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THE POLISH-GERMAN AND POLISH-CZECHOSLOVAK FRONTIERS:
ANNEX II⁽¹⁾: DANZIG.

[For Maps, see Annex I: East Prussia⁽²⁾; and Annex III: Pomorze.⁽³⁾]

SUMMARY.

Part I.—Political.

1. *General.*—Danzig was established as a Free City by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, under a customs union with Poland, for which it became the principal port. This was a reversion to something like the position before the second Partition of Poland in 1793, and until 1814 Danzig had always led a vigorous semi-independent existence. A hundred years of Prussian rule (1814–1914) had, however, sapped its independent spirit (paras. 1–3).

2. *The Paris Peace Conference.*—Official and expert advice at the Conference was unanimous in favour of the transfer of Danzig to Poland. The personal intervention of Mr. Lloyd George, who objected to forcing so many Germans to become Polish subjects, led to the establishment of the Free City (paras. 4–5).

3. *Status of the Free City.*—The constitution, framed in accordance with the Treaty of Versailles, gave Danzig sovereign status in all but name, with a few specific limitations. The city and its constitution were placed under the guarantee and protection of the League of Nations, though no measures were actually taken to prepare for the defence of Danzig. In practice the government of the city remained in the hands of Reich-German officials, whose service in Danzig was treated as part of their normal career. Polish disappointment over the settlement was and remained acute (paras. 6–11).

4. *Danzig-Polish Relations.*—Relations between Danzig and Poland were dependent to a large extent on the political attitude of the parties in power in Danzig and on the policy of the city's Government as dictated from Berlin. Under Nationalist Governments in Danzig constant disputes occurred between the Free City and Poland, which involved frequent references to the League of Nations. The dispute of most general importance was concerned with the rivalry between the port of Danzig and that of Gdynia (see Part II of this paper) (paras. 12–19).

5. *Danzig's Politics and Nazification.*—From 1920 to 1933 Danzig was controlled by German Nationalist parties, with two short intervals. From 1933 onwards the Volkstag had a Nazi majority, and the city's affairs came more and more completely under Nazi direction; the constitution was virtually suspended and authority passed to the unofficial Nazi *Gauleiter*. In 1939 it remained only to give formal recognition to this change (paras. 20–24).

6. *General Observations.*—The provisions under which the Free City was set up provided ample safeguards against encroachments by Poland, but none against those by Germany which actually took place; the League of Nations was unable, and the former Allied Powers were unwilling, to interfere: thus the Free City in the end was used by Germany as a stepping-stone for aggression against Poland. The ideal of an autonomous City State had in practice no chance of establishing itself against the very strong German position inside and outside the city (paras. 25–31).

⁽¹⁾ See *The Polish-German and Polish-Czechoslovak Frontiers*: Foreign Office Print: Poland February 12, Section 5.

⁽²⁾ Foreign Office Print: Poland, February 12, Section 8.

⁽³⁾ Foreign Office Print: Poland, February 12, Section 10.