hindered the normal development of industry must be eliminated. The principal cause was the dismem-

berment of the Polish economic organism by the three sharing States.

The formation of an independent Polish state, including all Polish territories, is a necessary condition of the future economic development of Poland, and therefore, of the political and cultural development of that part of the European continent comprised between the Baltic Sea and the Carpathians, between the Odra and the Polesie.

I.

THE INDUSTRIAL POLICY OF THE POLAND - SHARING STATES AND THE ECONOMIC INTERESTS OF POLAND

The economic life of the country of the Poles, especially the industrial production, has developed under the unequal, and generally unfavorable conditions brought about by the economic policies of the three sharing States. These policies are essentially different for each part of Poland and take into very little or no account whatever Polish interests and requirements.

In the Kingdom of Poland, (the part held by Russia) which is the part of Poland most developed economically, the foundations of the national industry were established by the local government of the Kingdom formed at the Congress of Vienna in 1815. A wide and methodical movement to improve and increase the industry of the country was undertaken by the government. All the merit of having brought the manufacturing industry to life and of having assured its progress should go to Prince Xavier Francois Lubecki, Treasurer of the young Kingdom and in charge of the direction of its finances toward the end of the year 1821.