

ADAM CZARTORYSKI

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Czartoryski, Prince Adam Jerzy (1770-1861), the scion of an aristocratic Polish family, son of Prince Adam Kazimierz and Izabella (nee Fleming) Czartoryski, served Poland as a statesmen, diplomatist, and soldier. He fought in the Polish army during the war of the second partition in 1793, after which his father's estates were confiscated by the Russians. In a last-ditch attempt to salvage his property, Czartoryski's father sent Adam and his brother Constantine to the Court of St. Petersburg. Summoning all his courage, Czartoryski befriended the grandson of Empress Catherine II, the Grand Duke Alexander, in the spring of 1796. Hoping he would soon be tsar, Czartoryski filled his friend's head with ideas about Polish freedom. When Alexander became emperor in 1801 after the murder of his father Paul, he appointed Czartoryski as Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs. Now as one of Tsar Alexander's trusted advisors, Czartoryski intervened on behalf of the Poles whenever he could, repeatedly advocating Poland's restoration according to 1772 boundaries, a Russian-English alliance, and the diplomatic recognition of Napoleonic France as a method of deterrence. Deemed Austria and Prussia to be Russia's main enemies, Czartoryski resigned in protest when the tsar formed an alliance with Prussia. He nevertheless continued to champion Polish independence after Napoleon's unsuccessful war with Russia, attending the Congress of Vienna

(1814) and pleading with British and French statesmen. On May 3, 1815, the Congress of Vienna did establish the so-called Congress Kingdom of Poland - a small state united with Russia but possessing its own army and local self-government. Cruelly, however, Alexander appointed Adam's brother Constantine as commander-in-chief of the Polish army and shunted Adam aside, never to be called back again to government service. Czartoryski participated in the Polish insurrection of 1830-1 and briefly headed a provisional Polish government. However, the Russians crushed the rebellion, and Czartoryski was sentenced to death. Fleeing to Paris, he set up a political forum for Polish émigrés from the Hôtel Lambert, where he resided. Only among the Hungarians, in armed revolt against the Habsburg empire in 1848, did the Hôtel Lambert find, and give, support. Many Poles joined the Hungarian army as officers and soldiers. Nevertheless, the Hotel's influence also faded, along with Czartoryski's dream of Polish independence in his lifetime.

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