

4 British Policy in Central and Eastern Europe

The course of negotiations at the London Conference developed from the overall international situation in 1830–1833. Other events in Europe affected the diplomatic representatives' different steps. One of these was the uprising in Congress Poland against the rule of Nicholas I.¹ Since the revolution broke out on 29 November 1830, it is commonly referred to as the November Uprising. In essence, the revolt was more a series of actions by young noblemen and officers rather than an organised act of the broader Polish public. As in the case of Belgium, they had been inspired by the July Revolution, which Francis I had warned of when he declared to the Russian ambassador in Vienna, Dmitry Pavlovich Tatischev, that the Poles "like to repeat everything that happens in Paris."² The revolutionary battle began in Warsaw with the murder of a number of Russian officers and leading government officials. Their objective, which was the killing of the Tsar's brother, Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich, failed. Initially, it was not clear what the political motivation of the Polish rebels was. Increasing numbers of dissatisfied city dwellers, soldiers, and noblemen began to join them, and Nicholas I was forced to respond to the situation urgently.³

Although the events surprised St Petersburg, the escalation of tense relations had been ongoing for several years. Through Tsar Alexander I, the Polish Kingdom gained an exceptional status within the Russian Empire at the Congress of Vienna.⁴ The key element of Poland's "exclusive nature" was the declared constitution, which the Tsar promised would deliver peace to the kingdom.⁵ A fundamental factor was the implementation of the constitution within the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, which secured the Poles' international guarantees.⁶ Metternich considered this the product of the Tsar's folly, with Great Britain positively responding to the step. In Russia itself, there were critics of the proposal.⁷

¹ EGERTON, Hugh Edward, *British Foreign Policy in Europe. To the End of the nineteenth Century*, London 1917, p. 181.

² SVOBODA, p. 80.

³ LINCOLN, William Bruce, *Nicolas I Emperor and Autocrat of All the Russias*, Portland 1978, p. 140.

⁴ Text of the whole constitution in: *British Foreign State Papers*, vol. XIX, p. 971; GRIMSTED, Patricia Kennedy, *The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I Political Attitudes and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy 1801–1825*, Berkeley 1969, p. 288.

⁵ *British Foreign State Papers*, vol. XIX, p. 971; GRIMSTED, Patricia Kennedy, *The Foreign Ministers of Alexander I Political Attitudes and the Conduct of Russian Diplomacy 1801–1825*, Berkeley 1969, p. 288.

⁶ Cowley to Palmerston, Vienna, 1 May 1831, TNA, FO 120/113.

⁷ Esterházy to Metternich, London, 14 January 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 193.

Considering domestic, political, and international circumstances, the Russians breached these freedoms during the 1820s, increasing dissatisfaction amongst the Polish intelligentsia and resulting in the subsequent fight against Russian rule.⁸

Nicholas I immediately adopted several measures to calm the situation. He promised amnesty to the revolutionaries if they surrendered to the Russian army and gave up their weapons immediately. But this call was met with no response.⁹ He also informed the Powers through his ambassadors that this was an internal political conflict and that only he should deal with it. As in Austria and Great Britain, hardly anybody doubted that the Tsar's massive army would win decisively and that the Poles had limited options. The conflict demonstrated the Russian command's significant weakness in planning and military supplies.¹⁰ Konstantin Pavlovich made crucial errors right at the outset of the uprising when he, alongside his loyal troops, including the crucial artillery forces available to him, senselessly withdrew to the border with Russia.¹¹ This misstep gave the Polish soldiers the chance to reform and reorganise.¹²

The Poles themselves were responsible for the uprising's failure. They could not establish a unified command throughout the fight and remained divided into several independent groups that could not coordinate effectively.¹³ They were aware, though, that the success of their campaign depended, above all, on international support. With this in mind, they wrote a manifesto directed particularly at the British and French public, which included the following words:

If in this last struggle, the liberty of Poland must sink under the ruins of her cities and the corpses of her defenders, our enemy shall reign only over deserts; and every good Pole will have this consolation in his dying moments, that in this battle to the death he has for a moment shielded the threatened liberty of Europe.¹⁴

Notable figures of the time, including Józef Grzegorz Chłopicki, a general in the Napoleonic Wars, Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, former Russian Foreign Minister, his-

⁸ Manifesto of the Polish Estates, *Annual Register, or a View of the History, Politics and the Literature for the Years 1831*, p. 407.

⁹ LINCOLN, p. 141.

¹⁰ BITIS, Alexander, *Reserves under Selfdom? Nicolas I's Attempts to Solve the Russian Army's Manpower Crisis of 1831–1832*. In: *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 51, 2003, 2, p. 186.

¹¹ Nicholas's brother demonstrated poor strategic thinking several times while commanding the battles. In the end, he died of a cholera infection in June 1831. LINCOLN, p. 139.

¹² SETON-WATSON, Hugh, *The Russian Empire 1801–1917*, Oxford 1967, p. 287.

¹³ CHURCH, p. 175.

¹⁴ BLANC, Louis, *History of Ten Years*, London 1844, p. 376.

torian Joachim Lelewel, and poet Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, made this Polish declaration.¹⁵

The Polish Manifesto did not arouse much interest within British political circles. The core issue of the day remained Belgium. Furthermore, the new government had only been set up a few days before the beginning of the November Uprising. As such, any intervention in the Poles' favour by London was impossible and undesirable. Britain's primary objective remained the containment of France. The last thing Palmerston wanted was to see a more severe conflict in Eastern Europe, preventing the Eastern Powers from intervening against France.¹⁶ In this regard, he had the impact of the Second and Third Partitions of Poland in 1793 and 1795 on the international situation during the French Revolution on his mind. It was in Britain's interests, then, that the rebellion be suppressed as quickly as possible, despite some personal sympathy that Palmerston and Grey had for the Poles.¹⁷ Heytesbury received instructions from the British Foreign Secretary on what diplomatic goals should be achieved: preventing Austria and Prussia, or France, from getting drawn into the conflict, supporting Polish civil and military refugees, allowing British subjects to contact the Poles, and ensuring the Russians kept to the Vienna agreements guaranteeing the Polish Constitution.¹⁸

Anglo-Russian relations had been fraught in the second half of the 1820s, something that France could exploit the most. This changed after Louis Philippe acceded to the throne. Nicholas's deep dislike for the Orléans regime was reflected in its relations with Great Britain. In October 1830, Heytesbury wrote to London about Russian endeavours to cooperate with the British government as much as possible.¹⁹ Matuszewicz received instructions to ensure that he proceeded in accordance with British diplomacy. This was also when the Russian Tsar agreed unequivocally to hold the London Conference on the Belgian Revolution.²⁰ Prospects for closer cooperation ended with the November Uprising and the accession of Grey's government. The Russians perceived the change in government positively overall. The new British Prime Minister was a close friend of Dorothea Lieven, the wife of Russia's ambassador, who had significant diplomatic clout in Great Britain.²¹ Paradoxically, she recommended Palmerston as British

¹⁵ SETON-WATSON, *The Russian Empire*, p. 283.

¹⁶ RIDLEY, p. 142.

¹⁷ BROWN, *Palmerston. A Biography*, p. 154.

¹⁸ SOUTHGATE, p. 44.

¹⁹ Heytesbury to Aberdeen, St Petersburg, 2 October 1830, TNA, FO 65/187.

²⁰ GLEASON, John Howes, *The Genesis of Russophobia in Great Britain*, London 1950, p. 108.

²¹ According to historian Glenda Sluga: Dorothea Lieven consistently wielded her influence over both British and Russian Foreign Ministers and statesmen in favour of intervention on be-

Foreign Secretary to Grey.²² Despite these apparent close relations, Anglo-Russian relations soon deteriorated.²³

Metternich had predicted possible problems in Poland as early as the end of 1829. When he received reports of the November Uprising, he secured the monarchy's borders to prevent the revolutionary movement from moving to Austrian territory.²⁴ Fifty thousand soldiers were put in combat readiness. He did not, of course, have any sympathy for the Polish campaign.²⁵ It was an uprising against a legitimate ruler, who had furthermore been crowned King of Poland.²⁶ On the other hand, he did not perceive the presence of the Russian army near the monarchy's borders as positive. Like Great Britain, the Austrian Chancellor wanted the problem resolved quickly, especially once the situation on the Italian Peninsula worsened, a region where Austria needed a free hand.²⁷ From the outset, the Russian Tsar tried to appeal to Vienna and Berlin to provide active support. Metternich was lukewarm to the request. There was a simple reason for this. The French would perceive the active involvement of the Habsburg Monarchy in suppressing the revolution as an intervention, prompting them to get involved in the conflict. The outcome could be a general war.²⁸

The Poles focused their hopes on France, but the French consul in Poland, Louis Marie Raymond Durand, rejected any support from Paris.²⁹ The Polish revolutionaries could only play for time. Russia followed French politics with suspicion. But via Pozzo di Borgo, Louis Philippe assured Nesselrode that his country wanted to keep the peace in Europe. In contrast, Paris was suspicious of Russian policy in Belgium and feared St Petersburg might intervene to support William I.³⁰ The French public and the German Confederation had the greatest sympathy for the Poles. Similarly, in Great Britain, public opinion and the press opposed the

half of Greek independence and against the Turks. She continued to pursue this interventionist policy well into the mid-1830s. SLUGA, Glenda, *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics, before and after the Congress of Vienna*. In: SLUGA, Glenda (ed.), JAMES, Carolyn (ed.), *Women, Diplomacy and International Politics since 1500*, New York, 2016, p. 121.

22 JUDD, *Palmerston*, p. 40.

23 BELL, vol. I, p. 174.

24 JELAVICH, Barbara, *The Habsburg Empire in European Affairs. 1814–1918*, Chicago 1969, p. 38.

25 Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 12 April 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

26 Nicholas I was crowned King of Poland in 1829.

27 Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 1 March 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

28 SETON-WATSON, *Britain in Europe*, p. 179.

29 BETLEY, Jan Andrzej, *Belgium and Poland in International Relations 1830–1831*, Mouton 1960, p. 143.

30 SVOBODA, p. 86.

Tsar.³¹ Only a small fraction of political representatives called for more active engagement, paradoxically also advocating for larger cuts to the military budget.³²

The situation in France changed at the end of 1830 when the government found itself in crisis and sought the traditional way out through foreign policy. Laffitte took a more active approach to Poland and attempted to calm the situation down to satisfy public opinion. At the same time, he called for coordinated action with the British cabinet. In real terms, the French government endeavoured to mediate between the Poles and Russia, which was impossible without British consent.³³ Palmerston rejected Laffitte's proposal. Great Britain did not want to embarrass Russia, and maintaining good relations with the country was important from a political viewpoint to ensure a smooth approach to the question of Belgium.³⁴

The Tsar was outraged by the French proposal and, as such, asked Austria and Prussia for greater cooperation. The Prussian King tried to offer Nicholas I a helping hand by having the army guard the border, similar to what was done in Austria.³⁵ He also agreed to Russia's request that they use supply routes crossing Prussian territory. Metternich defined the Habsburg Monarchy's position as a non-participating actor.³⁶ It would also tolerate the Russian army crossing its border, which aroused protests from Britain. The Austrians even had observers in the Russian military who were well-informed about the course of military operations.³⁷ Metternich disregarded British protests. He argued that the Poles were not a party to the conflict, so the Ballhausplatz's policy could not be strictly neutral. In order to support his stance, the Austrian Chancellor increased the numbers of the military corps in Galicia. The November Uprising, for him, was the logical result of the July Revolution, and he had no interest in the Poles receiving any kind of concession.³⁸

³¹ *The Times*, 3 April 1831, enclosed in the letter to: Esterházy to Metternich, London, 9 April 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 193.

³² WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 183.

³³ BETLEY, p. 149.

³⁴ BELL, vol. I, p. 166.

³⁵ Chad to Palmerston, Berlin, 5 January 1832, TNA, FO 64/181.

³⁶ Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 12 April 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

³⁷ Unlike the military attachés, the Austrian embassy in London complained about not being sufficiently informed by the Russian side regarding the events. Esterházy mentioned that even Nesselrode himself lacked adequate reports from St Petersburg and viewed the uprising as an act of ingratitude on the part of the Poles. Esterházy to Metternich, London, 14 January 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 193.

³⁸ HERRE, Franz, *Metternich*, Praha 1996, p. 341.

In December 1830, Palmerston was still convinced that the conflict could be resolved without armed confrontation, referring to St Petersburg and reports from Berlin, where George William Chad was ambassador. Both ambassadors at these courts were far from favourable in their statements about the Poles. As such, the British Foreign Secretary did not receive entirely objective information. Chad saw France as the main enemy and shared Prussian concerns about French territorial aspirations for the Rhine. Heytesbury's steps, in contrast, were focused on cooperating as closely as possible with Russia. Before the outbreak of the November Uprising, there had been negotiations on replacing him in his role, but considering the circumstances, this had to be put on hold. In his diplomatic approach towards Russia, he was cautious and preferred to send reports to London regarding the danger of French liberals rather than the situation in Poland.³⁹

In the meantime, the Lievens tried to gain the British government's favour. Dorothea Lieven attempted to exploit her very good connections with Grey and Palmerston to convince them to agree to the Tsar's plans. In early 1831, the Russian Princess wrote of the British Foreign Secretary: "Palmerston is adorable, controlling foreign affairs in every sense of the word."⁴⁰ In her correspondence, she continuously compared the Polish case to the British government's relationship with the problems in Ireland.⁴¹ In her opinion, the official reception of Polish representatives in London was like receiving Daniel O'Connell in St Petersburg.⁴² She also expressed her deep wish that Palmerston should not be interested in the fate of the Poles and instead concentrate only on the Austrian and Prussian stances on the uprising.⁴³ In his letters to Lieven, Grey acknowledged the Tsar's right to suppress the revolution, but he also hoped that St Petersburg would side more with them in the matter of Belgium.⁴⁴ Lieven was somewhat mistaken in her conclusions. Palmerston took advantage of the situation, and on the pretext of observing the Vienna agreements, he put counterpressure on Russia to disengage from Western Europe. The longer the conflict between the Tsar and his subjects lasted, the longer the British Foreign Secretary could take advantage of their domination at the conference taking place in London.⁴⁵

³⁹ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 185.

⁴⁰ Lieven to Cowper, London, 10 January 1831, SUDLEY, p. 24.

⁴¹ Lieven to Cowper, London, 8 January 1831, SUDLEY, p. 23.

⁴² O'Connell was an Irish political leader who fought for Irish emancipation.

⁴³ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 184.

⁴⁴ Grey to Lieven, London, 29 December 1830, STRANGE, vol. II, p. 39.

⁴⁵ HAHN, Hans Heinrich, *Außenpolitik in der Emigration. Die Exildiplomatie Adam Jerzy Czartoryskis 1830–1840*, Oldenburg 1978, p. 47.

A fundamental change to the Russian Tsar's stance came after 25 January 1831. That day, Nicholas I was dethroned by Revolutionary Poland's Sejm, and the Romanov dynasty was removed from the Polish Kingdom. The revolutionaries hoped they would achieve the same as the Belgians in their fight for independence, but this step only led to closer cooperation between the Eastern Powers and prevented the opportunity for a peaceful resolution to the situation. The Tsar's army immediately went on the march. In a letter to Grey, Lieven noted the smooth progress of Nicholas's army and the support of Polish farmers for Russia.⁴⁶ Even so, Russia's progress stalled during March 1831. The army's poor condition, lack of preparedness, and supply problems became evident.⁴⁷ This was all underscored by a cholera epidemic which broke out in the Russian camp, decimating its troops. This halt to the Tsar's soldiers' progress appeared to offer the Poles hope for success. They began negotiating with Austria, hoping to get their support. They offered the vacant royal throne to Habsburg Archduke Karl Ludwig, but Metternich resolutely rejected the proposal. Accepting it would have meant both a deterioration in relations with Russia and many potential future threats.⁴⁸ For Metternich, the Polish Kingdom was an area with several problems, and any incorporation into the Monarchy would result in an undesirable increase in the Slavic population. Thus, the Austrian Chancellor wanted Poland's role as a buffer state to remain.⁴⁹

Vienna's policy became much more active after the dethroning of the Romanovs was announced. Until that time, the Emperor's troops had essentially ignored the movement of Polish volunteers across the Austrian border. But this now changed, and the army began to arrest the leaders of the Polish Uprising, such as Czartoryski and General Józef Dwernicki. The former received an offer from the Austrian consul in Warsaw to give up all roles in the rebel government in exchange for being given a passport under any name he wished.⁵⁰ The agreement also involved police surveillance. The Tsar was angered by the proposal and demanded the immediate surrender of all prisoners, which Metternich refused to do.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Lieven to Grey, London, 19 February 1831, STRANGE, vol. II, p. 170.

⁴⁷ Wellington to Lieven, London, 1 May 1831, ROBINSON, Lionel (ed.), *Letters of Dorothea, Princess Lieven. During her Residence in London, 1812–1834*, London, New York, Bombay 1902, p. 300.

⁴⁸ Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 12 April 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

⁴⁹ ALBRECHT-CARRIÉ, René, *A Diplomatic History since the Congress of Vienna*, London 1958, p. 36.

⁵⁰ With Metternich's agreement, he was issued a passport under the name George Hoffman, which allowed him to travel to the British Isles.

⁵¹ SVOBODA, p. 95.

The Polish government was not focused only on Austria; it also sent emissaries to many countries, including Great Britain. The task of bringing the British government on their side was assigned to Marquis Alexandre Colonna Walewski, Napoleon Bonaparte's illegitimate son. Later, the poet Niemcewicz joined him. To their surprise, Palmerston refused to meet with them, and his reason for this was evident: he did not want to provoke St Petersburg unnecessarily. Although his and Grey's correspondence included many statements of sympathy for the Poles, supporting Polish independence was not a top priority.⁵² Metternich's main focus remained on international policy and the effort to avoid involvement in the conflict in Poland.⁵³ At the same time, he stressed that the political freedom previously enjoyed in Poland should remain in place even after the suppression of the uprising.⁵⁴

The only period during which Palmerston believed that hope was not lost for Warsaw was April 1831. Reports of the Polish army's unexpected successes and the spread of the revolution to Lithuania led British diplomacy to take a tougher stance against Russia and demand the strict observance of the Vienna agreements for the upcoming Polish-Russian negotiations.⁵⁵ In his letter to Lieven, Grey wrote about Russian defeat:

The advance of the Polish army to Minsk, and even, as some of the accounts state, to Siedlec, would indicate a success of a very decisive nature; were it not for the possibility that flushed by a first advantage, the Polish general may have been hurried on too far, and may, in his turn, afford to Diebitsch an opportunity of retrieving his losses. But where is Diebitsch? The whole operation seems to me nearly incomprehensible, except on the ground of his having mismanaged matters to a degree which his Turkish campaign gave no reason to expect.⁵⁶

Despite a certain change in his position, Palmerston was not entirely sure what policy to expound externally. In diplomatic correspondence, he described the Poles' fight as a civil war and expressed his concerns over the Russian army's weakness.⁵⁷

Similar messages began to turn up in correspondence with St Petersburg. Heytesbury wrote of the impact of conflict on the Russian government: "Her military means will be seriously crippled, and her finances entirely exhausted."⁵⁸

⁵² BETLEY, p. 165.

⁵³ Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 19 June 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

⁵⁴ HAHN, p. 49.

⁵⁵ Cowley to Palmerston, Vienna, 1 May 1831, TNA, FO 120/113.

⁵⁶ Hans Karl Friedrich Anton Graf von Diebitsch was a Russian general. Grey to Lieven, London, 13 April 1831, STRANGE, vol. II, p. 209.

⁵⁷ Palmerston to Cowley, London, 20 April 1831, TNA, FO 120/113.

⁵⁸ GLEASON, p. 112.

Under the pressure of bad news from the front, Nicholas I began considering dividing Poland between Austria and Prussia.⁵⁹ But neither Eastern Power was interested in taking him up on the offer.⁶⁰ Cowley laid out Metternich's opinion on future arrangements for the territory in a note to London. Poland would keep its status as a divided kingdom, which the Austrian Chancellor perceived as the best guarantee for peace to be preserved in Europe. But he also added that "any of the stipulations of the Treaty of Vienna would warrant the interference of Austria in the arrangements which Emperor of Russia may think proper to make for the future Govt. of that country."⁶¹ These words confirmed the Chancellor's vision, which reflected a desire for the preservation of the balance of power, respect for the Vienna agreements and the legitimate right to intervene against revolutionary events on the Continent.

In contrast to Palmerston, Metternich viewed the current events in Poland from an entirely different perspective:

The complications in Poland, which I had hoped to see resolved in the best possible terms, have taken a rather regrettable turn. Whether it is due to the military operations of Marshal Diebitsch, who is considered a true phantom of terror, or because the lack of foresight that he demonstrated in his initial movements has deeply compromised success, the delay between the first and second operations has greatly undermined the forces that had been collected. The Poles have been emboldened, and the offensive operations they have launched have been crowned with success, continually challenging the brave inhabitants.⁶²

Metternich was firmly against the idea of partitioning Poland. He was keen on maintaining strong relations with St Petersburg. Equally, he aimed to prevent any pro-revolutionary movements within Austria that could potentially ignite future rebellions in pursuit of reunification.

With Polish successes, the French government began to change its approach. Beginning in March 1831, Périer's moderate cabinet came into power and refused to engage in the conflict. However, in June, Sébastiani submitted a proposal for joint mediation to Palmerston, making the same offer to Austria. Neither country agreed.⁶³ In July, the British Foreign Secretary described the Poles as subjects fighting against their legitimate ruler in a speech in the House of Commons. However, given the political system in the British Isles, Palmerston could not ignore

59 SVOBODA, p. 101.

60 According to Cowley, Metternich proposed in June guaranteeing Poland's independence, which the Austrian Chancellor later denied.

61 Cowley to Palmerston, Vienna, 1 May 1831, TNA, FO 120/113.

62 Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 12 April 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

63 RIDLEY, p. 143.

public opinion, which was strongly in favour of the Poles.⁶⁴ His position remained one of distrust towards Paris. He was convinced that France was waiting for the opportunity to claim international success and consolidate its new political regime. On the other hand, Austria distrusted British policy.⁶⁵ This stance was also supported by Esterházy's correspondence with Metternich. He wrote about Great Britain that "it seeks to maintain good relations with all Powers, but it is most friendly and intimate with France, as a result of the current analogy in their positions and political institutions."⁶⁶ London, in an effort to maintain cordial ties with St Petersburg, assured Russia via Heytesbury of its intentions not to cooperate with France in Polish affairs.⁶⁷

The only possible solution for Metternich was the unconditional capitulation of the rebels.⁶⁸ He responded to French calls for a more active anti-Russian policy by stating that the Austrian Emperor was not in a position to order the Tsar to do anything.⁶⁹ But neither did Metternich have everything under complete control. His greatest domestic political rival, Franz Anton von Kolowrat-Liebsteinsky, did not agree with the idea of giving Russia greater assistance and suppressing the uprising quickly.⁷⁰ Kolowrat's concerns about the government budget forced the Prince to withdraw his claim.⁷¹ Metternich's approach also directly affected British interests, with Palmerston openly protesting against the holding of British goods at Austrian borders. This help, officially claimed by London, went to the Polish revolutionaries. In contrast, Vienna saw this as direct support for the revolution, which was in conflict with its policy.⁷² At the same time, Austrian assistance to St Petersburg was not entirely open either. This is evidenced by the fact that over the entire period, no political prisoners were handed over to the Russians.⁷³

⁶⁴ GLEASON, p. 124.

⁶⁵ Esterházy to Metternich, London, 21 March 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 193.

⁶⁶ Esterházy to Metternich, London, 24 July 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 194.

⁶⁷ BELL, vol. I, p. 168.

⁶⁸ Cowley to Palmerston, Vienna, 20 July 1831, TNA, FO 120/113.

⁶⁹ Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 19 June 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

⁷⁰ SWEET, Paul Robinson, *Friedrich von Gentz. Defender of the Old Order*, Madison 1941, p. 297.

⁷¹ Esterházy was aware of these facts during his negotiations with Palmerston: "Today, we find ourselves in a situation where our government's position is increasingly precarious. Any decisions made without careful consideration of their consequences could lead to unpredictable and possibly negative results." Esterházy to Metternich, 24 July 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 194.

⁷² Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 19 June 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

⁷³ Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 16 September 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

In his dispatch to London, Metternich explained the complex position Austria found itself in regarding the November Uprising. He stressed that neutrality could not be absolute, as doing so would endanger regional stability and risk exploitation by military units seeking refuge on Austrian soil. According to the Chancellor, Vienna needed to respond prudently to avoid legitimising Russian military actions and to prevent the Poles from taking advantage of Austria's extensive borders. At the same time, he criticised the British government for the pressure it placed on Vienna, pointing out that Great Britain would face a similar dilemma if it were in Austria's position. Metternich further asserted that the monarchy could not allow its territory to be used for the renewal of hostile actions:

We do not consider ourselves neutral in the legal sense regarding the conflict in Poland. However, even if we had declared neutrality, should we not still act as we are acting? Could we, with a clear conscience, refuse Russia the extradition of several thousand men who sought refuge on our territory, and allow them to return to their country through ours to renew hostilities?

Regarding the presence of Polish military units on Austrian soil, he added:

Neutrality can never extend to the subjects of one of the belligerent Powers, and by allowing them on its territory, the neutral state authorises the opposing party to attack them, justifying an attack on their enemy wherever they may be found.⁷⁴

From mid-June 1831, the Russian army began to recover from the crisis. The turnaround in the Polish-Russian conflict came after 8 September 1831, when the newly appointed General, Ivan Paskevich, managed to capture Warsaw and put down the uprising for good.⁷⁵

Polish defeat did not end the matter of Congress Poland and relations with St Petersburg for Palmerston. Esterházy was even doubtful that London would be able to maintain a passive policy under the weight of public opinion.⁷⁶ The British Foreign Secretary perceived the end of the conflict as a positive thing.⁷⁷ Russia was not tied down in the East with the other Powers, and it could take a more active role against France should the situation require it. The issue of keeping Poland's Constitution and status within the Russian Empire came to the diplomatic fore. This was not so much a response to the revolutionaries' requests as it was

⁷⁴ Metternich to Esterházy, Vienna, 16 September 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 192.

⁷⁵ ALBRECHT-CARRIÉ, p. 37.

⁷⁶ Esterházy to Metternich, London, 24 July 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 194.

⁷⁷ Even in Parliament, the Polish defeat did not generate much response. TWAMLEY, Zachary, *'A Fine Subject to Expatriate Upon.' British Foreign Policy and the Rhetoric of National Honour, 1830–1880*, unpublished dissertation, Dublin, 2024, p. 43.

an effort to maintain the Vienna arrangements and balance of power. During a discussion, Palmerston told Holland: “[Poland is] the great security of Europe against the inveterately encroaching spirit of France.”⁷⁸ He was of the opinion that it was not just a barrier to Russian expansion to the West but also a barrier in the opposite direction.

During August 1831, the Tsar became increasingly convinced that he should abolish the Polish Constitution. To this end, he sent his plan for the future of the kingdom to the British Embassy. Reports of Nicholas I’s intentions began reaching London as early as March 1831.⁷⁹ Lieven preferred to inform Grey first of Russian objectives. When the Prime Minister was unequivocally opposed to this plan, he did not show Palmerston the letter at all.⁸⁰ London officially instructed the embassy in St Petersburg to make the Russians keep the constitution.⁸¹ But Nicholas I was adamant, and surprisingly, Russian public opinion also played a role here.⁸² The Russian public naturally sided with the Tsar and demanded due punishment for the rebels. Heytesbury informed Palmerston that it was “the question of life or death to this [Russian] government. It feels it to be so, the public at large, feel it to be so – and the refusal will, I fear, be steadily persisted in, let the consequences be what they may.”⁸³ In early 1832, Metternich rejected his previous opinion that the Vienna agreements should be maintained. He was now of the opinion that, with respect to Poland, St Petersburg was not limited by any international guarantees. Thus, nothing stood in the Russian Emperor’s way to prevent him from freely changing the state of affairs in the kingdom as he saw fit.⁸⁴ British policy was ineffective in countering this idea.⁸⁵

Despite the unfavourable circumstances, the Poles did not give up their struggle. After his release from Austrian internment, Czartoryski arrived in London in 1831. Grey invited him to an unofficial dinner, at which Palmerston also appeared “by chance.”⁸⁶ The Lievens later heard about this meeting, sparking a wave of protests. The dispute between the British government and the Russian embassy made mutual cooperation even harder, as can be seen in the correspondence be-

⁷⁸ BOURNE, *Palmerston. The Early Years*, p. 352.

⁷⁹ GLEASON, p. 111.

⁸⁰ WESBTER, *The Foreign*, p. 189.

⁸¹ Esterházy to Metternich, London, 24 July 1831, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 194.

⁸² Bligh to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 9 April 1833, TNA, FO 65/207.

⁸³ Heytesbury to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 7 January 1832, TNA, FO 65/199.

⁸⁴ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 21 March 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

⁸⁵ RIDLEY, p. 144.

⁸⁶ GIELGUD, p. 327.

tween the Princess and Grey.⁸⁷ Surprisingly, her reproaches were primarily directed against Palmerston. The Lievens' approach began to change in mid-1831. The British Foreign Secretary became a target of criticism both domestically and internationally. He was called a tool of Russia in Parliament, and for the Russians, he was the Tsar's enemy. The crisis over electoral reform reached a culmination point within the British Parliament, forcing Palmerston to act in line with public opinion. Everything came to a head in June 1831 when he had to account for himself in the House of Commons. In his speeches, he once again appealed to public opinion. Although he did not openly support the Poles in their struggle, he sharply criticised Russian policy, expressing his disapproval of Nicholas I's actions.⁸⁸ One of the addresses was conveyed by Neumann to Vienna, indicating that Palmerston: "Took the opportunity [. . .] to pronounce, in vigorous terms, against the conduct of the Emperor Nicholas, accusing him of having violated, in the most outrageous manner, the rights of the people of Poland and the obligations he had assumed towards them."⁸⁹ The Russian Emperor was criticised by all sides in Great Britain, and one member of Parliament even called him a "villain" and a "monster in human form."⁹⁰

Diplomatic relations in St Petersburg also impacted the deterioration of Anglo-Russian political cooperation. From 1831, Heytesbury pressed for his removal from the post, apparently for medical reasons.⁹¹ One of the first nominated for the position was Stratford Canning, but the Tsar strongly opposed this choice.⁹² Canning's political opinions were anti-Russian, something well-known in St Petersburg. The Russians even suspected him of being involved in the December and November Uprisings.⁹³ Thus, his potential appointment exacerbated the already tense Anglo-Russian relations. Metternich also opposed Canning, stating that he "could never agree to his nomination."⁹⁴ Since Heytesbury's replacement was urgent, Palmerston temporarily appointed John Lambton, Earl of Durham, as ambassador. It was not so much Durham's diplomatic skills that earned him the position, but rather the Foreign Secretary's attempt to sideline him so he would not negatively impact do-

⁸⁷ Lieven to Grey, London, 2 January 1832 and Grey to Lieven, London, 4 January 1832, STRANGE, vol. II, pp. 311 – 312.

⁸⁸ Palmerston's speech to the British House of Commons, London, 28 July 1832, *Poland HC Deb 28 June 1832 vol 13 cc1115-52* [online], [quoted 2019-04-27]. Available on: https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1832/jun/28/poland#S3V0013P0_18320628_HOC_31.

⁸⁹ Neumann to Metternich, London, 24 July 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

⁹⁰ SETON-WATSON, *The Russian Empire*, p. 180.

⁹¹ Heytesbury to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 8 April 1832, TNA, FO 65/199.

⁹² Heytesbury to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 2 March 1832, TNA, FO 65/199.

⁹³ BOURNE, *Palmerston. The Early Years*, p. 362.

⁹⁴ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 12 April 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 201.

mestic politics.⁹⁵ Dorothea Lieven did her best to influence him before his departure to St Petersburg. She wrote to Grey about him: "I had Lord Durham with me for a long time this morning, and each time I see him, I like him the more."⁹⁶ The whole situation seemed somewhat paradoxical because Durham was considered one of the most pro-Polish radicals in British politics. Yet, upon the announcement of his nomination, his stance changed. Neumann wrote to Vienna that the Earl was seeking Palmerston's post.⁹⁷ The Russian Princess would also favour this idea because their mutual relations were now very hostile and were unlikely to improve in the future.⁹⁸

Durham eventually went to St Petersburg in 1832. During his mission, he went beyond the instructions he had been given several times. In conversation with the Tsar, for example, he said that Great Britain in no way agreed with the revolutions in Europe.⁹⁹ His acts drew ridicule from many European diplomats. According to Palmerston, he was duped by the Tsar and Nesselrode.¹⁰⁰ He failed to achieve anything regarding the Polish question, but he did begin to perceive himself as an important figure in European politics. The Russian Foreign Minister advised him that he stop in Vienna and Berlin on his return journey to London. Durham was enthused by this idea, something that could not be said for Lamb or the Chancellor. Metternich did not like him, and according to the British representative, his visit could do more harm than good.¹⁰¹ Grey also recommended that he visit both capitals.¹⁰² The Austrian Prince thought that it was Palmerston's decision and declared: "Something has happened to Palmerston: he's not the same man anymore."¹⁰³ In the end, though, Durham surprisingly decided not to visit Vienna.¹⁰⁴

Following a short interlude, Canning's name reappeared regarding the post of official ambassador. The British Foreign Secretary insisted on his proposal and

⁹⁵ MILTON-SMITH, John, *Earl Grey's Cabinet and the Object of Parliamentary Reform*. In: *The Historical Journal*, 1, 1972, 15, p. 68.

⁹⁶ Lieven to Grey, London, 19 October 1832, STRANGE, vol. II, p. 407.

⁹⁷ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 193. Neumann to Metternich, London, 2 July 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

⁹⁸ BELL, vol. I, p. 177.

⁹⁹ NEW, Chester William, *Lord Durham. A Biography of John Lambton, first Earl of Durham*, Oxford 1929, p. 206.

¹⁰⁰ Palmerston to Granville, London, 23 November 1832, TNA, FO 27/471.

¹⁰¹ NEW, p. 208.

¹⁰² Durham was Grey's illegitimate son.

¹⁰³ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 195. Metternich specifically wrote: "Il est arrivé qu'elque chose à Palmerston, ce n'est plus le même homme."

¹⁰⁴ NEW, p. 212.

continued to defend him: "Canning was the ablest diplomat we had, and as a cousin of the great Canning, he had to be provided with a suitable post."¹⁰⁵ Durham, convinced of his own importance, promised Nesselrode that Canning's nomination would be withdrawn.¹⁰⁶ This naturally led to conflict with Palmerston. Dorothea Lieven tried to exploit the difficult situation and sow division between Durham and his Foreign Secretary. In letters, she described the relationship between the two men as full of hatred. She claimed Palmerston was not open to the ideas of others and sought to undermine King William IV's trust in him. She continued to speculate that following the resignation of the current Foreign Secretary, Durham – promoted by St Petersburg – should take his place. Neumann informed Vienna of this plot. Even Metternich did not hold a high opinion of the Princess. It is not clear how Palmerston found out about the conspiracy, but after it surfaced, it was evident that her days in London were numbered.¹⁰⁷

Lamb's sister, Emily Clavering, Countess Cowper, also mentioned Lieven in her correspondence:

Emilie [Lieven's nickname] is a dear good soul, but very like a spoilt child, cannot bear contradiction and has no temper to stand things turning out differently from her wishes. They live on the hope of a revolution in France and say we do all sorts of things to bolster the state of things there, which cannot last. The fact is that they are in a very uncomfortable position. They act from the Orders of their Court and are therefore not responsible . . . they have forced us into a close alliance with France, which it has always been their object to prevent.¹⁰⁸

Furthermore, Russian diplomatic representatives were attempting to destabilise domestic political relations within the British cabinet, using their influence to sway individual politicians to their side.

By the end of 1832, relations between St Petersburg and London were extremely tense. Palmerston's attempt to reverse the fate of Congress Poland had failed.¹⁰⁹ In his Organic Statute of 26 February 1832, Nicholas I abolished the Polish Constitution, restricted the country's autonomy, closed the university in Warsaw, declared Russian the official language, and put the Sejm under Russian control.¹¹⁰ This marked the beginning of the process of unification with the rest of

¹⁰⁵ LEVER, Tresham (ed.), *The Letters of Lady Palmerston: Selected and Edited from the Originals. At Broadlands and Elsewhere*, London 1957, p. 203.

¹⁰⁶ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 197.

¹⁰⁷ BELL, vol. I, p. 177.

¹⁰⁸ Cowper to Grey, London, 19 November 1832, LEVER, p. 202.

¹⁰⁹ Neumann to Metternich, London, 29 July 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹¹⁰ Heytesbury to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 30 March 1832, TNA, FO 65/199; Bligh to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 9 April 1833, TNA, FO 65/207.

the Empire.¹¹¹ In early 1833, Nesselrode sent an official letter rejecting Canning as ambassador.¹¹² Lieven wrote to Palmerston that this was the goal of her political life.¹¹³ Palmerston's response has not been found, but in line with diplomatic rules, her husband had to end his post as ambassador and return to Russia in early 1834.¹¹⁴ The British press launched a campaign of attacks and insults against the Princess and her husband.¹¹⁵ Neumann blamed Talleyrand for the entire plot. He reported on his conversation with him in a very interesting dispatch to Vienna:

I asked him what specifically troubled him about Mr de Lieven. He replied that Lord Palmerston had shown an indifferent attitude towards the latest frank and open communications from the Russian cabinet regarding Eastern affairs. Additionally, articles offensive to Russia had appeared the following day in *The Globe*, a ministerial journal, and then two days later in *The Times*. Given the level of influence that the government exerted over the press, these incidents caused considerable unease.

Then he further stated:

He indicated that there had been a noticeable shift in the language used by Lord Palmerston regarding Russia since last Thursday. I had no doubt that Talleyrand had emphasised the shared interest of France and England in not allowing these tensions to escalate, advising that this matter should be resolved in a manner compatible with the dignity and personal sentiments of all involved.¹¹⁶

The rift he caused remained unmended, and Pozzo di Borgo was not nominated as the new ambassador until 1835. In the end, Durham became his British counterpart, having previously been pressured to resign from all functions in 1833.¹¹⁷

The November Uprising marked the start of an era of Anglo-Russian distrust, which divided Europe into two political camps.¹¹⁸ Despite the Russians' initial sympathy for Grey's government, the differing international political interests of the two states were evident, and British public opinion perceived the Tsar as a conservative despot much more strongly than it did Metternich, for example.¹¹⁹

¹¹¹ RICH, Norman, *Great Power Diplomacy 1814–1914*, New York 1992, p. 62.

¹¹² Bligh to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 9 January 1833, TNA, FO 65/207.

¹¹³ SETON-WATSON, *Britain in Europe*, p. 182.

¹¹⁴ Neumann to Metternich, London, 26 March, 1833, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 201.

¹¹⁵ Neumann to Metternich, London, 15 March, 1833, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 201.

¹¹⁶ Neumann to Metternich, London, 26 March, 1833, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 201.

¹¹⁷ Neumann to Metternich, London, 15 March 1833, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 201.

¹¹⁸ BAUMGART, Winfried, *Europäisches Konzert und Nationale Bewegung. Internationale Beziehungen 1830–1878*, Paderborn 1999, p. 181.

¹¹⁹ Neumann to Metternich, London, 15 March 1833, AT-OESTA/HHSTA, StAbt, England 201.

Great Britain deepened its cooperation with France, while Russia sought allies from amongst its eastern neighbours. Due to the evident British inability to stand up for its interests in Italian politics, Austria began to focus on Russia. For Vienna, cooperation with St Petersburg brought benefits. Nicholas I supported the Habsburg Monarchy's strategy in Italy and in the German Confederation. In contrast, Palmerston saw Metternich's policy in the German states as negatively as he did Russian policy in Poland. The anti-Austrian strategy in Central Europe was further aggravated by Vienna's focus towards the East.¹²⁰

Since its establishment at the Congress of Vienna, the German Confederation had been a vital element for Great Britain in maintaining the balance of power. Austro-Prussian domination served as a safeguard against French expansion into Central Europe.¹²¹ Metternich shared the same view. Cooperation between London and Paris since Grey's government had come into power had significantly diminished British fears in this regard. For Palmerston's policy, this space represented an opportunity to support liberal ideas while also being able to oppose Metternich's policy, which he considered to be purely repressive.¹²² In 1832, the threat to the Confederation came not from outside but from within, as revolutionary events had impacted the union since the start of the 1830s.¹²³

The July Revolution, along with the Belgian struggle for independence, had profound repercussions throughout Central Europe. The upheaval of 1830 served as a catalyst for liberals and radicals across Germany, inspiring them to intensify their demands for constitutional reforms, the creation of a unified German nation-state, and even the establishment of a republic through the overthrow of existing princely rulers. The political atmosphere in the southern constitutional states grew increasingly charged, as liberals within the Second Chambers pressed for significant reforms. These included demands for the military to swear allegiance to the constitution, the introduction of ministerial responsibility, the abolition of press censorship, and the establishment of public trials.¹²⁴

Austria and Prussia, both of which had yet to fulfil the constitutional promises made during the Congress of Vienna in 1814–1815, observed these developments with growing alarm. The spread of liberalism and political agitation, especially in the southern states where the existing constitutions were perceived as being at odds with the Federal Act, posed a serious challenge to the established

120 BROWN, *Palmerston and Austria*, p. 31.

121 BEALES, Derek, *From Castlereagh to Gladstone 1815–1885*, London 1969, p. 167.

122 SCHROEDER, *Systems, Stability, Statecraft*, p. 41.

123 BOTZENHART, Manfred, *Reform, Restauration, Krise. Deutschland 1789–1847*, Frankfurt am Main 1985, p. 111.

124 GRUNER, *Metternich, Palmerston*, p. 30.

order. Prince Metternich, recognising the liberal movement as a direct threat to the stability of the German Confederation, began to consider drastic measures. Among these were the potential dissolution of the Confederation itself or the neutralisation of smaller German states, drawing parallels to the recent developments in Belgium. This period marked a critical juncture in the struggle between conservative forces determined to preserve the old order and the liberal movement advocating for national unity and constitutional governance.¹²⁵

Furthermore, following the collapse of the November Uprising, a large number of Polish refugees began to turn up within the territory of the German Confederation. Their fight for national liberation roused a flood of solidarity, especially among German liberals.¹²⁶ Revolutionary unrest broke out in the confederate states that still did not have a constitution, such as Saxony, Hessen, and Brunswick-Lüneburg.¹²⁷ There was also dissatisfaction with the political conditions in Hanover, which was linked to its personal union with Great Britain. Here, liberals demanded a change in their governing representatives who were limiting the freedoms of their subjects.¹²⁸

For the Austrian Chancellor, the immediate problem was particularly neighbouring Saxony.¹²⁹ He followed events in the German Confederation with concern. The festival, which took place in May 1832 on the ruins of Hambach Castle near Neustadt in Bavarian Rhineland-Palatinate, provided a pretext for intervention.¹³⁰ The Hambach Festival centred around calls for a united republican Germany.¹³¹ The ambassador in Frankfurt, Thomas Cartwright, wrote in a report to Palmerston on the course of the Hambach gathering:

The Marseillaise was sung, and incessant shouts were heard in praise of liberty . . . The whole mass, however, upon arriving halfway down the hill, halted, and commenced vociferating insults against the King and the troops amidst deafening shouts of 'Liberty for ever'.¹³²

¹²⁵ Ibid. p. 34.

¹²⁶ SCHULZE, Hagen, *Der Weg zum Nationalstaat. Die deutsche Nationalbewegung vom 18. Jahrhundert bis zur Reichsgründung*, München 1997, p. 77.

¹²⁷ BLACKBOURN, David, *History of Germany 1780–1918. The Long Nineteenth Century*, Oxford 2003, p. 72.

¹²⁸ After William IV's death, the personal union with Hanover ended, and his brother Ernest Augustus became King, immediately annulling the constitution. Protests erupted across the state, and opinions in Hanover remained divided. PÁSZTOROVÁ, Barbora, *Vliv červencové revoluce ve Francii na německý nacionálismus*. In: Historický obzor 28, 2017, č. 3/4, p. 51.

¹²⁹ ŠEDIVÝ, Miroslav, *Zrod německého nacionálismu*, Plzeň 2013, p. 141.

¹³⁰ DESMOND, Seward, *Metternich. Der erste Europäer. Eine Biographie*, Zürich 1993, p. 226.

¹³¹ GILDEA, Robert, *Barricades and Borders. Europe 1800–1914*, Oxford 2003, p. 79.

¹³² Cartwright to Palmerston, Frankfurt, 8 June 1833, TNA, FO 33/44.

Austria, in cooperation with Prussia, secured the adoption of the so-called Six Articles, which were federal laws.¹³³ Each of its regulations included abolition of a free press, stricter censorship, a ban on political organisations, people's gatherings, festivals, and public political speeches.¹³⁴ One crucial point was the right for Prussia and Austria to intervene militarily in the name of the German Confederation if any of its member states changed the constitution arbitrarily.¹³⁵

In order to incorporate international guarantees within the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna, a guarantee of the signatory Powers applied to the German Confederation.¹³⁶ For Palmerston, the clause on intervention against members of the Confederation represented interference in the internal affairs of free states. Although they were members of a single national-political grouping, this did not give Austria or Prussia the right to interfere in the matters of other member states.¹³⁷ In his famous speech, he later stated: "Constitutional states in Europe are natural allies of England."¹³⁸ Lamb conveyed Palmerston's opinion and the stance of his government to Metternich regarding the events in the German Confederation during June 1832:

Great Britain, wrote the Principal Secretary of State, is a contracting party to the Treaty of Vienna, of which the arrangements concerning Germany form one of the principal treaties. The British government is also bound by ties of friendship with the German States; therefore, everything that tends either to disturb these arrangements and thereby endanger the general peace, or specifically harm the welfare of these States, must arouse the deepest interest of His Majesty's Government.¹³⁹

Metternich viewed the matter through a different political lens. From his perspective, the revolution and the related liberal radicalism were a Europe-wide issue, not an isolated phenomenon, but rather something that spread across societies.¹⁴⁰ As he stated in a letter to Paris: "At any rate, there exists in Europe only one affair of any moment, and that is the Revolution."¹⁴¹ He rejected separate spheres of in-

133 The Six Articles was issued on 28 June 1832.

134 The entire wording of the circular to individual German Confederation courts in: METTERNICH-WINNEBURG, vol. V, p. 244.

135 MÜLLER, Jürgen, *Der Deutsche Bund 1815–1866*, München 2006, p. 17.

136 GRUNER, Wolf Dietrich, *Die deutsche Frage. Ein Problem der europäischen Geschichte seit 1800*, München 1985, p. 80.

137 BAUMGART, p. 279.

138 Neumann to Metternich, London, 7 August, 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

139 Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 31 October 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

140 Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 28 June 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

141 Metternich to Apponyi, Vienna, 14 May 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199; METTERNICH-WINNEBURG, vol. V, p. 189.

fluence in this matter. For him, revolutionary movements represented a general evil spreading across Europe.¹⁴²

British intervention in conditions in the German states was balanced by Austrian activity during the civil war in Spain, an aspect which Chapter 7, “*Civil War in Portugal and Spain, and the Quadruple Alliance*,” shall discuss. Metternich’s objectives were thus not only focused on defending Austrian interests in the German Confederation but also on taking an active approach against the British in Western Europe. Domestic political affairs within Great Britain also had an important influence on Palmerston’s actions within Central Europe.¹⁴³ He strongly disapproved of Metternich’s policies concerning Germany and Europe and considered them to be reactionary, lacking in sensibility, and ultimately a threat to the peace of Europe.¹⁴⁴ As with the criticism of Russia’s actions in Poland, the current issue of electoral reform and the need to heed the voices of his voters also played a role in this matter.¹⁴⁵ Unexpectedly, it was the domestic press that began to criticise him for taking an overly moderate approach to foreign affairs.¹⁴⁶ He was also accused of making poor choices for diplomatic representatives at European courts.¹⁴⁷ The free British press wanted the influence of French radicals on European politics to be restricted. As such, they supported and urged the British government to ensure active policy, which would become a central voice for all liberals on the Continent.¹⁴⁸

In pursuing British interests in Central Europe, Palmerston relied exclusively on his future brother-in-law, the British ambassador to Vienna, Frederick Lamb.¹⁴⁹ Relations between the two men were not just highly professional but also friendly. Upon his arrival in Vienna, Palmerston wrote:

The King having been graciously pleased to select you to be His Majesty’s ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary to the Emperor of Austria, I have much satisfaction in transmitting to Your Excellency the letter by which the King accredits you in that character to His Imperial Majesty.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴² Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 24 June 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

¹⁴³ BROWN, *Lord Palmerston and Parliamentary Representation*, p. 49.

¹⁴⁴ GRUNER, *Metternich, Palmerston*, p. 6.

¹⁴⁵ MILTON- SMITH, p. 70.

¹⁴⁶ BROWN, David, *Compelling but not Controlling? Palmerston and the Press 1846–1855*. In: The Journal of the Historical Association 86, 2001, 281, p. 45.

¹⁴⁷ *Morning Chronicle*, 5 October 1832, enclosed in the letter to: Neumann to Metternich, London, 7 October 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁴⁸ Neumann to Metternich, London, 7 August 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁴⁹ RIDLEY, p. 112.

¹⁵⁰ Palmerston to Lamb, London, 27 January 1832, TNA, FO 120/116.

In private correspondence to the ambassador, the Foreign Secretary often openly confided in him in a manner he did to very few of his colleagues. In 1835, he officially praised him for his service to the cabinet and increased his salary, something that did not often occur during his time as Foreign Secretary.¹⁵¹

Although a Whig, Metternich liked Lamb, and this brought the two statesmen closer together. Lamb also had, for a brief period, excellent relations with the Chancellor's advisor, Friedrich von Gentz.¹⁵² He was a proponent of conservative policies and continually attempted to convince Metternich of the need for cooperation with Britain. For him, Austria should be an ally to be used as a counter-weight to France or Russia to keep balance on the Continent.¹⁵³ The British constitutional system portrayed him as purely aristocratic.¹⁵⁴ During his time in Vienna, he sent many letters to Palmerston defending Ballhausplatz's policies.¹⁵⁵ He later declared of the Austrian Chancellor: "He was an overly practical man who regulated his behaviour in line with his own doctrines, and intelligent enough to abandon his doctrines to conceal his behaviour."¹⁵⁶ According to him, cooperation with Vienna was a guarantee of the workability of the international order, and Austria should be a reliable partner for Great Britain.

Like other British diplomats in the Eastern Powers, he saw France as the primary danger to peace in Europe. He supported Metternich's vision of an allied Prussian-Austrian army as the best protection against war with their Western neighbour.¹⁵⁷ Following the outbreak of unrest in South-West Germany, he defended the interests of the Monarchy over his own government.¹⁵⁸ Palmerston disagreed with this defence. His main vision was the spread of political freedoms in the German Confederation and the defence of liberal movements across Europe. Lamb argued in line with the Austrian Chancellor that one could not assess the conditions within the German states from the perspective of an Englishman.¹⁵⁹

Even so, Palmerston did not change his opinion on the Habsburg Monarchy's approach in Central Europe. He said that the Six Articles suppressed states' rights

¹⁵¹ Treasury Minute, London, 8 September 1835, TNA, FO 7/255.

¹⁵² Gentz died on 9 June 1832. SRBIK, Heinrich Ritter von, *Statesman of Philosophical Principles*. In: KRAEHE, Enno E. (ed.), The Metternich Controversy, New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Atlanta, Dallas, Montreal, Toronto, London, Sydney 1971, p. 36.

¹⁵³ SOUTHGATE, p. 54.

¹⁵⁴ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 224.

¹⁵⁵ SOUTHGATE, p. 55.

¹⁵⁶ Lamb to Palmerston, Vienna, 3 September 1833, TNA, FO 120/137.

¹⁵⁷ Lamb to Palmerston, Vienna, 31 May 1833, TNA, FO 120/136.

¹⁵⁸ Lamb to Palmerston, Vienna, 21 September, 1832, FO 120/124.

¹⁵⁹ BROWN, *Palmerston and Austria*, p. 35.

to their own political development. In a letter to Vienna, he shared his opinion that if Metternich had granted the citizens of the German Confederation at least a little freedom, then their desire for revolution would immediately dissolve.¹⁶⁰ Over the course of the summer of 1832, he sent a number of other dispatches criticising Vienna's policy. With Lamb's assistance, the Chancellor explained the Austrian perspective on the matter. First of all, he rejected the British government's right to intervene in the affairs of the Confederation. Second, he emphasised that its purpose was not just to defend against an external enemy but also to unite in defending against an internal threat to its integrity, allowing Austria to protect it. According to the Federal Acts, the constitution adopted in each of the states, such as Bavaria, should also be approved by the Federal Diet. If the Diet rejected it and the particular state did not abolish it, Austria then acquired the right to intervene on behalf of the entire Confederation. As he noted at the end of his statement, the threat to the stability of the whole of Europe was German nationalists aligning with French extremists.¹⁶¹ He believed that it was Great Britain that should focus primarily on the balance of power and prevent the threat of a general war.¹⁶² Austrian policy's objective was to maintain order in Central Europe and secure the fulfilment of political obligations by the German courts.¹⁶³

Vienna's arguments fell on deaf ears in Britain. The British press and public opposed the Habsburg Monarchy, describing it as a despotic state that denied its subjects liberty.¹⁶⁴ Palmerston considered Metternich's strategy hopeless. He thought that liberalism could be suppressed in Poland or in the Papal States, but not within a decentralised territory numbering 12 million citizens, which he meant the German states.¹⁶⁵ Despite domestic political pressure, any policy of active intervention by the London government was just as unrealistic as in the case of Poland.¹⁶⁶ During the government discussions, Palmerston strongly opposed the Six Articles. Grey countered with the objection that the situation in the German Confederation was not exclusively a British matter and defended the doctrine of non-intervention.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁰ Palmerston to Lamb, London, 25 June 1832, TNA, FO 120/137.

¹⁶¹ Heytesbury in St Petersburg also supported these ideas, reinforcing the stance and adding weight to the arguments: Heytesbury to Palmerston, St Petersburg, 6 July 1832, TNA, FO 165/199.

¹⁶² Lamb to Palmerston, Vienna, 24 September 1832, TNA, FO 120/124.

¹⁶³ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 24 June 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

¹⁶⁴ *The Globe*, 25 June 1832, enclosed in letter: Neumann to Metternich, London, 27 June 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁶⁵ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 227.

¹⁶⁶ BELL, vol. I, p. 157.

¹⁶⁷ Neumann to Metternich, London, 27 July 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

The situation was different in Hanover. Here, the Six Articles had been adopted without previous consultation with Palmerston. Despite his vain protests, William IV affirmed their validity. Thus, in the case of Hanover, British policy was not in accordance with Palmerston's vision, and this led to conflict between him and the King.¹⁶⁸ The British king believed that intervening in the affairs of the Confederation could jeopardise Britain's global interests, particularly during a period characterised by the rise of divergent ideological factions across Europe.¹⁶⁹ This time, the press sided with the Foreign Secretary.¹⁷⁰ In the meantime, Lamb criticised these articles from Vienna and described Britain's newspapers as more radical than the revolutionary press in France.¹⁷¹ Palmerston wrote a letter to William IV, informing him of the necessity of the Hanover government respecting London's policies, especially in regard to the common interests of both states. This "non-observance" of official British policy was to be an exception that was not to be repeated.¹⁷²

Contrary to the opinions of his Foreign Secretary, William IV was determined to support adherence to a monarchist principle as the King of Hanover.¹⁷³ This led Palmerston to discuss with Grey the nature of the personal union with Hanover. They thought a resolution could be found if the two states kept each other better informed without any intervention in their internal affairs.¹⁷⁴ Grey conveyed this vision to the British King: "Our conduct must be regulated by English principles and English interests, and we cannot be diverted from the line prescribed by these because Hanover has taken a different course."¹⁷⁵ Together, they urged William IV to prevent any change to the Hanover Constitution. Should he not do so, Great Britain would not protect the state, and there would be further outbreaks of unrest. The British King objected that in the event of a larger conflict, only Austria or Prussia would be able to provide an adequate defence anyway.¹⁷⁶ Although the Foreign Secretary did not want to accept the King's conclusions, he could not do anything about it.

¹⁶⁸ GRUNER, *Metternich, Palmerston*, p. 48.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ SIMMS, Brendan, RIOTTE, Torsten, *The Hanoverian Dimension in British History 1714–1837*, Cambridge 2010, p. 105.

¹⁷¹ WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 229.

¹⁷² Palmerston to William IV, London, 5 September 1832, WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. I, p. 799.

¹⁷³ Neumann to Metternich, London, 27 July 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁷⁴ SIMMS, RIOTTE, p. 106.

¹⁷⁵ Grey to Palmerston, London, 3 August 1832, WEBSTER, *The Foreign Policy of Palmerston*, vol. II, p. 830.

¹⁷⁶ SIMMS, RIOTTE, p. 108.

Palmerston's approach to Hanover also had another objective in mind. One motive was an attempt to finally refute the accusations of the opposition and some of the public that he supported repressive policies on the Continent. Considering British public opinion and the tense situation in Parliament, he was forced to make a public declaration defending liberal values.¹⁷⁷ Edward Bulwer-Lytton and Scottish radical Joseph Hume supported him. Once he had most of the governing cabinet on his side, he made a speech to the House of Commons primarily focused on the general British public. In his speech on 2 August 1832, he argued that constitutional powers were natural allies for Great Britain.¹⁷⁸ Neumann, who was present at this session, immediately reported everything to Vienna.¹⁷⁹ The next point in his speech was his opinion on interfering in the domestic arrangements of European states:

The principle of interference meant either interference by force of arms, or by friendly counsel and advice. Now, he thought, the principle for this government to proceed upon was that of non-interference by force of arms in the affairs of any other country, but he did not think that we should be precluded where it was expedient for us to do so, from interfering by friendly counsel and advice. When we talked of the principle of non-interference, it meant that it would not be expedient, on the part of this government, to interfere by force of arms to dictate to any other state with respect to its internal affairs.¹⁸⁰

He further added:

That as long as our commerce is of importance to us – as long as Continental armies are in existence – as long as it is possible that a Power in one quarter may become dangerous to a Power in another – so long must England look with interest on the transactions of the Continent, and so long is it proper for this country, in the maintenance of its own independence, not to shut its eyes to anything that threatens the independence of Germany.¹⁸¹

Two hundred copies of this speech were sent to courts around the Confederation, encouraging many liberals across the continent.

¹⁷⁷ BROWN, *Palmerston and Austria*, p. 34.

¹⁷⁸ Neumann to Metternich, London, 2 August 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁷⁹ Neumann to Metternich, London, 7 August 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁸⁰ Palmerston's speech to the British House of Commons, London, 2 August 1832, *Germany – Protocol of Diet HC Deb 02 August 1832 vol 14 cc1030-71* [online], [quote. 2019-22-04]. Available on: https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1832/aug/02/germany-protocol-of-the-diet#S3V0014P0_18320802_HOC_38.

¹⁸¹ Palmerston's speech to the British House of Commons, London, 2 August 1832, *Germany – Protocol of Diet HC Deb 02 August 1832 vol 14 cc1030-71* [online], [quote. 2019-22-04]. Available on: https://api.parliament.uk/historic-hansard/commons/1832/aug/02/germany-protocol-of-the-diet#S3V0014P0_18320802_HOC_38.

A week later, Neumann had another conversation with Palmerston. He sought to understand the reasons behind Britain's hostility towards Austria and the objectives pursued through distributing pamphlets:

Lord Palmerston, like all those who have no good excuse to give, turned his defence into an attack point, and said: 'You want to destroy the form of their government; it is Austria,' he said, 'that advised Russia to abolish the Constitution in Poland, it is Austria that encouraged the Pope in his resistance, it is Austria that recognised the King of Spain's right to intervene in the affairs of Portugal, it is Austria that sought to draw us into threatening actions against Switzerland, similar to those of the Frankfurt Diet, it is Austria which by its attitude and military position threatens Switzerland and Germany simultaneously, filling the former with anxiety and compelling it to arm thirty thousand men out of fear of an invasion on its part, and requests the Grand Duke of Baden to occupy Constance'.¹⁸²

Palmerston also expressed concern that the proposed resolutions, being too severe, could cause a rift between the people and their sovereigns. He feared that, to avoid the fate of Charles X, the sovereigns might unite with their people and seek external protection, likely from France, which would be eager to provide it and warned that this could lead to a schism in Germany, manifesting within the Diet and potentially causing its dissolution. He further noted that the complications from such a situation would be significant. Metternich was upset after reading Neumann's reports.¹⁸³ Not only did Great Britain not support Austria's position regarding the prevailing crisis in the Papal States, but it also took an opposing position regarding the German states.¹⁸⁴

In this situation, Palmerston probably went further than he had planned. In his instructions to Lamb, he asked that his words be interpreted in the spirit of the British Parliament so as to limit their impact. His speech of 2 August 1832 was a real example of the ambiguity of Palmerston's politics.¹⁸⁵ On the home front, he was forced to act as a leading figure within liberalism, whereas in official correspondence, he tried to adjust such arguments so as to leave space for diplomatic manoeuvring. Metternich later said that he acted like a conservative in domestic policy and like a liberal in foreign policy.¹⁸⁶ In fact, Palmerston wanted to preserve Britain's dominant position within the Concert of Europe.

¹⁸² Neumann to Metternich, London, 14 August 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁸³ Neumann to Metternich, 14 August 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁸⁴ RIDLEY, p. 156.

¹⁸⁵ In a private discussion with Neumann, Palmerston called it a "*collection of conscience.*" Neumann to Metternich, London, 25 September 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 197.

¹⁸⁶ BELL, vol. I, p. 154.

His modified speech was sent through official diplomatic channels to Vienna and Berlin. Although the dispatch was intended only for these two states, it eventually reached all the German courts. Lamb, who further interpreted it to Metternich, delivered the letter on 7 September 1832. In his response, the Austrian Chancellor said:

The English government, by all accounts, is taking a dim view of the Austrian position in the German Confederation and the true significance of the decree of 28 June . . . The 28 June regulation was unanimously adopted by confederation members, so there must have been a unanimous and general feeling as to its necessity, which nevertheless did not lead the Diet to go beyond the threshold of strictly observing the law.¹⁸⁷

That same day, he sent London another dispatch, writing:

There are significant differences here between principles and positions; differences which are becoming increasingly sharp between Great Britain and Austria each day . . . The principle of unchanging conditions is the foundation of Austria's internal and external policy. Our own existence and peace in Europe are firmly associated with preserving this principle . . . We are accused by England of rejecting a system of concessions and taking a route of repression. The idea that we have a preference solely for repression is erroneous. Our true system is the following: 'We do not pursue a system of repression as the antithesis to a system of concessions; we simply pursue a system of prevention in order not to be forced to pursue a system of repression.' I must justify a sincere desire to support good understanding between the two Powers and strive to eliminate misunderstandings arising from a one-sided perspective, which stands in the way of happy collaboration.¹⁸⁸

From Austria's standpoint, the British position was perceived as direct interference in the internal affairs of the German Confederation and a failure to respect international spheres of influence.

The British document was not given credit in other states of the German Confederation either. In Prussia, the new Foreign Minister, Johann Peter Friedrich Ancillon, refused to accept it. The British ambassador in Berlin, Gilbert Elliot Murray Kynynmound, Earl of Minto, managed to salvage the situation by explaining that it was merely Palmerston's personal opinion, although this was not true. After the final acceptance of the dispatch, the British ambassador assured Prussia of the report's pacifist intentions and the British efforts to preserve peace in Europe. Metternich undertook the same step as Palmerston and had his response

¹⁸⁷ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 31 October 1832 (first dispatch), AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

¹⁸⁸ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 31 October 1832 (second dispatch), AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

sent around the German courts unofficially. His defence was able to firmly unite Austria and Prussia in their policies within the German Confederation.¹⁸⁹

Surprisingly, Palmerston and Metternich had the same opinion on the emerging customs union under Prussia.¹⁹⁰ Austria's Chancellor was aware that a change in political and economic conditions in Central Europe threatened Habsburg's interests and could result in Prussian domination within the territory.¹⁹¹ As such, he endeavoured to prevent this trade integration, even though it was difficult to find a means to achieve this.¹⁹² In contrast, Palmerston wanted a market that was as open as possible to ensure the maximum sale of British goods within the territory. While he spoke of adopting liberal reforms and freedoms, he opposed any kind of integration that might pose a threat to British power or economic interests.¹⁹³

As early as the beginning of 1833, Metternich informed Neumann that the situation in the German Confederation was gradually calming down and stabilising. On this occasion, he could not resist remarking on the poor political judgement of the British Foreign Secretary: "Nothing that Mr Palmerston had predicted has come to pass, and it is precisely the opposite of what he expected that has happened. We must acknowledge that this Minister is not distinguished by the strength of his calculations!"¹⁹⁴ The British government further distanced itself from supporting the German liberals, effectively leaving the affairs in Central Europe under the control of the two Eastern Powers.

Another unique case wherein Palmerston acted in line with Austrian policy was the matter of Switzerland. His actions in this confederation of cantons were deliberately counter to liberals. The July events boosted movements within individual cantons that aimed to strengthen the power of the central government. Conservative regions were opposed. Algernon Percy was a British diplomat and a conservative politician who sided with the conservative Catholic representatives.¹⁹⁵ Palmerston was opposed to the centralisation of Switzerland mainly because of the large number of radical liberals amongst the centralists linked to

¹⁸⁹ BILLINGER, Robert, *The War Scare of 1831 and Prussian-South German Plans*. In: SCHNEID, Frederick (ed.), European politics 1815–1848, Farnham 2011, p. 277.

¹⁹⁰ BOURNE, Palmerston. *The Early Years*, p. 374.

¹⁹¹ PÁSZTOROVÁ, Barbora, *Metternich a německá otázka v letech 1840–1848*, Plzeň 2019, p. 41.

¹⁹² Palmerston to Lamb, London, 29 December 1832, TNA, FO 120/116.

¹⁹³ Lamb to Palmerston, Vienna, 17 January 1833, TNA, FO 120/136.

¹⁹⁴ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 2 February 1833, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 204.

¹⁹⁵ He was replaced by David Richard Morier in 1832, who remained in the role for a further 15 years.

Paris. The growing French influence aroused Palmerston's concern that centralisation would make Switzerland a puppet state of its neighbour.¹⁹⁶

Metternich's concern was ideological and political in nature in this case. The revolutionary sentiments in Switzerland were closely linked to those in the German Confederation.¹⁹⁷ Therefore, it was necessary to address issues in both countries simultaneously to stabilise the situation in either one.¹⁹⁸ Another factor was the fact that the centralisation of a government with a republican character would conflict with the provisions established in 1815. After Paris, Geneva was the largest refuge for many revolutionaries and a base for secret societies.¹⁹⁹ Liberals who wanted greater centralisation also supported revolutionaries, which strengthened Metternich's belief in a European revolutionary plot managed from Paris whose objective was to undermine the prevailing international order.²⁰⁰ The Austrian Chancellor saw a clear way out of the situation: to abolish the neutrality guaranteed by the Powers at the Congress of Vienna.²⁰¹ He defended this move by stating that it aimed to protect the federation from decline and from falling under the control of demagogues and added that the consequences would be less favourable for Austria than for France. His sole aim remained to strengthen the influence of the conservative party and ensure the defeat of liberals. In conclusion, Metternich positively noted that Switzerland's neutral status was not definitively lost.²⁰²

During May 1832, Vienna urged Neumann to push Palmerston so that London could take a shared approach alongside Vienna.²⁰³ The British Foreign Secretary was not against the idea, but he made his help conditional upon government support. His main argument linked the cantonal system to the guarantee of neutrality. If there were to be a change in the way the state was arranged, this guarantee would thus no longer apply. He wrote in his instructions to Granville regarding this issue:

¹⁹⁶ Neumann to Metternich, London, 25 May 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 196.

¹⁹⁷ Lamb to Palmerston, Vienna, 30 October 1833, TNA, FO 120/137.

¹⁹⁸ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 11 April 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

¹⁹⁹ SOUTHGATE, p. 45.

²⁰⁰ Metternich to Neumann, Vienna, 11 April 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 199.

²⁰¹ LENHERR, Luzius, *Ultimatum an die Schweiz. Der politische Druck Metternich auf die Eidgenossenschaft infolge ihrer Asylpolitik in der Regeneration 1833–1836*, Bern 1991, p. 51.

²⁰² Lamb explicitly added: "In the course of conversation, it was observed that the menace of revoking the neutrality of Switzerland might perhaps not be acted upon if it should fail to produce its effect." Lamb to Palmerston, Vienna, 2 June 1832, TNA, FO 120/124.

²⁰³ Neumann to Metternich, London, 25 May 1832, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 196.

The neutrality of Switzerland was established not solely for her own benefit, but for the general advantage of Europe, and in order to diminish the chances of interruption of the peaceful relations of the states towards each other, it would seem that the motives which led to the guarantee of that neutrality would not cease to operate even in the event apprehended by the Cabinet of Vienna. It would be wiser therefore for the guaranteeing Powers to wait till Switzerland shall have failed in performing her part of the duties of neutrality before they anticipate the case in which they might find themselves absolved from the fulfilment of theirs.²⁰⁴

His primary opponent was Grey, who observed that Belgium, as a centralised state, had similarly attained neutral status. The position was later reconsidered, with an agreement to the proposal contingent on France's approval. This led to a recommendation for the central Swiss government to take measures to ease tensions and stabilise the situation as much as possible.

Metternich was relatively satisfied with the measures Palmerston took regarding the Swiss question. The only situation in which the British government protested against Austria was the length of time that imperial troops should remain at the Swiss-Austrian borders. In the end, a resolution was found to the crisis, and Switzerland retained its neutrality.²⁰⁵ Another issue soon arose. Palmerston received a dispatch claiming that the Eastern courts intended to force the Swiss government to expel all refugees, mostly liberals, from the revolutions in the German Confederation and Poland. In response, he declared:

If Switzerland agreed, she would be dishonoured, and her independence would be at an end. It is Austria that provokes all this; she forces the small governments to follow her system. Austria will bear all the responsibility, and the consequences will fall on her. France will not tolerate this, and I must warn you that England will act alongside France – this could lead to war or, at the very least, demonstrate that today's France will be defeated just as it was in the past.²⁰⁶

Hummelauer attempted to explain the Austrian position, asserting that his country's approach was driven by the conviction that they were acting both rightly and justly, and that it aligned with their own rights and interests. This issue stemmed from exaggerated reports from Paris, which sought to amplify the entire problem and deepen Palmerston's already profound suspicion towards the three Eastern courts. Metternich refuted these accusations, leading to the temporary postponement of the Swiss issue.

²⁰⁴ Palmerston to Granville, London, 15 June 1832, TNA, FO 120/119.

²⁰⁵ SUTERMEISTER, Werner, *Metternich und die Schweiz 1840–1848*, unpublished dissertation, Bern 1895, p. 68.

²⁰⁶ Hummelauer to Metternich, London, 4 July 1834, AT-OeStA/HHStA, StAbt, England 206.

The affairs of Central Europe were another example of Palmerston acting solely in accordance with British interests rather than in the role attributed to him as a “defender of liberalism.” His policy towards the Poles focused more on influencing British public opinion than on any genuine attempt at direct intervention in the region. It served as a second front against Russian opposition during the negotiations over Belgium in London. For him, the abolition of the Polish Constitution was evidence that the Eastern courts were moving towards repressive policies, directly conflicting with the British liberal regime. A similar perspective could be seen in his stance on the German Confederation. To Palmerston, Austrian rule represented a repressive regime seeking to suppress all liberal freedoms in Central Europe. In neither case was his plan successful; instead, it revealed the limits of British political influence, although it did win him public sympathy at home. The Swiss issue revealed another facet of his strategy, where liberal ties represented a potential expansion of French influence, which London viewed with great suspicion. In this instance, his policy aligned with Metternich’s, even though his excessive distrust did not entirely disappear but deepened as further European diplomatic events unfolded.

Despite some agreement on secondary policy issues, relations between London and Vienna were markedly tense, which made relations with St Petersburg deteriorate even faster.²⁰⁷ The more Palmerston distanced himself from cooperation with Eastern courts, the faster they came to an agreement on the necessity of cooperation.²⁰⁸ Within the German Confederation, the British Foreign Secretary failed to understand the Austrian perspective on the matter, and in an endeavour to satisfy public opinion, he intervened in affairs, but the British approach did not result in the desired effect.²⁰⁹ This misunderstanding of Metternich’s policies in Central Europe, and subsequently in the Italian states, deepened divisions in continental cooperation and resulted in polarisation between the Conservative and Maritime Powers.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ BROWN, *Palmerston and Austria*, p. 37.

²⁰⁸ ANGELOW, Jürgen, *Von Wien nach Königgrätz. Die Sicherheitspolitik des Deutschen Bundes im europäischen Gleichgewicht (1815–1866)*, München 1996, p. 106.

²⁰⁹ BOURNE, *Palmerston. The Early Years*, p. 374.

²¹⁰ HOLBRAAD, Carsten, *The Concert of Europe. A Study in German and British International Theory 1815–1914*, London 1970, p. 141.