

**P R Z E G L Ą D Z A C H O D N I O P O M O R S K I  
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**A R T Y K U Ł Y**

RADOSŁAW GAZIŃSKI

ORCID: 0000-0002-6734-9309

Uniwersytet Szczeciński, Wydział Humanistyczny

e-mail: r.gazinski@bg.szczecin.pl

**“PREPARATIONS” OF WESTERN POMERANIA  
FOR THE THIRTY YEARS’ WAR**

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When dramatic events took place in Bohemia (May 1618), which in consequence led to the outbreak of a great European conflict later called the Thirty Years’ War, Duke Francis I ascended the throne in Szczecin. He had a ‘condottiere’s mentality’, shaped by his numerous journeys around Europe. The new ruler was quite poorly educated, had no love for art, and preferred wine, horses and hunting over books. No wonder, that one of the main goals he set himself was the military reinforcement of Pomerania. He did so because the situation in the Empire was becoming less and less stable.<sup>1</sup> He started his energetic actions in this matter on two fields. Firstly, he tried to initiate the construction of modern fortifications surrounding the medieval walls of Szczecin and secondly to create a small permanent army maintained by the Pomeranian estates. In the spring of 1619, Francis I organised a commission from some of the most experienced duke’s councillors to determine the necessary size of the Pomeranian army. After discussions, the councillors decided that a permanent army that would fully secure the

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<sup>1</sup> Z. Boras, *Księżęta Pomorza Zachodniego*, Poznań 1996, p. 331.

Pomeranian borders should have 8,000 infantry soldiers and 1,500 cavalrymen. These troops would have to be well supplied with weapons and ammunition for which a separate duke's arsenal was needed in Szczecin.

The decision to establish a commission and the attempt to create a permanent army were also dictated by the threats to Pomerania, especially towards the land of Lębork and Bytów from Royal Prussia. In May 1619, Francis I received information from Gdańsk about a large number of marauders who were raiding the province and could cross the Pomeranian border.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the Elector of Brandenburg John Sigismund informed his neighbour about the possibility of invading Pomerania from the side of Greater Poland about 6,000 of light Cossacks cavalry.<sup>3</sup> According to the information received, Polish cavalry had already crossed the Polish-Brandenburg border and were robbing the border areas of Brandenburg. At the Szczecin's court, various possible decisions taken to protect Pomerania from robbery were considered. At the same time, it was hoped that the Polish troops located on the Greater Poland-Brandenburg border would be placed at the disposal of Emperor Ferdinand II by Sigismund III Vasa and eventually directed to suppress the uprising in rebellious Bohemia. The first decision made by the Duke in May 1619 was to call for a levy in mass from the land of Słupsk, and then to set up a 200-person unit to occupy the castle in Bytów and protect the land from foreign troops. Additionally, the Pomeranian forces were to support a 50-person squad with the task of patrolling the Pomeranian-Polish border.<sup>4</sup> The duke, making the above-mentioned decisions very quickly, presumed that the funds for the enlisted troops would be agreed by the next meeting of Pomeranian assembly. At the beginning of June, the duke changed his mind. In the face of incoming information, he called for a levy in mass for the whole endangered Duchy of Stettin.<sup>5</sup>

This was the result of contradictory news that reached Szczecin in June 1619. It was reported from Königsberg that there was a 1,000-person unit of the Polish light cavalry enlisted by Ferdinand II for the Czech War at the Brandenburg border. However, it was also believed that this unit was soon to leave the

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<sup>2</sup> Archiwum Państwowe w Szczecinie (later: APS), Archiwum Ksiąząt Szczecińskich (later: AKS), I/4742, pp. 14–16.

<sup>3</sup> APS, AKS, I/4742, pp. 28–29, 33–35.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 5–8, 14–15.

<sup>5</sup> It was supposed to gather on 30 June 1619: APS, AKS, I/4742, pp. 48–49.

Wielkopolska-Brandenburg border and the danger would end.<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, on the other hand, the Elector of Brandenburg John Sigismund (June 14th) informed Francis I that Pomerania is under serious threat, especially from the side of Royal Prussia, by about 10,000 unpanished and unpaid Polish soldiers, veterans of The Polish-Muscovite War.<sup>7</sup> In this situation, Duke Francis I informed his subjects about the growing threat and ordered the strengthening of city walls and castles. It is known that Sławno called up 50 and Słupsk 90 shooters.<sup>8</sup> However, the main force of Pomerania was meant to be the levy in mass spread around Polanów to cover the eastern part of the country. Due to the slow gathering of the levy in mass, the Duke postponed the final date of its concentration from 30 June to 13 July, and then to 19 August. Finally, at the end of August 1,300 infantry and 200 cavalry led by Thomas Stucken concentrated near Polanów.<sup>9</sup> The largest contingent of 500 infantry and 60 cavalry commanded by Captain Herman Giese was delivered by Szczecin.<sup>10</sup> So, at the end of August 1619 the cities of the endangered area (Sławno, Słupsk) established and maintained their own troops which constituted the last line of defence (about 140 infantry). The main defence was to be based on the levy in mass (about 1,300 infantry and 200 horsemen) gathered near Polanów, while in the extended positions there were heavy units (about 200 infantry and 50 horsemen). In this situation, the whole Pomeranian army consisted of about 1,640 infantry and 250 horsemen units, including just few professional draftees. These numbers were far from the suggested figures considered in terms of the permanent army and proposed a little earlier by the duke’s councillors (8,000 infantry and 1,500 horsemen).

It should be clearly stressed that it was impossible to maintain a permanent Pomeranian army by Francis I, in the reality of Pomerania at the time he simply could not afford it. The basic problem, not only of this Pomeranian ruler, was the constant lack of funds.<sup>11</sup> In fact, the Gryffins’ state was financially inefficient since the end of the 16th century. The beginning of unfavourable changes was the

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<sup>6</sup> This unit was to be commanded by Colonel Józef Lisowski: APS, AKS, I/4742, pp. 50–51.

<sup>7</sup> APS, AKS, I/4742, pp. 52–54.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 61–64, 77–78.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 85, 116, 150–151, 168–169.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 215–235.

<sup>11</sup> Z. Boras, *Księżęta...*, pp. 336–337.

bankruptcy of the Loitz bank house (1572),<sup>12</sup> which led to many bankruptcies in Pomerania (mainly among the nobility) and significantly weakened ducal finances. Since the turn of the 16th and 17th centuries the income from the domains, customs chambers and fixed taxes earned by the Pomeranian rulers did not suffice to maintain the ducal courts, officials, numerous residences and, above all, did not fully satisfy the needs of all members of the ducal family.<sup>13</sup> In this situation, under pressure from the Pomeranian estates, the dukes agreed to establish separate treasuries for the Duchies of Wolgast and Szczecin, which, controlled by the representatives of the estates, were to guarantee ducal loans and their regular repayments.<sup>14</sup> The financial inefficiency of the Pomeranian rulers was more and more noticeably accompanied by the weakening of their position in the state.

Facing this situation, Francis I did not have much choice but to obtain the consent of the estates. Unfortunately, they were not very interested in putting money into his plans to strengthen Pomerania militarily. The main reason for this was a long period of peace with no actual external threat.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, both the Pomeranian nobility and the cities saw no need to spend significant resources on maintaining a permanent army or building modern fortifications.<sup>16</sup> Hence, the establishment of the Pomeranian army by Francis I did not go beyond the general plans, and Pomerania still did not have permanent military units, except for a few dozen regularly armed and uniformed Trabants safeguarding the castles in Szczecin and Wolgast. The small mercenary troops established in the summer of 1619 were dismissed when the “Polish threat” ended. The main armed force of Pomerania was still (similarly to the Middle Ages) based on the levy in mass consisting of noble cavalry and bourgeoisie infantry. Actually, the whole conscription was created on the basis of an old order issued at the end of Bogislaw X’s reign (d. 1523), which specified the number of troops distributed by in-

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<sup>12</sup> B. Wachowiak, *Pomorze Zachodnie w początkach czasów nowożytnych (1464–1648). Odrodzenie się i upadek państwa pomorskiego*, in: *Historia Pomorza*, vol. 2/1, eds. G. Labuda, M. Biskup, M. Bogucka, A. Mączak, B. Wachowiak, Poznań 1976, pp. 754–755, where on pp. 796–797 additionally about a loan to Zygmunt August in the amount of 100,000 talars.

<sup>13</sup> For example, the College of Land Counsellors: B. Wachowiak, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 835, 850, had a decisive vote on the adoption of extraordinary taxes, and on the influence of the Land Sejmiks there on pp. 847–848.

<sup>14</sup> B. Wachowiak, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 966–968, 970–971.

<sup>15</sup> Actually, the last hard struggles to maintain the independence of Pomerania were fought at the end of the 15th century with the Brandenburgers Bogislaw X.

<sup>16</sup> K. Olejnik, *System obronny Pomorza Zachodniego do połowy XVII wieku*, in: *Z dziejów wojennych Pomorza Zachodniego*, ed. B. Miśkiewicz, Poznań 1972, pp. 84–85.

dividual cities and which was a general list of vassals obliged to serve the prince on horseback.<sup>17</sup> The condition of this armed force was checked through musters, which were announced quite regularly. At a certain place and time, at the duke’s order, a common movement of entire duchies or individual lands was gathered. During the demonstration, the lists of those obliged to perform the armed service were updated, the quality of armaments was checked and simple exercises were conducted. There is no doubt, however, that such irregular and untrained armed forces were not able to cope with the demands of a typical battlefield at that time.

The Pomeranian fortifications similarly looked pretty bad. Since the late Middle Ages, the defensive system of the Pomeranian lands was formed by city centres surrounded by stone and brick walls, and fights (e.g. Bogislaw X against Brandenburg) were concentrated around the cities themselves (Gartz, Pyrzyce).<sup>18</sup> It should be clearly emphasized that the mentioned city fortifications were the property of the cities themselves and were maintained at the expense of city treasures. The government authorities had nothing to say in this matter.<sup>19</sup> The described situation did not change until the early 17th century. Pomeranian cities were still the main points of resistance, and their fortifications, although partly adapted at the turn of the 15th and 16th century to use firearms, would not have been able to withstand longer artillery fire. The only urban area with modern Dutch-style fortifications meeting the criteria of a modern fortress was Stralsund. It is worth mentioning here that the city, the most powerful in Pomerania, built these fortifications at its own expense. The Pomeranian artillery was similarly weak. Only Stralsund had a sufficient number of modern cannons at that time. Other cities, including Szczecin, had just few and mostly outdated cannons.

Ambitious plans of Duke Francis I to create a permanent military force in Pomerania were interrupted by his unexpected death in November 1620. His younger brother Bogislaw XIV ascended the throne of Szczecin. The last duke of Szczecin and then Pomerania was in quite poor health, had very little understanding of military matters, but he was very religious and his religiousness was quite often too close to bigotry. Together with the duchy, he inherited from Francis

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<sup>17</sup> The Pomeranian common movement at the beginning of the 17th century, calculated according to the decree of Bogislaw X from 1523, consisted of a noble ride of about 644 horses and the city infantry (about 1549 people) and riding (about 264 horses). Thus, the Pomeranian forces of that time could count about 1500 infantry and 900 horses: APS, AKS, I/4742, pp. 265–266.

<sup>18</sup> Of course, not counting the dandruff-like rallies into the depths of Pomerania.

<sup>19</sup> K. Olejnik, *System...*, pp. 82–83.

In a large debt of 150,000 guilders, which he tried to repay unsuccessfully. Without financial resources, he abandoned his plans to strengthen Pomerania's military base.<sup>20</sup> Meanwhile, the situation in the Empire continued to complicate. Eventually, the Imperial Army of Ferdinand II beat its rebellious Czech subjects in the Battle of White Mountain (November 1620). The King of Bohemia and at the same time the elector of the Palatinate, Frederick V (the so-called Winter King) had to rush out of Prague. After the situation in Bohemia had been controlled and his return was secured (peace with Transylvania), the imperial army moved to combat the Protestant Electorate of the Palatinate and to eventually occupy its territory. This provoked serious concerns among the Protestant rulers of the north-eastern part of the Empire against a growing emperor who could introduce a centralised power and Catholicism throughout the empire. Duke Bogislaw XIV was also concerned about this development and tried to strengthen Pomerania militarily on his own.<sup>21</sup> Nevertheless, the Duke was lucky, as the congress of representatives of the Saxon Quartet of the Reich in Jüteborg (spring 1623) made decision to issue a joint permanent army of 6,000 infantry and 2,000 horsemen. In these plans, Pomerania was to appoint 1,000 infantry and 800 horsemen to arms. These armies were eventually recruited by Bogislaw XIV, unfortunately due to lack of money to support them he had to demilitarise them soon.<sup>22</sup>

The attempt to strengthen Pomerania in 1623 was ultimately unsuccessful and the country was completely unprepared for any military action. In this situation dukes Philippe Julius and Bogislaw XIV had nothing but to stick to the policy of neutrality, which they considered to be the cheapest way to save Pomerania from the possible war turmoil. Pure neutrality not supported by any significant military force meant pure vulnerability in the reality of the time. At the end of May 1623, news of the concentration of about 3,000 Polish soldiers at the Pomeranian border, who could cross it at any time,<sup>23</sup> reached the court in Szczecin. In this situation, on 23rd May 1623 Bogislaw XIV informed his subjects about the threat

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<sup>20</sup> Z. Boras, *Książęta...*, p. 335.

<sup>21</sup> H. Lesiński, *Pomorze Zachodnie w latach wojny trzydziestoletniej*, in: *Z dziejów wojennych Pomorza Zachodniego*, ed. B. Miśkiewicz, Poznań 1972, pp. 174–175 and B. Wachowiak, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, p. 988.

<sup>22</sup> E. Rymar, *Książęta Zachodniopomorscy wobec obronności swego państwa w XII–XVII wieku*, in: *Pomorze Militarne XII–XXI wiek*, eds. K. Kozłowski, E. Rymar, Szczecin 2004, pp. 37–38; comp. also: Z. Boras, *Książęta...*, p. 340.

<sup>23</sup> APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 1–3, these troops, according to the informants, spread out about 2 miles from the border, and the most endangered were the lands of amt Szczecinek.

to the state and ordered the strengthening of castles and city walls and announced the establishment of levy in mass throughout the Duchy of Szczecin. At the same time, in the duke’s surroundings, the costs of issuing mercenary troops that would protect the Pomeranian border started to be analysed. Eventually, the monthly accommodation of the 200-person company was estimated at about 2,320 guilders,<sup>24</sup> the 300-person company at 2,847 guilders, while the issue of a 100-person rota was to cost about 2,950 guilders per month.<sup>25</sup> Of course, it was clearly realised that full safety of Pomerania would be given by the army consisting of at least several thousand infantry and cavalry.<sup>26</sup> In reality the duke was not able to afford such an army for financial reasons. Moreover, the Pomeranian states did not feel like spending so much in order to offer support. So again, an intermediate route was chosen (as in 1619). The levy in mass was to be strengthened by just few mercenary troops.

In June 1623, a significant number of Cossack troops (light horsemen) was reported, which soon after appearing near the Pomeranian borders, finally entered Brandenburg. They were spread out on quarters near Sulechów.<sup>27</sup> This, immediately caused great concern in Berlin, and the Elector of Brandenburg George William informed all his neighbours, including the Duke of Szczecin Bogislaw XIV, about the Cossack threat. The latter, being seriously afraid of this assault within the Pomeranian borders, ordered (30th June 1623) the introduction of a state of full marital emergency. In all of the border towns, the gates were to be guarded day and night, the permanent guards were also put on the city walls. In addition, they were to gather enough gunpowder, ammunition and weapons. In July 1623, the levy in mass of the Duchy of Szczecin, which was called in May,

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<sup>24</sup> It was then assumed that the captain would receive 250 guilders a month, the lieutenants 70 guilders each. The core of the company forces was to be 169 musketeers receiving 7 guilders each month, which gave the amount of 1183 guilders. If we add to this the costs of maintenance of sergeants, corporals and other functional companies, the total costs increased to 2320 guilders per month: APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 36–42, 56–57. Possible savings and negotiation of lower pay for the company’s staff were also taken into account.

<sup>25</sup> In the case of a ride rota, the Rittmeister himself took 400 guilders for his own maintenance and 6 horses, the lieutenant took 180 guilders for himself and 4 horses. The rota consisted of 81 private horsemen, which in total consumed 2950 guilders per month: APS, AKS, I/4747, p. 43.

<sup>26</sup> APS, AKS, I/4747, p. 51.

<sup>27</sup> The number of Cossacks accommodated in Brandenburg has been exaggeratedly estimated at about 10,000 people: G. Bülow, *Ein drohender Kosakeneinfall in 1625*, “Baltische Studien” AF 1880, 30, pp. 219–220.

finally gathered.<sup>28</sup> At the same time, on the initiative of Bogislaw XIV, in June 1623, professional soldiers and officers were enlisted, the costs of their accommodation and maintenance were calculated. Eventually it was decided to enlist two large infantry companies of 591 men each. The officer and non-commissioned officer cadre of each of them was meant to contain, among others, a captain, 2 lieutenants, 4 sergeants, 45 corporals and a provost. Such a large squad also incorporated a few drummers, a surgeon, a quartermaster with helpers and quite a large number of servants. Also, there were 484 musketeers in each of the units. Monthly maintenance costs of the described unit amounted to 5,822 florins.<sup>29</sup> In fact, the personnel status of both established companies was much lower than originally assumed as 300 soldiers (600 soldiers in total) were enlisted. This was mainly due to the fact that in the Szczecin's court it was considered necessary to create an expensive cavalry unit (about 150 horses), whose task was to stop any possible direct attacks from Cossacks. In this situation, since the end of June 1623, the Duchy of Szczecin accommodated a recruitment of about 750 soldiers to cover the state borders.<sup>30</sup> In spite of quite regular soldier's pay in money<sup>31</sup> and partly in the natural goods, information about abuses and robberies committed by the soldiers enlisted by the duke (most often no money was paid for the food and horse feed taken)<sup>32</sup> was coming in from various places. In total, the states of the Duchy of Szczecin paid 16,185 florins a month to maintain the heavy forces protecting the country. The total cost of maintaining the army for 6 months (from the end of June to the beginning of December 1623) was 97,110 florins. Add to

<sup>28</sup> The common start was collected on July 10, 1623: APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 209–221, 223–270, there are also lists of people who came forward.

<sup>29</sup> APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 285–292, 332–335.

<sup>30</sup> Heavy companies were divided into small units stationed in different villagebss not far from the borders. For example, 37 soldiers were stationed in Pyrzyce, commanded by Sergeant Jurgen Zivermann, 53 soldiers and several non-commissioned officers commanded by Captain Reinhold v. Krokowa were stationed in Gartz near the Oder River: APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 667–671.

<sup>31</sup> The list of payments for the maintenance of the 2 companies is quite long. Among others, Szczecin paid 1,000 florins, Słupsk 448 florins, Darłowo 858 florins, Sławno 723 florins, Trzebiatów n. Rega 373 florins, Gartz 1,794 florins, Białogard 600 florins, Goleniów 222 florins, Płoty 83 florins, Lębork 834 florins, Dąbie 626 florins: total 7,561 florins. The kołbacka domain paid 527 florins, the szczecińska 800 florins, the szadzka 220 florins, the pyrzycka 200 florins, the trzebiatowska 757 florins, the bytowska 1,123 florins, the karlińska 1,738 florins, the szczecińska 1,251 florins, the lęborska 426 florins, and finally the Słupsk and Sławiński Province Governor allocated 4,400 florins: altogether 11,442 florins, which in total gave 19,003 florins: APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 676–677.

<sup>32</sup> Such complaints were submitted by the cities of Szczecinek, Stargard and Pyrzyce and the Kamień Pomorski Chapter: APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 350–351.



this the extraordinary expenses, which were calculated at 4,400 florins, and the amount finally mentioned above increased to 102,510 florins.<sup>33</sup> After all of the above-mentioned forces were made demilitarised in December 1623, Pomerania became again completely defenceless in the face of growing external threats.

Another threat approached the people of Pomerania in Spring 1625. This time the Duchy of Szczecin was threatened by attacks of rebellious ‘Lost Men’ (Lisowski’s soldiers) plundering Royal Prussia. At the end of May 1625, Bogisław XIV, fearing that the Pomeranian borders would be violated by robbing gangs, once again ordered a state of military emergency.<sup>34</sup> He did so because at the end of May (on 28th May 1625) he received a letter from the Chełmno voivode Jan Wejher, who wrote about the robberies of the marauders in his province and the fight against those rebellious troops from the royal army. Therefore, there were serious fears those who survived and regrouped may invade Pomerania.<sup>35</sup> As before, the state ordered that border towns were to be kept guarded at the gates and walls both day and night. Moreover, the duke ordered the repair and reinforcement of the walls themselves and the collection of weapons, bullets and gunpowder.<sup>36</sup> On 30th June 1625, Bogisław XIV announced the concentration of the common movement of both Wolgast and Szczecin duchies. In the end, 1,986 infantry and 266 horsemen users were gathered near Wolgast and about 1,500 infantries and 200 horsemen users near Bobolice.<sup>37</sup> Szczecin, totally in fear of the growing threat, decided to put up additional 20 horsemen and 100 infantry. The levy in mass was to be led by the Szczecin bourgeois Daniel Schreiber and captain Michael Hennicke. The owner of each house in the city and its suburbs had to pay 1 florin for the army, the kennels’ owners paid 1/2 florin and whoever owned a cellar paid 1/4 florin. Additionally, the contribution covered Szczecin’s estate and the town of Police.

The already critical situation worsened by an unexpected death (February 1625) of Philipp Julius, from whom Bogisław XIV inherited not only the Duchy of Wolgast, but also considerable debts. The reunification of Pomerania did not

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<sup>33</sup> APS, AKS, I/4747, pp. 523–534, 614–615, 622–636, 720–722, 755–757.

<sup>34</sup> The Ducal Order was issued on 30 May 1625: APS, AKS, I/4746, pp. 1–4.

<sup>35</sup> The news spread around Pomerania even spoke of 18,000 ‘Lost Men’ ready to rob Pomerania: G. Bülow, *Ein drohender...*, p. 226; comp. also: Z. Boras, *Księżęta...*, p. 341 and B. Wachowiak, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 988–989.

<sup>36</sup> G. Bülow, *Ein drohender...*, pp. 221–225, 227–229, comp. also: *Pomorze Zachodnie poprzez wieki*, ed. J.M. Piskorski, Szczecin 1999, pp. 142–143.

<sup>37</sup> APS, AKS, I/4746, pp. 5, 20–21, 23.

strengthen the last surviving Griffin at all, on the contrary, financially it was completely dependent on the states that did not intend to cover the costs of maintaining large military recruitments. The duke was clearly advised not to get involved on either side of the conflict. Meanwhile, in 1626, the political and military situation in the Empire became much worse due to the involvement of the Protestants from King Christian IV of Denmark. However, the Danish intervention ended in total defeat (Battles of Dessau – April 1626 and Lutter am Barenberge – August 1626), which significantly increased the threat from the victorious Habsburgs towards any Protestant estates of the Empire including Pomerania. Additionally, quite unexpectedly for Bogislaw XIV in the summer of 1626, the Polish-Swedish conflict moved to the area of Royal Prussia closely bordering the Pomeranian state. Pomerania seemed to be surrounded by areas where the war was taking place.

Following the new situation, in the spring of 1626 Bogislaw XIV appointed a commission of his councillors to examine the state of defence of the country. Castles, city fortifications and the state of borders were subject to assessment. In May 1626, at the Pomeranian Sejmik in Uckermünde, under the influence of a report on the poor condition of the fortifications and the lack of security around the borders, critical measures were adopted for the new recruits. The troops gathered in this way were to protect selected ports and some border crossings and bridges.<sup>38</sup> In June 1626, a separate tax (contribution) was collected by the above-mentioned Sejmik for the maintenance of permanent troops. The whole collection was to be supervised by a specially appointed War Council coordinating defence activities in Pomerania. At the same time, it was intended to create the War Fund, to which any funds intended for the maintenance of the army were to be transferred.<sup>39</sup> Special attention was paid to the professionalism of the commanding staff enlisted. At that time two colonels (Asmus v. Glasenapp and Matthias v. Borck)<sup>40</sup> and several junior officers were employed (June 1626). Also, soldiers were enlisted to two companies of infantry commanded by the above-mentioned colonels.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, a contract was signed with the artillery captain Matthias v. Osten,

<sup>38</sup> This concerned, among others, the ports in Wolgast and Kołobrzeg, bridges over the Oder River in Gartz and Gryfino and in the vicinity of Pasewalk, Demmin and Altentreptow (until 1939 Treptow an der Tollense); H. Lesiński, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 174–175.

<sup>39</sup> APS, AKS, I/4748, pp. 1–4, 6–8.

<sup>40</sup> Matthias v. Bork is unlikely to have his contract renewed after 3 months.

<sup>41</sup> An amount of 12,000 florins was spent on officer maintenance for the first three months: APS, AKS, I/4748, pp. 15–18.

who was meant to modernize the Pomeranian artillery. He was given support by a gunsmith master with several journeymen and guards to protect the planned armoury. The main task of v. Osten was therefore to organize a real arsenal and gather the appropriate number of cannons, gunpowder and bullets.<sup>42</sup> In July 1626, the Bogislaw XIV Chancellery issued special articles being a set of regulations for the enlisted army. They indicated, among other things, that the basic task of the Pomeranian troops is to protect the border, check passports of the travellers and fight against the gangs willing to attack the Pomeranian population. At the same time, the enlisted soldiers were forbidden to confiscate grain, bread, beer or other food from the Pomeranian peasants under the death penalty. The troops deployed along the border should set up fortified camps to which sufficient food and supplies were to be delivered.<sup>43</sup>

One of the first enlisted Pomeranian units belonging to Colonel Asmus v. Glasenapp’s company was directed to the vicinity of Penkun, to protect Szczecin from the south-west side. In July 1626 v. Glesenapp’s company reached the level of 300 soldiers recruited for a period of 3 months.<sup>44</sup> At the end of July and later on in August, the money successfully collected by the Pomeranian towns was spent through contracts with successive officers and the new recruitment of soldiers to the second company, the number of which slightly exceeded 200 people, began.<sup>45</sup> In order to command the mercenary forces of just over 500 soldiers, the duke, supported by the Pomeranian estates, finally employed 4 colonels, 4 captains, 4 lieutenants and an appropriate number of sergeants and corporals. In total, the monthly maintenance costs of the officer and non-commissioned officer unit reached 24,884 thalers in August.<sup>46</sup> At the same time, Bogislaw XIV called for a review of the levy in mass near Szczecinek and Bobolice in August 1626 (orders of 18 May and 21 June), ordered the repair of neglected fortifications and forbade the Pomeranian nobility to join the foreign army. Eventually, 2,145 people stood near Szczecinek, less than half of whom were armed with firearms and

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<sup>42</sup> APS, AKS, I/4748, pp. 22–23.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 24–29.

<sup>44</sup> Among other things, the captain actually commanding the company (in the field) received 200 florins a month, the lieutenant 50 florins, each of three sergeants 12 florins, and each of three corporals 10 florins: APS, AKS, I/4748, pp. 31–34, 39–41, 54.

<sup>45</sup> Captains Ditrich Schembach, Heinrich Normann or Johann Tydebohlen were enlisted: APS, AKS, I/4748, pp. 60, 77–78, 81–82.

<sup>46</sup> APS, AKS, I/4746, pp. 36–42, for example, Colonel Christian v. Nessen received 837 talars per month.

the rest with halberds and peaks.<sup>47</sup> In the vicinity of Bobolice, on the other hand, 2,294 defenders gathered, of which only 116 were armed with modern muskets, while 657 had older firearms with matchlocks.<sup>48</sup> In total, the two duchies joined together by Bogislaw XIV gathered forces consisting of about 4,500 soldiers of the common movement. At the same time the Pomeranian borders were secured by about 500 heavy ones.

Despite the duke's insistence, the project of establishing the general military treasury of Pomerania, i.e. the War Fund, controlled by the ruler, was not realized. On the other hand, Bogislaw XIV managed to obtain the estate's consent for the permanent functioning of the War Council consisting of some of the prince's councillors. The levy in mass called in August (about 4,500 people) was to be, by the intentions of the War Council, strengthened by about 3,000 permanent infantry units. Two companies, already enlisted in July 1626, with about 500 people, were to be extended to this size. However, there was not enough money to enlarge the heavy units. Thus, the Pomeranian army commanded by Claus Bruckhausen and Asmus Glasenapp was limited only to about 4,500 people,<sup>49</sup> reinforced by small mercenary forces.<sup>50</sup> In the long run, it was not possible to keep the mobilised troops, whose forces gradually melted down. Therefore, in November 1626 it was dissolved into houses. On the Pomeranian borders, there were only two heavy companies of 500 soldiers on foot left.

The effects of the military weakness of Pomerania were easy to predict. In January and February 1627, the units recruited by the Swedish in Mecklenburg were ordered to go to Royal Prussia, where since 1626 the Polish-Swedish War was waged. They intended to march on the shortest route through neutral Pomerania.<sup>51</sup> At the end of January, the first small groups of recruited soldiers appeared near Anklam, and here they encountered the Pomeranian sentries consisting of soldiers enlisted in 1626. Eventually, the Swedish units decided to withdraw. They decided to cut through Uckermark and cross the Oder River near Gartz. Here, however, on February 25th, Swedish officers met the envoys of Bogislaw XIV,

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<sup>47</sup> APS, AKS, I/4746, pp. 73–201. For example, one of the units of 223 soldiers consisted of 133 armed with firearms, 53 halberdsmen and 34 pikemen and additionally 3 carpenters with axes.

<sup>48</sup> APS, AKS, I/4746, pp. 186, 215–218, 254–257.

<sup>49</sup> It consisted of a bourgeois quota of 3445 pedestrians and 727 horsemen and a noble contingent of 694 horsemen: H. Lesiński, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 180–181.

<sup>50</sup> At that time, it was not even possible to achieve the heavy numbers approved by sejmik in Uckermünde, which were to include 600 foot soldiers and 150 rides.

<sup>51</sup> H. Lesiński, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 178–179.

who persuaded them to cross the Oder near Schwedt, giving the officers the amount of 9,000 thalers. This was the end of the success of the Pomeranian ruler, because after crossing the Oder near Schwedt, several thousand soldiers enlisted by the Swedish and commanded by Colonels Streiff von Lauenstein and Maksymilian Teufel<sup>52</sup> marched through Stargard, Białogard and Słupsk heading for Royal Prussia. The protests of the Pomeranian Duke didn’t do much good, because nobody took them seriously. Outraged by the violation of Pomeranian neutrality and borders, Bogislaw XIV once again tried to strengthen the permanent army. At the beginning, in March 1627, the Sejmik decided to establish a permanent body, the so-called War Government, in place of the War Council, which was to monitor the war events around Pomerania and counteract any possible threats.<sup>53</sup> During the sessions of the Sejmik it was repeatedly stressed that from the east, the Pomeranian borders were constantly being violated by Swedish and Polish troops. The news coming from different sides caused the Pomeranian states to adopt further extraordinary taxes to maintain a permanent army. At the same time, it was emphasized that the Pomeranian forces were only supposed to protect the borders and under no circumstances act offensively. The states ordered to establish a fund-raising money for the maintenance of the defence forces in Trzebiatów.<sup>54</sup> The taxes passed by the Sejmik were directed there and this became the source of the funds for the maintenance of permanent units and defence of Pomerania.<sup>55</sup> It should be emphasized at this point that duke Bogislaw XIV was largely excluded from the organization of the defence of his duchy by the aforementioned actions.

At the end of March 1627, the Swedish army approached Słupsk and started requisitioning food and goods. The number of their troops was probably over estimated at about 2,500 people.<sup>56</sup> Another Swedish unit estimated at about 1,000 soldiers were requisitioning food in the Sławno area, including in urban estates.

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<sup>52</sup> G. Bülow, *Ein drohender...*, p. 218 and B. Wachowiak, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 992–993.

<sup>53</sup> APS, AKS, I/4744, pp. 1–7, actually the War Government was constituted in April 1627: I/4744, pp. 28–34, 92–93, and its tasks are described in detail: I/4744, pp. 35–40, 57–58.

<sup>54</sup> APS, AKS, I/4753, pp. 69–70, 188–191.

<sup>55</sup> APS, AKS, I/4753, pp. 350–374; comp. also sample receipts to the Trzebiatowski cash register: I/4754, p. 60.

<sup>56</sup> The Swedish units rebuilding food on the Słupsk land were further strengthened by 900 additional soldiers: APS, AKS, I/4744, pp. 25–26, 60–67, comp. also I/4753, pp. 80–97, 107–110, where information about food and horses taken away by Swedes from particular villages was submitted by duke’s officials.

Bread, beer, calves, sheep and lard were taken away.<sup>57</sup> At the same time, Amtman of Lębork Antonius Natzmer informed the Duke that the Polish army was actually occupying the Lębork and Bytów land, taking the horse feed and food they needed. Natzmer suggested that the lean Pomeranian heavyweight forces, strengthened by the common movement, should be concentrated in the east of the country, which would at least limit the outgoing foreign troops. In April, the news reached Szczecin that a Polish unit of 200 soldiers had spread out in the vicinity of Okonek and illegally took food from duke's subjects.<sup>58</sup> A real threat was caused by the lively correspondence of Bogislaw XIV with the amtmens residing in the eastern part of the country. It seemed that Swedish troops, in search of food, could reach Darłowo, Koszalin and Kołobrzeg. In this situation, steps had to be taken as soon as possible to drive foreign troops out of the country. The companies of captains Johan Tiedebölen and Peter Störmers, consisting of a total of 380 musketeers, hastily enlisted (with city money), set off from Kołobrzeg and Stargard. The earlier enlisted company of Colonel Asmus Glasenapp, consisting of 180 soldiers, was to support them. In total, the Duke directed most of his heavy forces (560 men) to Szczecinek with the hope of pushing Polish units out of the border area. Eventually the Poles withdrew from the Szczecinek area before the arrival of the Pomeranian companies.

In the face of the threat to the whole country, the mercenaries were also financed by the towns of the Duchy of Wolgast, which granted an increase of heavy forces by 100 musketeers and 150 riders (the whole heavy forces consisted of about 700 infantry and 150 horses). At the same time, the duke decided (at the end of April) to order a mass mobilisation.<sup>59</sup> Its concentration near Szczecinek was set for the beginning of July 1627. The cities of the Duchy of Szczecin turned out to be the most cooperative in the face of the threat, enlisting a total of 5 infantry companions of bourgeois. The first company of 300 soldiers under the command of Captain Johan Tidebahl was set up in Szczecin. The second company with 280 soldiers under the command of Captain Georg Hagemeister consisted of 200 inhabitants of Stargard and 80 bourgeois from Pyrzyce. The third company commanded by captain Joachim Gruntze, with a total of 265 soldiers, consisted

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<sup>57</sup> APS, AKS, I/4753, pp. 146–152.

<sup>58</sup> APS, AKS, I/4744, pp. 78–79, 80–85 according to the preserved information Polish troops stayed near Szczecinek and Okonek for a month looting the whole area. Allegedly Poles squeezed two barrels of gold from amt and the city of Szczecinek.

<sup>59</sup> APS, AKS, I/4744, pp. 127–142.

of 50 people from Goleniów, 50 people from Gartz, 40 people from Gryfino, 80 people from Pasewalk, 25 people from Dąbie and 10 people from Banie. The fourth company of 280 people was commanded personally by Colonel Asmus v. Glasenapp and consisted of soldiers from Gryfice (60 people), Trzebiatów (100 people), Wolin, Kamień and Białogard 40 people each. The last fifth company of 260 people was commanded by Captain Büdeman Reinholt and was enlisted by cities of the eastern part of the country: Słupsk (100 people), Sławno (40 people), Darłowo (50 people), Lębork (30 people), Szczecinek and Bytów 15 people each and Sianów (10 people). In total, the cities of the Duchy of Szczecin exhibited 1,385 infantry soldiers.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, the cities financed a driving squad: Szczecin 60 horse riders, Stargard 50 horse riders, Trzebiatów and Słupsk 25 horse riders each, Pyrzyce and Pasewalk 20 horse riders each, Gryfice and Goleniów 15 horse riders each, Białogard 10 horse riders, Gryfino, Gartz, Kamień and Darłowo 8 each, Wolin and Sławno 6 horse riders each and Lębork 4 horse riders each.<sup>61</sup> Apart from the bourgeois, infantry and horsemen; noble cavalry began to be concentrated, the number of which (from the Duchy of Szczecin) reached 279 riders.<sup>62</sup> The whole levy in mass, consisting of 1,385 infantry and 567 horse riders, was to be spread out around Szczecinek. The above-mentioned forces were supported by heavy forces (700 infantry and 150 horse riders) stretched along the borders. In addition, Szczecin attracted a company of over 200 people to defend the city itself. In July 1627, the Pomeranian forces numbered a total of 2,285 infantry and 717 horse riders. Just like in July 1626, the appropriate regulations were published for the enlisted army (July 1627), specifying the duties of soldiers and penalties for non-compliance with discipline.<sup>63</sup> Almost simultaneously with the concentration of the entire Pomeranian forces of just over 3,000 people, there were widespread complaints about the high costs of the food and accommodation for the army, especially from the cities who made the greatest financial contribution.<sup>64</sup> Despite this, they continued to put in their own hauls and additionally created garrisons to

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<sup>60</sup> APS, AKS, I/4749, pp. 9–10, where the costs of troops’ maintenance and officers’ gauges were also calculated, for example, a captain received 200 florins per month, a lieutenant received 100 florins, a sergeant received 60 florins and a corporal received 40 florins. Comp. also: APS, AKS, I/4745, pp. 122–130.

<sup>61</sup> APS, AKS, I/4744, p. 276.

<sup>62</sup> This was far below the number of aristocratic rides according to previous linen lists: APS, AKS, I/4745, pp. 237–245, 258–264, 319–320, 334–339.

<sup>63</sup> APS, AKS, I/4749, pp. 18–32.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 125–134, I/4745, 149–150, 153–156.

protect the cities themselves. During August 1627, the levy in mass, especially the noble's cavalry, was partly dismissed home. The number of mercenary infantry was also reduced to 600 soldiers maintaining a 150-member cavalry unit.

Seeing more and more unfavourable development of the situation in the Reich, Bogislaw XIV returned in August 1627 at the Sejmik in Wolin, to his idea of establishing a bigger permanent army. The ruler demanded that the states should allocate funds for permanent troops, which was necessary to strengthen the neutrality policy. It was decided then that an infantry unit of 1,200 soldiers would be established.<sup>65</sup> Unfortunately, after the resolution was passed, the funds for the army were flowing too slowly to the national treasury in Trzebiatów. In this situation, it was assumed that the Pomeranian infantry would be enlarged to the number of 1,200 people later at the beginning of 1628. Meanwhile, in October 1627, the imperial troops led by Adolph, Duke of Holstein (about 3,000 people) were going to return to the Reich through Pomerania. After longer negotiations, Bogislaw XIV, in agreement with Pomeranian estates, agreed to the emperor's troops march on a strictly defined route (from Lębork through Słupsk, Koszalin, Nowogard, Goleniów to Szczecin). Food and horse feed were prepared along the route, and some sections of the route were covered by the enlisted Pomeranian troops.<sup>66</sup> Thanks to this, there were no major robberies.

After the defeat of the above-mentioned expedition of Christian IV (1626), the imperial army appeared in 1627 in north-eastern Germany, gradually occupying new territories. Despite the increasingly difficult situation, Bogislaw XIV still believed in the imperial promise (July 1627) that the army of Ferdinand II would not violate Pomeranian neutrality. When the Emperor demanded that his troops be allowed into Pomerania to protect the Pomeranian ports from the Swedish, the Duke replied that they would be protected by the enlisted Pomeranian troops. Meanwhile, in October 1627, despite his earlier declarations, Ferdinand II ordered Wallenstein, as commander-in-chief of the imperial army, to order the commander of the imperial troops in Mecklenburg, General Armin, to immediately man the Pomeranian ports, especially the Duchy of Wolgast. The aim was to cut the supply of grain to Sweden. Bogislaw XIV tried at the last minute to bribe Arnima with gifts worth about 60,000 thalers so that the imperial army would not cross the Pomeranian borders. Unfortunately, on November 2, 1627, Duke Bogislaw XIV

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<sup>65</sup> According to sejmik's resolutions, 600 soldiers each of the Duchies of Wolgast and Szczecin were to be issued by: H. Lesiński, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, p. 183.

<sup>66</sup> H. Lesiński, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 185–186.



was surprised in Franzburg<sup>67</sup> by Albrecht von Wallenstein’s delegate and forced to agree to accommodate in Pomerania imperial troops commanded by General Arnim (the so-called Franzburg surrender).<sup>68</sup> This was a complete violation of the previous policy of neutrality, and Pomerania, although under pressure, took the side of the Emperor. It was difficult for Bogislaw XIV to do otherwise, as he was unable to oppose the Emperor’s army without any significant military force. Moreover, it should be remembered that in those circumstances the duke was a vassal of the emperor from Pomerania simply obeying the rules.<sup>69</sup> Without finally entering into the assessment of Bogislaw XIV’s decision, it must be stated that from November 1627 the Thirty Years’ War also covered Pomerania.

To conclude, it must be stated that Pomerania’s preparations for the Thirty Years’ War were very inadequate, which resulted from the financial weakness of Pomeranian dukes and the estates’ reluctance to maintain more mercenary forces. Additionally, these preparations were not a consistently implemented long-term plan. There were also no unambiguous arrangements made jointly by the states and the duke in this matter. In the activities undertaken especially by Bogislaw XIV, one can see, above all, the changing mind depending on the current external situation. Since the spring of 1626, Pomerania began to realize more and more widely the permanence of the external threat, but this did not lead to full cooperation between the duke’s authorities and his subjects (Trzebiatów’s cash register). It was only at the end of February 1627 that the Swedish troops heading for the war in Royal Prussia passed through their formally neutral country that had a refreshing effect on Pomerania. The threat was also intensified by constant violations of the eastern borders of Pomerania by Swedes and Poles. Therefore, in August 1627 a joint decision (estates – prince) was made to protect Pomerania from external threat. This decision was, however, very late and in November 1627 the Duchy of Pomerania was forced to accept imperial troops.

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<sup>67</sup> In October 1627, the duke stayed at the castle in Wolgast and was probably persuaded by the bribed courtiers to travel to Franzburg where MP Wallenstein appeared: Z. Boras, *Książęta...*, pp. 343–344.

<sup>68</sup> *Pomorze Zachodnie poprzez...*, p. 144, H. Lesiński, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 186–187 oraz B. Wachowiak, *Pomorze Zachodnie...*, pp. 993–995.

<sup>69</sup> Emperor Ferdinand II confirmed Bogislaw XIV’s possession of the Duchy of Szczecin as a fiefdom in Regensburg in 1622.

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## „PRZYGOTOWANIA” POMORZA ZACHODNIEGO DO WOJNY TRZYDZIESTOLETNIJ

### ABSTRAKT

Pomorze Zachodnie nie było przygotowane do obrony swojego terytorium podczas wojny trzydziestoletniej. Pierwszą i zasadniczą tego przyczyną była słabość finansowa książąt pomorskich, których dochody z dóbr, ceł i zwyczajowych podatków nie pozwalały na pełne utrzymanie dworu, a co dopiero na zaciąg znaczniejszych oddziałów wojskowych. W rzeczywistości książęce wojska stałe składały się z około 100 drabantów osłaniających osoby książąt szczecińskiego i wołoskiego. Podstawową siłą zbrojną księstw było więc pospolite ruszenie składające się ze szlacheckiej jazdy i mieszczańskiej piechoty, różnorodnie uzbrojone i mało zdyscyplinowane. Podstawowymi punktami oporu w razie obcej agresji miały stać się pomorskie miasta, lecz jedynie Stralsund posiadał wybudowane z własnych środków nowoczesne fortyfikacje ziemne. Pozostałe miasta były osłaniane przez średniowieczne mury częściowo (w XVI wieku) przystosowane do broni palnej. Nie trzeba tu podkreślać, że nie stanowiły one większej przeszkody dla

ówczesnej artylerii. Rosnące zagrożenie wojenne spowodowało jednak, że książęta pomorscy zwłaszcza Franciszek I i Bogusław XIV próbowali zmienić ten stan rzeczy. Podjęte działania miały doprowadzić do ufortyfikowania Szczecina (co zrobiono częściowo) oraz powołania stałych sił zbrojnych (ok. 3000 żołnierzy). Powyższe plany przedstawiane przez książąt na pomorskich sejmikach nie spotkały się z przychylnością stanów, które odmówiły pieniędzy na organizację stałej armii i budowę wokół Szczecina nowoczesnych umocnień. Jedynym krótkotrwałym sukcesem książąt, zwłaszcza Bogusława XIV, było zaciąganie na okres największego zagrożenia niewielkich sił zaciężnych mających osłaniać pomorskie granice. W tej sytuacji pozbawieni większej siły zbrojnej ostatni pomorscy książęta Filip Juliusz, a zwłaszcza Bogusław XIV próbowali zachować neutralność w rozpalającym się w Rzeszy konflikcie, lawirując między walczącymi stronami. Politykę neutralności zakończyła tzw. kapitulacja franzburska w listopadzie 1627 roku, kiedy to książę Bogusław XIV zezwolił na wkroczenie na Pomorze wojsk cesarskich.

## **"PREPARATIONS" OF WESTERN POMERANIA FOR THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR**

### **SUMMARY**

Western Pomerania was not prepared to defend its territory during the Thirty Years' War. The first and principal reason for this was the financial weakness of the Pomeranian dukes, whose income from goods, duties and customary taxes did not allow them to fully maintain the court, let alone to take on major military units. In fact, the duke's permanent army consisted of about 100 guards protecting the dukes of Szczecin and Wolgast. The basic armed force of the Duchies was therefore the common one – a levy in mass consisting of noble riders and the bourgeois infantry, variously armed and undisciplined. The basic points of resistance in case of foreign aggression were to become the Pomeranian cities, but only Stralsund had modern ground fortifications built within its own budget. The remaining cities were shielded by medieval walls partly (at the turn of the 15th and 16th century) adapted to firearms. However, they were not a major obstacle for the artillery of the time. The growing threat of war caused the Pomeranian dukes, especially Francis I and Bogislaw XIV, to try to change this state of affairs. The undertaken actions were to lead to fortification of Szczecin (which was done partially) and establishment of permanent armed forces (about 3,000 soldiers). The above plans presented by the princes in the Pomeranian Sejmiks did not meet with the favour of the states, which refused to provide money to organize a permanent army and build modern fortifications around Szczecin. The only short-term successes of the dukes, especially of Bogislaw XIV, were the incurring of small permanent forces to cover the Pomeranian borders for the period of the greatest threat. In this situation, the last Pomeranian dukes Philipp Julius, and especially Bogislaw XIV, who were deprived of a greater military force, tried

to maintain neutrality in the conflict which was flaring up in the Empire by repeatedly switching sides between parts of the conflict. The policy of neutrality was ended by the so-called 'Franzburg Surrender' in November 1627, when Duke Bogislaw XIV allowed the imperial army to enter Pomerania.