

ARKADIUSZ INDRASZCZYK

ACTIVITY OF SECURITY SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE'S  
REPUBLIC OF POLAND AGAINST THE POLISH PEASANT  
PARTY IN FRANCE IN YEARS 1948-1966\*

INTRODUCTION

One of the characteristic traits of the Cold War era was the political emigrations, made of politicians and social activists unable to return safely to their countries, in which control had been taken over by communists. These political emigrants made political parties and organisations, included governments and quasi parliaments in Exile. But these groups were not one, and were often at odds with each other. This was the case, for example, in Polish political emigration after 1945, of which the Polish People's Party (Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe – PSL) in Exile was a part.

Governments of the so-called Eastern Bloc considered these emigrants to be a threat, because they undermined the political ideology represented by communists, presented world opinion with a different picture of events in their homelands than a communist propaganda, and gained support of the United States of America, among other things, in delivering message on ideologies other than communism to their homelands (e.g. via Radio Free Europe – FE). Therefore, governments of the Eastern Bloc countries engaged in activity aimed at neutralisation of political emigrants, which was done by their secret services, including the intelligence.

The main purpose of this article is described how the secret service of the Polish Peoples Republic (Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa – PRL) tried to

---

Dr hab. ARKADIUSZ INDRASZCZYK, prof. UPH – director of the Institute of Political Science and Public Administration of the Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities; e-mail: [arkadiusz.indraszczyk@uph.edu.pl](mailto:arkadiusz.indraszczyk@uph.edu.pl); ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9133-4062>.

\* The article was developed as a part of research on statutory topic “Theoretical and practical dimensions of security in the 20th and 21th century“ No. 509/18/S in Institute of Security Sciences at the Faculty of Social Science of the Siedlce University of Natural Sciences and Humanities.

neutralize and break up the PSL in France (which was a biggest part of the PSL in Exile), and how PSL in France could defend itself. This is a little-known part of the Cold War, because historians' work to date has focused on individual examples of the activities of the PRL intelligence on the "great personalities" of emigrants. The article shows how skillfully the PRL services were able to use internal problems in PSL in Exile and the difficult economic situation of members of this party.

Research works, which served as a basis for this article, were based on sources from PSL in France (which are stored in the Museum of the History of the Polish People's Movement in Warsaw), as well as archived materials of the PRL intelligence services, archived at the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw, which were published in year 2010<sup>1</sup>.

## 1. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE POLISH PEOPLE'S PARTY IN EXILE

Before describing the activity of secret services of the PRL against the PSL in France, it seems proper to provide a short description of the PSL in Exile, in particular its part – the PSL in France.

The PSL in Exile was main party of one of polish political centre in emigration, which was established by Stanisław Mikołajczyk, the leader of the PSL. Mikołajczyk was opposed by other polish political groups: the President's group and the party-focused group called Political Council, which was caused by his attempts to cooperate with the USSR and the fact that he recognised the Yalta agreements. A formal difficulty was posed by the fact that Mikołajczyk and his group failed to recognise the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of year 1935, and thus the authorities elected in exile. In 1948, he established the Alliance of Democratic Parties, which in year 1950 was transformed into the Polish National Democratic Committee (Polski Narodowy Komitet Demokratyczny – PNKD). Apart from the PSL, it was joined by the Labour Party (Stronnictwo Pracy – SP) and a part of the Polish Socialist Party (Polska Partia Socjalistyczna – PPS), as well as some members of the Democratic Party (Stronnictwo Demokratyczne – SD). In year 1970, the new chairman of the PSL, Franciszek Wilk, decided to engage in cooperation

---

<sup>1</sup> *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach aparatu bezpieczeństwa*, vol. II, *Działalność w latach 1947-1958*, wybór dokumentów W. Bagiński, F. Dąbrowski, F. Gryciuk, oprac. W. Bagiński et al., Warszawa–Łódź 2010; *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach aparatu bezpieczeństwa*, vol. III, *Działalność w latach 1959-1966*, wybór dokumentów W. Bagiński, F. Dąbrowski, F. Gryciuk, oprac. W. Bagiński et al., Warszawa–Łódź 2010.

with the President's group and the party-focused group, which had established together the Council of National Unity. There was a split in the PSL. Some members supported Wilk; others seceded<sup>2</sup>.

The authorities of the PSL in Exile consisted of the High Executive Committee (Naczelny Komitet Wykonawczy – NKW) and the Chief Council (Rada Naczelna – RN), seated in Washington. Field structures of the party were created in countries, in which most peasant activists remained. Thus, there was the PSL in France, the PSL in Great Britain, the PSL in the Netherlands, the PSL in Belgium, as well as the PSL in Sweden. The managing bodies of the PSL in individual countries were General Conventions (congresses) and Executive Boards (Zarząd Główny – ZG), and there were local clubs and districts as well.

The PSL in France was the biggest of these organisations. It was established in 1946, and in a matter of years, it had more than 80 local clubs in twelve districts. The subsequent Chairmen of the Executive Board of the PSL in France were: Władysław Krawczyk (1947-48), Jan Kulpiński (1948-60), Mieczysław Wiesztort (since 1961). The peak period of dynamic activity of the party was the late 1940s and the early 1950s. After it got temporarily "out of breath", its activity became more intense once again from the mid-1950s. Decline of activity of the PSL in France started in the late 1960s / early 1970s. It was associated with ageing of the party members, some of them dying, getting ill and suffering from poor economic conditions. The PSL members in France represented mainly labour migration – they were mostly miners and industrial workers from northern departments of France. It is estimated that in the period of its most intense activity, the PSL in France had several thousand members, which, taking into account the fact that it was established in exile, makes it, in fact, a mass party. The last members of the party in France lived to see the fall of communism in Poland, and in 1990 they considered themselves to be a part of the PSL in Poland. The last manifestation of their activity were letters written to authorities of the PSL in Poland, as well as to authorities of Poland, urging them to remain cautious during the negotiation process on Poland's accession to the European Union<sup>3</sup>. At the same time, materials of the organisation were handed over, mainly to the Museum of the Polish People's Movement in Warsaw.

---

<sup>2</sup> J. PIOTROWSKI, *Polskie władze naczelne na wychodźstwie w latach 1945-1990*, [in:] *Rządy bez ziemi. Struktury władzy na uchodźstwie*, ed. R.P. Żurawski vel Grajewski, Warszawa 2014, pp. 611-615.

<sup>3</sup> A. INDRASZCZYK, *Listy otwarte ludowców z emigracji do Polski z lat 1990-2007*, "Myśl Ludowa" 4 (2012), pp. 133-183.

## 2. THE PRL IN RELATION TO THE POLISH POLITICAL EMIGRATION

The authorities of Poland, like those of other Eastern Bloc countries, treated the political emigration as a dangerous political rival<sup>4</sup>. This policy of the communist regime against the political emigration started with recognition by the main allies of the anti-Nazi coalition (the United States, the United Kingdom and the USSR) of the Provisional Government of National Unity and withdrawal of recognition of the Polish authorities in London: President Władysław Raczkiewicz and the government of Tomasz Arciszewski. Since then, the authorities of rising Poland could formally recognise the activity of the Polish authorities and political groups in exile as being hostile to the state<sup>5</sup>. It was not so much about fearing that the emigration would manage to take over power, as it was impossible under the existing geopolitical conditions, but rather about retaining a monopoly for information disseminated within the country, as well as abroad. In general, existence of alternative political groups is viewed as unacceptable by totalitarian authorities. Nevertheless, those ruling the PRL could not just liquidate these groups, because they were located outside the borders of Poland and the Eastern Bloc, or eliminate them using the same measures (the army, the police, physical terror), which were applied against the domestic opposition. Therefore, to neutralise the political emigration, it was necessary to either disgrace it or to sabotage its activity. For this purpose, efforts were made to “infiltrate individual circles and transform emigration into a politically neutral Polish diaspora and then to win it over for ‘positive’ cooperation with the homeland”<sup>6</sup>. Engagement of the emigration in collaboration, or, even better, convincing emigrants to return to the country, would be a huge success of the communist regime, very valuable in terms of propaganda by showing that its vision of systemic and ideological solutions was the right one, accepted even by the Poles in exile. When cooperation was not possible, it was necessary to disintegrate the emigrant activity.

Activity aimed at the emigration was conducted consecutively by: The 2nd Special Division established in June 1945, which was transformed quite quickly into the 2nd Independent Division of the Ministry of Public Security (Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego – MBP), and in June of 1947

<sup>4</sup> Vide: *Tajny oręż czy ofiary zimnej wojny? Emigracje polityczne z Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej*, ed. S. Łukasiewicz, Lublin–Warszawa 2010.

<sup>5</sup> S. ŁUKASIEWICZ, *Wywiad cywilny PRL wobec polskiej emigracji na Zachodzie – przegląd struktur i kierunków działania do początku lat sześćdziesiątych*, [in:] *Tajny oręż czy ofiary...*, pp. 155-156.

<sup>6</sup> K. TARKA, *Jest tylko jedna Polska? Emigranci w służbie PRL*, Łomianki 2014, p. 5.

merged with military intelligence (2nd Division of the General Staff of the Polish Armed Forces); since July 1947 until 1954, the civil intelligence operated in the MBP as Department 7. As late as on January 1st, 1951, the so-called Emigration Division was established, that is, the 2nd Division; starting from May of 1953, its competences were divided among two units: the 3rd Division dealing with the European emigration and the 4th Division for the emigration overseas. In mid-1954, the structure of the security resort was changed, the MBP was liquidated and replaced by the Committee for Public Security (Komitet do spraw Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego – KdsBP). In the Committee, emigration was assigned to the 5th Division of the 1st Department. The 5th Division consisted of four sections, each of them dedicated to uncovering a different group in exile: the PSL, the Sanation, the National Democrats and the socialists. Such was the structure within the Ministry of the Interior until year 1961, when this Division in the Ministry was assigned number 8<sup>7</sup>.

The Polish diaspora was also dealt with by the Consular Department and the Department for Foreign Polonia of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Intelligence officers worked in “undercover” diplomatic missions, and intelligence residences were also established in official diplomatic missions. There were two types of residency – legal, established in diplomatic missions, and illegal – operating outside and independently of these institutions. Civil intelligence residencies were established in embassies, legations, consulates and trade representations. The residencies of military intelligence were established as part of military attachates at diplomatic posts<sup>8</sup>.

What tasks were undertaken against the emigration? According to the description of structure of the Intelligence Department of 1946, these tasks were to include “observation of the Polish communities with regard to all forms of collective and individual activity” and “interfering with political, social, cultural, religious and organisational life of these communities in order to counteract any reactionary influences and attitudes”<sup>9</sup>. The statute of the 2nd Independent Division of the MBP of 2nd January 1946 included such operational methods as building of “networks of agents and residents in centres, which are of concern to us, in organisational, professional, trade, in-

---

<sup>7</sup> Vide: W. BAGIEŃSKI, *Wywiad cywilny Polski Ludowej w latach 1945-1961*, vol. I, Warszawa 2017, pp. 27-394; S. ŁUKASIEWICZ, *Wywiad cywilny PRL...*, pp. 155-159; W. BAGIEŃSKI, F. DĄBROWSKI, *Wstęp*, [in:] *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, p. XXII.

<sup>8</sup> W. BAGIEŃSKI, *Wywiad cywilny Polski...*, pp. 397-401.

<sup>9</sup> Quoted after: S. ŁUKASIEWICZ, *Wywiad cywilny PRL...*, p. 156.

dustrial, tourist, sports, charity and other organisations, as well as within Polish institutions abroad and in the country at exit points leading abroad”<sup>10</sup>.

In 1955, a new policy of the PRL was initiated against the emigration, which was aimed at softening the stance towards those in exile and persuading them to return and to cooperate with diplomatic posts (embassies and consulates) of the communist regime. It was the so-called return campaign (or the second repatriation action and the trip-organising action). The campaign was initiated by a letter of intellectuals residing in the Poland, addressed to emigrants, encouraging them to return and convincing them of excellent working conditions that would await the returning workers, peasants, scientists and intellectuals. The return campaign was implemented, among others, by the “Homeland” Broadcasting Station, the “Bulletin of the ‘Homeland’ Broadcasting Station”, as well as the Society for Communication with Emigrants “Polonia”, established on 18 October 1955.

The return campaign, however, was organised by intelligence services, which attempted to use it to establish the proper infrastructure (contacts and a net of agents) to conduct surveillance and sabotage activity among the emigration<sup>11</sup>.

According to historians examining the activity of the PRL against the emigration and the Polish communities abroad, the secret services very rarely (if ever) acquired agents through blackmailing. To encourage people to return, or at least to visit their homeland, they appealed to emotions, the fact that emigrants missed their country and homes, worried about their close relatives living at home, and they promised them good jobs and social care of the state. Agents were recruited on the basis of difficult living conditions faced by emigrants, who were offered financial support, but also by nourishing antagonisms, negative emotions, revanchism against other emigration politicians and activists. The potential candidates were offered support for activity aimed against other emigrants and their organisations.

In their re-emigration action, the intelligence services achieved several successes, which include return to the country of important figures of the Polish independence emigration. For instance, these included the return two prime ministers of the Polish government in exile: Hugon Hanke and Stanisław Mackiewicz Cat, a renowned publicist, an uncompromising (this adjective

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>11</sup> More on the topic, see e.g.: S. CENCKIEWICZ, *Geneza, działalność i udział rozgłośni “Kraj” w akcji reemigracyjnej (1955-1957). Przyczynek do studiów nad polityką PRL wobec emigracji i Polonii*, “Niepodległość” 54 (2003/2004), no. 5, pp. 114-226; K. TARKA, *Jest tylko jedna Polska? ...*, pp. 5-12.

should, however, be followed by a question mark) opponent of any agreements with communists<sup>12</sup>.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, interest of the PRL authorities in activity of the political emigration subsided. Nobody wrote or talked about it any longer. According to Krzysztof Tarka, "It was decided they should be forgotten"<sup>13</sup>. This change in the attitude of the PRL authorities was due to several reasons, including stabilisation of power in the country, diminishing importance of the political emigration due to internal conflicts, dying out of the most important emigrants, such as Stanisław Mikołajczyk, who died in December of 1966, a change in the policy of the Western countries towards emigrants. In the 1980s, the authorities and intelligence services of the PRL focused on the "Solidarity" movement as the real threat to the regime<sup>14</sup>.

### 3. ACTIVITY OF THE PRL INTELLIGENCE SERVICES AGAINST THE PSL IN FRANCE

Activities of the intelligence services of the PRL against the PSL in France were a part of the campaign against Stanisław Mikołajczyk and the peasant movement in exile as a whole. As not all of the documentation of the intelligence on activity against the peasant activists in exile has been preserved, it is not easy to identify its objectives, strategies and tactics in subsequent years. A set of instructions for a resident<sup>15</sup> in Paris of year 1948 indicates that the intelligence mainly gathered information on activity of emigrants – including Mikołajczyk and peasant activists – at the time. They wanted to know everything about where the emigrants were staying, what they talked about, what they planned, what divided them, what were their plans for the future, ways of communicating with the country, etc.<sup>16</sup> On the

---

<sup>12</sup> Returns to the country and cooperation with the secret services of the PRL of such figures have been described by Krzysztof Tarka, see K. TARKA, *Jest tylko jedna Polska?*...

<sup>13</sup> Ibidem, p. 14.

<sup>14</sup> See P. PLESKOT, *The Polish Intelligence Service and the Polish Diaspora after the Imposition of Martial Law in Poland*, [in:] *East Central Europe in Exile*, vol. II, *Transatlantic Identities*, ed. A. Mazurkiewicz, Cambridge 2013, pp. 311-325.

<sup>15</sup> Resident – an intelligence officer managing the residency abroad, usually under cover as a diplomatic employee of an embassy or a consulate.

<sup>16</sup> Instruction for the resident of the 7th Department of the MBP in Paris, concerning the relationship between Stanisław Mikołajczyk and Zygmunt Zaremba and the stay of the chairman of the PSL in France, July 1948, [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, p. 108; "Excerpt from the instructions for a resident of 7th Department of the MBP in London pseud.

other hand, the approved tasks of the 1st Section of the 4th Division of Department 7 of the MBP of January 1949 in association with activity of S. Mikołajczyk in the USA included searching for information about his contacts, meetings, but also appraisal of his activity by the Department State of the USA and the status of financial support provided by Americans for Mikołajczyk, and gathering of information about the PSL organisation in the USA<sup>17</sup>.

According to the IPN employees, from 1949 until years 1954/1955, the intelligence focused mainly on collecting information. The security services were only in the process of establishment of their agent network, which initially had limited ability of obtaining valuable information. Activity was thus undertaken ad hoc, sometimes even incidentally<sup>18</sup>.

At the end of year 1953, the intelligence started to plan and conduct activity to sabotage the works of the Polish political emigration. The planned agency-operational tasks against the PSL in exile were aimed at:

establishing communication with the leading centre abroad by creating relationships with the agent network under the pretext of existence of former PSL activists, who required assistance from the foreign unit. Identifying and recruiting candidates to cooperate with the agent network to prevent unification of the PNKD with the Political Council... Inspiration should be strengthened by broadening of correspondence with family and friends (through recruitment) and exerting influence on emigration activists through this correspondence<sup>19</sup>.

However, in 1954, the network of agents of the PRL intelligence was too weak, which proves that a very significant conflict within the NKW of the PSL in 1954 was only watched passively by the services, which at the time were unable to influence the course of events<sup>20</sup>.

Gradually, they moved from the position of observers and commenced activity aimed at disintegration of the political emigration. Since then, the plans of operating activity against the PSL in exile included mainly disgrac-

---

‘Albin’ on observing the activities of Stanisław Mikołajczyk in London, 20 August 1948, Warsaw,” [in Polish] in: *ibidem*, pp. 111-112.

<sup>17</sup> “Tasks of Section 1 of 4th Department of Department 7 of the MBP related to the activities of Stanisław Mikołajczyk in the United States, January 1949, Warsaw,” [in Polish] in: *ibidem*, p. 188.

<sup>18</sup> W. BAGIEŃSKI, F. DĄBROWSKI, *Wstęp...*, p. XXIV.

<sup>19</sup> “Information from Department 2 of Department 5 of the MBP regarding folk activists in exile and action plans against them, 4 December 1953, Warsaw,” [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, p. 280.

<sup>20</sup> W. BAGIEŃSKI, F. DĄBROWSKI, *Wstęp...*, p. XXIV.



ing Mikołajczyk and other PSL leaders, disintegrating and putting an end to activity of this political group<sup>21</sup>.

In 1954, a case with code name "Drones" was registered, which was later divided into themes, including: "Drones A" and, subsequently, B, F, H, N, Sc, Sz, W. The code names probably referred to individual countries, in which peasant activists were being uncovered: A – the United States, F – France, B – Belgium, H – the Netherlands, N – Germany, Sz – Switzerland, W – Great Britain, etc. Only after the conflict in the NKW of the PSL in 1954, broader opportunities for the PRL intelligence emerged. The secret services started to establish broader relations with peasant activists conflicted with Mikołajczyk, who were dissatisfied with his activity.

It is known that the intelligence services of the PRL conducted about a dozen agency investigations on the peasant activists abroad and their families and friends in Poland. The following persons were investigated: Stanisław Mikołajczyk – case code names "Mik" and "Bartek"; Stanisław Kot (the leading politician of the PSL in Europe) – "The Dangerous"; Stefan Korboński (member of the NKW of the PSL, later the Political Council, vice-president and president of the Assembly of Captive European Nations, ACEN) – "Channel"; Stanisław Wójcik (member of the NKW of the PSL) – "Rabbits"; Władysław Zaremba (member of the NKW of the PSL) – "Traitors"; Franciszek Wilk (president of the PSL in Great Britain, editor and publisher of "Jutro Polski" in London) – "Forest"; Józef Mróz (peasant activist in West Germany and later in the USA) – "Fir Tree"; Tadeusz Chciuk-Celt (member of the ZG of the PSL in France, editor of "Biuletyn Informacyjny Polskiego Stronnictwa Ludowego we Francji", since 1953, editor at the Polish Broadcasting Station of the Radio Free Europe in Munich) – "Emigrant"; Waław Soroka (secretary of the ZG of the PSL in France, since 1954 – a peasant activist in the USA) – "Chameleon"; Jan Parafiniak (member of the ZG of the PSL in France, since 1950 an opponent of Mikołajczyk) – "Rabble-Rousers"; Stanisław Bańczyk (vice president of the PSL, excluded from the organisation in 1955) – "Pansies"; Tadeusz Paul (member of the NKW of the PSL) – "Meadow"<sup>22</sup>.

---

<sup>21</sup> For example: "Plan of operational activities of Section 2 of Department 2 of Department 3 of the Committee for State Security against activists of the PSL in exile and people in the country, March 16, 1956, Warsaw," [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, p. 394; "Plan to end the agent and group case crypt. 'Virus' after the return of agent 'M' from Great Britain, Warsaw August 29, 1960," [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. III, p. 411.

<sup>22</sup> W. BAGIEŃSKI, F. DĄBROWSKI, *Wstęp...*, pp. XXV-XXVII.

When in 1955 the PRL authorities decided to conduct the second repatriation action, the intelligence services had to take this fact into account and include persuading emigrants to return to Poland in their plans. These objectives were to be achieved using the following measures:

- writing letters abroad by families, groups, persons to persuade the peasant activists to return to Poland;
- selection of family members and former close co-workers of emigration activists, who could be sent abroad with artistic groups, sports people, scientists, and who could be used to persuade them to return to the country;
- gathering of compromising materials to be used to discredit the peasant activists in the eyes of the general public in the country and abroad;
- development of the network of agents and conducting of investigations involving other peasant activists<sup>23</sup>.

On the other hand, to achieve its main objective – disintegration of activity of the PSL in exile – the PRL intelligence used the following methods:

- disinformation aimed at the PSL members, achieved through activists from Poland collaborating with the secret services;
- exacerbating of personal conflicts between the PSL members through dissemination of false information, delivered by post or orally by peasant activists cooperating with the services;
- exacerbating of conflicts between the PSL and other Polish organisations abroad by disseminating false information;
- supporting of various groups of peasant activists, critical towards Mikołajczyk, in their activity against him – for instance, by supporting their press publications (bulletins);
- organising of a competitive organisation to associate peasant activists formerly removed from the PSL of Mikołajczyk or displaying negative attitudes towards him;
- disintegration of activity of the PSL local clubs by exacerbating conflicts between individual activists, between the local clubs and other structures of the PSL, particularly the authorities;
- hindering of work of the national and district authorities and local clubs of the PSL through activity of agents and collaborators – members of these authorities;

---

<sup>23</sup> See: operational plans of the secret service against the PSL in exile from years 1955-1958 published in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, pp. 394-397, 453-457, 716.

– hindering of work of domestic and district authorities and local PSL structures through activity of agents and collaborators being members of these authorities and structures;

– crippling of reconciliatory efforts of peasant activists by suggesting that such actions were not supported by the local clubs or by activists in Poland<sup>24</sup>.

For instance, the plan of operational tasks of the 1st Department of the MSW against the PSL activists in exile for year 1959 included recruiting the following activists in France: Stanisław Pluta – secretary of District 1, Jan Kochman – member of the ZG of the PSL in France, Michał Celler – pseudonym “Cedro” member of the ZG of the PSL in France and deputy chairman of District 8, Marian Pompa – former activists of the PSL in France, still viewed as an authority by the Polish community in France, Antoni Prause – chairman of District 2 of the PSL, Henryk Wroński – intelligentsia representative, persuaded to work for the PSL by Mikołajczyk, as well as Władysław Krawczyk, the former deputy chairman of the PSL in France, Kazimierz Grabowski – member of District 10 of the PSL in France. The plans were based on dislike of these peasant activists for Mikołajczyk, or at least conflicts of opinions and, in many cases, on financial issues – taking advantage of very difficult living conditions of peasant activists<sup>25</sup>.

The operational plan for agent known as “Rolland” – Henryk Dzendzel<sup>26</sup> – assumed that during his meetings with peasant activists in exile, he should in the first place obtain information on activity of the Peasants International<sup>27</sup>, travels of Tadeusz Paul (the general secretary of the PSL) and Stanisław Mikołajczyk around Europe, activity of Franciszek Wilk, as well as national congresses of the PSL held in this period in France, Great Britain and other countries. The second field of “Rolland’s” activity was collecting of information on organisation of contacts between the PSL activists in exile with those in Poland. In this regard, the intelligence services wanted to use “Rol-

---

<sup>24</sup> See: operational plans of the secret service against the PSL in exile form years 1955-1958 published in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, pp. 394-397, 716, 864-868, 887-893, and vol. III, pp. 5-7, 85, 101-102, and other.

<sup>25</sup> “Plan of operational activities of Department I of the Ministry of Interior for PSL activists in exile for 1959, December 9, 1958, Warsaw,” [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, pp. 861-863.

<sup>26</sup> Henryk Dzendzel (1895-1973), a peasant activist, a journalist, after the Second World War a member of peasant parties which collaborated with communists; a member of the State National Council and the Legislative Sejm; in 1953, recruited by the secret services of the PRL, used for surveillance of the peasant party in the country and abroad.

<sup>27</sup> Peasants International was the term used to refer to the International Peasants Union, which was an organisation of agrarian parties in exile.

land” to take over control of exchange of information between Zygmunt Augustyński<sup>28</sup> and professor Stanisław Kot. Augustyński was supposed to ask Dzendzel to give professor Kot some materials. Dzendzel would consent and take the opportunity to inform Kot of the threat of information being intercepted and agents being sent by the PRL intelligence services, thus winning the professor's trust. “Rolland” was to suggest, speaking for Augustyński and for himself, that emigrants should contact them before sending any information or materials. The action was aimed at gaining control of contacts between emigration and the country, by persuading emigrants to contact those peasant activists in Poland, who were already supervised by the intelligence services and surrounded by a network of agents<sup>29</sup>.

The intelligence services also instructed Dzendzel about the views to be presented by him in his contacts with emigrants. He was supposed to present himself as a supporter of the revival process and of Władysław Gomułka. He was to justify his stance by referring to the need to maintain stabilisation in the country. As for existence for the peasant party in exile, he was supposed to present the view that it was needed mostly for the purpose of cooperation between peasant activists in Poland and those abroad, and that activity of emigrants should follow the expectations of activists in Poland. In this way, he was supposed to persuade emigrants that they were not expected to engage in the independence movement, but to help the country and support the concept of financial and economic aid for its development. As for international politics, “Rolland” was instructed to present views similar to those of the emigrants, that is, supportive of the West<sup>30</sup>.

In the mid-1950s, the intelligence services were of opinion that activity of the PSL centres in exile focused on:

1. Winning of trust of former members of the PSL by individual emigrant groups, keeping in touch with these people, informing them of activity of the PSL and obtaining from them information on the situation in the country. These persons are supposed to be loyal, ready to engage actively in political activity whenever necessary. [...]
2. Recruiting of new members, not disgraced by activi-

---

<sup>28</sup> Zygmunt Augustyński (1890-1959) a journalist, a peasant activist, editor-in-chief of “Gazeta Ludowa”, which was an organ of the PSL, arrested and sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment in a show trial, released in 1955 because of his deteriorating health.

<sup>29</sup> “Plan of tasks provided for the agent ps. ‘Rolland’ in connection with his trip to France and probable contact with activists of the PSL in exile, 30 August 1958, Warsaw,” [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, pp. 709-713.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 711-712.

ty of the PSL, and thus not discredited, to work on behalf of the PSL centres. [...] 3. Coming to Poland in the course of repatriation and for temporary stays of members of the PSL in exile in order to infiltrate the ZSL and conduct hostile activity, aimed at strengthening the right-wing elements in the ZSL, as well as various groups outside the ZSL. 4. Organising of political actions, such as the project of publication of Witos's memoirs, sending anti-communist books to Poland, influencing works of Polish historians (Kot), and finally acquiring correspondents in Poland, whose articles would be published by the press in exile. 5. Organising of espionage in the country, in which Korboński's group seems to be particularly interested....<sup>31</sup>.

These assumptions were mostly wrong. The PRL intelligence services definitely overrated the abilities of the PSL in exile. The emigrant peasant activists were unable to build a net of their collaborators in Poland.

After a sufficient agent network was established, in the light of intensified conflicts inside the PSL (partially inspired and caused by the intelligence agents, and sometimes only exacerbated by them), in 1959, the PRL intelligence services decided to organise a new leftist peasant-worker party in exile<sup>32</sup>. In fact, the secret services took advantage of the situation in the PSL. After the split of year 1955, when the group of Bańczyk-Zaremba left the PSL, a group of those critical towards activity of S. Mikołajczyk started to emerge. They were thrown out of the PSL, which nevertheless did not put a stop to their activity. The group started to gather around the newspaper "Nasz Znak" ["Our Sign"], edited and published by Waldemar Sobczyk in Sweden. It included, among others, Bolesław Sirko (PSL in England), Waldemar Sobczyk (PSL in Sweden), Jan Kukiela (PSL in Belgium), Antoni Dudek (PSL, member of the Chief Council), Stefan Puchała (PSL in France). They considered establishment of a new party; however, they did not have the funds for it. This is where the secret services of the PRL came in, offering them financing and taking over control of establishment of the new organisation. Some of the listed peasant activists, including Kukiela and Sobczyk, were already agents of the secret service of PRL; however, it is difficult to determine now whether the concept of the new organisation was made

---

<sup>31</sup> "Framework work plan of the Group 3 of Department 2 of Department 3 of Ministry of the Interior concerning actions directed against the emigre PSL and contacts of its activists with people in the country, 27 September 1958, Warsaw," [in Polish] in: *ibidem*, pp. 715-716.

<sup>32</sup> "Plan of Department 5 of Department 1 of the Ministry of the Interior regarding the organization of the 'people's left' party in exile, January 13, 1959, Warsaw," [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. III, pp. 3-7.

up entirely by the secret services or perhaps its originators were the “rejected” peasant activists, and the intelligence decided to take advantage of them.

Planning the new organisation, the secret services decided that:

it is to retain its emigration status, it is not to usurp the right to represent the nation, it is to present the stance that the representative of the nation with regard to the internal and foreign state policy would be the domestic authorities (that is, the Warsaw regime), it is to retain its separate ideological character and independence from the country, constituting a ‘constructive’ opposition against the Polish authorities, at the same time sharing a number of interests with the country, such as: a) a struggle against German revisionism and militarism, b) defence of the borders on Oder and Neisse rivers, c) supporting and promoting the Polish foreign policy, d) promotion of achievements of the Polish nation and spreading of Polish culture among emigrants, e) cooperation with social, cultural, charity organisations.

The organisation was also supposed to undermine the existence of authorities of the Republic of Poland in exile and expose their anti-national politics<sup>33</sup>.

The new party was to be established, among others, by Stefan Puchała – agent known as “Tracz”, and it was supposed to receive support from “Nasz Znak”, published in Sweden by Waldemar Sobczyk, who at the time was already an agent using the pseudonym “Tur”<sup>34</sup>. The new organisation was to start with a bulletin, publishing texts that would be against Mikołajczyk, to be edited and published by Puchała, who was supposed to be getting 300 NF per issue.

As for organisation of the new group, which was supposed to lead to a split within the PSL, Puchała informed that the PSL was rather willing to support Mikołajczyk. The groups aiming for a split were weakened by statements and articles, e.g. in “Nasz Znak”, showing too much support for the policy of Poland. In his opinion, in order to gain popularity, the new group had to not only attack Mikołajczyk, but also show a clearly negative attitude towards the USSR and the communists<sup>35</sup>.

---

<sup>33</sup> Ibidem, p. 5.

<sup>34</sup> Quite a lot on sabotage in the peasant movement using Waldemar Sobczyk and his newspaper “Nasz Znak” has been written by Krzysztof Tarka. See K. TARKA, *Jest tylko jedna Polska?*..., pp. 315-395.

<sup>35</sup> “Copy of the report of the employee of the Department 1 of Interior Ministry residency in Paris pseudonym ‘Max’ from the meeting with the agent ps. ‘Tracz’ on September 4, 1960, [Warsaw] on September 4, 1960,” [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach*..., vol. III, pp. 431-432.

Another peasant activist, whom the secret services managed to recruit as their collaborator, was Marian Pompa, pseudonym "Czarski", one of the organisers of the PSL in France, who was excluded from the party quite quickly – already in year 1948. Data contained in the materials of the Polish intelligence services suggests that Pompa collaborated with them in years 1959-1969, after which contacts were discontinued by the services. The reason behind this decision was the fact that the French police discovered that Pompa had contacted employees of the Polish diplomatic post, and in March 1962, the residents in France were ordered to sever relations with him. According to reports, "Czarski" provided a lot of information on activity of the PSL; at the same time, it was indicated that he could not be useful as an agent as he had left the PSL much earlier<sup>36</sup>. In July of 1959, it was assessed that while "Czarski" proved his loyalty towards the PRL, he provided too little information, which was also too general. In order to force (encourage) him to cooperate more efficiently, the intelligence services took advantage of his difficult situation (loss of job, lack of apartment). A plan was made to check whether Pompa has any authority among the peasant activists in France, and – if he did – persuade him to prepare brochures and materials that would discredit the key PSL politicians, particularly Stanisław Mikołajczyk<sup>37</sup>.

On the basis of reports prepared by residents<sup>38</sup> contacting "Czarski", it is possible to conclude that in his letters and conversations, Pompa mainly spoke and wrote about Stanisław Kot, whom he considered to be the political leader of the PSL in Europe. He accused Kot of cynicism and political ruthlessness. Among other things, he declared that Kot had denounced to the French police the secretary of the ZG of the PSL in France Jan Parafiniak, accusing him of collaboration with communists. As a result, Parafiniak was arrested. Pompa also informed residents that Kot and Mikołajczyk had deliv-

---

<sup>36</sup> *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. II, footnote 5, 862; "Report of an employee of the Department of Interior Ministry residency in Paris pseudonym 'Rybak' and resident pseud. 'Jar' regarding a meeting with an agent ps. 'Czarski', [Warsaw] September 26, 1960," [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. III, pp. 489-490.

<sup>37</sup> "Note of a senior operational officer of Department 5 of Department 1 of the Ministry of Interior, Capt. Jan Wawrow regarding the former PSL activist in France Marian Pompa 'Czarski' and the possibilities of using it by the intelligence of the Ministry of Interior, July 10, 1959, Warsaw" [in Polish] in: *ibidem*, pp. 47-48; "Copy of the report of the employee of the Department of Interior Ministry residency in Paris pseudonym 'Grabowski' from the meeting with Marian Pompa on August 19, 1959, August 20, 1959, Paris," [in Polish] in: *ibidem*, pp. 50-51.

<sup>38</sup> These residents were: Mieczysław Antoni Wojciechowski pseudonym "Grabowiec" and Zdzisław Pachowski pseudonym "Jar". See *ibidem*.

ered messages through people leaving for Poland and friends coming to the West, concerning activity of the PSL<sup>39</sup>.

In 1959, the intelligence services received information of Mikołajczyk's intent to withdraw as a chairman of the PSL due to health reasons (or willingness of other peasant activists to push him out), which exerted impact on the plans of disintegration of the PSL. The intelligence identified several candidates, who could take over leadership after Mikołajczyk – these included Stanisław Kot, Franciszek Wilk, Tadeusz Paul, Adam Bitoński – the deputy chairman of the PSL in France – and it was assumed that the most significant among these would be Wilk and Paul. They were to become rivals to Adam Bitoński – “Beatrice”, who was the most important agent of Polish secret services in the fight not only with the PSL in France, but was probably the most important agent of Polish secret services in Western Europe. Bitoński fought not only the PSL but also other Polish organizations in exile, including émigré intelligence cells (more on this in the text)<sup>40</sup>. Nevertheless, it was assessed realistically that he would not gain an advantage throughout the entire PSL – therefore, the real objective of the action was to make sure Bitoński would take use the election of the new chairman of the PSL to break away some of the structures of the party in France, Belgium and the Netherlands – where he enjoyed a quite strong support of the local members<sup>41</sup>.

---

<sup>39</sup> “Note of an employee of the Department 1 Ministry of Interior residency in Paris ‘Rybak’ and resident pseud. ‘Jar’ regarding a meeting with an agent ps. ‘Czarski’ on July 21, 1960” [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. III, pp. 389-391.

<sup>40</sup> Before World War II, Adam Bitoński was an officer of Polish intelligence and counterintelligence, he fought in the defensive war in 1939, and after the defeat of Poland, he made his way to France. He fought in the Polish army in France in 1940, was captured, but was quickly released wounded. In France, he joined the Polish resistance movement. During the war, he met many members of the Polish Armed Forces, Poles in the resistance movement in France, and French resistance fighters. It was then that he developed good contacts with many later French politicians (including Paul Antier, Robert Bichet, Georges Bidault, General Pierre Bilotte, Leo Hamon, Jacques Mallet). He received many Polish and French decorations for his activity during the war. After the war, he joined the PSL, according to General Władysław Pożog, he did so on the orders of the secret services of the Polish People's Republic. Due to his numerous contacts, he was a very valuable asset for the Polish secret services. For the same reason, he was appreciated by Stanisław Mikołajczyk, for whom he organized many meetings. In the PSL in France, he quickly became one of the main animators of the party's activities. In the end, he became vice-president of the PSL Main Board in France and a serious candidate for party presidency. For more on Bitoński see: J. GMITRUK, *Rola Adama Bitońskiego w Polskim Stronnictwie Ludowym na Uchodźstwie (1948-1963)*, [in:] *Chłopskie partie polityczne z Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej na emigracji 1945-1989*, ed. A. Indraszczyk, Warszawa 2009, pp. 149-177; W. BAGIEŃSKI, *Wywiad cywilny Polski...*, pp. 328-330.

<sup>41</sup> According to the report on the action “Virus”, such information was based on investigations of contacts of authorities of the PSL abroad with activists in Poland, through former PSL



In association with the resolutions made, multi-level operational plans were prepared, in which tasks were defined to be completed in individual PSL districts in France. Thus, in District 1 of the PSL in France, as some of the local club chairmen were "rather loyal" towards the PRL, it was decided they would receive a "brochure underlining that Mikołajczyk's activity had nothing to do with the interests of Poland. Reminding of his stance towards the loan for Poland<sup>42</sup> and serving foreign interests".

In District 2, the plan was to disseminate an extract from Stanisław Wójcik's report from year 1955 on management of the PSL funds and to "underline how Mikołajczyk had secured himself financially (houses, farms, cars). There was absolutely no assistance for those in real need." Raising of these problems was due to the fact that during the last congress of the PSL in France in 1959, activists from this district spoke of the issue unofficially, laying the blame on Mikołajczyk.

The intelligence also intended to spread rumours that Janusz Borowczak, the president of "Wici"<sup>43</sup> „intentionally took away the camping equipment, because he wanted to organise a summer camp near Paris to have his lovers nearby". At the same time, there was a plan to disseminate gossip on Borowczak's supposed behaviour being similar to that of Mikołajczyk to suggest that Mikołajczyk behaved immorally.

In District 4, there was a conflict between the chairman, Andrychowski, and the ZG secretary – Urbaniak – due to the fact that the latter received some subsidies; it was supposed to be exacerbated. The plan was to take advantage of jealousy of the funds received.

In District 5, the intelligence services wanted to pursue the conflict between the chairman, Kulpiński, and the chairman of the local club in Le Creusot, Dakowski, despite the fact that the former had meanwhile died. To achieve this purpose, a letter to Dakowski was forged, containing accusations of Dakowski insulting the memory of the deceased etc.

---

members leaving to the West, who cooperated with the secret services. See "Plan drawn up by the Deputy Director of Department 3 of the Ministry of Interior, Colonel Stanisław Filipiak and head of Department 2 of Department 3 of the Ministry of Interior Major Adam Malik regarding the termination of the crypt. 'Virus', Warsaw October 20, 1960," [in Polish] in: *ibidem*, pp. 494-496.

<sup>42</sup> Stanisław Mikołajczyk did, in fact, oppose the concept of loans to be granted by Western countries to Poland, believing that in this way, states of the West helped in preserving the communist regime, which was economically dysfunctional.

<sup>43</sup> "Wici" was the popular name of the Rural Youth Union, which came from the name of the newspaper issued by this organisation before year 1939.

Agent “Beatrice” was assigned the task of increasing the number of field visits and making small donations to build his organisational and political background. Bitoński was also supposed to make bolder accusations against Mikołajczyk<sup>44</sup>.

Using a forged defamatory letter against Mikołajczyk, the agents were supposed to make the chairman of the PSL and his collaborators disliked among the members. Stanisław Pluta – agent „Jesion” – was supposed to act discreetly, while Władysław Krawczyk and Marian Pompa, who had previously confronted Mikołajczyk and had been removed from the PSL, were to do it officially<sup>45</sup>.

After completing these tasks, Adam Bitoński was supposed to start acting openly. He was instructed to organise several field conferences, during which Mikołajczyk’s opponents were to declare themselves to be the authorities of the PSL. Initially, Bitoński was supposed to use the “Wiarus” periodical, and then – to start publishing his own bulletin. The platform of the ideological organisation of Bitoński was described in the reports as follows: “it should not, at least initially, be defined too clearly. It should be clearly against Mikołajczyk. The aim is to cause withdrawal from activity of the best-known supporters of Mikołajczyk and Kot. Attitude towards the PRL – for now, outlined only in general. Do not identify the country and the government. In some clubs (as decided upon by ‘Beatrice’), this issue should not be brought up as a major one. The pro-PRL platform should be underlined with gradually increasing intensity, as the split-up movement develops and strengthens”<sup>46</sup>.

Before the new PSL was created, activists in France became suspicious of their deputy chairman, Adam Bitoński. They started to suspect that he was the man behind numerous forged letters and false information concerning the PSL chairman, Kulpiński, and the secretary – Urbaniak. On 3 September 1960, the ZG of the PSL appointed a special commission to investigate on the case. The commission decided Bitoński was guilty of acting to the detriment of the PSL. The findings of this commission served as a basis for exclusion of Bitoński from the PSL by the NKW PSL on 29 October 1960<sup>47</sup>. Bitoński’s

---

<sup>44</sup> “Plan prepared by Department 5 of Department 1 of the Ministry of the Interior regarding actions against the PSL in exile, Warsaw, September 8, 1960,” [in Polish] in: *Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach...*, vol. III, p. 448.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 449.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 449-450.

<sup>47</sup> Circular of the PSL in France, Paris, November 1960 [in Polish], file case no. 6617, Museum of the Polish People’s Movement (Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego – MHPRL)

position was much weakened, although several clubs in France refused to believe in his guilt.

Organisation of the new PSL was finalised in the autumn of 1961. On the 18th and 19th of November of this year, the so-called reconciliation meeting was held in Brussels, during which the new PSL authorities were elected. Zbigniew Zaremba was elected the chairman of the NKW, while Stanisław Wójcik became the head secretary. Adam Bitoński became the chairman of the European Council, and Jan Kukiela – the secretary of the Council, while Waldemar Sobczyk was appointed its representative in Sweden. The new group declared condemnation of the activity of S. Mikołajczyk, peaceful co-existence of the two political blocs, general disarmament, neutralisation of the most conflict-prone regions, including Central and Eastern Europe. There was a postulate of reorganising the UN into a single global bloc. Unification of Germany was approved, under the condition of elimination of the threat of a new German aggression, which was to be achieved through demilitarisation and neutralisation under global supervision. A claim was made for recognition of the borders of Germany with Poland and Czechoslovakia. The declaration opted for strict cooperation between Poland and the USSR and emigration from the USSR, arguing it was necessary to counteract and safeguard Poland against German revisionism<sup>48</sup>.

Activity of the new PSL started to diminish quite quickly. According to Waldemar Sobczyk, this was associated with the fact that Adam Bitoński was arrested by the French in January of 1963 and accused of spying for the PRL intelligence<sup>49</sup>. Sobczyk could have been right, as then did it turn out clearly that Bitoński was an agent of the Warsaw regime, of which he had been suspected, while there had been no evidence of this fact. Inevitably, the same accusations were made against other members of the new PSL, which must have hindered exerting influence on peasant activists in France, as well as in other parts of Europe. The “new PSL” was not helped, either, by the fact that Stanisław Bańczyk and Waław Soroka – already searching for opportunities to return to Mikołajczyk’s PSL – dissociated themselves categorically from the organisation. Stefan Korboński also considered such return. These attitudes could influence other peasant activists, who were conflicted

---

in Warsaw; Letter of Tadeusz Paul to the Executive Board of the PSL in Le Creusot, New York, 21 June 1961 [in Polish], file case no. 14692/1-2, *ibidem*.

<sup>48</sup> K. TARKA, *Jest tylko jedna Polska?*..., pp. 53-354; “Deklaracja zjednoczeniowa członków Polskiego Stronnictwa Ludowego znajdujących się na emigracji,” (Union declaration of members of the Polish People’s Party in exile) (in Polish) “Nasz Znak” 1961, no. 11/12 (114/115), pp. 7-13.

<sup>49</sup> K. TARKA, *Jest tylko jedna Polska?*..., p. 369.

with Mikołajczyk, and seeing the aversion of these leaders in exile to the “new PSL”, were also reluctant to join it.

#### 4. DEFENCE OF THE PSL IN FRANCE AGAINST SURVEILLANCE AND ACTIVITY OF SECRET SERVICES OF THE PRL.

It was very difficult – almost impossible – to counteract surveillance by the PRL intelligence services. The PSL in exile had no agents in the PRL services or authorities, so they knew nothing about their plans, or the lists of agents recruited. They found out about the latter only when they were able to identify them or were warned against them. Attempts were also made to dissociate from any positive opinions of the Polish authorities.

Such was the case of Waldemar Sobczyk and “Nasz Znak”. After the initial period of praise, it was quickly noticed that the newspaper was too favourable for the Polish authorities. As early as in 1956, the Chief Council of the PSL issued a resolution prohibiting cooperation between the PSL members and the paper<sup>50</sup>. It was not known at the time that Sobczyk was an agent of the PRL services, but he was suspected of either collaborating or at least supporting the People's Poland on the basis of the content published.

Leon Urbaniak, the secretary of the ZG PSL in France, wrote in a circular of November of 1960 that for three years (that is, since around year 1957/1958), the ZG had been receiving information from various countries that

communist messengers, either from consulates or sent directly from Warsaw, made attempt to sabotage the activity of the PSL. More than anything, they attacked Chairman Mikołajczyk, underlining the need to remove him. As for the PSL itself, they expressed the opinion that it could exist and be useful, if it limited itself to matters it considered to be needed (consistent) with the activity of the Warsaw authorities. These included defending of the Western border, preserving of Polish language and schools, trips and visits to the country etc.<sup>51</sup>

This information proves that the PSL authorities in France received information about the threat posed by secret and official services of the PSL.

---

<sup>50</sup> To the attention of members, Paris, 15 Feb. 1956 [in Polish], 3, file case no. 6621, MHPRL.

<sup>51</sup> The Polish People's Party in France, Circular, Paris, Nov. 1960 [in Polish], 2, file case no. 6617, MHPRL.

In November 1960, a lot was known about activity of agents and their tasks. Urbaniak wrote about it as follows:

Everywhere, they promised generous financial assistance for activity of the PSL, provided it would be harmonised with the institutions in Warsaw. They searched for the PSL activists willing to collaborate with them and they virtually imposed themselves upon them with financial assistance... They encouraged members to establish local PSL organs or to restore the former ones, promising a generous coverage of costs... To those they trusted, they suggested activity known in the communist world as disinformation (spreading of false information, attacks on leaders, libels, anonymous letters<sup>52</sup>.

Based on analysis of libels, brochures etc., Urbaniak concluded these were written by persons having extensive knowledge of the PSL authorities in France, being close to them<sup>53</sup>.

In January 1961, the ZG of the PSL in France warned its members against "Nasz Znak". It informed that the letter had been publishing libels and false information on the PSL members and recommended not to receive this paper either from the post or from private persons. It was already known at the time that one of the regime's collaborators was Michał Celler of Onnaig<sup>54</sup>. He was excluded from the PSL for his collaboration with "Nasz Znak"<sup>55</sup>.

In January of 1961, Leon Urbaniak informed more extensively about the "second offensive of anonymous letters, which accompanied home visits." He warned others against Adam Bitoński and Stefan Puchała; he also informed that the French sources (without giving their names) reported that Bitoński was getting ready to establish a new PSL group. He also informed of false letters, signed by the International Peasants' Union<sup>56</sup>. In the course of his attempts to disintegrate the peasant activists, in January 1961, two months after he was excluded from the PSL by the NKW and two days after the decision was recognised by the ZG of the PSL in France, Adam Bitoński wrote a letter to members of the ZG PSL and the district chairmen of the PSL in France, in which he "clarified" the issues of "huge amounts of money that were received by the PSL in France and remained unsettled." Bitoński wrote that

---

<sup>52</sup> Ibidem, p. 2.

<sup>53</sup> Ibidem.

<sup>54</sup> The Polish People's Party in France, Circular, Paris, Nov. 1961 [in Polish], 4, file case no. 6620, MHPRL.

<sup>55</sup> To the attention of members, Paris, 15 Feb. 1961 [in Polish], 2, file case no. 6621, MHPRL.

<sup>56</sup> Ibidem, pp. 1-3.

Leon Urbaniak, the secretary of the ZG, had received the amount of 944,440 francs, which was not recorded in the accounting books that, nevertheless, contained many records of expenses that had never been incurred<sup>57</sup>.

In October 1961, the ZG of the PSL informed of a “message” that was disseminated in France, written by a person already excluded from the PSL (no name was given, but it was probably Adam Bitoński), informing of a conflict within the ZG between the chairman and the secretary. Therefore, the two activists explained in the circular it was not true and ensured readers of their harmonious collaboration<sup>58</sup>.

At the same time, new letters were sent to peasant activists in France, supposedly from their counterparts in England, Sweden, the Netherlands, Belgium, Paris and even Poland. These referred to Wiesztort and Urbaniak, as well as Mikołajczyk and other PSL members being “at loggerheads” because of the “dollars” that everyone wanted to get for themselves<sup>59</sup>. Leon Urbaniak explained in his letters that “messages from England, Sweden or Paris are edited by experts of the Warsaw Regime in collaboration with Bitoński”<sup>60</sup>.

“The real PSL members” – the split supporters – also informed the peasant activists outside France of the supposedly bad condition of the PSL in France. In 1961, Stefan Puchała wrote to Waław Soroka: “The last conflict between Mr. Bitoński and Mr. Mikołajczyk has had a significant effect. A number of prominent members are leaving Mr. Mikołajczyk, who has not had many supporters here anyway. In a word, all has turned into chaos and the peasant organisation, built with so much effort and commitment, is falling apart.” This was supposed to prove disintegration of the peasant party in France and diminishing support for Mikołajczyk. At the same time, Puchała asked Soroka about relations between peasant activists in the USA<sup>61</sup>. Soroka sent the same letter to the attention of Tadeusz Chciuk-Celt.

---

<sup>57</sup> Letter of Adam Bitoński to members of the ZG PSL and the district chairmen of the PSL in France, Paris, 17 Jan. 1961 [in Polish], file case no. 14739, MHPRL.

<sup>58</sup> The Polish People's Party in France, Circular, Paris, Oct. 1961 [in Polish], 2, file case no. 6627, MHPRL.

<sup>59</sup> The ZG was informed of this, among others, by Ludomir Dakowski, Letter of Ludomir Dakowski to the Executive Board of the PSL in France, Le Creusot, 13 Aug. 1961 [in Polish], file case no. AN-7679, MHPRL; Letter of Mieczysław Wiesztort to Leon Urbaniak, no place of publication, 2 Oct. 1961 [in Polish], file case no. 13350, ibidem.

<sup>60</sup> Letter of Leon Urbaniak to Ludomir Dakowski, Paris, 10 Oct. 1961 [in Polish], file case no. 14129, MHPRL.

<sup>61</sup> Letter of Waław Soroka to Tadeusz Chciuk-Celt, USA, 7 Feb. 1961 [in Polish], file case no. 12533, MHPRL. On the back is the letter of Stefan Puchała to Waław Soroka of 1 Feb. 1961.

In January 1962, the ZG of the PSL wrote:

We found out last year how communists, using their agents, decided to take over the PSL in France, reach the Executive Board, control it from the top, to lead the entire Party to serve the regime and Moscow. These plans have failed. The agents were exposed, reviled and thrown away. This was done not only by peasant activists in France – the same happened to agents in Belgium, the Netherlands, Sweden, England and the United States. The number of agents excluded shows the extent of communist sabotage activity<sup>62</sup>.

Authors of the circular assured their readers of great political experience of peasant activists in France and in Europe, of their internal strength and solidarity, protecting them against the communist sabotage<sup>63</sup>. Was it really the case, or was it only a way of casting spells on reality to show that the communist action failed to cause much evil as the PSL was able to expose it and neutralise the danger? Probably both. However, Bitoński's case shows that communist agents operating in the PSL in France were not seen through for a long time.

In June of 1962, the ZG of the PSL once again rectified false information on participation of the peasant activists in France in actions organised by A. Bitoński. This time, it was about the supposed participation of Ludomir Dakowski, Foryś and Laskowski in the organisational committee of the new party. All three activists denied this information. The same was done by Stanisław Bańczyk and Kazimierz Bagiński, who did not agree to participate in the new organisation established by the PRL intelligence, unlike Stanisław Wójcik and Władysław Zaremba. In a circular, the members were warned of false signatures under letters and messages and informed that those were typical methods used by agents – no names were provided so that the information could not be verified<sup>64</sup>.

The last information in circulars on actions of the communist regime against the PSL in France appeared in year 1963. Such information probably ceased to be published after the arrest of the leading intelligence agent – “Beatrice”, that is, Adam Bitoński – by the French. The Warsaw regime lost the central element of its agent network. This arrest could also discourage

---

<sup>62</sup> The Polish People's Party in France, Circular, Paris, Jan. 1962 [in Polish], 1, file case no. 6628, MHPRL.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 2.

<sup>64</sup> The Polish People's Party in France, Circular, Paris, June 1962 [in Polish], 1-2, file case no. 6629, MHPRL.

other agents and collaborators of secret services, who were no longer willing to operate to the detriment of the PSL, all the more so as attempts of the services to create an alternative peasant organisation, able to counteract the PSL in France, had failed.

Still with Adam Bitoński, it should be noted that he managed to deceive not only the peasantry, but also other emigrants and representatives of English and American intelligence. Bitoński was also used by the PRL intelligence to break up emigration intelligence centers led by brothers: Lieutenant Colonel Przemysław and Major Jan Kraczkiewicz. For not only communists sought to create an intelligence network among emigrants and in Western countries, but Western countries and emigrants carried out the same or similar intelligence activities against communist regimes<sup>65</sup>. Polish émigré intelligence centers were willing to cooperate with the interviews of Western countries, mainly with the Americans and the British. This was not surprising, because on the one hand, Polish emigrants needed financial support from the Anglo-Saxons, and on the other hand, also organizational support. Moreover, the Anglo-Saxons were allies in the fight against communism. The creation of intelligence centers by emigrants resulted from the willingness to conduct such activities, but also from the necessity to develop masses of soldiers and former partisans, ready and eager to serve the Polish cause. In turn, for the Anglo-Saxons, it was important to recruit people who knew the area, language and culture<sup>66</sup>. While the fact of cooperation of Polish emigrants with Anglo-Saxon interviews does not raise doubts, as W. Bagieński wrote, establishing their mutual ties, relations and subordination is an extremely difficult matter<sup>67</sup>.

The above-mentioned Kraczkiewicz brothers acted against this background. Jan, who lived in Belgium, was for some time an associate of the head of the "Planning Bureau", Col. Franciszek Demel, and when he left for Great Britain, he took over some of his assets and continued his espionage activity on his own. Przemysław, in turn, was at that time the chairman of the Main Board of the Home Army Circle in London. Against the Kraczkiewicz's, the Polish People's Intelligence conducted several cases by two units at the same time in the Department of the 7th Ministry of Public Security. The Emigration Department started a case codenamed "Bagno" / "Specialist",

---

<sup>65</sup> W. BAGIEŃSKI, *Wywiad cywilny Polski Ludowej w latach 1945-1990*, vol. II, Warszawa 2017, p. 128.

<sup>66</sup> Vide: J. ŻARYN, "Taniec na linie nad przepaścią". *Organizacja polska na wychodźstwie i jej łączność z krajem w latach 1945-1955*, Warszawa 2011, p. 98.

<sup>67</sup> W. BAGIEŃSKI, *Wywiad cywilny Polski...*, vol. II, p. 129.



and the Western European Department had separate cases for Przemysław's center – "Betrayers" (later "Spies"), and Jan's center – "Odszczepieńcy". The first real successes of the interview were thanks to Adam Bitoński, agent of "Beatrice". For when, in 1954, Przemysław was engaged by English intelligence to create a network on the continent, one of the first people he recruited was Bitoński. He was given the nickname "Rey" and the task of finding people to cooperate. Przemysław took Bitoński twice for talks to England with representatives of American and English intelligence. He also commissioned him to organize his own network capable of obtaining information from Poland. Bitoński, with the consent of the Department of the 7th Ministry of Public Security, recruited Jan Przedpełski from the PKO Branch in Paris and Maria Wisti-Szurek from the Paris station of the Polish Academy of Learning.

When the British terminated their cooperation with Jan Kraczkiewicz, taking him into retirement, which was caused by suspicions that the center was being investigated by the PRL intelligence, and after the liquidation of Przemysław's center, Bitoński remained undeveloped by English intelligence. In 1955, Jerzy Rabczewski came to Bitoński, introducing himself as the head of the Polish section of British intelligence for the city of Paris and offered him to continue cooperation. "Beatrice" would continue to gather information, search, recruit and run its own network of associates. He obtained permission for this from Department I. Since Bitoński's contacts with Rabczewski were good, Departments I and II prepared in July 1956 further detailed action plans for "Beatrice". With the consent of the KdsBP management, he was to recruit the indicated persons, and at the same time counterintelligence was to investigate Rabczewski. In July 1956, Bitoński was invited by the British for a few days' training to London. He was then ordered to look for new agents among emigrants leaving for a short stay to Poland, and among members of foreign delegations and people coming from Poland.

As W. Bagieński wrote, the activity of Adam Bitoński is not fully known due to large gaps in the source material. It is only known that due to suspicions of cooperation with the PRL intelligence, contacts with Bitoński were first interrupted by the French in mid-1960, and a few months later by the English. But, as we know, he was arrested only in early 1963<sup>68</sup>.

According to the findings quoted above, in fact, the only defence measure that the PSL in France had at its disposal against surveillance and disintegration attempts was quick exchange of information – unfortunately, it required

---

<sup>68</sup> Vide: *ibidem*, pp. 204-213.

letters and circulars, which were, in fact, time-consuming. It was, nevertheless, the only way that the peasant activists could share information and clarify whether anyone had really done or said anything that was mentioned in the letters. After identification and proving of detrimental activity, such members were removed from the PSL.

### CONCLUSIONS

The intelligence service of the PRL failed to lead to the termination of PSL's operations in France, but it was successfully sabotaged. The activity of the PRL intelligence service against the PSL in France stopped the organizational development of this party. Appearing slander and calumnies in correspondence and conversations, especially in the second half of the 1950s meant that the energy of PSL members in France was directed to clarifying these matters, which was difficult and time consuming. This resulted in a decrease in the level of trust among party members as well as the trust of other emigrants in the people's party and an increase in reluctance to engage in political activity.

PSL members in France were almost helpless in the face of PRL intelligence activities. In fact, it was only the French action – the arrest of Adam Bitoński and the trial of him as a spy of the PRL – that exposed the presence of agents and collaborators of the PRL intelligence in the ranks of PSL in France.

The PRL intelligence had the effect of hindering the activities of the PSL in France, and thus also of the actions of Stanisław Mikołajczyk and his political group.

After the Adam Bitoński scandal PSL in France lost its development initiative. The party itself continued to operate, but less and less, in principle its members were limited to supporting its life by engaging in social activities of local Polonia groups in France.

It should also be noted that the price paid for actions of the PRL intelligence and defence against surveillance was loss of the opportunities to visit Poland that emerged after relaxation of the PRL regime in the mid-1950s and commencement of the so-called second repatriation. Undoubtedly, many were willing to go – after all, they had left not only their homeland, but often also their families behind. Such visits, however, started to raise suspicions. They were, in fact, to be made to a country considered to be totalitarian, anti-democratic and ruled by a single party. The PSL members feared that

those making such visits to Poland could be targeted by the intelligence services and could be persuaded to collaborate, or they could become unaware objects of the intelligence game, through contacts with their families or peasant activists in the PRL, who had agreed to collaborate with the regime.

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BAGIEŃSKI W., DĄBROWSKI F., Wstęp, [in:] Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach, vol. II, Działalność w latach 1947-1958, Warszawa-Łódź: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu 2010.
- BAGIEŃSKI W., Wywiad cywilny Polski Ludowej w latach 1945-1961, vol. I and II, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu 2017.
- CENCKIEWICZ S., Geneza, działalność i udział rozgłośni „Kraj” w akcji reemigracyjnej (1955-1957). Przyczynek do studiów nad polityką PRL wobec emigracji i Polonii, „Niepodległość” 54 (2003/2004), no. 5, pp. 114-226.
- Deklaracja zjednoczeniowa członków Polskiego Stronnictwa Ludowego znajdujących się na emigracji, „Nasz Znak” 1961, no. 11/12 (114/115), pp. 7-13.
- GMITRUK J., Rola Adama Bitońskiego w Polskim Stronnictwie Ludowym na Uchodźstwie (1948-1963), [in:] Chłopskie partie polityczne z Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej na emigracji 1945-1989, ed. A. Indraszczyk, Warszawa: Muzeum Historii Polskiego Ruchu Ludowego 2009.
- INDRASZCZYK A., Listy otwarte ludowców z emigracji do Polski z lat 1990-2007, „Myśl Ludowa” 4 (2012), pp. 133-183.
- ŁUKASIEWICZ S., Wywiad cywilny PRL wobec polskiej emigracji na Zachodzie – przegląd struktur i kierunków działania do początku lat sześćdziesiątych, [in:] Tajny oręż czy ofiary zimnej wojny? Emigracje polityczne z Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej, ed. S. Łukasiewicz, Lublin-Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu 2010.
- PIOTROWSKI J., Polskie władze naczelne na wychodźstwie w latach 1945-1990, [in:] Rządy bez ziemi. Struktury władzy na uchodźstwie, ed. R.P. Żurawski vel Grajewski, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo DiG 2014.
- PLESKOT P., The Polish Intelligence Service and the Polish Diaspora after the Imposition of Martial Law in Poland, [in:] East Central Europe in Exile, vol. II, Transatlantic Identities, ed. A. Mazurkiewicz, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2013, pp. 311-325.
- Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach aparatu bezpieczeństwa, vol. II, Działalność w latach 1947-1958, wybór dokumentów W. Bagieński, F. Dąbrowski, F. Gryciuk, oprac. W. Bagieński et al., Warszawa-Łódź: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu 2010.
- Stanisław Mikołajczyk w dokumentach aparatu bezpieczeństwa, vol. III, Działalność w latach 1959-1966, wybór dokumentów W. Bagieński, F. Dąbrowski, F. Gryciuk, oprac. W. Bagieński et al., Warszawa-Łódź: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu 2010.

Tajny oręż czy ofiary zimnej wojny? Emigracje polityczne z Europy Środkowej i Wschodniej, ed. S. Łukasiewicz, Lublin–Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu 2010.

TARKA K., Jest tylko jedna Polska? Emigranci w służbie PRL, Łomianki: Wydawnictwo LTW 2014.

ŻARYN J., „Taniec na linie nad przepaścią”. Organizacja polska na wychodźstwie i jej łączność z krajem w latach 1945-1955, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu 2011.

#### ACTIVITY OF SECURITY SERVICE OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF POLAND AGAINST THE POLISH PEASANT PARTY IN FRANCE IN YEARS 1948-1966

##### Summary

The article describes operations of the Poland security service against the Polish People's Party (PSL) in France. The Poland authorities considered the political emigration to be a serious opponent and did its best to discredit this group in the eyes of the Polish society and to disintegrate its activity. The tools utilised by the security service included surveillance, acquisition of informal collaborators, escalation of personal conflicts between emigrants, disinformation concerning the attitudes of Poles in the country, persuading the key politicians in exile to return to the country. The intelligence has had many successes, including the return of important emigrants to Poland, winning many over as agents, and causing internal conflicts among the political emigration.

**Keywords:** PRL intelligence; surveillance; Polish People's Party in exile; political emigration; security service

#### DZIAŁALNOŚĆ TAJNYCH SŁUŻB POLSKIEJ RZECZYPOSPOLITEJ LUDOWEJ PRZECIWKO POLSKIEMU STRONNICTWU LUDOWEMU WE FRANCJI W LATACH 1948-1966

##### Streszczenie

W artykule opisano operacje tajnych służb Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej przeciwko Polskiemu Stronnictwu Ludowemu we Francji. Władze Polski postrzegały emigrację polityczną za poważnego oponenta i podejmowały działania w celu zdyskredytowania emigrantów w oczach Polaków oraz dezintegrowania działalności emigrantów. Metodami, których używały tajne służby, były: inwigilacja, namawianie do formalnej i nieformalnej kolaboracji, eskalowanie konfliktów personalnych pomiędzy emigrantami, dezinformowanie o postawach Polaków w kraju, namawianie kluczowych polityków na wychodźstwie do powrotu do kraju. Wywiad PRL odniósł wiele sukcesów, wliczając w to powrót ważnych emigrantów do Polski, pozyskanie wielu agentów, eskalowanie wielu wewnętrznych konfliktów w polskiej emigracji.

**Słowa kluczowe:** wywiad PRL; inwigilacja; Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe na wychodźstwie; emigracja polityczna; tajne służby