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**W. WILSON'S ADMINISTRATION AND THE BEGINNING
OF THE POLISH-UKRAINIAN CONFLICT IN EASTERN HALYCHYNA
(NOVEMBER 1918 – FEBRUARY 1919)**

Abstract. The Purpose of the Article. *The involvement of the United States in the process of the Polish-Ukrainian armed conflict is among rather unexplored aspects. This armed conflict began in November 1918, after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The purpose of the article is to elucidate this issue in detail. The methodology of the research is based on the principles of historicism, systematicity, scientificity, verification, authorial objectivity, a moderate narrative constructivism, as well as the use of general (analysis, synthesis, generalization) and special historical (historical-genetic, historical-typological, historical-systemic) methods. The scientific novelty consists in the fact that for the first time in Ukrainian historiography the attempt has been made to analyze the American policy on the Polish-Ukrainian armed conflict in Eastern Halychyna at the end of 1918 – the beginning of 1919, based on the analysis of the US Department of State official published documents concerning this issue. The Conclusions.* During November 1918 – February 1919, Washington acted as an arbiter in the process of resolving the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Eastern Halychyna, which resulted from the efforts of both sides to implement the idea of creating an independent state using the US-proclaimed principle of “the right of nations for self-determination”. Both Poland and the ZUNR, claiming the control of the region, engaged in the international struggle actively, including the appeal to the White House, seeking for the recognition of their claims as legitimate. This activity turned out to be quite effective for the ZUNR. Owing to the repeated appeals for help to W. Wilson's administration, the declarations that the proclamation of the Ukrainian state was the realization of the principle of the nations' self-determination, the Western Ukrainian government made sure that its interests were no longer ignored, despite Washington's support of Poland.

Key words: *the ZUNR, Eastern Halychyna, the White House, W. Wilson, the Right of nations to self-determination, the Paris Peace Conference.*

**АДМІНІСТРАЦІЯ В. ВІЛЬСОНА ТА ПОЧАТОК
ПОЛЬСЬКО-УКРАЇНСЬКОГО КОНФЛІКТУ У СХІДНІЙ ГАЛИЧИНІ
(ЛИСТОПАД 1918 – ЛЮТИЙ 1919)**

***Анотація.** Мета дослідження – висвітлення участі США у процесі польсько-українського збройного конфлікту у Східній Галичині, який розпочався у листопаді 1918 р., після розпаду Австро-Угорської імперії. **Методологія дослідження** спирається на принципи історизму, системності, науковості, верифікації, авторської об’єктивності, поміркованого нарративного конструктивізму, а також на використання загальнонаукових (аналіз, синтез, узагальнення) та спеціально-історичних (історико-генетичний, історико-типологічний, історико-системний) методів. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що вперше у українській історіографії здійснено спробу комплексного розгляду американської політики щодо польсько-українського збройного конфлікту у Східній Галичині наприкінці 1918 – на початку 1919 р. на основі аналізу опублікованих офіційних документів Державного департаменту США, які стосувалися цієї проблеми. **Висновки.** Протягом листопада 1918 – лютого 1919 рр. Вашингтон виступив одним із арбітрів у процесі врегулювання польсько-українського конфлікту у Східній Галичині, який виник, у тому числі, і внаслідок намагання обох його сторін реалізувати ідею створення незалежної держави, користуючись проголошенням США принципом “права націй на самовизначення”. І Польща, і ЗУНР, претендуючи на контроль над регіоном, активно включилися у міжнародну боротьбу, зокрема апелювали до Білого Дому, домагаючись визнання своїх претензій легітимними. Досить результативною ця діяльність виявилася для ЗУНР. Завдяки постійним зверненням про допомогу до адміністрації Вільсона, заяви про те, що проголошення української держави є реалізацією принципу самовизначення націй, західноукраїнський уряд добився того, що його інтереси більше не ігнорувалися, незважаючи на те, що Вашингтон схилився до підтримки Польщі.*

***Ключові слова:** ЗУНР, Східна Галичина, Білий Дім, В. Вільсон, Право націй на самовизначення, Паризька мирна конференція.*

The Problem Statement. As the recent events in Ukraine illustrate, related to the military conflict in the East of the country, the international support factor is one of the main in the process of developing the mechanisms for the military conflict resolution. In this context, it is important to consider the history of Ukrainian foreign policy activity during the period of the national liberation competitions of 1917 – 1921, when the Ukrainian authorities tried to ensure the existence of a newly created state, appealing to the leading states in order to obtain an international legitimacy and guarantees of their existence.

The Purpose of the Article. The involvement of the United States in the process of the Polish-Ukrainian armed conflict is among rather unexplored aspects. This armed conflict began in November 1918, after the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The purpose of the article is to elucidate this issue in detail.

The Analysis of Sources and Recent Researches. It should be mentioned that this issue was not analyzed properly by Ukrainian scientists. That is why, during the analysis of the events under research, we used the source materials, in particular, the published documents of the US State Department, which covered the certain events, related to the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Eastern Halychyna in 1918 – 1919.

The Statement of the Basic Material. In November 1918 the countries of the Fourth Union were on the verge of a military defeat in World War I (1914 – 1918). The economic exhaustion caused a significant reduction in the political authority of the central states governments, both internationally and domestically. This tendency was particularly noticeable in the national enclaves of the empires, in particular, the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The national movements of the several nations, conquered by Vienna during the previous centuries,

saw in the weakening of the imperial power the opportunity to create their own independent state. Their desire was also reinforced by the declared intentions of the Entente States and their main ally the US – to promote the formation of the national states.

However, the desire of non-independence gave rise to many new problems in the regions, which were claimed by the several previously enslaved peoples. The very conflict eventually erupted in Eastern Halychyna, which had been under the rule of the Vienna Monarchy since 1772. The dominion of the region was immediately encroached upon by the two nations, who sought for independence under conditions of the gradual collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. On the one hand, it was claimed by the Poles, considering Western Ukrainian lands to be the part of Poland from the XIVth century. They (the Poles) were opposed by the local Ukrainians who, on the eve of the end of the Great War, reached that level of development of their national movement, when the ideology of the national isolation from the Poles or the Russians was formed finally, and the course was chosen for reunification with the Dnieper Ukraine within the framework of an independent and unified state. It is common knowledge that at this first stage of the national revolution in Eastern Halychyna, it was the local Ukrainian Halicians, who were more determined. On October 31, 1918, a centurion of the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, Dmytro Vytovsky (1887 – 1919), called on the Ukrainian movement to take up arms, as the Poles would soon do so. “If we don’t conquer Lviv tonight, the Poles will conquer it tomorrow,” he stated.

Already on November 1, 1918, a squad of “ususy”, consisting of 1500 people conquered all main administrative buildings in Lviv, and there was a blue and yellow flag over the city-hall tower. The Ukrainian National Council, which “raised the crown that fell on the city’s paving stones”, declared itself to be a new government.

Such promptness, among other things, was probably caused by the desire to acquire the international subjectivity as the state on the eve of the formation of a new global order. The new world order, according to the statements of the potential victors, envisaged the creation of a large number of national states in the land of the vanquished empires. First of all, the US, whose president – Woodrow Wilson (1856 – 1924) – insisted on publicly proclaiming the justice of only such a “peace”, in which every nation and people had the right for a national self-determination. This was especially true of the peoples of the former Austro-Hungary. The White House believed that its final disintegration into the national “flaps” would not only provide a fairer system but also contribute to the “DePrussiation” of Eastern Europe.

The Halician Ukrainians, proclaiming their own state, believed that in this way they would ensure the development of the events in their native land in the context of W. Wilson’s ideology and the international support would protect them from the Polish claims better than the power of weapons, which in fact lacked. Both political forces sought to establish power in Halychyna – the Ukrainian and Polish National Committees – hoped for the international support from the beginning of the conflict and appealed to Washington. In this diplomatic rivalry, the Poles were more prompt. As early as on November 13, 1918, the Polish National Committee sent a special memorandum to the US Embassy in Paris, expressing its own position on the territorial affiliation of eastern Halychyna. They emphasized that the attempts of the Ukrainians to build their own country were nothing more than the German intrigue. *“The Polish National Committee considers it to be its duty to bring the following facts to the knowledge of the Allied Governments and the Government of the United States: Germany and Austria, forced by the Allies to capitulate, and seeing that the Polish question will not be solved in accordance with their plan, are endeavoring, with the aid of the Ukrainians,*

devoted to their cause since the beginning of the war, to obstruct the unification of the new-born Poland” (The Polish National Committee to the American Ambassador in France (Sharp), 1942, p. 411), – the document ran.

The Poles insisted that during the seizure of power in Halychyna (Galicia), the Ukrainians were actively assisted by the German armed forces and German military experts. *“Since Galicia proclaimed its separation from Austria in order to form a single independent State united to the other Polish territories, German armed forces, followed by Ukrainian detachments and acting, it is alleged, in the interests of the Ukrainian cause, occupied, after a struggle with the Polish Legionnaires, the cities of Lwow and Przemysl”* (The Polish National Committee to the American Ambassador in France (Sharp), 1942, p. 411), – it was emphasized in the document.

The authors of the Memorandum argued that Berlin’s main task in the Polish issue was to weaken Poland by establishing the Ukrainian state, under the patronage of Germany. They considered it necessary to remind the Entente and the United States of the Brest-Lithuanian peace treaty, concluded by the Ukrainian government, one of the points of which was the transfer of Chelm region by the UNR – *“the province of Chelm which has always been a part of the kingdom of Poland and whose Polish character was proven even by the Austrian census”* (The Polish National Committee to the American Ambassador in France (Sharp), 1942, p. 412).

Accordingly, the Polish National Committee declared its protest against such German attempts to disrupt the integrity of the Polish territory, which in turn violated the Entente’s interests in Eastern Europe (The Polish National Committee to the American Ambassador in France (Sharp), 1942, p. 412).

It’s quite evident, from the context of the Memorandum, the Poles did not insist on denying the right of the Ukrainians for a national self-determination, but they pressed another “painful side” of Washington. Considering the proclamation of the Western Ukrainian state as a geopolitical intrigue of Germany, then the plan of “dePrussiation” of Eastern Europe was threatened, the realization of which was insisted by W. Wilson and Colonel E. House (1858 – 1938), his closest advisor on foreign affairs.

There were other aspects that the Poles insisted on in their relations with Washington. In particular, they rejected allegations of the Jewish massacres (pogroms), which likely took place with the beginning of the conflict against the Ukrainians. In general, the Polish National Committee did not reject the responsibility for certain manifestations of anti-Semitism, but explained those manifestations by the fact that the Jews often supported the enemies of Poland. In particular, the Poles tried to convey such an interpretation to the Italian government, which in turn informed the views of the Committee to Nelson Page (1853 – 1922), the American Ambassador to Italy. In his letter to the State Department of December 5, 1918, it was noted: *“Polish Committee in Italy anxious regarding alleged activities of enemy in spreading exaggerated reports of anti-Semitic pogroms in Galicia. This committee concedes riots have taken place, but that they were small affairs due to Bolsheviks’ influence, and were between Poles and Ukrainians, Jews having sided with Ukrainians, who are controlled and directed by Austrian generals”* (The Ambassador in Italy (Page) to the Acting Secretary of State, 1942, p. 346).

The same message also reported another desire of the Polish National Committee – the introduction of the US military contingent to the territory of Poland, due to the possible passing of a large number of former prisoners of war. *“Committee also worried over tendency in international circles to reduce territorial holdings of new Polish States. They assert*

that over three million prisoners will pass through Poland, and they urge sending American troops to Poland to reestablish order and check spreading of Bolshevism" (The Ambassador in Italy (Page) to the Acting Secretary of State, 1942, p. 346), – Nelson Page wrote.

From the very beginning of the liberation movement in Eastern Halychyna, the Ukrainians also appealed to the White House. Already on September 17, 1918, the telegramme from the newly formed Ukrainian National Committee was transmitted to the State Department through the US Embassy in Switzerland. In the telegramme, the Ukrainian socio-political figures, who were abroad, expressed their hope that Washington would support the national aspirations of the Ukrainians, their desire to build their own state, in accordance with the principle of the nations' self-determination, declared by W. Wilson. *"Ukrainian National Council just founded in Switzerland of representatives of almost all political parties of the Ukraine for the defense of the Ukrainian national and democratic cause abroad formulates its best wishes to you, Mr. President. It places itself entirely on the basis of your program in which it sees the best guarantee for the continued free existence of the independent Ukrainian state. We are sure that the entire Ukrainian people is at one with us in placing its entire confidence in your defense of our independence before our enemies"* (The Minister in Switzerland (Stovall) to the Secretary of State. Berne, 1942, p. 698), – the telegramme ran.

On November 26, 1918, another document was transmitted to the White House by the former Austro-Hungarian Embassy in Sweden – another telegramme from the Ukrainian National Committee. In the telegramme, the leaders of the Ukrainian state insisted that the events, that had taken place in Halychyna, were nothing more than a scenario of the peoples' national determination, whose support was repeatedly stated by the US president. *"The provisional Government of Halycz the province of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire united to an independent Ukrainian State permits itself, aware of the call issued by you, Mr. President, to the peoples now freed from the oppression of the former Monarchy, to address to you, Mr. President, the following appeal for support"* (The Swedish Minister (Ekengren) to the Secretary of State, 1942, p. 195), – the document ran.

The members of the Ukrainian government insisted that they represented the interests of the purely Ukrainian people, which is the dominant nation in Halychyna. It was noted that in defining the borders of the state, it did not include any territory dominated by other population. *"The provisional Government of Halycz the province of the former Austro-Hungarian Empire united to an independent Ukrainian State permits itself, aware of the call issued by you, Mr. President, to the peoples now freed from the oppression of the former Monarchy, to address to you, Mr. President, the following appeal for support"* (The Swedish Minister (Ekengren) to the Secretary of State, 1942, p. 195), – noted in the document.

Then, the Ukrainian National Council stated that it had given up any provocative actions and hostile acts against other peoples, who try to seize the territory of Halychyna (the Poles, the Romanians, the Hungarians), thus causing hostility of the Ukrainian population. The members of the Council insisted that they continue acting this way until the peaceful settlement of existing contradictions (The Swedish Minister (Ekengren) to the Secretary of State, 1942, p. 195).

As we can see, the text of the message was written in a peaceful spirit – it required only an international solution to the problems between the Ukrainians and the Poles. However, it is known that the conflict between the two hostile nations only grew, forcing the ZUNR government to appeal again to Washington in search of a fair solution. On December 29,

1918, the message was sent to the White House by Eugene Petrushevych (Petrouchevitch) (1863 – 1940), the ZUNR President. In the message he protested against the hostilities of the Polish side. “*The Polish Government at Warsaw is continually sending troops in large number to Eastern Galicia. Its object is to overthrow by military force the former Ukrainian state of Halytch reestablished within its territory by the Ukrainian nation in the exercise of the peoples’ right of self-determination and at present constituted as the “Western Ukrainian Republic” and to annex it by violence to the Polish kingdom.*” (The President of the National Council of the Western Ukrainian Republic (Petrouchevitch) to the Acting Secretary of State, 1942, p. 420), – the Ukrainian leader wrote.

In the letter the Polish general Tadeusz Rozwadowski (1866 – 1928), the head of the local Polish military formations, was accused of leading the movement for Halychyna’s accession to Poland. The ZUNR chairman accused the latter of ordering the arrest of the Ukrainian civilians as hostages and sanctioning the brutal pogroms. (The President of the National Council of the Western Ukrainian Republic (Petrouchevitch) to the Acting Secretary of State, 1942, p. 420).

Eugene Petrushevych (Petrouchevitch) also noted that together with the repressive actions in Halychyna, “*Polish emissaries carry on with the Governments of the Allies and in the press a campaign of most incredible slander and lying against the Ukrainian nation of the Western Ukrainian Republic to prevent any neutral step being taken by the Governments of the High Allies*” (The President of the National Council of the Western Ukrainian Republic (Petrouchevitch) to the Acting Secretary of State, 1942, p. 420).

Eugene Petrushevych (Petrouchevitch) also accused Romania of aggression against Ukrainian Bukovyna. “*The Roumanian army has likewise occupied the Ukrainian parts of Bukowina and annexed them to Roumania in the name of King Ferdinand*” (The President of the National Council of the Western Ukrainian Republic (Petrouchevitch) to the Acting Secretary of State, 1942, p. 420), – E. Petrushevych wrote.

All these acts of aggression by Poland and Romania were interpreted by the President of the ZUNR as the principles violations of the nations’ self-determination, proposed by the US President W. Wilson. He hoped that the United States, which was one of the leading initiators of the final collapse of the “scrappy empire” into nation states, would help withdraw Polish and Romanian troops from the territory, where the Ukrainian population was predominant. Eugene Petrushevych’s message ended in the call for the respect for the state aspirations of the Ukrainians (The President of the National Council of the Western Ukrainian Republic (Petrouchevitch) to the Acting Secretary of State, 1942, p. 420).

It is clear that the conflict between the Poles and the Ukrainians, which flared up in the eastern regions of the former Austro-Hungary, became an important factor in destabilizing the international situation in the region. W. Wilson’s idealistic principles concerning the right for self-determination did not, in reality, become a universal mechanism for resolving the local national problems, since the peoples, who wanted to exercise this right, were more in number than Washington calculated, taking into account the US geopolitical interests. Undoubtedly, W. Wilson’s administration accounted on Poland, which seemed to be an ideal means of “de-Prussiation” and “de-Bolshevization” of Eastern Europe. On the other hand, the state, which was the main initiator of the principle implementation of the right of nations for self-determination, could not ignore the appeals of the Ukrainian people, even because it “tarnished” its participation in the German project of the national states. This dilemma was to be resolved in the nearest future.

It should be noted that during this period, Washington did not have a sustainable action plan for the national future of Eastern Halychyna. The group of intellectuals was formed in

September 1917, in W. Wilson's administration. The members of the group "The Inquiry" were to work out the foundations of the postwar world order and in May 1918 they could not yet determine the context, in which the political processes in the region could be considered – in Ukrainian or in Polish. In particular, in the organization's report on May 10, 1918 it was mentioned that "*the nationalist questions involved in Galicia are being studied as part of the Polish question, though the group of men working on Austria-Hungary study Galicia in its political and economic relations to the Austro-Hungarian Empire*" (Report on the Inquiry, 1942, p. 83).

Since the beginning of the military conflict between the Ukrainians and the Poles in Eastern Halychyna, its resolution was identified by "The Inquiry" as one of its priorities. In particular, in the note of one of the leading members of Captain Walter Lipman's organization to S. E. Moses, the head of the organization, of December 5, 1918, it is stated: "*Very serious troubles have occurred in Lemberg between the Poles and the Ruthenians, raising in an acute form the problem of eastern Galicia*" (Captain Walter Lippmann to the Chief of the Section of Territorial, Economic and Political Intelligence of the Commission to Negotiate Peace (Mezes), 1942, p. 320).

The diplomats had to be responsible for the case. In particular, Archibald Cerry Coolidge (1866 – 1928), an American diplomat, a member of "The Inquiry", was given the task to make clear the situation in the city. A. Coolidge was considered an expert in Eastern European affairs, who had performed the diplomatic missions in Russia during the recent months. On December 27, 1918, he was sent to Vienna with a special mission. One of his tasks was to appoint an American agent in Lviv to monitor the situation in Eastern Halychyna (The Secretary of the Commission to Negotiate Peace (Grew) to Professor A. C. Coolidge, 1942, p. 219).

On January 9, a special message was sent to the White House, in which the diplomat outlined his vision of the development of the political situation in Eastern Halychyna and his recommendations regarding the resolution of the Polish-Ukrainian conflict. In particular, he proposed to grant autonomy to the already declared ZUNR government, at least until the final resolution of the Ukrainian issue at the international peace conference. A truce had to be declared between Poland and the ZUNR before the end of the conference. "*A promising suggestion that has been made is that a truce should be concluded between the Poles and the Ukrainians under the terms of which eastern Galicia should be left as an autonomous district in the hands of its present Ukrainian possessors, and Lemberg be ruled by a government half Pole and half Ukrainian, until the Peace Conference shall have determined the final boundaries*" (Professor A. C. Coolidge to the Commission to Negotiate Peace, 1942, p. 227), – it was mentioned in the document.

A. Coolidge believed that the military forces of both sides, involved in the conflict, could be used to fight with the Bolsheviks.

It should be noted that A. Coolidge was not the only one supporter of the truce establishment in Eastern Halychyna. In particular, from the very beginning of the conflict, the same position was taken by official London, Washington's chief ally. On November 15, 1918, the government telegramme was sent to the State Department, stating: "*His Britannic Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires has been informed that His Majesty's Government would view with serious displeasure any military or other action of the Polish Government in East Galicia or elsewhere of a nature to prejudge or forestall the decisions of the Peace Conference*" (The British Chargé (Barclay) to the Secretary of State. Memorandum, 1942, p. 346).

In the end, taking into account the totality of the external and internal factors that influenced the US policy towards Poland and Eastern Halychyna, it was decided to consider it in detail in the format of the Paris Peace Conference, which began its work on January 18, 1919. Several “Great 5” meetings (the USA, the UK, France, Italy and Japan) were held during January and February. The Polish representatives were also invited. Finally, at two meetings, held on February 12 and 26, 1919, the creation of a special Polish commission was announced to develop the mechanisms for resolving the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Eastern Halychyna. By the end of this process, the truce was established between the warring sides.

The Conclusions. During November 1918 – February 1919, Washington acted as an arbiter in the process of resolving the Polish-Ukrainian conflict in Eastern Halychyna, which resulted from the efforts of both sides to implement the idea of creating an independent state using the US-proclaimed principle of “the right of nations for self-determination”. Both Poland and the ZUNR, claiming the control of the region, engaged in the international struggle actively, including the appeal to the White House, seeking for the recognition of their claims as legitimate. This activity turned out to be quite effective for the ZUNR. Owing to the repeated appeals for help to W. Wilson’s administration, the declarations that the proclamation of the Ukrainian state was the realization of the principle of the nations’ self-determination, the Western Ukrainian government made sure that its interests were no longer ignored, despite Washington’s support of Poland.

The US policy on the further resolution of the Polish-Ukrainian military conflict will be analyzed in the next scientific articles.

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