

Przemysław Benken

# The Mysterious Death of Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz



Winner of the Sixth Edition  
of the Competition for the **Janusz Kurtyka Award**



PETER LANG

Przemysław Benken

## The Mysterious Death of Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz

Dr. Benken's book is a case study of the life and death of Jan Rodowicz, *nom-de-guerre* Anoda, who served as a combatant in the Polish pro-independence underground resistance movement during the Second World War. The operations in which Anoda was involved, his conduct during and after the War, especially in the investigation following his arrest by the Communist security service and the mystery shrouding his death while under interrogation, turned him into a symbol for the young people of Poland in those times. His generation was forced to fight for its freedom against two criminal totalitarian systems, the Nazi Germans and the Soviets, paying with their lives or health for the ideals they did not want to give up.

### The Author

Przemysław Benken is a Polish historian and political scientist affiliated with Poland's Institute of National Remembrance. Dr. Benken specializes in twentieth-century military history, focusing on the Second World War and the postwar period. He is the winner of the 2022 Janusz Kurtyka Award.



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## The Mysterious Death of Jan "Anoda" Rodowicz

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Przemysław Benken

# The Mysterious Death of Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz

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# Glossary of special terms and list of abbreviations

*Phrases in the text of this book marked with asterisks denote special terms explained in this glossary*

Page	Special term	
19, 25	AK, <i>Armia Krajowa</i> , the Home Army	The largest underground resistance movement operating in occupied Europe against the Nazi Germans during World War II. Formally established on February 14, 1942, it engaged in combat and other clandestine activities, with a secret membership estimated at up to 390 thousand.
25	The Polish People's Republic (also the People's Republic of Poland), <i>PRL</i> , <i>Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa</i>	Official name of the Polish state established in 1944 as a Soviet satellite (i.e. not fully sovereign and under the political dominance of the USSR) operating until 1989.
21, 25	Battalion Zośka and Battalion Parasol	The AK ↑ was divided into large operational units called battalions, further subdivided into companies and groups. The combatants serving in Battalions Zośka and Parasol were members of Polish scouting organizations, and took part in the fighting during the Warsaw Uprising↓.
20- 21, 25	MBP, <i>Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego</i> , the Ministry of Public Security	The chief government institution in Communist Poland conducting repressive measures against political opponents, created December 31, 1944, to continue Communist security operations which started as soon as the Red Army and its Polish subsidiaries arrived in German-occupied Poland in July 1944.
26	The Second Resistance Movement, <i>Druga Konspiracja</i>	Not all the Polish underground resistance forces laid down their arms when combat against Germany came to an end and World War II finished. Many continued to fight against the Soviet forces occupying Poland after 1944 and the Polish Communist authorities they set up. The last man still putting up armed resistance to the Communists in Poland was not rounded up and killed until 1963.

Page	Special term	
26	The Gray Ranks, <i>Szare Szeregi</i>	Codename for the combat units composed of Polish scouts and guides who engaged in anti-German combat during World War II
21, 35	The Polish national uprisings of 1830 and 1863	For 123 years after Poland lost its independence in the late 18th century and its territory was partitioned between Austria, Russia, and Prussia, on many occasions the Polish people rose up against the Partitioning Powers. The main insurrections were the November Uprising of 1830-1831, and the January Uprising of 1863-1864.
35	The Polish educational system under German occupation	One of the first measures Germany took on invading Poland in 1939 was to close down all the schools, colleges and universities in the country and send hundreds of university professors and high school teachers to concentration camps. Polish children could attend only a rudimentary form of elementary education, in line with Hitler's order to keep the people of Poland uneducated. To counter this policy, Polish educationalists set up a clandestine system of secret schools, covering the entire range of education and holding classes in private homes.
20, 25	The Warsaw Uprising of 1944	The anti-German uprising organized by the military and civilian authorities of the Polish Underground State operating in occupied Poland which broke out in Warsaw on August 1, 1944, and continued until early October 1944 (not to be confused with the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising which occurred in the spring of 1943). The 1944 Uprising was fought in left-bank Warsaw, while Red Army units sat idly by and "observed it from the east bank of the Vistula."
39	Polish Forces, <i>Wojsko Polskie</i>	In this book, "Polish Forces" means Polish military units organized and commanded by officers cooperating with the Red Army marching west and eventually capturing Berlin in May 1945.
39	Gen. Zygmunt Berling (1896–1980)	Polish officer and Communist politician, commander of the First Polish Army which fought on the Eastern Front in World War II under Soviet auspices and marched with the Red Army on Berlin.

25	The Radosław Group, <i>Zgrupowanie AK Radosław</i>	A group of combat and sabotage units including Battalions Zośka and Parasol, commanded by Col. Jan “Radosław” Mazurkiewicz, which made a major contribution to the combat during the Warsaw Uprising↑, incl. the liberation of Gęsiówka, a concentration camp the Germans set up in the City of Warsaw.
41	Gen. August “Nil” Fieldorf (1895–1953)	Polish military commander, c-in-c of KEDYW ↓ and in late November 1944 second-in-command of the AK ↑. Murdered by the Communists in 1953 after a show trial.
25, 41	KEDYW, <i>Kierownictwo Dywersji Komendy Głównej AK</i> , “Directorate of Diversion”	The AK↑ special unit for sabotage and propaganda activities
42	Gen. Władysław Anders (1892–1970)	Polish officer and politician in the Polish government-in-exile, commander of the Polish Army fighting on Western fronts during World War II, especially the Second Corps which he formed after the Soviets released him from the Lubyanka Prison following the Sikorski-Mayski agreement in 1941.
42	Stanisław Mikołajczyk (1901–1966)	Polish politician, leader of the PSL ↓. Prime Minister of the Polish government-in-exile↓, 1943. In 1945, following the Yalta Conference at which Poland was put in the Soviet sphere of influence, M. decided to return to Poland and stand as leader of the candidates in opposition to the Communists in the 1947 election↓ mandated by the Allied Powers. The Communists rigged the election and M., who was given a ministry in the new government, resigned in protest and left Poland, fearing persecution. The Communists launched a wave of massive repressions against members of the opposition, many of whom were imprisoned or murdered.
21, 43	“coming out, coming out into the open and declaring, the disclosure campaign” <i>ujawnianie się</i>	On August 2, 1945, the Communist authorities, which had been conducting repressive measures against AK↑ combatants, announced an “amnesty” for those who made a public disclosure that they had served in the AK. Col. “Radosław” Mazurkiewicz, commander of the Radosław ↑Group, appealed to his subordinates to “come out into the open” and declare their service in the AK.

44	Union of Freedom and Independence; WiN, <i>Zrzeszenie "Wolność i Niezawisłość"</i>	In the wake of the 1945 "coming out" campaign, ↑ some AK officers turned down the Communists' offer of an amnesty for those AK members who disclosed their allegiance and gave up armed opposition. The objectors established WiN, a new underground organization which continued resistance activities, incurring massive repressions (arrests and executions) from the Communist authorities, which effectively lasted until 1954.
44, 68	PSL, the Polish People's Party, <i>Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe</i>	A large Polish political party with a membership mostly of Polish peasant-farmers and focused on rural affairs. Its leader Stanisław Mikołajczyk ↑ decided to run for election to Sejm (the Polish parliament) in the 1947 General Election (mandated by the Allies)↓. However, the Communists rigged the election and a wave of mass repressions against PSL members and sympathizers followed. Many were killed.
48	The Communist Party of Western Ukraine	A Communist Party operating illegally in the eastern part of pre-war Poland
22, 50	The First (Kościuszko) Infantry Division, <i>1 Polska Dywizja Piechoty im. Tadeusza Kościuszki</i>	An infantry division which was part of the Polish Forces ↑ formed in the USSR in 1943 and commanded by General Zygmunt Berling ↑ under Soviet auspices
50	educational officer	A <i>politruk</i> , i.e. a political commissar in the Red Army and other Soviet and Communist forces, whose job was to provide appropriate political and ideological training for military personnel
51	ZPP, Union of Polish Patriots <i>Związek Patriotów Polskich</i>	A political organization of Polish Communists created in Moscow in 1943 under the auspices of Stalin and sent into Poland with the Red Army to take over power and form a Communist government
19, 42	The Polish government-in- exile	Poland put up resolute military resistance when it was invaded by Germany on September 1, 1939, followed on September 17 by a Soviet invasion of the country's eastern territories, but when resistance collapsed in early October, the Polish government left the country and operated in exile, first in France and later in Britain. It was recognized by most Allied and neutral countries until 1944 and the imposition of a Communist government on Poland.

52	PPR, the Polish Workers' Party <i>Polska Partia Robotnicza</i>	Official name of the Communist Party set up in 1942 and ruling Poland as of July 1944
53	PZPR, the Polish United Workers' Party, <i>Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza</i>	Official name of the Communist Party ruling the People's Republic of Poland, created following the forced amalgamation of the PPS ↓ and PPR ↑ in 1948. The PZPR ruled Poland in a one-party political system under the auspices of the USSR until 1989.
55	Wiesław Chrzczanowski (1923–2012)	Polish lawyer and politician; veteran of the Warsaw Uprising ↑; survived imprisonment and torture by the Communists; held prominent government and parliamentary offices after 1989
56	National Military Organization, NOW, <i>Narodowa Organizacja Wojskowa</i>	A secret anti-German combat organization set up by the Polish Nationalist Party in 1939, amalgamated with the AK ↑ in 1942
55	Zdzisław Sadowski (1925–2018)	Polish economist and ex-NSZ ↓ and AK ↑ combatant. Imprisoned by the Communists, 1945–1946, but later served as an adviser to the Communist government, as well as acting as a secret collaborator for the Communist security service.
71	NSZ, the National Armed Forces, <i>Narodowe Siły Zbrojne</i>	An anti-German secret combat organization set up in 1942 and operating until 1946 against the Communists, independently of the AK ↑
25, 32	Koszykowa	The name of the street in Central Warsaw housing a military courthouse where persons accused of “crimes against the State” were tried and many death sentences were handed down
58	The Tenth Pavilion in Mokotów, <i>X Pawilon na Mokotowie</i>	The prison on ulica Rakowiecka in Warsaw, used by the Communists in the Stalinist period for the confinement and torture of political prisoners. The building now houses a memorial museum.
21, 52	KBW, Internal Security Corps, <i>Korpus Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego</i>	Special military security unit subject to the authority of the MBP ↑ (1945–1954); originally its task was to “fight underground resistance forces” (i.e. Polish anti-Communist resistance units, as well as underground Ukrainian Nationalist units and German Werwolf sabotage units); later KBW engaged in repressive operations against individuals showing any signs of opposition to the Communist authorities.

28	Department Five, <i>Departament V MBP</i>	Division of the MBP↑ tasked with security operations to protect the PPR/PZPR↑ Communist Party and its subordinate institutions and organizations against “hostile activities.” Also conducted surveillance of social organizations and associations, especially young people’s movements, and operations against the Roman Catholic Church. The head of Department Five was Julia Brystiger.
76	GZI, Main Directorate of Information of the Polish Army, <i>Główny Zarząd Informacji</i>	A military police and security force established in 1944 by the Communist authorities in People’s Poland
60	<i>Powiat</i>	Name of the second-tier unit in the territorial administrative division of Poland
41, 60	Voivodeship (also voivodship)	Name of the first-tier unit in the territorial administrative division of Poland
20, 62	Operation Tempest, aka Operation Storm, <i>Akcja Burza</i>	Anti-German military operation undertaken by the AK ↑ in occupied Poland in 1944, shortly before the arrival of the Red Army in Polish territories under German occupation
62	Order of the Red Banner of Labor, <i>Orden Trudovogo Krasnogo Znameni</i>	Soviet civil decoration awarded for distinguished service to the Soviet Union, founded in 1920
67	ZWZ, <i>Związek Walki Zbrojnej</i> , Union of Armed Combat	A Polish wartime underground resistance force, created September 27, 1939, predecessor of the Home Army↑
21, 85	The parliamentary election of January 1947	At the Yalta Conference, the Western Allies (Britain and the USA) agreed to hand Poland over to the Soviet sphere of influence on condition of a free election being held. The Communists, who had been installed as the government of Poland as soon as the Red Army entered Polish soil (July 1944), made the arrangements for the election, which they rigged. See Stanisław Mikołajczyk ↑.
87	<i>Kamienie na szaniec</i>	A non-fiction novel by Aleksander Kamiński (and its film adaptation) about a group of combatants fighting in the Gray Ranks ↑; English edition: <i>Stones for the Rampart: The story of two lads in the Polish underground movement</i> (1944)
21, 38	Virtuti Militari Cross, Krzyż Virtuti Militari	The highest Polish military award for bravery

67, 93	“Ponury”	Capt. Jan Piwnik (1912–1944), a distinguished ZWZ- AK↑commander in the Kielce region of occupied Poland, and later in the Nowogródek area, killed in combat
93	To drink a <i>brüderschaft</i>	To drink to a close friendship with someone, a social custom practiced in several European countries incl. Poland
102	The Belweder Palace	A representational Neo-Classical palace in Central Warsaw, the traditional residence of the President of the Republic of Poland
20, 88	To go into the forest; the men of the forest; to flee to the forest	Polish resistance groups conducting operations against German forces occupying Poland during World War II and later against the Communists used the forests as convenient hideouts.
184	PPS, the Polish Socialist Party, <i>Polska Partia Socjalistyczna</i>	A Polish socialist party with a long tradition; in 1948 those of its members and branches still in Poland following the Communist takeover of power in 1944 were forcibly amalgamated with the PPR ↑, forming the PZPR ↑.
211	A Soviet invasion hanging over Poland (in 1956)	In Poland the political thaw in the Soviet bloc following the death of Stalin in 1953 did not come until 1956 in the wake of mass protests in Poznań. First Secretary Bierut died and Władysław Gomułka came to power. The factional feud in the PZPR eventually led to victory for the moderates grouped around Gomułka, eliciting an anxious response from Moscow including Red Army units moving toward the Polish border. After a time, Nikita Khrushchev, who had already sent the Red Army into Hungary to put down the Hungarian Uprising, decided to withdraw his troops from the Polish border, to avoid having to deal with potential popular discontent in another satellite country.



## List of Abbreviations

AAN	Archiwum Akt Nowych, Archive of Modern Records
AHM	Archiwum Historii Mówionej, Oral History Archive
AIPN	Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej, Archives of the IPN
AIPN Wr	Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej Oddział we Wrocławiu, the Wrocław branch of the IPN Archives
AK	Armia Krajowa, Home Army, the largest underground resistance organization during the Second World War in German-occupied Europe
AUdsKiOR	Archiwum Urzędu ds. Kombatantów i Osób Represjonowanych, Archive of the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression
GZI	Główny Zarząd Informacji, the Main Directorate of Information of the Polish Army, a military police and security force established in 1944 by the Communist authorities in People's Poland
IPN	Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, the Polish Institute of National Remembrance
KBW	Korpus Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego, the Internal Security Corps, a special-purpose military security unit established by the Communist authorities in People's Poland
KPZU	Komunistyczna Partia Zachodniej Ukrainy, the Communist Party of Western Ukraine, which conducted illegal activities in the eastern territories of prewar Poland
MBP	Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, the Ministry of Public Security, the chief government institution in Communist Poland conducting repressive measures against political opponents
MON	Ministerstwo Obrony Narodowej, the Polish Ministry of National Defense
MPW	Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, the Warsaw Rising Museum
MSW	Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych, the Polish Ministry of Internal Affairs
NSZ	Narodowe Siły Zbrojne, the National Armed Forces, a Polish underground combat organization during the Second World War affiliated with the National Party, which continued resistance operations after the War against the Communists

PKPG	Państwowa Komisja Planowania Gospodarczego, the State Economic Planning Committee, the government institution in People's Poland running the country's centralized economy, 1949–1956
PPR	Polska Partia Robotnicza, the Polish Workers' Party, the Communist Party established during the Second World War, later amalgamated with the PPS (Polish Socialist Party) to form the PZPR
PRL	Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa, the Polish People's Republic, also referred to as the People's Republic of Poland and sometimes abbreviated to People's Poland, the state established by the Communists in 1944 which existed until 1989 under the political tutelage of the Soviet Union
PSL	Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe, the Polish People's Party
PZPR	Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotników, the Polish United Workers' Party, the ruling Communist Party in People's Poland created by the merger of the PPR and the PPS in 1948, in power until 1989
UdsKiOR	Urząd ds. Kombatantów i Osób Represjonowanych, the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression, the Polish government institution created in 1991 for the provision of welfare services for Second World War veterans and persons who suffered oppression by Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, and the Communist authorities of People's Poland
WP	Wojsko Polskie, the Polish Forces; in this book the term "Polish Forces" means the Polish military forces created on Soviet territory after Hitler's invasion of the USSR in 1941 and fully subordinated to Soviet command.
WUBP	Wojewódzki Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, Voivodeship Public Security Office, a regional branch of the Communist security service, subject to the central authority of the Ministry of Public Security
ZBoWiD	Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację, the Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy, the official war veterans' association in People's Poland
ZPP	Związek Patriotów Polskich, the Union of Polish Patriots, an organization of Polish Communists created on Soviet territory during the Second World War and installed in Poland by the Red Army on its westward march in 1944
ZWZ	Związek Walki Zbrojnej, Union of Armed Combat, a Polish wartime underground resistance force, created in 1939, the predecessor of the Home Army

# Foreword

Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz – why should readers all over the world be interested in a man from Poland they’d never heard of? Why read a book focused on just one character? Is a young man who was arrested in 1948 by the Communist authorities of postwar Poland and fell out of a window worth the effort? It’s a story like many other wartime incidents in Central and Eastern Europe. In the context of Russia’s current aggression against Ukraine and accounts of the atrocities Russian troops are committing there, you could say things like that are also happening there now, so it’s not a particularly shocking event.

But once we take a closer look it gets more interesting. The story of “Anoda” is not just about an individual. It’s typical for a whole generation of young Polish intellectuals born and brought up in the two decades between the World Wars. Can you imagine the devastating fate that awaited them? Just as they reached maturity World War Two erupted, and along with it the Nazi German occupation of Poland, followed by Soviet occupation and the regime implemented by Polish Communists. For the young people of Poland, it meant a continuous, desperate effort to avoid being invigilated, arrested, and subjected to economic discrimination. Only because during the War they had engaged in the defense of their country which was invaded and oppressed by two aggressors, Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. The story of that young generation is the story of the victims of a war started by two totalitarian states. This book shows the effects of that clash of totalitarian powers reflected in the life of one idealistic boy. But his story could be multiplied hundreds of thousand times in the lives of his peers in Poland, and millions of times throughout the entire region.

Although officially Poland was one of the Allies who won the Second World War, and despite the fact that the criminal pact Hitler and Stalin made to wipe out Poland and its people, in practice Poland was a loser because it did not achieve the aim of its battle against its aggressors – that is, it did not recover its status as a sovereign state. Polish soldiers, especially the young ones, were not fighting to set up a Communist system in their country. They joined the Home Army\* because it was under the authority of the lawful government of Poland in exile\* in London. They were in the service of the legal authorities of the Polish State.

Poland had the largest underground resistance force operating on its territory during the Second World War in occupied Europe. In 1944, the Home Army and its associated organizations had 390 thousand serving in their ranks. For comparison, the better-known French resistance movement had

200 thousand members in 1944. As Soviet forces proceeded further and further into the German-occupied territory of Poland, pushing out the German army, the Soviet intelligence service started to infiltrate the Home Army, which was implementing Operation Tempest (*Akcja Burza*),\* its biggest military undertaking, of which the best-known episode was the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising\* in August 1944. The aim of these operations was to clear part of the prewar Polish territory of the occupying German forces and act as the domestic military power receiving the incoming Soviet forces. Stalin was well aware of these Polish plans and that is why he refused to come to the aid of fighting Warsaw during the Uprising. Soviet troops bided their time on the right bank of the Vistula, waiting for the outcome of the battle between the Germans and the Poles in left-bank Warsaw. When the Uprising fell, Hitler issued an order for the utter destruction of Warsaw and the eviction of its inhabitants. The city was razed to the ground.

After the Uprising was crushed and the Soviets occupied most of the Polish territories, infiltrating the ranks of the Home Army with their agents, General Leopold Okulicki, its Commander-in-Chief, decided to disband it. However, this did not spell the end of Polish resistance on the home front.

Some units hid in the forests.\* Others, such as NIE (for *Niepodległość*, “Independence”) or later WiN\* (*Wolność i Niezawisłość*, “Freedom and Independence”), continued to engage in civil and military resistance operations against Poland’s new, Communist occupying power. Estimates of the manpower of this second resistance force give figures of up to 180 thousand. So fighting continued on Polish territory, even though Hitler was dead and officially the War had come to an end. The last resistance fighter was killed in 1963. These facts are not widely known even in Poland. The Communists tried to stop such information from spreading, and to do this they imposed long prison terms or death sentences on resistance fighters and intimidated their families. They staged show trials in which freedom fighters were branded “gangs of criminals.” When the Communist system fell in 1989 and the last Soviet forces left Poland in 1993, surviving veterans of the anti-Communist resistance forces, who had been “doomed to oblivion,” were given the epithet *Żołnierze Wyklęci*, “the Doomed Soldiers.”

The military operations and clandestine civilian disobedience campaign conducted by the resistance forces against the Communist regime were associated with the general belief that a Third World War could soon break out between the Soviets and the Western Powers. Expecting its imminent outbreak, combatants and their civilian associates wanted to preserve their organizations and keep themselves ready to fight and aid the Western belligerents against the Soviets on Polish territory. The Communist Party soon set about dealing with the underground resistance movement, using their secret police forces, the special investigation units in the MBP (Ministry of Public

Security)\* and the KBW (Internal Security Corps).\* These units relied on the methods and skills developed for invigilation, investigation and security operations by their trainers and advisers from the Soviet NKVD.

The main operation applied to disarm and infiltrate the resistance forces was the so-called Amnesty, whereby every resistance fighter hiding in the forests or keeping a low profile in the cities could return to a normal, “legal” lifestyle if he “came out,”\* that is confessed he was a member of the resistance, handed in his weapons, and stopped conducting underground activities. It was an enticing offer. Despite their ideals and refusal to come to terms with Communist rule, most resistance men realized that the chances for successful underground operations and for the outbreak of a Third World War were waning. The first Amnesty was announced on August 2, 1945, and nearly half of the 150 thousand–strong underground force “came out” into the open. A second Amnesty was held in 1947, in connection with the forthcoming parliamentary election.\* Over 76 thousand “came clear.” Only a vestige – about 2 thousand – of the original numbers were left in the secret resistance movement. The Communists rigged the election and used the forged results to set up a permanent Communist power system in Poland. On February 4, 1947, at the first session of Parliament, the Communist leader Bolesław Bierut was elected President; and on February 19 a “Small Constitution” was adopted enshrining the Soviet political model in the Polish legislative system.

That is the background to the story of Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz. Born into the family of a professor of the Warsaw University of Technology, Anoda grew up in a patriotic environment. His relatives had participated in the Polish uprisings\* of 1830 and 1863 against the Russian tsarist regime. They were his role models. He joined the Home Army, took part in Operation Arsenal and fought in the Warsaw Uprising as a combatant in Battalion Zośka,\* one of the most renowned units. He received the *Virtuti Militari*\* for bravery and was wounded on several occasions. He was a hero well-known for his valor, the mirror of military fortitude. In September 1945, he “came out” in compliance with the rules for the amnesty. He expected a Third World War to break out and did not like the Communist regime. But he did not engage in active resistance once he had come out into the open. Instead, he went up to university, first as a student of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the Warsaw University of Technology, later switching to Architecture. So he was not unusual but quite typical of the young postwar generation in Warsaw.

The Communist authorities did not take a favorable attitude to people like Anoda, even though they had stopped their underground activities. Such youngsters were experienced combatants and had intellectual acumen. They were independently-minded and did not approve of the new political

system. That is why those in power ordered the MBP to disintegrate the community of Home Army veterans, who were believed to be continuing underground resistance activities even though there was no evidence for it. In fact, they were not conducting undercover operations. The campaign against them was part of a large-scale operation against Polish patriots and all who offered resistance of any kind. Hard evidence did not mean much and charges could be brought against anyone on any pretext, such as having relatives in Western countries. In 1948, many Home Army veterans were arrested in a broad sweep to discover “the domestic enemy.” 60 % of the arrested were war invalids.

The man who masterminded the arrests was Wiktor Herer, a member of the MBP’s management and a convinced Communist. He was born into a Jewish family in Lwów and his parents were killed by the Germans during the Second World War. To evade German repressive measures, he fled to Georgia and joined the First Kościuszko Infantry Division\* which was being set up in the Soviet Union and in which he served as a political officer. The commanding officers were Communists whom the Soviets had found trustworthy still before the outbreak of the War. The rank-and-file was made up of Poles who had been held in Soviet labor camps or in forced labor. The division was established in accordance with Stalin’s ideas to take over Poland and turn it into a Communist satellite state. Poland was to keep the outward signs of statehood – a territory of its own, a national anthem, a modified national emblem (a White Eagle deprived of his crown), a separate army commanded by a mixed corps of Polish and Soviet officers, and a Communist government of its own. Stalin needed convinced Communists like Wiktor Herer. When the fighting against the Germans was over, Herer joined the MBP department charged with invigilating young people. His superiors had a very good opinion of him. He was good at recruiting snoops and secret agents, and interrogating Home Army veterans. He was an intellectual and a strategist. In general, he did not resort to violence, preferring to outwit his adversaries by intelligent means, provoking and hoodwinking them into disclosing information, setting traps by facing them with evidence he had gleaned from his spies. Ideologically, he was the exact opposite of Anoda the young patriot.

We still do not have the full facts relating to the death of Jan Anoda Rodowicz. We know that he fell out of a window on the fifth story of the MBP building in Warsaw. It was the same building in the basement of which he had been imprisoned and where he had been interrogated. The cause of death was multiple trauma. He had only spent four days in detention there – not much compared to prisoners incarcerated for years on end.

The story of Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz offers a message for the world at large. It shows what happens when the world ignores the fate of the freedom

and democracy of people left abandoned in a country under a totalitarian regime. There may be many like Anoda in Ukraine under Russian occupation. This book also shows what the Communist system was really like: an oppressive machine dealing out terror operated by well-trained functionaries who turned against their own people under the influence of an ideology. This is a truth still so hard to grasp for many in the West. As a character, Jan Rodowicz speaks volumes for the young people of his generation and for Poland in general – what kind of country it could have been if it had not found itself on the wrong side of the Iron Curtain. The situation we are in now, wondering what the outcome of the present war will be for Ukraine, makes the message of Anoda’s life all the more relevant for us. We hope the young men and women of Ukraine will come out on the right side and enjoy genuine freedom. Otherwise, many of them may defenestrate – literally or figuratively speaking – in a large-scale operation conducted by a Russian oppressor in search of “the domestic enemy.”

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# Introduction

When the Second World War came to an end, the veterans of the Radosław Group\* of the AK (Armia Krajowa, Home Army)<sup>1</sup> \* found they were targeted by the Communist security forces of the Polish People's Republic,\* whose officers considered them a threat to the country's new rulers. Despite the announcement of an "amnesty" in 1945 and the "coming out" (disclosure) of the secret structures of the Polish wartime resistance movement, the former insurgents were not left in peace. In late 1949, the security forces launched an operation of mass arrests, starting primarily with veterans of Battalion Zośka\* in what came to be known as "the Zośka Case." Jan "Anoda" Rodowicz was the first to be rounded up. He was last seen alive by a former insurgent from the same battalion, in the evening of January 3, 1949. Four days later, Anoda was dead.

The aim of this book is to present the mysterious circumstances of Rodowicz's death on January 7, 1949, in the environs of the MBP (Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, Ministry of Public Security)\* building on Koszykowa\* in Warsaw. This publication is the first in-depth monographic study on the subject.

Despite the passage of over sixty years since the mysterious death of this renowned insurgent, as well as the fact that after 1989 the records of the Communist security services were made accessible for research and Anoda's body was exhumed in the early spring of 1995, so far no one had managed to determine the cause(s) of his death beyond all reasonable doubt. According to the official version presented by the security officers, Anoda died in outcome of the serious injuries he sustained when he attempted to commit suicide by self-defenestrating from a fifth-story window in the MBP building. However, there are grounds to suggest that his death was due to severe internal injuries caused by the security men interrogating him.

In view of Anoda's heroic conduct during the War when Poland was under German occupation, and his military service in the resistance movement (including combat during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944)\*, his death still arouses heated discussion. His family and former comrades in arms

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1 Zgrupowanie Armii Krajowej Radosław (the Home Army [AK] Radosław Group) was a special group of units engaged in combat during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. It was commanded by Col. Jan "Radosław" Mazurkiewicz, and comprised AK KEDYW\* (Sabotage, Combat and Propaganda) units such as Battalions Zośka and Parasol.

believe he was murdered by MBP men.<sup>2</sup> This has also been the view subscribed to by historians working on the Second Resistance Movement\* and the Communist security forces operating in People's Poland, as well as journalists and authors of general interest books.<sup>3</sup>

Those who accept this opinion automatically reject all the alternative versions of the events. However, someone who sets out to produce a work of scholarship not only has the right but also the duty to examine all the hypotheses before plumping for one of them or coming up with an explanation of his own. Here it is not a question of casting doubt on the responsibility of the MBP men for the death of Jan Rodowicz in order to whitewash

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- 2 During the commemorative event held by the Polish Ministry of Justice in tribute to Jan "Anoda" Rodowicz on January 7, 2014, the anniversary of his death, Jan "Tomek" Nowakowski delivered a memorial speech in which he said the following: "Knowing what Anoda's character was like, we rule out the possibility that he could have committed suicide, on the other hand we admit the likelihood of him making a bravado but abortive attempt to escape by jumping down on the roof of a shed neighboring on the premises of the British Embassy. The real reason why the butchers working for the Communist security service tortured him to death in retribution for this feat, or even if it never took place, was to eliminate this outstanding man endowed with all the qualities of a leader." See *Informacje, Mowa na uroczystości przed Ministerstwem Sprawiedliwości w rocznicę śmierci Jana Rodowicza 'Anody'* on the Ministry's website, [http://ms.gov.pl/Data/Files/\\_public/aktual/2014/mowa-na-uroczystosci-przed-ministerstwem-sprawiedliwosci-w-rocznice-smierci-janka-rodowicza.pdf](http://ms.gov.pl/Data/Files/_public/aktual/2014/mowa-na-uroczystosci-przed-ministerstwem-sprawiedliwosci-w-rocznice-smierci-janka-rodowicza.pdf). See also the newspaper article "Agora zabija pamięć o Anodzie," published by *Gazeta Polska* in its April 28, 2015 edition, discussing Janina Rodowicz's open letter to Piotr Lipiński. In her letter, Jan Rodowicz's relative Janina took a position similar to Nowakowski's and reproached Lipiński for the shortcomings in the scholarship of his biography of Anoda published in 2015.
  - 3 For instance, in one of his articles, Tomasz Łabuszewski claimed that Jan Rodowicz was murdered by MBP men during the investigation (Tomasz Łabuszewski, "Sprawa 'Radosława' – w kręgu urojonej konspiracji," in *Walka o pamięć. Władze i społeczeństwo wobec Powstania Warszawskiego 1944–1989*, Agnieszka Panecka, ed., Warszawa: Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, 2008, 76). Another publication on Zośka veterans says that Anoda was "tortured to death" during the investigation (Włodzimierz Trojan, *Ci, którzy przeżyli... Biografie żołnierzy batalionu 'Zośka' Armii Krajowej*, Warszawa: Środowisko Batalionu "Zośka" Armii Krajowej, 2002, 284). A note saying that Jan Rodowicz was murdered appeared in a memorial volume published by the Warsaw University of Technology to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Warsaw Uprising ("Politechnika w Powstaniu Warszawskim. W pięćdziesiątą rocznicę [1944–1994]," *Zeszyty Historyczne Politechniki Warszawskiej* no. 1 (1996): 125); and a similar remark on the murder of Anoda made its way into the biographical dictionary of the Gray Ranks\* (Zygmunt Głuszek, *Szare Szeregi. Słownik biograficzny*, Vol. 1, Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, 2006, 272).

those suspected of killing him, but to endeavor to reconstruct the course of events as accurately as possible, and that calls for a review of all the options.

Numerous articles have been published and television programs broadcast on the death of Anoda, but many of them contained errors or were a mix of deliberately sifted items of information, sometimes drawn from mutually exclusive sources. It has been claimed that Rodowicz was shot dead by MBP men, even though the sources which say he was tortured do not confirm this. Yet many points in these sources can hardly be said to be trustworthy when compared with the results of the autopsy following the exhumation in 1995, or with Henryk Kozłowski's account. When Kozłowski, another Zośka veteran, met Anoda in the corridor of the MBP building in the late evening of January 3, 1949, he did not notice any signs of violence on his body. Also the story of Anoda autodefenestrating in an attempt to reach the premises of the British Embassy turned out to be indefensible. I will conduct an in-depth examination of each of these claims later in the book.

One of the most coherent hypotheses (albeit not free of lacunas), the suicide claim, has earned the least number of supporters. This was due mainly to the fact that it was propagated by retired security officers, whose statements some regarded as unreliable and dismissed them a priori. Another thing that prompted such an attitude to the MBP version was the fact that during the inquiry conducted in the 1990s it was proved that one of the retired security men had perjured himself. Moreover, there were a few places in the statements made by the MBP men where they tried to equivocate or prevaricate, dodge the issue or diminish their part in the detention and death of Jan Rodowicz, or argue that they could not remember.

But that did not mean that there was no relevant information in the statements made by the MBP men, so rejecting them out of hand would have meant cutting corners. I had to take the trouble to sort out the useful parts from the security officers' statements and examine their version of the events as well. When I confronted what they had to say with the other materials available to me, I came to the conclusion that a suicide bid by self-defenestration from the fifth story of the MBP building could not be dismissed,<sup>4</sup> what's more, it was even one of the two most likely hypotheses. The other possibility which called for serious consideration was that the security boys handled the investigation badly and killed the suspect before they got the information they were after out of him.

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4 In my opinion, the circumstances attending a putative suicide bid would have been different from what the ex-MBP men said, who claimed that they had nothing to do with it. Later on in this book, I present evidence which strongly suggests that the MBP investigators on the Rodowicz case used a sophisticated set of psychologically-oriented manipulative measures against him, and most probably physical violence as well, their aim being to extract a statement from him

Mindful of the importance of the matter, the intense emotions it still conjures up, and the controversies that have built up around it, I present all the main hypotheses concerning the circumstances of the death of Anoda, describing their weak and strong points. This strategy will allow my readers to reach their own conclusions on the matter.

Even if readers do not find all of my conclusions convincing, the information I present will certainly help to arrange the facts we have collected so far in an organized manner. I would like to stress once more that my intention is neither to vindicate the security men nor to disparage Rodowicz. There can be no doubt that the security officers and their informers were responsible for the death of Anoda.<sup>5</sup> Only once we admit this general but very important premise can we attempt to carry out an in-depth scrutiny of the last days and hours in the life of Jan Rodowicz.

During my work on this book, I conducted a search in the AAN (Archiwum Akt Nowych, the Archive of Modern Records), the archives of the IPN (Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, the Polish Institute of National Remembrance) in its headquarters in Warsaw and some of its regional branches, the Archive of Urząd do Spraw Kombatantów i Osób Represjonowanych (the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression), and in the collections and archive of Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego (the Warsaw Rising Museum). I conducted the part of my research connected with the MBP men involved in the death of Anoda within the framework of a project which was being carried out at the same time by a team of IPN associates for the compilation of a biographical dictionary of the MBP's management staff. I also availed myself of photocopy materials provided by Agnieszka Pietrzak (these included the statement made by Maj. Wiktor Herer, acting Head of Subdepartment Four of the MBP's Department Five,\* the records of subsequent inquiries carried out by the public prosecutor in the 1990s, and letters to Anoda's family and friends from persons purporting to possess information on the circumstances of his death).<sup>6</sup> Dr. Pietrzak has been working for years on the history of the soldiers who served in the Home Army's Battalion Zośka.

My most important resources, both as regards the quantity and quality of the original records, came from the Archives of the IPN (AIPN), although I managed to find relevant archival items in the AAN as well, and used them in my research. Another key contribution was made by the photocopies I received from Agnieszka Pietrzak.

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incriminating his commanders and comrades in arms in the anti-German and anti-Communist resistance movement.

5 A certain analogy may be observed in the way the New York police treated the death of 9/11 victims. All those who jumped to their death from the burning towers of the World Trade Center were qualified as murder victims.

6 Some of these materials have been deposited in the AAN.

I studied not only the source materials created by the security staff in the course of the investigations they conducted against veterans of the AK's Radosław Group, but also the personal files of the security men involved and their informers,<sup>7</sup> the records of the inquiry and investigations into the circumstances of the death of Jan Rodowicz carried out after 1989, and the private collections of other members of Battalion Zośka, now deposited in various archives (e.g. Henryk Kozłowski's documents presented to the AAN by Anna Jakubowska, his first wife). I examined the letters and written relations collected by members of Anoda's family. Other relevant sources were the recollections of Zośka combatants, including the autobiography of Rodowicz's friend, Henryk Kozłowski.<sup>8</sup>

Thanks to the courtesy of the staff of the Ministry of Justice, whose headquarters are in the building which once accommodated the MBP, in the summer of 2014 I was given access to the premises in which Jan Rodowicz was interrogated, as well as to the office from which he is said to have self-defenestrated or have been defenestrated. I was also given a set of data on the history of the building and the arrangement of the rooms on its diverse floors, which helped to confirm or reject some of the information in the records and statements.

In addition, I got in touch with Jan Rodowicz's family and the group of Radosław veterans who knew him well and remembered him from the time of their anti-German resistance activities and remained in contact with him after 1945.

2015 was marked by a particularly abundant output of publications on Jan Rodowicz, written at the same time as this book but issued slightly earlier. Thanks to this, I was able to read them, which I found particularly important because they presented interesting materials and ideas.

As regards documentary value, special mention should be made of the book by Mariusz Olczak of the AAN.<sup>9</sup> Another valuable publication was

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7 The concept of "informers" (*informatorzy*), as used in People's Poland in 1945–1955, denotes persons successfully recruited by the Communist security service to willfully carry out tasks commissioned by its officials. In later times, such individuals were classified as *tajni współpracownicy* ("secret collaborators"). I have followed the principles which should govern the disclosure of personal identities of individuals whose aliases occur in this type of historical sources, as formulated by Antoni Dudek and Zdzisław Zblewski in their paper "Materiały operacyjne służb specjalnych PRL jako źródło historyczne. Uwagi metodologiczne," in Filip Musiał, ed., *Wokół teczek bezpieki – zagadnienia metodologiczno-źródłoznawcze*, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego "Societas Vistulana," 2006, 213–217.

8 Henryk Paweł Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy przez wiele lat. Wspomnienia z AK i inne*, Warszawa: Bellona, 2010.

9 Mariusz Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz "Anoda." Życie i śmierć bohatera "Kamieni na szaniec"*, Warszawa: Historyczna and Archiwum Akt Nowych, 2015. In the

the book by the *Gazeta Wyborcza* journalist Piotr Lipiński, which marks the peak of his research and rounds off his work on the life and death of Anoda.<sup>10</sup>

Special credit should go to Lipiński for managing to talk to the officers on the Rodowicz investigation who were still alive at the time. That could no longer be done when I started my own research, and my attempts to contact their families proved abortive. The last book published at this time on Anoda was by Barbara Wachowicz but it did not contribute much to the issues in my main field of interest.<sup>11</sup>

Publications on Radosław veterans, by Tomasz Łabuszewski,<sup>12</sup> Agnieszka Pietrzak,<sup>13</sup> and Bartosz Nowożycki,<sup>14</sup> made up a salient supplement to the

introduction to his book, Olczak writes that it was not his aim to embark on a thorough re-examination of the circumstances of the death of Jan Rodowicz, even though the book provides a number of important items of information relating to this issue, along with a brief presentation of the hypotheses historians have considered concerning the death of Rodowicz.

- 10 Piotr Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szańcu*, Warszawa: Agora and Muzeum Powstania Warszawskiego, 2015. This book's shortcoming is the fact that Lipiński, who is not a professional historian, failed to conduct a full search of the sources and in places took an overly superficial approach to the sources he did consider. The limits to his workshop as a scholar may be observed, for instance, in his uncritical approach to the minutes of the Rodowicz interrogations; see Sławomir Cenckiewicz, "Anoda – kolega Herera i Brystiger?" *Do Rzeczy Historia* no.11 (2015). Ryszard Śmietanka-Kruszelnicki is one of the researchers who have stressed the need for special care in handling source materials of this type; see his article "Protokół przesłuchania jako źródło historyczne," in *Wokół teczek bezpieki – zagadnienia metodologiczno-źródłoznawcze*, Filip Musiał (ed.), Kraków: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego "Societas Vistulana," 2006.
- 11 Barbara Wachowicz, *Ułan Batalionu "Zośka."* *Gawęda o Janku Rodowiczu "Anodzie,"* Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, 2015.
- 12 See, for instance, Łabuszewski, "Sprawa 'Radosława' – w kręgu urojonej konspiracji."
- 13 Agnieszka Pietrzak, *Żołnierze Batalionu Armii Krajowej "Zośka" represjonowani w latach 1944–1956*, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2008; and her articles, "Powojenna konspiracja żołnierzy batalionów AK 'Zośka' i 'Parasol' – rzeczywistość a wersja funkcjonariuszy MBP," in Małgorzata Żuławnik and Barbara Świtalska, eds. *Różnymi drogami do niepodległości. Studia z historii najnowszej*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego, 2014; and "Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy 'Zośki' i 'Parasola' objętych tzw. sprawą 'Radosława' w latach 1948–1956," *Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy* no. 1 (2015): 251.
- 14 Bartosz Nowożycki, "Losy byłych żołnierzy zgrupowania AK 'Radosław' 1944–1989," *Przegląd Historyczno-Wojskowy*, no.1 (2014): 247; and his book *Zgrupowanie "Radosław,"* Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, 2014.

biographies of Anoda. I also referred to the work of IPN associates published in the journals *Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989*<sup>15</sup> and *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*.<sup>16</sup> In addition, I looked through the general interest newspaper articles and reports, albeit these materials presented a miscellany in terms of quality. The full list of all these sources and references is given in the bibliography.

I made a critical review of all the source materials, which enabled me to reject at least some of the mutually exclusive hypotheses and myths which had accrued over the years since the death of Anoda. I did not stop at collecting and rereading the documents which other historians have seen, but conducted my own research on them.

An in-depth search in the archival resources of the IPN led me to the discovery of new important facts relating to the surveillance operations conducted by security agents against Zośka veterans. An accomplishment which I regard as one of my major successes is that I was able to identify the informer codenamed “Górnik,” whose tip-offs helped the MBP officers very substantially to piece together their information on the Zośkaites.<sup>17</sup> Górnik turned out to be the AK veteran Adam Abramowicz. Access to Górnik’s personal file let me get a better grasp of the way security men obtained the information which they utilized in their investigations. For many years, this particular informer had been a controversial figure both for historians as well as for Zośka veterans trying to work out which of them had ratted. The high degree of detail in the disclosures Abramowicz conveyed to the security agents suggested that Górnik must have been a key personage in the Zośka community, maybe even a close friend of Jan Rodowicz. Yet it turned out that he was not so widely known in the group but had socialized with some of the Zośkaites, which let him collect the information he then passed on to the security service.

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15 See, for instance, Filip Musiał, “Jak badać akta Urzędu/Służby Bezpieczeństwa ‘ludowej’ Polski? Kilka uwag źródłoznawczych,” *Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989*, no. 1 (2014): 12; and Wojciech Frazik, “Dowód zbrodni, czyli co zrobić z ciałem ofiary,” *Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989*, no. 1 (2004): 1.

16 See, for instance, Krzysztof Brzechczyn, “Problem wiarygodności teczek i opartej na nich narracji historycznej. Kilka uwag metodologicznych,” *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, no. 2 (2012): 20.

17 I first published this informer’s given name and surname, as well as the basic facts concerning his contacts with MBP men in my 2015 article “Filantropem nie jestem,” which appeared in *W Sieci Historii*, no. 6 (2015). Mariusz Olczak’s book came out shortly after my article. Olczak gives the personal particulars of informer Górnik, but he does not say what the source of his information was. My article is mentioned only in his bibliography.

Although the general opinion hitherto had been that Górnik had made a major contribution to Jan Rodowicz's arrest, the extant documents do not *prove* that he supplied the security men with the key information which clinched the arrest of Rodowicz, though we cannot dismiss such an outcome altogether, because Górnik's operations file has not survived. The extent of this informer's influence, prior to his identification, seems to have been over-rated in the earlier work of Piotr Lipiński and Agnieszka Pietrzak. It is quite true that Górnik played a considerable role in the MBP's efforts to collect information on AK veterans, but he was only one of several informers working in the field. In his case, it was a question chiefly of obtaining data on erstwhile insurgents' alleged connections with Western spies to set up the pipelines needed to get them to "the Capitalist countries."

Unfortunately, Abramowicz was not the only MBP bug in the Zośka community. There were also others, especially "Zaręba,"<sup>18</sup> whom I refer to in this book. I have also managed to identify "Odwet" as Bronisław Sianoszek: the MBP men on the investigation referred to his tip-offs in their in-house correspondence to back up their arguments to start arresting Zośka veterans.<sup>19</sup>

The MBP's informers and their influence on the fate of Jan Rodowicz is an issue which in practice has not been addressed in the publications so far, and that is why in this book I have given them a considerable amount of attention. Otherwise, I would not have been able to fully grasp the mechanisms which eventually led to Anoda's imprisonment in the MBP jail on Koszykowa.\* It was also an indispensable part of my research, allowing me to make a thorough assessment of the extant minutes of the interrogations and understand the arrestee's exceptionally difficult predicament.

Perhaps in the future we will be able to access more documents currently believed lost or destroyed, which will give us a better insight into the circumstances of Jan Rodowicz's arrest. The Górnik files show that there is room for hope.

This book consists of an introduction, three chapters, and a conclusion. Chapter One gives the basic information on Jan Rodowicz, especially his anti-German activities and during the Second Resistance. It also presents Major Wiktor Herer, the officer who conducted the Anoda investigation, and Górnik, Odwet, and Zaręba, the informers working for the MBP.

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18 The first to access this informer's files was Agnieszka Pietrzak in "Zaręba – informator w środowisku batalionu Zośka," *W Sieci Historii*, no. 7 (2015).

19 I was the first to publish the first name and surname of informer Odwet, as well as the basic facts relating to his contacts with MBP men; see Przemysław Benken, "Współpraca Bronisława Sianoszka z bezpieką," *W Sieci Historii*, no. 11 (2015).

Writing a description of these characters was more than just an absorbing venture into a few case-studies which had received little notice before; it laid the ground for me to carry out a more probing analysis of the complex relations in the AK Radosław group of veterans after World War II, helping to show the extent of the group's infiltration by individuals working for the MBP and their impact, which I believe played a very important part in the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz. This chapter also contains an account of the origins of the Zośka Case, the late 1948 and early 1949 arrests.

In Chapter Two, I give an account of the investigation conducted against Jan Rodowicz, right up to his death. In this part of the book, I give a detailed description of all the hypotheses concerning the cause of his death, some of which I managed to check by accessing documents not considered in earlier studies. These new records allowed me, for instance, to dismiss a large part of Leonarda Rodowicz's claim that in the 1960s she saw documents describing Anoda's murder. This chapter also provides information on the inquiries conducted by Polish prosecutors after 1989 and their results.

In Chapter Three, I relate what happened to some of the individuals presented in the previous parts of the book. One of my objectives was to examine the trustworthiness of the statements Wiktor Herer made in the 1990s. The book finishes with a conclusion and an appendix containing a selection of source documents, including the minutes of the interrogations of suspect Jan Rodowicz.

The book's main body has been augmented with biographical footnotes giving the basic information concerning individuals involved in anti-German resistance operations during the Second World War. Unless otherwise stated, this information relates to the period of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising. This is intended to give readers a better insight into the community of AK veterans I am writing about without disrupting the flow of my narrative with digressions on aspects outside of the book's basic sphere of inquiry.

To conclude, I would like to thank all those who helped to make this book a reality. I am most indebted to Dr. Agnieszka Pietrzak, who allowed me to use the materials she has collected and shared her opinions and research experience with me. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Sebastian Ligarski and Dr. Paweł Szulc of the Szczecin Regional Branch of the IPN Historical Research Office, who offered insightful observations in a discussion of the pros and cons of the diverse versions of the death of Anoda, and encouraged me to continue my research. Words of thanks are also due to associates of the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Poland, for their sympathetic attitude to my research and for granting me access to premises crucial for the writing of this book. I am grateful to Grzegorz Hanula, who was an employee of the Warsaw Rising Museum at the time. He helped me

contact AK veterans. I would also like to thank the archivists on the staff of the AAN, the AIPN, and the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression, and Dr. Zbigniew Osiński of the Archive of the Warsaw Rising Museum, without whose help it would have been impossible to collect all the materials needed to write this book.

# Chapter One. Against two totalitarianisms: the road to destiny

## “Anoda”

Jan Rodowicz was born in Warsaw on March 7, 1923, into the family of Kazimierz Rodowicz, a professor of the Warsaw University of Technology and before the Second World War head of the city’s waterways department, and his wife Zofia née Bortnowska, the sister of General Władysław Bortnowski, commander of Armia Pomorze in Poland’s 1939 defense campaign. The future hero of Battalion Zośka grew up in a home full of Polish patriotic traditions — his forebears included veterans of the Polish national uprisings of 1830 and 1863,\* for instance, his grandfather Teodor Rodowicz fought in the January Uprising of 1863. It would be no exaggeration to say that for generations the Rodowicz family had been committed to fighting for Poland’s freedom, which brought severe repressions on some of its members. All of this had an effect on shaping the young man’s character and undoubtedly played an important role in the key decisions he made in his life. This is something we must remember in the examination of the last days of Anoda’s life.

Jan attended a middle school called Gimnazjum imienia Stefana Batorego, which he left in 1939. In 1939–1941, once the War had started and the Polish educational system went underground under German occupation,\* he continued his education attending secret high school classes and graduating in June 1941.<sup>1</sup>

Before the War broke out, Rodowicz was a member of the Twenty-Third Warsaw Scouts (known as Pomarańczarnia, “The Orangery”), so in 1940, he and the others in the pack well-nigh automatically joined Szare Szeregi (the Gray Ranks)\* and became involved in their operations. That was when he chose the alias “Anoda” for his nom-de-guerre.<sup>2</sup> After a short time, he was sent to a special unit of the Gray Ranks known as Grupy Szturmowe (storm groups), thanks to which he completed a course of combat training and learned how to handle weapons and explosives, and the techniques of

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1 Archive of the Warsaw Rising Museum (hereinafter MPW Archive), MPW-A/185-MPW-A/1830. Transcript of the certificate issued by the board of examiners for the school known as Państwowe Gimnazjum i Liceum im. Stefana Batorego w Warszawie confirming that Jan Rodowicz had passed the (high) school leaving examination [i.e. graduated from high school], March 24, 1945, unpaginated.

2 One of the things Jan Rodowicz was specially known for at this time was painting the *Polska Walcząca* (Poland is Fighting) symbol on walls and tearing down Nazi German flags. (Lipiński, *Anoda...*, 80–81).

sabotage. In 1942, he attended a clandestine cadet college, graduating with the rank of Private 1<sup>st</sup> Class Rifleman — Junior Warrant Officer (*starszy strzelec podchorąży*). At the same time, he was attending a legal electrical engineering and electronics course (i.e. a training course the Germans allowed Poles to attend), and in 1943 graduated from Państwowa Szkoła Elektryczna II stopnia, a school providing a legal training course for Polish electricians.<sup>3</sup> Jan was employed during the War in Tadeusz Czarnecki's electrical engineering workshop and later in the Philips factory.<sup>4</sup>

On March 26, 1943, Jan Rodowicz took part in the renowned Operation Arsenal, in which he commanded a four-man unit known as Butelka (Bottle),<sup>5</sup> for which his superiors awarded him the Krzyż Walecznych (Cross of Valor) decoration.<sup>6</sup> On September 1, 1943, when Grupy Szturmowe was

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3 MPW Archive MPW-A/185-MPW-A/1830. Transcript of Jan Rodowicz's graduation certificate from the school known as Państwowa Szkoła Elektryczna II stopnia w Warszawie, September 1, 1943, unpaginated.

4 Thanks to this, Rodowicz was able to remove components from his workplace which were later used to construct radio sets (Lipiński, *Anoda...*, 85). Anoda also built radio sets for use by the resistance. In a 1947 statement, he said that in 1943 he had taken part in making a hundred military radio sets. (MPW Archive MPW-A/185-MPW-A/1830, Arkusz ewidencyjny dla członka Związku Uczestników Walki Zbrojnej o Niepodległość i Demokrację [Member's record sheet for the Polish war veterans' association known as Związek Uczestników Walki Zbrojnej o Niepodległość i Demokrację], September 30, 1947, unpaginated.)

5 Rodowicz's section completed its mission, thanks to which the insurgents intercepted a prisoner transport vehicle carrying Jan "Rudy" Bytnar, who had been very badly beaten up by the Germans. Next, Anoda took part in a shoot-out lasting about a quarter of an hour with the car's security guards, during which he sustained a minor neck wound. Rodowicz also distinguished himself during the retreat, when Maciej "Alek" Dawidowski was fatally wounded. When a German in civvies suddenly appeared on the scene with a gun, Anoda dual wielded (fired) two guns and killed the intruder. Thanks to this, Dawidowski could be evacuated to a safe hideout (Stanisław Broniewski, *Akcja pod Arsenalem*, Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1972, *passim*).

6 Rodowicz was also involved in other Grupy Szturmowe operations, e.g. the one codenamed Celestynów on the night of May 20/21, 1943, to free 49 political prisoners who were being transported from Lublin to Auschwitz. On May 27, 1943, he participated in Operation Sól to procure explosives from the warehouses of a chemical factory in Praga; in this operation he commanded the securing section. On August 20, 1943, he was on a demolition job to destroy a German border guard sentry post at Sieczychy, during which Scoutmaster Tadeusz "Zośka" Zawadzki was killed (Stanisław Broniewski, and Bogdan Celiński, "Jan Rodowicz," [entry in] *Polski słownik biograficzny*, Vol. 31/3, fasc. 130, Emanuel Rostworowski (ed.), Warszawa: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich — Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1988, 357–358).

reorganized as Battalion Zośka, Jan was appointed deputy commander of the Felek Company of the Third Platoon and participated in all the combat operations this unit conducted (for one of them he was awarded a second Cross of Valor).<sup>7</sup> In November 1943, he was promoted to the rank of *sierżant podchorąży* (sergeant warrant officer). In January 1944, Anoda assumed the duties of acting commander of the Ryszard Platoon in “Rudy,” the Second Company of Battalion Zośka, and held this post until March, when he returned to his original company.

In April 1944, as Rodowicz’s fears of being arrested by the Germans grew, he gave up his factory job and left Warsaw. From May 22 to June 17, 1944, he was in the Alek Platoon, which was under the command of the Second Company, in the “Base” located in the Puszcza Biała forests near Wyszaków, serving as the instructor for an army training course. On June 19, he returned to his home platoon; on June 1, this sub-unit had become part of the Second Company and assumed the codename “Felek,” which had been used hitherto by the First Company. Rodowicz and his platoon spent the time from June 29 to July 25 at the “Base.”

Jan Rodowicz took an active part in the combat during the Warsaw Uprising, distinguishing himself in the fighting in the Wola district.<sup>8</sup> On August 2, he took part in an operation which led to the capture of two medium-size German Panther tanks and the occupation of an elementary school building on Spokojna. On August 5, 1944, Anoda was wounded on Okopowa. He was hit in the left leg by a machine gun bullet, but continued to fight after having his wound dressed. On August 8, he again made a distinguished contribution to a successful Polish counterattack from the area of the Lutheran cemetery in the direction of Sołtyka and Młynarska, against the flank of the German attack at a critical moment in the fighting. This

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7 Rodowicz was also involved in the operation to destroy a German military police station at Wilanów on September 26, 1943; and in the derailing and cannonading of a military train carrying German soldiers on leave, at Pogorzela on the night of October 23/24, 1943. On the night of April 5/6, 1944, he commanded a highly successful operation to blow up a railroad culvert at Rogoźne, for which he was decorated with the Cross of Valor (Broniewski and Celiński, 358; Stanisław Sieradzki, *Janek Anoda – jakim go pamiętam: wspomnienia wojenne*, Celestynów: Celestynowskie Towarzystwo Kulturalne, 1993, *passim*). More on the operations in which Anoda took part before the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising in the following books on Battalion Zośka: Anna Borkiewicz-Celińska, *Batalion “Zośka,”* Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1990, *passim*; Aleksander Kamiński, *Zośka i Parasol*, Warszawa: Iskry, 2009, *passim*), and Olczak, *passim*.

8 Zygmunt “Zero” Rodowicz, Jan’s elder brother, also fought in the Warsaw Uprising and died on August 30, 1944. He was wounded in combat and died in a hospital which the Germans bombed and set on fire.

helped the insurgents to maintain their positions.<sup>9</sup> The exploit earned Anoda a prestigious distinction, the *Virtuti Militari*\* Silver Cross (Fifth Class), conferred on him on August 14.<sup>10</sup> Three days later, he was promoted to the rank of second lieutenant. However, he could not attend the award ceremony, because on August 10 a sniper's bullet went through his left lung. Anoda was sent to the St. John of God Hospital on Bonifraterska in the Old City (Stare Miasto), and later transferred to the hospital on Miodowa.

Despite his serious injury, on August 30 Rodowicz managed to cross from the Old City to the City Center (Śródmieście) via the network of underground sewers, and was put in Hoża hospital.<sup>11</sup> On September 8, he and what still remained of Battalion Zośka reached the Czerniaków district.

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- 9 One of Anoda's comrades in arms left the following recollection of the counter-attack: "The Germans are fleeing .... We're giving them a good wallop ... Bullets hissing like wasps [are coming at them] on the left. ... Machine gun fire battering them from the right, they're getting tangled up in a thick net of insurgent gunfire. From the shooting position on the central tower Sęp's [Wojciech Markowski's] light machine gun is snapping at them, and Anoda's Brügger & Thomet MP9 [a captured German machine pistol] is biting into them, too. ... In our section the enemy's completely shattered" (Stanisław Sieradzki, "Świsł — Pluton 'Felek' atakuje," in *Pamiętniki żołnierzy Batalionu AK "Zośka,"* Vol. 1, Tadeusz Sumiński (ed.), Warszawa: Społeczny Komitet Opieki nad Grobami Poległych Żołnierzy Batalionu 'Zośka,' 2012, 196. The German units sustained heavy losses during the counterattack and were forced to abandon some of their weapons, which were taken over by the insurgents. A description of the fighting conducted by Battalion Zośka has been given by its commander; see Ryszard Białous, *Walka w podziemiu. Batalion Armii Krajowej "Zośka" w Powstaniu Warszawskim,* Warszawa: Rytm, 2009. See also Nowożycki, *passim*.
- 10 Rodowicz, Władysław, Stanisława Rodowiczowa, and Zofia Iwanicka, *Tryptyk rodzinny: dzieje rodziny Rodowiczów,* Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1999, 441. MPW Collections, Powstańcze biogramy, Jan Rodowicz, Rozkaz nr 6 Dowództwa Grupy „Północ”, 16 VIII 1944 r. [Insurgents' biographies, Jan Rodowicz, Order No. 6 issued by Northern Group Command, August 16, 1944], unpaginated. Remarkably, Anoda's distinction was not recorded on the list published by the office of the Chapter of the Military Order of *Virtuti Militari* residing in London; there was no document to confirm the award and the number of the cross conferred on him. (Andrzej Kunert, ed., "Powstanie Warszawskie. Kadra dowódcza Armii Krajowej – noty biograficzne," in *Powstanie Warszawskie,* Władysław Bartoszewski, Andrzej Kunert, and Zygmunt Walkowski eds., Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2009, 672).
- 11 An account of how some of the combatants in the AK "Radosław" Group made their way from the Old Town to the City Center "at street level" and via the underground network of sewers is given in Szymon Nowak and Andrzej Ryba Finna, *Ostatni szturm. Ze Starówki do Śródmieścia 1944,* Gdańsk: Oficyna Wydawnicza FINNA, 2012, *passim*.

On September 15 he was injured again, this time by a German “anti-tank rifle.”<sup>12</sup> The bullet hit him on the left shoulder and shoulder-blade, shattering part of the bone. The following day, on his way to a field hospital, a piece of shrapnel from a mortar grenade struck his left elbow, and to cap it all, he broke his left arm when he fell from a stretcher.<sup>13</sup>

Unconscious and seriously injured, Anoda was evacuated on September 17 by a Polish Forces\* sappers’ pontoon which took him to Saska Kępa.<sup>14</sup> Next, he was sent to a Polish Forces field hospital at Anin, where he was operated and had three blood transfusions. After a week, he was taken to a military hospital at Otwock, from which he absconded after a few months, fearing arrest in connection with his involvement in the AK. On arriving in

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12 Probably a *Panzerfaust* single-shot man-portable anti-tank system or a *Panzerschreck* rocket anti-armor rifle model 54. According to Sieradzki, Jan Rodowicz was wounded by shrapnel from a gun fired from a German tank (Lipiński, *Anoda...*, 174).

13 Agnieszka Pietrzak’s collections, copy of Jan Rodowicz’s application to Referat Spraw Inwalidów Wojennych przy Starostwie Grodzkim Prasko-Warszawskim (the Department for War Invalids’ Affairs in the Municipal Starosty of the Praga District of Warsaw), requesting an invalid’s pension, October 24, 1945, unpaginated. See Lipiński, *Anoda...*, 179. According to Henryk Kończykowski, as a sappers’ unit of the Polish Army was evacuating Rodowicz to the east bank of the Vistula [i.e. to Praga], the Germans launched such a heavy volley of fire that the soldiers carrying him dropped the stretcher and ran for cover. Kończykowski writes that Rodowicz broke his left arm at the elbow and was injured by shrapnel. However, I have decided to give credence to Anoda’s version of the events, as related above. His injuries were serious enough for an amputation to be considered.

14 Stanisław Sieradzki gave the following description of the hazardous ferry across the river: “[Jan Rodowicz] had been hit in the lung, but he was still brandishing his hand machine gun and fighting... Only to get ... his shoulder torn to pieces just above his heart. ... Berling’s\* soldiers [i.e. men from the First Army of the (Communist) Polish Forces\*] ... put the wounded on their pontoons and ferry them across. I’m on the first pontoon, and Janek’s on the third one. The second is hit by a round from a grenade launcher and goes under. The yells of the injured are stifled by the noise of my pontoon scraping against the riverbank” (cited after Wachowicz, “Ułan batalionu ‘Zośka,’” in *Antologia reportażu polskiego*, eds. Krystyna Heska-Kwaśniewicz and Bogdan Zeler, Katowice: Książnica, 1998, 315). According to one of Anoda’s friends, he was evacuated to the other side of the river because he was covered up by an army coat (Olczak, 251), but her story has not been confirmed by other sources. Moreover, many insurgents openly availed themselves of the ferry service provided by the Communist First Army to flee the city, which the Germans were gutting and destroying completely. Some put on military uniforms in an attempt to save their lives before giving themselves up to the Germans. (Szymon Nowak, *Przyczółek Czerniakowski 1944*, Zabrze: Wydawnictwo Inforteditions, 2011, *passim*).

Warsaw, he found that all that was left of his erstwhile home was a pile of rubble, so he set off for Milanówek and was reunited with his family, who had been staying there since the end of the fighting for the city. He returned to Warsaw at the turn of February and March 1945.<sup>15</sup>

The fall of the Warsaw Uprising did not mean that the members of Battalion Zośka who had survived the fighting did not want to continue the struggle for Poland's independence. However, the end of German occupation and the arrival of the Red Army, which was gradually engulfing the country followed by its units designated to counteract all signs of the re-emergence of an independent Polish State not subservient to the Soviets called for the implementation of methods of operation adequate for the new situation.<sup>16</sup>

In November 1944, Henryk "Kmita" Kozłowski<sup>17</sup> met with Col. Jan "Radosław" Mazurkiewicz,\* ex- commander of the combat unit fighting in the Warsaw Uprising under the same codename. Radosław notified Kmita that a new military unit codenamed Nie (No) was being created. It was to continue the struggle for an independent Poland in the aftermath of the country's territory being overrun by the Red Army.<sup>18</sup>

In January 1945, Kmita was ordered by Radosław to set up a unit consisting of Zośka veterans. There were not many people in it,<sup>19</sup> but it did have Jan Rodowicz, who first became its deputy commander, and subsequently commander of its Special (or Combat) Group, which consisted of a few Zośka men injured in the Uprising who had managed to cross the Vistula and reassemble on the right bank, i.e. the Praga part of the city.<sup>20</sup> This unit was dubbed Oddział Dyspozycyjny Kmity (Kmita's Detached Unit) and was chiefly engaged in the distribution of anti-Communist leaflets and smearing posters put up by the (Communist) government—an occupation Anoda was particularly good at.<sup>21</sup> They also tried to stop Polish pro-Communist

15 Broniewski and Celiński, 358; Rodowicz, Rodowiczowa, and Iwanicka, 442.

16 See Sławomir Kalbarczyk, "Sowieckie represje wobec polskiego podziemia niepodległościowego w Warszawie i okolicach na przełomie 1944 i 1945 r.," *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* no. 2 (2) (2002).

17 Henryk Paweł Kozłowski (1922–2007), lieutenant, second-in-command and (as of August 18, 1944) acting commander of "Maciek," the First Company of Battalion Zośka.

18 Nowożycki, 105.

19 Włodzimierz Steyer recalled that there were never more than twenty persons in this unit. (Włodzimierz Steyer, "Druga konspiracja Zośki," in *Sowieckiemu zniewoleniu – nie. Harcerska druga konspiracja 1944–1956*, with a foreword by Stanisław "Orsza" Broniewski, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ład, 2005, 72).

20 Henryk P. Kozłowski, "Ppor. phm. Jan Rodowicz 'Anoda' (1923–1949)," in *Sowieckiemu zniewoleniu – nie...*, 69–70.

21 Steyer, 73.

soldiers, disarm them and confiscate certain items making up their uniforms.<sup>22</sup> Kmita’s unit had a couple of vehicles which its members had captured. They were planning more ambitious operations with the use of the firearms they still had from their period of anti-German operations and insurgent activities in the city, but nothing came of these plans.<sup>23</sup> One of the main operations they were intending to undertake was the liberation of General August “Nil” Fieldorf,\* deputy commander of the AK and its KEDYW\* unit, and commanding officer of Nie, who was in detention in a camp at Rembertów. However, the operation was called off because General Nil was deported to the Soviet Union before they could start.<sup>24</sup>

Kozłowski and Rodowicz took a very active part in the operations of Kmita’s Detached Unit, becoming Radosław’s most trusted Zośka men. They were with him during the secret meetings held in connection with the work of Nie, acting as his personal bodyguards.<sup>25</sup> On May 7, 1945, Nie

22 Extant MBP records show that in late April 1945, Zośka men in Warsaw managed to disarm an officer of the [pro-Communist] Polish Forces. They confiscated his pistol (AIPN, 0189/51, E. Żuchowska, *Charakterystyka nr 50 nielegalnej poakowskiej organizacji Zgrupowania “Radosława,”* Warszawa [Description of the illegal ex-AK organization known as the Radosław Group], Warszawa, 1977, 21). In March or early April 1945, Włodzimierz Steyer and Wojciech Szymanowski, who were in the unit, disarmed a soldier of the [pro-Communist] Polish Forces, taking his PPSH 7.62 caliber machine pistol (AIPN, 0189/51, Karta na “czyn przestępczy” dokonany przez członków byłego batalionu “Zośka,” [Record of the offense committed by ex-Battalion Zośka men, September 6, 1977], 238).

23 Years later, one of the Zośka veterans wrote, “We never used them [our weapons]. ... against anyone. For the whole time we were ‘underground’ (it was a period of several months), we never engaged in an armed operation” (Stanisław Krupa, *X Pawilon. Wspomnienia AK-owca ze śledztwa na Rakowieckiej,* Ząbki: Apostolicum Wydawnictwo Księży Pallotynów, 2000, 57).

24 Pietrzak, “Powojenna konspiracja ...,” 226. Extant records mention Henryk Kozłowski planning a “terrorist operation” in June 1945, involving a series of decoys in the environs of Warsaw targeted at Col. Anatol Fejgin, deputy head of the Chief Information Department (Główny Oddział Informacji), and Col. Wiktor Grosz, head of the Chief Political and Educational Board of the Polish Forces (Główny Zarząd Polityczno-Wychowawczy WP) (AIPN, 0189/51, Karta na “czyn przestępczy” dokonany przez członków byłego batalionu “Zośka,” [Record of the offense committed by ex-Battalion Zośka men, September 7, 1977], 246). In August 1945, Jan Rodowicz and five of his colleagues traveled to Łódź, where, according to Barbara Wachowicz, he was to assassinate Mieczysław Moczar, an officer of the local Voivodeship\* Public Security Office, but the attempt failed because there was a car accident in which Anoda broke his arm and collarbone (Wachowicz, 108; cf. Lipiński, *Anoda...*, 228–229).

25 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Zyciorys Jana Rodowicza [Jan Rodowicz’s CV], December 27, 1948, 11.

was disbanded and Col. Mazurkiewicz was appointed commanding officer for the Central Area (Obszar Centralny) under orders from the Domestic Delegation for the Armed Forces appointed in London by Acting Supreme Commander General Anders.<sup>26</sup> \* Central Area was to replace Nie.

In June 1945, the Domestic Delegation issued an order promoting Anoda to lieutenant in recognition of his distinguished service for Polish independence.

On August 1, 1945, the first anniversary of the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, Radosław was arrested by officers of the Communist secret service. The men under his command decided to liberate him. On August 5, his deputy, Capt. Józef “Maciej” Rybicki,<sup>27</sup> ordered Lt. Kmita to abduct General Viktor Lebedev, the Soviet ambassador to Poland, to effect an exchange for Radosław. The operation took place a few days later, unsuccessfully as it turned out, with Anoda as its second-in-command. Henryk Kozłowski described the events as follows:

... we set up a decoy on the road near Natolin to ambush what we assumed was Ambassador Lebedev's car. As always, he was wearing a uniform and in the company of a woman. The vehicle was an open deck BMW with a military driver. Our decoy [an Opel which was to block the road, while some of the men in the unit were in a Mercedes parked nearby] turned out to be abortive. The driver did not stop but only slowed down and deftly bypassed the roadblock, driving onto the narrow-gauge railroad track which ran parallel to the road. Fearing a shootout with the loss of the [prospective] hostage and his driver, I decided not to order my men to stop the automobile with a round of fire as it was passing us, hoping that we would be able to have another go within the next few days... . The Russian in full dress looked in our direction but did not say a word. All of us were armed and wearing uniforms, we looked like an ordinary [Polish] army unit.<sup>28</sup>

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26 The Domestic Delegation's tasks were as follows: to consolidate the military resistance movement; to keep the Polish government-in-exile\* informed about the situation in Poland; to protect the inhabitants and resistance organizations against the domestic (Communist) and Soviet security forces; to apply patriotic, pro-independence, anti-Soviet propaganda to influence the men serving in the (Communist) Polish Forces; to cooperate with the London-based Polish authorities for the airlifting and transfer of correspondence, funds, material resources, and personnel; and to support Stanisław Mikołajczyk\* and his associates in opposition to the Communists.

27 Józef Rybicki (1901–1986), platoon commander in the Fourth Company of the Bartkiewicz Group; after the Warsaw Uprising head of Kedyw in the AK's Chief Command.

28 Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy ...*, 346. A description of this abortive operation is also to be found in AIPN, 01236/379, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Witolda Morawskiego [Minutes of the interrogation of suspect Witold Morawski], April 6, 1948, 23–24. See also Steyer, 73–74. Steyer was to pull a sack over the Soviet ambassador's head. The fact that this task was delegated to him was later used

Actually, the man in the car which Kozłowski’s men tried to stop was not General Lebedev but the military attaché General Maslov, and most probably the Soviets did not even notice it was a decoy set up to ambush them.

On August 21, 1945, Radosław, who was in prison at the time, ordered his men to come out into the open,\* and on September 4 he was released.<sup>29</sup> Many of the veterans of the AK’s Radosław Group were persuaded by their commander that there was no point in continuing to fight any longer and instead that they should join in the work to restore and rebuild the country, and get an education. They followed their commander’s advice, taking the opportunity of the amnesty guaranteed them on the grounds of a decree issued on July 22, 1945.<sup>30</sup> Kmita’s Detached Unit ended its operations on August 6, 1945, when Col. Jan Rzepecki, second-in-command of Nie and commander of the Domestic Delegation for the Armed Forces, issued an order to disband the Domestic Delegation.<sup>31</sup>

On September 15, 1945, Jan Rodowicz and a group of about a dozen colleagues appeared before the Liquidation Committee set up for the disbanding of the AK and “came out into the open,” that is publicly declared they were members of the AK. For a time, he worked in the Committee’s

against him during the investigation. He was surprised that the interrogators knew the details of the plan to kidnap the Soviet ambassador, which they had obtained from their informers.

- 29 Four days later, Radosław, acting as Delegate for the Armed Forces in the Central Region, issued a declaration in a newspaper informing the public that he had disclosed the fact he had served in the resistance movement (“Z konspiracji – do jawnej, twórczej pracy. Deklaracja Delegata Sił Zbrojnych Obszaru Centralnego AK o wyjściu z konspiracji,” *Głos Ludu*, September 9, 1945). For the motives for Col. Mazurkiewicz’s decision and the course the disclosure campaign took, see Nowożycki, 106–111. Not all of Mazurkiewicz’s men took a favorable view of disclosure: they did not trust the Communists, and some even accused Col. Mazurkiewicz of betraying the cause (see Wachowicz, 109–110).
- 30 According to Communist security officers, the only reason why Col. Mazurkiewicz engaged in the disclosure campaign was to give AK veterans a chance to resume a “legal” lifestyle, helping them to find a job, get medical care if they were sick or invalids, and procure the release of those held in prison by the security service. In “Amnestia 1945 r. i deklaracja Jana Mazurkiewicza Radosława” (in *Komunistyczne amnestie lat 1945–1947. Drogi do ‘legalizacji’ czy zagłady?*, ed. Wojciech J. Muszyński, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2012), Tomasz Łabuszewski writes that the real objective behind this move was to create conducive conditions for further, long-term undercover operations against the Communist authorities).
- 31 See “Rozkaz likwidacyjny Delegatury Sił Zbrojnych na Kraj, 6 VIII 1945 r.,” in *Armia Krajowa w dokumentach 1939–1945*, Vol. 6: *Uzupelnienia*, eds. Tadeusz Pełczyński et al., Ossolineum: 1991, 484–485.

office, collecting information on his comrades in arms who had gone missing during the Warsaw Uprising.<sup>32</sup> Earlier, he had buried the cache of weapons belonging to Kmita's Detached Unit Kozłowski had passed on to him.<sup>33</sup> The fact that he had hidden away these arms and not handed them in when he made his declaration before the Committee would be used as the chief allegation against the Zośkaites a few years later.

For many AK veterans, coming out of the organization's underground structures was not so much a surrender in the face of the realities of the time, as a decision based on their realization that the Second Resistance had a very weak structure and was hugely infiltrated by the Communist security service, and under its close surveillance. This was confirmed in the summer of 1945 when Radosław and about eighty persons closely connected with him were arrested. A temporary, or even apparent stop to anti-Communist activities let them hope that the new authorities would relax their vigilance and the MBP's repressive measures against them would be toned down. The Zośkaites were hoping that this would let them calmly look forward to a favorable turn of events on the international scene auspicious from their point of view, such as a war breaking out between the Western countries and the Soviet Union, which a large part of society thought was inevitable and merely a matter of time. That would weaken the Communist regime imposed on Poland.

We should also consider the fact that the campaign to get these youngsters to come forward and declare offered them a breather. For several years, they had been engaged in dangerous clandestine operations against two ruthless totalitarian regimes.<sup>34</sup> And we must not forget that not many of the combatants of Battalion Zośka lived to see the fighting stop. As many as 360 out of the original 520—nearly 70 % of them—were killed in action during the War.<sup>35</sup> These losses show the extent of the sacrifice the patriotic young people of Warsaw had made. Thanks to Col. Mazurkiewicz's appeal, these ex-AK men could resume and arrange their private affairs, pick up the threads of their interrupted education, find a job etc. Unfortunately, the coming out campaign was also a boon for the security service, which obtained information who it should be keeping an eye on.<sup>36</sup>

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32 Trojan, 283.

33 See Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy ...*, 253.

34 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Stanisław Rodowicz, a relative of Jan Rodowicz, was murdered by the Soviets in Katyn.\* (Lipiński, *Anoda...*, 69).

35 Borkiewicz-Celińska, 679.

36 A document drafted in January 1946 by members of Zrzeszenie "Wolność i Niezawisłość" (the Union of Freedom and Independence),\* or Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (the Polish People's Party),\* "The way 'security' is understood here follows a logical line, that someone who took an active part in the resistance

Like many of his wartime comrades in arms, in the fall of 1945 Jan Rodowicz went up to university. He started by enrolling in the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at the Warsaw University of Technology.<sup>37</sup> Problems due to the arm injury he sustained during the Uprising prevented him from applying for the Faculty of Architecture, which would have been more in line with his interests and career plans. It was not until 1947, once he was able to cope with technical drawing after a long spell of convalescence, that he transferred to Architecture.<sup>38</sup>

Alongside his university studies, Jan Rodowicz also engaged in social work. One of the projects he co-organized was the exhumation of those of Battalion Zośka who had fallen in action, locating them under the ruins, and having them buried in the Powązki cemetery. He drew up a register of those who had gone missing and tried to get his comrades in arms to make a written record of their recollections of the period under German occupation and save the surviving documents to serve as the basis for the Battalion’s archive. This encouraged Zośka boys to keep in touch with each other, and one of the outcomes were the group excursions they made to winter camps, which were also attended by members of other insurgent units. The first of these winter events was organized by Henryk Kozłowski in Zakopane at the turn of 1945 and 1946. About 40 persons attended it. The next one was in Szklarska Poręba, at the turn of 1946 and 1947; and the third and last one was held in Karpacz, with 25 participants, at the turn of 1947 and 1948.<sup>39</sup> The winter camps were organized like scouts’ jamborees, and integrated

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against the Germans will never be passively reconciled to the idea of another country, another neighbor using similar methods,” Bogusław Kopka and Grzegorz Majchrzak, “Raport o służbie bezpieczeństwa publicznego z 1946 roku,” *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, no.1 (3), (2003): 258).

37 In September 1945, Jan Rodowicz applied for admission to the Telecommunications Faculty of Państwowa Wyższa Szkoła Elektroniki i Budowy Maszyn (an electrical and mechanical engineering college), but in November of the same year decided to start on a course of study at the Warsaw University of Technology.

38 According to Barbara Wachowicz in *Antologia reportażu polskiego* (319), all six marks in Jan Rodowicz’s student record book (No. 21102 in the University’s register) for the 1947/1948 academic year were the top grade (*bardzo dobry* – “very good”) and one of them, for Technical Drawing, was *bdb+* (“very good+”). However, Mariusz Olczak (351) writes that Jan Rodowicz’s marks were not quite so good.

39 For more on AK veterans’ everyday lives and community work in the veterans’ association in 1945–1949, see Nowożycki, 111–114. Veterans of the Uprising saw each other at weddings, to celebrate each others’ name-days and birthdays, and also for the baptisms of their children. These social events did not have much in common with anti-Communist resistance activities. In 2009, Jan Rodowicz’s friend, Wojciech “Korczak” Świątkowski (1922–2021, cadet sergeant,

Zośka veterans into a close-knit community. Apart from recreation, they also offered the opportunity for relatively unhampered discussion on the contemporary geo-political situation. Some of their participants made no bones about their negative attitude to the Communist authorities. Years later, Henryk “Halicz” Kończykowski,<sup>40</sup> one of the distinguished Zośkaites, recalled, “We were almost a hundred-percent sure there would be a Third World War .... We had a [hidden] cache of arms, because you had to be ready for war.”<sup>41</sup>

Jan Rodowicz was one of the Zośkaites who found it hardest to reconcile himself to Communist rule in Poland. During meetings in the circle of their closest, most trustworthy friends, these young people made general plans for what they would do when the right time came. On January 25, 1949, Sławomir “Prus” Słubicki,<sup>42</sup> another of Anoda’s friends, was being interrogated by the MBP once the Zośka Case had gotten underway, and made the following statement, “Jan Rodowicz told me that coming out into the open ... was merely a sham because they had handed over only a negligible part of their weapons. ... He also said that the organization’s members were still in contact with one another ... so that, in the event of an armed conflict, they could continue to engage in sabotage behind the lines of the armies taking part in the fighting. He told me that Zośka was organized like a cadre designed to ... rally sabotage units ..., and Battalion Zośka men would command those units.”<sup>43</sup>

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second-in-command of the First Company of Battalion Parasol), said in an interview, “They accused us [in 1949] of continuing to keep in touch with each other, that we were still friends, just as we had been under German occupation and that it was all against the new government. That’s what the charges were” (MPW Collections, Archiwum Historii Mówionej [Oral History Archive, hereinafter AHM], Wywiad z Wojciechem Zygmuntem Świątkowskim [Interview of Wojciech Zygmunt Świątkowski], January 15, 2009).

40 Henryk Kończykowski (1924–2016), senior rifleman of the fourth group in the Third (“Felek”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka.

41 Quoted after Jarosław Wróblewski, *Zośkowiec*, Warszawa: Fronda, 2013, 370.

42 Sławomir Słubicki (1923–1975), rifleman of the Third (“Felek”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka.

43 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Protokół przesłuchania Sławomira Słubickiego, January 25, 1949, [Minutes of Słubicki’s interrogation], 317. During the investigation, Col. Mazurkiewicz gave the following explanation why they hid some of their weapons: “In late 1945, I learned from Kozłowski that some of the men from Battalion Zośka who had come clear had not handed in all of their weapons ... I told Kozłowski to collect up all the weapons and keep them safe pending orders from me ... I did not hand those weapons over to the MBP because my Zośka unit had been registered by the MBP as the unit which had handed in all of its weapons. If I now disclosed ... the possession of a new cache of arms, there

Although it does not seem right from the point of view of the methodology of historical research to take the minutes drawn up during the interrogations at face value (I will discuss this point at length in the next chapter), yet other extant relations also show that during their winter rallies, Zośka men did indulge in discussions on a prospective Third World War and their part in it.<sup>44</sup> Nonetheless, like Agnieszka Pietrzak, I have to observe that most of the Radosław veterans who attended the winter camps were not engaged in Second Resistance operations. The gaps in source materials as well as the fact that reliable research could not start until 1989, by which time there were not many eyewitnesses of these events left, created obstacles to the determination of the real extent of these undercover operations. The surviving minutes of Zośkaite interrogations could not provide clinching evidence due to the small degree of credibility these documents present.<sup>45</sup>

AK veterans who availed themselves of the opportunity offered by the amnesty did so to take care of their own affairs better than they had been able to do up to that time, get over their wartime trauma and try to settle down to a normal life. Yet, not all of them reconciled themselves to the notion that their work in the resistance had come to an end. Banking on the brief spell when the MBP seemingly relaxed its pressure on them, even the most diehard anti-Communists among the Zośkaites tried to make the best possible use of the last years of their youth, which they could now live in peace. Alas, they did not realize how profoundly the MBP was invigilating their community. Hence, the relative breathing space the Communists

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could have been legal consequences for my men.” (AAN, Prokuratura Generalna, Biuro Prezydialne, 4/676, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Mazurkiewicza [General Prosecutor’s Office, President’s Office, 4/676, Minutes of the interrogation of Jan Mazurkiewicz], December 1, 1950, 29–30). Years later, Zośka men said they did not hand in all of their weapons because they were attached to them, and also because they wanted to keep them for “self-defense” (see Krupa, 57–58).

44 In a conversation with me on June 23, 2015, Henryk Kończykowski said that if a Third World War had broken out, the Zośkaites would certainly have retrieved the weapons they had buried underground and joined in the fighting against the Communists. He said that the weapons they had buried, at least those items he was responsible for, were in good condition and could be put to use immediately if the need arose. On the other hand, he also said that although many of the insurgents had not come to terms with Communist rule in Poland, nonetheless after 1945 they recognized the need to adapt to a certain extent to the reality, waiting for further developments. Jan Rodowicz, for example, wanted to graduate from Warsaw University of Technology and work as an architect in Warsaw’s reconstruction and restoration program.

45 Pietrzak, *Powojenna konspiracja...*, 223.

granted them starting with the amnesty was but a lull, a calm before the storm about to break out in the form of the Zośka Case.

Here I will introduce Major Wiktor Herer, the character who played such a vital part in the predicament that AK veterans faced in the late 1940s. He was the man who helped the Communist decision-makers put their plans into practice. I think it would be interesting to compare this MBP officer's career with the story of Jan Rodowicz. Both were deeply committed to the ideals of their youth, for which they were ready to fight and die. But while Anoda became a symbol of the Christian and patriotic values for the next generations, Wiktor Herer continued to be a staunch supporter of the Communist ideology practically until the 1960s and never faced up to his past.

### Wiktor Herer<sup>46</sup>

Herer was born into a Jewish family on January 19, 1920, in Cernăuți, Romania (now Chernivtsi, Ukraine), as the only child of Michał Herer and his wife Zofia née Fryling. In the same year, the Herer family moved to Lwów (now Lviv, Ukraine). Wiktor's parents were office workers, his father worked in the wood industry, and his mother was employed by a social insurance company. In the questionnaire Wiktor Herer filled in after the War for his MBP employer, he described his social background as "petty bourgeois."<sup>47</sup>

Wiktor's father was a member of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine,\* which must certainly have had an effect on his son's political opinions. Perhaps the professional experience of his mother, who always said she was neither a member of, nor sympathized with any particular political party but at work saw individuals who did not get the right welfare or support from the State, may have prompted young Wiktor's choice of a political outlook and go for the ostensibly highly attractive vision of a Marxist version of social justice. Marxism offered a set of simple solutions to all the socio-political problems challenging the Second Polish Republic.

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46 I have published most of the basic information on Wiktor Herer in my article "Od 'utrwalacza władzy ludowej' do roli doradcy Solidarności – zmienne koleje losu profesora Wiktora Herera," in *Granice kompromisu. Naukowcy wobec 'aparatu władzy ludowej,'* ed. Piotr Franaszek, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej, 2015, 100–124. Herer's biography has been reconstructed to a large extent on the basis of the information he put into his personal questionnaires and documents. However, these sources should be treated cautiously because not all the information in them has been cross-checked against other sources.

47 AIPN, 0193/2139, Wiktor Herer, Ankieta specjalna [Special questionnaire], September 10, 1945, page 12.

But we should bear in mind that in the wake of the Polish-Bolshevik War of 1919–1920, Polish society loathed Communism so much that throughout the country, perhaps with the exception of its capital Warsaw, the only people who sympathized with Communism were individuals from the lowest classes of society who were not influential at all and saw no other prospects to improve their situation.<sup>48</sup>

In 1930, Herer started his high school education, at IX Gimnazjum Państwowe in Lwów. In 1934, he joined a youth organization called Pionier, which had a membership of the offspring of “revolutionary” activists and was controlled by Komunistyczny Związek Młodzieży Polskiej (the Young Polish People’s Communist Union), but in the same year he was caught by the police in the act of distributing illegal leaflets in public places and expelled from school. At this time, he made numerous contacts with people he would keep in touch and work with after the War in Poland under Communist rule. One of Herer’s most influential associates whose acquaintance he made in this period was Julia Brystiger.<sup>49</sup>

In 1935, Herer appeared before a juvenile court in connection with the illegal leaflets and was acquitted. In the same year, he left for Warsaw, where he attended a private high school, from which he graduated in 1938.

In Warsaw, he supported himself on an allowance from his mother and money he earned by giving private lessons, yet he continued to engage in political activism. In 1935–1938, he was involved in the activities of a youth organization called Związek Niezależnej Młodzieży Socjalistycznej (the Union of Young Independent Socialists), under an alias, “Adaś.” However, there is no information in the records preserved in the archives on the exact

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48 Communists who lived in prewar Warsaw were not so socially deprived. See, for instance, Elżbieta Kowalczyk, ed., *Komuniści w międzywojennej Warszawie*, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2014, *passim*.

49 Julia Brystiger moved to Lwów in 1929. In 1931–1935, she was the editor and publisher of a Communist weekly entitled *Przegląd Współczesny*. In 1933–1937, she was a member of the Communist Party of Western Ukraine. In 1937, she was arrested and sentenced to 2 years in prison. When the Red Army invaded Lwów in 1939, she stayed in the city and was the secretary of the local (oblast) branch of International Red Aid (AIPN, 01208/1293/J, Życiorys Julii Brystiger [Julia Brystiger, CV], February 5, 1966, page 4). For the Communist movement in prewar Lwów and measures to counteract it, see Marcin Dziubak, “Zwalczanie ruchu komunistycznego w województwie lwowskim przez Policję Państwową II Rzeczypospolitej,” in *Komuniści w II Rzeczypospolitej. Ludzie - struktury - działalność*, eds. Marcin Bukała and Mariusz Krzysztofński, Rzeszów: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej -Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2015, 421–446.

nature of Herer's activities. Communist groups were under police surveillance, and particular activists would be detained shortly before a forthcoming operation and released without charges being brought against them. This happened to Herer, too. In 1936, he spent six weeks of his summer holidays (July and August) in prison at Kosów Huculski.<sup>50</sup>

After leaving school, Herer returned to Lwów and applied for admission to university but was unsuccessful, most probably chiefly because of his police record. It was not until the Red Army entered the city in September 1939 that he managed to become a student of the Faculty of Agricultural Science of Lwów University of Technology, from where he transferred in 1940 to the Faculty of Economics of a new educational establishment called Instytut Handlu Radzieckiego we Lwowie (the Lwów Institute of Soviet Trade).

Herer's interests, alongside his studies, included Communist socio-political activities. Under Soviet occupation the conditions for this were good. In 1939–1940, he was the manager of a local youth club for working-class youngsters and served as secretary of the branch of the All-Union Communist Leninist Young People's Union in the Faculty of the Agricultural Sciences of Lwów University of Technology.<sup>51</sup>

When Germany attacked the Soviet Union, Herer evacuated east. He stayed for a short spell in Kharkov Oblast, and in October 1941 moved to Tbilisi, and until 1943 was a student of the Faculty of Economics at the Joseph Stalin University. His income came from a scholarship and occasional blue collar jobs. His parents were killed by the Germans.

In June 1943, on completing his course of study and shortly before his final examinations, Herer volunteered for the First (Kościuszko) Infantry Division,\* which was being created at the time. In July, he completed a five-week training course for educational officers,\* and until October served as second-in-command of the provisions platoon attached to the Fourth Reserve Infantry Regiment, in the rank of warrant officer of its educational officers' corps. Antoni Michalak gives the following account of the part educational officers were expected to play in the First Infantry Division:

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50 AAN, Akta osobowe [Personal records], Z 1334, Ankieta uczestnika walki o wyzwolenie narodowe i społeczne ludu polskiego w okresie do 1939 [Questionnaire for combatants in the fight for the national and social liberation of the people of Poland to 1939], October 7, 1949, unpaginated. For the methods of operations used by the Polish police, see Robert Litwiński, "W imię polskiej racji stanu. Aparat policyjny II Rzeczypospolitej wobec działalności komunistycznej," in *Komuniści w II Rzeczypospolitej...*, 399–420.

51 AIPN, 00193/2139, Odpis życiorysu złożonego przez Wiktora Herera [Transcript of Wiktor Herer's Curriculum Vitae], October 12, 1949, 32.

There were different attitudes and mindsets among the men. Some new arrivals were prejudiced, distrustful of the officers, and had serious reservations about the program of the ZPP (Związek Patriotów Polskich, Union of Polish Patriots).<sup>\*</sup> You could sense that their sympathies were with the London-based Polish government-in-exile.<sup>\*</sup> Some who reported in the Kościuszko Division could not bring themselves to believe that it was a Polish force. ... Those who had been deported with their families from Western Ukraine and Western Byelorussia to distant parts of the Soviet Union, places with a severe climate, harbored a deep grudge on account of the wrong that had befallen them. Others were irritated by the ZPP's position on Poland's eastern border. ... Quite a few of us were wondering whether we could make soldiers out of them and lead them to battle. How could they be won over? How could their political awareness be changed? And who was to do it? Only the educational officers. They were the only ones who knew the right arguments to access the mindset of these men.<sup>52</sup>

As this passage shows, Herer was tasked with a duty that was entrusted only to the best, ideologically impeccable Communists, who enjoyed the respect of their comrades. The work they had to accomplish was difficult: those who undertook it were not only required to be well-versed in sociopolitical matters, but also had to be intelligent and have good interpersonal skills. These were rare qualities in the community of Polish Communists, whose top ranks had been decimated in the Stalinist purges before the War, and later by the German occupying authorities.

In January 1944, Herer was appointed second-in-command for political affairs in the artillery unit at the Tambov artillery training center, which provided a course for Polish artillerymen. From January to March 1944, he held the post of propaganda instructor in the Ninth Infantry Regiment of the Third Infantry Division; and thereafter was transferred to an identical post in the Third Light Artillery Regiment of the same Division and stayed in this post until November 1944, thanks to which he was able to observe the drama of the Warsaw Uprising from the east bank of the Vistula.<sup>53</sup> \* From November 1944 until March 1945, he performed the same duties in

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52 Antoni Michalak, *Z przebytej drogi*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1986, 115. He adds the following observation: "Luckily, there were a lot of good, politically mature and experienced Communists in the Division. They were the ones the commanding officers appointed as educational officers" (116).

53 In May 1944, Wiktor Herer was also employed as a lecturer in a training college for political and educational officers stationed in Sumy (now Ukraine). Michalak writes, "The selection criteria we applied to shortlist candidates included qualities like politico-ideological approval of the ZPP, a developed political stance, willingness to work in the politico-educational apparatus, a high degree of intelligence, and educational qualifications of at least seven years of elementary school" (156).

the Third Reserve Infantry Regiment of the First Army of the Polish Forces. In March 1945, Herer was appointed to the post of political instructor in the Fourth Infantry Division, and in May of that year he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant,<sup>54</sup> continuing to serve in this post until July 1945. On May 8, 1945, his combat career came to an end when his unit reached the environs of Berlin and thereafter returned to Warsaw.<sup>55</sup> In December 1945, he joined the PPR (Polska Partia Robotnicza, the Polish Workers' Party).\*

The Fourth Infantry Division provided the basic human resources for KBW (Korpus Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego; the Internal Security Corps),\* so Herer now became a KBW man.<sup>56</sup> He was appointed senior instructor in the KBW's Political and Educational Board and held this office until September 1945.<sup>57</sup> He lodged a request for a transfer to the MBP, which was granted and he received his new posting on September 10, 1945. Three days later,

54 When interviewed by Polish prosecutors in the 1990s, Wiktor Herer tried to withhold information that during the Second World War he was a political officer.

55 Wiktor Herer was decorated with the following medals and distinctions for his contribution to victory over Nazi Germany on the eastern front: Odznaka Grunwaldzka (the Grunwald Badge, July 22, 1945), Medal Zwycięstwa i Wolności (the Victory and Liberation Medal, October 26, 1945), and Medal za Odrę, Nysę i Bałtyk (the Oder, Neisse, and Baltic Medal, October 26, 1945). In all probability, he did not take part in the fighting on the frontline, as some of these awards might suggest, but served on the rear. For descriptions of these distinctions, see Kazimierz Madej, *Polskie symbole wojskowe 1943–1978: godło, sztandary, order, odznaczenia i oznaki Ludowego Wojska Polskiego*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Ministerstwa Obrony Narodowej, 1980.

56 In 1977, when Wiktor Herer applied for membership of the veterans' association ZBoWiD (Związek Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację, the Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy), he submitted a declaration that from May 24 to September 12, 1945, he had served in army units "fighting against the reactionary underground resistance movement" (Archiwum Urzędu ds. Kombatantów i Osób Represjonowanych [Archive of the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression, hereinafter AUdsKiOR], K208356, Zaświadczenie wojskowego komendanta uzupełnień Warszawa-Mokotów dla Wiktora Herera [Certificate issued for Wiktor Herer by the commanding officer of the Warszawa-Mokotów recruitment board], June 14, 1977, 2). Participation in the fighting against the pro-independence resistance movement meant an additional retirement bonus for officers who made this declaration, because it doubled their years in service, so it was a popular claim, even if the claimant never took part in the fighting against the "gangs" (Musiał, "Jak badać akta ...," 25).

57 In the 1990s, Wiktor Herer made a point of insisting that during his service in the Polish Forces he never performed any military intelligence or counterintelligence duties (AIPN, 2188/680, Protokół przesłuchania Wiktora Herera [Minutes of Wiktor Herer's interview], October 15, 1992, 15).

he was appointed deputy head of Subdepartment Four of Department Five\* in the MBP. His superior was Julia Brystiger, whom he had known since his prewar Communist operations in Lwów.<sup>58</sup>

Department Five handled sociopolitical matters,<sup>59</sup> and Subdepartment Four comprised three sections responsible for the surveillance of various young people's institutions which were recognized as legal. Section One controlled the universities and colleges; Section Two monitored secondary schools; and Section Three supervised sports and other organizations.<sup>60</sup>

Herer's decision to become a member of the MBP's staff was deliberate and absolutely of his own making. He knew very well what kind of tasks he would be working on. To join the MBP's security units, especially Department Five, Subdepartment Four, Herer must have resorted to his personal connections. The source materials I had at my disposal do not say this literally, yet it may be reasonably assumed. That is what many of the individuals did who eventually landed on the top rungs of the career ladder in the security service. Their connection with the MBP commenced with a private word or two with old friends in high places in the Ministry.

Herer's service in the MBP was one of the highlights in his CV. He was certainly an asset for its human resources because of his stable, trustworthy

58 In the statements Herer made in his diverse questionnaires on his "revolutionary" activities before September 1, 1939, he usually named Julia Brystiger as one of the persons who could testify to the truth of the information he gave. We also know that he kept in touch with her on a regular basis at least until the 1970s.

59 For details on the organization of this department, see Zbigniew Nawrocki, "Struktura aparatu bezpieczeństwa," in *Aparat bezpieczeństwa w Polsce. Kadra kierownicza*, Vol. 1: 1944–1956, ed. Krzysztof Szewczyk, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2005, 34–35.

60 One of Herer's duties was the invigilation of the scouting organizations, as shown by the fact that he was one of the addressees of a confidential report on the situation in the scouts, drafted on November 27, 1947 by Col. Edward Braniewski, head of Section Two of the Politico-Educational Central Board of the Polish Forces. The other recipients of this document were Gen. Marian Szychalski, First Deputy Minister for National Defense; Gen. Piotr Jaroszewicz, Chief Quartermaster of the Polish Forces; Gen. Stanisław Popławski, Second Deputy Minister for National Defense; Roman Zambrowski, Member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the PZPR;\* Franciszek Mazur, Member of the Secretariat of the Central Committee of the PZPR; Stanisław Skrzyszewski, Minister of Education; and Aleksander Kowalski, Chairman of the Central Board of Związek Walki Młodych (ZWM, Young People's Fighting Union, a Polish Communist youth organization). Krzysztof Persak, *Odrodzenie harcerstwa w 1956 roku*, Warszawa: Trio, 1996, 26. For the Communists' negative attitude to the Polish scouting movement following its postwar restoration, see Persak, 11–62.

political views and his educational qualifications, which were very good for the early postwar years: he was an economist, spoke Russian and Ukrainian, and also knew French and German.

Herer performed his duties so well that in January 1946 he was promoted to captain, and as of May 10 of that year, officially became head of Subdepartment Four (unofficially, he had been responsible for his subdepartment ever since he came to it). In July 1946, he was awarded the Silver Cross of Merit (*Srebrny Krzyż Zasługi*), the first of the three occasions on which this distinction was conferred on him. In December of the same year, he was promoted to major. Shortly before his promotion to captain, his superior officer wrote of him in her reference letter:

[He is] self-reliant, highly gifted, brisk and well-informed, skillful, and has a knack for recruiting agents. He thinks in the categories of a manager handling his business on a nationwide scale. He reacts instantly to news of facts and all manner of phenomena in the provinces. He issues clear and precise recommendations for the [Warsaw] Voivodeship Internal Security Office on how to deal with matters as soon as they come up. He expects a high standard of work performance from his subordinates but does not have enough patience to teach them how to improve and work better. He keeps to a very high moral standard. He has been awarded a financial bonus for good work.<sup>61</sup>

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61 AIPN, 0193/2139, Charakterystyka zastępcy naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP sporządzona przez dyrektora Departamentu V MBP [Character assessment for the deputy head of Subdepartment Four in Department Five of the MBP, compiled by the head of Department Five of the MBP], April 11, 1946, 69. A more probing assessment of Herer reads as follows: “Talented, working well with agents, good at recruiting and supervising agents. Very self-reliant, shows a lot of invaluable initiative, quick-witted. Fast to make decisions, though not always with due circumspection. Hard-working, though not always fully disciplined, in outcome of a misguided sense of self-sufficiency. Has management qualities but held back in his work by the want of a systematic approach. Strict with his subordinates but not always successful in winning their trust and fine-tuning them. ... Has an excellent innate intelligence but does not devote enough attention to self-education. Highly motivated ideologically, very courageous and honest. No addictions. Impulsiveness and lack of self-control are the [main] defect of his character. (AIPN, 0193/2139, Charakterystyka naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP Wiktora Herera [Character assessment of Wiktor Herer, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Five of the MBP, unpaginated, 71). Herer had a few small setbacks during his work in the security service. He lost his MBP employee’s ID card twice. On the first occasion, in November 1947, he was punished with three days of house arrest and a fine amounting to 50% of his income for the duration of the house arrest (AIPN, 0193/2139, Raport do ministra bezpieczeństwa publicznego w sprawie mjr. Wiktora Herera w związku z zagubieniem legitymacji służbowej [Report to the Minister of Public Security concerning the loss of Maj. Wiktor Herer’s employee’s ID card], December 30, 1947, 73). The second time it happened, almost

One of Maj. Herer's chief tasks was "the prevention of anti-State activities"—that is, counteracting any such operations which might be taken up by young veterans of the armed pro-independence resistance movement. He played a key role in the surveillance and figuring out of "suspicious elements" because he coordinated the work of his subordinates, made a personal commitment to the recruitment of new informers, received information from them, and interrogated detainees. This was undoubtedly the most sinister phase in his life, when he told Wiesław Chrzanowski,\* in words which later turned into an oft-cited catchphrase, "Our task is not merely to destroy you physically; we must also destroy you morally in the eyes of society."<sup>62</sup>

These words put Herer's opinions in a nutshell. Ever since his youngest years, he had been devoted to the Communist ideology and took a negative attitude to its opponents.<sup>63</sup> His conduct now followed logically from what he had done in the 1930s (and paid for it with a short term in prison). There was no pecuniary interest on his part; neither was he expecting any other kind of gain, unlike many others in the security services; it was the outcome of his genuine beliefs.<sup>64</sup> This state of affairs contributed to the good opinion

a year later (September 1948), he was again put under house arrest, this time for a week, again with the loss of 50% of his income (AIPN, 0193/2139, Raport do ministra bezpieczeństwa publicznego w sprawie mjr. Wiktora Herera w związku z zagubieniem legitymacji służbowej [Report to the Minister of Public Security concerning the loss of Maj. Wiktor Herer's employee's ID card], September 15, 1948, page 75).

62 Quoted after Czesław Leopold and Krzysztof Lechicki, *Więźniowie polityczni w Polsce 1945–1956*, Paris: Editions Spotkania, 1983, 15. In a somewhat different version, Herer is believed to have said to Chrzanowski on his second arrest in 1948, "You hoodwinked us, and we won't let you get off with it; we will destroy you, not only physically but morally as well" (quoted after Roman Graczyk, *Chrzanowski*, Warszawa: Świat Książki, 2013, 306). Herer was referring to Chrzanowski's behavior following his release after his first arrest (1946), when he signed a declaration to collaborate with the MBP. Chrzanowski started to keep a low profile and warned colleagues in the resistance movement, telling them what he had learned during his interrogations. Apparently Herer felt a special grudge against Chrzanowski also because, as a Jew, he loathed persons whose opinions were "nationalist."

63 In a conversation with me, Henryk Kończykowski recalled that in the opinion of Radosław veterans who had been interrogated by Herer, he was completely mesmerized by the Communist ideology and did not admit any discussion at all on its shortcomings.

64 Zdzisław Sadowski,\* Herer's erstwhile prisoner and later his colleague in academia, recalled many years later, "[Herer] used to say that when he was a student in Lwów, first he became a member of the Communist students' union, next he joined the army and in the natural course [of a career] was sent to the security service, and lo and behold, here he was now [in the interrogation room]" (Zdzisław

Herer's superiors had of him as well as to the effectiveness of his work and the esteem it was given, evidenced by more decorations being lavished on him. In July 1947, he was awarded a second Silver Cross of Merit, and a third one almost a year to the day later. There were also promotions ahead—to lieutenant colonel on July 18, 1949.

Herer's status in the Ministry soon turned him into an important figure in the security service. Not only was he running investigations and collecting the information obtained in the course of them, but he was also being invited to meetings attended by the most important persons in the State for matters like the scouts. This made him one of the MBP's chief strategists, giving him a certain amount of leverage in operations against dissidents who challenged the new reality.

Some persons whom Herer interrogated have said that he never used physical violence against them, he only applied verbal methods of persuasion and psychological manipulation. Often he would conduct an interrogation in a civilian suit, and his office did not look like a specially furnished interrogation room, it did not even have bars on its windows. Herer conducted investigations concerning members of legal youth organizations, so the repressiveness was smaller than if he had been interrogating members of illegal groups.

In a postwar statement, Wiesław Chrzanowski, who belonged to the combat organization Narodowa Organizacja Wojskowa (the National Military Organization)\* during the Warsaw Uprising, left the following recollection of the way Herer conducted interrogations:

I have to say that Herer himself [interrogated me] in a harsh tone, but there were no physical or other attempts to pressurize me. The first time they took me to his office, as soon as they brought me in, he said, "You will tell me about your espionage activities, exactly and with the full details." There was a typist sitting next to him and taking it [the minutes] down. I replied that I never had anything to do with it [espionage]. He said, "We'll see." But three days later, I think, he came to my dingy *literatka*,<sup>65</sup> it was on a Sunday, a day which was not supposed to be a working day, with no official hours on duty, took me to his room and we had a talk lasting

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Sadowski, *Przez ciekawe czasy. Rozmowy z Pawłem Kozłowskim o życiu, ludziach i zdarzeniach*, Warszawa: Polskie Towarzystwo Ekonomiczne and Instytut Nauk Ekonomicznych Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 2011, 72). Even though such a career was nothing out of the ordinary for prewar Communists, Herer definitely went too far in his interpretation of the events, passing on a suggestion to Sadowski that it was the random operation of the State that had propelled him into the security apparatus and that he was merely a not very significant cog in a powerful, historic machine to which he had to submit.

65 In the jargon of prisoners held in the jail of the MBP building, a *literatka* was a completely unfurnished cell for solitary confinement in the basement, marked with a letter (Polish *litera*, hence the name). Inmates held in a *literatka* had to sleep in

about two hours. It was like a sort of semi-social discussion in tone, though at times there were questions. For instance, he took out a copy of an émigré magazine called *Przegląd polityczny* and asked, “Who did you get it from?” I knew very well it ... had not been found ... during the search. He got a bit irritated and said, “Well, if your lot won, you’d hang us on those trees,” meaning the trees in Ujazdowski Park. “No need for so many,” I said, “there weren’t so many of you.” That annoyed him. But he wasn’t one [to use violence].<sup>66</sup>

Zdzisław Sadowski, another insurgent, an ex-member of Narodowe Siły Zbrojne (the National Armed Forces)\* who was arrested in November 1945, remembered Herer interrogating him in a similar manner:

I even liked my interrogation. The interrogator was an educated man. I knew he was carrying out his duty and I thought to myself that if my old organization ever came to power, perhaps I’d be the one who would have to perform the same task. So I didn’t bear any grudges against him. ... what I got was more of a conversation rather than an interrogation. We talked about what was going on in the country. ... He left a positive impression on me because ... I didn’t feel I was being interrogated, just having a discussion with an intelligent man ... he asked me what motivated me and told me about his motives.<sup>67</sup>

However, these recollections of Herer during an interrogation, especially Zdzisław Sadowski’s story, were not the only accounts we have of him from arrestees who met him at this time. They said that for a Communist security man, his personal deportment was fairly cultivated and made him stand out from his colleagues, but many of his subordinates behaved in a very different way.

Generally, interrogations followed a prearranged course and boiled down to an attempt to get suspects to admit to the charges, many of which were

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darkness on the floor, though sometimes the jailers switched on a glaring light which they kept on all day long (Leopold and Lechicki, 18).

66 MPW Collections, AHM, Wywiad z Wiesławem Chrzanowskim [Wiesław Chrzanowski Interview], May 10, 2007. One of the interesting details in Chrzanowski’s memoirs is his mention that he first met Herer before his arrest when he was an assistant at the SGH Warsaw School of Economics (known in 1949–1991 as Szkoła Główna Planowania i Statystyki, the Main School of Planning and Statistics) and made arrangements with Herer for the nostrification of the graduation certificate Herer had brought from Tbilisi. On April 14, 2015, Krzysztof Wyszowski told me that in the early 1980s Chrzanowski said that Herer had often “tormented him” during his incarceration, and on one occasion during an interrogation “almost tore his ear off” (quoted after Witold Bagieński, Sławomir Cenckiewicz, Antoni Macierewicz, and Piotr Woyciechowski, *Konfidencki*, Warszawa: Editions Spotkania, 2015, 385).

67 Sadowski, 70 and 72.

not true. If a suspect refused, the security men used brutal repressive measures against him, most definitely with the approval of their superiors.

The statement made by Henryk Kozłowski, who was detained shortly after Anoda's arrest, may serve as an example:

Herer ... neither resorted to violence nor used vulgar language, but he did put me in the *karzec* or doghouse,<sup>68</sup> [also there were] frequent interrogations with the use of a glaring, concentrated beam of electric light. He tried to mislead me with promises of a light sentence, or even letting bygones be bygones [i.e. forgetting about my purported transgressions] and a release if I confessed and owned up to all the charges and decided to "cooperate" ... on the investigation. He threatened that otherwise there would be a harsh investigation and my wife would be arrested. ... On the basis of these threats, I think he must have been the man who issued the order for my wife's arrest. [Junior investigative officer Tadeusz] Tomporski [nicknamed *Mały Bijak*, "Little Hitter" by the prisoners; he used to appear whenever Herer's persuasive methods brought no results], the chief investigator on my case, was a second lieutenant was at the time, I believe. He was a brutal, vulgar, short-tempered, cynical [man]. Already at his first interview with me on Koszykowa he beat me up and kicked me .... After my transfer to the Tenth Pavilion in Mokotów,\* he conducted long, intense, exhausting interrogations, hitting and kicking me, pulling my hair out, and making me squat and do frog jumps.<sup>69</sup>

Prisoners who refused to cooperate with the security men were treated brutally, though some, for instance Zdzisław Sadowski, only complained of getting poor meals; he said he was never hit by his interrogating officers and only divulged practically worthless information.<sup>70</sup> Incidentally, in the Thirteen Students' Trial, Sadowski got a low suspended sentence of just two years, which would mean that either he was not actively engaged in

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68 *Karzec* ("house of punishment," coined from the Polish word *karąć*, "to punish"), also called *psia buda* ("the doghouse"), was a small cell 120 cm (about 47 inches) in height with an entrance similar to the hole on a doghouse with a concrete floor and air vents at both ends. Prisoners who were disciplined were sent to the doghouse and had to sit there naked, several at a time. It was an extremely severe punishment and dangerous for their health. (Leopold and Lechicki, 18).

69 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Zeżnanie Henryka Kozłowskiego w Ottawie złożone w sprawie Jana Rodowicza "Anody" w ramach pomocy prokuratorskiej* [Statement made by Henryk Kozłowski in Ottawa for the mutual legal assistance of the Polish prosecutor's inquiry concerning Jan "Anoda" Rodowicz], unpaginated, 2 (copy).

70 It might be worthwhile to compare Zdzisław Sadowski's not very convincing description of the "game" he played with the security officers to avoid doing harm to his former colleagues but still keep the relatively bearable conditions he had in prison, with the experience of Wiesław Chrzanowski (see "Chrzanowski: Gdyby Sąd Lustracyjny uznał, że byłem agentem, to byłoby przekreślenie mojego życia," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, March 11–12, 2000).

anti-Communist operations or else the MBP boys were pleased with his performance during the investigation. Sadowski's claim that there was no physical violence during the investigations has to be rejected, or treated at best as an isolated instance, in view of his subsequent close connection with the Communist power structures.<sup>71</sup>

All this shows that Maj. Herer was a formidable adversary for those Zośkaites who did not come to terms with Communist rule in Poland.<sup>72</sup> Practically all of those who were arrested and held in the cellars on the Koszykowa premises must have come in contact with Herer.<sup>73</sup> It cannot be denied he was intelligent and had the right qualities for the job, both as regards his professional qualifications, which he had acquired during his period of service with the Polish Forces and the KBW, as well as his personal views, which were fully in line with the policy pursued at the time by the PPR.

Once I had examined the documents Maj. Herer compiled for his superiors, I was in a position to state unequivocally that he conducted his operations against patriotic Polish youngsters effectively, resolutely and unswervingly. He told his subordinates which individuals they were to keep under surveillance and extract information from, and supervised his network of informers, occasionally recruiting new snitches himself. The records I managed to access showed that it was thanks to the long-term work of his informers as well as of those "helping" colleagues from other departments that the security men collected the data which paved the way to Maj. Herer's biggest successes.<sup>74</sup> If it had not been for that recruitment effort, the MBP would not have achieved such a good insight into the social environment of the Radosław veterans and would have had a much harder time trying to obtain

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71 On June 1, 1966, Zdzisław Sadowski was registered as a secret collaborator code-named Robert, working for Subdepartment Six of Department Three in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (AIPN, 00945/1970, Akta osobowe TW "Robert"[Personal records of Secret Collaborator "Robert"]). The security officers did not require Professor Sadowski to sign a declaration of intent to collaborate with them. His collaboration ended in 1969.

72 On p. 19 of their book, Leopold and Lechicki call Maj. Herer "one of the MBP's best department heads."

73 Leopold and Lechicki, 20.

74 MBP officers planted a dozen informers in the Radosław Group veterans. It is impossible to determine whether they were all active in the period immediately preceding the Zośka Case, or whether this was the total number of secret agents including those recruited after 1948. As yet, no one has managed to ascertain the particulars of all the informers; see Pietrzak, *Żołnierze Batalionu Armii Krajowej "Zośka" ...*, 67.

useful leads for the subsequent investigation.<sup>75</sup> Having just one informer planted in the right place (and the records show that the security officers were striving all the time to recruit more and more snitches) gave Maj. Herer a broad overview of the situation, letting him choose a convenient time for a final showdown with the veterans of the AK Radosław Group and taking them by surprise.

### “Górnik,” “Odwet,” “Zaręba,” and others

A substantial contribution to the invigilation and arrest of the Zośkaites came from informers using the aliases “Górnik” (Miner), “Odwet” (Revenge), and “Zaręba” (a fairly common Polish surname).

As I have already written, until recently historians did not know the identity of informer Górnik, so it will be a good idea to take a closer look at his persona. This will offer an opportunity to present an interesting case study of how easy it was for some individuals with patriotic roots to cross over to the other side and serve in the Communist security apparatus. There was a connection between Górnik and the operations of Odwet, another informer I mentioned in the Introduction, and with the background to the recruitment of Zaręba, Maj. Herer’s best informer in the 1940s. I am going to describe all of them in this subchapter.

Adam Abramowicz, aka Górnik (the alias he used in his operations as an MBP informer), was born into the family of Antoni Abramowicz and his wife Cecylia née Skubiszewska, on February 15, 1925 at Czemierniki in Lubartów Powiat\* in the Voivodeship\* of Lublin. His parents were ethnic Poles and came from a peasant background. His father was employed for many years as a manager of large agricultural estates, and in 1933 purchased a property of 30 hectares including farmland.

Adam Abramowicz attended elementary school in Czemierniki and continued his education in 1938–1939 in a Lublin middle school for boys called

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75 As the security officers themselves said, “There were tremendous difficulties ... with the invigilation and eradication of the Radosław Group. ... The ranks of these AK men were very close-knit. They did not admit outsiders, that is anyone who did not have a background of combat in the AK. So it was difficult for the security service to infiltrate the ranks of the AK with its agents. Another significant factor was the social background of the members of Radosław. Except for a few individuals, they all came from the Warsaw intelligentsia, which was hostile to rule by peasants and the working class.” (AIPN, 0189/51, E. Żuchowska, *Charakterystyka nr 50 nielegalnej organizacji poakowskiej Zgrupowania ‘Radosława’* [Description of the illegal ex-AK organization known as the Radosław Group], Warszawa, 1977, 36–37).

Wyższe Gimnazjum Biskupie Męskie, run by the local Roman Catholic diocese. He had just completed his first year at the school when the War broke out. He lived in Czemierniki, helping his parents with the farm and continuing his education at home until mid-1942, when he moved to Warsaw. I have not been able to determine the reason for his move, but once he was in the capital, he attended clandestine classes offered by the teaching staff of the middle and secondary (high) school known before the War as Gimnazjum i Liceum imienia Jana Zamoyskiego, which the German occupying authorities had closed down. He graduated from this secret high school in the spring of 1944. In 1941–1944, the future MBP informer was employed as a fitter’s assistant in a mechanic’s workshop on Czerniakowska.

In January 1943, Abramowicz joined the AK, apparently introduced by Kazimierz Rybak, and took the alias “Fałat.” He attended a clandestine cadets’ course, graduating as a cadet corporal in the fall of 1943 and becoming an instructor training prospective combatants. On the basis of the information he passed on to the MBP officer who recruited him in 1947, we learn that in February 1944 he was promoted to cadet sergeant and awarded the Cross of Valor, and that in May 1944 he took part in an operation to seize a cache of arms from a German convoy, for which he was promoted to lieutenant and presented for the conferral of a second Cross of Valor (purportedly, the order for this award went missing). I have not managed to find documentary evidence to confirm most of this information on Fałat’s involvement in resistance operations.<sup>76</sup> In 1953, Abramowicz himself denied it in a statement delivered to his superiors in the MBP:

I never took part in any operations, and if I ever said I did, it was only to brag about the heroism expected of me. Looking back at my past and examining it thoroughly, [I can only say] it was an enthusiastic flash in the pan ... I never got any of the honors I was promised.<sup>77</sup>

In mid-July 1944, Abramowicz left Warsaw for Czemierniki to visit his father, who was seriously ill, and as a result did not take part in the Warsaw Uprising. Unable to return to Warsaw, he decided to join the Sixth Company

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<sup>76</sup> Adam Abramowicz was not on the list of recipients of the Cross of Valor. Adam Abramowicz the informer Górnik should not be confused with Father Adam Abramowicz, a chaplain and a major in the AK, who joined in 1942, used the noms-de-guerre “Stary” and “Romuald” and was decorated with the Gold Independence Cross with Swords (*Złoty Krzyż Niepodległości z Mieczami*) and the Cross of Valor. See Julian Humeński, ed., *Udział kapelanów w drugiej wojnie światowej*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego & Akademia Teologii Katolickiej, 1984, 477.

<sup>77</sup> AIPN, 00168/216, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora ‘Górnik’ [Agent’s report from Informer Górnik], December 1, 1953, 18–19.

of the Eighth Infantry Regiment of the AK Legions under the command of Lieut. “Czesław,”<sup>78</sup> the commanding officer of one of the companies set up for Akcja Burza (Operation Tempest, aka Operation Storm)\* in the Fourth Battalion of the Eighth Infantry Regiment of the AK Legions.<sup>79</sup> This regiment was disbanded and some of its companies were disarmed when the Red Army and the (Communist) Polish Forces arrived in the area of its operations.<sup>80</sup> For a time, Adam Abramowicz returned to work on the family farm (his father died on September 8, 1944). He had not made a memorable contribution to the history of the Eighth Infantry Regiment in his short spell of service in it, and his name does not appear in the regimental personnel records published in the books on its history and organizational structure. In 1953, the managing director of Dalspro, a centralized enterprise for foreign trade in which Abramowicz was employed at the time, wrote in an in-house character assessment of him, that Abramowicz said that he had “spent a few days as a soldier in the AK, in the neighborhood of Lubartów.”<sup>81</sup>

On December 25, 1944, Abramowicz was arrested in Lublin for membership of the AK and deported to the Soviet Union. We have no information on the details of the investigation conducted against him at this time. He worked in a coal mine in the region of Stalingrad and his subsequent choice of an alias (Miner) harked back to this period in his life. Remarkably, in his CV composed for the MBP, Abramowicz noted that “In April 1945, the mine’s workforce was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor (Orden Trudovogo Krasnogo Znameni)\* for its active labor.”<sup>82</sup> I have not managed to collect more information on Abramowicz’s time in the Soviet Union or discover why he was discharged already on September 15, 1945. There is no mention in the records of any health problems, which could have explained why he was allowed to return home, though we cannot rule out that this was the reason for his early repatriation.<sup>83</sup> I should add that

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78 Abramowicz probably meant 2nd Lt. Jan Tadeusz “Czesław” Pudelko, the commanding officer of Region Six (Czemierniki) District of Lublin Powiat, which was in the Lublin Regional Inspectorate of the AK Lublin Branch Command. See Ireneusz Caban, *Ludzie lubelskiego okręgu Armii Krajowej*, Lublin: Czas, 1995, 256.

79 Ireneusz Caban, *8. pułk piechoty legionów Armii Krajowej. Organizacja i działania bojowe*, Warszawa: Bellona, 1994, 107.

80 Caban, *8. pułk ...*, 108–111.

81 AIPN, 00168/216, Charakterystyka Adama Abramowicza [Character assessment of Adam Abramowicz], April 13, 1953, page 17.

82 AIPN, 00168/216, Życiorys Adama Abramowicza [Curriculum Vitae of Adam Abramowicz], July 19, 1947, 8.

83 Danuta Janiczak (now Danuta Szyksznian-Ossowska), nom-de-guerre Sarenka, an AK liaison girl from Wilno (Vilnius), may serve as an example of a deportee

one of the regiment’s lieutenants deported to the Soviet Union was released in February 1946, while another was not released until November 1947.<sup>84</sup> A fact which may well have had an effect on Abramowicz’s early release was that he declared he had served as a rank-and-file member of the AK. In 1953, Donat Czerewacz, one of the veterans of Battalion Zośka, made the following comment on Abramowicz’s sojourn in the Soviet Union:

I think his stay [in the USSR] did him a lot of good and gave him a democratic [!] orientation. He was not very worried by the fact that in the current political system they would forfeit their property [by the Communist standards of those times, the Abramowicz family owned too much farmland].<sup>85</sup>

On leaving the USSR, the future informer first returned to his home village and worked on the land, and later decided to move to Warsaw, where he legalized his graduation certificate which he had obtained on finishing a secret high school during the War. In 1946, he enrolled for Economics at the SGH Warsaw School of Economics. At this time, he got in touch with his old colleagues and friends from the Warsaw AK and with Zośka veterans, especially Donat “Sójka” Czerewacz, who shared a rented room with “Fałat” and his brother Andrzej.

Thanks to his participation in the anti-German resistance movement and deportation to the Soviet Union, Adam Abramowicz enjoyed the confidence of Warsaw Uprising veterans. In August 1947, in an account delivered to the MBP officer recruiting him, he described what he had been doing since his return to Warsaw:

In the meantime, I met Witold Morawski.<sup>86</sup> Donat Czerewacz introduced me to him and we used to see him. I sensed that he was not pleased with the current political system and he let me know that we had to take action to change it. He claimed

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who was released in mid-1945 and allowed to return to Poland on grounds of ill health. See Szymon Nowak, *Dziewczyny wyklęte*, Warszawa: Fronda PL, [2015], 456–458.

84 Caban, 8. *pułk ...*, 118.

85 AIPN, 2386/6229, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Zaręba” [Extract from an agent’s report submitted by Informer Zaręba], December 13, 1953, 167. Donat Czerewacz was a friend of Adam Adamowicz and brought him into the Zośka community but did not know that Abramowicz had become an MBP informer. He may have deliberately passed on this information to the MBP to protect his friend from repressive measures.

86 2nd Lt. Witold Morawski, noms-de-guerre “Witold” and “Witold Czarny” (1919–1989), the last commander of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka.

that change would come with the help of the Western Powers and the Third World War.<sup>87</sup>

Adam Abramowicz was in touch not only with Morawski and Czerewacz, but with other Zośkaites as well, for instance Maria “Kapralinka” Matuszewska,<sup>88</sup> who was also an acquaintance of Czerewacz and Morawski. The MBP did not fail to notice these contacts.<sup>89</sup> Another relevant point for the security men was the fact that Adam Adamowicz’s brother Andrzej was an AK veteran, too, and still in touch with other members of his old unit. Andrzej Adamowicz came out into the open in 1945 and then went up to Warsaw to enroll at the SGGW (Warsaw University of Life Sciences). He was in touch with Morawski. Czerewacz maintained that Andrzej Abramowicz was in contact with Col. Radosław thanks to Morawski’s services as a go-between. Czerewacz also claimed that Andrzej Abramowicz kept up his contacts with members of the resistance movement in the Lublin region because he regularly visited Czemierniki to pass information on from “AK command.”<sup>90</sup> I have not come across any documentary evidence to prove that Andrzej Abramowicz was an MBP informer too; nevertheless, most probably his brother Adam obtained information from him on the discussions he had with ex-AK men in which Adam had not taken part.

Veterans of the Warsaw Uprising held discussions with the Abramowicz brothers on matters concerning anti-Communist activities, and even though they did not spill all the beans, Fałat learned enough to serve as a valuable source of information for the MBP. He demonstrated his potential on the day when he was recruited, passing on the following information to the MBP boys:

This year [1947] in April, I was introduced by Ewa Trzeptakówna to Bronisław Sianoszek, a man who had been released from prison on the grounds of the amnesty. He said that he would promptly be making appropriate contacts to fight [the Communists]. He introduced me to a man called “Cezary,” real first name Zygmunt,<sup>91</sup> and claimed that this guy was in touch with the British secret service

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87 AIPN, 00168/216, Życiorys Adama Abramowicza [Curriculum Vitae of Adam Abramowicz], July 19, 1947, page 8–9.

88 Maria Matuszewska (1924–1978), liaison girl in the Second Platoon of the First (“Maciek”) Company (and later of the Second (“Rudy”) Company) of Battalion Zośka.

89 AIPN, 2386/6229, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Zaręba” [Extract from an agent’s report submitted by Informer Zaręba], December 13, 1953, page 167.

90 *Ibid.*

91 Lieut. Zygmunt “Cezary” Szkudelski (1919–1967), earlier second-in-command of KEDYW AK for the Polesie Region.

and working for them, and that Cezary was cooperating with Witold Morawski, whom I have mentioned before .... Sianoszek is believed to have notified them through the services of Cezary that the amount of dollars [he would be getting] from the British secret service was not enough. On considering these characters, Witold Morawski, Bronisław Sianoszek, and Cezary, I can say that Cezary is fairly advanced, Witold Morawski is under him and in touch with the British Embassy through one of the members of their staff, Miss Stella [Traynor], who is living with him, that is with Morawski [she was his fiancée and later his wife]. Sianoszek was to function as a working tool in their hands, and hence for the British secret service.<sup>92</sup>

The information reported by Adam “Górnik” Abramowicz should be treated with a good deal of caution because he may have been giving facts suggested by the MBP officers or ones he thought would make him look more valuable to them. Nonetheless, the assessments the MBP later made of his work as an informer as well as the data in the reports he submitted during the Zośka Case show that he played a substantial part in figuring out the Radosław veterans, albeit not as important a role as historians had believed until recently.

The roots of Górnik’s collaboration with the MBP may be traced to his activities in connection with Bronisław “Bronek” Sianoszek, one of the insurgents Górnik ratted on in the denouncement I have just quoted. Sianoszek was recruited on March 8, 1947, by 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Bronisław Kaczmarek of Section One, Subdepartment Two in Department Five.

In the first half of 1945, Sianoszek had been charged with conducting illegal operations against the Communist power structures then being established. On July 17, 1945, the Warsaw District Military Court sentenced him to death, but the sentence was commuted to ten years in prison.<sup>93</sup> On the

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92 AIPN, 00168/216, Życiorys Adama Abramowicza [Adam Abramowicz, CV], July 19, 1947, 9.

93 AIPN, 0203/4935, Odpis wyroku Wojskowego Sądu Rejonowego w Warszawie w sprawie Bronisława Sianoszka [Transcript of the sentence handed down by the Warsaw District Military Court in the case against Bronisław Sianoszek], July 17, 1945, 31. Sianoszek was accused of planting an AK agent in the MBP and attempting to murder one Waryszewski of Milanówek, who was suspected of having collaborated with the Gestapo. Bronek was apprehended with a gun in his hand as he was leaving Waryszewski’s residence. Apparently, Waryszewski had convinced him he was innocent. In another version of the events preserved in the MBP’s records, the plan to kill Waryszewski was dropped “for technical reasons.” Marek Cabanowski writes that after Sianoszek had been sentenced, his wife had an interview with 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Józef Różański, head of the MBP Investigations Department, the outcome of which was that already on July 27, 1945, a suggestion was put to Bronek to write to President Bierut with a plea for clemency, which was granted (Marek Cabanowski, *Grodziszczanie*, Part 2, Grodzisk Mazowiecki & Podkowa Leśna: Lewion, 2002, 44, 57–58). MBP records hold an unpaginated memorandum drawn up on the basis of archival documents

grounds of ensuing acts of amnesty, Sianoszek was eventually released in March 1947 (earlier he had made several attempts to escape from jail).<sup>94</sup> However, before he left prison, he was interviewed by Kaczmarek, and, apparently on a voluntary basis,<sup>95</sup> made a pledge to collaborate with the MBP, choosing to operate under the alias “Odwet” (on August 19, 1947, he changed his alias to “Szarota”).<sup>96</sup>

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from Department Two, Office C of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, dated May 8, 1964, which says that the plea for clemency addressed to President Bierut was made by Sianoszek’s mother (AIPN, 01236/69, Notatka służbowa sporządzona na podstawie materiałów archiwalnych znajdujących się w Wydziale II Biura C MSW). However, it is hard to tell whether the security men were planning to recruit Broniek already at this stage, and whether his wife had a part in the plan. Information Sianoszek submitted later when he was an agent suggest that he may have obtained Róžański’s support because under German occupation during the War, his mother had kept a child from Róžański’s family, or perhaps even himself (he was Jewish), in a safe hideaway (AIPN, 01236/69, Odpis z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Jana” [Transcript of a report submitted by Agent Jan], April 3, 1954, 18; *ibid.*, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Alfreda Paczkowskiego [Minutes of the interrogation of witness Alfred Paczkowski], June 19, 1964, 91).

- 94 AIPN, 01236/69, List Bronisława Sianoszka do marszałka Konstantego Rokossowskiego [Letter from Bronisław Sianoszek to Marshal Konstanty Rokossowski], January 6, 1952, 15.
- 95 In 1949, on the second anniversary of his recruitment, Bronisław Sianoszek denied that the information he had passed on earlier was true. He added that he had agreed to collaborate with the MBP only on account of the torture to which he was being put in prison and Bronisław Kaczmarek’s threats that if he did not agree, he would not be amnestied (AIPN, 00945/44, Oświadczenie Bronisława Sianoszka przesłane do MBP [Declaration sent by Bronisław Sianoszek to the MBP], March 8, 1949, unpaginated). However, Sianoszek’s surviving reports show that at least up to a certain time, he took a very active part as Informer Odwet in helping the security service. In one of his reports, he complained that his work with Kaczmarek was not going well and that Kaczmarek was not taking full advantage of Sianoszek’s broad spectrum of contacts with insurgents (including Battalion Zośka veterans).
- 96 AIPN, 00945/44, Raport referenta Sekcji I Wydziału II Departamentu V MBP Bronisława Kaczmarek do naczelnika Wydziału II Departamentu V MBP mjr. Karola Więckowskiego na temat okoliczności zwerbowania Bronisława Sianoszka [Report from Bronisław Kaczmarek, administrative officer of Section One, Subdepartment Two of Department Five in the MBP, to Maj. Karol Więckowski, Head of Subdepartment Two, Department Five in the MBP, on the circumstances of the recruitment of Bronisław Sianoszek], May 9, 1947, unpaginated.

Sianoszek had been in the anti-German resistance movement since 1940. He had been a member of ZWZ \* and subsequently of the AK, sent out on missions beyond Warsaw, for instance in the region of the Świętokrzyskie Mountains,<sup>97</sup> and he was also a veteran of the Warsaw Uprising with a distinguished combat record. He had been wounded several times, taken prisoner and sent to the Pruszków transit camp, from which thanks to a few of his fellow combatants he managed to escape and go into hiding in the Kielce region. So it only took him a short time to establish contact with Zośkaites, including Witold Morawski and Donat Czerewacz.<sup>98</sup> What he said sounded anti-Communist, which earned him their trust. Czerewacz, who had become a friend of Broniek’s, used to invite him to social gatherings attended by Zośkaites, where Broniek met other members of the Battalion, including Jan Rodowicz. Agent Odwet gave the MBP a detailed description of Anoda:

... [he is] tall and blond with distinct wisdom teeth, his hair is sparse and upswept; he has a long face with a shapely Roman nose; wide, dark eyebrows; blue eyes; a broad mouth, and a gap between the central pair of his teeth; his face is pale; he is very lively; he laughs out loud a lot with a characteristic guffaw.<sup>99</sup>

Moreover, Sianoszek reported that Jan Rodowicz had a bad opinion of the Communist authorities and that in the right circumstances (i.e. on the outbreak of the Third World War) Radosław veterans would engage in combat against the regime ruling Poland.<sup>100</sup> So in 1947, Agent Odwet held a better

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97 Bronisław Sianoszek had been one of the bodyguards of Jan “Ponury” Piwnik, \* commander of the AK in the Świętokrzyskie Mountains and the Nowogródek region. On October 26, 1943, Broniek had distinguished himself during a German attack on a secret factory producing arms for the resistance at Suchedniów. He shot dead three military policemen (including one officer) and wounded another two (Cezary Chlebowski, *Pozdrówcie Góry Świętokrzyskie*, Warszawa: Tomasz Chlebowski, 1993, 294–299).

98 Like Adam Abramowicz, Bronisław Sianoszek was introduced to the ex-Zośka community by Donat Czerewacz, who was not an MBP informer at the time, and not aware of the fact that his friends were working as MBP agents.

99 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, *Analiza kontaktów Zygmunta Szkudelskiego i Witolda Morawskiego z pracownikami ambasad Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii przygotowana przez Bronisława Sianoszka* [Analysis of Zygmunt Szkudelski’s and Witold Morawski’s contacts with the staff of the British and US embassies, compiled by Bronisław Sianoszek], no date, 75.

100 *Ibid.*, 75–76. Bronisław Sianoszek wrote that “Anoda and Donat [Czerewacz] argued that neither the Gray Ranks nor any other fighters had anything to gain from a 1:1 or even a 1:10 ratio [of losses]. That when the [next] war broke out, they would be there with their high level of training and routine to take command of the underground Radosław units, and their task would

position than Górnik in Anoda's entourage, and what's more, he knew Anoda personally.

Shortly after his release, Sianoszek resumed relations with Adam Abramowicz, whom he had first met during the War in the spring of 1944, when he and his unit were passing through the area where the Abramowicz family lived. On leaving prison, Broniek met Abramowicz during a visit to Donat Czerewacz's residence.<sup>101</sup> In the first decade of May 1947, after a few weeks of talks with Abramowicz to sound out his views,<sup>102</sup> Sianoszek arranged a meeting between Abramowicz and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Kaczmarek, whom he introduced as a friend of his. Abramowicz intimated that he might be interested in collaborating with the MBP.

Sianoszek's activities for the MBP, which involved invigilating the Zośka community and looked promising for his superiors, were suddenly interrupted on May 11, 1947, when he and three of his colleagues including Adam Adamowicz broke into and burgled the residence of Henryk Witczak to obtain funds to continue their "underground resistance" operations.

"Broniek" Sianoszek drew up the following report on the background to the incident:

Meanwhile, the boys wanted to "do" an MBP colonel. ... I couldn't let that happen and notified Mr. B[ronisław] K[aczmarek]. ... Ultimately, the plan was that I would have to let them do the job, I preferred it to be ... on a man whose attitude to the Polish state I was familiar with rather than on money or an individual associated with the government. ... ultimately, my restraint ... might have raised suspicions. I spoke to Mr. Broniek K[aczmarek] about it, and he said that in the event, if need

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be to protect all the members of the group and keep them whole [up to that time]" (*ibid.*, 76).

101 Another version of the story says that Bronisław Sianoszek met Adam Abramowicz in 1947, in a Wilanów restaurant run by Zygmunt Szkudelski.

102 Bronisław Sianoszek gave the following account of the impression Adam Abramowicz and his brother Andrzej made on him: "Ultimately, the dozen or more talks I had with the Abramowicz brothers led me to believe that they would be willing to collaborate with the MBP. I suggested it to Adam cautiously, directing his attention to the PSL\* because he knew one of the journalists on the editorial board of *Gazeta Ludowa* [a paper representing the views of the PSL]. I realized that they would do anything for money, except shoot their colleagues. Abramowicz went further than I expected and offered me his services for the invigilation of foreign spies providing he got a guarantee from the MBP that they would spare the Polish boys. After an interview with Mr. Broniek K. [Bronisław Kaczmarek], he agreed to work [for the MBP] on wider-ranging conditions. His work ... was moving forward, like it was self-propelled, luck was on his side. Adam Abramowicz had a brother Andrzej and asked for him not to be dragged into this business" (*ibid.*, 82).

be, it would be alright to allow the job to be done but first he had to know who it would be against and who'd do it. ... Straightaway on the next day, I handed in my share of the swag. ... After the incident ... I went to see Mr. Kaczmarzski and told him all about it. He didn't seem to be worried at all that something bad had happened. We only had to know how to put a bad thing to good use for the cause. The boys tried to find a hideout for me and wanted to transfer me to their contacts in Lublin. ... They didn't know I was “in the game” and thought that if there was another exposure, they would be made to answer for it [by the security service] as well, because they had been in on the job.<sup>103</sup>

On May 20, 1947, Sianoszek was arrested in connection with the break-in and burglary. On July 19 he was released and in October 1947 the case against him was dropped because on the night of the offense he had been under the influence. Another argument he invoked in his defense was a doctor's certificate for “psychological degeneration,” which had allegedly been troubling him since childhood. Nonetheless, in the wake of this incident, his records were transferred to Subdepartment Three of Department Three.<sup>104</sup> Another reason for Sianoszek's transfer was his quarrel with his case officer concerning future assignments, and with the head of Subdepartment Two of Department Five, whom Sianoszek suspected of wanting to arrest him once he had collected enough information from him.<sup>105</sup>

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103 *Ibid.*, 82–84.

104 AIPN, 00945/44, Wniosek naczelnika Wydziału II Departamentu V MPB mjr. Karola Więckowskiego o usunięcie z sieci agenturalnej wydziału informatora [o] ps[eudonimie] ‘Odwet’” [Application submitted by Maj. Karol Więckowski, head of Subdepartment Two of Department Five in the MBP, for the removal of the informer known as Odwet from the Subdepartment's network of agents], July 20, 1947, unpaginated.

105 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Analiza kontaktów Zygmunta Szkudelskiego i Witolda Morawskiego z pracownikami ambasad Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii przygotowana przez Bronisława Sianoszka [Analysis of Zygmunt Szkudelski's and Witold Morawski's contacts with the staff of the Embassies of the United States and Great Britain, compiled by Bronisław Sianowszek], no date, 84. The investigation ended with 2nd Lt. Kaczmarzski's dismissal from the MBP on June 17, 1947 (at Kaczmarzski's request). An assessment of Kaczmarzski drawn up in May 1947 says, “In his work with informers he proved incapable of influencing and managing his informers, and even tolerated an attempt to subordinate him, [i.e. control] an UB [Security Service] employee. He is wanting in truthfulness, particularly as regards keeping back many facts and strictly operational details from his superiors. Due to his drinking habit and staying in the company of suspicious persons, he is at risk of sliding down the road to transgression.” (AIPN, 0193/2345, Charakterystyka ppor. Bronisława Kaczmarzskiego [Character assessment of 2nd Lt. Bronisław Kaczmarzski], May 27, 1947, 63).

As a result, there was a change in the priorities on the agenda for Informer Odwet—at this time he changed his alias to “Szarota” (Cudweed). He was now ordered to figure out the Sixth Wilno Brigade, a unit under the command of Władysław “Młot” Łukasiuk. The invigilation of the Zośkaites was to be continued by Abramowicz, whom Sianoszek had prepared and trained for the job.

Adam Abramowicz made his decision to work for the security service in the latter half of 1947. He was recruited by Lt. Ryszard Matejewski of Subdepartment Three, Department Three of the MBP, who was also Szarota’s case officer. Matejewski climbed the career ladder in the MBP, and after some time reached managerial rank. In 1969–1971, he was deputy minister for internal affairs and was promoted to brigadier-general, but left the Ministry in June 1971, following accusations of illegal trafficking in foreign currencies.<sup>106</sup>

Department Three was organized along counterintelligence lines and its duties were to combat “political terror and banditry,” identify the makers

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106 Ryszard Matejewski had the reputation of being one of the best members of staff of Department Three (AIPN, 0604/19, Raport naczelnika Wydziału III Departamentu III MBP mjr. Stanisława Imiołka do dyrektora Departamentu III ppłk. Józefa Czaplickiego w sprawie przyznania awansu ppor. Ryszardowi Matejewskiemu [Report from Maj. Stanisław Imiołek, Head of Subdepartment Three, Department Three of the MBP, to Lt.-Col. Józef Czaplicki, Head of Department Three, re. the promotion of 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Ryszard Matejewski], October 31, 1948, unpaginated). Matejewski stood out especially for the way he worked with informers. In a later assessment, he was described as follows: “During his work in Department Three he has had and continues to have a substantial network of informers delivering valuable data on the basis of which we have reached [detained] numerous important figures” (AIPN, 0604/19, Charakterystyka służbowa naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu III mjr. Ryszarda Matejewskiego [In-house character assessment of Maj. Ryszard Matejewski, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Three], January 16, 1952, unpaginated). Snippets of information on Matejewski’s part in the Zośka Case have survived in his records: “... he participated in the elimination of the Radosław group’s contacts (AIPN, 0604/19, Charakterystyka służbowa naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu III mjr. Ryszarda Matejewskiego [In-house character assessment of Maj. Ryszard Matejewski, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Three], November 25, 1951, unpaginated). Curiously enough, Matejewski was a brushmaker by profession. When his criminal activities came to light in 1971, ex-Deputy Minister Matejewski was put on trial and sentenced to twelve years in prison (AIPN, 0604/19, Wyciąg z wyroku Sądu Wojewódzkiego dla miasta stołecznego Warszawy z 15 II 1972 r. w sprawie Ryszarda Matejewskiego [Transcript of the sentence handed down on February 15, 1972, by the Warsaw Voivodeship Court in the case against Ryszard Matejewski, undated and unpaginated).

and distributors of “hostile” flyers and anonymous circulars, and thereby eliminate the organized activities of the armed pro-independence resistance movement.<sup>107</sup>

In the report dated July 1947 addressed to Maj. Stanisław Imiołek, head of the Subdepartment, Matejewski gave the following grounds for his request for permission to recruit Adam Abramowicz:

Abramowicz, an ex-AK man, has numerous contacts with people still in the underground resistance movement and can help to disclose them and hence paralyze their activities. More specifically, at this time I want to employ him to invigilate “Cezary” and his associates, as well as Witold Morawski, who are utilizing their offices [in veterans’ organizations] to conduct intelligence for foreign powers while at the same time continuing undercover activities for the AK and NSZ.<sup>108\*</sup>

Lt. Matejewski presented his superior with the work plan for Abramowicz’s recruitment. On August 19, 1947, Abramowicz was due to report to the headquarters of Subdepartment Two, Department Five to collect the items which had been requisitioned during the search conducted at his place (in the Sianoszek case).<sup>109</sup> Maj. Karol Więckowski, head of Subdepartment Two, promised to notify Matejewski as soon as Abramowicz arrived in the MBP building. He was then to be discreetly escorted to the premises of Subdepartment Three, where he was to be interviewed to determine whether he would collaborate with them.<sup>110</sup>

The MBP men carried out their plans for August 19 successfully and Matejewski drew up the following report:

Abramowicz agreed to join us without the need for any kind of persuasion or pressure, and just said, “I’m not a philanthropist; I want to be paid for my work.” [The officers underlined this quote and put two exclamation marks in the margin next to

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107 For more information on the organization of this department, see Nawrocki, “Struktura aparatu bezpieczeństwa,” 37. The task of Department Three was to counteract the resistance movement associated with the ND (Nationalist Party).

108 AIPN, 00168/216, Raport referenta Wydziału III Departamentu III MBP Ryszarda Matejewskiego do naczelnika Wydziału III Departamentu III mjr. Stanisława Imiołka w sprawie zezwolenia na werbunek Adama Abramowicza [Report from Ryszard Matejewski of Subdepartment Three, Department Three of the MBP, to Maj. Stanisław Imiołek, Head of Subdepartment Three, Department Three of the MBP, requesting permission to recruit Adam Abramowicz], July 17, 1947, 5.

109 Before breaking into and burgling Henryk Witczak’s residence, Bronisław Sianoszek and his friends had a drinking spree at Adam Abramowicz’s place.

110 AIPN, 00168/216, Plan werbunku Adama Abramowicza [Plan for the recruitment of Adam Abramowicz], July 18, 1947, 6.

it.)<sup>111</sup> After we had agreed to this, he undertook to figure out Cezary's group and his associate Witold Morawski, following the successful figuring out of Maciej Malicki [Abramowicz's colleague during the War], who has recently returned from England and is in the network smuggling exposed guys out of the country. In addition, he agreed to notify us of any individuals or groups he learned of who were involved in hostile operations against the Polish State. He has assumed the alias "Górnik." I have arranged a first meeting with him for August 29, 1947.<sup>112</sup>

On the same day, Abramowicz signed a declaration to collaborate with the MBP, with the following passage in it:

I hereby declare that I have established contact with ... Maciej Malicki, who has recently ... returned from England. This individual has promised to get me out of the country to the American zone, all the time using the contacts which he has there (that is in the American zone) as well. I hereby undertake to follow the matter up and expose all the individuals involved in it and their potential and impact. The second point on my agenda will be to figure out and expose the operations of [Polish] citizens Witold Morawski, "Cezary" (first name Zygmunt) and their associates who are in contact with the British Embassy through the mediation of Stella .... I undertake to notify the authorities of the Ministry of Public Security and pass on the full and detailed information I obtain on the activities of the abovementioned persons and all other matters concerning seditious operations and foreign intelligence operating against the Polish State. I shall deliver such information orally and in writing.<sup>113</sup>

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111 In the records for Adam Abramowicz, the answer to the question on the grounds for his recruitment carries the entry *lojalność* ("loyalty"), out of a choice of three options: "patriotism and loyalty," "evidence to discredit him," or "material interests."

112 AIPN, 00168/216, Raport z przeprowadzenia werbunku Adama Abramowicza [Report on the recruitment of Adam Abramowicz], July 19, 1947, 7.

113 *Ibid.*, Zobowiązanie informatora "Górnik" do współpracy z organami MBP [Informer Górnik's declaration to collaborate with the MBP], July 19, 1947, 10–11. For more on the way secret collaborators were recruited and how security officers kept in touch with them, see for instance, Filip Musiał, "Wiązanie tajnych współpracowników z organami bezpieczeństwa Polski Ludowej. Przyczynek do dyskusji nad mechanizmem psychicznego manipulowania konfidentami," *Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989*, no. 2(4), (2006): 153–176. Most of Musiał's case studies relate to clergymen. He also gives a comprehensive review of security service training handbooks used for such matters in 1970–1989, however, many of the recommendations and methods in them must have been applied already in the Stalinist period. See also Musiał's book, *Podręcznik bezpieczeństwa. Teoria pracy operacyjnej Służby Bezpieczeństwa w świetle wydawnictw resortowych Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych PRL [1970–1989]*, Kraków: IPN, 2007, *passim*.

As his declaration shows, Abramowicz readily agreed to work for the security service. No doubt, his recent deportation to the Soviet Union and the knowledge that the MBP was hot on his trail had a lot to do with his decision. Yet, a few of the flaws in his character, which came to light already in his story of what he had done during the War, as well as financial considerations seem to have had no less of an influence on it. As a 1966 in-house report on him says,

He was often put on various operations involving things like going into hiding, using false IDs, making arrangements for people to be smuggled abroad etc. At this time [August 1947 – September 1949], Informer Górnik was in receipt of generous and frequent payments.<sup>114</sup>

There are only two receipts extant in Abramowicz’s personal records for this period, for money paid out to him by MBP officers. He received the first payment, a sum of 5 thousand złoty, on the day he was recruited.<sup>115</sup> On October 28, 1947, he got another payment of 5 thousand złoty.<sup>116</sup> All his other pay slips are for payments made in the 1950s and ‘60s. However, on the basis of the memorandum I have cited above, we may say that Abramowicz got more from MBP officers; it could have been in smaller amounts paid out to him more often. In point of fact, he fed them valuable information for the whole of 1948 and much of 1949.<sup>117</sup> In this respect, we should take note of another passage from a character assessment of Abramowicz made in the 1960s:

He takes a self-aware attitude to our work and is willing to cooperate but requires payment for his services. He is an individual who will carry out any task, even if it concerned his family or people close to him, provided it was worth his while to do it.<sup>118</sup>

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114 AIPN, 00168/216, Charakterystyka informatora “Górnik” [Character assessment of Informer Górnik], February 16, 1966, 32.

115 *Ibid.*, Pokwitowanie odbioru przez informatora “Górnik” kwoty 5 tys. zł [Receipt signed by Informer Górnik for the sum of 5 thousand złoty], July 19, 1947, 41.

116 *Ibid.*, Pokwitowanie odbioru przez informatora “Górnik” kwoty 5 tys. zł [Receipt signed by Informer Górnik for the sum of 5 thousand złoty], October 28, 1947, 42.

117 Adam Abramowicz was one of the seven best informers in Department Three recruited by Ryszard Matejewski during his period of employment in the unit (AIPN, 0604/19, Charakterystyka służbowa naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu III mjr. Ryszarda Matejewskiego [In-house character assessment of Maj. Ryszard Matejewski, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Three], November 25, 1951, unpaginated).

118 AIPN, 00168/216, Charakterystyka TW “Górnik” [Character assessment of Secret Collaborator Górnik], February 16, 1966, 32. Its author’s superior inserted a comment in the margin: “An important character trait, because he

Górnik appreciated the generosity of the MBP men he worked for and the prospects ahead, such as getting a good job after graduation, which would open up for him thanks to his efforts to provide them with as much information as possible on matters he thought could interest them. An undated description of Abramowicz's character drawn up by Lt. Matejewski (its content suggests it was written after June 1, 1948), says that

In his work hitherto, Agent Górnik has been genuinely willing to cooperate. He has been punctual and precise in his work.<sup>119</sup>

The evaluation of Abramowicz in a memorandum made in 1966 is explicit. It says that

He has successfully figured out a whole series of subjects from Battalion Zośka and ex-NSZ men. Quite a number of them were reached [i.e. detained] by former MBP Department Three.<sup>120</sup>

Cadet Tadeusz Ordon, who established contact with Górnik in early 1953, gives a somewhat different assessment of the value of Abramowicz's reports, presumably on the basis of records from his working file, which is no longer accessible because it was destroyed:

In this period [1947–1949], this Informer's work was chaotic; practically on every occasion he submitted data on a different person. ... Often, the value of his information was negligible and instead of carrying out the task he was instructed to do, he came up with something that was interesting but completely different, so the old job was forgotten.<sup>121</sup>

Most probably Cadet Ordon's somewhat more critical opinion of Abramowicz was the outcome of a cross-checking review of the reports he submitted in the course of the investigations he was on. Nonetheless, the rest of Ordon's appraisal said that Górnik had rendered good services for the MBP.

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could sell you down the river, too." Bronisław Sianoszek drew attention to Adam Abramowicz's greed for money, too, quoting the remark he made after his preliminary meeting with Bronisław Kaczmarek, "I'll work for them if they pay me; after all, I'm not going to work for love; I need to visit restaurants and I have to have an expenses fund." (AIPN, 00945/44, Protokół przesłuchania Bronisława Sianoszka [Minutes of Bronisław Sianoszek's interview], May 24, 1947, unpaginated).

119 AIPN, 00168/216, Charakterystyka informatora "Górnik" [Character assessment of Informer Górnik], undated, 11.

120 AIPN, 00168/216, Charakterystyka TW "Górnik" [Character assessment of Secret Collaborator Górnik], February 16, 1966, 32.

121 AIPN, 00945/1750, Charakterystyka informatora "Górnik," [Character assessment of Informer Górnik], undated, unpaginated.

Górnik’s case officer for the Zośka investigation was Lt. Matejewski, who received his reports personally and forwarded them to Maj. Herer. Thanks to this, the data collected by Abramowicz was utilized in the investigations supervised by the head of Subdepartment Four of Department Five.

As I wrote in the Introduction, for a very long time the identity of Informer Górnik was unknown. After 1989, when his reports became accessible to historians, in practice it was no longer possible to ask the persons mentioned in them to say who they talked to on that particular day. Some of the persons Abramowicz had invigilated were no longer alive (Witold Morawski died in 1989); others had problems with their memory, perhaps some used this argument as an excuse because they had worked with the security service themselves (this was the case with Donat Czerewacz and Stella Morawska). In general, historians believed that in view of the high value of the information delivered by Górnik and the fact that he had meetings with the top brass among the Battalion’s veterans, therefore the informer must have been a Zośkaite himself.<sup>122</sup> In the initial phase of my work for this book, I thought that Górnik was Jan “Pytek” Makowelski, who died in 1985.<sup>123</sup>

In a report dated December 21, 1952, Informer Zaręba (Donat Czerewacz) wrote the following about Makowelski:

... he tried to obtain information from me what the real reason was for the prosecution of the Zośkaitees and why some of them were acquitted. When I told him that perhaps it was because of the weapons and those who knew about them, he replied that that could not be true because in that case he should have been arrested as well, as he was the firearms NCO and intimated that he knew about the weapons.<sup>124</sup>

Zaręba’s statement implies that Makowelski, a veteran of Battalion Zośka, was one of the few persons who knew that the weapons were hidden after the Kmita Detached Unit was disbanded but were not arrested. Yet we should note that he did not know the whereabouts of the hidden cache. Zaręba went on to tell his superiors:

I told him [Makowelski] that personally, I thought the weapons had been hidden somewhere in Jeziorno, and that Rodowicz had hidden some of them separately. He replied, “What about the arms [hidden] somewhere in Piastów?” Then he said that perhaps the arms (from Piastów and maybe from elsewhere as well) had been

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122 See, for instance, Pietrzak, *Żołnierze Batalionu Armii Krajowej “Zośka”...*, 67.

123 Cpl. Jan Makowelski (1925–1985), Second (“Alek”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka.

124 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora ‘Zaręba’ [Extract from the secret report delivered by Informer Zaręba], October 21, 1952, 82.

moved by Kozłowski and [Andrzej] Sowiński<sup>125</sup> and hidden somewhere else, at the time when he was detained by the security authorities in 1946.<sup>126</sup>

The records I had access to at the time suggested that at first the security men did not know where the arms had been hidden, either, and only learned of their whereabouts during the investigation.

At this early stage of my research, it seemed a good idea to check up whether Pytek's arrest was connected with his recruitment for the security service, albeit there are no hints in the extant source materials to suggest this.

Makowelski was detained in 1946 and interrogated by investigators from Główny Zarząd Informacji WP (GZI, Main Directorate of Information of the Polish Forces)\* in connection with the fabricated military IDs found in the possession of Zośkaites.<sup>127</sup> Two years later, Makowelski was suspected of having collaborated with the Gestapo against the interests of the people of Poland under German occupation during the War.<sup>128</sup> On March 10, 1948, Pytek was arrested by officers of the Criminal Investigations Department of the City of Warsaw Headquarters of the People's Police Force, but he was released pretty soon, and three days later the case was dropped when it turned out that he simply looked like the collaborator Ryszard Krymke.<sup>129</sup>

I did not find any evidence that GZI or the MBP tried to make use of the charges wrongfully brought against Pytek to make him decide to work for them, but that did not rule out such a possibility, especially as there were other facts indicating that Makowelski may in fact have been cooperating with the MBP. Pytek's talks with Zaręba show that he could have had a motive for collaboration with the security forces: he might have been envious of the favors enjoyed by some of Col. Mazurkiewicz's subordinates and felt a grudge for what he considered unfair treatment from the Colonel. In the early 1950s, Makowelski "complained about Radosław and said that

125 2nd Lt. Andrzej "Zagłoba" Sowiński (1922–1996), commander of the Third Platoon of the First ("Maciek") Company of Battalion Zośka.

126 *Ibid.*

127 AIPN, 0225/125, Protokół przesłuchania Henryka Pielaszka [Minutes of the interrogation of Henryk Pielaszek], May 10, 1949, 189.

128 Jan Makowelski was denounced in a secret message submitted to the Wrocław Regional Prosecutor's Office on March 29, 1947, by the plenipotentiary of the Lower Silesian branch of Związek Inwalidów Wojennych (the Union of War Invalids). AIPN Wr, 488/2658, Vol. 2, Doniesienie na Jana Makowelskiego vel Ryszarda Krymke [Letter denouncing Jan Makowelski alias Ryszard Krymke], March 29, 1947, 3.

129 AIPN Wr, 488/2658, Vol. 1, Wniosek o umorzenie śledztwa w sprawie Jana Makowelskiego [Application for the termination of the investigation against Jan Makowelski], March 13, 1948, 2–3.

he was to blame that Zośka men were in jail, and that he had kept them on a leash like dogs, as they trusted him absolutely. He also said that Radosław had not paid his men for their part in the Uprising, that he had indulged in self-enrichment and spent money on himself and his closest associates (here he mentioned Kozłowski), buying them apartments and workshops,<sup>130</sup> and showed no concern for the rest [of the veterans].”<sup>131</sup>

It would be hard not to consider Pytek’s allegations against Radosław an outcome of the innuendos insinuated by the MBP. Other ex-Zośka men who later crossed over to work for the MBP laid similar charges against their erstwhile commander. Under interrogation following his arrest in 1949, Andrzej “Zagłoba” Sowiński said that shortly after the War, not all the veterans of Battalion Zośka were as well-off as Radosław’s protégés Kozłowski and Rodowicz:

The combat group was paid on a regular basis, I don’t know how much they got but it was enough to lead a comfortable life and enjoy themselves without having to work. On the contrary, the other group, which I was looking after, could be left to starve.<sup>132</sup>

So some individuals in the insurgents’ community nursed feelings of rancor against others in their group, and this could be taken advantage of by security officers and the informers working for them. It was easier to extract information from disgruntled Zośka veterans about those they thought were doing well at the expense of others. What put extra gall into the matter was the fact that following Sowiński’s arrest, his former comrades in arms developed an extremely bad opinion of him when he started to appear as a witness for the prosecution in the so-called slop-bucket trials.<sup>133</sup> In a report

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130 Jan Mazurkiewicz tried to help his soldiers find jobs and used the funds he still had left over from their resistance operations to set up cooperative work centers. In 1946, he established a workshop for the repair and maintenance of motor vehicles on Topiel in Warsaw. It employed ex-soldiers who had served in Battalion Zośka and was later managed by Henryk Kozłowski (Nowożycki, “Losy byłych żołnierzy...,” 112–113).

131 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Zaręba” [Extract from the secret report delivered by Informer Zaręba], October 21, 1952, 82.

132 AIPN, 0259/368, Protokół przesłuchania Andrzeja Sowińskiego [Minutes of the interrogation of Andrzej Sowiński], January 10, 1949, 15.

133 “Slop-bucket trials” (*procesy kiblowe*) were a type of legal proceedings practiced in Poland during the Stalinist period, so called because they were not held in a courtroom but in the prison cell of the accused. The judge, jury, and witnesses sat on chairs or on the prison bunks, while the only seat left for the accused to sit on was his/her toilet. Anna Jakubowska has given me an account of the role Andrzej Sowiński played in her slop-bucket trial. In the opinion of the Zośkaites,

made on May 29, 1952, of his conversation with Barbara Olszewska, Donat Czerewacz wrote that when he made a remark that Sowiński might be given an early release from prison, “she laughed scornfully ..., and her tone of voice and gestures intimated that Zagłoba was a squealer.”<sup>134</sup>

Sowiński was released in 1954 after serving a ten-year sentence (initially it was fifteen years, but later reduced on the grounds of the amnesty) and joined the PZPR. On August 21, 1962, he consented on a voluntary basis to work as a confidential contact for the security service, taking the alias “Szczepan.” Initially, he was tasked with reporting information about his workmates from the Tele and Radio Technology Institute.<sup>135</sup> He had very good working relations with the security service and continued until the end of the 1960s, when the records of Confidential Contact Szczepan were sent to the archive.

Sowiński’s example showed how much the attitude of some Zośkaites to the Communist authorities could change over the years. In outcome, a considerable number of individuals were suspected of snitching on their former comrades in arms. Suspicions escalated particularly after 1989, when the surviving MBP records, especially informers’ reports peppered with numerous codenames and aliases, finally became accessible.

Another item which linked up with the hints that Pytek and Górnik might have been the same person was a passage from Abramowicz’s report of January 8, 1949, in other words from the time when the Zośka Case had already started. In this message, Górnik notified the MBP of the way the Zośkaites had reacted to news of their colleagues’ arrest. His report went as follows:

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Sowiński decided to act as a witness in these trials to secure a chance for a lenient investigation for himself and a shorter sentence.

134 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Zaręba” [Extract from the secret report delivered by Informer Zaręba], May 29, 1952, 504.

135 The officer from the Ministry of Internal Affairs who interviewed Andrzej Sowiński to obtain his consent to work as an informer wrote the following in his report on the meeting: “The atmosphere during Sowiński’s interview was very cordial. As I noticed, he was pleased or even moved by the fact that I made no mention of either his past in the AK or his time inside. He said that he appreciated our hard work and would help us as much as he could.” (AIPN, 00945/2284/J, Raport oficera Wydziału Operacyjnego Wydziału VI, Departamentu II MSW do zastępcy naczelnika Wydziału VI Departamentu II w sprawie rozmowy przeprowadzonej z Andrzejem Sowińskim [Operations Division of Subdepartment Six, Department Two of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Interviewing Officer’s Report to the Deputy Head of Subdepartment Six, Department Two, concerning the interview of Andrzej Sowiński,] August 30, 1962, 6–7.)

... Donat Czerewacz came to see me and said, “You know, they’ve taken Anoda and six Zośka officers. Only Witold [Morawski], myself, and Staszek ‘Czart’<sup>136</sup> are left.”<sup>137</sup>

This meant that the informer was not an officer in the Battalion, whereas Jan Makowelski was an NCO and responsible for its arms cache. Another relevant point was the date of the report. The individuals who knew of the arms Rodowicz had hidden were arrested on January 3, five days before this report was delivered. That ruled out Andrzej Sowiński, who was to take part in the transfer of the weapons to a safer hideout, which in fact never occurred.

Another point which seemed worthy of notice was the fact that Kozłowski did not mention Makowelski as one of the people (along with Andrzej “Jur” Wolski<sup>138</sup> and “Zagloba”) in the know about the arms which had not been handed in but buried by Anoda.<sup>139</sup> Nonetheless, from the report delivered by Zaręba (Czerewacz) in December 1952, which I have quoted above, I gathered that Pytek might have been better informed on the matter than his colleagues thought. No doubt, a fairly large group of insurgents, larger than originally planned, must have learned that some of their weapons had been stowed for safe keeping. After his arrest, Andrzej Sowiński said it was at least five persons: four Zośka veterans plus the porter of the house on the premises of which the cache was buried, while a further three probably knew something as well.<sup>140</sup>

Eventually, as I have already said, it turned out that Górnik, the traitor whose codename proved so undecipherable to his victims, was not one of the top brass Zośkaites, nor even one of the Battalion’s veterans, but at best a rank-and-file member of the AK.<sup>141</sup> Many Zośka veterans were very

136 Platoon Sgt. Stanisław Lechmirowicz (1924–1984), First Unit of the First (“Sad”) Platoon, Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka.

137 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora “Górnik” [Secret report delivered by Informer Górnik], January 8, 1949, 599.

138 Cadet Sgt. Andrzej Wolski (1924–2011), commander of the Fourth Squad of the Third (“Felek”) Platoon, Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka.

139 The only persons who knew the exact location of the hidden arms cache were Henryk Kozłowski, Jan Rodowicz, and the concierge who watched over the hideout.

140 AIPN, 0259/368, Protokół przesłuchania Andrzeja Sowińskiego [Minutes of the interrogation of Andrzej Sowiński], January 6, 1949, 48.

141 In Ryszard Matejewski’s personal file, Adam Abramowicz is described as “an ex-AK man, loosely associated with Battalion Zośka” (AIPN, 0604/19, Charakterystyka służbowa naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu III mjr. Ryszarda Matejewskiego [In-house assessment of Maj. Ryszard Matejewski, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Three], November 25, 1951, unpaginated). The name Abramowicz did not ring a bell with insurgents I spoke to.

surprised when his particulars were made public: they could not remember him either from the War or from the Second Resistance period.

The gaps and discontinuities in the records meant I could not see the full set of Górník's secret reports, so I was not in a position to say whether he, too, learned of the Zośkaites' hidden cache of arms and whether he reported it to his overseers in the MBP.

The extant documents cast doubt on this point. In a conversation with Abramowicz on January 3, 1949, Witold Morawski said,

... but you see, he [Jan Rodowicz] had some other business you don't know about, he had some weapons business with the brother<sup>142</sup> of "Laudański"<sup>143</sup> [Juliusz Deczkowski].<sup>144</sup>

If Abramowicz had known that Anoda had stashed the arms away, he would have had to obtain the information unofficially from one of the Zośka veterans. Those involved did not consider him to be in the know, but as he and his brother were on good terms with many of the insurgents, and according to Czerewacz, since 1947 Górník had often been meeting with them over a glass of vodka,<sup>145</sup> we cannot disregard the possibility altogether.

If we admitted it as likely, it would offer an explanation for Morawski's belief that Abramowicz was beyond suspicion on the arms affair. Apart from that, Abramowicz's character assessments show that he was active already before the Zośka Case, though presumably the numerous tip-offs he delivered varied in value. Moreover, Cadet Ordon's assessment of Informer Górník expressly says that the data he handed in included facts and observations on persons not related to the main business he was supposed to be handling as an informer. We should bear in mind that the MBP also had other informers invigilating veterans of the Radosław Group of the AK, so

The disclosure of Górník's identity also came as a big surprise at least to some of the people conducting research on the history of the Zośkaites.

142 Pvt. Józef Zbigniew "Jurand" Deczkowski (1926–2000), rifleman in the Seventh ("Garłuch") Infantry Regiment, Eighth Independent Area (Okęcie) of the Warsaw District of the AK.

143 2nd Lt. Juliusz Bogdan "Laudański" Deczkowski (1924–1998), commander of the Third Squad in the Second ("Alek") Platoon of the Second ("Rudy") Company of Battalion Zośka.

144 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora "Górník" [Secret report delivered by Informer Górník], January 8, 1949, 599.

145 AIPN, 2386/6229, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora "Zaręba" [Extract from the secret report delivered by Informer Zaręba], December 13, 1953, 167. Adam Abramowicz may have learned of the arms cache from Donat Czerewacz.

we cannot rule out the possibility that one of their other snoops tipped them off about the arms cache.

After the transfer of Bronisław Sianoszek’s records to Department Three and Adam Adamowicz’s recruitment by a member of its staff, Department Five wanted to have an informer for the delivery of detailed information on the Zośkaites. Its choice fell on Donat Czerewacz, one of Radosław’s most trusted associates. In June 1947, when he was recruited by Maj. Herer himself, the MBP already had a data set to discredit him, and Herer must certainly have found it useful for his talks with Czerewacz.

Here I have to present the basic facts on the activities of “Sójka” (Czerewacz) to mid-1947, which will let readers understand how important it was for the security service to win his services.

Donat Czerewacz was born in Białystok on January 22, 1921, into the family of Józef Czerewacz and his wife Maria (née Łuckiewicz). His father was an ethnic Pole, and his mother was Belarusian.<sup>146</sup> Józef Czerewacz, who had a working-class background, was a fitter working in a Białystok post office, and Maria Czerewacz was a housewife. The future insurgent had a sister and two brothers, one of whom later worked for the Białystok Voivodeship branch of the Communist security service.

Young Donat attended a local elementary school and middle school in Białystok, which he finished in 1937. He continued his education in a teacher-training high school where the fees were moderate (that was all his family could afford). When the War broke out on September 1, 1939, he was in the second year of his high school course. In the mid-1930s he joined a local boy scouts’ pack and took an active part in its projects.

During Poland’s defense campaign in 1939, Donat Czerewacz served as an observer at an anti-aircraft station, and evacuated on September 8, leaving his hometown and heading east. By September 17, he was nearing the Lithuanian border. On turning back to the Bug River, he encountered a unit belonging to the Eighty-First Infantry Regiment of the Polish Army and joined it as a volunteer. On September 20, he was taken prisoner by the Soviets in the vicinity of Grodno<sup>147</sup> and deported east with hundreds of other Polish soldiers to a POW camp at Ostashkov.

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146 In late 1952, Donat Czerewacz wrote that during World War I his parents had lived in Ukraine and returned to Białystok in 1919, and that at school he was called a Bolshie and a *kacap* (a Polish derogatory name for Russians) because he and his mother belonged to the Orthodox Church (AIPN, 2386/6229, *Życiorys Donata Czerewacza* [CV of Donat Czerewacz], October 11, 1952, 20).

147 In his memoirs written after 1989, Czerewacz says that he spent three days in the region of Grodno [now Hrodna, Belarus] and participated in the city’s defense against an attack by Soviet armored units. (Trojan, *Ci, którzy przeżyli...*, 58).

Although before the War Czerewacz did not live in the part of Poland which was occupied by Nazi Germany pursuant to the pact Hitler made with Stalin, who occupied the rest of Poland east of the line of demarcation settled with Hitler's Germany, nevertheless after a few weeks the Soviets released him on the grounds of an exchange agreement with the Germans, who reciprocated by releasing Polish rank-and-file soldiers in their captivity who were residents of areas occupied by the Soviet Union after September 17. Donat's knowledge of German helped him procure a release. He returned home to Białystok in December 1939 and went back to school, which now offered a ten-year program of Soviet-style education. He graduated in June 1941, on the eve of Hitler's invasion of the USSR. Thanks to Operation Barbarossa and the rapid progress the Germans made on the eastern front, he avoided being called up for service in the Red Army. In 1941–1942, he worked in a factory and later in a fishmonger's store, as well as doing business on the black market.

In July 1942, one of his mother's relatives brought him into the ZWZ. He took the alias "Sójka" (Jay) and at first served as a liaison officer. In late 1942, his superiors suggested that in view of his very good German, he should get himself employed in a local holiday center for the German military and collect information on the situation on the eastern front. He worked there as a porter until March 1943. In 1943, he joined a combat organization known as Bojowa Organizacja Wschód, completed a cadet's training course, and attended secret high-school classes, graduating in 1944.

In the spring of 1944, there was a leak and the Germans set about the demolition of the AK in Białystok. Donat Czerewacz was not at home when they came for him, so they arrested his brother Leonard instead. Wanted by the Gestapo, Donat and a friend from his combat organization fled to Warsaw, where his colleague had family and friends. Once he reached the capital, Czerewacz made contact with other members of the combat organization and in late June joined one of its subunits called Grupa Narocz.<sup>148</sup>

During the Warsaw Uprising, at first he fought in the Fifth Platoon of the First Company of Battalion Parasol in the Radosław Group of the AK, serving as second-in-command of a combat squad. On August 4, he sustained his first injury; he was hit in the arm by a machine-gun bullet. He had his wound dressed in the Karol and Maria Hospital but was not able to return to his

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I found this a plausible story because it tallies with the accounts of the fighting for Grodno published after 1989 (Czesław Grzelak, *Wilno, Grodno, Kodziowce 1939*, Warszawa: Bellona, 2002, *passim*).

148 AIPN, 2386/6229, Życiorys Donata Czerewacza [CV of Donat Czerewacz], October 11, 1952, 22–23; Trojan, *Ci, którzy przeżyli...*, 57–58.

unit, so on the following day he joined Battalion Zośka, persuaded to do so by Eugeniusz Romański,<sup>149</sup> who knew him from the Białystok scouts, and Eugeniusz Stasiecki,<sup>150</sup> second-in-command of Battalion Zośka. Czerewacz served in the First (“Włodek”) Platoon of the First (“Maciek”) Company for the rest of the time Battalion Zośka engaged in combat. He was injured again on September 14, during a counterattack on Czerniakowska (shrapnel from a hand grenade hit him in the left leg and right shoulder).

After the fall of the Czerniaków district of the city, he crossed the river and reached the military hospital in Otwock, where he made contact with surviving members of Battalion Zoska, including Witold Morawski and Jan Rodowicz. When his wounds had healed after the fall of the Uprising, he returned to the city and joined the Kmita Detached Unit. At first, he was put in command of a small group of just a few persons (after the War, when he started to work for the MBP, on the day he was recruited he passed on information about the people in this group to Maj. Herer and said that Anoda was its second-in-command, but did not reveal his real name). Later, he was in a group commanded by Jan Rodowicz.

Czerewacz was awarded two Crosses of Valor for his part in the Warsaw Uprising and promoted to 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant.

In April 1945, he was arrested in Otwock by officers of the People’s Police during an unsuccessful attempt to obtain a cache of weapons, but after a few weeks managed to escape from the Communist Security Service’s municipal jail via a tunnel he dug for himself.<sup>151</sup>

Czerewacz took a favorable attitude to Col. Mazurkiewicz’s appeal for his men to come forward and declare their participation in resistance activities. After making his declaration, he took a job in the office of the Liquidation Committee. In 1946, he enrolled for Journalism at the Diplomatic and Consular Faculty of the Warsaw Academy of Political Studies.

Earlier (in November 1945), with the knowledge of his comrades in arms, Czerewacz traveled to the British occupation zone of Germany to meet

149 Eugeniusz “Rawicz” Romański (1919–1944), commander of a tank and second-in-command of the “Wacek” Armored Platoon in Battalion Zośka.

150 Eugeniusz Stasiecki, nom-de-guerre “Piotr Pomian” (1913–1944), killed in action on August 16, 1944.

151 *Ibid.* Witold Morawski was making plans to spring incarcerated colleagues from jail. He intended to use his contacts in the security service to do this, but the plan was never implemented. Anna Jakubowska told me in a conversation that at first she suspected Donat Czerewacz of being Informer Górnik (Miner), in association with the escape tunnel he dug using a spoon. Some people even thought that the entire business of his escape was a hoax orchestrated by the security service, though there is no evidence for that in the extant source documents.

with several people, including Ryszard Białous, ex-commander of Battalion Zośka.<sup>152</sup> The purpose of his travel was to sound out the possibility of getting the Zośkaites still in Poland out of the country and join those of their colleagues whom the Germans had taken prisoner and who were therefore west of the Iron Curtain when the War finished. Having obtained all the required information and false documents, in December Czerewacz pretended to be repatriating and took a sea route back to Poland, in order to give his superiors and colleagues the information he had collected concerning opportunities for emigration to the West.<sup>153</sup>

According to the reports he submitted later to the MBP, nearly all the Zośkaites, including himself, Anoda, and Witold Morawski, were in favor of emigration, but Col. Mazurkiewicz and Henryk Kozłowski did not approve of it. Czerewacz put it as follows:

I think Kozłowski was against leaving [Poland ...] because he realized that if he was removed from under the protective wings of Radosław, he would no longer be “in command” of the Zośkaites, who did not treat him as a combat authority, quite on the contrary—his spells of cowardice during the Uprising in the fighting for Czerniaków were well-known. Radosław did not want to issue his approval for their emigration because (as some Zośkaites said), ... they were his bodyguard, and had earned a reputation for that both before and during the Uprising.<sup>154</sup>

We should, of course, treat this statement very cautiously, in view of the fact that it comes from a secret report Czerewacz made in 1953; however, we may assume that the question of surviving Zośkaites leaving Poland for the

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152 Ryszard “Jerzy” Białous (1914–1992), commander of Battalion Zośka and “Broda53,” a sabotage brigade.

153 AIPN, 2386/6229, Protokół przesłuchania Witolda Morawskiego [Minutes of the interrogation of Witold Morawski], February 19, 1949, 129–130.

154 *Ibid.*, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora “Zaręba” [Agent’s report delivered by Informer Zaręba], November 10, 1953, 170. In June 1990, Henryk Kozłowski made the following observation on emigration: “The period of armed combat was a closed chapter, and we were considering whether we would be able to live abroad. It seemed to us that we wouldn’t.” (Quoted after Wachowicz, *Ułan Batalionu „Zośka”. Gawęda o Janku Rodowiczu...*, 155). Anna Jakubowska and Henryk Kończykowski told me that only some of the Zośkaites wanted to leave Poland, but Jan Rodowicz was definitely not one of them. The other issue which requires a commentary is the question of Henryk Kozłowski’s alleged cowardice during the fighting for Czerniaków. Kozłowski was injured in the final phase of combat in Warsaw, therefore quite obviously he was not so active. However, if he had really discredited himself during the Warsaw Uprising, as Czerewacz said, other Zośkaites would definitely not have agreed to serve in the detached unit under his command.

West most likely marked the first serious rift in relations between Czerewacz and Kozłowski, which had been good up to that time.

According to Czerewacz, his quarrel with Kozłowski would finally surface in 1947 during one of the Zośkaite talks “over tea” on the January parliamentary election.\* In opposition to the opinion of Kozłowski and other Zośkaites present at the meeting, Czerewacz claimed that the official result of the voting reflected the real balance of political forces in the country. He came from a working-class family and now he was making a stand against the “reactionaries” who wanted to keep the influence they had enjoyed and continue to use it in postwar Poland. From this time on, Czerewacz’s contacts with other Radosław Group veterans apparently shrank quite considerably.<sup>155</sup>

The trustworthiness of this item of information, which Czerewacz divulged to the MBP in the 1950s, should not be given a high rating. By this time, he was trying to relax his working relationship with the security service, which wanted him to continue to invigilate his companions from Battalion Zośka. He could not meet these expectations, because after 1949 he lost his credibility with most of the veterans of the Radosław Group. So he tried to get different tasks from his officers in the MBP and presented them with all the arguments he could think of to prove that it was no longer possible to figure out the Zośkaites. At the same time, he still wanted to be perceived as a loyal supporter of the Communist government. He was a student of the Academy of Political Studies, so he knew the arguments he should apply to convince his officers that he was in favor of “the new reality.”

The incident which occurred in May 1947 when he was detained by the MBP in connection with the breaking into and burglary of Henryk Witczak’s residence organized by Bronisław Sianoszek undoubtedly marked a turning point in Czerewacz’s life. The first time he passed on general information

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155 AIPN, 2386/6229, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora “Zaręba” [Agent’s report delivered by Informer Zaręba], January 2, 1954, 182. None of the persons I talked to confirmed that there had been any conflicts between Donat Czerewacz and Zośkaites on “a class basis.” Evidence that some controversies had occurred in connection with Czerewacz comes in a passage from one of the character assessments of him made by the MBP in the 1950s, relating to an extract from a statement made by Bogdan Celiński during an interrogation in 1949. The assessment says, “In October 1948, on orders from Rodowicz, [Bogdan] Celiński organized a group which was to be ready to engage in armed resistance in the event of a war. Some people taking part in that conversation had reservations concerning Informer Zaręba on political grounds (presumably they knew of his contacts with the MBP).” (AIPN, 2386/6229, Charakterystyka informatora “Zaręba” [Character assessment of Informer Zaręba], April 28, 1956, 226).

about his comrades in Battalion Zośka was when he was being interrogated by Maj. Herer, whereupon he said that he was due to take an exam that day and asked to be allowed to leave. Herer let him go, on condition that he would return for another interview within a couple of days. Czerewacz complied and met Herer in a restaurant. On June 13, 1947, Herer recruited him for service as an informer whose task was to invigilate the veterans of the Radosław Group. Czerewacz chose the name “Zaręba” for his MBP alias.<sup>156</sup>

Insurgent “Sójka” had volunteered of his own free will to serve as an MBP informer, as his recruitment questionnaire said,<sup>157</sup> nonetheless Maj. Herer must certainly have let him know that he had discrediting information on him. A secret report submitted in February 1947 by Informer “Jan” could serve as an example. It said that Czerewacz was a murderer and ex-AK intelligence agent [*sic!*] from Białystok for counteracting the Communist movement. Until the fall of 1944, he had worked in the German officers’ mess in Białystok and was the manager of the Jews from the ghetto who worked there. ... When he was in the resistance movement in the summer of 1945, he stood out for his exceptional brutality to [Communist] officers, over a dozen of whom he had on his conscience [*sic!*], as he brags. An enemy of the current Government and Forces, and a rumor-spreading agitator. Now a student of the Academy of Political Studies and one of the more energetic activists of the ideological movement joined by members of former Storm Group organizations.<sup>158</sup>

There was no further information in any other agent’s report on Sójka’s activities in the AK’s intelligence or counterintelligence agencies, or on the murders he was alleged to have committed on Communists, and the MBP did not check up on the sensations reported by Informer Jan.<sup>159</sup> The very fact

156 At this time, Maj. Herer decided “on operational grounds” not to take a written deposition from Donat Czerewacz declaring his obligation to work for the MBP.

157 As Bronisław Sianoszek reported, at this time Donat Czerewacz was living very frugally (AIPN, 00945/44, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora “Odwet” [Agent’s report from Informer Odwet], no date, unpaginated), so presumably he decided to work for the security service largely to improve his financial situation. Adam Abramowicz’s motives were pretty much the same.

158 AIPN, 2386/6229, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Jan,” [Excerpt from agent’s report submitted by Informer Jan,] February 22, 1947, 131. Informer Jan worked for Department Two of the Polish Forces General Chief of Staff. In Czerewacz’s records there is a note on Sójka which says “The informer met him [Sójka] and 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Anoda ... bragging that they had more Communists than Germans on their list of achievements. ... [He is] a diehard enemy of the current [Communist] regime” (AIPN, 2386/6229, Wyciąg z informacji o członkach AK [Excerpt from information on AK members], no date, 118).

159 Although none of the other sources I examined confirm the information in Jan’s report—and there were rumors that after the War members of the Warsaw

that Maj. Herer was in possession of such information, as well as Bronisław Sianoszek’s secret reports containing fairly long descriptions of Czerewacz may have induced him to agree to work for the MBP. Evidence that his work for them was not undertaken on sincere grounds, at least not at the outset, comes in the fact that he informed Henryk Kozłowski that he had been detained by the MBP in May and that he had had a second meeting with Maj. Herer. He warned Kozłowski that the security men were interested in Battalion Zośka veterans.<sup>160</sup> Moreover, Czerewacz did not inform the MBP of his meetings with Zygmunt Szkudelski, which they knew of from the tips delivered by Abramowicz and Sianoszek, later confirmed during the interrogation of Witold Morawski in 1949.

Later Czerewacz said that the change in his attitude to his collaboration with Maj. Herer came after his quarrel with Kozłowski and other Zośkaites over the results of the general election. After the incident, he stopped informing Kozłowski of his meetings with Herer. In the 1950s, he gave the following explanation of the matter:

As regards the motives for my conduct, by that time I had reached a crossroads, on the one hand I wanted to be a loyal citizen and tried to understand and commend everything the Government of People’s Poland was doing, while on the other hand there was solidarity with my brothers in arms, the ideology of *Kamienie na szaniec*\* and a sense of openness and sincerity toward my colleagues ... still sort of holding me in the Zośka group. ... I was never a reactionary. Brainwashed by the ideology of undercover resistance, in my imagination I built up an idealistic picture of a resistance movement and fighting against occupying forces, I was in the mass of insurgents and before I knew it, found myself among the enemies of People’s Poland, skillfully crammed with propaganda from London and in the enemy camp. ... The fact that I had no contacts at all with people on the democratic side [*sic!*] delayed my political maturity and decision to assume the proper attitude on the class war that was going on.<sup>161</sup>

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branch of the AK were executing “turncoats,” i.e. those who had gone over to the Communists—MBP recruiting officers did not automatically cross persons who had served in the AK’s intelligence or counterintelligence network off the list of their potential informers. (Tomasz Balbus, “Służył nam bez zastrzeżeń i skrupułów. Druga twarz byłego szefa Oddziału II Obszaru Lwowskiego AK ppłk. Henryka Pohoskiego ‘Walerego’ vel ‘Szpinalskiego’.” *Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989*, no.1, 2004: 286–318).

160 See Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy przez wiele lat...*, 32. Czerewacz gave Henryk Kozłowski a description of what Maj. Herer looked like, which let Kozłowski recognize Herer following his arrest on January 3, 1949.

161 AIPN, 2386/6229, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora “Zaręba” [Agent’s report submitted by Informer Zaręba], December 19, 1953, 218–219. Czerewacz

We cannot rule out the possibility that the purpose of Czerewacz's move away from the Zoślaite community, at least at the beginning, was to save himself from having to pass on a lot of information about his former pals. When we read the reports he submitted in the 1950s in which he censured Col. Mazurkiewicz and Kozłowski,<sup>162</sup> we should bear in mind that presumably he was only saying what he thought the MBP wanted to hear from him.<sup>163</sup>

Despite Czerewacz's high-flying expressions of support for People's Poland, I don't think he was absolutely sincere, and the MBP men noticed it, too. At the time, he treated his collaboration with them as a purely opportunistic business. It was to save him from repressive measures, secure better living conditions (he was quite generously paid for his tips), and give him the chance to find a good job after graduation.<sup>164</sup> In the first phase of his work for the MBP, Czerewacz may well have felt reluctant to snitch on his colleagues, while they must certainly have treated him with suspicion and distanced themselves off once they learned of his rendezvous with Maj. Herer. There came a time when the situation must have gotten the better of him, and he decided to isolate himself off both from the veterans of the Radosław Group and from the MPB officers, who wanted more and more information from him.

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claimed that his period at university and the people he met at this time played an important part in "awakening his class awareness."

- 162 Czerewacz wrote, "I saw how those people were feathering their own nest with the resistance organization's money, buying apartments, stores, and car workshops for themselves, all with the organization's money but for themselves," (*ibid.*, 219). The AK man Sójka, who lived very frugally after the War, could well have been envious of individuals with bigger financial resources at their disposal.
- 163 An excellent example of this is offered by Donat Czerewacz's account of his stay at his brother's: "I was fairly courageous and my brother [Wiktór] asked me to help with organizing the self-defense of the property [a state-owned collective farm] he was the manager of against the armed gangs and bandits [*sic!*]. We were supplied with rifles by the People's Police. In practice, I was in command of this defense. There was an exchange of fire on several occasions. That's when I realized that 'the men of the forest,'\* that is effectively my colleagues, were just gangsters, and moreover cowards," (*Ibid.*) We can hardly believe that Czerewacz's views really went through such a radical change in so short a time. Another hint that he was out to win the confidence of the MBP men is the fact that he tried to persuade them that it was thanks to his encouragement that one of his brothers and his brother-in-law decided to work for the security service.
- 164 In October 1948, Donat Czerewacz applied to join Związek Młodzieży Polskiej (ZMP, a Communist youth organization), and was admitted on January 5, 1949.

In 1948 (probably in its latter half),<sup>165</sup> Czerewacz stopped contacting his case officer and left for a three-month visit to a family living in Giżycko and Knyszyn; he visited them every year when the fishing season started. Maj. Herer gave him a card with a phone number he was to call, but Czerewacz never dialed it. Later he gave the excuse that he had lost the card, but the MBP boys did not believe him and suspected him of trying to dodge them. Czerewacz resumed contact with Maj. Herer in January 1949 while in his hometown, when he got a telegram from Kozłowski, which said “Janek seriously ill – come back,” which he quite rightly read as meaning that Anoda had been arrested.<sup>166</sup>

Years later, Czerewacz tried to vindicate his behavior with the following explanation:

In December, I returned to Warsaw straight after Christmas and due to that telegram decided to do all I could to restore my contact with the security service. I realized that the information I had on Zośka and Radosław was the asset which would help me redeem part of my earlier misdemeanors and serve as proof that I had embarked on this new road in all sincerity. My capital asset could forfeit its value if someone else delivered it. That was the main motive for the way I behaved, not the fear of being arrested because if I had still been on the other side mentally, I would have tried to find other ways out in the sense of fleeing abroad. ... It was more of a case of being afraid I would be taken for an enemy, now that I had truly turned into a friend, that's what told me to go to the security service.<sup>167</sup>

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165 A literal reading of Informer Zaręba's records, i.e. the information Czerewacz passed on to the MBP in the early 1950s, would suggest that he cut contact with Maj. Herer in September 1947, but this would be hardly credible, since on January 17, 1948, he signed a receipt slip for the payment of 10 thousand złoty (Pietrzak, “Zaręba...,” 77). I think the problem can be logically explained if we assume that there was a typo in the date, which should have been “1948,” not “1947,” or maybe if Czerewacz himself went wrong over the date and the error was later reproduced in subsequent documents. This would tally with other items of information he delivered, according to which he broke off contact with the MBP before he left for the three months he spent with his family in the country and returned to Warsaw when he learned of the arrest of Jan Rodowicz. It would be hard to imagine that Maj. Herer would have waited for fifteen months and done nothing to reestablish contact with his informer, who was in Warsaw for most of that time. In addition, in the documents relating to 1947 I have quoted above, Herer figures as a captain, whereas in reality he was promoted to the rank of major on December 20, 1946, so we should take a very cautious approach to the details, especially the dates, in Czerewacz's records from the 1950s.

166 AIPN, 2386/6229, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora ‘Zaręba’, ” [Agent's report submitted by Informer Zaręba], January 2, 1954, 182.

167 *Ibid.*

Contrary to the version Czerewacz presented to the security officers, I think his return to Warsaw was due to his fear of being arrested and at best sentenced to a long term in prison. By the end of 1948, he must have realized that the game he had been playing with the MBP had come to an end. He came to believe that the only solution for him was to resume his work with the security men.

On his return to Warsaw, he got in touch with Maj. Herer, whose name he did not know, through the services of one of his fellow students at the university. It turned out that a student called Kazimierz Łaski was performing the duties of the head of Subdepartment Four, Department Four of the MBP. Czerewacz had a meeting with his case officer before January 20, following a phone call in the evening of January 13. An agreement was made that his task would be to pretend that he was hiding from the security service, in order to monitor the activities of the veterans of the Radosław Group still at liberty.<sup>168</sup>

At first, Czerewacz proved himself in his new role, supplying Maj. Herer with several invaluable tips which were later used in the investigations that followed and helped to arrest new suspects.<sup>169</sup> After ten days, he was instructed to travel to Giżycko, where he was to continue to “be in hiding” and return to Warsaw to see his case officer if the need arose. However, after some time, the head of Department Four reached a conclusion that the situation would raise suspicions if Czerewacz, allegedly “wanted” by the MBP, managed to avoid being caught for such a long time while almost all of his colleagues had been arrested much earlier. So he decided that Informer Zaręba had to be rounded up.<sup>170</sup> Czerewacz was arrested on April 4, 1949, but in no way did it stop him from continuing to collect data on his former

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168 Pietrzak, “Zaręba...,” 76–77.

169 AIPN, 2386/6229, Charakterystyka informatora “Zaręba” [Character assessment of Informer Zaręba], April 28, 1956, 222. The following remark in Maj. Herer’s report to Julia Brystiger may be regarded as a good description of Zaręba’s operations: “We have managed to recruit Informer Zaręba, who is one of the most active members of Zośka. On the basis of Zaręba’s reports, ... I have ascertained that there is panic in the Zośkaite community [after the first arrests]. (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Raport naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do dyrektora Departamentu V [Report from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of MBP Department Five, Subdepartment Four, to the Head of Department Five], January 17, 1949, 125).

170 AIPN, 2386/6229, Pismo naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do dyrektora Departamentu V w sprawie konieczności osadzenia w areszcie Donata Czerewacza [Memorandum from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of MBP Department Five, Subdepartment Four, to the Head of Department Five, re. the need to arrest Donat Czerewacz], April 4, 1949, 19.

comrades in arms. Now he was a cell agent, snitching on his cellmates; thanks to this, on orders from Maj. Herer, he got more generous food rations and was allowed to receive parcels.<sup>171</sup>

Informer Zaręba was released from jail on July 18, 1949, along with a group of others arrested in connection with the Zośka Case. No charges were brought against him,<sup>172</sup> and following his release he went back to his work for the security service.

To sum up this part of the story, I have to say categorically that the Zośkaites were lax about adhering to the principles of undercover operations, and this worked against them.<sup>173</sup> If they had kept strictly to the rules, the security men would have found it much harder to collect evidence against them.

However, it has to be stressed that people like Adam Abramowicz, who had been deported to the Soviet Union after the War and whose brother and fiancée Janina Bojemaska<sup>174</sup> belonged to the AK, seemed to be one of the last persons who could be suspected of sympathizing with the Communist

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171 *Ibid.*, Charakterystyka informatora “Zaręba” [Character assessment of Informer Zaręba], April 28, 1956, 223; *ibid.*, Pismo naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do komendanta Aresztu MBP kpt. Antoniego Zająca w sprawie przyjęcia paczki dla zatrzymanego Donata Czerewacza [Memorandum from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of MBP Department Five, Subdepartment Four, to Capt. Waclaw Zajac, Chief Warden of the MBP Prison, re. receipt of a parcel for detainee Donat Czerewacz], April 20, 1949, 393.

172 Presumably, the MBP considered that if there was a sufficiently long break in Czerewacz’s intensive contacts with the Zośkaites, it would be enough for them to regard his release from prison as a natural development, not as a suspicious turn of events.

173 For comparison, I shall cite one of Bronisław Sianoszek’s reports: “Donat and everyone else said that the chance of the MBP planting a snooper in the Gray Ranks was next to nil because they were too well-knit and would not admit any new members.” (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Analiza kontaktów Zygmunta Szkudelskiego i Witolda Morawskiego z pracownikami ambasad Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii przygotowana przez Bronisława Sianoszka [Review of Zygmunt Szkudelski’s and Witold Morawski’s contacts with the U.S. and British Embassies, compiled by Bronisław Sianoszek], no date, 76). A sign of how naïve Radosław Group veterans could be is provided by the fact that in a conversation with Informer Górnik in early January 1949, Witold Morawski mentioned Jan Rodowicz’s hidden arms cache. Perhaps another of the Battalion’s veterans had said the same earlier in a private conversation with another MBP informer, unaware that his interlocutor was snooping on them.

174 Janina “Hanka” Bojemaska (1928–2012), liaison girl for Plac Warszawa-Południe Command of the Warsaw Region of the AK.

government.<sup>175</sup> What's more, he was so intelligent, and his case officers at the MBP so experienced, that it was not until 2015 thanks to a lot of assiduous sleuthing and shifting through the records of the security service that I managed to identify Informer Górnik. In addition, the surviving archival records contain indirect evidence to show that neither Janina Bojemska<sup>176</sup> nor Abramowicz's brother had a clue that he was working for the MBP.

Donat Czerewacz had served in the Radosław Group of the AK and engaged in the combat conducted by Battalions Parasol and Zośka right to the end of the Warsaw Uprising, and thereafter joined the Kmita Detached Unit, which gave him a sense of protection against exposure. In fact, his fellow combatants considered him Number Four in the VIP ranking of Battalion Zośka, as he bragged to his MBP bosses.<sup>177</sup>

Bronisław Sianoszek, who had commanded the "Baśka" Storm Group during the Uprising, was awarded the *Virtuti Militari* Cross (Class Five, for personal bravery),\* and two Crosses of Valor.<sup>178</sup> His memoirs were published in 1966 with the following back-cover blurb:

In the spring of 1940, Sianoszek established contact with KOP (Komenda Obrońców Polski, "Defenders of Poland Command," a secret organization) and later, after his brother's arrest, with the ZWZ. For the entire period of Poland's wartime occupation by Nazi Germany, Sianoszek took an active part in the resistance movement, first as an agent distributing the underground press, next as a courier, thereafter as a security guard protecting a secret factory producing hand grenades, the commander

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175 Years later, Zośka veteran Bogdan "Wiktor" Celiński (1921–2016), cadet platoon sergeant of Group Three of the Second ("Alek") Platoon of the Second ("Rudy") Company, recalled that there was "such a fraternal atmosphere that those who survived the War made up a sort of family (quoted after Lipiński, *Anoda...*, 191).

176 I have not come across any written records to show that Janina Bojemska was an MBP informer. Hence, we may assume that she should not be associated with the secret operations of Adam Abramowicz.

177 AIPN, 2386/6229, Notatka ze spotkania z informatorem "Zaręba" [Memorandum on a meeting with Informer Zaręba], December 12, 1953, 56.

178 At Milanówek, Bronisław Sianoszek saved the life of a liaison girl and field nurse called Barbara "Bogna" Gac (1925–2010), who served in the Second ("Alek") Platoon of the Second ("Rudy") Company of Battalion Zośka. When a German soldier apprehended Bogna, Broniek hit him in the face, which let her escape (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Analiza kontaktów Zygmunta Szkudelskiego i Witolda Morawskiego z pracownikami ambasad Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii przygotowana przez Bronisława Sianoszka [Review of Zygmunt Szkudelski's and Witold Morawski's contacts with the U.S. and British Embassies, compiled by Bronisław Sianoszek], no date, 75). Maria Matuszewska was another of Broniek's close acquaintances.

of a unit of guards protecting a secret sten gun production works at Suchedniów, a soldier in the platoon of “Ponury’s”<sup>\*</sup> bodyguards, and finally an AK resistance fighter. ... In July 1944, he was a courier dispatched to Warsaw, where he joined the Uprising. ... The Gestapo arrested him on two occasions, but he escaped, hid in the environs of Warsaw, and was later sent out on orders to the Kielce region. In the spring of 1945, at the end of the War, he returned to Milanówek. Feeling duty-bound by the soldier’s oath he had taken, he did not lay down arms but continued to carry out the orders of his superiors, who tried to start up civil war [*sic!*] in a country ravaged by war and occupation.<sup>179</sup>

To supplement this blurb, I should add that once “Bronek” had flipped over into Informer Odwet, on Czerewacz’s suggestion he drank a *brüderschaft*<sup>\*</sup> with Jan Rodowicz and got on first-name terms with him.<sup>180</sup>

Veterans of the anti-German resistance movement failed to appreciate how dangerous a threat the Communist security service was for them and were too lackadaisical about counterintelligence measures.<sup>181</sup> Quite erroneously, they assumed that individuals who had a distinguished record in the fighting against the Nazi Germans would automatically continue to be trustworthy and stand up to defy the Communists. Unfortunately, the MBP’s methods of operation turned out to be more effective than those the Germans had used during the War.<sup>182</sup> Time was not as important for the Communists as it had been for the Germans, and their security agents applied a long-term strategy.

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179 See Sianoszek, *Śmierć nie przychodzi, kiedy czekam...* .

180 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Analiza kontaktów Zygmunta Szkudelskiego i Witolda Morawskiego z pracownikami ambasad Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii przygotowana przez Bronisława Sianoszka [Review of Zygmunt Szkudelski’s and Witold Morawski’s contacts with the U.S. and British Embassies, compiled by Bronisław Sianoszek], no date, 76.

181 Some of the meetings in 1947 involving Witold Morawski were attended by Adam Abramowicz, Donat Czerewacz, and Bronisław Sianoszek, three men who were or would soon become MBP informers. Having “agents working in parallel” was a convenient measure for the MBP, thanks to which they could cross-check the data reported by each of their snoops and monitor them. This was how the MBP learned that Donat Czerewacz was not informing them of all of his contacts with ex-AK men. It was also a way to determine whether a given informer was in danger of being discovered. See *Instrukcje pracy operacyjnej aparatu bezpieczeństwa 1945–1989*, ed. Tadeusz Ruzikowski, Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, 2004, *passim*.

182 A list of agents working for the Warsaw Voivodeship Security Office, drawn up in March 1949, gives an idea of the network of Communist agents. See Kazimierz Krajewski and Jacek Pawłowicz, “Agentura WUBP w Warszawie wykorzystywana w 1949 r. przeciwko podziemiu niepodległościowemu,” *Aparat*

Many individuals who had been able to go through an extremely brutal investigation of a couple of days carried out by German henchmen could not put up with the interrogation methods the Soviets practiced upon them for weeks, months, or even years on end.

Presumably, the MBP was more successful at figuring out “hostile environments” also because they were not out to exterminate the Polish nation and did not set up an impenetrable barrier between themselves and the people of Poland as the Germans had done. Instead, they could offer their collaborators loads of benefits and calm their conscience with propagandistic claims on the need to join in Poland’s restoration and get the country to rise from its ruins, turning into a strong, new Polish State. Very many people who had staunchly stood up against the Germans found the “new, post-1945 reality” acceptable. For many others susceptible neither to appeals to their patriotism nor to having their pockets lined, fear of the consequences which could ensue if they refused to cooperate with the MBP played the key role.

The discovery of the personal particulars of Informer Górnik did not resolve all the controversies associated with his part in the arrest of Jan Rodowicz. Although Abramowicz’s tips undoubtedly played a significant part in the Zośka Case, numerous problems were still waiting for a solution. The MBP men availed themselves of the services of other informers, such as Zośka veteran Piotr Waroczewski alias “Wężyk,”<sup>183</sup> theoretically with

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*Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989*, no. 1, (2004): 245–285. Ex-MBP officers used to say, “Bigmouths who said too much suffered the most. Informers ... were allowed to rattle away against the Polish and Soviet regimes, against the [Communist] Party and its leaders. When people heard this, they stopped being careful and started to say what they really thought of the regime, they were sincere about their problems, and inadvertently committed a ‘political offense.’” (“Działalność sowieckich ‘doradców’ przy Wojewódzkim Urzędzie Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego w Białymstoku w latach 1944–1947. Relacja z archiwów wywiadu USA,” Introduction and commentary by Piotr Łapiński and Wojciech Jerzy Muszyński, *Glaukopis* no. 1 (28), (2013): 184).

183 Piotr “Tajfun” Waroczewski (1925–2019), corporal in the Third Group of the First (“Sad”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka. Studied at the Warsaw University of Technology and worked for the Communist security service. Recruited for the first time on September 19, 1946 (on a voluntary basis), by Cadet Zygmunt Czerwonka of the Government Security Department, when he took the alias “Felek.” Recruited a second time on April 5, 1949, by Lt. Roman Masny, a senior officer of the MBP, Department Five, Subdepartment Four, Section One. Masny had information to discredit Waroczewski, which he had obtained from a statement made by Henryk Kozłowski under interrogation, concerning arms Waroczewski had kept hidden away for a time after declaring his involvement in the AK. We do not know how long Waroczewski’s first period

better chances to collect information on their former comrades in arms than Górnik. However, their work files have been destroyed, and all that remains are their tips appended to the records of particular cases, and their character assessments compiled in the 1950s and later. All this makes it much harder to assess how valuable a particular informer was for the security staff.

Although not all the MBP agents have been identified, a close examination of the data in the extant records shows that the best source of information was Donat Czerewacz. Pretty soon after his recruitment he was supplying detailed information on the activities of the Zośkaites in 1945–1947.

He was remunerated with very generous pay for his services, which must certainly have been utilized during the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz. On the other hand, there are no surviving reports made by him, nor any receipts for money paid out to him in the period immediately preceding the Zośka Case, presumably because that was the time when he broke off relations with Maj. Herer.

Informer Zaręba knew of the arms cache Jan Rodowicz was keeping hidden away and passed this information on to the MBP, nonetheless the fact that there is no date on the transcript of his secret message means that we cannot say for certain that he was the first to forward it to the security officers, giving them just the pretext they were looking for to arrest Rodowicz, as Agnieszka Pietrzak has observed.<sup>184</sup> In my opinion, Czerewacz did not pass on the information on the hidden arms cache until his return to Warsaw and renewal of contact with Maj. Herer, that is in January 1949. Evidence for this comes in a memorandum dated December 1953 in his personal file, which says

Zaręba .... reestablished contact with Maj. Herer in 1949, probably in January. He provided important information on individuals etc., especially at the time of the

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of service lasted and what information he passed on to the MBP at the time (AIPN, 001121/246/J, Akta osobowe informatora “Wężyka” [Personal records of Informer Wężyk]).

184 Pietrzak, “Zaręba...,” 76. The passage in Zaręba’s tip-off reads as follows: “From what I have managed to observe, the cache hidden away should comprise about 30 machine pistols, one LMG [light machine gun], a German MG [*Maschinengewehr*, machine gun], one MP-43 machine pistol [assault rifle], 10 to 15 handguns, and 30 to 50 grenades of various types. These weapons were stashed away by Kmita. They have been buried on the premises of the property owned by Kmita’s wife in Jeziorno. In addition, Janek Rodowicz has hidden his own weapons, 1 or 2 machine pistols and 2 to 4 handguns, somewhere else (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Zaręba” [Excerpt from agent’s report submitted by Informer Zaręba], no date, 98).

arrests [arrest?]. Apparently, he did not pass on information on the weapons cache because he did not know where it was hidden.<sup>185</sup>

If we consider the fact that it was Maj. Herer who received the message about the arms cache from Zaręba and that in late 1953 Herer was no longer an MBP employee, we can read the last sentence of this passage as confirmation that the information on the arms was not submitted until January 1949. If Zaręba had spilled the beans any earlier, that last sentence would make no sense.<sup>186</sup>

Even though no one has managed to collect clinching proof that it was Czerewacz who told the MBP men of the hidden arms cache prior to Rodowicz's arrest, it will be worthwhile considering whether the security men did not learn of it from one of Zaręba's friends, Adam Abramowicz or Bronisław Sianoszek. Czerewacz might have discussed the matter with them but not mentioned it to the MBP. After all, he did not tell them of his contact with Zygmunt Szkudelski, either, although they knew of it in any case.

Perhaps it was Adam Abramowicz who passed on the key information to the MBP in 1948 but there are no written records of it in his personal file. His codename is not mentioned in Maj. Herer's correspondence, even though the aliases of Czerewacz and Sianoszek do occur there. Information on a "sabotage operation" being planned and hidden weapons definitely came from Sianoszek. However, his extant denunciations show that he discussed matters involving weapons with Zygmunt Szkudelski but it is hard to tell whether it concerned the Zośkaite arms, or weapons stashed away by other units throughout the country.<sup>187</sup> Sianoszek's surviving personal

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185 AIPN, 2386/6229, Notatka ze spotkania z informatorem "Zaręba," 12 XII 1953 r., k. 55. [Memorandum on a meeting with Informer Zaręba], December 12, 1953, 55].

186 Col. Adam Humer sent this excerpt from Zaręba's report back to Department Five in late February 1949. Most of the matters mentioned in this secret message refer to events in 1945–1946 and a few in 1947, but there are none for 1948, although this might have been because by 1948 Czerewacz was not as closely associated with the Zośkaite and their affairs as before. In one of his tip-offs from the 1950s I have cited above, Zaręba wrote that in his exchanges with the security service in 1949 he wanted to apply his "capital," that is what he knew about his colleagues from the Battalion, which would suggest that he did not start disclosing the most incriminating information about them until January 1949.

187 Purportedly, Zygmunt Szkudelski told Broniek that he was "not to worry about the arms, that quite a lot of weapons were being left [undisclosed] by groups which were coming forward and making public declarations." (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Analiza kontaktów Zygmunta Szkudelskiego i Witolda Morawskiego z pracownikami ambasady Stanów Zjednoczonych i Wielkiej Brytanii przygotowana przez Bronisława Sianoszka [Review of Zygmunt Szkudelski's and

records are incomplete, so we cannot rule out the possibility of him learning of Anoda’s hidden cache through his various connections.

Whichever of the informers obtained the information that clinched the case against Rodowicz—the MBP men who were planning to arrest him knew that the Zośkaites had a hidden cache of weapons—it is an incontrovertible fact that the MBP’s agents played a part in the figuring out and breaking up of the community of Radosław Group veterans. Most probably, it was thanks to the information the MBP boys obtained from their stool pigeons that they managed to get Anoda to sign the minutes of his interrogations in which he incriminated his colleagues, and got him to disclose the whereabouts of the buried arms cache. This could well have landed Anoda in such a difficult situation while the investigation was still going on that he decided that the only way out was to take his life.

I decided to present all the above facts, including those relating to Jan Makowski and Andrzej Sowiński, because it enabled me to show how complex the situation really was, what with all the diverse reactions and types of behavior individual Zośkaites assumed after 1945, though we might not have expected it to have been so convoluted. They were not a monolithic structure, and as time went on, split up into groups sympathetic to, or estranged from one another, which made things easier for the MBP and their snitching helpmates. Sometimes a mere snippet of information was enough for the security men to launch an investigation eventually leading to scores of arrests, as happened in the Zośka Case.

However, I must insist that the experiences these young insurgents went through during the War and the dilemmas they faced in its aftermath should make us proceed very cautiously in formulating an evaluation of their conduct. Not all of them were as unswerving as the most steadfast veterans of Battalion Zośka, hence their tendency to behave in ways which could be considered blameworthy from today’s point of view, and which deteriorated the longer they were put to the test of more and more trauma. Of course, that is not to absolve the informers who tipped off the Communist security apparatus and were generously rewarded for ratting on their colleagues, especially as their operations often led to death sentences or long years of imprisonment for Polish patriots.<sup>188</sup>

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Witold Morawski’s contacts with the U.S. and British Embassies, compiled by Bronisław Sianoszek], no date, 80).

188 Not all informers actually made an effort to help the security service, as the example of Stanisław “Kopeć” Jastrzębski shows. On April 19, 1950, Jastrzębski, a veteran of Battalion Parasol, signed a deposition binding himself to work for the MBP but told his colleagues from the Battalion of it. The MBP summed up his behavior and reluctant attitude to the security service as follows: “although he

## The Zośka Case<sup>189</sup>

As I have already said, the community of veterans of the Radosław AK Group was intensely infiltrated by security service agents. The MBP managed to get its informers into the group fairly quickly. It did not acknowledge the amnesty of 1945 and the operation associated with it to get patriotic young people to come forward and disclose their combat past, thus ending their underground activities. The security service thought it was just a ploy on the part of Col. Mazurkiewicz to facilitate the continuation of activities targeted against the Communist government. Extant records show that the security men believed it was only those whose anti-Communist activities were already known to the authorities that “came out into the open” in response to Col. Mazurkiewicz’s appeal, while the others intended to continue their “hostile operations.”<sup>190</sup> The MBP officers did not trust Radosław and planned to crack down on his group.<sup>191</sup>

Although some Zośkaites did not come to terms with the “new reality,” as I have shown, in general most of them tried to lead a normal life. They understood that the armed struggle against the Communist authorities in the late 1940s would have made no sense unless another world war broke out.<sup>192</sup> Włodzimierz Steyer,<sup>193</sup> a member of Kmita’s Detached Unit, which was disbanded in 1945, recalled years later, “We ended our underground resistance

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associated with ex-AK men in their hostile community and knew of their hostile operations, he did not disclose these facts, thereby misleading the Authorities. ... he concealed the information he had and eluded us, delivering completely useless information. In addition, he claimed that he was no longer in touch with any of them, thereby trying to mislead us,” (quoted after Pietrzak, “Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy ‘Zośki’ i ‘Parasola’...,” 110).

189 Although the 1948–1949 arrests also included Battalion Miotła and Parasol veterans, the wave of repressions is known as the Zośka Case because the MBP’s operations were targeted primarily at the veterans of Battalion Zośka, who accounted for the majority of those arrested. See Pietrzak, *Żołnierze Batalionu Armii Krajowej ‘Zośka’...*, 66–69; also Łabuszewski, *Sprawa ‘Radosława’...*, 52–53.

190 Pietrzak, “Powojenna konspiracja...,” 219.

191 After defecting to the West in 1953, Lt. Col. Józef Światło, ex-Deputy Head of Department Ten, recalled, “I absolutely insist that the disclosure of the AK was only a pretext for its complete dissolution; I know this from the Party and security services. The idea was to figure out the entire organization, take action and eliminate it” (quoted after Zbigniew Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło. Za kulisami bezpieczeństwa i partii 1940–1955*, Londyn: Polska Fundacja Kulturalna, 1985, 113).

192 Pietrzak, “Powojenna konspiracja...,” 222.

193 Włodzimierz “Grom” Steyer, (1923–2012) – Cadet Sergeant (*sierżant podchorąży*) of the Third (“Felek”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka.

work when we came out.”<sup>194</sup> However, the reports compiled by MBP officers created the impression that the insurgents were participating in a powerful conspiracy to overthrow the Communist government by force of arms and eliminate its leaders physically.

It is difficult to determine whether that was what the security men really thought, or whether they just wanted to prove to their superiors that the structures within which they operated were indispensable, and to show that they were being successful, i.e. breaking up a dangerous group of the government’s adversaries.<sup>195</sup> There is also the question whether the arrest of Radosław’s former subordinates as well as himself could have been the beginning of a planned MBP campaign which in the long run had much broader goals than just the pacification of a group of recalcitrant youngsters and its leader.

It seems to me that, considered in the context of the origin of the Zośka Case, each of these aspects played an important role, which resulted in the officers overestimating both the capabilities of ex-AK men and the intents of most of them.<sup>196</sup> The security men wanted to meet the expectations of their

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194 Włodzimierz Steyer, “Druga konspiracja ‘Zośki’...,” 74. In March 1949 Informer Sowa reported his conversation with Jan Rodowicz’s mother: “When I asked if anyone from the Zośka group had really done anything, Mrs. Rodowicz replied that she was absolutely certain that nothing of the sort had ever happened” (AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 6, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora “Sowa” [Report from Informer Sowa], March 26, 1949, 73).

195 Another proof of the fact that the management of the MBP knew they did not have enough evidence against disclosed AK veterans was that after 1989 Wiktor Herer did not even try to maintain his false accusations he had raised against them during the Stalinist period. Filip Musiał writes about the limited value of the descriptions of individual “hostile organizations” compiled by the MBP (Musiał, “Jak badać akta...,” 29). These descriptions contained errors, e.g. on the number of individual units and their activities. However, some officers also happened to believe that ex-AK soldiers from Battalion Zośka were still conducting underground activities even after the War. Stanisław “Nita” Krupa (1922–2015), master corporal (*plutonowy*) of the Second Squad of the Second Platoon of the First (“Maciek”) Company of Battalion Zośka, recalled years later that when he was arrested and confined in Mokotów prison, Col. Ludwik Serkowski, Deputy Head of Subdepartment Two of the Investigations Department, told him, “After all, you Zośka people, are the mainstay of the fascist regime. You dream of nothing else than to destroy People’s Poland. Moreover, you continue to conspire and intend to overthrow the People’s Power. And you ask why you have been locked up?” (Krupa, *X Pawilon...*, 12).

196 Pietrzak, “Powojenna konspiracja...,” 222. Here is an extract from the instruction issued by General Anders, Commander-in-Chief and Head of the Government of the Republic of Poland to Col. Jan Rzepecki in August 1945: “No underground military organization should continue to operate in Poland. Clandestine

superiors, for whom facts were not the most important – what mattered was the achievement of a specific end result. Thanks to this, some of the extant documents say that after the War, Col. Mazurkiewicz established an underground organization called Samoobrona (Self-defense), which was to plan military operations against the Communist authorities in the Voivodeships of Kraków, Subcarpathia and Silesia.<sup>197</sup>

Bartosz Nowożycki has published the following comment on the security agents' successful surveillance of Radosław and his former subordinates:

It seems that the reason for the Ministry's special interest in the ex-Kedyw personnel at AK Headquarters was the emergence of a movement which grouped these veteran soldiers under the auspices of Jan Mazurkiewicz. Created by opponents of the new government, the group was partly beyond the regime's control. The grounds for the charges against them were their alleged failure to meet the conditions of the amnesty and the continuation of their undercover operations under the guise of veterans' and other social activities.<sup>198</sup>

One of the most important arguments to support the claim that the Zośka Case was caused by the Communists' urge to pacify the volatile and potentially hostile community of young AK veterans was the banality of the grounds on which the charges against some of them were made. As Agnieszka Pietrzak has written, the reason for an ex-AK combatant's arrest and the initiation

military operations now would be against the open political action currently being undertaken. ... We do not intend to conduct an armed struggle, as we did under German occupation" (Instrukcja Naczelnego Wodza i Rządu RP dla płk. Jana Rzepeckiego: rozwiązanie Delegatury Sił Zbrojnych na Kraj, sierpień 1945 r. [in] *Armia Krajowa w dokumentach 1939–1945*, vol. 5: *Październik 194 — lipiec 1945*, ed. Tadeusz Pełczyński et al., Wrocław, Warszawa, and Kraków: Ossolineum, 1991, 492–493).

197 Seweryn Dmowski examines the decision to launch repressive measures against Radosław and his former subordinates, and observes that "it was a pseudo-decision – the decision-making center basically had little or no knowledge of the facts, or only a rudimentary, unverified knowledge of them, but actively sought to implement the decision to initiate repressions" (Dmowski, "Sprawa Jana Mazurkiewicza 'Radosława' 1949–1956. Analiza decyzyjna," Warszawa, 2012, 212 (manuscript of a PhD dissertation).

198 Nowożycki, "Losy byłych żołnierzy...", 115. The MBP was undoubtedly aware of the fact that Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz and his wife attended the winter camps. According to Informer Jan, the winter camps were financed by "rich merchant and industrialist families" (AIPN, 2386/6229, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora "Jan" [Report from Informer Jan] February 22, 1947, 178). During the investigations against them, some of the Zośkaites were told that they had been conniving against the authorities during their social meetings. (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 346–347).

of an investigation against him could have been, for example, because he attended the wedding of a former comrade in arms whom MBP officers suspected of “hostile activity,” or because he had relatives who were citizens of Western countries. Sometimes, offering hospitality to a person security men were interested in was enough to attract their attention.

For these reasons, many former AK members, both men and women who may have attended the winter camps or social meetings, found themselves in remand prisons (60 % of those arrested were war invalids) even though for various reasons they were no longer engaged in anti-Communist activities. A scrutiny of the list of those who were detained and subjected to investigations shows no connections between many of the cases, which additionally confirms that the security men were not interested in eliminating the most dangerous individuals from the Communist point of view, but in breaking up and intimidating the entire community of erstwhile insurgents.<sup>199</sup>

The wide range of repressive measures and publicity in the press proved that the arrests were not the result of individual decisions made by the heads of specific MBP departments and subdepartments, but part of a carefully prepared, coordinated operation approved by the key decision-makers in the country. The contemporary civilian security system was completely subordinated to the most influential members of the Communist Party. The gaps in the source materials do not allow for the unambiguous identification of the individuals who made the key decisions to launch repressive measures against Radosław and his former subordinates,<sup>200</sup> although, on the basis of what we know on the way the country’s decision-making mechanisms worked, we may conclude, as Seweryn Dmowski writes, that the operation must have been approved by President Bolesław Bierut, Jakub Berman, who supervised the civilian security system, as well as Roman Romkowski, who was the Public Security Minister’s assistant for security operations and as of January 10, 1949, Deputy Minister of Public Security, and from February 1949 on the Commission for Public Security of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the PZPR. Stanisław Radkiewicz, Minister of Public Security; Mieczysław

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199 Pietrzak, “Powojenna konspiracja...,” 219–220. By 1946, opponents of the Communist authorities had learned that a denunciation or a “reasonable suspicion” of “reactionary activity” were sufficient grounds for arrest. (Kopka and Majchrzak, “Raport ‘O służbie bezpieczeństwa...,’” 258).

200 In 1956, Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz testified that shortly after his arrest he was summoned to the headquarters of the Investigation Department of the MBP and was told that his investigation had been conducted on instructions from “the Minister of Security and the government.” (AIPN, 765/328, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Mazurkiewicza [Minutes of Jan Mazurkiewicz’s interrogation], April 12, 1956, 340).

Mietkowski, Deputy Minister of Public Security; Konrad Świetlik, Deputy Minister of Public Security; and Anatol Fejgin, Deputy Head of GZI,\* played a lesser role.<sup>201</sup> Moreover, extant documents show that the decision to start repressive actions was taken at the national level (there is no information about any pressure from Moscow, although Soviet advisers participated in the planning of individual operations); ultimately, they were to affect not only the Zośkaiteś but also other individuals and groups, which, as Seweryn Dmowski notes, was part of the “wider context of the hue and cry for a domestic enemy in People’s Poland in 1949–1956.”<sup>202</sup> So the fact that the Zośka Case broke out precisely at that time (late 1948) was not a coincidence, and certainly not the initiative of Julia Brystiger and Wiktor Herer of Subdepartment Four under her supervision. Throughout the process, the MBP officers were only following the orders that came from the very top.<sup>203</sup>

In the 1990s, Maj. Herer, one of the main executives conducting this operation, presented an interesting vindication of the reasons for the arrests of ex-members of the Radosław Group (see Appendix 1). According to him, Jan Rodowicz was detained after a boiler exploded in the bathroom of the Belweder Palace,\* where Zofia Dzierżyńska (widow of the Cheka founder Feliks Dzierżyński) was staying during a short spell in Warsaw. This incident occurred on December 22, 1948. Maj. Herer allegedly received information that Anoda was suspected of being involved. Appreciating the absurdity of this accusation, he decided to take preventive measures to protect both Jan Rodowicz and other AK veterans against wrongful repression.

Years later, Maj. Herer presented the honorable motives he was allegedly inspired by in the following way:

In these circumstances, Julia Brystiger, who was head of the MBP’s Department Five at the time, and I, were very worried to hear the vague news of the “explosion” . . . Jan Rodowicz’s name was mentioned in the information on the incident, which started to be treated as an attempted act of terrorism committed by a group from the Warsaw University of Technology associated with him. . . we thought that the incident, which in our opinion was just an ordinary technical breakdown, might be used as a pretext to trigger the . . . mechanisms for a provocation instigated by one of the units in the Security Service. . . We were afraid that Jan Rodowicz would be arrested under normal procedures and confined in Mokotów, and that

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201 Dmowski, “Sprawa Jana Mazurkiewiczza...,” 220.

202 *Ibid.*, 245.

203 According to Józef Światło, Julia Brystiger, whose sexual partners included Jakub Berman, Hilary Minc, and Eugeniusz Szyr, had more influence than Stanisław Radkiewicz and Roman Romkowski (Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło...*, 65). However, she could not decide on her own to start an operation against the Radosław veterans, contrary to Herer’s claim in the 1990s.

the investigation concerning the terrorist attack would be politicized. We feared that the investigation would come under fire of orders and pressure from above for impulsive haste, which could lead to a show trial, most opportune for the Stalinist demands. This in turn could serve as the signal for a mass wave of repressions against students and the intelligentsia as a whole.<sup>204</sup>

According to Maj. Herer, the preventive arrest of Anoda by his subdepartment was mainly intended to protect Anoda from the brutal investigation to which he would have been exposed if the case were handled by the Investigations Department run by the notorious Col. Józef Różański. Years later, Herer wrote

we decided to take action absolutely spontaneously within the framework of the security apparatus to prevent incitement [*sic!*]. To do this, ... Department Five ... decided to remand Jan Rodowicz in custody on the grounds of a prosecutor's warrant request. ... Rodowicz's confinement meant that he was no longer subject to the authority of the Investigations Department and the investigation procedures in force at the time. ... I tried to do all I could to protect young people, especially those who had been in the AK from turning into more victims.<sup>205</sup>

Maj. Herer's version of the events should be regarded as unreliable.<sup>206</sup> The repressions against the veterans of the Radosław Group had been planned for a long time, as evidenced by the recruiting of agents in the 1940s (Abramowicz, Czerewacz and Sianoszek started cooperating with the MBP in 1947) as well as by the collection of incriminating evidence, which was used in subsequent investigations.<sup>207</sup>

Although for obvious reasons, the records of the Zośka Case could not have confirmed the fears of the management of Department Five that Anoda and his colleagues would be arrested by the subordinates of Col. Różański, they did show that the diverse organizational units in the MBP cooperated with one another. Their officers exchanged information and materials or

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204 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, [Wiktor Herer], *Samobójstwo Jana Rodowicza*, undated, 1 (copy). The report was created in the 1990s and an unsigned type-script copy was presented to the Rodowicz family.

205 *Ibid.*, 2–3.

206 Perhaps Julia Brystiger and Wiktor Herer for some time considered whether the accidental explosion in the Belweder Palace could be used as a convenient pretext to start a new wave of repressive measures, but eventually abandoned the idea.

207 According to Lt. Col. Józef Światło, Roman Romkowski told him in 1946 that the arrest of AK veterans was to be suspended until all of them had been disclosed (Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło...*, 115). Individual arrests occurred already in 1945–1947, showing the attitude of the Communist authorities to veterans of the Warsaw Uprising. The MBP was also interested in the records of the Liquidation Commission (Agnieszka Pietrzak, *Żołnierze batalionu Armii Krajowej "Zośka"...*, 66).

asked for detained persons to be interrogated on circumstances specified in their memoranda, and for copies of the reports to be sent to them. For example, in early March 1949, Maj. Herer forwarded a suitcase containing part of the Zośka Battalion Archive (including diaries and photographs) his subordinates had confiscated from Anna Borkiewicz<sup>208</sup> to the Head of the General Subdepartment of the Investigations Department.<sup>209</sup> Materials concerning former AK members were also sent to the Investigations Department if it was believed that they could be used in the ongoing investigation conducted by Col. Różański's men against Col. Mazurkiewicz, who was arrested on February 4, 1949.<sup>210</sup> Incidentally, the brutal investigating officer mentioned by Henryk Kozłowski, Warrant Officer Tadeusz Tomporski, was an associate of Subdepartment Two in the Investigations Department.

We cannot detect any signs whatsoever in the records of Maj. Herer's activities on specific cases, of his intention to protect Polish youngsters against

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208 Anna Zofia "Hanka" Borkiewicz-Celińska (1921–2019) – Cadet Master Corporal (*plutonowy podchorąży*), nurse and liaison officer, after August 20, 1944 in the Second ("Rudy") Company of Battalion Zośka.

209 AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 7. Pismo naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do naczelnika Wydziału Ogólnego Departamentu Śledczego MBP kpt. Adama Krukowskiego w sprawie przekazania archiwum batalionu "Zośka" [Letter from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Five of the MBP, to Capt Adam Krukowski, Head of the General Subdepartment of the Investigation Department of the MBP, on the transfer of the archives of Battalion Zośka], March 5, 1949, 165.

210 See AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 7, Pismo naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do dyrektora Departamentu Śledczego MBP płk. Józefa Różańskiego [Letter from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Five of the MBP, to Col. Józef Różański Head of the Investigations Department of the MBP], re use of the information on the underground activity of Col. Roman "Rudy" Rutkowski [Head of the Aviation Subdepartment in Department Three of the AK General Command], in the investigation against Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz], February 5, 1949, 164; *ibid*, Pismo naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do naczelnika Wydziału Ogólnego Departamentu Śledczego MBP kpt. Adama Krukowskiego w sprawie przekazania materiałów dotyczących członka batalionu „Zośka” pozyskanych przez WUBP w Szczecinie do wykorzystania w śledztwie przeciwko płk. Janowi Mazurkiewiczowi [Letter from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Five of the MBP, to Capt. Adam Krukowski, Head of the General Subdepartment of the Investigations Department of the MBP, re transfer of materials on a member of Battalion Zośka obtained by the Szczecin Voivodeship Public Security Office for use in the investigation against Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz], May 7, 1949, 167. Herer also sent extracts of Donat Czerewacz's reports to the Investigations Department.

the wiles of the Investigations Department. Instead, we should be talking of an organized, joint operation conducted by the security forces to destroy “the hostile circle,” although each of the heads of individual departments tried to make his achievement the biggest success, which would enhance his or her influence in the Communist power structures. Tomasz Łabuszewski writes that in the late 1940s there was rivalry between the Investigations Department and Department Three in the efforts to “combat hostile activities.”<sup>211</sup> Seweryn Dmowski comes to a similar conclusion, on the basis of an observation that the key case against Jan Mazurkiewicz was quite quickly taken away from Department Three and transferred to the Investigations Department.<sup>212</sup>

According to Lt. Col. Józef Światło, Julia Brystiger did not get on well with Józef Różański. This was apparently due to the fact that after the Red Army entered Lwów in 1939, she wanted to establish good relations with the occupying authorities and fell out with Różański, considering him a threat to her influence. Allegedly, she denounced him.<sup>213</sup> Herer had been active in Lwów’s pre-war Communist structures, just like his boss Brystiger, and remained on friendly terms with her long after he quit the security service, so the story he later presented, in which he tried to put all the blame for his actions on Różański, could have resulted from the long-standing conflict between Brystiger, Różański, and their respective subordinate officers. Yet even Brystiger and Różański’s rather uncongenial relations did not make a direct impact on the attitude of the staff in their departments to Radosław veterans.<sup>214</sup> On the basis of the tips Maj. Herer collected from his informers, the minutes of the interrogations he conducted, and other documents concerning individual cases, we may say beyond all doubt that his investigations were multi-faceted and carried out with a lot of drive. His aim was to obtain

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211 Łabuszewski, “Sprawa ‘Radosława’...,” 56–58.

212 Seweryn Dmowski, “Sprawa Jana Mazurkiewicza...,” 241.

213 Zbigniew Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło...*, 64.

214 At this point, I shall refer to Julia Brystiger’s comments made during a briefing she conducted for the staff of her department, overheard and remembered by one of the arrestees: “She told them that virtually the entire Polish intelligentsia was against the Communist system and there was no chance of re-educating them. Thus, what remained to be done was to eliminate them. However, the mistake made in Russia after the October Revolution, where the intelligentsia had been exterminated and thus the economic development of the country slowed down, cannot be made, so pressure had to be applied and a reign of terror imposed so that representatives of the intelligentsia would not dare to be politically active. Only their skills were to be used.” (quoted after Leopold and Lechicki, *Więźniowie polityczni...*, 20).

as much evidence as he could to incriminate the Zośkaites and plant new informers in their ranks.

In my opinion, in the 1990s Herer tried cynically to whitewash himself, minimizing his involvement in the Zośka Case and producing information which was a mix of half-truths and manipulation. The repressions against veterans of the Warsaw Uprising were in fact a form of provocation induced by the Communist security forces, and Herer took an active part in it.<sup>215</sup>

The extant records show that the wave of arrests of ex-AK men was initiated on the pretext of the secret reports delivered by informers that a group of Warsaw Uprising veterans was allegedly establishing “sabotage units” and collecting weapons and other equipment (such as the radio sets bought in November 1948) to carry out subversive activities.<sup>216</sup> On December 27, 1948, a few days after the arrest of Anoda, Maj. Herer wrote to Julia Brystiger,

In November 1948, we arrested Waclaw Nowowiejski [full name Waclaw Gluth-Nowowiejski],<sup>217</sup> who said that ... in 1948 Rodowicz Jan said he wanted to get weapons.<sup>218</sup> In addition, we had unconfirmed reports from Informer Odwet

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215 I think Wiktor Herer’s real attitude to the veterans of the Warsaw Uprising is evidenced by his statement of February 24, 1947, on the postwar scouting movement, of which many of the Radosław veterans had been members: “as regards its ideology, scouting is a thoroughly reactionary organization. ... The ZHP is a phenomenon inherited from the prewar period with all of its encumbrances. Scouting cannot be democratized. If all the scoutmasters in Poznań are defending murderers, that is not due to the principles [of scouting] but to the way they are being propagated. Scouting will be bad for a long time. ... Young people are being brought up in opposition to us, and the extent of the [influence] of the underground on young scouts is huge. The atmosphere there is demoralizing. It would be better if the young did not belong to any movement or group rather than there” (“Protokół konferencji w sprawie Związku Harcerstwa Polskiego odbytej w Ministerstwie Oświaty z udziałem przedstawicieli ZHP, ZWM i MBP, 24 II 1947 r.” [in] *Komuniści wobec harcerstwa 1944–1950*, comp. Krzysztof Persak, Warszawa: ISP PAN, 1998, 55). Herer was confabulating when he said that he first heard of Rodowicz after the explosion in the Belweder Palace, during a conversation with Julia Brystiger.

216 Pietrzak, “Powojenna konspiracja...,” 219.

217 Waclaw “Wacek” Gluth-Nowowiejski (b. 1926), cadet corporal (*kapral podchorąży*), squad leader in the AK Żmija Group.

218 However, Gluth-Nowowiejski said that his conversation with Jan Rodowicz on how he got a German MP40 submachine gun was said as a joke and that Anoda did not know that Wacek was keeping weapons hidden. This remark was recorded in the minutes of his interrogation. The MBP became interested in Jan Rodowicz already in 1946, although at the time all they knew was his nom-de-guerre. (Pietrzak, “Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy ‘Zośki’ i ‘Parasola’...,” 104).

[Bronisław Sianoszek] that people in the group were discussing plans to continue sabotage activities.<sup>219</sup>

Donat Czerewacz confirmed the tips that the Zośkaites were planning dangerous operations against the government. He described an incident which occurred when Ryszard Białous, the ex-commander of Battalion Zośka, visited Warsaw in May 1946:

... when Białous started talking about a prospective outbreak of hostilities in Poland, he was interrupted by Radosław, who insisted that they [the men in the Battalion] would not start throwing grenades until he issued such orders.<sup>220</sup>

Czerewacz also told his MBP interlocutors (though likely not before January 1949) of the arms cache the insurgents had buried, but he could not say where Anoda had hidden his weapons.<sup>221</sup>

A subsequent report drawn up by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in the 1970s said that in the summer of 1948 Radosław veterans started to set up an armed organization, planning to establish a unit operating in the Świętokrzyskie or Tatra Mountains and preparing an evacuation route to Western Europe which they intended to use to escape from Poland in case

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219 AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 6, Raport naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do dyrektora Departamentu V [Report from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Five of the MBP, to [Julia Brystiger,] Head of Department Five, December 27, 1948], 120. The following information from Donat Czerewacz, passed on after Jan Rodowicz's death, is in the records: "[Stanisław] Bontemps [Boruta, b. 1925, a rifleman in the Żniwiarz Group], told me that someone must have denounced the Zośkaites. There was a suspicion that it was done by Sławek (name), a colleague of Anoda's, with whose wife Anoda had flirted, and Sławek had threatened Janek that he would take revenge" (AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 6, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora "Zaręba" [Informer Zaręba's report, September 23, 1949], 66). I could not obtain more information on Sławek, even though I contacted Prof. Bontemps through his daughter as an intermediary, because he was in poor health. Prof. Bontemps did not confirm that he had ever talked to Donat Czerewacz after the War. It was probably a rumor, although in a letter of April 10, 1948, to Halina Martin Jan Rodowicz called Alicja Arens his "ex-fiancée." (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 356), and in his last letter to Martin (December 18, 1948), he wrote, "I lead the promiscuous life of a bachelor student. I live on a frugal diet, but I love without limit," (quoted after Barbara Wachowicz, *Ulan Batalionu „Zośka”*. *Gawęda o Janku Rodowiczu...*, 141).

220 AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 6, Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora „Zaręba" [Excerpt from Informer Zaręba's report], undated, 98. The structure of this document shows that it may contain passages from several reports from different periods.

221 *Ibid.*

of danger.<sup>222</sup> This underground resistance unit was allegedly to be equipped with weapons not handed in during the disclosure campaign, as well as with equipment obtained by other means.<sup>223</sup>

Thus, the immediate cause triggering the Zośka Case was not the Belweder boiler explosion<sup>224</sup> and attempts by some MBP officers to protect AK veterans, but the fear of the security men that ex-AK combatants were about to resume underground activities, albeit there was no hard evidence for this<sup>225</sup> and all they had to go by were the secret reports served up by their snitches.<sup>226</sup> What was far more important was that the security boys were desperate for a crackdown on “hostile groups” and hard evidence to let them boost up the wave of repressions to swamp other individuals and groups as well.<sup>227</sup> Few of the extant documents mention the Belweder boiler explosion or an attempt to assassinate Zofia Dzierżyńska.

- 222 Ryszard Białous played the biggest role in setting up a transfer route to the West, and (as Donat Czerewacz informed Maj. Wiktor Herer) presented Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz and the Zośkaites with a plan to smuggle individuals at risk of Communist repression to Germany, and thence to Britain or Brazil (AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 97–98; Wyciąg z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora “Zaręba” [Excerpt from Informer Zaręba’s report], undated, 97–98). The MBP men intended to present the alleged Zośkaite escape plan in the context of their work for the British intelligence service, which was alleged to be funding AK veterans.
- 223 See “Charakterystyka nielegalnej organizacji poakowskiej członków byłego batalionu ‘Zośka’ ze Zgrupowania ‘Radosław,’” [in] *Sowieckiemu zniewoleniu – nie...*, 79–81.
- 224 Several recent publications for the general reader are still claiming that the immediate cause of Jan Rodowicz’s arrest was the Belweder explosion (see, for instance, Max Cegielski, *Mozaika. Śladami Rechowiczów*, Warszawa: Wydawnictwo W.A.B., 2011, 110–111).
- 225 Tomasz Łabuszewski writes of the correspondence between Lt. Col. Leon Andrzejewski, Deputy Head of Department Three with Tadeusz Kwiatkowski, Head of Subdepartment Three of the Warsaw Voivodeship Public Security Office, in November 1949. Andrzejewski expressed his dissatisfaction with the lack of results of the investigation into the activities of the ex-Radosław members. He received an answer which showed that the Office had failed to collect sufficient evidence against Warsaw Uprising veterans (except those already arrested) and asked for guidance. (Łabuszewski, “Sprawa ‘Radosława’...,” 76).
- 226 The relevance of the data informants provided leaves much to be desired from today’s point of view. Filip Musiał observes that “The operational records describing the opinions, programs, tactics, resources, opportunities and goals set by the persons under surveillance should be treated very cautiously” (Filip Musiał, “Jak badać akta...,” 30).
- 227 Lt. Col. Józef Światło gave the following description of the mechanism of the repressions unleashed in the Stalinist period against any group: “An announcement is made that there is a specific enemy at large, but it has not been proved

Agnieszka Pietrzak's many years of research have brought her to conclude that the efforts the Zośkaites made to collect weapons and their discussions on the prospective establishment of new underground structures were intended to serve the purpose of self-defense against the operations they anticipated the security forces could launch against them, like the ones in late 1948 and early 1949.<sup>228</sup> However, these preparations were certainly not as vigorous as the reports delivered by the snoops made them out to be, and generally did not go beyond initial arrangements, which was best shown by the Zośkaites' almost complete lack of reaction to the first wave of arrests of their erstwhile officers.<sup>229</sup> Instead of responding with the "terrorist

yet. It must be proved by the security service. ... Can we expect anyone in this group to think for themselves and question, for example, the validity of the Central Committee's claim? Nobody ... thinks about the claim itself anymore, only how to prove it in their own field. ... With such a comprehensive amount of political groundwork, the Security Office knows in advance what evidence it needs and who will be the easiest target. Therefore, the very first interview they have with an informer is suggestive. Usually, the snitch is more intelligent than his interlocutor and knows exactly what kind of news is needed. After a few days, he brings it in; naturally, it's exaggerated, some truth, some lies." (quoted after Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło...*, 211–212).

228 For example, Kazimierz "Sławomir" Kalandyk (1927–2007), rifleman of the Second Squad of the Second Platoon of the Third Giewont Company of Battalion Zośka, made the following statement about his conversation with Anoda in September 1948: "Rodowicz said that in outcome of the prospective military conflict between the West and the USSR, they expected ex-AK would be arrested. So, they were keeping in touch with each other, and in the event of arrests, they were all to take cover in the forest. He also told me that they had weapons hidden which they would use if they went into the forest to fight the [Communist] army" (AIPN, 0225/125, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Kalandyka [Minutes of Kazimierz Kalandyk's interrogation], April 1, 1949, 184. According to the accounts of Jan Rodowicz's friends collected by Mariusz Olczak, in the latter half of 1948 Anoda anticipated the onset of repressions (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 362). In a conversation with me, Henryk Kończykowski, confirmed that some of the Zośkaites were concerned about the escalating level of aggression in the official propaganda, which could herald an imminent spate of arrests.

229 Pietrzak, "Powojeenna konspiracja...", 219. Bogdan Celiński recalled: "1948 came. I had only one conversation with Janek "Anoda" ... We were talking and he said, as if sensing new times, that we may face repression, that we must be prepared for it and should be in touch with each other as part of what you could call "Self-defense." I took note of this, but did not start any conversations with any of my colleagues on the matter. That was the end of our conversation. Janek Rodowicz was arrested on December 24, 1948, and we still didn't realize it was the beginning of the great tragedy that came after that." (MPW Collections, AHM, Interview with Bogdan Celiński, January 19, 2009). For the characteristics of "Self-Defense," from the point of view of the MBP, see AIPN, 0189/

operations” he was supposedly preparing in hiding, Col. Mazurkiewicz sent a letter dated January 20, 1949 (by which time practically all the key Zośkaites and Radosław’s wife had been arrested) to Minister Radkiewicz with an appeal to stop the repressions against his former subordinates.<sup>230</sup>

However, relying on reports sent in by their informers and adapting to the expectations of their superiors, the MBP officers perceived the case differently, and deliberately tried to amplify its importance. In late 1948, as soon as some of the Zośkaites sensed the imminent danger and took preliminary steps to protect themselves in the event of repressions (by discussing the problem and purchasing radio sets), the security service presented this as confirmation of their suspicions and a signal that the enemy was finishing his “preparations for battle.”<sup>231</sup>

51, E. Żuchowska, *Charakterystyka nr 50 nielegalnej organizacji poakowskiej Zgrupowania “Radosława,”* Warszawa 1977, 12–13. This publication shows “Self-Defense” as a well-organized and armed terrorist group that could have posed a considerable threat to the Communists.

230 Radosław wrote to Radkiewicz, “neither I nor the arrestees who had come out belonged to any organization (if one of the boys hid some rusty old pistols after his disclosure, which was apparently the grounds for the arrests, then you have to take a reasonable approach to these things). They were young people – they had a sentimental attachment to the weapons they had been fighting with for many years ... For now, I’ll stop at these remarks, trusting that you ... will not allow these boys to be mistreated and will use your influence to handle this case properly” (AIPN, 01251/111, vol. 1, List Jana Mazurkiewicza do ministra bezpieczeństwa publicznego [Jan Mazurkiewicz’s letter to [General Stanisław Radkiewicz], Minister of Public Security], January 20, 1949, 155–156).

231 Bogdan Celiński made the following recollection of the period after his arrest: “Later, on January 13 [1949] ... we were all transferred from Koszykowa to Mokotów, where we were greeted by Col. or Lt. Col. Humer [Lieutenant Colonel Adam Humer, Deputy Head of the Investigations Department of the MBP] and he asked each of us what we were in for et cetera. I said that I was innocent and inside because I was in the AK, but I had disclosed my identity. ‘And what about Self-Defense?’ he asked. So they had made it into a big organization” (MPW Collections, AHM, Wywiad z Bogdanem Celińskim [Interview with Bogdan Celiński], January 19, 2009). Mieczysław Szerer has described the way the Communist authorities saw it: “the MBP boys developed a view of the world in which a man is on his way to work, at work, on the way back, at home, on a walk, in a cafe, while talking to friends – always and everywhere he’s under the gaze of eyes following him, but it never occurs to him that his movements are being observed closely and whatever he says is overheard and carefully recorded in reports which provide the basis for further ‘studies’ entrusted to agents.” (Mieczysław Szerer, “Komisja do badania odpowiedzialności za łamanie praworządności w sądownictwie wojskowym [z wykazem spraw z grupy

Remarkably, in the 1990s Wiktor Herer tried to downplay the arms cache in the context of Anoda's arrest, as he wanted to vindicate the reasons he presented for Anoda's detention:

We knew that Rodowicz's group was keeping a cache of weapons concealed. We had known about the matter for some time but did not treat it as an urgent operation.<sup>232</sup>

It follows that Herer did not consider the fact that Radosław veterans were keeping hidden weapons as something he should have countered immediately, but only used his knowledge of this as a pretext to arrest Anoda before the Investigations Department did it.

This admission by Maj. Herer is at loggerheads with the records, including documents which he signed in 1949, in which "fears" that the hidden weapons might be used by the veterans were the immediate reason for the arrest of people suspected of "sabotage activities," and this cannot be considered a smokescreen, as the buried weapons turned into one of the main lines in the investigations against the Zośkaites. The arms cache was not only supposed to create the appearance that placing Jan Rodowicz in custody saved him from the Investigations Department, but it was to serve as the pretext to imprison him and other Zośkaites. The security service hoped that this would enable them to obtain evidence to incriminate Radosław himself.

Wiktor Herer's assertions in the 1990s were part of the line of defense he adopted during the inquiry to clarify the circumstances of Jan Rodowicz's death. Herer wanted to demonstrate his good will—he claimed that one of his main motives in the late 1940s was to prevent the "Sovietization" of Poland<sup>233</sup>—and rule out the possibility of being accused of being an accessory to the killing of Anoda. However, we must acknowledge that the Zośka Case, which was an overture to the trial of Col. Mazurkiewicz, was carried out well in advance by Herer and Brystiger as well as officers from other

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Tatara i in. rozpatrywanych przez Naj. Sąd Wojskowy w I-szej instancji, biografią M. Szerera i uwagami Redakcji," *Zeszyty Historyczne* 49, 1979, 80–81).

232 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, [Wiktor Herer], *Samobójstwo Jana Rodowicza*, undated, 1 (copy).

233 Józef Różański's view was similar to Herer's and he tried to persuade some of those he interrogated that the investigations conducted by his department were mild compared to what could happen if they were arrested by the NKVD. Adam Humer was another who denied the use of any kind of violence against suspects, despite the huge number of reports to the contrary (Piotr Lipiński, *Bicia nie trzeba było ich uczyć. Proces Humera i oficerów śledczych Urzędu Bezpieczeństwa*, Wołowiec: Wydawnictwo Czarne, 2016, *passim*).

departments of the MBP, with the knowledge and approval of influential Party decision-makers.<sup>234</sup>

Since Jan Rodowicz appeared in the reports obtained by the MBP as a person interested in collecting weapons and probably also responsible for their safekeeping, he became the first obvious target for the security agents' attack. The MBP wanted to quickly obtain hard evidence in the form of an arms cache the insurgents had stowed somewhere, as this would have put the investigation on a favorable footing for them and significantly facilitated extracting confessions from other Zośkaites, which it achieved. Mariusz Olczak has pointed out that Jan Rodowicz, one of the informal leaders of the Zośka group, could have attracted the attention of the MBP after July 3, 1948, when they arrested Aleksander "Wilk" Krzyżanowski, ex-commander of the Wilno District of the AK, with whom Anoda had exchanged correspondence.<sup>235</sup> This was certainly a relevant point in the decision the management of Department Five made to detain Rodowicz.

The arrest of Anoda started the operation against Radosław Group veterans and persons associated with them. To start with, the arrests were not made on a massive scale, because the officers did not want to make the frightened young people "flee to the forest,"\* which would have made it difficult to gather information and apprehend them. Ultimately, however, the repressions affected 90 people, most of whom were detained (62 of them were tried). 34 former members of Battalion Zośka (including 2 women) were arrested and 28 were convicted.<sup>236</sup>

The interrogations were to force detainees to confess to crimes against the Communist power system which they had been accused of committing (on the grounds of information from informers) after "coming out into the open" or which were fabricated by MBP officers.<sup>237</sup> The purpose was to obtain

234 Piotr Gontarczyk observes that "The subject of the work of the UB and SB was not society, but the Communist ideology ..., the place of Poland in the Communist Bloc subordinated to Moscow ... and the protection of the quite mundane, petty interests of the masters of the People's Republic of Poland" (Piotr Gontarczyk, "Aparat represji w PRL. Wyjaśnienie pojęć i modus operandi," *Glaukopis* no. 2-3, 2005, 96).

235 Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 362.

236 Pietrzak, *Żołnierze Batalionu Armii Krajowej "Zośka"...*, 67.

237 As Henryk Kończykowski recalled, "The task of the investigating officer was to get statements to confirm the assumptions made above, and since those assumptions were pure nonsense which could not be proved, the investigating officer had no choice but to enforce confessions." (Henryk Kończykowski, *Stracone lata*, no place or date of publication, 7). This was typical of the operations conducted by the state's investigative bodies at that time. (Anna Marcinkiewicz-Kaczmarczyk and Wiesław Kaczmarczyk, "Funkcjonowanie organów śledczych MBP, KdsBP

statements incriminating Col. Mazurkiewicz, which the MBP intended to use in the investigation against him to get him to confess, which would have been of much greater value than information obtained from his subordinates. It was not Jan Rodowicz and his colleagues, but Col. Mazurkiewicz who could have incriminated many people hand-picked by Communist decision-makers for elimination from public affairs. An important role in this was played by the interrogation minutes drafted by the investigating officers, which did not contain a precise record of what suspects said but often had matters added by the interrogating officer.<sup>238</sup>

As Seweryn Dmowski writes, although the decision to prosecute Radosław and his subordinates was initially an axiological and political move to eliminate post-AK groups hostile to the Communists, and only later developed a social and military aspect involving more or less genuine and warranted fears that the Zośkaites had concealed weapon caches and were planning to organize sabotage units,<sup>239</sup> ultimately its effects were felt by more people. 1948 was a year of fierce factional infighting within the PPR. Attempts were made to connect the so-called Radosław case<sup>240</sup> with Col. Mazurkiewicz's alleged contacts with the Party's General Secretary Władysław Gomułka and Minister Marian Spychalski (there was no evidence for this),<sup>241</sup> who were removed from power in early 1949 and arrested in 1950. Another important aspect was Radosław's alleged strong influence on the "rightist" circles of the Central Executive Committee of the Polish Socialist Party \* (the purge in this party began in the fall of 1948 and his contacts with Deputy Prime Minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk). At the climax of the case, the security service tried to prove a connection between Col. Mazurkiewicz and conspirators in the army (investigators began looking into this issue in November 1949). These and other questions (e.g. regarding General Fieldorf) raised

i MSW w latach 1945–1956," *Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989*, no. 1 [8–9], 2011, 56).

238 Śmietanka-Kruszelnicki, "Protokół przesłuchania jako źródło...", 358.

239 Dmowski, "Sprawa Jana Mazurkiewicza...", 211.

240 "The Radosław case was defined in two ways – first, as the repressive measures exercised by the police and courts against Radosław veterans in 1948–1956; second, as the repressions against the purported founders of an 'illegal organization operating in 1949–1956 and working with conspirators' who came from the pre-war officer corps" (*ibid.*, 12).

241 AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 5, Podsumowanie wyników akcji operacyjno-śledczej wymierzonej w siatkę konspiracyjną o charakterze cywilnym kierowaną przez płk. Jana Mazurkiewicza przygotowane przez ppłk. Józefa Jurkowskiego [Summary of the results of the operational and investigative operations against the civilian underground network led by Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz, drafted by Lt. Col. Józef Jurkowski], undated, 145.

in the course of the investigation against Col. Mazurkiewicz, as well as the takeover of the Radosław case by GZI, are not directly related to the main topic of this book, so I refer those interested in them to the publications on the subject.<sup>242</sup>

Thanks to evidence obtained during the interrogation of ex-AK members and Radosław himself, the MBP men reported to their superiors that they had scored “a significant success in the fight against hostile circles” in Poland. One of the records summarizing their findings says,

The assessment of the evidence in our possession allows us to conclude that there was indeed a civil conspiracy led by Radosław between 1945 and 1948. Its main operatives were ex-AK men who had come out into the open ....The methods of operation [this underground group used] were a combination of legal forms (cooperatives, Związek Uczestników Walki Zbrojnej o Niepodległość i Demokrację [a Polish war veterans' association], foundations, parents' associations, social events and gatherings, etc.) with illegal modes of operation (individual instruction, inspiration, especially whispered propaganda, presumably sabotage as well as training young people, collecting weapons, etc. and infiltrating state and economic institutions, and political parties, for hostile activities and espionage). A special feature of this conspiracy was its long-term nature, the peak achievement of which was to be an armed coup with the participation of armed conspirators in a convenient political constellation.<sup>243</sup>

According to the extant records, the MBP officers intended to use the arrest and trial of the insurgents, including Col. Mazurkiewicz, to achieve several goals, also ones related to the internal struggle within the PPR / PZPR. They had the approval of the top Communist decision-makers, revealing successive “conspiracies” in the highest political and military echelons, in a

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242 See, for example, Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło...*, 82–83, 135–148; Dmowski, “Sprawa Jana Mazurkiewicza...,” *passim*; Łabuszewski, “Sprawa ‘Radosława’...,” 59–75; Poksiński, “TUN.” *Tatar --Utnik --Nowicki. Represje wobec oficerów Wojska Polskiego w latach 1949–1956*, Warszawa: Bellona, 1992, *passim*; “Raport Komisji Mazura,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, January 22, 1999, *passim*; Robert Spalek, *Komuniści przeciwko komunistom. Poszukiwanie wroga wewnętrznego w kierownictwie partii komunistycznej w Polsce w latach 1948–1956*, Poznań: Zysk i S-ka Wydawnictwo, and Warszawa: Biuro Edukacji Publicznej IPN, 2014, *passim*.

243 AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 5, Podsumowanie wyników akcji operacyjno-śledczej wymierzonej w siatkę konspiracyjną o charakterze cywilnym kierowaną przez płk. Jana Mazurkiewicza przygotowane przez ppłk. Józefa Jurkowskiego [Summary of the results of the operational and investigative operations against the civilian underground network led by Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz, drafted by Lt. Col. Józef Jurkowski], undated, 144.

method which had proved effective in the USSR.<sup>244</sup> The facts did not matter much: what counted was the image created by the MBP investigators, which would then be endorsed by the prosecutor's office and the courts.

The operations of the security service working on the Zośka case turned out to be a very severe blow to the Radosław veterans. The Communists managed to neutralize them. There were attempts to slander its members in the eyes of public opinion, presenting arrestees as extremely dangerous conspirators.<sup>245</sup> This opinion, although not shared by most people, stuck to the victims, many of whom had to live with the burden of the Stalinist period for many years. This was particularly evident in their problems with finding a decent job.

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244 For example, during the August 1936 trial of the so-called Trotskyist-Zinoviev terrorist group, Andrey Vyshinskiy, Prosecutor General of the USSR, accused the defendants of striving to: 1) physically eliminate Joseph Stalin and Kliment Voroshilov, 2) undertake activities to organize subversive cells in the army, and 3), make use of any failures or disorder which might occur in the event of an armed conflict to seize power (Andrzej Wyszyński, *Przemówienia sądowe*, Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1953, 468). *Nowe Drogi*, the theoretical and political mouthpiece of the Central Committee of the PPR and later of the PZPR, wrote in 1949, "What we have here is the tactic of the bourgeois states superimposing successive spy networks which draw on years of experience of their intelligence services and constantly maintaining a reserve force of spies and sleeper agents who avoid any form of activity for a long time, often earning a reputation for themselves of being active and even enthusiastic and self-sacrificing supporters of People's Poland" (E.S., "Nauki procesu Rajka," *Nowe Drogi* no.5, 2000, 16).

245 In this case, too, we may observe a reliance on Soviet models, although the Poles did not go as far as Prosecutor Andrey Vyshinskiy, who described the accused in the of the Trotskyite-Zinoviev terrorist trial as follows: "We are building a new socialist society, a new Soviet state in the difficult conditions of a class struggle and fierce resistance by the remnants of the vanquished and doomed exploiting classes. Every step forward we take provokes fierce resistance from the enemy rallying all the forces of the old world against us, all the rottenness, all the dregs of the old society; rallying to battle against us the most criminal, the most degenerate, the most savage and vile elements." (Andrzej Wyszyński, *Przemówienia sądowe...*, 456. See also Mariusz Mazur, "Propaganda komunistyczna wobec Armii Krajowej w latach 1943–1955," *Dzieje Najnowsze* no. 1, 2015).



## Chapter Two. Murder, failed escape attempt, or suicide?

### The arrest, investigation and death of Anoda: the version presented by the security officers

On December 24, 1948, Anoda was apprehended in his room in apartment No 10 at Lwowska 10 in Warsaw, on the orders of Maj. Herer, who had signed the warrant for his arrest.<sup>1</sup> After a personal search and a search of his room, Jan Rodowicz was remanded in custody in the basement jail of the MBP building on Koszykowa. Still on the same day, he was interrogated by Lt. Bolesław Cykała (see Appendix 3), but did not reveal any information incriminating himself or his former comrades in arms.<sup>2</sup>

On December 27, at the request of the officers, Rodowicz wrote his CV, with information on his closest relatives.<sup>3</sup> It was probably then that he made a note on the activities of Battalions Miotła and Parasol under the German occupation of Poland during the War (see Appendix 2). In this document, Anoda provided some information on Stanisław Lechmirowicz for the period before the “amnesty,” but did not do the same for “Tajfun” (Piotr Waroczewski) and “Orkan” (Henryk Pielaszek),<sup>4</sup> giving the excuse that he did not know enough about them.<sup>5</sup>

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- 1 In an interview with Piotr Lipiński, Wiktor Herer withheld the truth, claiming that the arrest warrant for Jan Rodowicz was signed by Julia Brystiger (Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szafcu...*, 248). He said that Anoda’s arrest on Christmas Eve was not a deliberate move by the security service, but was due to operational reasons. However, Jan Rodowicz’s family and veterans of the Radosław AK Group perceived it as an additional oppressive measure.
  - 2 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Rodowicza [Minutes of Jan Rodowicz’s interrogation], December 24, 1948, 44–45. Mariusz Olczak speculates that questions about Ryszard Białous during the interrogation were put because the MBP was counting on his visit to Poland for Christmas (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz “Anoda”...*, 461). They may have known from their informers of Anoda’s earlier contacts with Białous and intended to set a trap for Rodowicz.
  - 3 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Życiorys Jana Rodowicza [CV of Jan Rodowicz], December 27, 1948, 9–11.
  - 4 Henryk Pielaszek (1925–1998), senior rifleman (*starszy strzelec*) of the Third (“Ryszard”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka, serving at the time in the First (“Sad”) Platoon of the same company.
  - 5 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Notatka Jana Rodowicza dotycząca batalionów AK ‘Miotła’ i ‘Parasol’ [Jan Rodowicz’s memorandum on AK Battalions Miotła and Parasol], undated, 12–13. The question concerning Piotr Waroczewski, an MBP

If Jan Rodowicz was indeed interrogated on December 27, which I think is very probable, then the minutes of this interrogation have not been preserved. On the same day, Lt. Cykała questioned Anoda's father as a witness, asking him about his son's acquaintance with Bronisław Krzyżanowski.<sup>6</sup>

The surviving records show that on December 29, 1948, Jan Rodowicz was interrogated a second time. This interrogation was conducted by Lt. Bronisław Kleina (see Appendix 4) and its minutes show that it took a different course to the one on December 24. This time, Anoda apparently admitted that he and an unknown man going under the alias "Czarny Karol," who later went abroad, buried a cache of weapons intended for use in the future, in military operations after the outbreak of another world war. A unit operating in the rearguard was to be equipped with them; the unit's task would be to "survive the war." Another cache of weapons was allegedly buried near Jeziorno by Henryk "Kmita" Kozłowski.<sup>7</sup> In addition, Jan Rodowicz confessed that Kmita had purchased radio receivers and a transmitter, which the Zośkaites wanted to help them communicate in undercover conditions once the unit was fully organized.<sup>8</sup> The minutes recorded the names of Bogdan Celiński, Wojciech Szymanowski, Andrzej Sowiński and Andrzej Wolski, as persons involved to a greater or lesser extent in planning the prospective military operations.

Later the radio receivers would become an additional circumstance, apart from the buried weapons, incriminating Radosław and the Zośkaites. When questioned about this during the investigation, Col. Mazurkiewicz gave the following answer:

I was considering a move from Warsaw to the countryside and wanted to be able to have a safe means of communication with Kozłowski, so I instructed him to assemble two transceivers, one for me and one for him. I needed to keep in touch with Kozłowski should there be any arrests, because if that happened I intended to go into hiding myself and help endangered Zośkaites to hide. The radio station was to serve as a means of communication between myself and this group.<sup>9</sup>

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informer using the alias "Wężyk"), whose past was well known to the MBP, could have been used to assess the credibility of Jan Rodowicz's statement, as well as to verify Wężyk's tip.

- 6 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Rodowicza [Minutes of Kazimierz Rodowicz's interview], December 27, 1948, 59–62.
- 7 All Jan Rodowicz could tell the MBP was general information, since he did not know the exact whereabouts of the buried weapons cache, as Henryk Kozłowski's memoirs confirm. (Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy przez wiele lat...*, 253).
- 8 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Rodowicza [Minutes of Jan Rodowicz's interrogation], December 29, 1948, 46–49.
- 9 AAN, Prokuratura Generalna, Biuro Prezydyjne, 4/676, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Mazurkiewicza [General Prosecutor's Office, Presidial Bureau, Minutes of Jan Mazurkiewicz's interrogation], November 20, 1950, 23–24.

Curiously enough, as Mariusz Olczak has observed, on December 27, 1949, when Maj. Herer asked Julia Brystiger for permission to arrest Celiński, Kozłowski, Szymanowski, and Wolski (Sowiński was arrested on January 3, 1949), he referred to Anoda's statement, but the extant records show that the minutes with that statement were not written up until December 29.<sup>10</sup> There is only one set of minutes dated earlier in the surviving records for Anoda interrogations— those for December 24, when these matters did not come up.

The simplest way to explain this discrepancy is to attribute it to an error in the date of one of the documents, because it is difficult to understand why information from a purported interrogation on December 27 was reproduced almost word-for-word in the minutes for December 29. Yet the chances of such a mistake were small, and Maj. Herer would likely not have called for more arrests unless he had written evidence in the form of statements incriminating prospective arrestees, so I think that what most probably occurred was that for some reason or other, an unknown set of minutes for an interrogation held on December 27 was not preserved in the records or perhaps “duplicated” (amended or supplemented?) in the minutes for December 29. The December 29 minutes in fact reproduced the information Herer had referred to two days earlier. Unfortunately, I have not been able to clear up this problem.<sup>11</sup>

For many *Zośkaites*, Rodowicz's arrest came as a big surprise. Initially, they did not see it as the start of a wide-ranging operation by the security forces against the community of Warsaw Uprising veterans. There were speculations that it could have been connected with an incident that had occurred at Warsaw University of Technology. During a class, Rodowicz, who was known for his practical jokes, was believed to have dangled a dead rat suspended on a string over the head of President Bolesław Bierut's daughter

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10 Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 462. See also AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Raport naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do dyrektora Departamentu V [Report from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of Subdepartment Four, Department Five of the MBP, to [Julia Brystiger], Head of Department Five], December 27, 1948, 121.

11 Some remarks preserved in Witold Morawski's records say that on December 24, 1948, Jan Rodowicz informed his interrogators that Stella Morawska had worked in Britain, and “Witold” knew of the “Battalion's current and forthcoming activities,” although the minutes of Anoda's interrogation for that day do not mention this and there is nothing to indicate that the record is incomplete. (AIPN, 01236/379, Plan śledztwa w sprawie Witolda Morawskiego [Plan of the investigation for Witold Morawski's case], undated, 38. See also AIPN, 0259/365, Plan śledztwa w sprawie Wojciecha Szymanowskiego [Plan of the investigation for Wojciech Szymanowski's case], January 13, 1949, 9).

Krystyna, who was a fellow student.<sup>12</sup> Another possibility was that Anoda might have unwittingly made a derogatory comment on the Communists during a conversation in a large group.<sup>13</sup> So people were expecting the matter to be clarified pretty soon, and no one anticipated that the MBP would start serious reprisals against Rodowicz. Years later, Anna Jakubowska,<sup>14</sup> at the time Henryk Kozłowski's wife and a good friend of Anoda's, recalled:

... we underestimated [the arrest of Jan Rodowicz] somewhat .... When [Anoda] was arrested on Christmas Eve, everyone said, "Oh! They'll release him in three days' time!" ... I had a very bad premonition.<sup>15</sup>

The Zośkaites did not start to be concerned until Jan Rodowicz's prison confinement turned out to be longer than expected, and when, on January 3, the security forces began rounding up more veterans of the Warsaw Uprising associated with Anoda.

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- 12 Dariusz Baliszewski, *Trzecia strona medalu*, Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Bukowy Las, 2010, 293. News of the arrest of Jan Rodowicz was passed on to the Zośkaites by Wojciech "Synon" Szymanowski (1923–1983), a rifleman in the Second Platoon of the First ("Maciek") Company of Battalion Zośka, a lodger at the Rodowicz house since April 1948. Anoda's mother told him that MBP men had come, and he managed to leave by the backstairs (AIPN, 0259/365, Protokół przesłuchania Wojciecha Szymanowskiego [Minutes of Wojciech Szymanowski's interrogation], February 10, 1949, 23). Mariusz Olczak writes that the story of the rat with which Jan Rodowicz was said to have scared Krystyna Bierut was just a story. Olczak established that it never happened. Anoda dangled a dead animal during a class at Warsaw University of Technology, but it was behind the back of an unpopular assistant (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 450, footnote 454).
- 13 During a conversation with Adam Abramowicz about Rodowicz's arrest, Witold Morawski said, "They've taken Anoda, he's a big loser. What's he done?" (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora "Górnik" [Secret report delivered by Informer Górnik], January 8, 1949, 599). Juliusz B. Deczkowski thought that the reason for Rodowicz's arrest could have been the political jokes Anoda enjoyed cracking (Juliusz Bogdan Deczkowski, *Wspomnienia żołnierza baonu AK "Zośka,"* Warszawa: Instytut Historii Polskiej Akademii Nauk. Wydaw., 2004, 298).
- 14 Anna "Paulinka" Jakubowska (1927–2022), nurse and liaison girl in the Second and later Third Platoon of the First ("Maciek") Company of Battalion Zośka.
- 15 AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej, 1, Wywiad z Anną Jakubowską [Anna Jakubowska's Records, 1. Interview with Anna Jakubowska], August 2001, unpaginated. See also Deczkowski, *Wspomnienia żołnierza...*, 296. Bogdan Celiński recalled: "On January 1, we met in a small group for a New Year's Eve party at my place, Filtrowa 68 ... to welcome in 1949. ... We did not sense that it was the beginning of a new period" (MPW Collections, AHM, Wywiad z Bogdanem Celińskim [Interview with Bogdan Celiński], January 19, 2009).

On January 8, 1949, Górnik (Adam Abramowicz) informed Lt. Matejewski that five days earlier, Stanisław Sieradzki,<sup>16</sup> his friend and fellow student at the Warsaw School of Economics where they were both reading Economics, had told him,

Things are looking bad, buddy. Security men took Janek Anoda on Christmas Eve and I'm worried for Witold [Morawski]. Take care and don't go to see him.<sup>17</sup>

Abramowicz did not heed this advice and visited Morawski. They talked about the new arrests. Witold then asked him to consult Czerewacz, who had returned to Warsaw in December, and ask him if he was not afraid of repressive measures from the security apparatus. Zaręba told Górnik that the Zośkaites had probably been detained for unspecified “new affairs” or because the Communists feared the outbreak of an armed conflict and wanted to round up the Battalion’s best veterans straightaway.<sup>18</sup> The next time Morawski saw Abramowicz, on January 8, 1949, he was irritated and allegedly vented the following tirade:

[If] a fool like Anoda has been jailed, it's his own fault, because why did he play pranks like throwing rats at Bierut's daughter? That son of a bitch Radosław [*sic!*] has raised them (some of the Zośkaites) so high, like he couldn't do any otherwise.<sup>19</sup>

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- 16 Stanisław “Świsł” Sieradzki, (1921–2009), cadet sergeant (*sierżant podchorąży*) of the Third (“Ryszard”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka, later commander of the heavy machine gun section of the Third Squad of the Third (“Felek”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company.
- 17 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol 10, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora ‘Górnik’ [Agent’s report from Informer Górnik], January 8, 1949, 599. Sieradzki was one of Kozłowski and Rodowicz’s closest collaborators and was in the Detached Unit.
- 18 *Ibid.* With Adam Abramowicz listening in, Donat Czerewacz wondered whether he’d be arrested, too. He had not yet gotten in touch with Maj. Wiktor Herer.
- 19 *Ibid.* The day before, Adam Abramowicz met Stanisław Sieradzki. When Abramowicz asked how he was coping with the situation, Sieradzki said, “It’s bad, brother,” showing the growing concern of the Zośkaites caused by successive arrests of important people from their circle. Some criticized Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz and Henryk Kozłowski when they learned of the arrests and the death of Anoda. For example, Kazimierz “Markiz” Łodziński (1922–2011), a medic in the First Squad of the Third (“Felek”) Platoon of the Second (“Rudy”) Company of Battalion Zośka, told Donat Czerewacz that he blamed “Radosław and Kmita for everything ... even if the others were released, no one could make Janek Rodowicz come back.” (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora “Zaręba” [Agent’s report from Informer Zaręba], August 27, 1949, 68).

When we examine the information in the minutes of Jan Rodowicz's successive interrogations, we should bear in mind the circumstances in which these documents were created.

First, the very fact that a given person had been detained by the MBP was tantamount to proof that he was considered guilty of "hostile activities," and what the MBP was after was not to verify this assumption, but to get evidence to confirm it and open up the potential for more arrests.<sup>20</sup>

Second, the minutes were usually written up by a recording clerk or the investigating officer at the end of the interrogation. So, the document only contained what the person writing it up wanted it to contain. Sometimes they even went so far as to record fake statements attributed to the arrestee, while any information the security police did not like was omitted, e.g. if the suspect complained about the use of unlawful methods of interrogation. Also the minutes were not a literal record of the detainee's statement, but in fact an interpretation of what he or she had said made by the officer (that is why the text often contained expressions typical of the required jargon used in the MBP at the time, such as "gangs," "subversive activities," "terrorist operations," etc.).

Third, the suspect had a very small chance to make corrections to the minutes (for example, he was informed that he would be able to do so during the court hearing).

Fourth, the interrogation was a kind of game played by the MBP officer against the arrestee, who did his best to provide only those facts and only mention people the MBP already knew of, or talk about people who were dead or beyond the reach of the MBP (e.g. those who had emigrated). Or they discussed events which happened in the period covered by the "amnesty."

An important issue that requires a separate discussion is the knowledge that the officers had at the time when a suspect was arrested. According to Filip Musiał, it could be classified in four categories based on its origin: 1) official sources (published leaflets, proclamations, the underground press,

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20 Leopold and Lechicki, *Więźniowie polityczni...*, 21. This issue was important also for the pending court proceedings, in which the evidence collected during the investigation was to prove the defendants' guilt beyond all doubt. In Communist countries, trials intended to play an "educational" role were public, so there should have been no doubt at all that the sentences were absolutely fair. Andrey Vyshinskiy, formerly Prosecutor General of the USSR, one of the greatest authorities for the Polish judiciary at the time, wrote, "The court ... should convince the public that it has passed the right verdict. ... the court's verdict is to be taken as the truth, in other words, the court proclaims the truth." (Andrzej Wyszynski, *Teoria dowodów sądowych w prawie radzieckim*, transl. from Russian by Józef Litwin and Leon Schaff, Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1949, 17).

books, etc.); 2) operational records (informers' reports); 3) investigations (statements by other detainees, witnesses, and agents observing customs business); 4) archives taken over from other institutions.<sup>21</sup> Such data had a significant effect on the statements made by suspects; when confronted with very serious evidence against them, they would confirm only the information the security service already knew. There was no point in denying it, which could have resulted in a tougher interrogation. Having information available helped the security police to fabricate minutes.

The security men had a big advantage over Rodowicz on all these counts,<sup>22</sup> although there is still no data for some of these points (e.g. on the contribution of customs agents).

Confronted with minutes containing a lot of meticulously assembled information and name-dropping decades after they were produced, a reader not familiar with historical sources of this type may get the impression that suspects ratted on their colleagues.<sup>23</sup> In fact, what they were doing was to avail themselves of their only chance to thwart the investigators' plans other than stubbornly insisting on a version of events favorable for them, which was not a frequently chosen strategy because it could mean more torture. In addition, some of the interrogated persons were aware that in court they would be able to withdraw their statements made under interrogation, on the grounds of being forced to make a confession under duress. That is why some suspects were ready to go along with the interrogator's suggestions, especially if the alternative was a long spell of physical violence and psychological cruelty.<sup>24</sup>

If we consider all of this as well as the fact that for obvious reasons we do not have Jan Rodowicz's version or the records of a court hearing, we will see that it is extremely difficult to reconstruct the true course of Anoda's interrogations. On the other hand, as Tomasz Balbus observes,

... these issues, which contemporary historians of the history of the People's Republic of Poland encounter on a daily basis and can read between the lines of

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21 Musiał, *Jak badać akta...*, 31.

22 For example, in his statement made on January 5, 1949 Bogdan Celiński said that if war broke out, Anoda was planning to "flee to the forest," and a day later Andrzej Sowiński added that Jan Rodowicz knew of the weapons hidden by Battalion Miotła (AIPN, 2386/6229, Wyciąg z protokołów przesłuchań [Extract from interrogation minutes], undated, 159, 164).

23 See Andrzej Romanowski, "Tajemnica Witolda Pileckiego," *Polityka* 20, 2013. Romanowski has evidently never examined records of Stalinist investigations before and reaches conclusions which undermine Capt. Witold Pilecki's reputation and portray him as a snitch.

24 Śmietanka-Kruszelnicki, *Protokół przesłuchania jako źródło...*, 359–365.

the extant records, do not mean that the archives produced by the security service and military intelligence may be completely disqualified and dismissed as a historical source. These problems should remind us all the time that whenever we undertake any kind of research, we should always take a critical approach to the sources. We must consider the circumstances in which they were created, the nature of the records and who created them, as well as the time and place where they were generated.<sup>25</sup>

It will be good to bear in mind that Anna Jakubowska and Henryk Kozłowski, who went through a similar investigation themselves and knew the methods the security agents used, did not reject the interrogation minutes Anoda signed in their entirety, but tried to analyze them, looking for answers to the question what his verbal exchanges with the interrogators could have been like.<sup>26</sup>

In my opinion, several conclusions can be drawn from Jan Rodowicz's interrogation minutes.

First of all, in all the interrogations on record, Anoda protected Col. Mazurkiewicz and did not say anything that could have directly incriminated him (e.g. he "could not say" who supplied the money for the purchase of the radio receivers).

Secondly, most of the information provided by Jan Rodowicz about his colleagues was already known to the investigators (from informers' reports or the seizure of some of the documents from the Battalion Zośka Archives in Anoda's room on the day of his arrest), or concerned events prior to the disclosure campaign.

Thirdly, Anoda provided the MBP with new information and signed statements which were relevant for the further course of the investigation. He told them where he had buried the weapons and confirmed that there was a plan to establish a unit ready for a future war.<sup>27</sup>

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25 Tomasz Balbus, "Badania dokumentacji komunistycznego aparatu represji (UBP, Informacji Wojskowej, Milicji Obywatelskiej). Wybrane aspekty źródłoznawcze," in *Wokół teczek – zagadnienia metodologiczno-źródłoznawcze*, ed. Filip Musiał, Kraków: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego Societas Vistulana, 2006, 210.

26 As Henryk Kończykowski told me on June 23, 2015, the minutes read out to him at the end of an interrogation generally agreed with his statement. However, the investigation concerning the first person detained from a given group was quite different, more intensive and calculated to obtain the necessary information as quickly as possible, compared to the procedure with persons arrested later in the investigation, when the MBP already had substantial evidence (Kończykowski was interrogated at the end of the investigation against the Zośkaites because he managed to avoid arrest for some time).

27 In June 1990, Henryk Kozłowski, who had not seen the extant records yet, said, "I categorically reject the claim that Janek told them [the MBP] the whereabouts of the weapons... The caretaker of the house was with us when we hid them.

However, the minutes did not say that the unit was to carry out operations against the Communists. The MBP considered it self-evident (as shown in the correspondence between Herer and Brystiger). But Anoda was only talking about a plan to survive that war, and perhaps that was why he was deliberately making his statements sound vague. Unfortunately, the questions and answers on record in the individual minutes do not say much about the atmosphere of the interrogations and any incidents which may have occurred during them. Here, the best I could do was to reconstruct the incidents on the basis of circumstantial evidence and outside knowledge.

On January 4, 1949, Lt. Kleina interrogated Anoda again and discussed Kozłowski's purchase of the radio equipment (Appendix 5). In addition, the minutes signed by Jan Rodowicz again included the names of four of his colleagues from the Battalion (Celiński, Kozłowski, Szymanowski and Wolski, all four already under arrest), with whom Anoda was to have discussed the reactivation of the unit.<sup>28</sup>

On the same day, Lt. Cykała attended by Lts Kleina and Roman Masny dug up the weapons hidden on the property at Aleja Niepodległości 216. Anoda's signature is on the minutes for this operation (Appendix 8).<sup>29</sup> Two

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I am not accusing anyone, but someone must have tipped them off," (quoted after Wachowicz, *Ułan Batalionu "Zośka" ...*, 155). A rumor circulated among the veterans of Battalion Zośka that even though the caretaker was known for his dedication to the insurgents, apparently his daughter was married to a security officer. There are no mentions of the caretaker in the sources I have found. I could not even discover his name, nor find any information in the extant records to prove that the whereabouts of the hidden weapons had been disclosed to the MBP officers by another person.

28 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Rodowicza [Minutes of Jan Rodowicz's interrogation], January 4, 1949, 54–55. We should compare Maj. Herer's purported intention to protect Polish youngsters against Soviet-style persecution with his comments on how he expected members of Battalion Zośka to react to the ongoing arrests: "... the other people may go into hiding, and it is very likely that they will not stop at just hiding, but go into banditry. The chances of that are high." (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Raport naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP mjr. Wiktora Herera do dyrektora Departamentu V [Report from Maj. Wiktor Herer, Head of Subdepartment Four of Department Five of the MBP, to [Julia Brystiger], Head of Department Five], December 27, 1948, 121).

29 On the basis of Anna Jakubowska's relation and the memoirs of Henryk Kozłowski (256), Mariusz Olczak hypothesized that Jan Rodowicz may have dug up the weapons already on January 2, 1949. That was the information Kozłowski gave him on the basis of what Anoda's mother had told him. In 2015, Jakubowska told Olczak that on January 2, 1949, that is before Kozłowski was arrested, she had spoken to him, suggesting that the weapons should be retrieved

MP40 submachine guns and seven magazines for them, a Vis pistol with two magazines, a P38 pistol with three magazines, a P08 pistol with one magazine, five hand grenades, 208 rounds of 9mm ammunition, 249 rounds of MP40 ammunition, and two holsters were found.<sup>30</sup> After a specialist examination of these weapons (see Appendix 9), it was established that after being cleaned they would be fit for use.<sup>31</sup>

More caches of weapons, located in Jeziorna (Anoda provided only very general information on its whereabouts) and Podkowa Leśna, were found later in the investigation, on the basis of statements made by other detainees and tips from informers.<sup>32</sup> The firearms the MBP found served as the basis for a propaganda campaign against AK veterans.

January 7, 1949, turned out to be the last day of the investigation against Jan Rodowicz. On that day, he was interrogated twice: first by Maj. Herer (Appendix 6), and later by Lt. Kleina (Appendix 7). The surviving records show that in the first session, Anoda gave a detailed description of the circumstances of the attempt to kidnap the Soviet ambassador in August 1945, which I mentioned in the previous chapter; he also added that in March 1945,

(Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 464). Nevertheless, in an interview on June 22, 2015, Jakubowska admitted that after the lapse of such a long time, she was no longer able to say whether she had discussed the hidden weapons with Kozłowski either before or after his arrest, so the version of events presented in the investigation files should be accepted as true.

- 30 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Protokół odkopania broni ukrytej przez Jana Rodowicza [Minutes of the disinterment of the weapons hidden by Jan Rodowicz], January, 4, 1949, 27.
- 31 *Ibid.*, Orzeczenie techniczne w sprawie broni należącej do Jana Rodowicza [Technical Report on the weapons kept by Jan Rodowicz], January 21, 1949, 28. Scrutiny of this document shows that the weapons could in fact have been in a much worse technical condition, but the MBP may not have wanted to admit this, because it would not have fitted in with their idea of an investigation against dangerous “saboteurs” and assumed the Zośkaites must have had weapons which were in a fairly good condition.
- 32 See Pietrzak, “Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy ‘Zośki’ i ‘Parasola’...,” 100. In January 1949, MBP agents confiscated one heavy machine gun, two light machine guns, 26 submachine guns, 19 infantry rifles, 20 pistols and 34 grenades (“Charakterystyka nielegalnej organizacji ...,” 81). The records of the MBP’s “acquisitions” obtained from January 18 to March 18, 1949, including weapons and other confiscated items, are in AIPN, 0255/125, Raport starszego oficera śledczego Sekcji I Wydziału II Departamentu Śledczego por. Jerzego Krzyżanowskiego do wicedyrektora Departamentu Śledczego ppłk. Adama Humera [Report from Lt. Jerzy Krzyżanowski, Senior Investigator, Section One of Subdepartment Two of the Investigations Department, to Lt. Col. Adam Humer, Deputy Head of the Investigations Department], March 18, 1949, 176.

Kozłowski prepared an assassination attempt on another Soviet general who was in Warsaw at the time.<sup>33</sup> After the first interrogation, Jan Rodowicz was taken back to his cell. Shortly afterwards, something happened which was dramatic and has still not been explained, leading to his death.

According to the official version, after 1 p.m. on January 7, 1949, Lt. Kleina began the second interrogation of Jan Rodowicz on that day. It lasted 20 minutes, and Kleina described it as unsuccessful, because Anoda only gave “yes” or “no” answers.<sup>34</sup> After that time, Lt. Kleina received an order from an officer whose name he did not remember to escort the suspect to Maj. Herer’s office on the opposite side of the corridor. After bolting the door of his room, Lt. Kleina escorted Jan Rodowicz on his own (with no other officers attending) to the secretary’s office, which led to Maj. Herer’s office. When Kleina was in the secretary’s office, someone (he could not remember who it was) said to him, “One moment. Go into the next room. The door is open and no one is there.”<sup>35</sup>

Kleina described what happened a moment later in a statement he made before the prosecutor in October 1992:

I opened the door and went in first. Jan Rodowicz came in after me, ran up and jumped onto the window sill of the open window and jumped out. It was a double wing window and it was wide open. I did not approach the window because I realized he must be dead. I notified the secretary’s office of his suicide. I was so shocked by the tragedy that I was trembling and could not calm down. Herer and my colleagues tried to calm me down. ... I could not have stopped Jan Rodowicz because he did it so fast, he sped past me like a whirlwind.<sup>36</sup> (Appendix 10).

According to Lt. Kleina, Rodowicz self-defenestrated out of an unbarred window on the fifth floor of the building, which looks out on Aleje Ujazdowskie and fell onto the concrete yard in front of the fence. There was a clinic on the premises of the MBP headquarters, so a doctor was called immediately and confirmed that death had occurred shortly after the fall.<sup>37</sup>

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33 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Rodowicza [Minutes of Jan Rodowicz’s interrogation], January 7, 1949, 50–51.

34 Agnieszka Pietrzak’s collections, Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza “Anody” [Decision of the Warsaw Voivodship Prosecutor’s Office to discontinue the investigation into the murder of Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz], November 6, 1996, 9 (copy).

35 AIPN, 2188/620, Protokół przesłuchania Bronisława Kleiny [Minutes of the hearing of Bronisław Kleina], October 21, 1992, 22.

36 *Ibid.*, 22–23.

37 The official notice of his son’s death delivered to Kazimierz Rodowicz gives a slightly different sequence of events. It says that Anoda “committed suicide by jumping out of the window while being escorted to prison” [to his prison

On January 8, an autopsy was performed, which showed that the cause of death was a hemorrhage from the aorta<sup>38</sup> (after 1989, the autopsy report could not be found). Four days later, Anoda was buried in an unmarked grave in No. 1 Municipal Cemetery in Warsaw.<sup>39</sup> An unnamed woman employed by the undertaker's company remembered that on the night of January 12, a truck arrived with several young MBP officers who brought in the body of Jan Rodowicz wrapped in a blanket. The security men bought a casket, put the corpse in it, closed the lid and ordered it to be taken immediately to the cemetery and buried.

In late February, a few days before Jan Rodowicz's family was officially notified of his death (March 1, 1949), the manager of the funeral home, who had known Anoda since 1945, when he had carried out exhumations of members of Battalion Zośka fallen during the War, gave his staff a slip of paper with the number of the grave, which he told them to show Anoda's relatives if they turned up at the office. Later, some people speculated that he did so because the MBP had allowed him to inform the family where exactly Jan Rodowicz had been buried.<sup>40</sup> Years later, Anoda's mother summed it up as follows:

... it seemed strange, and it was obvious that among the people who had tortured our son to death, there was someone who had the heart to think of us and let us find the grave.<sup>41</sup>

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cell? – the Polish text is vague – *Translator's note*] (MPW Archive, MPW-A/185-MPW-A/1830, Pismo szefa Wydziału Nadzoru Prokuratorskiego nad Śledztwem w Sprawach Szczególnych mjr. Mieczysława Dytręgo do Kazimierza Rodowicza w sprawie śmierci syna [Letter from Maj. Mieczysław Dytry, Head of the Subdepartment for the Prosecutor's Supervision of Special Investigations, to Kazimierz Rodowicz re. his son's death], March 1, 1949, unpaginated).

38 *Ibid.* See also MPW Archive, MPW-A/185-MPW-A/1830, Akt zejścia Jana Rodowicza [Death Certificate of Jan Rodowicz], October 27, 1949, unpaginated.

39 As Mariusz Olczak has observed on the basis of his examination of the records in the Archives of the Powązki Cemetery, the State authorities wanted to have Anoda buried as soon as possible (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 479). They wanted to keep his death a secret, to stop news of it from reaching other suspects, as this would have hindered the investigation.

40 According to Julian B. Deczkowski, the undertakers had known Jan Rodowicz and liked him, and this was the main thing which induced them to let the family know where exactly he was buried (Julian B. Deczkowski, *Wspomnienia żołnierza...*, 298). Deczkowski did not mention the MBP officer, whose identity could not be established.

41 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, W. Rodowicz, "Historia śmierci Jana Rodowicza (w opinii rodziny)," January 19, 2001, 3. In the 1990s, Wiktor Herer referred to the memoirs of Zofia Rodowicz, stating that from the very beginning the officers had intended to let the family locate Anoda's grave. Mariusz Olczak

Thanks to this, on March 16 (Zofia Rodowicz also gave another date, March 19), 1949, Jan Rodowicz's body was exhumed (for the first time) and interred in the family grave (so, in fact, it was his second funeral).<sup>42</sup> The casket was opened, a cursory examination was made of the corpse, and Anoda was decorated with his medals, which his mother pinned to her son's British uniform (he was wearing it on the day of his arrest and was buried in it).

Since the circumstances of Anoda's death were very controversial, on August 9, 1991, an inquiry was initiated by the Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes against the Polish Nation.<sup>43</sup> At the request of Wiesław Chrzanowski, Minister of Justice, the Prosecutor's Office of the Ministry of Justice forwarded the records to the Commission. However, the inquiry did not bring a definitive answer regarding the cause of Jan Rodowicz's death, so on May 30, 1994, Prosecutor Wanda Gałązka, who had been delegated to the Commission from the Warsaw Voivodship Prosecutor's Office, applied for the case to be closed, which was done in January 1995.

The Warsaw Prosecutor's Office reopened the inquiry in April 1995. It was conducted by Prosecutor Stefan Szustakiewicz, at whose request Jan Rodowicz's body was exhumed a second time. This inquiry did not lead to the discovery of new facts which could have given a definitive determination of the cause of Anoda's death, and it was discontinued on September 28, 1995. After protests from Rodowicz's family and the Battalion Zośka community associated with the World Association of Home Army Soldiers, the inquiry was reopened, only to be ultimately discontinued on November 6, 1996, by Prosecutor Edyta Petryna.

In 2001, Władysław Rodowicz, Anoda's paternal cousin, wrote a letter to Prof. Leon Kieres, President of the Institute of National Remembrance,

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rejects this version, writing that if it had not been for the fact that the undertakers knew Jan Rodowicz, his grave might never have been found at all (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 480).

42 Consent for the exhumation was issued on March 14, 1949, after office hours, by Dr. Edmund Stawiński from the Warszawa-Śródmieście Starosty Office (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 483). Since March 14, 1949, was a Monday, and the exhumation took place two days later, news of the exhumation probably reached the MBP, as Informer Sowa attended it.

43 On January 28, 1993, *Gazeta Wyborcza* published an open letter whose authors demanded explanations for three Communist crimes committed in the Stalinist period which brought about the death of Gen. August Emil Fieldorf, Capt. Witold Pilecki, and Jan Rodowicz. The letter was signed by Jan Nowak-Jeziorański, Aleksander Gieysztor, Tomasz Strzembosz, Tomasz Szarota, Władysław Bartoszewski, Tadeusz Żenczykowski, Lucjan Kindlein, Andrzej Wolski, Zofia Korbońska and Henryk Kozłowski (Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szańcu...*, 91).

requesting an inquiry into the alleged crime, but the request was turned down due to the lack of new evidence.<sup>44</sup>

Currently, there are at least five alternative versions of the death of Anoda which may be considered. The first is that the MBP shot him; the second, that he was willfully beaten to death during the investigation; the third, that he was inadvertently beaten to death during the investigation; the fourth, that he died while attempting to escape; and the fifth that he self-defenestrated in a suicide jump. That is the order in which I will discuss all five versions.

## Shot dead

The hypothesis that Jan Rodowicz was shot by security officers during an interrogation was based on three premises: the statement given by Bogusław Bosiacki, who claimed to have witnessed Rodowicz's death; a cursory examination of Anoda's body by Anna Rodowicz, the wife of his father's nephew, on March 16, 1949, before his second funeral; and a claim by Leonarda Rodowicz,<sup>45</sup> the wife of a distant relative of Anoda, who said that in 1969 she had come across documents relating to the circumstances of Jan Rodowicz's death.

Bosiacki decided to present his version of the events in the latter half of 1994, when Battalion Zośka veterans placed an appeal addressed to the general public in several newspapers, asking people to come forward with information to help explain how Anoda died.<sup>46</sup> In February 1995 Bosiacki

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44 AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej 1, Pismo Władysława Rodowicza do prezesa IPN [Anna Jakubowska's Records 1, Letter from Władysław Rodowicz to [Leon Kieres], President of the Institute of National Remembrance], May 2, 2001, unpaginated.

45 Leonarda Rodowicz sometimes used her middle name Elżbieta.

46 The members of Battalion Zośka placed advertisements of the following type in newspapers: "Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda died on January 7, 1949, in the building of the Ministry of Public Security at Koszykowa 6 in Warsaw. He served as a lieutenant in the Home Army's Battalion Zośka and was awarded the *Virtuti Militari*. Any persons who can provide information about the circumstances of his death or the interrogation methods used in the said building in 1948–1949 are kindly requested to contact, personally or in writing, the veterans of Battalion Zośka at Długa 22, Warsaw, where office hours are held every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 12.00 noon. We would especially like to know if Jan Rodowicz's interrogators included the following MBP men: Wiktor Herer, Bronisław Kleina, Bolesław Cykała, and Roman Masny, and if so, in what capacity they were involved in this case and what their role was" ("Kto wie o 'Anodzie'?", *Rzeczpospolita*, November 29, 1994).

wrote a letter to Tadeusz Sumiński,<sup>47</sup> one of the veterans, with a detailed description of Jan Rodowicz's death. In an affidavit taken by a public prosecutor, Bosiacki said that in January 1949 he had been held in the Koszykowa prison and although he neither shared a cell with Anoda nor met him personally, yet fellow inmates told him that they had seen Jan Rodowicz limping and groaning after he had been beaten up, as he was being escorted for an interrogation or back to his cell.

Reportedly, Bosiacki was being interrogated by security officers in the morning hours of January 7, when he heard a gun going off in one of the neighboring rooms near the stairwell:

The investigator who had been questioning me immediately dashed out into the corridor, taking out and cocking his gun. He was in such a hurry that he left the door ajar. Kleina, another investigator, also rushed out; ... they were very agitated and Kleina was almost shouting, sort of giving an excuse for his behavior: "I wasn't able to fucking [*sic!*] stand it and shot the bastard" ... They were joined by one more officer ... and after a short discussion pulled Rodowicz out into the corridor, carried him to the window, opened it, and flung the body out. ... The guy who had been interrogating me came back to the room, took a towel out of the cabinet, and went to the bathroom to clean up. Rodowicz must have been bleeding, because there was blood on the officer's jacket and hands.<sup>48</sup>

Bosiacki claimed that the following day the prisoners received confirmation from the officers that the man who was killed was Anoda.

Although Bosiacki's account is vivid and has a lot of details, it has to be treated as incredible for several reasons.

First of all, no documents have been found to confirm that he was held on Koszykowa.<sup>49</sup>

Second, he was unable to name any of the fellow prisoners who he said had told him that Anoda had been beaten up.

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47 Tadeusz Sumiński aka Leszczyc (1924–2009), rifleman and platoon sergeant (promoted in early September 1944) in the Second Squad of the Third Felek Platoon in the Second Rudy Company of Battalion Zośka.

48 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Letter from Bogusław Bosiacki to Tadeusz Sumiński, February 3, 1995, [3] (copy). See also Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza "Anody" [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, page 17 (copy). Bosiacki made a statement before the prosecutor that he had seen the security officers dragging the body of a slim young man along the floor, but he did not recognize the victim.

49 My own additional inquiry in the AIPN brought no findings, either.

Third, the corridor on the fifth floor, where the prisoners were interviewed, had no windows, only doors leading to the rooms (as I verified personally during my visit there: the corridor still has no window, just as in 1949); therefore Bosiacki could not have seen the officers throwing Rodowicz's body out of a window in the corridor.

Fourth, Bosiacki asserted that there was blood on the officer's uniforms, so Anoda's clothes should have been bloodstained too; however, the family did not notice anything like that when they saw his body before the second funeral.

Fifth, the death certificate and the official notice delivered to Kazimierz Rodowicz of his son's decease, concur that Jan Rodowicz died at 2 p.m., not in the early hours.<sup>50</sup>

Bosiacki's claims occasioned more misgivings. In the letter to Tadeusz Sumiński he wrote,

I'm not a cowardly man at all, quite the opposite, I am one of the bravest. But due to the current political situation in this country, please keep my information only for members of the Home Army's Battalion Zośka. I have absolutely no trust in the police and public prosecutors, because they do as much as they can and pull the strings of kinship and friendship to protect ex-security men. ... I shall never speak up in public because it would mean my immediate exit from the ranks of the living.<sup>51</sup>

Incidentally, Bosiacki, who claimed to have witnessed Anoda's death, used to sell a unique product at St. Dominic's Fair in Gdańsk, offering bars of soap for 20 PLN which, he said, had been produced by the German company RIF during the Second World War from human fat, "mostly from Jews killed in Stutthof concentration camp."<sup>52</sup> Customers could strike a similar bargain with him for less than 20 PLN at a fair in Toruń, where he plugged his soap

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50 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza "Anody"* [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 5 [time of death] and 18 (copy). Also, imprisoned Zośka soldiers learned of Jan Rodowicz's death many weeks later, so the news did not spread like wildfire in the MBP jail, contrary to Bosiacki's claim. Anoda's friend Wojciech Świątkowski, nom-de-guerre Korczak (1922–2021), a sergeant cadet who was second in command of the First Company of Battalion Parasol from August 25, 1944, told me on June 24, 2015 that he only learned of Jan Rodowicz's death in February 1955, when he was released from prison.

51 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Letter from Bogusław Bosiacki to Tadeusz Sumiński*, February 3, 1995, [1] (copy).

52 Piotr Lipiński, "Okno" [in] *Ofiary niejasnego*, Warszawa: Prószyński i S-ka, 2004, 60.

“made from the bodies of concentration camp prisoners, mostly Jews,”<sup>53</sup> and encouraged a German woman passer-by to buy some: “*Kaufen, kaufen. Judenseife, gut, gut, kaufen.*”<sup>54</sup> The Main Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish People established that RIF never produced soap from human fat, and the police had Bosiacki in for questioning on suspicion of abuse of human corpses. Henryk Kozłowski gave the following appraisal of Bosiacki’s story: “In my opinion, the statements made by the alleged witness, who spoke to ‘Leszczyc’ in a phone conversation, are completely untrustworthy.”<sup>55</sup> I reckon Kozłowski’s opinion sums up this sensational yarn pretty well.

In light of the facts, Bosiacki’s words turn out to be uncorroborated by hard evidence. He was also responsible for spreading other unsubstantiated rumors, for instance about the Gestapo handing Stefan Starzyński, the Mayor of Warsaw, to the Soviets, who killed him. Apparently, during the War, Bosiacki came in possession of Starzyński’s memoirs, which security men confiscated in 1947.<sup>56</sup>

Much more importance has to be attached to the testimony of Anna Rodowicz, who was a doctor and conducted a cursory examination of Anoda’s body before his second funeral. She did not notice any injuries such as broken limbs or a fractured skull typical for victims who fall from a great height. What she did observe was a small round hole in a bone process behind the ear which must have been bleeding as dry bloodstains were still visible. In 1968, Zofia Rodowicz said,

... Anna Rodowicz ... palpated Janek’s head and legs. We found no broken bones in his legs, nor any bruises or injuries on his face or hands when we put his body in the casket we had provided. He was dressed in his British military uniform, which he was wearing when he was arrested, with its neck opening secured with a safety pin, it was smart and his hair was tidy, even the creases on the legs of his pants were straight.<sup>57</sup>

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53 *Ibid.*

54 *Ibid.* See also Wojciech Tochman, “Mydło,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, August 5, 1995.

55 AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska’s records], 1, List Henryka Kozłowskiego [Letter from Henryk Kozłowski], June 24, 1995, no pagination.

56 Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szańcu...*, 139–140.

57 Quoted after Agnieszka Pietrzak’s collections, Władysław Rodowicz, *Historia śmierci Jana Rodowicza...*, [page 2]. Alicja Arens, Anoda’s fiancée, said later that a rumor circulated among Jan Rodowicz’s friends about him having been shot in the back of the neck, but Anna Rodowicz did not observe such a wound during her examination (Lipiński, “Okno,” 53). Danuta Winiarska nom-de-guerre Słoninka (1925–2015), a riflewoman and medic in Battalion Zośka, recollected her conversation with Jan Rodowicz’s mother: “... she told me about his exhumation, about all that. Yes, what did she tell me? That a friend, a doctor, had been

Anna Rodowicz believed that the hole behind Janek's ear could have been a bullet wound,<sup>58</sup> but Prof. Aleksander Dubrzyński, head of the Chair and Institute of Forensic Medicine at the Warsaw Medical Academy, who was asked for an opinion during the 1990s inquiry, stated that a hurried examination of a fully dressed body could not have produced reliable results, especially if it was exhumed in winter, two months after burial, and Dr. Rodowicz could not tell whether an autopsy had been done earlier.<sup>59</sup> What's more, on April 25, 1995, Jan Rodowicz's body was again disinterred and examined by experts, who observed that "a fragment of the frontal bone was separated from the skull along a line that typically results from a postmortem incision."<sup>60</sup> Regrettably, several fragments of the skull as well as the bones of the entire shoulder girdle, pelvis, backbone, and chest were missing. The preserved bones bore no trace of mechanical perimortem trauma. Therefore the experts decided it was impossible to determine the cause of death.<sup>61</sup> The only important information the 1995 autopsy brought was that a postmortem examination had been carried out on Rodowicz's body shortly after his decease. The results of the 1995 procedure convinced Henryk Kozłowski that the claim that Rodowicz was shot dead had to be rejected.<sup>62</sup>

Another person who discarded the death by gunshot hypothesis was Andrzej Biedrzycki, a doctor who took part in a six-month training course

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with them and examined Janek's body. There were no signs that anything had been broken, but there was a bullet wound in the head, so they [the MBP men] had shot him" (MPW Collections, AHM, interview with Danuta Winiarska, November 15, 2007).

- 58 Anna Rodowicz upheld that opinion in the 1990s: "In my view, Janek died from a bullet wound in the back of the head" (AIPN, 2188/620, Protokół przesłuchania Anny Rodowicz [Minutes of the interview of Anna Rodowicz], March 15, 1993, 61).
- 59 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza „Anody” [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 14–15 (copy).
- 60 Quoted after *ibid.*, p. 6. The 1995 exhumation has been described by Piotr Lipiński, who was an eye-witness (Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szaniecu...*, 65).
- 61 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza „Anody” [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 16 (copy).
- 62 AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska's records], 1, List Henryka Kozłowskiego [Letter from Henryk Kozłowski], June 24, 1995, no pagination.

in anatomical pathology held at the Warsaw Medical Academy in 1960. That was where he met Prof. Wiktor Grzywo-Dąbrowski, head of the Chair of Forensic Medicine, who was one of the lecturers.

In an informal conversation with one of Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski's assistants, whose personal data Biedrzycki could not remember, he learned that on the day of Jan Rodowicz's death, MBP men arrived with his body and left it in the freezer in a sealed casket, giving strict orders that on no account could it be opened. They presented an autopsy report which said that Anoda had died of aortic hemorrhage. Reportedly, Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski refused to sign it (as he had heard rumors that Anoda had been murdered) and during the night, he and his assistants opened the casket to carry out an illicit autopsy. They observed injuries on almost all the bones and internal organs, but no gunshot wound. When the procedure was completed, the body was put back in the casket, which was closed and nailed up again.<sup>63</sup>

However, Biedrzycki's account can be undermined since he could not recall his interlocutor's personal data, even though he spent six months on the training course and should have remembered the names of his instructors. What's more, the assistant who spoke to Biedrzycki told him he had not attended the autopsy, but had only been informed of it by one of his colleagues. One could expect that Anna Rodowicz should have noticed any signs of serious trauma on the body during her examination, but she found that not even Anoda's legs were broken, notwithstanding the reservations we may have as to the reliability of her observations. Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski never officially confirmed that Biedrzycki's account was true. Biedrzycki in turn admitted that already in the 1940s he was sure that Anoda's death was the doing of the MBP. All his statements, whether delivered orally or in writing, were highly emotional.<sup>64</sup>

More doubts arise over the fact that according to Biedrzycki, Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski conducted his secret autopsy on the night of January 7/

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63 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza "Anoda"* [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 16 (copy).

64 In his letter to Piotr Lipiński, Andrzej Biedrzycki wrote, "We heard of Anoda's death when we were still students in Warsaw and at the time no one doubted it was yet another crime perpetrated by the security services. Anoda, who fought against the Germans ... and survived the Warsaw Uprising, was killed by the Soviet invaders. But of course these were just rumors" (Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *List Andrzeja Biedrzyckiego do Piotra Lipińskiego* [Letter from Andrzej Biedrzycki to Piotr Lipiński], May 10, 1995, no pagination [copy]).

8, while the MBP's documents give the date of the previous, official examination, which preceded the transportation of the body to the Institute of Forensic Medicine, as January 8, 1949, i.e. on the following day.<sup>65</sup> Also, Biedrzycki said that the corpse was delivered in a casket, whereas an anonymous woman working for the undertakers said that the MBP men had brought it wrapped in a blanket and purchased a casket just before the first burial.

So despite its sensational and elaborate details, Biedrzycki's version cannot be treated as reliable, either. Still, the proponents of the hypothesis that Anoda had been murdered used this account as an argument in their favor, the more so as it gained some credibility after the 1995 exhumation, which confirmed that Jan Rodowicz's body had been autopsied prior to the first interment. Also the fact that the corpse looked neat when it was exhumed for the first time was regarded as a consequence of the illicit autopsy performed by the pathologists at the Institute of Forensic Medicine; they were believed to have made an effort to give the body of one of the heroes of the Warsaw Uprising a dignified appearance.<sup>66</sup>

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65 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza "Anody" [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], September 28, 1995, page 2 (copy). In his statement made before the public prosecutor, Andrzej Biedrzycki made a significant change to the version of the events he had presented to Piotr Lipiński. Biedrzycki had told Lipiński that he had obtained information about Jan Rodowicz's death from Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski, but during his interview with the prosecutor he said it was from one of Grzywo-Dąbrowski's assistants (Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szancku...*, 186).

66 However, the body of Anoda, a Polish resistance hero, might have looked dignified thanks to the undertakers, who knew who he was (his first burial was described by an anonymous woman employee and some of the details provided by her could have diverged from what had really happened). It is also possible that after the official autopsy one of the medical staff, for some reason wanted the body to look presentable. That such endeavors had been undertaken is evidenced by the safety pin on the neck opening of Anoda's clothes (an arrestee was not allowed to keep such objects in jail). As Jan Rodowicz was not shot following a court verdict, but according to the official version committed suicide, his body could be delivered to the family. Wojciech Frazik writes: "In some cases, the bodies of those who died in jail during an investigation were delivered to the families. This happened when officially the cause of death was suicide. However, often there was a condition that the casket had to be kept shut and the appearance of the deceased secret" (Frazik, *Dowód zbrodni...*, 229). Frazik claimed that the disclosure of the whereabouts of Anoda's grave to the family was a departure from the usual procedure (*ibid.* 230). He must have been sure that Jan Rodowicz had been murdered, but even if so, we must remember that

Nevertheless, Biedrzycki's statement ruled out the possibility that Rodowicz's death could have been caused by gunfire. That was also the conclusion to other accounts which claimed he was killed by the violence inflicted upon him. A skin fold behind his ear made by the pathomorphologist could have been taken for a hole in the skull, and perhaps this is how we should explain the description offered by Anna Rodowicz.

The last argument that Anoda died due to the use of firearms was Leonarda Rodowicz's discovery of a file of documents in the central archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, where she was employed.

Leonarda Rodowicz née Kuzio married Anoda's nephew Wojciech Rodowicz in November 1963, but her relations with her husband's family were never close. As she and her brother worked for the security services, they were treated like snoops planted by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Leonarda did not have much of an idea about the circumstances of Anoda's death. She worked in the main archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs from 1962. In August 1969, she said, her duty was to prepare folders with personal records to be sent to the archive. In late August, she came across a folder containing a wad of 136 sheets stitched together with thick cotton thread; its ends were secured with strips of paper, glued to the sheet and stamped. The folder had a heading, "Jan 'Anoda' Rodowicz" and the last document was a copy of Form E-15 with the following note: "Shot during an attempted escape."<sup>67</sup> Leonarda Rodowicz was not alone in the room at the time (since she was not a PZPR member, she had to share a room with the party secretary) and yet she ventured a remark that the documents probably referred to a member of her family. She was given the papers just thirty minutes before the end of her working day, so she did not have enough time to study them carefully without arousing suspicion by, for instance, staying to work overtime.

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officially the cause of death was suicide. So the situation was not as exceptional as it might seem at first glance. Mariusz Olczak holds a similar view and writes that "at the time, it must have been the only case when the family was notified of their relative's death in jail, and told the whereabouts of his grave" (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 482).

67 Władysław Rodowicz, *Historia śmierci Jana Rodowicza...*, [4]. Leonarda Rodowicz described the file as follows: "... It was relatively thin, the sheets appeared to have been sewn together with thick white cotton thread and the ends glued to the cover, There was an ink stamp, not a wax seal, affixed on the strip of paper that secured the two ends. The strip also gave the number of pages, I believe it was 136" (Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Relacja Leonardy Rodowicz [Leonarda Rodowicz's account], [2000], 1 [copy]*).

Next day, the folder was gone and Leonarda was told that she had lost her job. In the end, she was required to write a report and turn up in the minister's secretariat for a talk, after which she was transferred to the Criminology Section in the National Police Headquarters. That was all that happened to her.<sup>68</sup> In 1990, when she tried to obtain access to these records, she was informed that they had been moved to the Ministry of Justice; however, they were never traced there. Jan Rodowicz's relatives claim they may have been destroyed to conceal the fact that he was murdered.

The records in Leonarda Rodowicz's personal file which I saw speak of a different course of events.

On January 5, 1968, the head of Department Two, Office C in the Ministry of Internal Affairs sent a report to the Director of Office C, informing him that Leonarda Rodowicz had come across the name Jan Rodowicz during an inquiry into archival records and compiling indexes concerning the anti-Communist resistance movement of 1944–1950. In a conversation with “Comrade Łuczyński,” who was working on a similar task, she said that “presumably Jan Rodowicz was her husband's brother, who was arrested in 1948 by the former MBP, and died in its main building. She sought advice on who the family should ask for permission to have the personal belongings, photos and letters, returned. They would be treasured family heirlooms. ... On the grounds of the investigation file, it was established that ... Jan Rodowicz had self-defenestrated and killed himself during an interrogation.”<sup>69</sup> The department head wrote that Leonarda Rodowicz had never mentioned in her personal questionnaire, which employees were routinely required to submit, that a member of her family had suffered Communist repressions. So he asked his supervisor if it was still possible for her to have access to MBP operational materials.<sup>70</sup> The report did not suggest she should be fired, and its date implied that the incident did not occur in August 1969, but in the latter half of 1967.

In early January, the head of Office C sent a report on the matter to Ryszard Matejewski, a general of the security forces whom I mentioned in the previous chapter, and added that Leonarda Rodowicz did not notify her

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68 *Ibid.*

69 AIPN, 1756/667, Raport naczelnika Wydziału II Biura „C” MSW płk. Jana Starzyckiego do dyrektora Biura „C” płk. Jana Zabawskiego w sprawie Leonardy Rodowicz [Report from Col. Jan Starzycki, Head of Subdepartment Two, Office C of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to Col. Jan Zabawski, Head of Office C re. Leonarda Rodowicz], January 5, 1968, 73. Leonarda Rodowicz's personal file shows that it is wrong to suggest that for some reason she had made up the whole story.

70 *Ibid.*

supervisors that she had found the file of her brother-in-law. Matejewski, who was the general director of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, “recommended that she be relegated to another post, with no access to MBP operational files. Citizen Rodowicz was transferred to work in the Police Headquarters archives.”<sup>71</sup>

Leonarda Rodowicz’s personal file gives slightly different circumstances for her transfer to the Criminalistics Department of Police Headquarters than those described in her own account.

In mid-July 1968, the executive board of the PZPR committee in her workplace did not accept her application to join, and advised her “to work more diligently for the Union of Socialist Youth (ZMS, Związek Młodzieży Socjalistycznej), put more effort into her professional career and assume a more crystallized ideological stance”<sup>72</sup> (she had a church wedding in 1963). On October 24, 1968, the head of Office C, presumably unable to reconcile himself to having a relative of Anoda working for him and moreover not telling him about it, informed Leonarda that she would be fired because of her “husband’s distant relations.”<sup>73</sup> The following day, the embittered archivist sent a letter to Gen. Matejewski (the same man who had recruited Adam Abramowicz), asking to see him for a short talk. She complained that previously there had never been any reservations about her work: “My employment in the Ministry of Internal Affairs was the first job with which I felt such a strong emotional and ideological bond. My brother and my friends also work here, and 90% of my social contacts are employed in the Ministry. I am unable to understand why now, having worked here for seven years, ... I am to quit because of a family member who is either dead or has been rehabilitated or never made my acquaintance.”<sup>74</sup> Leonarda Rodowicz’s

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71 AIPN, 1756/667, Pismo dyrektora Biura „C” MSW płk. Jana Zabawskiego do dyrektora Departamentu Kadr MSW płk. Teodora Mikusia w sprawie Leonardy Rodowicz [Official letter from Col. Jan Zabawski, Head of Office C in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, to Col. Teodor Mikuś, Head of the Personnel Department in the Ministry of Internal Affairs re Leonarda Rodowicz], January 19, 1968, 72.

72 AIPN, 1756/667, Wyciąg z protokołu z posiedzenia Egzekutywy Komitetu Zakładowego PZPR dotyczący Leonardy Rodowicz [Abstract of the minutes of the meeting of the executive board of the PZPR cell in [Leonarda Rodowicz’s] workplace to discuss her case], July 15, 1968, 80.

73 AIPN, 1756/667, Raport por. Leonardy Rodowicz do dyrektora generalnego MSW gen. Ryszarda Matejewskiego w sprawie zwolnienia z pracy [Lt. Leonarda Rodowicz’s report for Gen. Ryszard Matejewski, Director General in the Ministry of Internal Affairs re her dismissal], October 25, 1968, 24.

74 *Ibid.*, 26. Even though we should not disregard the situation in which this report was written and the person to whom it was addressed, I am inclined to admit that it is a reliable representation of Leonarda’s emotional state. This is further

letter included one paragraph about Anoda: “Jan Rodowicz, my husband’s grandfather’s son, was in the Home Army, as far as I know, and after the War he committed suicide in jail (I do not know anything else about him). I came across his name one day when I was processing the files.”<sup>75</sup>

Gen. Matejewski read Leonarda Rodowicz’s arguments and gave his approval for her transfer to another post. She worked for the Communist state security services until the collapse of People’s Poland, achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel and earning commendation from her superiors.<sup>76</sup> However, her personal file shows that she never joined the PZPR.

If we compare Leonarda’s own account with the extant records we see that although she indeed discovered documents concerning Jan Rodowicz and had serious problems at work because of it, she did not access any sources historians do not know of. That can be inferred from her letter to Gen. Matejewski as well as from the in-house correspondence circulated between her supervisors: we can establish that all they had access to were the records of the investigation against Jan Rodowicz.<sup>77</sup>

Given that the hypothesis that Anoda was shot has not been confirmed by any reliable source, and that it is difficult to explain why there should have been any official records which said that Anoda had been killed, especially as all the other records available (including security officers’ personal files) speak of his suicide, in my opinion we have to reject Leonarda Rodowicz’s story and especially her key argument.

Regrettably, I have not managed to trace the records of the investigation into Jan Rodowicz’s death, which was conducted in 1949 by the Chief

corroborated by all her earlier and subsequent character assessments, which were laudatory.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>76</sup> For instance, the character assessment dated March 1969 says that Leonarda Rodowicz attended PZPR training courses and contributed to the discussions (AIPN, 1756/667, Charakterystyka por. Leonardy Rodowicz [Character assessment for Lt. Leonarda Rodowicz], March 27, 1969, 82). In November 1982, after martial law had been enforced, she was commended for “not being indifferent to the problems facing our country. In situations which are politically and socially difficult, her conduct is always that of a loyal citizen” (AIPN, 1756/667, Opinia służbowa na temat mjr Leonardy Rodowicz [Official assessment of Maj. Leonarda Rodowicz], November 20, 1982, 106).

<sup>77</sup> The archival unit holding records of the investigation into the Anoda case is titled “Rodowicz Jan Jerzy” and in the present-day pagination system used by the AIPN it amounts to ninety pages. This heading is different from the one mentioned in Leonarda Rodowicz’s account, but the cover could have been changed, perhaps in 1974, when these records were classified as confidential on orders from the head of Office C in the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

Military Prosecutor's Office. I sent a new inquiry regarding the matter to the Archives of the Ministry of National Defense in Modlin and on July 21, 2014 received their answer: no files of such an investigation were found in the archival collections of the Chief Military Prosecutor's Office. So these records are still unknown. In my view, they would probably not contribute much to what we know already, except for establishing beyond all reasonable doubt when and where the autopsy of Anoda's body was carried out and who performed it.<sup>78</sup>

In weighing up the pros and cons of the hypothesis of Anoda being shot, we should consider the benefits it could have brought the security services. I don't think they could have gained anything at all. What sense would it have been made for them to eliminate the suspect while his case was still being investigated, during an interrogation the minutes of which had not been finished, and, even more importantly, on the day when Anoda had put his signature to information which was crucial for the success of the investigation?<sup>79</sup>

We should bear in mind that up to January 7, 1949, the security men had been unable to force Jan Rodowicz to produce any evidence incriminating Col. Mazurkiewicz. Even though Anoda had signed a statement that described the activities of his comrades in arms, which could be regarded as a success for the investigators, yet their main goal was to obtain a statement implicating Radosław. But Anoda gave evasive answers to all the questions pertaining to Col. Mazurkiewicz.

What's more, the MBP men must have thought that Jan Rodowicz, the main "conspirator in Radosław's organization" besides Henryk Kozłowski, and a Battalion Zośka veteran, would be sentenced to death. Dariusz Baliszewski<sup>80</sup> observes that if Anoda had lived longer, he would definitely have become one of the main figures vilified in the speech the Minister of Public Security delivered on February 10, 1949. Commenting on the arrest of the Zośka veterans, he said that among the former Home Army soldiers "there were a few who deceitfully took advantage of the magnanimity of the People's Democracy [*sic!*], betrayed its trust ..., and made new sabotage

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78 The available source materials (such as the officers' personal files) suggest that the investigation carried out by the Central Military Prosecutor's Office did not bring results which differed from the previous official findings.

79 As the security officers declared in the documents they drew up for their superiors, Jan Rodowicz had "provided comprehensive information about all the members of Battalion Zośka as well as the participation of particular individuals in stashing the weapons" (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 6, Spis aresztowanych [List of arrestees], no date, 167).

80 Baliszewski, *Trzecia strona medalu...*, 294.

attempts against Poland. ... Undoubtedly, the strings were being pulled by foreign intelligence agencies.”<sup>81</sup> In the circumstances, it would have been much more devastating for Jan Rodowicz’s nerves to be subjected to a protracted investigation, stand trial, and then have to wait, in vain, for a pardon.

Shooting Anoda in broad daylight during an interrogation would have been unprecedented, too. Therefore I am inclined to agree with Wiktor Herer, who said during his interview with Piotr Lipiński,

[Jan Rodowicz] shot? Can you imagine anyone being shot within a hundred meters from the offices of five ministers? Can you imagine the bang of firearms going off in the building? How can you think and talk of such a thing...<sup>82</sup>

In the account of Anoda’s death I have already quoted, Herer pointed out that the grand edifice of the MBP had not been designed to serve as a place for brutal interrogations. The walls between the rooms were not sound-proofed, so “any violent hearing of whatever kind, even just the use of a raised voice, would have been hardly imaginable in such a building.”<sup>83</sup>

Of course, I cannot agree that suspects were not tortured during interrogations, and the basement of the MBP building, where they used to be held, still looks ghastly today, as I found out personally. Nevertheless, the hypothesis that Jan Rodowicz was shot in the vicinity of Maj. Herer’s office does not seem plausible. At this point, we can again turn to Henryk Kozłowski’s account:

I never saw an officer with a gun during an interrogation, I never saw an MBP man carrying a gun. Tomporski threatened to use a gun, but you could hardly take him seriously (killing a suspect or a witness before the investigation was over!!!).<sup>84</sup>

If Anoda had been shot in cold blood, it would have been impossible to hide the fact from the supervisors<sup>85</sup> and other MBP men. The killing, perhaps

81 Quoted after Piotr Stachiewicz, „*Parasol*”. *Dzieje oddziału do zadań specjalnych Kierownictwa Dywersji Komendy Głównej Armii Krajowej*, Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy PAX, 1984, 638.

82 Quoted after Lipiński, “Okno,” 58.

83 Agnieszka Pietrzak’s collections, [W. Herer], *Samobójstwo Jana Rodowicza*, no date, 5 (copy).

84 AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska’s records], 1, *Zeznania Henryka Kozłowskiego złożone w Ottawie* [Henryk Kozłowski’s statement made in Ottawa], no date, 3. Henryk Kończykowski told me that interrogators did not carry weapons or threaten to use them, yet they were allowed to keep them in their offices (e.g. in their desks).

85 See the order issued by Col. Mieczysław Mietkowski, Deputy Minister of Public Security, on the duty of state security officers to observe the regulations in force in the event of the death of an arrestee, July 27, 1946 [in] Frazik, *Dowód zbrodni...*, 234.

presented as an accident or in self-defense, would have been mentioned in the records (because a bullet wound could not be covered up even if you defenestrated the body), but there were no such remarks.

The idea that Anoda was shot does not tally at all with the fact that his family was allowed to locate and see his body. If the security officers had wanted to conceal the truth and said that Anoda had committed suicide just to cover up his murder, they would have kept the whereabouts of his burial secret, just as they used to do with other security apparatus victims, whose remains have only recently been found and identified thanks to the latest genetic tests.<sup>86</sup> On the other hand, if the MBP had wanted to demonstrate that they did not have to worry about bearing the consequences of having murdered Anoda and let his family see the body, we must reject the argument that they tampered with the evidence and wanted to destroy the Jan Rodowicz legend. They must have realized that news of the first exhumation would spread like wildfire among his friends and fellow-combatants.

In my view, firearms could have been used only in one situation: if Jan Rodowicz had attacked an officer while being questioned.<sup>87</sup>

And yet even that raises doubts, too. Would Anoda, who had been kept in custody for about two weeks and could have been battered, have been able to stand up to Lt. Kleina, who was the same age and fully fit? If he had managed to take Kleina by surprise and a scuffle had ensued, it would have been hardly possible for Kleina (even if he was armed) to shoot Anoda in the back of the head; and it would have been equally difficult for any other intervening officer to give an accurate shot (when Anoda was being interrogated, Kleina's assistant was usually Juliusz Kubera, who also used to escort Jan Rodowicz to the interview room). Also, if such a situation had arisen, the officers would have preferred to immobilize him and inflict a wound in a different part of the body, but most probably it would have been enough to use other means of physical coercion. It is highly improbable that Lt. Kleina, even if infuriated by Jan Rodowicz's behavior, could have shot him in a fit of anger. If security officers had lost their self-control so easily, there would have been many more incidents of that kind.

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86 See, for instance, Krzysztof Szwagrzyk, Łukasz Szleszkowski, Andrzej Ossowski et al., "Badania historyczne i medyczne w procesie identyfikacji ofiar komunizmu," *Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944–1989* no. 1 (11), 2013.

87 Władysław Rodowicz envisaged a similar course of developments: "Given Janek's temper, I think he definitely would have hit back if they started beating him. Suicide's a nonsensical idea. They did not have enough time to break Janek. He was too strong a character [to commit suicide], with plenty of fighting spirit" (quoted after Wachowicz, *Ułan Batalionu „Zośka”*. *Gawęda o Janku Rodowiczu...*, 150).

For these reasons, I think the hypothesis that Anoda was shot has to be rejected.

### **Intentional aggravated battery occasioning death**

The second version of the events based on the supposition that the security men killed Jan Rodowicz assumed that they willfully beat him up during the interrogation and defenestrated the body of the dead or dying man from a fifth-story window to cover up evidence of the violence, oppress his family, and destroy the morale of the Radosław veterans.

To consider this hypothesis, first we must find out if the security officers who worked on the Battalion Zośka case used violence against suspects. Contrary to what Wiktor Herer asserted years later, the extant records show that violence was indeed used. Agnieszka Pietrzak gives the following description of the MBP's brutal interrogation methods:

Persons under interrogation were beaten and kicked, and their hair was pulled out. When "ordinary" beating brought no results, more elaborate methods were applied, such as "the feather," when the victim was beaten with a thick metal rod which ... was used instead of a chain to operate the cistern and flush the toilet. Suspects were beaten using other instruments of torture, such as a metal spring. ... Another form of harassment was ... strenuous physical exercise, which was nicknamed "PE." ... In winter, prisoners were forced to stand for several hours or even all night in their underwear by an open window. Another torture was dubbed "the duck": victims were made to stand in cold water and when they were exhausted and fainted, they were hosed down with water. Also, ... they were sometimes ordered to sit on the leg of an upturned stool, which pressed into their anus. The interrogators referred to this torture as "Anders's pale"; it caused a great deal of pain as soon as it was applied. Recalcitrant interrogatees were locked up in dark solitary cells.<sup>88</sup>

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88 Pietrzak, "Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy 'Zośki' i 'Parasola'...", 113–114. See also Anna Marcinkiewicz-Kaczmarczyk and Wiesław Kaczmarczyk, "Funkcjonowanie organów śledczych...", 56. Wojciech Frazik writes about some of the murders of arrestees committed by the MBP in the 1940s (Frazik, "Dowód zbrodni...", 229). Jerzy Ślaski writes about Maj. Stanisław "Adam" Prus, an officer of the Lublin region in the Home Army and commander-in-chief of the Ninth Legionary Infantry Regiment, who was interrogated in the Lublin headquarters of the regional security service. He was murdered in November 1944: "He was beaten to death, ... and his body was dropped from a third-story window, his death was presented as suicide. At the time, Capt. Humer was head of the Investigations Department of the Lublin Voivodeship Office of Public Security. The scenario created when Maj. "Adam" was killed was later played out several times, for instance in Warsaw ..., involving Jan Rodowicz, one of the bravest soldiers of Battalion Zośka" (Jerzy Ślaski, *Żołnierze wyklęci*, Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza Rytm, [2012], 113).

Years later, Wiktor Herer claimed that the situation was quite the opposite. According to him, the tasks of Department Five did not include targeting anti-Communist armed resistance, but watching the activities of “legal and semi-legal” organizations and therefore “it comes as no surprise at all that our Department’s working practices must have differed radically from the idea society in general has today of the work of the security service.”<sup>89</sup>

This explanation cannot be considered as trustworthy, because it has been countered by the testimony of many people who were interrogated during the investigations supervised by Maj. Herer. That’s why the hypothesis that Anoda was beaten to death should be examined very carefully, even though in the 1990s Herer vehemently asserted that “no violence was ever used against Jan Rodowicz.”<sup>90</sup> It ought to be remembered that even Col. Mazurkiewicz, whose case was examined by the Investigations Department, was physically abused by its staff, so we cannot expect that his subalterns, however distinguished, received better treatment.<sup>91</sup>

One of the most convincing arguments supporting the hypothesis that Anoda was killed by violent security officers is Andrzej Biedrzycki’s account, which I discussed above, of the illicit autopsy on Jan Rodowicz’s body.

According to what Biedrzycki heard from the assistant or assistants of Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski and summarized in his letter to Piotr Lipiński of May 9, 1995, the findings were that

Lt. Rodowicz had sustained severe multiple fractures, in other words almost all his bones had been broken. Also, almost all the organs in the abdomen and chest were damaged and torn. Extensive, post-traumatic bruising was observed on the skin, in the body cavities and muscles, as well as in the vicinity of the bone and internal injuries, which showed that they were inflicted while he was still alive. ... The only possible way of inflicting such injuries was by crushing the body ... with the full weight of the perpetrators, who must have stamped on it with their heavy army boots. This is how the Professor viewed it. ... So Anoda was murdered and tortured to death. ... In over forty years of my career as a doctor, I have seen the corpses of many people who committed suicide by jumping from upper stories or rooftops of

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89 Agnieszka Pietrzak’s collections, [W. Herer], *Samobójstwo Jana Rodowicza* [Jan Rodowicz’s Suicide], no date, 5 (copy). Herer withheld the fact that the Battalion Zośka investigation also involved officers from a few other departments.

90 *Ibid.*

91 At his trial in November 1953, Radosław testified that “This investigation ... is best summed up by the fact that I went on hunger strike three times and that my teeth have been knocked out” (AIPN, 765/327, Protokół rozprawy głównej Jana Mazurkiewicza i innych z dn. 16 XI 1953 roku [Court records of the main hearing for Jan Mazurkiewicz et al. on November 16, 1953], November 16, 1953, 131).

high buildings or factory chimneys. Usually, they have broken pelvises, limbs, ribs, or the base of their skull, but their bones are never crushed.<sup>92</sup>

MBP men who caused such severe injuries to a suspect knew very well that he might die of them. Therefore, even if they had no previous experience of how to conduct an interrogation, their actions would have to be seen as willful and leading to the death of Anoda.

The data provided by Biedrzycki was corroborated by another source, namely a letter written by Halina Kaczorowska, daughter of Dr. Konrad Okolski,<sup>93</sup> head of the Infant Jesus Hospital in Warsaw. On July 25, 1959, she informed Anoda's mother that her father had always claimed, on the basis of what trustworthy people (that is Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski) said, that

Jan Rodowicz did not take his own life; he was deprived of it and that was an indisputable fact.

She went on to explain:

I think that as head of the hospital where your son's autopsy was conducted, he was in a position to learn the truth about the circumstances and causes of his death.<sup>94</sup>

Notably, as early as 1949, a few weeks after Anoda's second funeral, Dr. Okolski approached Zofia Rodowicz's husband during a social event, took him aside and told him in a private conversation that he intended to break the promise which he had given to Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski and tell Jan Rodowicz's parents that their son had been beaten to death, the proof of

92 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, List Andrzeja Biedrzyckiego do Piotra Lipińskiego [Letter from Andrzej Biedrzycki to Piotr Lipiński], May 9, 1995, 1–2 (copy). For some time, a hypothesis was put forward that Anoda's chest was crushed because he was held in a specially constructed closet in which a victim could be squeezed when the security men turned a knob on one of its sides. If Jan Rodowicz had been killed in this way, it would explain why there was a dent in his skull, as his relatives observed during the first exhumation. This hypothesis is no longer given much attention, but it has been mentioned in the publications (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 487).

93 Dr. Konrad Okolski's son Konrad Jr., was Anoda's friend, served in the same units and fought in practically the same battles as Anoda. During the 1944 Warsaw Uprising, Konrad Okolski Jr. was commander-in-chief of the Third Felek Platoon of the Second Rudy Company in Battalion Zośka. He was killed in action on August 11, 1944.

94 MPW Archive, MPW-A/185–MPW-A/1830, List Haliny Kaczorowskiej do Zofii Rodowicz [Letter from Halina Kaczorowska to Zofia Rodowicz], July 29, 1959, no pagination. Kaczorowska dictated the letter in hospital, just before her death. As she was too weak to sign it, it was initialed by her husband Bohdan Kaczorowski.

which was that his chest had been crushed.<sup>95</sup> At the same time, Dr. Okolski asked Anoda's parents to keep this fact secret and they gave him their word for it.

As I have said, Biedrzycki's account looks comprehensive and coherent, but was not confirmed by other sources, except for what Dr. Okolski (who died in 1952) told Anoda's parents, and his daughter's letter. Yet Anna Rodowicz did not notice any fractured bones, in the first place. Second, no fractures were observed during the examination of the few bones still surviving from Anoda's body in the 1990s. Third, in 1960 Jan Rodowicz's mother decided to contact Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski personally and asked him about the autopsy, but he gave her an evasive answer, saying he did not remember it.<sup>96</sup> Such a reply is extremely puzzling, because in 1960 Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski apparently confirmed the version that had been presented by his assistant to Biedrzycki earlier the same year. Why did Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski not want to discuss the topic with Jan Rodowicz's mother, although he had talked about the autopsy with his colleague? Biedrzycki's comment was brief: "We're doctors, and know each other inside out."<sup>97</sup> Presumably, it was harder for Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski to tell Anoda's mother about her son's death than to confide in a fellow physician.

In my view, Biedrzycki's version is based on hearsay and even though it may have been concocted in good faith, it holds little value.

It seems that Dr. Okolski's account has more import. Although it has not been preserved in writing, it is corroborated by Halina Kaczorowska's letter and was not undermined by the 1995 exhumation findings (due to the paucity of Jan Rodowicz's skeletal remains). It can be refuted on the grounds of two arguments which can hardly be brushed aside: Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski's silence on the subject, which is hard to explain, and the extant, though incomplete records, which say nothing about his autopsy of Anoda's body.

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95 Quoted after Lipiński, "Okno," 53.

96 *Ibid.*, 63.

97 Quoted after *ibid.* Piotr Lipiński interpreted the professor's behavior in the following way: "In Communist Poland, it was better to keep quiet. People knew that a carelessly uttered word sometimes could bring them harm. Or perhaps Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski really could not remember that autopsy?" (Ariadna Machowska, "Tajemnica śmierci 'Anody.' Rozmowa z Piotrem Lipińskim," *Gazeta Wyborcza, Duży Format*, May 9, 2015). We may assume that Grzywo-Dąbrowski's reticence was justifiable, since under Communism many people responded similarly to other mysterious deaths. Another explanation is that he simply wanted to forget the affair, which was made impossible by Andrzej Biedrzycki's story.

I am of the opinion that these dilemmas can be resolved in two ways which give the most plausible explanations. The first is that Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski did not conduct an autopsy on the night of January 7/8, but an autopsy was performed, as the official records say, on January 8 by Dr. Zygmunt Rusaczewski. The second is that Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski conducted his own examination after the official one and discovered traces of serious injuries to the internal organs, which may have been inflicted by beating (while it is to be noted that Anna Rodowicz did not examine Rodowicz's chest).

If my second guess is correct, then Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski's findings may have confirmed Dr. Okolski in his belief – a suspicion he may have had as soon as he heard of Jan Rodowicz's death – that he had been murdered. But realizing that for some reason Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski was not likely to disclose that fact, Dr. Okolski decided to leak it to Rodowicz's parents himself, yet made sure Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski would not learn of it. That would explain the behavior of Dr. Okolski's daughter: she became privy to his secret and knew her father was convinced that Rodowicz had been killed.

Still, some reservations have to be made. If it were possible to establish that someone performed an autopsy on Jan Rodowicz's body on January 7 or 8, it would mean that the information that Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski carried out his autopsy on January 7 was spurious, given the official documents, since Dr. Rusaczewski, who autopsied the body on January 8, would have discovered it had already been examined. Such willful conduct on Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski's part would have meant serious consequences for him, yet the source materials show no evidence of that (and it was mentioned only in the oral accounts). A rather unlikely alternative explanation would be that false information was deliberately entered in the records to hide the fact that the official autopsy took place on January 7 (or perhaps was never performed at all!), as Biedrzycki suggested. That would be unlikely because the security officers definitely did not envision that a few decades later historians in a democratic Poland no longer under Communist rule would scrutinize their records, and did not consider taking special steps to mislead them. It would be absurd now to pore over every document compiled by the MBP for signs of "Communist treachery" and query the value of all the data in MBP files.

What's more, regardless of whether the official autopsy was carried out on January 7 or 8, the security men had their report and were not obliged to obtain Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski's signature. If, for some reason, they had wanted to get it endorsed by him, they need not have presented the body to him, as that would have involved the risk of him discovering the true cause of death (if it was not suicide). It would be just as difficult to accept that no autopsy was performed (although a report was drafted and then

lost), because the extant documents, Jan Rodowicz's death certificate and the notification sent to Kazimierz Rodowicz of his son's death, corroborate that the body was autopsied. Also, non-performance of an autopsy would have been a breach of the MBP's in-house procedures applicable whenever a detainee died.

On July 26, 1946, Col. Róžański signed an instruction which specified how the security system had to operate in such a situation. The correct procedure was 1) the prosecutor had to be notified and he decided to have either an examination or an autopsy done, which was performed by a forensic physician, assisted, if possible, by the doctor who had last seen the deceased; 2) the body could not be buried before the prosecutor issued permission in writing; 3) the prosecutor should be notified of the death by the administrative unit of the MBP in which the detainee died (the investigating officer was to contact the prosecutor using his superiors as intermediaries); 4) except for a few special cases, the notification of the death of detainee was to be sent to the prosecutor of the District Military Court; 5) Department Two of the MBP had to be notified as well.<sup>98</sup>

On the basis of the preserved source materials, I came to the conclusion that following Jan Rodowicz's death Col. Róžański's instruction was put into force, which was not always the case, as Wojciech Frazik, for instance, who was an expert on the Communist security apparatus, claimed. However, the missing records make it impossible to determine whether Anoda's family was given the real findings of the autopsy (there is only a brief description of them in the notification sent to Kazimierz Rodowicz). The fact that Anoda's relatives were allowed to trace and exhume the body shows that the security officers must have thought that the condition of the corpse would not induce Anoda's family to challenge the official version of how he died.<sup>99</sup>

We should also bear in mind that Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski was not a stranger to the Rodowicz family: he was a friend of Anoda's maternal uncle.

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98 See Instrukcja kierownika Wydziału Śledczego MBP płk. Józefa Róžańskiego o postępowaniu organów Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego w wypadku śmierci osób zatrzymanych [Instruction issued by Col. Józef Róžański, Head of the Investigations Division of the Ministry of Public Security, re procedures applied by the public security services in the event of the death of an arrestee], July 26, 1946 [in] Frazik, "Dowód zbrodni..." 235.

99 We may ask whether the prompt and secret burial of Jan Rodowicz may be treated as proof that the security officers wanted to remove the evidence of their crime, especially as sometimes after other "suicidal" deaths of prisoners, the bodies were delivered to their families. In my opinion, in this particular case the security men chose to operate differently: they intended to keep Anoda's death secret because of the ongoing investigation against others from the same milieu.

The MBP men must have known about this bond of friendship and therefore we may wonder if they really would have entrusted Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski with Jan Rodowicz's dead body, even in a nailed up casket. Perhaps he was pressured just to sign the autopsy report presented to him but not allowed to examine the corpse. As he was an esteemed pathologist, his signature would have been invaluable from the point of view of the security services, because it would lend authority to the official version of the events. When Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski refused to sign the report, they obtained a signature from another physician, to make the records look right, and took the corpse away (if it was delivered to the Institute of Forensic Medicine at all, as the Institute has no record of it ever being there).

This hypothesis runs counter to what Biedrzycki and Dr. Okolski said, namely that Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski performed an autopsy; but it seems the most likely one to me, because it explains how the Professor became involved in the mystery surrounding Anoda's death. From the way the security officers behaved, Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski and Dr. Okolski could have concluded that they wanted to conceal the fact that Jan Rodowicz had been beaten to death.

We may also consider the following scenario: the MBP men asked Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski to carry out the autopsy in the hope that the injuries caused by the fall from the fifth story would be superimposed on and conceal the injuries caused by the violent interrogation, and his professional authority would confirm their version of the events. Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski might have discovered the real cause of death and refused to sign the autopsy report, which was ultimately signed by Dr. Rusaczewski, but then why should he not have passed his knowledge on to Zofia Rodowicz and persisted in saying he did not remember the case right up to his death in 1968, by which time the victims of the Stalinist reign of terror had long since been rehabilitated?

Perhaps Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski feared for his safety well into the 1960s. In contrast, as early as 1949 several people helped Anoda's relatives to find where he had been buried and arrange for an exhumation, undeterred by the risk of reprisals from the Communists.<sup>100</sup> So what harm could have come to Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski eleven years later if he had divulged the truth to Jan Rodowicz's mother, and then, if need be, denied it? The worst that

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100 Perhaps the MBP masterminded or at least tolerated the family locating Jan Rodowicz's grave and then obtaining an official permit to exhume his body. However, we cannot be completely certain that this was indeed the case, because the extant records do not give any evidence for it. Also, many people from Anoda's milieu, including Mariusz Olczak, author of his best biography, believe that the security forces were not behind the operation.

could have happened would have been the emergence of yet another rumor, generating as little publicity as Dr. Okolski's statement or his daughter's letter. What's more, Biedrzycki's account implies that by that time the story about the illicit autopsy had become an open secret among the employees of the Institute of Forensic Medicine, and even discussed with people who were not their colleagues at work. I believe too many persons had heard of it and therefore one cannot seriously consider the idea that Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski wanted to withhold the truth about the autopsy he (never) performed on Anoda's body. Such an attitude would have been at variance with his famous non-conformism, which he reportedly proved in January 1949, when the risk of reprisals from the Communists was definitely much higher.

Another problem which deserves serious reflection is that maybe the information passed onto Anoda's family was intended to comfort his heartbroken mother, who was not sure whether her son had or had not committed suicide. That is suggested by the opening words of Kaczorowska's letter: "I am aware that for many years now you have been troubled by the thought that your son Janek might have taken his own life due to the ordeals he suffered in prison."<sup>101</sup> Dr. Okolski clearly defined his motive for revealing Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski's secret: he wanted to "soothe the Catholic conscience" of Anoda's father.<sup>102</sup> These actions, although taken in good faith, did not have to be based on facts. That could account for the divergences between Biedrzycki's account, the 1949 exhumation findings, and the examination carried out in the 1990s as well as for Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski's reticence.

Some more aspects of this matter need to be taken into account, as they cast doubt on the hypothesis that Jan Rodowicz was tortured to death.

Henryk Kozłowski was arrested on January 3 and taken to Koszykowa. About 11 p.m. on the same day, he saw Anoda for a few seconds in the corridor of the building. Jan Rodowicz looked just as he usually did. Kozłowski recalled:

Janek was walking as he normally did, sliding along in long, slow steps. He smiled at me, raised his right hand, and smoothed his hair once or twice.<sup>103</sup>

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101 MPW Archive, MPW-A/185–MPW-A/1830, List Haliny Kaczorowskiej do Zofii Rodowicz [Letter from Halina Kaczorowska to Zofia Rodowicz], July 29, 1959, no pagination. Henryk Kozłowski was another person who observed the suffering of Zofia Rodowicz, who "grieved for her son, and was distressed because he had committed suicide," (Wachowicz, *Ułan Batalionu "Zośka". Gawęda o Janku Rodowiczu...*, 154).

102 Lipiński, "Okno," 53.

103 Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy przez wiele lat...*, 32. Henryk Kozłowski put more details of his meeting with Anoda in a private letter, "He was walking casually, in long, easy strides, with his back straight. Looking at his posture and movements,

On the basis of this account, we may assume that Anoda had not been treated too badly at least until January 3. If he was battered to death, it must have happened between January 4 and 7, with the climax of the violence perpetrated on January 6 or 7 (in accordance with Biedrzycki's story that Anoda's body was transferred to the Institute of Forensic Medicine almost immediately after his death).

One other Zośka veteran, Stanisław Sieradzki, who was held in the MBP jail and relied on the accounts of fellow prisoners, said that for most of the investigation, Jan Rodowicz had been fine, both physically and mentally (apparently joking and reminiscing about his wartime adventures).<sup>104</sup> This leads to the conclusion that Anoda's fatal injuries (if any) must have been sustained during one of the last interrogations.

We need to consider what could have made the interrogators resort to such extreme violence since earlier, without applying such measures, they had induced Jan Rodowicz to identify the whereabouts of the weapons and sign interrogation minutes implicating his comrades in arms.<sup>105</sup>

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I had no impression, not even for a while, that he had been physically abused; neither did I see any bruises on his face" (AAN, Anna Jakubowska's records, 1, List Henryka Kozłowskiego [Letter from Henryk Kozłowski], June 25, 1995, no pagination).

104 AAN, Anna Jakubowska's records, 1, Zeznania Henryka Kozłowskiego złożone w Ottawie [Henryk Kozłowski's statement made in Ottawa, no date, 5]. In 1953, Henryk Kozłowski received confirmation of this information from a fellow prisoner named Krzymowski, who apparently had been Jan Rodowicz's cellmate, but it was definitely not Bolesław Krzymowski, a former soldier of Battalion Miotła (Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy przez wiele lat.*, 256). However, such coincidences have to be viewed with the utmost caution as the security services planted informers in particular cells to gather information from cellmates. Such data was later used to make progress in the investigations or to persuade suspects that they should testify what the interrogators wanted to hear from them. Pseudo-cellmates even took part in more complex operations and the most trusted ones were given access to investigation records. Although no documents have been found to confirm that cell snitches were involved in Jan Rodowicz's case, we may presume that both he and other members of Battalion Zośka had such cellmates. The involvement of snitches could be useful in the course of an investigation; also, in its later phase, pseudo-cellmates could be instructed by the security officers to propagate a certain version of the events among the arrestees. Cell informers and their activities are described, for instance, by Jacek Wołoszyn ("‘Ostra broń’ – agentura celna. Tajni współpracownicy w więzieniach i aresztach śledczych w latach 1944– 1956," *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość*, no. 2 (16) 2010).

105 I give a detailed discussion of this issue was in the subchapter entitled "Self-defenestration caused by developments during the investigation."

On the other hand, we should bear in mind that Anoda did not say anything that could incriminate Col. Mazurkiewicz, although the interrogating officers kept asking him questions about Radosław. Precisely the fact that Rodowicz did not blame Mazurkiewicz could have prompted the MBP men to inflict violence on Anoda in the last days of his life. They did not want to kill suspects before they got the information they were after out of them. Anoda's interrogators could have worked along the same lines as the GZI officer who interrogated Gen. Józef Kuropieska in 1950 and wrote unashamedly in his official memo:

I think K.'s [poor] physical condition should be made even worse. ... K. must lose his will to live, but we won't let him die.<sup>106</sup>

The conjecture that Jan Rodowicz was intentionally killed by the security men may have struck the right note with many people in his milieu, but it is not based on solid evidence. It is true that the statements offered by former MBP staff that they never hit Anoda have to be assessed critically, because their stories are false and mutually exclusive on many different points. Yet they do not seem to have wanted to beat Jan Rodowicz to death in cold blood when he was still under investigation. Again, we need to consider the pros and cons of such an action, as I have already suggested in my examination of the claim that Anoda was shot.

Of course, we could suppose that the murder was committed by one or more officers who did not like the suspect's defiance and that later they wanted to cover up the incident, since it was a crime even in light of the Communist laws, and defenestrated the body. But they would have been aware that the in-house procedure applied when a suspect died would soon reveal what had really happened. It's hard to imagine that their supervisors would have let such license go unpunished, especially as Anoda was a key suspect. Maj. Herer and Julia Brystiger would not have benefited from the murder, because it would have made for difficulties in pursuing an investigation which was crucial from the point of view of the Communist authorities. Herer and Brystiger's subordinates would not have dared to be so brazen, as it would have brought serious consequences for them, and would have been put on record in their personal files.<sup>107</sup>

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106 Szerer, "Komisja do badania odpowiedzialności...", 89.

107 Wiktor Herer told Piotr Lipiński that "It was impossible for a security officer to decide on his own to kill a suspect. The system did not tolerate having diverse decision-makers. And it afforded enough opportunities for miscarriage of justice" (quoted after Lipiński, "Okno," 57). We cannot but agree with this argument presented by Herer, an ex-security officer.

In my opinion, the lack of material evidence and logical motives for the MBP battering Anoda to death while his case was still being investigated make for the rejection of this hypothesis.

### **Battery and inadvertent manslaughter**

Even if Jan Rodowicz was not murdered intentionally, he could have died due to violent interrogation methods used by the officers, who did not want to murder him but only to extort new information.

This hypothesis sounds reasonable on the basis of the fact that undoubtedly suspects were tortured under interrogation. Although on January 3, when Kozłowski met Rodowicz in the corridor, Rodowicz's appearance and movement was normal, as I have written above, yet when Kmita was released from prison in the 1950s, he was ready to agree that his fellow-inmate had been tortured to death by the interrogators.<sup>108</sup> Also, on January 4 and 7, 1949, Anoda had signed statements implicating his and some other combatants' involvement in the "terrorist attacks" planned in 1945. At first glance, this could be viewed as continuing to collaborate with the security services, but actually could have been otherwise motivated.

We need to figure out what could have made Jan Rodowicz sign these interrogation minutes, especially as the penalty would have been a death sentence or life imprisonment (or long-term imprisonment at best) — not only for himself, but also for his closest surviving friends and combatants who had stood by him during the War and in the postwar anti-Communist resistance movement. Since Anoda had lived a courageous life and the interrogation minutes in his file are relatively brief and quite laconic compared to those in the files of other Zośkaites<sup>109</sup> (this brevity could have come from the fact that he did not cooperate with the interrogators and confirmed only those facts which they already knew or extorted by torture), and since he

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108 AIPN, 2188/630, Protokół przesłuchania Zbigniewa Grabowskiego [Minutes of the interview of Zbigniew Grabowski], March 10, 1994, 62.

109 Jan Rodowicz was the first to be arrested and interrogated. The security officers had much more incriminating evidence at their disposal for those who were arrested later, which they had gathered during previous interrogations and therefore the interrogation minutes tended to be more extensive. Henryk Kończykowski, who had been hiding for a while and thus was not interrogated until the final phase of the investigation, told me that by that time the MBP men knew more about the activities of his fellow-combatants than he did. In such cases, the only thing a suspect could do was to confirm the facts the security services already knew.

died a suspicious death, it is to be presumed that he did not sign the documents of his own accord. Most probably he was forced to sign them.

If we assume that Anoda put up resistance and initially did not want to cooperate with the interrogators, as can be inferred, for instance, from the minutes of the first interrogation, the simplest thing to do was to torture him, which was a common practice.<sup>110</sup> Given that at this stage the security services did not want to lose an important suspect who could offer valid information or be forced to attest to false information (for instance about Col. Mazurkiewicz), the idea that Anoda was killed prematurely but unintentionally seems plausible. Jan Rodowicz's friend Anna Jakubowska gave serious consideration to such a scenario. Having scrutinized the prosecutor's records for the 1990s investigation, she made her own analysis, in which she showed discrepancies between the statements made by particular MBP men.<sup>111</sup> Tadeusz Sumiński, who was arrested by security men on January 13, 1949, thought that

Jan Rodowicz's death could have had the nature of a "suicide," because he was unable to stand the torment anymore or perhaps could not put up with more interrogations, and his body was defenestrated to vindicate the incompetence of his torturers.<sup>112</sup>

To my mind, the unintentional killing of Anoda caused by physical violence inflicted on him during the interrogation should be viewed as probable,<sup>113</sup> for then we could establish a series of causes and effects.

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110 In June 1990, Henryk Kozłowski presented a slightly different version of the events "[Jan Rodowicz] had a very strong team spirit and sense of honor, but he was somewhat naive. He thought that a man's word was his bond. Perhaps [the MBP men] gave him their word of honor! Or perhaps they blackmailed him with some lie or other" (quoted after Wachowicz, *Ułan Batalionu "Zośka." Gawęda o Janku Rodowiczu...*, 155). In my opinion, this hypothesis, based on the belief that Anoda was naive, should be rejected, because the Zośkaites considered him to be radically anti-Communist. So instead we should assume that Jan Rodowicz had no illusions about the nature of the Communist regime and its state security system.

111 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Uwagi Anny Jakubowskiej odnośnie do niejasności w zeznaniach funkcjonariuszy MBP przesłuchiwanym w sprawie śmierci Jana Rodowicza "Anody" [Anna Jakubowska's comments on the ambiguities contained in the security officers' statements on the death of Jan Rodowicz], January 28, 1995, 1 (copy).

112 AIPN, 2188/620, Protokół przesłuchania Tadeusza Sumińskiego [Minutes of the interview of Tadeusz Sumiński], March 5, 1993, 58.

113 As the text of the minutes breaks off in mid-sentence, we may speculate that Jan Rodowicz had been battered and died when the interrogation was nearly over, and Lt. Kleina had started writing up the minutes, but did not finish them because Rodowicz died.

First, the death of such a crucial suspect would have made the senior officers blame the interrogators. It would have shown them up as bunglers and hindered the subsequent course of an important investigation.<sup>114</sup> To cover up the fact that they had killed Jan Rodowicz, they could have defenestrated his body to make the incident look like a suicide.<sup>115</sup>

Second, this version of the events could account for the misrepresentations and ambiguities in the officers' statements, for instance, Lt. Kleina's claim that he did not look out of the window after Anoda's supposed jump<sup>116</sup>

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114 It is clear that Anoda played an important part in the investigation. We observe this in the interrogation of Tadeusz Sumiński. In 1993 he made the following statement: "On several occasions during the investigation, I was threatened with being confronted with Jan Rodowicz, who apparently had testified against me" (AIPN, 2188/620, Protokół przesłuchania Tadeusza Sumińskiego [Minutes of the interview of Tadeusz Sumiński], March 5, 1993, 58). The security officers engaged arrestees in their games, threatening them with a confrontation with Anoda even after January 7, 1949, when a confrontation was no longer possible. But they never showed suspects the minutes of the interrogations of Jan Rodowicz (Pietrzak, "Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy 'Zośki' i 'Parasola'...", 113). These remarks should be supplemented with the fact that the MBP recruited Stanisław Sieradzki thanks to Anoda's statements. Maj. Herer notified Julia Brystiger of this: "I am in possession of the following evidence incriminating Sieradzki: he did not hand in his weapons during the coming-out but gave his machine pistol to Jan Rodowicz, and he knew about the weapons stowed away by Zośka men" (AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 10, Pismo mjr. Wiktora Herera do dyrektora Departamentu V MBP z prośbą o wyrażenie zgody na werbunek Stanisława Sieradzkiego [Letter from Maj. Wiktor Herer to the head of Department Five of the Ministry of Public Security requesting permission to recruit Stanisław Sieradzki], January 7, 1949, 593). The task assigned to Sieradzki, who was detained on January 8, 1949, that is after he had been shortlisted as a potential informer, was to discover what Zośka veterans who had not been arrested were doing. Sieradzki agreed to collaborate with the MBP (in Herer's opinion, his only motive was fear) and was released, but just two days later he revealed his enlistment to his fiancée and therefore Maj. Herer decided that Sieradzki would no longer be able to work as an MBP informer. Sieradzki was arrested on January 13, 1949 with several other Zośkaites (AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 10, Notatka służbowa mjr. Wiktora Herera w sprawie Stanisława Sieradzkiego [Maj. Wiktor Herer's memo re. Stanisław Sieradzki], April 13, 1949, 600).

115 As I have said above, pursuant to the regulations in force, MBP interrogators were held responsible if a suspect who had been tortured died during an interrogation. However, in practice they could expect to be treated leniently. For instance, initially, very few GZI officers were punished for the death of arrestees who died following brutal interrogations ("Raport komisji Mazura," *Gazeta Wyborcza*, January 22, 1999).

116 In the circumstances, most people would have looked out of the window. Furthermore, Lt. Kleina should have done so if only to check whether the suspect

and that all the time Maj. Herer was close by or even at the scene, or Kleina's mentions of several anonymous people and his exaggerated response in October 1992, when he was being questioned by the prosecutor acting on behalf of the Regional Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation under the auspices of the Institute of National Remembrance. Kleina, now retired, said,

"I swear by all that is holy, by my children, that I had no part in the death of Jan Rodowicz"  
(Witness weeps).<sup>117</sup>

Third, from the point of view of the security forces, passing off Anoda's death as a suicide would have been an ideal solution, because it could have been used to discredit him and dampen the spirits of the Zośka veterans. Jan Rodowicz would have been made to look like a guilt-ridden informer who chose to take his own life, that is acted against the principles of his religion.

Fourth, Lt. Kleina's personal file contains a short note about a disciplinary measure (ten days of house arrest) taken against him for professional misconduct (he had left the window open), which let the suspect commit suicide.<sup>118</sup>

was still alive and continuing his escape, although of course that would have been virtually impossible.

- 117 AIPN, 2188/620, Protokół przesłuchania Bronisława Kleiny [Minutes of the interview of Bronisław Kleina], October 21, 1992, 23. Perhaps Kleina may have reacted in this way because Anoda had been battered by another officer. As corroborated in Wiktor Herer's statement, the common practice in the security services was that no minutes were taken for some interrogations. So we cannot know what happened during such interrogations and how many times Anoda was actually questioned after his arrest. Also, we should note what Kleina said when he was interviewed by Piotr Lipiński: "I had nothing to do with it [i.e. Jan Rodowicz's death]. He was in my office but left" (quoted after Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szaniecu...*, 217). These words could be taken as evidence that other people were involved in Anoda's death and that Kleina was trying to protect them.
- 118 AIPN, 0242/334, Przebieg służby Bronisława Kleiny [Service record of Bronisław Kleina], no pagination. It would be interesting to find answers to several questions. Was Kleina's punishment of ten days of house arrest adequate to the seriousness of his professional misconduct? Or was he such a good employee that a more serious penalty was waived? Was Kleina protected by Maj. Herer during the 1949 investigation conducted by the Office for Staff Affairs and in the inquiry after 1989 because he took all the responsibility for the death of Jan Rodowicz and admitted he had neglected his duties? Regrettably, I have not found answers to those questions. Kleina supervised the files of Polish students, which made him a valued officer and he would definitely not have been dismissed readily. Perhaps that's why Maj. Herer designated him as the "main culprit." People from Jan Rodowicz's milieu as well as his biographers have pointed out

The MBP saw no need to put false information into the personal files of its associates, because the Communists did not expect to fall from power, so those who were responsible for Anoda's case had to endorse this version of events, not only for the general public, but also for their own superiors.

The fifth argument is that on January 7, 1949, Warsaw was fogbound until the late afternoon.<sup>119</sup> The fog could have made it easier to camouflage manslaughter and make it look like suicide, because there would have been no witnesses who saw exactly what happened.<sup>120</sup>

The sixth point is that this version does not stand in contradiction either to Dr. Okolski's account, or to the assumption that the security officers turned to Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski, or to the reservation I made above, that he may or may not have performed an autopsy on Jan Rodowicz's body.

The seventh point is that the security men might have thought that the injuries due to defenestration would be sufficient to camouflage the real cause of Jan Rodowicz's death and therefore they let his family know the location of his grave.

Eight, I should quote an opinion voiced by Anoda's relative, another Jan Rodowicz, born in 1947. In a conversation with me, he said that since Anoda had been seriously wounded during the 1944 Warsaw Uprising, namely he had been shot in the lung, then even a moderate blow in that area could have caused life-threatening internal injuries, perhaps against the intentions of the interrogators. Obviously, this hypothesis can no longer be properly examined.

Nine, since the security officers persistently claim that Anoda committed suicide and since they are people whose words cannot be trusted, we should be looking for an alternative answer to the question of how Jan Rodowicz died and assume that they actively, though perhaps unintentionally, contributed to his death.<sup>121</sup>

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that this section of Lt. Kleina's character assessment, which was drafted by Maj. Herer, says that Kleina was able to keep professional secrets (AIPN, 0242/334, Charakterystyka por. Bolesława Kleiny [Character assessment for Lt. Bronisław Kleina], November 10, 1949, no pagination). This passage may have referred to the fact that Kleina gave a bogus account of the circumstances of Anoda's death. The same words were repeated verbatim in Kleina's character assessment of December 19, 1947, which does not necessarily corroborate the claim: they were just a standard set phrase used in the MBP to fill in this particular assessment form.

119 Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szańcu...*, 64.

120 Although Wiktor Herer said that the "suicide" had been witnessed by passers-by walking along Aleje Ujazdowskie, historians have not managed to identify any of those witnesses.

121 For many MBP officers the Second World War was a personal tragedy which relativized the value of human life, and so it is hard to expect they had any

Just like the interrogation minutes, the rest of the papers on the case in the MBP's records, also the in-house ones, should be analyzed on the basis of source criticism. Those which were to be read by several recipients hardly ever recorded instances of officers infringing the regulations in force; usually they provided just general information.<sup>122</sup> The records of the investigation into Jan Rodowicz's death, which was carried out by the Central Military Prosecutor's Office, have gone missing, so I could not consult them. Information about Anoda's suicidal jump was in the death certificate, the notice sent to his father, the last interrogation minutes, and Lt. Kleina's and Leonarda Rodowicz's personal files, as well as in the investigation records for veterans of the Radosław Group. These records were not intended to be seen by a large group of readers, which, theoretically, supports their reliability. In my view, although they underlined the arguments of those who thought Jan Rodowicz had not been killed but committed suicide, they did not mean the outright rejection of alternative versions of the events.

Given this context, we ought to weigh up more factors: by claiming that Anoda had committed suicide, the security officers might have wanted to achieve two aims, namely to avoid responsibility for manslaughter and their incompetence, and at the same time to aggravate the ordeal of Rodowicz's family. If they had really wanted to prevent their superiors from learning that they had battered Rodowicz to death and instead claimed that he had jumped out of a fifth-story window, then we can hardly deny they would have likely defenestrated the body, realizing what the in-house procedures in store for them were. They did not have enough medical knowledge to understand that defenestration would certainly not fool a pathologist, nor even the family if it discovered the whereabouts of Anoda's burial. So they

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inhibitions about the use of violence against the "enemies of the new reality." For instance, Maj. Wiktor Herer's closest family were all murdered by the Germans. Lt. Bolesław Cykała was arrested by the Gestapo on October 1, 1941, severely battered in Pawiak jail, and deported to Auschwitz on February 3, 1942. Later he was transferred to Buchenwald, where he was held until January 3, 1945 (AUdsKiOR, K 442375, Zaświadczenie wystawione dla Bolesława Cykały przez Państwowe Muzeum w Oświęcimiu [Certificate issued for Bolesław Cykała by the Auschwitz State Museum], January 30, 1969, 1; *ibid.*, Pismo Międzynarodowego Komitetu Czerwonego Krzyża do więźnia obozów koncentracyjnych w Oświęcimiu i Buchenwaldzie Bolesława Cykały w sprawie udzielenia mu informacji zawartych w archiwach organizacji [Letter from the International Committee of the Red Cross to Bolesław Cykała, survivor of Auschwitz and Buchenwald concentration camps, re his request to provide him with information from the International Red Cross archives], May 17, 1976, 11–12).

122 Brzechczyn, "Problem wiarygodności teczek...", 56–57.

might have tried to validate the report for their superiors by defenestrating the body.<sup>123</sup>

Wiktor Herer firmly denied that his subordinates had defenestrated Jan Rodowicz dead or alive:

The incident happened in broad daylight, on a weekday [a Friday], before the eyes of various security staff, interested parties from outside, and passers-by on Aleje Ujazdowskie. ... I cannot imagine any member of the staff of our building on Koszykowa getting the idea to defenestrate someone from a Ministry window into the yard clearly visible from all the windows as well as from the street.<sup>124</sup>

Herer, the retired head of Subdepartment Four, said that it would have been difficult to keep such an action secret. Moreover, the suffering of Anoda's family could have been aggravated just by spreading rumors of his suicide and preventing his parents from finding the grave. There was no need to defenestrate the body.<sup>125</sup>

If Jan Rodowicz had died during an interrogation, even Wiktor Herer's connections could have proved insufficient to hush up the matter. Surprised by the unexpected turn of events, the security officers could have concluded that the best solution would be to drop the body from the window in order to conceal the real cause of death. Perhaps the attempt to pressure Prof. Grzywo-Dąbrowski into signing a fabricated autopsy report served the same purpose, but since he refused, another doctor was found to endorse a trumped up document.

I think that caught off guard by Jan Rodowicz's death and pressed for time, they could have acted on an impulse, which prevented them from fabricating a consistent version of the events which could still be considered

123 This would explain why Anoda's limbs were not broken, as Anna Rodowicz said she observed during the first exhumation.

124 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, [W. Herer], *Samobójstwo Jana Rodowicza*, no date, 4 and 5 (copy).

125 Pursuing this line of thought, we could assume that the body was never defenestrated at all, but that is hardly plausible, especially in the context of all the facts presented above, such as the fact that the place where Anoda's body hit the ground could be easily seen by people working in the Ministry and that the body was definitely autopsied. We should not attribute too much importance to the argument that the foggy weather on that day helped to fake a self-defenestration since the noise of the body hitting the concrete surface of the yard was bound to be heard in the rooms nearby. Even though it is true that in March 1949 Anoda's body did not show any facial injuries, as pointed out by Agnieszka Pietrzak (Pietrzak, *Żołnierze Batalionu Armii Krajowej 'Zośka'...*, 74), yet Dr. Andrzej Ossowski, an esteemed member of the staff of the Forensic Medicine Institute of Szczecin Medical University, has told me that some fatal falls from a height leave the deceased's face largely intact.

fully trustworthy even now. Bronisław Kleina made his statement on the last moments of Anoda's life to the Office for Staff Affairs already on January 7, 1949, but since they were not as inquisitive as the historians who have been sleuthing the matter in recent years, they took his questionable story at face value.

As Kleina's statement was put on record in his personal files and in the 1990s neither Kleina nor Herer could be sure that the investigators would never find the prosecutor's files, which were likely to hold the same version of Jan Rodowicz's death as Kleina's personal files, they had to be consistent and keep to the same story they had on January 7, 1949.

This version of the events has several weak points.

First, Jan Rodowicz signed some of the statements incriminating both himself and other combatants already on December 29 (or perhaps on the 27<sup>th</sup>), so in light of Henryk Kozłowski's account before he received any serious injuries. This argument has often been undermined by a claim that until January 7, Anoda's statements only revealed Zośkaite activities conducted in the period covered by the amnesty and therefore no combatant could be prosecuted for them. That is not quite true, as his statement dated December 29 says that a "unit" was to be formed following the outbreak of a third world war and that this plan had been conceived just two months earlier.<sup>126</sup>

Second, the records show that on January 4, 1949, Anoda signed the minutes for the unearthing of a cache of weapons by the security forces, so he must have been fit enough to participate in the event. Any torture leading to his death must have been inflicted between January 5 and January 7. However, if we assume that on December 29 Jan Rodowicz disclosed information which the MBP was after and what made him do so was not just to avoid violence — which is what Henryk Kozłowski's account seems to imply — then the same motive could have still been valid on the subsequent days of the investigation.

Third, although the 1995 autopsy and the examination of the body before the second burial did not render enough evidence to reach a satisfactory conclusion, they showed that Anoda's injuries had not been as serious as Andrzej Biedrzycki suggested. Rodowicz's relatives said that his skull was relatively unharmed, except for a dent on the left side, which could have resulted from being squeezed into too small a casket.

Fourth, if this premise was true, then Dr. Rusaczewski's autopsy report must have been fabricated.

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126 AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 21, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Rodowicza [Minutes of the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz], December 29, 1948, 47.

Fifth, even though the inquiry carried out in the 1990s has received considerable criticism, it shows that the statements made by the ex-MBP men were not significantly different from each other. None of them tried to pin the blame on a colleague.<sup>127</sup> Of course, that does not mean they were all telling the truth, but following the 1989 transformation of Poland's political system, they could be prosecuted and might have been suspected of wanting to save their own skin by making former colleagues culpable. However, this would be a weak argument because it does not consider group solidarity or a conspiracy of silence.<sup>128</sup>

Sixth, the MBP took care not to lose key suspects by letting them die during an investigation. In one of the reports for the interrogation of Col. Mazurkiewicz, the security officer wrote,

I hereby report that the suspect ... has complained of swollen arms and legs, which is due to his heart condition. When I was interrogating him about this particular matter ... , I noticed he was highly upset and could not control himself; he often goes pale. ... Such incidents have occurred several times, so I was obliged to question him on less difficult matters, so as not to bring about any unforeseen health complications.<sup>129</sup>

At this point, I should add that if we accepted that Jan Rodowicz was battered to death by the MBP men, it would be the only such instance in the whole of the Zośka case.

The version with the untimely manslaughter of Anoda while his case was still being investigated seems to me far more probable than the previous

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127 Henryk Kozłowski counted on such a development, because in his letter to the Chancellery of the Sejm he wrote, "Although the associates of the former Ministry of Public Security all too often tend to suffer from severe amnesia, I still hope that after so many years since those tragic events occurred, some of them may suddenly understand the need to testify to the truth" (AAN, Anna Jakubowska's records, 1, Pismo Henryka Kozłowskiego do Kancelarii Sejmu [Letter from Henryk Kozłowski to the Chancellery of the Sejm], August 24, 1991, no pagination).

128 Maj. Wiktor Herer, who happened to have a very intense spell of activity in the Solidarity trade union in the 1980s (which I will present in the next chapter), wanted to prove his objectivity in a rather perverse manner by declaring that his "political views radically evolved over forty years. ... Following the period of martial law, I was no longer a PZPR member [actually Herer was removed from the Communist Party for his critical attitude to Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski's policies]. If Jan Rodowicz had really been killed, I would have striven to help find the perpetrators" (AIPN, 2188/620, Protokół przesłuchania Wiktora Herera [Minutes of the interview of Wiktor Herer], October 15, 1992, 19).

129 AIPN, 765/328, Raport por. Leona Midry do ppłk. Wiktora Leszkowicza [Lt. Leon Midra's report for Lt.-Col. Wiktor Leszkowicz], April 15, 1951, 180.

hypotheses. It raises doubts, too, but has proved convincing enough not to be rejected out of hand. It must be regarded as one of the two most likely versions of the events.<sup>130</sup>

The dilemmas described in this chapter could be resolved if we were knew exactly where the body hit the ground (the fall of a live person is different from that of a corpse). Regrettably, the available records and statements do not pinpoint the exact spot. On the other hand, if we believe Anna Rodowicz's report of her examination of Anoda's body – and she did not observe any fractured bones – we may conclude that what was defenestrated was already a corpse.

### Assault with fatal injury following a failed escape attempt

Jan Rodowicz's family did not accept the hypothesis that he had committed suicide; they thought Anoda had been murdered by the security officers or killed during an escape attempt, as ever since he was arrested he had been planning to flee. Their suspicions were raised by an alleged anonymous witness who contacted Dariusz Baliszewski, maker of the TV program *Rewizja Nadzwyczajna*, after the installment broadcast on February 28, 1996, in which the mysterious circumstances of Anoda's death were discussed.

The self-declared witness said that on January 7, 1949, he was in the Ministry of Public Security, because he was an errand boy delivering mail and documents. Apparently, when he was downstairs, he saw Jan Rodowicz taking a leap from a fifth-story window for the roof of a garage building situated on the right hand side of the Ministry on Koszykowa. However, Anoda slid off the garage roof back into the Ministry grounds. The witness claimed to have seen what happened next, with the officers grabbing Rodowicz's arms and escorting him back into the Ministry. According to the "errand boy," only Anoda's left arm was injured.<sup>131</sup>

Jan Rodowicz's family had a different idea of what happened:

Janek availed himself of an opportunity, pushed Kleina aside, leaped up on the window sill, and was gone. He either jumped out or slid down the drainpipe onto

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130 According to Tomasz Łabuszewski, Jan Rodowicz "was most probably battered to death under interrogation and subsequently defenestrated to cover up the crime and the identity of its perpetrators" (Łabuszewski, "Sprawa 'Radosława'...", 89).

131 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza "Anody" [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 18 (copy).

the felted roof of a shed next to the fence neighboring on the British Embassy. The roof sloped down to the yard of the MBP. Anoda was just a few inches away from the edge of the roof and the premises of the Embassy, that is freedom. ... But as he was landing, he sprained his wrist and was unable to pull himself up to the top of the roof which abutted on the premises of the British Embassy.<sup>132</sup>

Next, Anoda was beaten up by the infuriated officers, who, to quote Mariusz Olczak's vivid description, "beat him to death, breaking his ribs and ripping up his internal organs."<sup>133</sup>

However, the hypothesis that Jan Rodowicz attempted to escape is implausible for several reasons.

First of all, the reliability of this anonymous witness is doubtful.<sup>134</sup>

Second, the grounds of the British Embassy did not adjoin the Ministry of Public Security. In 1945–2008 the Embassy was situated further off, in the Eliza Wielopolska Mansion at Aleja Róż 1 (just off the crossroads of Aleja Róż and Aleje Ujazdowskie). There is another property (with the Sobański Mansion on it) between the Wielopolska Mansion and the Ministry. True, we may assume that if by a miracle Anoda succeeded in making a precipitous jump from the fifth floor and reaching the vicinity of the Sobański Mansion, continuing his escape and scaling the fence, he would have gotten to the premises of the British Embassy. Yet it has to be remembered that the Embassy building was guarded against trespassers; Prof. Jacek Tebinka, with whom I corresponded to discuss the matter, has never come across a British document describing such an incident.

Third, when Kleina visited the scene in 1995, he pointed to

the row of three windows on the fifth floor of the front elevation, left of the right-hand-side stairwell (if you look from Aleje Ujazdowskie). The first window left of the stairwell was on the room shared by Masny and Cykała and that was the

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132 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, W. Rodowicz, *Historia śmierci Jana Rodowicza (w opinii rodziny)* [The death of Jan Rodowicz according to his family], January 19, 2001, [1].

133 Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 476.

134 Anna Jakubowska told me that Henryk Kozłowski did not manage to verify the witness's information about those biographical facts (such as studying abroad in the United States). See also Patryk Pleskot, "Samobójstwo, wypadek, a może morderstwo? Wokół śmierci Jerzego Zawieyskiego (1969 rok)," *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* no. 2 (24), 2014: 135–147. After another program by Dariusz Baliszewski, this time about the mysterious death of Jerzy Zawieyski, a writer and a member of the Sejm representing the Catholic association Znak, Baliszewski was contacted by a person who claimed to have some knowledge about the death of Zawieyski, who was apparently defenestrated by security officers. Patryk Pleskot concluded that this was rather unlikely and was inclined to say that Zawieyski committed suicide or had been the victim of a fatal accident.

window from which J[an] R[odowicz] jumped. It's a narrow window and at the time it was open. The next window is large and arched, and was on the office. The third window, also large and arched, and left open at the time, was on the room of W[iktor] Herer, head of the subdepartment.<sup>135</sup>

So it seems that Jan Rodowicz jumped from a window that looked out on aleje Ujazdowskie and fell down into the Ministry's yard between the building and the fence, and would have been unable to continue his escape.

Fourth, the old plans of the premises, the aerial photographs as well as the information which I gathered by talking to the staff employed in the building (now the Ministry of Justice) in the summer of 2014, clearly demonstrate that the distance between the window from which Anoda supposedly took his jump and the garages which, significantly, appear to have been demolished prior to 1949, was too large for anyone to cover safely. On the side facing the Sobański Mansion, there are windows only on the central recessed section, so it would have been impossible for a fugitive to jump from any of them onto the garages and reach the neighboring property. Also, this part of the building held a row of toilets, not regular rooms. Though some other office rooms were nearby, yet those which were used by Maj. Herer and his staff were located in another part of the building.

Fifth, it is quite doubtful that Jan Rodowicz might have been planning an escape from the Ministry of Public Security since he could not expect any help from outside. When he saw Henryk Kozłowski in the corridor on January 3, he knew that his closest friends from Battalion Zośka had been arrested too. Therefore an escape had no chance of success. Even if he had been admitted to hospital with serious injuries, who would have tried to move him from there to a safer place?

In my opinion, the hypothesis that Anoda attempted to escape has to be rejected for lack of reliable evidence. Neither is it likely that the security officers beat him to death after catching him following the attempt. The topography of the building and its immediate surroundings mean that if Anoda jumped from the fifth floor, it could only have been a suicide bid.<sup>136</sup>

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135 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Uwagi Anny Jakubowskiej odnośnie do niejasności w zeznaniach funkcjonariuszy MBP przesłuchiwanym w sprawie śmierci Jana Rodowicza „Anody” [Anna Jakubowska's comments on the ambiguities in the security officers' statements on the death of Jan Rodowicz], January 28, 1995, 1–2 (copy).

136 Danuta Winiarska's conclusions were similar: “I don't think that he [Jan Rodowicz] wanted to commit suicide. Perhaps he considered it possible to jump down and survive. But no, Janek was a reasonable person and knew that if he jumped from such a height, he wouldn't survive” (MPW Collections, AHM, Wywiad z Danutą Winiarską [Interview with Danuta Winiarska], November 15, 2007).

## Self-defenestration caused by developments during the investigation

The last version of events I shall discuss here is that Jan Rodowicz took a suicidal jump out of the window on the fifth floor of the Ministry of Public Security on Koszykowa, on the side facing Aleje Ujazdowskie. This version does not involve the security officers directly. I shall try to reconstruct the aspects of the investigation which could have induced Anoda to end his life by self-defenestrating from a considerable height.

As I have said, Jan Rodowicz signed the first interrogation minutes implicating himself and his closest fellow combatants from Battalion Zośka on December 29 (perhaps even on the 27<sup>th</sup>), 1948, which was, as we may gather on the basis of Henryk Kozłowski's account, at least a few days before the interrogators might have beaten him up. Therefore we may presume that he was prompted by similar motives to sign subsequent minutes, dated January 4 and 7, 1949, on matters which took place before the Home Army soldiers came out into the open. If we disregard the cruelest torture or a completely voluntary confession, we may consider other impulses which could have persuaded Anoda to offer information to the security services. In the mid-1990s, Anna Jakubowska presented her interesting ideas on the matter:

In what circumstances could J[an] R[odowicz] have implicated his colleagues? He must either have been confronted with the statement of someone who had already made such a confession (but no other Zośka associate was arrested before the night of January 3/4, 1949), so we would have to assume there was a snitch who knew all those facts, which was well-nigh impossible [*sic!*], or else that he had been tortured so badly that he broke down.<sup>137</sup>

Based on the extant records, I have come to the conclusion that the version with the “snitch” (or several snitches) was more likely.

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137 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Relacja Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska's statement], May 7, 1990, 4 (copy). Many people have admitted that the torture made them sign the minutes of the interrogations given them by the MBP (Śmietanka-Kruszelnicki, *Protokół przesłuchania...*, 364–365). At this point, a reference may be made to the experience of Col. Jan Mazurkiewicz: “I can't remember if I said that. I signed it because I had been beaten and tortured. ... Also, the interrogator read out the minutes of the interrogations of [Henryk] Kozłowski and put some sentences into my minutes. ... To make the interrogating officer go, I told him some made up stuff about sabotage, because I wanted to have a few teeth left for my old age” (AIPN, 765/327, Protokół rozprawy głównej Jana Mazurkiewicza i innych z dn. 16 XI 1953 r. [Minutes of the main hearing for Jan Mazurkiewicz et al. on November 16, 1953], November 16, 1953, 150–151).

First, Juliusz Kubera, a sometime associate of Subdepartment Four, said that Anoda was arrested on the grounds of information passed on by a student recruited by Lt. Cykała. The student purportedly told him that Jan Rodowicz was storing weapons and forming an “illegal youth group” consisting of Zośka ex-combatants.<sup>138</sup> However, Kubera could not remember the name of that student and claimed he had never seen his records, which made it hard to believe his account.

Second, the order to apprehend Anoda, signed by Maj. Herer and dated December 24, 1948, gave the following grounds for arrest: Rodowicz was suspected of activities against the Polish state, which shows that by that day the security forces had collected incriminating evidence against him thanks to their informers.<sup>139</sup>

Third, the fact that Anoda’s moves had been watched by informers was confirmed by Anna Jakubowska in her account of May 7, 1990:

When my case was closed and I had to see a senior officer, in whose presence I signed the indictment, he looked at me carefully and said something like this: “So you went underground, thinking you were so smart and clever, because you had managed to outwit the Germans, but we’re smarter than they were. We knew everything about you, and your brilliant, naive Janek had his overseers who kept an eye on him and monitored all that he did.”<sup>140</sup>

Fourth, the files of other cases carry the reports of student informers like Adam Abramowicz and Donat Czerewacz, who gave the MBP detailed information about their friends and their friends’ acquaintances.

Kubera’s statement did not allow for the identification of the person who contributed the most to Jan Rodowicz’s arrest. If we take him at his word, it turns out that there was at least one more informer planted among the Zośkaites, since as I have said, Abramowicz was recruited by Lt. Matejewski and Donat Czerewacz by Wiktor Herer (and Piotr Waroczewski by Lt. Roman Masny, but not until April 1949). Yet it has to be noted that under the regulations in force, particular members of the MBP staff were not to tell each other about their respective networks of informers, which would have increased the risk of disclosure. So if Kubera learned anything about the work of somebody else’s informer in the Zośka milieu, he must have used

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138 Agnieszka Pietrzak’s collections, Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza “Anody” [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor’s Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 2 (copy).

139 *Ibid.*, 3 (copy).

140 Agnieszka Pietrzak’s collections, Relacja Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska’s statement], May 7, 1990, 5 (copy).

his unofficial channels and therefore it is hard to assess if this information is valid. We must also remember that Kubera's statement might have been designed to safeguard his sometime informer by misleading the lustration court reviewing the activities of former Communist informers who tried to apply for a public appointment in the 1990s. Such tendencies were observed among former MBP staff when applicants charged with submitting perjured lustration declarations (i.e. concealing their Communist past) were prosecuted. Unfortunately, as the records are incomplete, I did not manage to resolve this problem.<sup>141</sup> However, Górnik's personal file contains data which suggests that he could have spied on Anoda in the late 1940s.<sup>142</sup>

On the basis of Anna Jakubowska's suggestions and Henryk Kozłowski's recollections, I am ready to assume that in the first stage of the investigation Jan Rodowicz may have been confronted with data collected by one or several informers (I consider his face-to-face confrontation with an informer unlikely). The data may have entailed evidence that was so hard and fast that Anoda had no choice but to make a confession.<sup>143</sup> A salient point in this context is the encounter between Anoda and Henryk Kozłowski in the corridor on January 3. Even though Kmita claimed it was fortuitous, it may actually have been deliberately arranged to show Anoda that the security services knew practically everything about his organization.<sup>144</sup> That encounter could have let them put pressure on Anoda by telling him that Kozłowski had already confirmed the facts discovered by informers or even that he had incriminated Anoda.<sup>145</sup> In addition, the security officers must certainly have

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141 For instance, the records of the work of Adam Abramowicz in 1947–1949 were destroyed in 1965 (AIPN, 001519/12, *Dziennik archiwalny teczek personalnych i pracy agencji wyeliminowanej* [Archive register of canceled personal files and agents' records], no date, 59).

142 AIPN, 00168/216, *Pogłębienie materiałów dotyczących informatora „Górnik”* [More particulars concerning Informer Górnik], 1953, 14. The MBP asked Adam Abramowicz to disclose the information he had on 68 people, including Jan Rodowicz.

143 Cf. Pietrzak, *Żołnierze batalionu Armii Krajowej ‘Zośka’...*, 72. Pietrzak wondered whether the MBP may have arranged a confrontation not only between Jan Rodowicz and the informer, but also with the janitor who was supposed to guard the hidden cache of weapons.

144 The extant documents do not hold the minutes of an interrogation of Jan Rodowicz conducted on January 3, 1949. We may assume that Anoda was being escorted back to his cell after an interrogation conducted by Maj. Herer for which no minutes were recorded, or that he had been brought to the fifth floor only for the confrontation with Henryk Kozłowski to take place.

145 Bogdan Celiński gives an example of the MBP's games: “The interrogations started with having to write your CV, over and over again. Then [there was a question] about weapons. I said I don't know, I never took part in hiding any

used some of the Battalion Zośka records as well as other documents found in Jan Rodowicz's room when he was being arrested. So, for instance, if the MBP men had photographs showing Anoda in the company of Radosław veterans on their outings or winter excursions, he could no longer deny knowing them or say he had never been in contact with them.

Lt. Col. Józef Światło drew up a schedule for the first stage of an investigation:

The usual procedure was that during the first stage of an investigation the suspect had to write a résumé of his or her life. Initially, the interrogator's only aim was to obtain as much information as possible, so the suspect was treated quite leniently. ... But you can't write a résumé or CV without referring to other people. ... And finally the moment comes when the interrogator reads out excerpts from the statements of the suspect's former buddies. Since they are incriminating him, why should he be the only one to protect them and keep silent? The interrogator lets the suspect know that if he spills the beans about the others, perhaps there will be no inquiry into things which he would prefer not to disclose. And who doesn't have things that are best left untold? On the other hand, the interrogator tempts the suspect ... in yet another way. He reads out self-incriminating excerpts from the statements made by the others. He's eloquent and persuasive, and sounds reasonable. Why should the suspect withhold those details concerning them which they have already admitted to? The interrogator is not insistent, but highlights the fact that the detainee can provide proof of his own truthfulness and honest cooperation under investigation. And when the suspect yields to the temptation of talking about the other people involved in the case, half the battle is won for the interrogator. However, if the suspect resists, the interrogator resorts to other methods of persuasion.<sup>146</sup>

Without doubt, the security officers wanted Anoda to feel guilty, because they hinted that Kmita had been arrested on the grounds of his statements. As Rodowicz was generally known as a kind-hearted and sincere person, he could have experienced a temporary breakdown caused by the sense of having been betrayed by some of his closest comrades in arms.<sup>147</sup> That feeling

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weapons. They didn't seem to believe me. Finally they showed me a note written by Henryk Kozłowski (I could recognize his handwriting) which said that the weapons were stowed away in Jeziorna near Warsaw, where his wife had a property; that's where the arms were hidden and Bogdan Celiński helped him. I demanded a confrontation with Henryk [to confirm that] I didn't know of any weapons. I said, 'I don't know, Henryk's mistaken.' And they believed me, because actually I didn't take any part in hiding the arms in Jeziorna" (MPW Collections, AHM, Wywiad z Bogdanem Celińskim [Interview with Bogdan Celiński], January 19, 2009).

146 Quoted after Błażyński, *Mówi Józef Światło...*, 213–214.

147 Henryk Kończykowski told me that Jan Rodowicz had not assumed the MBP would be able to plant informers among the Zośkaites. So when he had to face up to that under interrogation, that is in extremely unpropitious circumstances, he could have gone through at least a temporary breakdown.

could have been reinforced by the MBP men explaining he had been used by Radosław and that he was to be blamed for the arrest of other Zośkaites, however specious this may sound.<sup>148</sup> Also, they wanted to convince Anoda that anyhow, the security service knew about everything.

Jan Rodowicz had never been held in custody or interrogated by the MBP before, so it is hard to say how well he coped in this new situation. More recently, Wiktor Herer insinuated that he had managed to break Anoda. Although he is not to be believed, since none of Jan Rodowicz's statements implicated Radosław, yet surely the investigation must have been the hardest time in Anoda's life.

Regardless of how the value of such interrogation minutes is assessed by modern historical research, as I have said already, we must admit that the security officers induced Jan Rodowicz to reveal the whereabouts of the cache of weapons, which they did not know before. Perhaps Anoda came to the conclusion that unearthing weapons which had not been used since the end of the War would not have much of an impact on his case. Yet, on the contrary, the weapons became the most important material evidence against the Zośkaites, who were charged with conspiracy to commit subversion. However, Rodowicz deftly avoided implicating Radosław, which was the main objective of his interrogators. Anoda's refusal to incriminate Radosław could have made them turn to more drastic interrogation methods in the last days of Anoda's life.

Although the 1995 autopsy did not corroborate Andrzej Biedrzycki's account, we cannot exclude the possibility that physical violence was used against Jan Rodowicz.

In the first place, by the 1990s Anoda's skeletal remains had become incomplete and therefore it was not feasible to check whether any of his bones had been fractured.

Second, the security officers were well-versed in methods of inflicting severe physical pain without causing serious injury to the bones (e.g. they hit their victims on the lower back in the kidney area). Here I shall quote Stanisław Krupa:

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148 In his interview with Piotr Lipiński, Wiktor Herer recalled his talks with Jan Rodowicz: "He behaved in a dignified manner. That was very important. He didn't wheedle. He was very intent. He looked like a man devastated for political, not personal reasons: first the uprising and now he was inside for those weapons. He had grudges against his leaders. Against the commanders" (quoted after Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szańcu...*, 254). These words of Herer's should not be taken at face value, nonetheless the difficult situation in which Rodowicz had found himself was bound to gradually undermine his morale.

Personally, I wasn't held in a solitary cell or suspended from a hook. A more sophisticated yet no less painful method was used. My quizzer [interrogator] used a ruler to hit me on the neck, collar-bone or arm, or a pencil a bit thicker than normal to tap me on the head. He kept doing it for hours, with short breaks to ask me questions. At first, it didn't hurt much. I smiled inwardly. But after a few days, the flesh on my neck and arm turned livid, then green. Every tap with the ruler was extremely painful. It was even worse when he struck me on the head. It felt I was being jabbed with needles and my whole body was throbbing with a bizarre pain.<sup>149</sup>

The available records do not show that Jan Rodowicz was tortured under investigation, but so little is known about his final days that such a possibility should not be ruled out. And physical violence, administered in doses, could have complemented other, far more subtle methods of questioning.

On the basis of the typical course of similar investigations in that period, we may assume that the MBP men interrogating Anoda resorted to psychological manipulation. Presumably, he was threatened that an attitude of non-cooperation could bring about reprisals against his closest relatives.

The statements Zośkaites made years later which Agnieszka Pietrzak has analyzed conjure up a sinister picture of how the security officers abused their victims mentally:

Anna Jakubowska said that for her, the worst thing was not the physical suffering, but the psychological torment. Officer Tomporski threatened that her mother would be arrested and her son, who was under two, would be sent to a children's home under a different name so that Jakubowska would never get him back or even recognize him. A similar attempt was made to disconcert Włodzimierz Steyer, son of Rear Admiral Włodzimierz Steyer, commander-in-chief of the Polish Navy: he was told he would not see his little daughter again. Andrzej Wolski was told that the woman screaming in the next room was his wife Maria. A similar deceit was used against Stanisław Sieradzki and Halina Dunin-Karwicka:<sup>150</sup> both were told that it was their mother screaming.<sup>151</sup>

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149 Krupa, *X Pawilon...*, 60.

150 Halina Dunin-Karwicka nom-de-guerre Janina (1917–1999), liaison girl for the Third Company of Battalion Parasol and wife of the company's commander. After her husband was killed in the Warsaw Uprising, she married Ludwik Rakoczy.

151 Pietrzak, "Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy 'Zośki' i 'Parasola'...", 114–115. I think that the following excerpt from Anna Jakubowska's account is an apt description of the plight of arrestees: "I must say that the first days following my arrest were the worst, mainly due to the awareness of being locked up, and in a single cell with eight of us in it. It was a horror. ... My interrogations were not as bad as what other people had. Of course I was hit and poked at sometimes, but that was not the worst thing for me. Personally, for me, the worst thing was the method my interrogator used. Namely, he threatened that I would never see my child again. When he said it for the first time, I must have reacted in such a

Yet the strategy of reminding victims about their families could also have other effects. Henryk Kozłowski described them in the following way:

Your family, your nearest and dearest: that's your most sensitive spot. ... Physical violence is not as destructive. But you are shattered by memories of the free world, of life, and the normal family life you visualize ... all of that leaves you a wreck. Yet this vision of your own family, your children, and your parents may become your strongest point. ... Will you be able to look them in the eye unflinchingly and openly, or will you be ashamed of this period in your life? ... If you turn out to be a scoundrel who defended himself at any cost by giving false evidence, you're bound to lose them. They will reject you in contempt. But even if you don't survive, you can leave a legacy of warm, affectionate memories, and perhaps pride.<sup>152</sup>

This digression should be supplemented with one more remark. On the day of Jan Rodowicz's arrest, his room was searched and the security men seized his private correspondence (e.g. with Alicja Arens) as well as the archives of Battalion Zośka. These materials were definitely used when Anoda was interrogated, which must have influenced his morale.

When considering the possible motives behind Anoda's decisions, we should remember that to some extent the development of the investigation must have taken him by surprise. In late 1948, even though Rodowicz feared new reprisals from the Communist state apparatus and prepared for them (e.g. building a radio communications system to stay in touch with Radosław), he may have developed a false sense of security, because he had stopped engaging in underground operations. We can infer from his private letters that he was happy with his studies and personal life. Presumably, he expected the Communist regime to collapse in consequence of favorable coincidences in international politics. These hopes were dashed as soon as the informers' evidence, astonishingly accurate and incriminating him and his friends, was presented to him during the investigation. The MBP men wanted to impress him as people who knew practically everything about his milieu and from whom nothing could stay hidden for long. Since Anoda realized what the Communists thought of Col. Mazurkiewicz and his men,

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way that he realized it was going to work perfectly on me. Later he seemed to be mounting the tension, saying, 'Well, we might send him to a children's home.' ... It was horrible. And tragic. Also, they claimed that my mother had already been arrested and my child sent to an orphanage. That meant the end of my family. And that was my greatest tragedy" (MPW Collections, AHM, Wywiad z Anną Jakubowską [Interview with Anna Jakubowska], February 17, 2005).

152 Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy przez wiele lat...*, 272–273. See also Jan Kowalski [pen name of Władysław Bartoszewski], *Metody i praktyki bezpieczeństwa w pierwszym dziesięcioleciu PRL*, Warszawa [samizdat publication], 1985, 20–22.

he could guess that at best he would be imprisoned for life unless he started to cooperate with the MBP.

Henryk Kozłowski, who found himself in a similar impasse, contemplated suicide. His dilemmas must have been similar to Anoda's. In hindsight, he described the events as follows:

I was close to committing suicide when, after another interrogation, Herer, who was irritated by my denials of having weapons stashed away, took me to the room next door and showed me a metal case full of guns, which had been excavated on Aleja Niepodległości. The greased paper had been removed from some pieces and other items were still in the case. I looked at it carefully: it was the same box I had collected from the tinsmith and taken to Janek's place. ... That was a serious, painful blow. By that time, I had become aware of the consequences, the scale of the arrests, and further repercussions. ... I contemplated suicide and thought about jumping out of a large, unbarred window of a fifth-floor toilet onto the yard on Koszykowa. I used that bathroom several times.<sup>153</sup>

This quote indicates that some people held in custody in the MBP building considered killing themselves by taking a suicidal jump from the fifth story, but not from the rooms looking out onto Aleje Ujazdowskie, which were office rooms. The plans of the facility that were made available to me show that the windows of one of the toilet facilities did face the yard, which lends credibility to Kmita's account.

Jan Rodowicz must have known that he was a living legend and that was why the Communists wanted first to discredit him during a show trial and then to have him killed. He must have gathered it was highly unlikely for him to escape from the clutches of the security services alive. Anoda must have understood that in the further course of the inquiry he would have to sustain physical violence and be coerced into signing new statements, implicating Col. Mazurkiewicz and his comrades in arms from the Radosław Group. The next stage would be a humiliating trial and closure with a degrading execution.<sup>154</sup>

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153 AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska's records], 1, Zeznania Henryka Kozłowskiego złożone w Ottawie [Henryk Kozłowski's statement made in Ottawa], no date, (3).

154 At the time, no one could have foreseen the social and political changes accomplished after 1956 which brought about amnesties (the first Zośkaites were amnestied already in 1952). It is equally difficult to assess if Bolesław Bierut would have signed a reprieve if Jan Rodowicz had asked for a pardon. Bierut did reprieve Henryk Kozłowski, whose four death sentences were commuted to lifetime imprisonment. Kmita was released from prison in August 1956 (Trojan, *Ci, którzy przeżyli...*, 188).

All those realizations were bound to radically alter Anoda's outlook on life, which was confirmed by Juliusz Kubera, who used to work for the security forces. In the 1990s, during an interview in a prosecutor's office, he said that Rodowicz broke down when he heard the voice of another detainee whom apparently he had incriminated (as I have already mentioned, the walls in the MBP were not soundproofed, so the screams of the tortured could be heard in neighboring rooms). Rodowicz asked the interrogator what sentence that man would receive.<sup>155</sup> Kubera's story does not have to be true, but I can imagine the MBP staging such a situation. Given their methods, they may have tried to convince Anoda that the person being tortured next door was his fiancée or his mother.<sup>156</sup>

So the dilemmas faced by Jan Rodowicz were appalling. This is how Anna Jakubowska summed them up:

... it seems to me that if Janek did not kill himself, he could have provoked the MBP to kill him, because he didn't want to live any longer. He did not want to live when he learned that his statements gave grounds for his friends' arrest. He was a guileless man who believed in humanity, in the possibility of understanding a man's true intentions, and in justice, which went hand in hand with his sense of responsibility and the dignity of a Polish officer: such a personality had to be on the losing side in those times of contempt and hatred.<sup>157</sup>

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155 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza "Anody"* [Decision of the Voivodship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 11 (copy).

156 The MBP often resorted to such psychological operations. For instance, the investigation records for Maria Mazurkiewicz, the wife of Radosław, contain a document which says, "She has become dejected after hearing from her interrogating officer that Radosław is being interrogated next door, and is distraught during questioning" (AAN, Prokuratura Generalna, Biuro Prezydyjne, 4/675, *Notatka służbowa dotycząca Marii Mazurkiewicz* [Memo re Maria Mazurkiewicz], May 11, 1949, 5).

157 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Relacja Anny Jakubowskiej* [Anna Jakubowska's statement], May 7, 1990, 4 (copy). Henryk Kozłowski took the following approach to these issues: "Was Janek given any promises? What made him testify against his colleagues, due to which on the night of January 3/4, 1949 four of them were arrested and the weapons hidden on the aleja Niepodległości site were unearthed? Did the MBP already know that the arms had been stowed away in a property on aleja Niepodległości when they arrested Janek? In my opinion, Janek was tricked and that was the reason behind his desperate move" (AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska's records], 1, *List Henryka Kozłowskiego* [Letter from Henryk Kozłowski], June 24, 1995, no pagination).

Although Rodowicz's family and friends from Battalion Zośka were of the opinion that he could not have self-defenestrated,<sup>158</sup> because he was a deeply religious man and loved life, I think that they did not see those facts in the right context. On January 7, 1949, Rodowicz had every right to believe that all that awaited him was further humiliation during the investigation, a show trial, and finally an execution. Also, if Anoda's system of values is to be treated as a point of reference, I should quote the rules which were followed by Polish resistance fighters in 1939–1945 and must have been imparted to Anoda too:

Item 23. Whosoever is arrested or apprehended in a street roundup shall ... (c) in the last resort, accept any blame and lay down his life, choose death rather than turn in and betray others. Item 24. It must be stressed very strongly that under investigation, during interrogations, an arrestee should answer any question in the negative rather than admit to anything, because then the interrogators will certainly use it and little by little extract all the information they need. Item 25. Whosoever feels that if caught and interrogated, he will break down, should acquire and keep about his person a dose of strong poison and use it when about to break down.<sup>159</sup>

So the ethical code espoused by members of the resistance ruled that collaborating with the occupying forces and ratting on one's comrades in arms was the ultimate disgrace, whereas the greatest heroism was to sacrifice one's life, even by suicide if necessary. So the self-defenestration from the fifth story of the MBP building should not be seen as a denigrating act that could diminish Anoda's stature. On the contrary, it ought to be perceived as his supreme sacrifice, which he decided to make in order to waylay the Communist security forces, which he partly achieved, albeit from beyond the grave.

In my view, Jan Rodowicz could have experienced a temporary breakdown when the security officers brought up the facts that had been discovered by the informers, threatened that his closest relatives would be victimized, and insinuated that Anoda's actions gave grounds for the arrest of his colleagues. Not all of these exchanges were put on record. Such a nervous collapse could

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158 Anoda's fiancée took a slightly different view of this. After the first exhumation, one of the informers heard her say that she had no idea how it happened, nevertheless, it was quite possible that Janek took his life and she hoped that no one would hold it against him (AIPN, 03303/216, Vol. 6, Doniesienie agenturalne informatora "Sowa" [Agent's report from Informer Sowa], March 26, 1949, 73).

159 Quoted after Wróblewski, *Zośkowiec...*, 136. Stanisław Krupa recalled that before his first interrogation a fellow prisoner gave him the following advice: "Remember, don't own up to anything you didn't do and especially don't incriminate others, because once you've signed a paper, it cannot be taken back. Of course they are going to force you. Don't break down. The hardest thing is the first punch in the kisser, the first kick in the balls" (Krupa, *X Pawilon...*, 56).

explain why Anoda revealed the operations which he and his comrades in arms had planned and where they had hidden the weapons. However, Maj. Herer did not triumph over Rodowicz, who was a man of fortitude and quickly regained his right senses: from January 4 on, he refused to explain what the Zośka veterans were doing after they had come out into the open. That's why the investigation, which had been progressing relatively swiftly, now began to lose momentum. And that's why physical violence may well have been used against Rodowicz in the course of the following days, but the security men did not manage to bring him to the next breaking point.

According to Lt. Kleina's 1992 statement, Jan Rodowicz was not too forthcoming during the twenty-minute interrogation on January 7, 1949. Kleina described this interrogation as a failure. Yet the extant minutes of that interrogation show quite the opposite, because, for instance, Anoda disclosed information about Stanisław Sieradzki which Maj. Herer intended to use to recruit Sieradzki.<sup>160</sup> Rodowicz also described the character traits of a few members of Kmita's detached unit and during the interrogation Herer conducted earlier that day, he had spoken about the abortive attempt to kidnap a Soviet general who was to be exchanged for Radosław, who was in prison at the time. That was information which the MBP could have learned only from one of the few people involved in the operation (presumably Donat Czerewacz).<sup>161</sup>

About 1.30 p.m., Lt. Kleina was notified by Maj. Herer's secretary to bring Jan Rodowicz to the office. When they got there, Kleina learned that Herer was busy, so both the arrestee and the interrogator were asked to wait in an empty room normally used by two other officers; the window in that room was wide open.<sup>162</sup> In 1949, January was exceptionally warm and on

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160 AIPN, 0330/217, vol. 21, Protokół przesłuchania Jana Rodowicza [Minutes of the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz], January 7, 1949, 52–53, 56. Anoda said the following about Sieradzki, “Before he came out, he handed one machine gun over to me. It was one of those I buried. ... He knew I had buried his machine gun.”

161 Donat Czerewacz was one of the participants in the attempt to kidnap the Soviet general. Dariusz Baliszewski observes, “Anoda understood that, first of all, the attempt to capture a Soviet general would be tantamount to a death sentence and, second, that they had a security snitch in the unit” (Baliszewski, *Trzecia strona medalu...*, 295). The only matters Jan Rodowicz mentioned on January 7, 1949, were operations which were covered by the amnesty, while the MBP must have let him know a few days before that informers had been working on his case.

162 Both the plans of the building from the period when it housed the Communist security services as well as my own observations on the premises of the Ministry of Justice confirm the statements of the security officers, who said that there were connecting doors between the rooms, which made it unnecessary to go out into the corridor. Later on, those doorways were walled up.

January 7 the temperature was about 0 degrees Celsius (32° F). Presumably, the people who used that room regularly wanted it aired while they were out.<sup>163</sup>

Kleina was the first to enter and let Anoda in. Undoubtedly, he was closely watching the suspect, so he could have failed to notice that the window was open. Rodowicz instantly caught sight of the window and on impulse made a lunge for it because it was the only place that offered a way out of further questioning.<sup>164</sup> Henryk Kozłowski's account implies that Anoda might have been contemplating suicide. Kleina, who was maybe closing the door and might have been pushed aside by Rodowicz, as Herer said, was taken aback and could not stop the prisoner.

It all took just a few seconds and left him in such a state of shock that he did not even go up to the window. Seconds later, Maj. Herer joined him and Kleina told him what had happened. Herer ran out into the yard and watched over the body until the ambulance came to collect it. He wanted to make sure that Anoda was dead. During the 1990s inquiry, he said that he did not remember if Anoda had survived the fall.<sup>165</sup> A note was put on the unfinished minutes of the interrogation saying, "The suspect jumped out of the window and killed himself."<sup>166</sup>

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163 I cannot understand why Mariusz Olczak assumed that the window must have been closed (Olczak, *Jan Rodowicz...*, 476). It could have been opened by the interrogators, for instance to air the room, which was stuffy because they were heavy smokers.

164 Jan Rodowicz tended to react impulsively in stressful situations, as Anna Jakubowska said in connection with the chances of his lashing out on the officers: "It could have been an instantaneous response, a quick, immediate decision. That is, due to his combat experience in the resistance and uprising, in a confrontational situation he was able to react in a flash, without thinking," (quoted after Olczak, 478).

165 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, *Postanowienie Prokuratury Wojewódzkiej w Warszawie o umorzeniu śledztwa w sprawie zabójstwa Jana Rodowicza "Anody"* [Decision of the Voivodeship Prosecutor's Office in Warsaw to terminate the investigation into the manslaughter of Jan Rodowicz aka Anoda], November 6, 1996, 7 (copy). It is hardly likely that Herer should not have remembered such an important fact. However, on January 7, 1949, he may have been unsure if the suspect had died instantly, because he only returned to the building once the doctor had confirmed Anoda's death.

166 AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, *Protokół przesłuchania Jana Rodowicza* [Minutes of the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz], January 7, 1949, 56. It was neither in Kleina's nor in Herer's handwriting.

Still on the same day, January 7, Lt. Kleina, and probably Herer and his secretary as well,<sup>167</sup> were questioned by the Office for Staff Affairs, but no minutes of those interviews are extant. Kleina's punishment was ten days of house arrest. No other person was penalized. A few days before Jan Rodowicz's death, Maj. Herer was finally appointed Head of Subdepartment Four (up to that time he had only been its acting head) and on July 18, 1949, he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel. After many years of service, Lt. Kleina became Chief of Section One, Subdepartment Five of Department Five in the Ministry of Public Security and was employed in that capacity from August 1, 1953 to June 14, 1954. Later (from June 15 to December 9, 1954), he was Head of Section One, Subdepartment Seven of Department Three in the same Ministry.<sup>168</sup>

In my opinion, this is the most coherent reconstruction of the events because it relies on more source materials than the other hypotheses, but it still leaves many questions unanswered.

First, we cannot be sure what could have made Jan Rodowicz self-defenestrate. Was it the torture, a sense of being betrayed by his comrades in arms, or a feeling of guilt for their arrest?

Second, Anoda's reflex reaction must have been extremely quick and his agility excellent if he was able to jump up on the window sill, which purportedly bore an imprint of the heel of his shoe, before Kleina could react.

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167 There is no information on the matter extant in the personal file of Herer's secretary Warrant Officer Apolonia Andziak (AIPN, 2174/334, Akta osobowe chor. Apolonii Andziak [WO Apolonia Andziak's personal records]; AIPN, 0193/9035, Akta osobowe Apolonii Andziak [Apolonia Andziak's personal file]). Apolonia Andziak's date of death is not in the PESEL-NET database but gives her registered address as Władimira Komarowa 139 (this street is now called Wołoska). Currently, the building is a home for retired medical practitioners (Dom Lekarza Seniora im. dr. Kazimierza Fritza). Until 1989 it was used as a home for veterans of the workers' movement and administered by the Central Committee of the PZPR. Later, its function changed, but the residents stayed and some still live there. On October 2, 2015, an employee of the home's welfare department replied to my letter and wrote that "[Apolonia Andziak] is not a resident. Perhaps she used to live here many years ago, but I have not found any records to confirm her residence in this institution. Our most senior employees who might remember her have retired, and our current staff, even those who have been working here for twenty years, do not recall such a resident." According to Piotr Lipiński in *Anoda. Kamień na szancku...*, 94, Apolonia Andziak died before 1990.

168 *Służba Bezpieczeństwa w Polskiej Rzeczpospolitej Ludowej w latach 1944–1978*, Vol. 1, edited by K. Bednarska, H. Knawa, U. Paradowska et al., Warszawa, 1978, 97, 122.

Significantly, Jan Rodowicz had been wounded several times during the Warsaw Uprising (in 1945 a medical board awarded him a disability pension as his incapacity for work was estimated at 81%),<sup>169</sup> and even though his condition improved very substantially in the years that followed the War, he was not fully fit and the fortnight spent in jail was bound to have a negative effect on his health.

Third, the security officers' statements were divergent. For instance, Maj. Herer said he had forgotten who had escorted Anoda to his room, but obviously he must have known it was Lt. Kleina. It was not clear, either, when exactly Kleina closed the door, how many people were in the secretary's room, and whether someone else was in the room Kleina and Anoda entered.

Fourth, during the inquiry in the 1990s, Lt. Kleina denied that he had interrogated Jan Rodowicz before or taken part in any other part of the proceedings against him, which was not true, as the graphological examination of the minutes of the previous interrogations showed. His signature was on them, as well as on the records of other cases which he had been investigating.<sup>170</sup> Kleina's personal file, deposited in the archives of the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression contains his handwritten CV, which says, "In 1945–1947, I was an officer of the Ministry of Public Security [in the KBW]; I was involved in combat against the gangs and reactionary

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169 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, Pismo zastępcy dyrektora Izby Skarbowej w Warszawie w sprawie przyznania Janowi Rodowiczowi renty inwalidzkiej [Letter from deputy head of the Warsaw Treasury Office re the grant of a disability pension to Jan Rodowicz], January 31, 1946, no pagination (copy). Also, Henryk Kozłowski added that Anoda's left arm had not fully recovered, and in the summer of 1948 he broke it again (Kozłowski, *12 miesięcy przez wiele lat...*, 254).

170 In the 1990s, Bronisław Kleina wanted to create an impression that his responsibilities in the Ministry of Public Security were only taking care of the students' files and that he had not participated in the interrogations. Yet, the extant records not only disprove the claim that he interrogated Jan Rodowicz only on January 7, 1949, but also show that Kleina took part in other operations (Wółoszyn, "Ostra broń...", 312, note 72). The author of one of Kleina's character assessments wrote "... he works well with informers. Recently he has been running a few serious cases of fieldwork within his powers on his own and has recruited informers both by the investigation technique and information collected from agents" (AIPN, 024/334, Charakterystyka por. Bronisława Kleiny [Character assessment for Lt. Bronisław Kleina], July 14, 1950, no pagination). My feeling is that Piotr Lipiński has slightly glossed over Kleina's biography by suggesting that the course of his career in the security services had to some extent been unplanned and that he had lived his life "under orders" (Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szańcu...*, 212). In any case, the person who was in charge of the MBP files of all the students in Poland must have commanded the absolute trust of his superiors.

underground movement.”<sup>171</sup> This sentence shows that his duties did not stop at handling students’ files.

Fifth, although Maj. Herer said that the suicidal jump and its consequences must have been observed by many people, including random passers-by, the only witness whose name has been identified is Lt. Kleina.<sup>172</sup>

## Conclusion

Recapitulating my arguments, at least five versions have been proposed to explain the circumstances of the mysterious death of Jan Rodowicz while held on remand by the MBP. I have discussed all of them and analyzed each in detail. To my mind, the probable versions of the events are those in my subchapters entitled “Battery and inadvertent manslaughter” and “Self-defenestration caused by developments during the investigation,” though I am inclined to consider the latter the most likely. Again, I have to stress that both have some significant weak points, so much so that neither of them can be accepted without reservation.

It is quite possible that some new documents, now unavailable, may crop up and let researchers draw more explicit conclusions or even solve the mystery completely. Nevertheless, for the time being, even though historians have a substantial volume of unconfirmed data as well as a handful of incontrovertible facts at their disposal, we have to settle for conjectures based on unverifiable assumptions.

To bring this part of the book to a close, I shall emphasize once more that whether we believe that Jan Rodowicz was murdered or that he self-defenestrated, the people to be blamed for his death are the MBP officers, particularly Maj. Herer, and next the informers. Herer was the one who decided that this man, a veteran of the Gray Ranks and Battalion Zośka, should be arrested. Next, in charge of Anoda’s case, he was responsible for selecting interrogation methods that were expected to make him break down mentally and, most likely, physically as well. In an interview with Piotr Lipiński in the 1990s, Herer actually admitted to the former charge:

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171 AUdsKiOR, K 205856, Deklaracja członkowska Bronisława Kleina do Związku Bojowników o Wolność i Demokrację [Bronisław Kleina’s application to join ZBoWiD], December 18, 1975, 4. Even if we assume that Kleina declared he had “fought the gangs” only to get a higher pension (but then that fact has been confirmed in a letter from the Central Archives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs), this admission still undermines his credibility.

172 This matter is partly explained by the fog which I have mentioned above, due to which the group of potential witnesses should be narrowed down only to persons working in the MBP building at the time.

- PL: “Why did Anoda jump out?  
 WH: “He was going through a political crisis and was critical of the Home Army commanders.” [*sic!*]  
 PL: “Do you feel responsible for his death?”  
 WH: “I can’t feel responsible for his arrest. His suicide? He committed it after talking to me, those talks could have influenced his decision. I couldn’t have foreseen that.”<sup>173</sup>

Given that Jan Rodowicz would not have committed suicide had he not been arrested by the MBP, it is only reasonable to assume that his death was a special kind of homicide committed by the Communist security services. The foregoing remarks can be neatly summed up by a quote from Dariusz Baliszewski:

... Arresting an innocent man with the intention to oppress him, to punish him for what he did not do – is that not an offense [?]. And if ... we agree he committed suicide, is it not a crime to impel an arrestee to commit suicide?<sup>174</sup>

Only Lt. Kleina was penalized for his part in the investigation against Anoda. On March 29, 1949, when he was still on the staff of the Ministry of Public Security, relatively mild disciplinary measures were taken against him and he spent ten days under house arrest for letting the suspect kill himself. This sanction had no consequences for Kleina’s later career in the Communist security forces.<sup>175</sup> In 1989, his veteran rights were withdrawn, just like Wiktor Herer’s, and in 1995, Kleina stood trial for perjury while under a public prosecutor’s investigation.<sup>176</sup>

Nonetheless, we are left with the impression that not all the opportunities offered after 1989 were used in the 1990s inquiry. The retired MBP men who enjoyed the status of witnesses, not suspects, had to attend just one session of questioning. The minutes of those sessions do not show that

173 Lipiński, “Okno,” 57.

174 Baliszewski, *Trzecia strona medalu...*, 296. Henryk Kozłowski held the same opinion: “Janek’s death was a murder, no matter whether he jumped out of the window of his own accord or was defenestrated” (AAN, Akta Anny Jakubowskiej [Anna Jakubowska’s records], 1, List Henryka Kozłowskiego [Letter from Henryk Kozłowski], June 24, 1995, no pagination).

175 It was no obstacle to his promotion to the rank of captain on July 22, 1951. Also, the majority of the extant assessments carried out by his superiors are good (AIPN 1977/208, Charakterystyka kpt. Bronisława Kleina [Character assessment for Lt. Bronisław Kleina], December 14, 1957, 7). Kleina left the state security services on January 31, 1955 and worked for thirty years, until his retirement, as security chief in the Palace of Science and Culture in Warsaw (Lipiński, *Anoda. Kamień na szańcu...*, 214).

176 See “Falszywe zeznania w sprawie ‘Anody’,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, April 18, 1998.

they were asked additional questions when their answers were vague. The archival research for the inquiry was unsatisfactory: the only records used were the personal files of the retired MBP staff and the files for the investigation against Jan Rodowicz. If more attention had been paid to the files of the Radosław veterans and Col. Mazurkiewicz himself, some of the statements offered by Maj. Herer would have been disproved. Also Bronisław Kleina's personal files, kept in the archives of the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression, could have rendered serious arguments against some of Kleina's statements concerning the scope of his duties when he worked for the Ministry of Public Security. In light of these remarks, I believe that Jan Rodowicz's death gave reasonable grounds to take this case to court. Even if the evidence collected turned out to be insufficient to prove that the ex-MBP men were directly instrumental in bringing about Anoda's death, the proceedings could have brought new information to light.

## Chapter Three. The later lives of the security men and snitches who sleuthed Radosław veterans

When the Communist security men discovered the whereabouts of the Zoskaites' first arms caches, the authorities were able to launch a propaganda campaign against the veterans in the mass media. In early 1949, the press reported that "a sabotage and terrorist group amply financed by America" which had been amassing weapons and explosives had been busted. One of the articles on the Zośka case rounded up with the following conclusion:

Thanks to the vigilance of the Security Forces, a gang which was preparing sabotage operations targeted at our country's leaders has been crushed.<sup>1</sup>

In the following months, more ex-insurgents were interrogated. When the investigation was over, they were put on trial before the Warsaw District Military Court. The first proceedings started in August 1949.<sup>2</sup> In most cases, the court handed down sentences ranging from a few to ten or more years in prison. There were additional penalties, such as disenfranchisement, the forfeiture of other rights, and the confiscation of property. Henryk Kozłowski was given a fourfold death sentence (President Bierut used his right of pardon and commuted Kozłowski's sentence to life imprisonment), and Stefan Gorgoń-Druźbicki<sup>3</sup> was given life imprisonment (the Supreme Military Court reduced his sentence to fifteen years). The last trial, in which

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1 "Władze Bezp. Publicznego rozbiły bandę dywersyjną," *Trybuna Ludu*, February 5, 1949.

2 For the way local military courts operated, see Krzysztof Szważyk, *Prawnicy czasu bezprawia. Sędziowie i prokuratorzy w Polsce 1944–1956*, Kraków and Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Towarzystwa Naukowego Societas Vistulana, 2005; Marcin Zaborski, *Ustrój sądów wojskowych w Polsce w latach 1944–1955*, Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, 2005. Andrey Vyshinskiy wrote, "Soviet courts take an active part in building up the state and its political system, they are the conduits carrying the policy of the Soviet state. And that policy is to eradicate operations hostile to socialism, committed by the enemies of this system; it is to strengthen the dictatorship of the proletariat, strengthen the power of the soviets and bolster respect for the principles of socialist coexistence and state discipline" (Andrey Wyszyński, *Teoria dowodów sądowych...*, 31–32).

3 Stefan "Kurp" Gorgoń-Druźbicki (1923–1997), senior rifleman of the First ("Sad") Platoon of the Second ("Rudy") Company of Battalion Zośka.

Witold Morawski was sentenced to twelve years in prison, ended on January 19, 1952.<sup>4</sup>

When the investigations were still going on and the first trials were underway, the MBP continued to figure out other members of Battalion Zośka still at large and their friends and associates. They continued to use their informers, as shown by the sundry reports Czerewacz delivered which have been preserved in the records for particular cases.

The gradual changes which occurred in the Communist authorities led to a change in their attitude toward the Radosław veterans. Thanks to the amnesties of 1952 and 1956, many of the sentences were reduced and some of the convicted youngsters were released. However, that did not mean the end of their ordeal, because for many of them their past was an obstacle to finding a decent job. They also came up against other difficulties and forms of harassment. They were not rehabilitated and their feats (including those accomplished after 1945) acknowledged until 1989—the time when a historical record could be made of their resistance against the Communist regime.

I think it will be a good idea to examine what happened later to the people who were on the other side of the barricade and played a special role in the Zośka case, and who later tried to cover up their involvement. The biographies of the Radosław veterans have become the subject of numerous analyses and studies, whereas those responsible for the postwar repression against them have remained largely unknown.

### The MBP officers

On September 28, 1950, Department Five was reorganized and Lt.-Col. Herer was appointed head of Department One.<sup>5</sup> He held the office until

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4 For particular court proceedings, see Agnieszka Pietrzak, “Represje wobec byłych żołnierzy ‘Zośki’ i ‘Parasola’...,” 115–120. The Radosław veterans were rehabilitated by the Polish Supreme Court after the political transformation of October 1956.

5 The work of Department One was the maintenance of ideological and information security in the Communist political authorities, including all the political groups affiliated with the PPR, which were purportedly following different agendas. It consisted of six sections, the first three of which focused on counter-intelligence. Section One was responsible for the PPS,\* the PPR, Towarzystwo Uniwersytetu Robotniczego [the Society for the Workers’ University] and Związek Walki Młodych [Union of the Young People’s Struggle]. Section Two handled Stronnictwo Ludowe [the People’s Party], the Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe [the Polish People’s Party] and Związek Młodzieży Wiejskiej “Wici” [the Wici Union of Young Peasants]. Section Three oversaw Stronnictwo Demokratyczne [the Alliance of Democrats], Stronnictwo Pracy [the Labor Alliance] and youth

December 31, 1951, and left the MBP on January 10, 1952. Minister Radkiewicz consented to his transfer to the PKPG (State Economic Planning Committee) to fill a key vacancy in its military department, which had a desperate want of university-educated staff with qualifications in economics to handle provisions for the military forces.

Herer had been completing his degree program in Economics at the SGH Warsaw School of Economics since 1947, and passed all the prescribed examinations in 1948. For a few months in 1949, he was an assistant lecturer at the Chair of Political Economy in the college attached to the Central Committee of the PZPR, which qualified him for an appointment in the PKPG. The matter was settled during a conversation with the deputy director of the PKPG, during which Herer said he was ready for a change in his career.<sup>6</sup> His superiors gave their approval and he could start a new chapter in his life, a successful academic career culminating in the status of one of the top economists in Communist Poland and in the Third Polish Republic.

In 1951, Herer graduated with an MA in Economics, and obtained his PhD nine years later (June 18, 1960), on the grounds of a doctoral dissertation entitled *Niektóre zagadnienia wzajemnych proporcji między rolnictwem a przemysłem* (Selected Issues in the Mutual Proportions between Agriculture and Industry) from the Faculty of Political Economics of the University of Warsaw.

He was in the PKPG from January 16, 1952, to July 31, 1966 and for a time was head of its agricultural division. In 1957, the PKPG transformed into the Commission for Economic Planning attached to the Council of Ministers. The records say he was a highly regarded expert; in May 1955,

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organizations. Section Four dealt with propaganda and the administrative and physical destruction of all political structures not accepted by the Communists, which in practice meant the annihilation of every political association whatsoever spreading ideas not in line with the Soviet ideology. Section Five infiltrated trade unions and social and political organizations tolerated by the Communists. Section Six handled “the operational steering” of the political organizations of the national minorities.

6 AIPN, 0193/2139, Pismo zastępcy przewodniczącego PKPG do ministra bezpieczeństwa publicznego w sprawie przeniesienia ppłk. Wiktora Herera do pracy w PKPG [Letter from the Deputy Head of the PKPG to the Minister of Public Security re the transfer of Lt Col Wiktor Herer to an appointment in the PKPG], October 15, 1951, 80. The close relations between Julia Brystiger and Hilary Minc, who was a deputy prime minister at the time, seem to have been behind Herer’s appointment in the PKPG, although the records do not say this outright. This kind of transfer must have been approved by the relevant ministers, the more so as the records show that Minister Radkiewicz knew of Herer’s impending transfer before it was settled officially.

the Politburo appointed a commission of eight including Herer and headed by the president of the PKPG Eugeniusz Szyr, to draft documents for the grounds of Central Committee resolutions on agriculture.<sup>7</sup>

On August 1, 1966, Herer was transferred to the Institute of Planning affiliated to the Commission of Economic Planning, where he was deputy head. The peak of his academic career came on March 8, 1973, when the Council of State appointed him Professor Extraordinary of the Economic Sciences.<sup>8</sup>

On February 15, 1982 the ex-MBP man moved on to employment in the Institute for the National Economy, which was later transformed into the Institute for Development and Strategic Studies. Herer retired on June 30, 1992, but continued to work on a part-time basis until December 31, 1995, at the Department of Statistical and Economic Studies of Statistics Poland (GUS) and for the Polish Academy of Sciences.<sup>9</sup>

Herer was as successful in his academic career as he had been in the MBP. His impressive rise in the Communist power structures undoubtedly contributed to his success, up to a certain point in time helping him climb the career ladder after he left the security services. Another important advantage was his acquaintance with Julia Brystiger, who continued to enjoy the confidence of key figures in the Communist Party even when she retired at the end of 1956. Equally important was Herer's intelligence, which let him fathom the complex economic mechanisms he had been interested in already before the War. His knowledge of foreign languages, notably French, was another asset; in the 1970s, for instance, he was regularly invited to lecture at the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Montpellier, which boosted his academic career and showed that his publications were doing well. Most of his

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7 Protokół nr 46 posiedzenia Biura Politycznego w dniach 26 i 27 V 1955 r. Minutes of the 46<sup>th</sup> session of the Politburo, May 26 and 27, 1955], [in] *Centrum władzy. Protokoły posiedzeń kierownictwa PZPR. Wybór z lat 1949–1970*, comp. Antoni Dudek, Aleksander Kochański, and Krzysztof Persak. Warszawa: ISP PAN, 2000, 141.

8 In Poland, professorships have customarily been conferred by the supreme state authority, viz. the President (as of 1989, following the repeal of the Council of State). At this time, the two categories of the professorship, (the extraordinary professorship as the lower category and the ordinary professorship as the senior category) were abolished and replaced with the academic title of professor in a uniform category.

9 Centralne Archiwum Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego, Zakład Badań Statystyczno-Ekonomicznych Głównego Urzędu Statystycznego i Polskiej Akademii Nauk [GUS Central Archive, Department of Statistical and Economic Studies of the National Bureau Statistics Poland and the Polish Academy of Sciences], file no. 34.

papers were on agriculture, an important branch of the Polish economy. His research interests were closely connected with the work of the team he was head of at the PKPG. In the 1980s he was interested in Poland's fiscal policy (especially in anti-inflation mechanisms), which resulted in a series of publications compiled jointly with Professor Władysław Sadowski, an associate of the Department of Statistical and Economic Studies at Statistics Poland and the Polish Academy of Sciences.<sup>10</sup>

Herer succeeded in developing close relations with Zdzisław Sadowski, his erstwhile prisoner, who later became an esteemed economist (in 1953 he took up a post at the University of Warsaw and in 1987–1988 he was Deputy Prime Minister in Zbigniew Messner's cabinet; now he is Honorary President of the Polish Society of Economics). In 1980–1981, Sadowski was Herer's superior and provided the following account of their acquaintanceship:

I met Lieutenant Herer again a few years later at the Warsaw School of Economics. It turned out he was an economist too, became an assistant professor and later a professor. ... Subsequently, we saw each other very often. He would call on me in my office at the Polish Society of Economics ... and we would talk about the economy or sometimes about other matters.<sup>11</sup>

Herer continued to take an active interest in the Polish economy until the mid-1990s, and his commitment was reflected in his publications.

The turning point in his life came in the mid-1960s, when he started to challenge some aspects of the PZPR's policy. Although for many years he had been a devoted member of the Communist Party, which he demonstrated especially in the Stalinist period, his dissatisfaction with the agricultural policy enforced by Communist decision-makers grew in the course of his academic career. It appears to have been connected with the gradual decline in his status after Hilary Minc was dismissed and removed from the Politburo of the Central Committee in 1956. In the 1990s, the ex-MBP man let a remark slip that in the mid-50s those in power launched a campaign against him. In 1966, his criticism of the government's economic policy cost him the loss of a lucrative job at the PKPG. He was decried

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10 Professor Władysław Sadowski was one of the two members of ZBoWiD who acted as sponsors for Wiktor Herer's application for membership (AUdsKiOR, K 208356, Deklaracja członkowska Wiktora Herera do ZBoWiD, [Wiktor Herer's ZBoWiD Membership Declaration], September 13, 1977, 3).

11 Zdzisław Sadowski, *Przez ciekawe czasy...*, 71. Sadowski gave Wiktor Herer a copy of his first book, *Pieniądz a początki upadku Rzeczypospolitej w XVII wieku*, with the following dedication alluding to 1945–1946: "Remembering our old discussions, not on Money but to a large extent on the Republic of Poland" (*ibid.*).

for his “inappropriate attitude to the official Party line on agriculture”<sup>12</sup> and officially transferred to the Institute of Planning (in fact it was a disciplinary measure). He regarded it as an example of anti-Semitism at his former workplace.<sup>13</sup>

Herer’s sensitivity to signs of anti-Semitism seems to have played a more and more important role in his life. He kept up his close relations with individuals who decided to leave Poland for the “Capitalist countries” when the Polish government launched a wave of anti-Semitism in March 1968. Although at this time, Herer had not yet started to openly voice his opposition to the economic and political decisions implemented by the authorities, but Communist security operatives were noting numerous instances of his “inappropriate” pronouncements in private conversations.<sup>14</sup> In 1969, Herer was removed from the Scientific Council of the Department of Agriculture at the Polish Academy of Sciences.

Herer had been working on several confidential and secret projects<sup>15</sup> for Professor Józef Pajestka, Deputy Head of the Commission for Economic Planning, and in 1969 Department Three of the MSW raised objections to his application for a passport to visit France. Although the visit was to be purely professional (he was to participate in a symposium organized by the Association for the Agricultural Economy of France), it was feared Herer could use the occasion to provide classified information to unauthorized persons or to defect. It turned out that the former MBP officer was too valuable an asset for the Polish authorities to lose him by irresponsibly letting him run off.

Incidentally, when Władysław Gomułka fell from power, at first Herer took a critical view of Gomułka’s successor Edward Gierek and the group which had come to power, voicing his negative opinion in private conversations. Soon, however, he stopped criticizing the government’s decisions. As

12 AIPN, 728/4357, Notatka starszego inspektora Wydziału VI Departamentu III Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych dotycząca Wiktora Herera [Memorandum from the Senior Inspector of Section Six of Department Three of the MSW re Wiktor Herer], February 1, 1971, 2. Another of Herer’s bloomers at the time (1963) was his loss of a classified document titled *Wstępny projekt programu zmian cen w latach 1961–1963* [A Provisional Plan to Adjust Prices, 1961–1963].

13 *Ibid.*

14 AIPN, 728/4357, Notatka naczelnika Wydziału II Biura Paszportów MSW w sprawie wyjazdu Wiktora Herera do Francji [Memorandum from the Head of Department Two of the Passport Bureau of the MSW re Wiktor Herer’s visit to France], February 4, 1971, 6. This memo says that Herer’s meetings with “persons holding pro-Zionist views” were “against the official policy of Poland.”

15 *Ibid.*

a result, the security watchdogs moderated their stance on Herer's trips to France, and as of 1971 he started lecturing there on a regular basis, taking the opportunity to visit his relatives. In 1979 he was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta, the second highest Polish civil award.

Despite the improvement of Herer's relations with the authorities, we may conjecture that his choice of an academic career in economics and the brutal anti-Semitic campaign made him less attached to part of the Communist dogma. He was certainly intelligent enough to observe the dreadful mess the Communists were making of the national economy and knew what it would lead to.

Herer's decision to criticize the Communist authorities occurred in 1980–1981, the years marking a turning point. Perhaps the reason for this was that the removal of Edward Gierek from power meant the rise of Wojciech Jaruzelski, the man responsible for the purges unleashed in the aftermath of March 1968. However, the major role seems to have been played by the erosion of the Communist power structure in the late 1970s and early '80s. In 1980, Herer joined the Solidarity Trade Union, which he said he was a member of until 1989. In the 1990s, he gave the following explanation for his ideological volte-face:

I want to add that in January 1952 my employment with the MBP came to an end, for various reasons, including pressure from the Soviet advisors [*sic!*]. For the entire period from 1946 to 1952, I was on the faculty of the Warsaw School of Economics, first as an assistant and later as an adjunct. Although I had completed the full graduate program in four years of study at Lwów and Tbilisi (1941–1943), the Warsaw School of Economics required me to take some extra examinations, including one in non-Marxist political economy. ... In the course of four decades, my political views have undergone a radical evolution. Already by the mid-fifties, I was being subjected to various kinds of political discrimination. I was never allowed to work abroad as an expert, from time to time my passport was withdrawn, and in 1966 I was dismissed from the Planning Commission. After the imposition of Martial Law, I left the Party (the PZPR).<sup>16</sup>

This quote contains a true account of the harassment he experienced in the 1950s and '60s, skillfully blended in with his narrative and suggesting a self-portrait of himself almost as a martyr of the Communist system, whereas in reality he was no more than the victim of factional infighting. He presented his service in the security forces as a mission with a covert objective to forestall the Sovietization of post-war Poland, which would lead to far more serious repressions for Poland.

On a different occasion Herer averred the following:

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16 AIPN, 2188/680, Protokół przesłuchania Wiktora Herera, [Minutes of Wiktor Herer's interview], October 15, 1992, 19.

I honestly admit that at the time [the 1940s] I identified with many of the economic principles espoused by the new political system. But I was very sensitive to the attempt to Sovietize political relations in Poland because I had an intimate knowledge of the horrors they entailed, as I came from the part of the Second Polish Republic which was occupied by Soviet forces in 1939. Another relevant point was the fact that my family was closely connected with some Polish Communists who were murdered in the Soviet Union in 1937.<sup>17</sup>

Herer's suggestion that the sole objective of his actions was to prevent a Soviet-like reign of terror in postwar Poland must be treated as questionable, just like his claim that later he was harassed because of this. The accessible records, the course of his career in the security forces and his work at the PKPG all suggest quite the opposite. His later problems were due mostly to his Jewish background, the marginalization of his mentors in the Party, and his criticism of the agricultural policy advanced by the authorities, rather than because of his alleged stand in defiance of the persecution of the people of Poland in the 1940s and later.

Herer's attempts to explain and vindicate his decisions look like a way to escape the past for which he could be held accountable. He did not resort to a lapse of memory but wanted to shirk the responsibility by claiming he was a victim and the one who prevented the Sovietization of Poland, although he took an active part in it himself.<sup>18</sup>

The leading personalities in the democratic opposition in Poland considered Herer a valuable accession, though some members of Solidarity had reservations about his involvement in the security service. A few of them had been interrogated by Herer when they were held in MBP custody on Koszykowa.

Here is Leszek Żebrowski's account of Wiesław Chrzanowski's confrontation with his erstwhile jailer:

At a session of Solidarity's National Committee in Gdańsk in 1981, Jacek Kuroń brought in a new group of advisors. Professor Wiesław Chrzanowski, one of

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17 Agnieszka Pietrzak's collection, [W. Herer], *Samobójstwo Jana Rodowicza*, n.d., 4 (copy). I shall refer to information on Julia Brystiger's opinion on her work at the security service in the late 1960s: "She does not deny or disavow anything and believes everything she did was right and totally justified by the circumstances" (AIPN, 01208/1293/J, Notatka w sprawie Julii Brystiger [Memorandum re Julia Brystiger], March 24, 1966, 9). We can hardly assume that Wiktor Herer's views were fundamentally different from those of his former superior.

18 There is a rather cynical passage in Wiktor Herer's statement, in which he goes as far as to compare his Communist activities in prewar Poland, for which he suffered oppression, with Jan Rodowicz's engagement in anti-German underground activities.

the creators of Solidarity's statute, told me the following. One of the new arrivals, an elderly gentleman, sat beside Chrzanowski and looked familiar, but what came to Chrzanowski's mind seemed preposterous. When Kuroń introduced the experts, it turned out it was Wiktor Herer... a new expert for agriculture. Professor Chrzanowski could not hold back – he stood up and said, "Look, this man is the Security Service officer who interrogated us." Kuroń replied, "If you don't like it, you can leave."<sup>19</sup>

The disclosure of Herer's past did not mean his marginalization in Solidarity, simply because the union did not have economists with such a good academic record.<sup>20</sup> The apogee of his work for the trade union came in 1981, but when Martial Law was imposed he stopped his activities in Solidarity. In February 1982, he took up an appointment at the Institute of National Economy, which was founded on December 30, 1981, on the grounds of an ordinance issued by Prime Minister Wojciech Jaruzelski. He was recommended for the post by Professor Pajestka, who wanted to have his former collaborators there. Herer continued to work at the Institute of National Economy until it was transformed into the Institute of Development and Strategic Studies. I have not managed to trace any records on Herer's activities in the democratic opposition movement in 1982–1988.

The 1990s were difficult for Herer because this was the time when he came up against the prospect of being held to account for his criminal activities in the MBP. Especially the death of Anoda was an incident which cast a shadow of guilt on him. The prosecutor's inquiry made his name known in right-wing political circles: today it still stands for the notorious legacy of the Stalinist public security service in Poland. Although the inquiry was eventually dropped, it left a mark on Herer's reputation, which not even Zdzisław Sadowski's laudatory opinion could wash clean.

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19 Leszek Zebrowski, *Ostatnie powstanie narodowe*, <http://www.blogpress.pl/node/17106>, Accessed April 16, 2015.

20 Wiktor Herer and Professor Władysław Sadowski jointly authored articles published in the *Tygodnik Solidarność* weekly. Wiesław Chrzanowski reacted by refusing to send any more contributions for publication in the paper, whose Chief Editor at the time was Tadeusz Mazowiecki (Sławomir Cenckiewicz, "Z bezpieki do Solidarności. Nadzwyczajny przypadek Wiktora Herera," *Historia do Rzeczy*, no. 10 (2015), 65). Wiktor Herer appeared as an economist and only as an economist even in publications associated with Solidarity, including ones published by the Institute of National Remembrance, with no mention of his earlier work for the MBP. See Krzysztof Podemski, "Prasa 'Solidarności' w oficjalnym obiegu w 1981." In *'Solidarność' od wewnątrz 1980–1981*, eds. Andrzej Friszke, Krzysztof Persak and Paweł Sowiński. Warszawa: Instytut Pamięci Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu: Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, 2013, 227.

The ex-cop did everything he could to dodge liability for his doings at the MBP. This puts a question mark over his purported idealism, with which he tried to explain both his commitment to work in the Communist security services and the subsequent change in his views, culminating in his membership in Solidarity.

Even if Herer was not directly responsible for the death of Anoda, the specious and inconsistent depositions he made in the 1990s do not exonerate him. It is difficult not to think that such abstruse arguments could not have been made by a person fully convinced of his innocence trying to defend himself, but rather by an accomplice in the crime, no matter whether intentionally or not, who attempts to put the blame on others.

Wiktor Herer died on March 24, 2003, at the age of 83.

For several years, Bronisław Kleina had a very good record as an MBP officer. He was highly regarded by his superiors. So he climbed the career ladder and was a captain by July 1951, thanks to which he was promoted to a senior post.

In the latter half of 1949, the MBP learned that for several weeks after the end of the Polish military campaign in 1939 Bronisław's father, Antoni Kleina, had collaborated with the German invaders (he signed the Deutsche Volksliste for persons who claimed to have German roots, and joined a militia set up by the German authorities). Similar accusations were made against other members of Bronisław Kleina's family. In addition, the postwar Communist authorities treated him with suspicion because he had been in the AK. An investigation conducted in the early 1950s showed that Bronisław Kleina's father was apparently put on the Volksliste under duress and soon stopped using documents issued by the Germans, and that he "did no harm to the people of Poland." After another round of questioning, in December 1953 Capt. Kleina's explanations were accepted and he was allowed to stay in the security service.<sup>21</sup>

However, his position suddenly deteriorated in the mid-50s. On January 17, 1955, Julia Brystiger, at the time Head of Department Three of the Committee for Public Security, submitted an application for Kleina's dismissal because, as she claimed, he did not want to improve his qualifications: "He does not engage in continuous education and shows no willingness to learn."<sup>22</sup>

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21 AIPN, 0242/334, Notatka służbowa dotycząca kierownika sekcji Wydziału V Departamentu V MBP kpt. Bronisława Kleiny [Memorandum concerning Capt Bronisław Kleina, Head of Subdepartment Five, Department Five in the MBP], October 29, 1953, unpaginated. See also subsequent annotations in this document.

22 AIPN, 0242/334, Wniosek dyrektora Departamentu III Komitetu ds. Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego do dyrektora Departamentu Kadr Komitetu ds.

Before the human resources department issued an opinion on the matter, Brystiger called Kleina in for a talk and told him that he would be transferred to a new post and serve as security chief in the Palace of Culture and Science. Kleina replied that it was hard for him to leave the security apparatus but he had thought the matter over and agreed to go.<sup>23</sup>

Bronisław Kleina's work in the Committee for Public Security came to an end on January 31, 1955. Subsequently, he was head of the security unit at the Palace of Culture and Science until his retirement. In the meantime, he was awarded the Order of Polonia Restituta and joined ZBoWiD (the Society of Fighters for Freedom and Democracy).

He died on July 10, 2007, at the age of 84.

Julia Brystiger continued her career in the security services for a couple of years after Anoda's death. On January 15, 1950, she was appointed Head of Department Five (before she was just Acting Head); in August 1954 she became Head of Department Three, and at the beginning of 1955 Head of Department Three in the Committee for Public Security. The end of her distinguished career in the security services (she eventually reached the rank of colonel) came in 1956 – her appointment in the Committee for Public Security finished on November 16, and in 1957 she was due to be brought to justice in proceedings against former MBP officers. Eventually, the plan was abandoned due to objections raised by Władysław Gomułka.<sup>24</sup> Brystiger was subsequently employed as an academic in the Institute for International Affairs. Later she was a copy editor for the PIW publishing house and also tried her hand as a writer (she published a novel under the pen name Julia Prajs).

At the close of her life, she changed her worldview (some sources claim she went as far as to be baptized and received into the Roman Catholic Church). Most probably, this was possible to a large extent thanks to her frequent visits at Laski, a small place on the outskirts of Warsaw renowned for its home for the blind, where she made the acquaintance of the Catholic priests working in the institution.<sup>25</sup> However, it is hard to say whether she

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Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego w sprawie zwolnienia kpt. Bronisława Kleiny z dniem 1 II 1955 r [Application by [Julia Brystiger], Head of Department Three of the Committee for Public Security to the Head of the Human Resources Department of the Committee for Public Security re the dismissal of Capt Bronisław Kleina as of February 1, 1955], January 17, 1955, unpaginated.

23 *Ibid.*

24 Jan Żaryn, "Córka marnotrawna, czyli Luna w Laskach." *Biuletyn Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej*, no. 11 (58) (2005), 45.

25 *Ibid.*, 49.

regretted the role she had played as an officer in the public security service and, if she was genuinely sorry, how deep her remorse was.

Brystiger died on October 9, 1975, at the age of 73.

## The informers

On September 1, 1949, Adam Abramowicz started work at Dalspo, a centralized business engaged in foreign trade<sup>26</sup> and practically cut his contacts with the security services (apparently, he saw security officers only on sporadic occasions).

The MBP contacted him again on May 18, 1953. The meeting was arranged by two officers of Subdepartment One of Department Four, Capt. Eugeniusz Kryszler and Warrant Officer Tadeusz Ordon, who wanted to learn more about Abramowicz's underground involvement in the Home Army under German occupation.

According to Warrant Officer Tadeusz Ordon, the encounter went as follows:

Once the informer learned who we were and what we wanted, he was ready to renew his collaboration with us; actually, he had been waiting for such a move from us because he had not completed some of his cases. Here he started enumerating various contacts, names and cases, and said how committed he had been to his work for the MBP. ... Later, Informer Górnik said he had a number of contacts he acquired at the time of his activities in the Home Army and that he had a colleague from the NSZ who worked somewhere in Warsaw. ... Our conversation showed he was an intelligent and skillful individual; he said he wanted to work on specific cases and that in general he was always specific. He also said that our authorities had gone a bit wrong in some of the decisions on certain aspects of intelligence operations and as a result he lost their trust on one of his former assignments (we are not familiar with the case).<sup>27</sup>

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26 Although one of the documents said that Adam Abramowicz graduated from SGPiS (now the SGH Warsaw School of Economics) in 1951 (I quote this information on p. 19 in my article "‘Filantropem nie jestem’...", other records suggest that he dropped out in 1949 after three years of study.

27 AIPN, 00168/216, Notatka służbowa z rozmowy z Adamem Abramowiczem sporządzona przez chor. Tadeusza Ordona [Memorandum of a conversation with Adam Abramowicz written by Warrant Officer Tadeusz Ordon], May 18, 1953, 12. What Abramowicz meant was that some security men from Kraków arrested several persons who were in contact with him, which alerted the smuggling network allegedly collaborating with the British intelligence service (AIPN, 0604/19, Charakterystyka służbowa naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu III MBP mjr. Ryszarda Matejewskiego [Character assessment of Maj Ryszard Matejewski, Head of Subdepartment Four of Department Three of the MBP], November 25, 1951, unpaginated).

Górnik was entrusted with the task of collecting intelligence on ex-insurgents. Also, he was to observe and report on the situation at Dalspo. Abramowicz accomplished both tasks and presented very detailed descriptions of his closest collaborators (for instance, he provided information on their contacts with “hostile circles”).<sup>28</sup>

Ordon’s note suggests that Abramowicz was happy with his earlier work for the MBP (for financial reasons) and actually looking forward to when he could go back to it.

In the following years, Górnik transferred to a job with another centralized export business called Rolimpex, where he was head of the fruit and vegetable department. On October 1, 1961, he started work at Animex, yet another centralized foreign trade business, where he was section head in the meat department. All the time, he was in touch with security officers from Department Two of the MSW, passing on intelligence on his Polish workmates and “a number of interesting pieces of information on Capitalist traders.”<sup>29</sup> In 1964, he was again asked to provide data for 1956–1957 concerning individuals like Bronisław Sianoszek, Zygmunt Szkudelski, and Witold Morawski.<sup>30</sup>

In March 1965, Secret Collaborator Górnik was dispatched to Rome (his professional duties took him to Milan too). According to plan, he was to stay in Italy for three or four years. At this time, he was in contact with one of the officers of Section Seven of Department Two at the MSW.

The available records show that trouble with Abramowicz’s relations with the Ministry’s officers first arose when he was working abroad. In the latter half of 1967, Secret Collaborator Robert reported what he had learned from a woman working for Coopexim (another centralized export business). She said that Abramowicz told her he was working for the security services, and they were pestering him and wanting long and frequent reports from him.<sup>31</sup>

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28 AIPN, 00168/216, Notatka służbowa z rozmowy z Adamem Abramowiczem sporządzona przez chor. Tadeusza Ordon [Memorandum of a conversation with Adam Abramowicz written by Warrant Officer Tadeusz Ordon], May 18, 1953, 15.

29 AIPN, 00168/216, Charakterystyka TW “Górnik,” [Character assessment of Secret Collaborator Górnik], September 25, 1965, 32. See also AIPN, 01434/452, Wykaz tajnych współpracowników, kontaktów służbowych i lokali kontaktowych Wydziału IX Departamentu II MSW [List of secret collaborators, operational contact agents, and contact venues, Subdepartment Nine of Department Two, MSW], January 10, 1963, unpaginated.

30 AIPN, 00168/216, Notatka służbowa dotycząca TW “Górnik,” [Memorandum re Secret Collaborator Górnik], May 20, 1964, 24.

31 *Ibid.*, Notatka z rozmowy z TW „Robert” przygotowana przez mjr. Henryka Sobieskiego [Memorandum on a conversation with Secret Collaborator Robert, compiled by Maj Henryk Sobieski], September 15, 1967, 35.

About a fortnight later, a decision was made to transfer Górnik's dossier to the Archives of Bureau C, as the officers of Department Three were no longer interested in working with him. However, on July 26, 1968, an intelligence case codenamed "Górnik" was registered in the Autonomous Section of the Ministry's Department One, with which Abramowicz had been collaborating since June 12, 1968. The grounds for this decision were that he had good contacts in Italian circles infiltrated by the Yugoslav Study and Documentation Services, an intelligence agency reporting to the Yugoslav Federal Secretariat for Foreign Affairs, and by the intelligence agencies of other countries.<sup>32</sup>

Nonetheless, Abramowicz's collaboration with Department One was not going well. His case officer reported that Górnik followed orders in a sloppy, fragmentary and unsatisfactory way. He supplied information that was too general, superficial, and often irrelevant. Attempts to make him more active had failed. Abramowicz tried to give "objective reasons" as excuses for his sloppiness, saying he had problems with getting access to particular individuals, bad relations with specific companies, or other more or less objective difficulties. All in all, Górnik turned out to be an unenthusiastic and worthless collaborator.<sup>33</sup> Other officers must have had the same opinion, because Department One stopped working with Secret Collaborator Górnik on December 7, 1970, when he came back to Poland.

Abramowicz worked for Animex until 1974, when he was made redundant. However, he received some financial support from Alexander Moksel, a citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany, a member of the SPD and a friend of Willy Brandt. Moksel was a wealthy businessman trading in meat whom Górnik had met when he was working for Animex. Thanks to his support, Górnik could set about building a house in the village of Gliczarów Górny in Biały Dunajec Powiat, where he was planning to open a small restaurant. But he never turned his nose up at money. Following an interview in mid-1977 concerning the sources of his income, the deputy head of the passport section of the Warsaw People's Police headquarters reported,

Abramowicz claimed that he was on familiar terms with the police authorities and assured me that he was loyal and ready to help. These declarations, as well as

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32 *Ibid.*, Postanowienie o założeniu rozpracowania operacyjnego kryptonim "Górnik" [Decision to launch an operational surveillance action codenamed "Górnik"], July 23, 1968, 37.

33 *Ibid.*, Notatka służbowa dotycząca współpracy TW "Górnik" na terenie Włoch, [Memorandum on the services rendered by Secret Collaborator Górnik in Italy], December 8, 1970, 40. Adam Abramowicz's poor performance may have been accounted for partly by the fact that his last pay slip dated back to December 1965.

his obsequious courtesy, were so manifest in our conversation that they made me wonder ... how much of it was being put on.<sup>34</sup>

In 1977, the security service made its last attempt to use Abramowicz's alleged contacts in the Federal Republic of Germany, but failed already after his preliminary interview with Maj Henryk Antczak, an inspector from Subdepartment Seven, Department Two in the MSW. Antczak gave the following account of Abramowicz's situation at the time:

As Abramowicz said himself, upon quitting his job with Animex, he gave up his social life and avoided meeting colleagues. He spends most of his time in the environs of Poronin, where he has started building a house and intends to move there next spring for permanent residence. He is mentally unbalanced, which was easy to see, at odds with "life" and his social environment. His speech is chaotic and lacks coherence. ... He made no attempt to hide the fact that until recently he was an alcoholic. ... Considering all of this, I think it would be pointless to keep him as one of our contacts any longer, and even inadvisable due to the state of his mental health.<sup>35</sup>

In 1979, Abramowicz had a massive heart attack and his health deteriorated so much that he was qualified for a disability pension. Later he traveled abroad, to Italy to visit the family of a doctor he met when he was working in Milan.

It is hard to say whether the poor condition of Górnik's psychosomatic health the Ministry's officers observed in the late 1970s was in any way due to pangs of conscience for collaborating with the Communist security services. What seems puzzling is Abramowicz's complete lack of contact with his brother Andrzej as of the 1970s. After 1989, Górnik never tried to say anything about the circumstances of Jan Rodowicz's death or disclose any details concerning the sinister aspects of his life.

Adam Abramowicz died on December 4, 2011, at the age of 86.

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34 AIPN, 763/57531, Meldunek specjalny nr 236/77 dotyczący kontaktów utrzymywanych przez Adama Abramowicza z obywatelem RFN [Special memorandum no. 236/77 re contact maintained by Adam Abramowicz with a citizen of the Federal Republic of Germany], June 1, 1977, unpaginated.

35 AIPN, 00168/216, Raport do naczelnika Wydziału VII Departamentu II MSW płk. Stefana Jedynaka z rozmowy przeprowadzonej z byłym TW "Górnikiem", obywatelem Abramowiczem Adamem przez inspektora Wydziału VII Departamentu II MSW mjr. Henryka Antczaka [Report for Col Stefan Jedynak, Head of Subdepartment Seven, Department Two of the MSW, re conversation with Citizen Adam Abramowicz, formerly Secret Collaborator Górnik, compiled by Maj Henryk Antczak, Inspector of Subdepartment Seven, Department Two of the MSW], October 25, 1977, 79–80.

As I have already said, Bronisław Sianoszek played an important role in gathering intelligence on the Radosław veterans. Not only was he instrumental in recruiting Abramowicz for the security service, but he also prepared the ground for Maj Herer's talks with Donat Czerewacz. However, from 1948 on, Sianoszek's collaboration with the security services did not work well, because after some time he stopped rendezvousing and no longer submitted relevant data.<sup>36</sup>

In March 1949, Sianoszek wrote the letter I have mentioned in one of the footnotes, in which he revoked his earlier denunciations and severed his ties with the MBP. Some publications say that Sianoszek was held in a number of maximum security prisons, from which he escaped on a couple of occasions – the last time in 1953.<sup>37</sup> In fact, in 1949 he went into hiding and spent the next four years holed up. In his records there is information about a letter he wrote to President Bierut in early 1952 with a petition for a chance to “come out of an illegal situation.” He sent a similar letter to Marshal Konstanty Rokossowski.<sup>38</sup> President Bierut gave his consent to have the reprisals against Sianoszek stopped, on condition that in future he would “not commit any acts undermining the wellbeing of People's Poland.”<sup>39</sup>

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36 AIPN, 0945/44, Raport starszego referenta Wydziału I Departamentu III MBP por. Władysława Borkowskiego do naczelnika Wydziału I Departamentu III mjr. Bronisława Wróblewskiego w sprawie Bronisława Sianoszka [Report from Lt Władysław Borkowski, Senior Office of Subdepartment One, Department Three of the MBP, for Maj. Bronisław Wróblewski, Head of Subdepartment One, Department Three, re Bronisław Sianoszek], March 21, 1949, unpaginated.

37 Cabanowski, *Grodziszczanie...*, 58.

38 Here is a passage from Bronisław Sianoszek's letter: “During my interrogation they said I was the arsonist of Warsaw – the wounds I received while extinguishing the conflagration of the city had not yet healed. I was called a fascist – my wounds from German bullets had still not healed. I was beaten up – I had a relapse of the gangrene I developed thanks to the Gestapo's bullets. It was the beginning of a drama which is still with me today. ... The War has left psychological and mental scars on each one of us, but did not the contribution of our blood and the fighting we put in exceed a hundredfold our shortcomings and defects? ... In 1947, I was released from prison under the amnesty. However, my future prospects were arranged in such a way that in practice they were dependent on me working for a certain Ministry.” (AIPN, 01236/69, List Bronisława Sianoszka do marsz. Konstantego Rokossowskiego [Bronisław Sianoszek's letter to Marshal Konstanty Rokossowski], January 6, 1952, unpaginated).

39 AIPN, 00203/4935, Pismo dyrektora gabinetu ministra bezpieczeństwa publicznego ppłk. Michała Drzewieckiego do szefa Wojskowego Urzędu Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego w Warszawie w sprawie Bronisława Sianoszka [Letter from Lt Col Michał Drzewiecki, Director of the office of the Minister of Public Security,

For a short time in 1954, Subdepartment Four of Department Three considered resuming collaboration with Sianoszek. However, in the end, the document on Sianoszek's prospective reinstallation had a handwritten note added by the superior of the officer who drafted it, which said,

Sianoszek is deranged and in my opinion it would be pointless to interview him. If he were normal, he'd be inside. So, giving him an interview would not make any sense.<sup>40</sup>

Nonetheless, a memo written on Sianoszek in May 1964 suggests that when he sent a letter to the MBP in January 1954, in which he wrote of spying activities by some people he knew, collaboration with him was resumed. However, Sianoszek failed to submit information of any value and, as his case officers discovered, blew his cover to his wife, telling her of his relations with the security service and embroidering on the facts by saying, for instance, that he was meeting with the Minister of Public Security. So Sianoszek's collaboration was terminated in late 1955.<sup>41</sup>

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to the Head of the Military Office of Public Security in Warsaw re Bronisław Sianoszek], March 14, 1952, 10.

- 40 AIPN, 0945/44, Raport referenta Wydziału IV Departamentu III MBP do naczelnika Wydziału IV Departamentu III zawierający prośbę o zezwolenie na spotkanie się z wyeliminowanym informatorem "Odwet" [Report from an Officer of Subdepartment Four of Department Three of the MBP to the Head of Subdepartment Four of Department Three of the MBP, requesting permission to interview the dismissed informer Odwet], January 22, 1954, unpaginated. In subsequent years, the MBP's opinion of Bronisław Sianoszek did not improve. One of the documents concerning him says, "he is depraved – an alcohol addict. ... considered degenerate and everyone avoids his company" (AIPN, 00203/4935, Notatka służbowa z przeprowadzonej rozmowy na temat Bronisława Sianoszka [Memorandum re a discussion on Bronisław Sianoszek], December 16, 1958, 14). One of the informers who knew Sianoszek personally characterized him in the following way: "He is a person ... who enjoys killing people; he has the character of a psychopath, produces fantastic stories and is moody" (AIPN, 01236/69, Odpis z doniesienia agenturalnego informatora "Jan" [Copy of an intelligence report submitted by Informer Jan], April 3, 1954, unpaginated). This description is likely exaggerated, as Informer Jan must have been afraid that Sianoszek would obtain information on his operational activities and would take his revenge (according to his case officer, he was afraid of Bronek). On the other hand, Sianoszek's tragic experiences must have had a negative impact on his psychological and mental constitution.
- 41 AIPN, 01236/69, Notatka służbowa na temat Bronisława Sianoszka sporządzona na podstawie dokumentów Wydziału II Biura "C" MSW oraz posiadanych materiałów [Memorandum re Bronisław Sianoszek, written on the basis of records from Department Two of Bureau C of the MSW and other records], May 8, 1964, unpaginated).

However, in the following years Sianoszek was still of interest to the security service – now he was being observed on suspicion of illegal possession of firearms. In 1961, he reported some of his acquaintances who allegedly wanted to come clear and disclose their spying activities, but ultimately nothing came of the matter and in 1962 Subdepartment One of Department Two at the MSW decided to terminate its collaboration with Sianoszek.<sup>42</sup> In 1964–1965, the security service became interested in him again. This time he was suspected of having been in possession of firearms since the War. Apparently, he was spreading rumors on the identity of the kidnappers and killers of the politician Bolesław Piasecki's son Bohdan. In addition, the police authorities were interested in him in connection with a bank robbery committed on December 22, 1964; Bronek was suspected of complicity. However, he was cleared of involvement in the last two affairs.

Once he had Bierut's consent to return to a "life above board," Sianoszek took up a job at a dental outpatient clinic in Ciechanów (he was a qualified dental technician). Next, he embarked on a writer's career and published his memoirs. He also wrote magazine articles for *Świat* and *Stolica*.

He died in a car accident on March 30, 1968, at the age of 46. Right to the end of his life, he was considered a hero of the anti-German resistance movement and a victim of Communist oppression.<sup>43</sup> Some suspected that the security service was behind his death, but there is no evidence for that.<sup>44</sup>

Donat "Sójka" Czerewacz was the only one of the Radosław veterans with a distinguished combat record to be released from prison without any additional hassle, and that was why other Zośkaites started to speculate whether he might have been an MBP snitch.

In his exchanges with MBP officers in the early 1950s, now as Informer Zaręba, Czerewacz said that to convince his colleagues in the resistance movement of his trustworthiness, he should have been sentenced to at least ten years in prison, so now he was having serious problems with meeting his former comrades in arms, who did not trust him. As a result, he was no longer able to offer the MBP information as good as what he had provided before, and in addition, he must have felt ostracized by his peers. However,

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42 *Ibid.*

43 Bronisław Sianoszek helped in the work for a publication on his underground unit and delivered source materials to its author, Cezary Chlebowski (Chlebowski, *Pozdrówcie Góry Świętokrzyskie...*, 426–427). There is no trace in Sianoszek's personal records of any documents to confirm his receipt of payments from the MBP.

44 The driver walked out of the accident unscathed (Cabanowski, *Grodziszczanie...*, 43). Some speculated he could have been an MBP stooge sent in to get rid of Sianoszek.

the MBP came to the conclusion that Sójka was not making full use of his ample opportunities, in order to protect his colleagues.

A letter written by Jan Grabowski, an officer from Subdepartment Four of Department Five, to Capt Stanisław Filipiak, the new head of Department Four,<sup>45</sup> gives an interesting account of a talk with Czerewacz:

Informer Zaręba ... does not want to shirk collaboration, but he is aware that lately his work has not been bringing any effects and he would like to produce some results which would also give him some satisfaction. So he asked if it would not be better to move him somewhere else where he could accomplish something. The boss showed him that his thinking was ... wrong, that it was 1951 and there were no more gangs [*sic!*], that the methods of battle had changed and now the enemy was operating in a more disguised way and that you did not have to look for him elsewhere, because ... you could find him here.<sup>46</sup>

Although Czerewacz's case officers claimed that these arguments convinced him, in the following years he was still not particularly successful in collecting intelligence on Radosław veterans. On the contrary, he was engaged in things the MBP did not want, for example, he tried to join the PZPR.<sup>47</sup> It is hard to say whether he wanted to join the Party for ideological reasons, or because it would make his everyday life easier, or because he hoped it would wipe out the last shred of credibility he had with the Zośkaites, and the MBP would have to live with it.

On April 28, 1956, Zaręba was crossed off the list of informers, but in 1959 he was entered on it again when he started a job as an editor for the magazine *Żołnierz Polski* (earlier he had been a sports journalist). At this time, he resumed his contacts with the Zośkaites, whom he had not seen for a couple of years. Most of them treated this as proof that he was not an informer after all, because otherwise he would have tried to keep in touch with them all the time.<sup>48</sup> After some time, Zaręba's case officers decided

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45 Filipiak succeeded Wiktor Herer in the post. In November 1950, Herer was appointed Head of Subdepartment One of Department Five.

46 AIPN, 2386/6229, Notatka służbowa referenta Wydziału IV Departamentu V MBP Jana Grabowskiego dla naczelnika Wydziału IV kpt. Stanisława Filipiaka [Memorandum from Officer Jan Grabowski of Subdepartment Four in Department Five of the MBP, for Capt Stanisław Filipiak, Head of Subdepartment Four], February 14, 1951, 57–58.

47 AIPN, 2386/6229, Prośba Donata Czerewacza o zgodę na członkostwo w PZPR [Donat Czerewacz's petition to join the PZPR], March 14, 1951, 49. He did not become a member until 1960.

48 One of the outcomes was the following passage (and other passages) on Donat Czerewacz in Włodzimierz Trojan's book on the Zośkaites: "[he was] released after five months, but later he was detained on several occasions and kept under surveillance until 1955," (Trojan, *Ci, którzy przeżyli...*, 60). This data must have

he should apply for membership of ZBoWiD, which would help him collect intelligence on his colleagues from the Warsaw Uprising.<sup>49</sup> He joined ZBoWiD in April 1966,<sup>50</sup> but as the Zośkaites were no longer pursuing any anti-Communist activities, his attempts to collect intelligence were abortive.

Czerewacz's professional career was largely connected with his work for the MBP. In 1949, when he graduated with an MA in Journalism, Herer got him a job with Rolimpex,<sup>51</sup> where he was given the same tasks as Abramowicz. In 1954, again on a recommendation from the MBP, he became a journalist for *Sportowiec* magazine. Next, in 1959 he became an editor for *Żołnierz Polski*, where he was to gather intelligence on the civilian and military staff working for this and other magazines concerned with military matters (especially the personnel who visited capitalist countries). In 1965 he started work in the Czołówka film studio and in March 1973 took up a lucrative job as secretary of the central editorial board of the news department in Poland's state television, which he held until he retired in 1982. In the last years before his retirement he was working for Department Two of Directorate Two of Central Command of Internal Military Service. On January 25, 1983, he was again struck off the list of informers, this time because after his retirement he was no longer able to obtain intelligence.<sup>52</sup>

When he recuperated his credibility with Radosław veterans, Insurgent Sójka engaged in social work for the veteran movement and earned respect for it—he wrote the lyrics for the Battalion Zośka song. In 1995 he was awarded the Krzyż Armii Krajowej (Home Army Cross), and Krzyż za Zasługi dla Związku Harcerstwa Polskiego z Rozetą z Mieczami (the Cross

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been supplied by Czerewacz himself, who right to the end of his life continued to claim he had been persecuted by the Communist authorities.

- 49 AIPN, 2386/6229, Notatka służbowa ze spotkania z TW "Zarębą," [Memorandum on a meeting with Secret Collaborator Zaręba], June 18, 1959, 63. See also MPW Collections, Powstańcze biogramy, Donat Czerewacz, Deklaracja członkowska Donata Czerewacza do Związku Powstańców Warszawskich, [Insurgents' potted biographies, Donat Czerewacz, Application for membership of Związek Powstańców Warszawskich [Union of Warsaw Insurgents)], March 10, 1992, unpaginated.
- 50 AUdsKiOR, K 7447083, Deklaracja członkowska Donata Czerewacza do ZBoWiD, [Donat Czerewacz's application to join ZBoWiD], April 27, 1966, 6.
- 51 AIPN, 2386/6229, Pismo mjr. Wiktora Herera w sprawie spowodowania przyjęcia do pracy Donata Czerewacza [Maj Wiktor Herer's letter of recommendation for Donat Czerewacz], August 23, 1949, 403.
- 52 Pietrzak, "'Zaręba'...", 78.

of Merit for the Polish Scouting and Guiding Association) in 2000, a decoration awarded to members of the Gray Ranks. Despite the suspicions some people had about him, he managed to keep others in the dark about his dealings with the security service.<sup>53</sup>

Donat Czerewacz died on July 27, 2007, at the age of 86.

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53 MPW Collections, Powstańcze biogramy, Donat Czerewacz, Nekrolog Donata Czerewacza “Sójki” podpisany “Środowisko Żołnierzy Batalionu ‘Zośka’” [Insurgents’ potted biographies, Donat “Sójka” Czerewacz, Obituary published by Środowisko Żołnierzy Batalionu “Zośka”], no date, unpaginated.



## Closing remarks

In the long run, the Communist security apparatus failed to accomplish its aim. It failed to wipe the heroic chapter created by the young people of Poland fighting for the country's independence and sovereignty in 1939–1945 and in the wake of the Second World War out of the nation's collective memory. Especially in recent years, we have been observing a vibrant wave of interest in the history of the Warsaw Uprising, proceeding particularly clearly among school, college, and university students. Feature films and documentaries are being made about individuals like Anoda; such persons are also the subject of works of literature and scholarship, news reports and articles. They are being commemorated by historical reenactment groups whose events are becoming more and more professional, and in the names of important streets and squares in many towns and cities throughout Poland. Meanwhile, as if on the principle of contrast, the political police working for the MBP and their informers have sunk into the shadows of oblivion. No doubt they were pleased with that after 1989, and did not want to be reminded of the shameful episodes in their lives. So in a sense, historical justice has been done. Yet most of those guilty of the severe repressive measures taken against patriotic Polish youngsters have gone unpunished.<sup>1</sup> Gaps in the records have been one of the things which have prevented a precise scrutiny of the events. The informers have not been called to account, either. Luckily, many Zośkaites and veterans of other insurgent battalions have lived to see the times when the Polish State could finally pay them the tribute they deserve.

Regardless of the controversy shrouding the circumstances of his death, Jan “Anoda” Rodowicz has become an indisputable symbol of Poland's underground resistance both against Germany as well as against the Communist

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1 In 1994, Adam Humer was put on trail and convicted of using torture to extract confessions. Battalion Zośka veterans were witnesses at his trial (Żaneta Semprich, “Świadkowie z batalionu ‘Zośka’,” *Rzeczpospolita* August 4, 1994). He was committed to Rakowiecka prison. One of the prison staff gave the following account of his behavior: “He was furious. He behaved as if everything on the premises belonged to him. He wanted to be given special treatment. But he was soon told that now he was a prisoner, not an investigating officer!” (quoted after J.S. Majewski, “Katownia w środku miasta,” *Gazeta Wyborcza*, November 25, 2004). Ten other security policemen including Tadeusz Tomporski were convicted apart from Humer, but not all of them served their prison sentences because of ill health (“Czterech ubowców w drodze do aresztu,” *Rzeczpospolita*, May 24, 1996; Lipiński, *Humer i inni...*).

regime. His third funeral, which took place on May 24, 1995, turned into a patriotic manifestation attended by crowds of Varsovians.

Tributes to honor his memory include the following:

- he is the patron of several scouts' brigades, the 265<sup>th</sup> Warsaw Scouts Pack, and the First Scouts Pack of Murowana Goślina;
- memorial plaques have been put up in his honor on the building of the Faculty of Architecture of Warsaw University of Technology and on the building currently accommodating the Ministry of Justice;
- on September 19, 2005, one of the streets in the Ursynów district of Warsaw was named after him, and a memorial stone was set up there to honor him;
- a street has been named after him on the Teofilów residential estate in the city of Łódź;
- Jan "Anoda" Rodowicz is the patron of the Second Group of Scouts, Guides, and Cub Packs in the Poznań–Wilda Brigade;
- in 2011, the Warsaw Rising Museum founded the Jan "Anoda" Rodowicz Award, which is conferred in two categories: for lifetime achievement which may serve as a role-model for young people to follow, and for a special achievement.

I hope that my research effort presented in this book will help to disseminate information on Anoda and make this outstanding individual more and more popular and better known. I hope this book will serve to present the last days of his life as an opportunity for reflection on the broad spectrum of the diverse attitudes people took on Poland's tragic history in the Stalinist period.

# Appendix

## No. 1 [W. Herer,] Jan Rodowicz's suicide

### 1. Political and historical background conditions

The political volte-face effected by Stalin after the War, which in Poland may be regarded as coinciding with the establishment of Cominform (1947),<sup>1</sup> inaugurated a new period marked by the removal of Gomułka from office, followed by his arrest. The main development in this period was the increasing integration of the political and social conditions in the Communist countries with all that had already taken place and was continuing in the Soviet Union. At any rate, some of the trends leading up to this integration had appeared already in 1945. They are given a cogent expression in Bierut's account of a talk, very brutal and full of threats, he had with Stalin in the presence of Molotov in 1945, published for the first time in Gomułka's memoirs (1994). In this exchange, Stalin launched an extremely vicious and vulgar attack on Bierut, accusing the Polish government of being too gentle with its political adversaries.<sup>2</sup>

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- 1 Cominform, the Information Bureau of the Communist and Workers' Parties (Russian: Информационное бюро коммунистических и рабочих партий), was a co-ordination body of Marxist-Leninist Communist parties in Europe during the early Cold War that was formed in part as a replacement of the Communist International. The Cominform was dissolved during de-Stalinization in 1956. Its Polish branch, Biuro Informacyjne Partii Komunistycznych i Robotniczych, was established on September 27, 1947, during a conference of Communist and Workers' Parties at Szklarska Poręba.
  - 2 Bolesław Bierut (1892–1956), Stalinist President of the Polish People's Republic, cited the question with which Stalin opened the conversation: "*Tso ty, yob tvoyu mat, dyelayesh v Polshe? Kakoy z teba komunist? Ty sukinsyn.*" ("What are you, fuck your mother, doing in Poland? What kind of Communist are you? You're a son of a bitch.") Gomułka cites the rest of the quote in Polish translation: "After announcing the decree on agricultural reform you should have immediately crushed the big landowners, sending some to prison and resettling the rest to a new place." Then he (Gomułka) gives the following comment on the passage: "We have to rule out the possibility of Bierut exaggerating and embroidering on the exchange. He had no reason to misrepresent it to his own disadvantage. But he could not keep it secret from the Politburo because it carried a need to correct the Party's policy, take a tougher line on our political adversaries, the reactionary underground resistance movement, and the opposition groups in London," (Władysław Gomułka, *Pamiętniki*, Andrzej Werblan (ed.), Warszawa: Polska Oficyna Wydawnicza "BGW", 1994, Vol. 2, 308–309 [footnote in the original document]).

Nonetheless, the enforced Sovietization of the political and social conditions in Poland in 1946–47 proceeded along a path marked by a considerable amount of ebb and flow. But in 1947–53, more pressure was applied, giving rise to a sharply escalating trend. 1949 marked a turning point. Both in Russia as well as in the extreme Stalinist groups in Poland, criticism intensified of the situation in Poland, which was perceived as too liberal and given a derogatory Russian label, “*kabaretochniy sotsyalizm*” (cabaret-show socialism).

In these circumstances, Julia Brystiger, who was head of the MBP’s Department Five at the time, and I, were very worried to hear the vague news of the “explosion” (that was the term used) of the boiler in the bathroom of the Belweder Palace at the time Zofia Dzierżyńska,<sup>3</sup> widow of Feliks Dzierżyński, was in Warsaw and staying in the Belweder (in late 1949).<sup>4</sup> Jan Rodowicz’s name was mentioned in the information on the incident, which started to be treated as an attempted act of terrorism committed by a group from the Warsaw University of Technology associated with him. We denied this explanation of the incident and considered it a tall tale, but we did not suspect it could have been a provocation instigated by one of the units in the Security Service. Nonetheless, we thought that the incident, which in our opinion was just an ordinary technical breakdown, might be used as a pretext to trigger the time-honored mechanisms for a provocation, not planned in advance but one that took advantage of a chance occurrence.<sup>5</sup> People who activate such a mechanism after a time start believing themselves in their conjectures, which makes them even more dangerous because they do all they can to make their story credible.

We were afraid that Jan Rodowicz would be arrested under normal procedures and confined in Mokotów,<sup>6</sup> and that the investigation concerning the

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3 Zofia Dzierżyńska (Sofia Sigizmundovna Dzerzhinskaya, in transcription from the Russian version of her name, 1882–1968), was a Polish-born Communist activist, permanently resident in the Soviet Union after the War.

4 Erroneous information; Zofia Dzierżyńska visited Warsaw in 1948.

5 A recently published book by Alla Kirilina (*L’Assassinat de Kirov. Destin d’un stalinien, 1888–1934*, Paris: Seuil, 1995) contains the latest set of documents concerning the assassination of Sergey Kirov, which say that, contrary to what Khrushchev maintained, Kirov was killed by a mentally unbalanced maniac called Leonid Nikolayev with no political connections at all. Bernard Feron has given the following account of the killing of Kirov: “Stalin did not commission this murder, he only made cynical use of it for his political purposes, thereby making December 1, 1934 [the date of the killing] one of the saddest days in Russia’s history, which is full of such sad days anyway.” As we know, Kirov’s death was the start of three years of mass murder in Russia and other Soviet republics [footnote in the document].

6 The remand prison on ulica Rakowiecka in the Mokotów district of Warsaw.

terrorist attack would be politicized. We feared that the investigation would come under fire of orders and pressure from above for impulsive haste, which could lead to a show trial, most opportune for the Stalinist demands. This in turn could serve as the signal for a mass wave of repressions against students and the intelligentsia as a whole. The finale could well be a fundamental change in the general living conditions for the intelligentsia as well as for the peasants who were dragging their feet over collectivization. The change could involve the imposition of everything that had occurred in Russia and was being brought in on a mass scale at the time, the turn of 1949 and 1950, in all the countries of the Soviet Bloc except for Poland. It entailed measures such as the mass resettlement of some of the intelligentsia from the capitals and other cities, mass rustication from the universities and colleges, and the mandatory employment in blue-collar jobs of educated individuals and distinguished representatives of the arts and culture. Here I have to observe that even those who were declared sympathizers of the new Communist order or generally approved of it reconciled their acceptance of the basic economic principles resulting from Poland's inclusion in the Soviet Bloc with a widespread, patent reluctance to have the Polish socio-political situation brought in line with the Soviet model. A distinctly negative attitude to those aspects of Sovietization which were particularly oppressive to society, especially for the intelligentsia and farmers (such as enforced collectivization) could be observed even among Party leaders and—significantly—the commanding cadres in the military and security service. The ostensible paradox about such attitudes in these social groups may be readily understood if one recalls that these forms of Sovietization meant a special kind of threat to a large part of the leadership cadre, including the group in command in the military and security apparatus. Many people, especially from the older generation, were well aware that this was the part of society which had been affected most of all by the Stalinist reign of terror raging in Russia in the late 1930s. These fears were enhanced by the fact that a considerable part of the cadres in the Party and military, including the top brass, came from those regions of prewar Poland which were exposed to a mass, very brutal wave of terror conducted by the NKVD in 1939–41. A large number of these people had gone through the Soviet gulags. This applied especially to the officers of the First Army of the Polish Forces.\*

There could be no doubt that if a show trial were staged against the perpetrators of the so-called Belweder assassination attempt, with Jan Rodowicz as one of the accused, there would be a danger of Sovietization escalating beyond all bounds. That is why we decided to take action absolutely spontaneously within the framework of the security apparatus to prevent incitement. To do this, we decided to resort to the rights and privileges of Department Five—which in fact we used very rarely since, as I will

explain later, it was tasked with other duties— and we decided to remand Jan Rodowicz in custody on the grounds of a prosecutor’s warrant request. He was committed to the MBP remand prison on the premises of its building on the corner of Koszykowa and Aleje Ujazdowskie.<sup>7</sup>

Rodowicz’s confinement meant that he was no longer subject to the authority of the Investigations Department and the investigation procedures in force at the time. All of his interviews were held in this building, and all of them only in the Department’s offices on the fifth story. Not a word was said about the Belweder Incident during our discussions with him. We limited ourselves to the subject of the disclosure of a small cache of arms which had been hidden away after the Warsaw Uprising and its handing over to the appropriate authorities. We knew that Rodowicz’s group was keeping a cache of weapons concealed. We had known about the matter for some time but did not treat it as an urgent operation. However, given the situation at the time, it was obvious that Jan Rodowicz and his associates could be detained by the Investigations Department, which would press charges against them relating to the Belweder Affair as well. When Rodowicz was arrested, on the initiative of Department Five a technical expertise was launched to determine the cause of the explosion, as a result of which the whole affair quietened down very quickly, within a matter of days after Rodowicz’s arrest. The expertise proved beyond all doubt that the incident which had been dubbed an explosion was the outcome of a technical failure. We endorsed the results of the expertise with arguments which showed that the atmosphere in the ex-AK community was not conducive to plans for terrorist attacks.

From late December to the day of the tragedy (January 7, 1950),<sup>8</sup> we conducted several talks in the form of interviews with Jan Rodowicz. All of them without exception were civilized discussions (no one raised their voice). I have to stress that these talks were certainly not an attempt to recruit him. On the whole, they concerned the socio-political background to the business of the hidden arms.

Department Five’s method of conducting interviews and interviewing arrestees, which happened very rarely, on exceptional occasions, was due to the nature of the tasks for which it had been appointed. These tasks were not sleuthing and figuring out organizations engaged in armed resistance. We observed the activities of legal and semi-legal organizations regarded (according to the criteria applicable at the time) as entities representing the

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7 In 1945–1956 this major thoroughfare was known as “Aleja im. Marszałka Józefa Stalina” in honor of Generalissimo Stalin.

8 Erroneous date; it should be 1949.

opposition. The way the Department selected its staff and the location of its premises in the Security Ministry's representational building were tailored to meet these purposes. I will return to the question of our premises a bit later. So, in view of these circumstances, it comes as no surprise at all that our Department's working practices must have differed radically from the idea society in general today has of the work of the security service.<sup>9</sup>

This business concerning the hidden arms cache was straightforward from the operational point of view, but there was a political aspect to it, basically like the Belweder Affair. In my opinion, I believed we had to do all we could both in the case of the weapons as well as in the Belweder Affair to prevent the political conditions society had to live in from deteriorating. As I have already said, in practice this boiled down to stopping the Sovietizing processes like the ones that had occurred in all the new countries of the Communist Bloc (except for the eastern territories of Germany and a considerable part of Poland).

On the basis of this idea as my point of departure, I considered all operations involving weapons and attempts to set them in motion extremely dangerous for Poland. I tried to do all I could to protect young people, especially those who had been in the AK from turning into more victims. That's what I spoke about with Jan Rodowicz. I think this line of thinking proved itself to a certain extent in 1956, when there was a real threat of a Soviet invasion hanging over Poland.\* So what happened in 1956? By that time, I was no longer working in the security apparatus, which I left in 1951. A considerable number of Security Office officers, even the top brass, engaged in the operations on the Polish side (I mean a considerable number of them, but only some, because like the rest of the Party and State apparatus, the security apparatus was divided). The Security Service was the source of systematic information on the movements of Soviet forces. In the event, it turned out that presumably, by and large what stopped the Russians and made them retreat and give up the idea to stage an operation like the Hungarian one<sup>10</sup> in

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9 One of the *samizdats* of the time published an account given by a person who was in a group of young people waiting outside in the corridor for an interview, and heard a discussion in one of Department Five's rooms under lock and key. The people in the corridor could distinctly hear what was said inside the room during a staff meeting. Julia Brystiger, head of the Department, spoke at length to those at the meeting, and her address on matters which were clearly confidential concerned the aims of the Department's work [footnote in Herer's original document].

10 Wiktor Herer was thinking of the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, which was crushed by Soviet forces. About two and a half thousand victims, people who had stood up against the Communist regime, were killed.

Poland were not the weapons saved from the Warsaw Uprising and collected by people inspired by honest motives, but the arms in the possession of the regular Polish forces ready to engage in armed resistance. That's how a new tragedy was averted.

I am well aware of the tremendous skepticism (or perhaps various degrees of skepticism) which my assertions must be evoking. Many will perhaps think I am "making up a philosophy" to go with my past, or that it still does not vindicate my four years of work in the apparatus of the Ministry of Security. As far as that is concerned, I am not at all sure myself that once I got there, I did everything I could to stop the worst there was in the work of that apparatus. So I found it hard to live with that burden, especially in 1947–50, when, quite openly for all to see, I was on the faculty of a university and at the same time serving in the MBP. Later too, I found it hard to live with that burden, also when I was a rank-and-file member of Solidarity, right from the start of its activities. And it's hard for me to live with that burden now as well.

In later times, I often thought about my work in the Ministry. So what else is there for me to say now?

My work there started almost by accident, straight after the War. My spell in the First Army of the Polish Forces happened to come to an end when I was serving in the Fourth Division, which right after the War was automatically transformed into the Internal Security Corps. Of course, I don't want to suggest that I was given no choice about being transferred to a job in the MBP. During my service in the First Army I never held a post in any of the military information, intelligence, or prosecution units. I honestly admit that at the time I identified with many of the economic principles espoused by the new political system. But I was very sensitive to the attempt to Sovietize political relations in Poland because I had an intimate knowledge of the horrors they entailed, as I came from the part of the Second Polish Republic which was occupied by Soviet forces in 1939. Another relevant point was the fact that my family was closely connected with some Polish Communists who were murdered in the Soviet Union in 1937.

## **2. What I remember about the developments leading up to Jan Rodowicz's suicide**

It was like this. One of my colleagues who usually worked in records burst into my room. He was shocked and bewildered, and said that Jan Rodowicz had jumped out of the window of a neighboring, fifth-floor room (either next door to mine or the next but one, I'm not sure which). He did it after passing down the Ministry's corridors which were open to diverse interested parties from outside the security apparatus, who had permits allowing them to enter

these premises. The incident happened in broad daylight, on a weekday,<sup>11</sup> before the eyes of various security staff, interested parties from outside, and passers-by on Aleje Ujazdowskie. The yard into which Rodowicz fell was fenced off from the street with the same wooden fence which is up now. After a while I was in the yard, where I saw Rodowicz lying on the ground. He was removed straightaway in an ambulance.

The autopsy carried out shortly afterwards showed that the cause of death was his fall from a window high up on the building, onto the concrete floor of the yard. Numerous eye-witnesses confirmed this sequence of events. I did not see the incident myself, but I cannot imagine any member of the staff of our building on Koszykowa getting the idea to defenestrate someone from a Ministry window into the yard clearly visible from all the windows as well as from the street.

Jan Rodowicz was buried in Powązki Cemetery, but after three months, his family had the body moved to a family grave. Two persons helped: the manager of the funeral parlor, who knew Rodowicz, and a member of the Security Service staff, mentioned in the memoirs of Rodowicz's mother in the following remark, "There was someone who had the heart to think of us and find the grave, for which I shall always be grateful to him."

I realize that anything I write will inevitably come up against distrust. That's the way it is in all political systems: in situations like this one, people never trust what the police say. This applies, of course, especially to the evidence given by my erstwhile subordinate in the Security Service in the conditions of postwar Poland. However, aware of the responsibility, I take it upon myself to assert that, apart from the very fact of Rodowicz's arrest and confinement in prison, no violence was ever used against him. All of his interrogations were conducted in the office rooms which have no bars on the windows looking out on the streetside of Aleje Ujazdowskie. The walls were not soundproofed. Jan Rodowicz was escorted for interviews along corridors used by interested parties from outside the security apparatus, including persons who had no reason whatsoever to sympathize with the security apparatus. Any violent hearing of whatever kind, even just the use of a raised voice, would be hardly imaginable in such a building.

### **3. What made Jan Rodowicz commit suicide?**

That's a very hard question for me to answer. From what I observed, there was absolutely nothing about Jan Rodowicz's behavior to indicate that he was thinking of suicide.

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11 In 1949, January 7 was a Friday.

After 45 years, I can no longer recall just exactly what was said during our talks. But what I definitely remember is that not even the slightest attempt was made to recruit him. What I was interested in was to reduce the case down to a minimum in view of the aspect of the so-called Belweder Explosion I have described above.

I am convinced that self-defenestration from a fifth-story window could not have been an attempt to escape but simply a suicide.

To conclude, I have to put one more question to myself. What would have happened if the risk of incitement based on the Belweder incident had not been nipped in the bud and Jan Rodowicz had been arrested in connection with it under the Investigations Department's normal procedure? Of course, one cannot be sure that the Belweder incident would have been used to mount a full-scale political provocation. Many other factors could have come into play. One thing is certain—there was a very high probability of a provocation being fomented, and its social consequences would have been absolutely immeasurable. So I may ask myself if it would have been right for me not to take the chance to stop something that was so dangerous, just for the sake of my own peace and quiet. That is a question I may address not only to myself.

*Source: Agnieszka Pietrzak's collections, a certified transcript of Herer's original typescript document.*

## No. 2 Information Jan Rodowicz passed on under investigation on Battalions Miotła and Parasol

### Parasol

In late 1943, a third detached company consisting of two companies was created alongside Battalion Zośka. It was a special unit, intended particularly for operations against the Gestapo and Aleja Szucha.<sup>12</sup> It was commanded by “Pług,” aka “Adam.”<sup>13</sup> At the turn of 1943–44, it became fully autonomous and engaged in a vigorous series of operations, such as [the assassination attempts] on Gen. Kutschera,<sup>14</sup> Koppe,<sup>15</sup> Hahn,<sup>16</sup> Bürkl,<sup>17</sup> and many others. By the time the Uprising broke out, Parasol had grown to the size of a storm battalion of the same rank as Battalion Zośka. Afterwards, Parasol was commanded by “Jurek Żoliborski,”<sup>18</sup> who was killed in the Uprising. Battalion Parasol took part in the fighting conducted by the Radosław Group during the Warsaw Uprising in the districts of Wola, Starówka (the Old Town), Śródmieście (the City Center), Czerniaków and Mokotów. A very small group of its surviving members continued in the underground resistance after the Uprising and came forward and declared with Col. Radosław in 1945.

### Miotła

Miotła [“Broom”] was a sabotage group attached to Kedyw (Kierownictwo Dywersji, “Directorate of Diversion,” a unit conducting sabotage activities) under the command of Col. Radosław’s brother,<sup>19</sup> who was killed in the

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12 Under wartime occupation, the Germans used the building at No. 25 on Aleja Szucha for their police (*Ordnungspolizei*) and security police (*Sicherheitspolizei*) headquarters.

13 Adam Borys (1909–1986), organizer and commander of Battalion Parasol.

14 Franz Kutschera (1904–1944), SS and police chief for Distrikt Warschau in the Generalgouvernement (German-occupied Poland not directly incorporated in Germany).

15 Wilhelm Koppe (1896–1975), SS and police chief for Wartheland (the part of Poland directly incorporated in Germany) and the Generalgouvernement (the rest of German-occupied Poland).

16 Ludwig Hahn (1908–1986), chief of the Sicherheitsdienst (security service) for the Reichsführer SS (Heinrich Himmler) and of the security police for Distrikt Warschau (1941–1944).

17 Franz Bürkl (1911–1943), deputy chief warden of the Pawiak Prison.

18 Jan Kajus Andrzejewski, noms-de-guerre Jan, aka Jan Ż., aka Jan Żelechowski (1913–1944) – commander of a sabotage brigade known as Brygada Dywersji Broda 53.

19 Franciszek Władysław Mazurkiewicz, noms-de-guerre Niebora, aka Korday (1901–1944) – commander of Battalion Miotła.

Uprising. Miotła remained in the resistance movement after the Uprising, as it only came forward and declared together with Col. Radosław. That's all I know about Miotła, except that it was commanded by "Tadeusz,"<sup>20</sup> I think.

**Lechmiowicz** – currently a student at the Faculty of Architecture of Warsaw University of Technology, unfortunately I don't know exactly which year he is in <sup>a</sup>(maybe the third year),<sup>a</sup> nor where he lives, as I was not interested in that. <sup>b</sup> I think he lives in Czerianków.<sup>b</sup> In the resistance movement he was in Sad Platoon, Battalion Zośka. Later, he took part in the Warsaw Uprising and was seriously wounded. After the Uprising, he was in hospital in Otwock and afterwards took part in the resistance movement, after which he came forward and appeared before the AK Liquidating Committee, declaring his rank as 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant.

"**Tajfun**" and "**Orkan**." I can never remember which is which, and I <sup>c</sup>don't remember<sup>c</sup> their surnames, because I used to see them <sup>d</sup> for a longer time after they came forward<sup>d</sup> only on our skiing trip to Szklarska Poręba. Before the Uprising, they were both in the same unit of Battalion Zośka, and during the Uprising, too. After the Uprising, at first they were in our resistance movement but later they withdrew and I don't remember if they came forward and declared or not. I know that one of them, <sup>e</sup>the thinner one,<sup>e</sup> is studying at the University of Technology, and the other one, <sup>f</sup>the fatter one,<sup>f</sup> is at Wawelberg's.<sup>21</sup> I also know that we used to call the fatter one— I don't know if it was Tajfun ["Typhoon"] or Orkan ["Hurricane"] because in general we nicknamed them "The Winds" and knew they were each other's best friends — we also used to call the fatter one "Bęcwałski," because he played Bęcwałski during a show put on <sup>g</sup>during our skiing trip.<sup>g</sup>

Source: *AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 12–13, original handwritten manuscript.*

a–a Written in to supplement the statement.

b–b Written in to supplement the statement.

c–c The phrase "I don't know" has been crossed out and replaced with "I don't remember."

d–d Written in to supplement the statement. e–e Written in to supplement the statement. f–f Written in to supplement the statement. g–g Written in to supplement the statement.

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20 Tadeusz Wiwatowski, nom-de-guerre Olszyna (1914–1944) – second-in-command of Battalion Miotła.

21 Szkoła Wawelberga i Rotwanda [Wawelberg and Rotwand's School], a technical college founded in Warsaw in 1895 by financiers Hipolit Wawelberg and Stanisław Rotwand.

### No. 3 Minutes of the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz, December 24, 1948

Minutes of the interrogation of the suspect

Warsaw, December 24, 1948

Cykała Bolesław, lieutenant, investigating officer, Ministry of Public Security, Warsaw, conducted the interrogation of suspect

Surname and given name: Rodowicz Jan

Parents' names: Kazimierz and Zofia (née) Bortnowska

Date and place of birth: March 7, 1923, Warsaw

Residential address: Warsaw, ul. Lwowska 7 apartment 10

Nationality: Polish

Citizenship: Polish

Religion: Roman Catholic

Occupation: 2<sup>nd</sup>-year student of Warsaw University of Technology, Faculty of Architecture

Profession: student

Education: high school graduate

Army recruitment status: Subject to Rejonowa Komisja Uzupełnień Warszawa (Warsaw Regional Armed Forces Recruiting Office)

Rank: lieutenant

Military status: discharged

Family status: bachelor

Assets and property: none

Military decorations and orders: Virtuti Militari (Fifth Class); Krzyż Walecznych (The Cross of Valor) awarded twice; Medal Wolności i Zwycięstwa (The Freedom and Victory Medal); Medal za Warszawę (The Warsaw Medal); Odznaka Grunwaldzka (The Grunwald Badge)<sup>22</sup>

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22 The War Order of Virtuti Militari is the supreme Polish military decoration, conferred for outstanding bravery in combat. It was founded by King Stanisław August Poniatowski on June 22, 1792, to commemorate the Battle of Zieleńce.

Krzyż Walecznych (The Cross of Valor) was founded on the grounds of the Ordinance issued by Rada Obrony Państwa (the National Defense Council) on August 11, 1920, as an award for bravery and valor in combat by officers, NCOs, and men serving in the Polish forces.

Criminal record: says he has never been convicted for an offense

Question: “When was Białous Jerzy<sup>23</sup> aka Jerzy in Poland?”

Answer: “I do not remember exactly, probably he was in Poland in the spring of 1946 or 1947.”

Question: “When did you last see Białous Jerzy?”

Answer: “The last time I saw Białous Jerzy was during his stay in Poland in the spring of 1946 or 1947.”

Interrogation conducted by Cykała.

This marks the end of the minutes, which were read out to me and on confirming that they comply with the truth, I hereby sign them

Jan Rodowicz

Source: *AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 44–45, original handwritten manuscript.*

Medal Zwycięstwa i Wolności 1945 (The 1945 Victory and Freedom Medal) was founded on the grounds of the Decree issued by the Council of Ministers (i.e. the Polish Cabinet) on October 26, 1945, to commemorate “the victory of the Polish Nation and Its Allies over the barbarity of Nazi Germany and the triumph of the idea of democratic freedom, and as a decoration to honor persons whose actions or suffering, sustained at home or abroad to May 9, 1945, contributed to that victory and triumph.”

Medal za Warszawę 1939-1945 (The Warsaw Medal, 1939-1945) was founded on the grounds of the Decree issued by the Council of Ministers on November 21, 1945, to commemorate the heroic story of Warsaw in the war against the Nazi German invaders; the story of the soldiers who defended the capital of Poland in September 1939, fought indefatigably throughout the period under occupation, and sacrificed their lives in the tragic uprising; and also to commemorate the victorious liberation of Warsaw by the restored Polish Army allied with the Red Army; as well as to honor those who took part in the combat for the Capital City of Poland.

Odnaka Grunwaldzka (The Grunwald Badge) was founded on the grounds of Order No. 155 issued by the Supreme Commander of the Polish Forces on July 22, 1945. Conferred on soldiers in the Polish Forces who took part in the fighting against Germany in 1939-1945, soldiers of the Polish Armed Forces in the West on their return home, underground resistance fighters at home and abroad; Poles who fought in the ranks of the Soviet and Yugoslav underground resistance forces, or in the French Resistance Movement; Polish soldiers who fought in the ranks of Allied armies; and to all whose exemplary service in auxiliary units assisted those in active combat until the very last day of the War, thereby contributing to the victory.

- 23 Ryszard Białous, nom-de-guerre Jerzy, aka Zygmunt, aka Taran (1914–1992), commanding officer of Battalion Zośka and combatant in the Warsaw Uprising. Lived in exile abroad (in Argentina) after the War.

#### **No. 4 Minutes of the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz, December 29, 1948**

Minutes of the interrogation of the suspect

Warsaw, December 29, 1948

Kleina Bronisław, Lieutenant, investigating officer, Ministry of Public Security, Warsaw, conducted the interrogation of suspect

Surname and given name: Rodowicz Jan.

Personal particulars enclosed in records.

Question: "What was done with Battalion Zośka's weapons prior to coming forward and making a public declaration in 1945?"

Answer: "Some of the weapons were buried by myself and a person whose surname I don't know, only his alias "Czarny Karol," who left the country prior to our coming forward and making a public declaration in 1945. The following weapons were buried: three to five short 9 mm pistols, three machine pistols, about six grenades, and some ammunition. A second batch was buried in the environs of Jeziorno by Kozłowski Henryk aka Kmita, home address Warsaw, ul. Smolna No. 11, apartment 11."

Question: "How were those weapons to be used?"

Answer: "As far as I know, they were to be kept hidden until the outbreak of a war. Once war broke out, they were to be used to establish units consisting of ex-Zośkaites. The aim of a unit would be to survive the war. This idea was put forward at one of our meetings, or more precisely, developed at a series of meetings held in diverse circumstances in small groups of 2-3 persons to sound out these persons and what they thought. It was adopted about two months ago by Kozłowski Henryk and myself."

Question: "What preparations did you make to reactivate the unit?"

Answer: "We considered it right to prepare people and to do this, I spoke to Szymanowski Wojciech, a Warsaw University of Technology student (Faculty of Architecture), home address Warsaw, ul. Mała 11 or 13; and Celiński Bogdan, a mechanical engineer, home address Warsaw, ul. Filtrowa 68. I notified them of our idea and asked them to find the right people and take down their addresses, so that they could be easily reached to join the unit in the event of war. I also spoke to Wolski Andrzej, a Warsaw University of Technology student (Faculty of Electrical Engineering), home address Warsaw, ul. Dantyszka 9 apartment 3, and told him of our idea but did not ask him to select appropriate people. In connection with the preparations,

Kozłowski Henryk received money from a person I do not know to purchase radio receivers and receiver transmitter sets. Two radio sets were purchased and a few components for a receiving and transmitter station. This was deposited in the residence of Sowiński Andrzej, a radio engineer employed by Polish Radio, home address Warsaw, ul. Narbutta, I don't know the house number. He and I were to assemble the radio station. It was to be assembled to facilitate communication between the various units. The weapons which I had buried [in a property] on al. Niepodległości were due to be transferred because a house was being built there. The place to which it was to be relocated had not been determined. Around November 15, 1948, Kozłowski Henryk, Wolski Andrzej, Szymanowski Wojciech and I went to the place where the cache was being kept to check whether the weapons were safe. I found that the weapons were not endangered, so we decided not to take the risk and leave them there."

Question: "Did Radosław know that the weapons had been stashed away and that there was a project to reactivate Battalion Zośka?"

Answer: "That I don't know. I did not see him. I used to see Kozłowski Henryk and he is the only one who can know that."

Question: "What else do you have to say on the matter?"

Answer: "I declare that when I was checking if the weapons were safe, I did not show the persons listed above the exact whereabouts, so they could not retrieve them on their own. I shall amend my statement that the two radio receivers purchased for the unit were deposited with Sowiński Andrzej. One of them is in my place."

Interrogation conducted by Kleina.

This marks the end of the minutes, which comply with what I said, and on reading them, I hereby sign them.

Jan Rodowicz

*Source: AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 46–49, original handwritten manuscript.*

## No. 5 Minutes of the interrogation of Jan Rodowicz, January 4, 1949

Minutes of the interrogation of the suspect

Warsaw, January 4, 1949

Kleina Bronisław, Lieutenant, investigating officer, Ministry of Public Security, Warsaw, conducted the interrogation of suspect

Surname and given name: Rodowicz Jan.

Personal particulars enclosed in records.

Question: "Who gave Kozłowski Henryk the money to purchase the radio receivers and components for a radio set, and when?"

Answer: "I don't know who gave the money to Kozłowski Henryk and how much it was. What I do know is that he received it in early November 1948 and that the two receivers purchased by Sowiński Andrzej cost about 60,000 zł. In words: sixty thousand zloty. Kozłowski Henryk gave Sowiński Andrzej the money for them."

Question: "Did Kozłowski Henryk dispose of money to be used for the unit's purposes?"

Answer: "I never heard of any other purposes for which he had and distributed money."

Question: "Which of your people personally discussed the reactivation of the unit with Kozłowski Henryk?"

Answer: "Wolski Andrzej, Szymanowski Wojciech, Sowiński Andrzej, and I discussed the reactivation of the unit personally with Kozłowski Henryk. Celiński Bogdan knew of the matter, because I spoke to him about it."

This marks the end of the minutes, which comply with what I said, and on reading them, I hereby sign them.

Jan Rodowicz

*Source: AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 54–55, original handwritten manuscript.*

## No. 6 Minutes of the first interrogation of Jan Rodowicz held on January 7, 1949

Minutes of the interrogation of the suspect

Warsaw, January 7, 1949

Herer Wiktor, Major, investigating officer, Ministry of Public Security, Warsaw, conducted the interrogation of suspect Surname and given name: Rodowicz Jan.

Personal particulars enclosed in records.

Question: "What terrorist acts was Battalion Zońska preparing in 1945?"

Answer: "In August 1945, we were making preparations to abduct the head of the Soviet military mission, who lived in Konstancin. The abduction was to take place when the abovementioned Soviet general was traveling from Konstancin to Warsaw. After making the necessary arrangements, we were in two cars, waiting for the Soviet general to pass on the road near Powsin. One of our vehicles, driven by Marian Rojowski,<sup>24</sup> home address ul. Lwowska 15, blocked the road as the Soviet car was about to pass. The Soviet driver maneuvered around the obstacle and got out of the trap. So the kidnap attempt failed.

The abduction was prepared following an instruction from Col. "Maciej" Rybicki, "Radosław's" second-in-command. Maciej wanted to procure the release of Radosław in exchange for the kidnapped Soviet general. After the failed kidnap attempt, Maciej wanted us to undertake further operations to abduct the general. The following persons took part in the operation: Kozłowski Henryk alias Kmita, who was in command; myself as second-in-command; Lechmirowicz Stanisław alias Czart; Sieradzki Stanisław alias Świst; Donat Czerewacz; Druźbicki Antoni alias Kurp; Celiński Bogdan alias Wiktor; Zakrzewski Jerzy alias Linowski<sup>25</sup>; Włodzimierz Steyer alias Grom; Marian Rojowski; and the driver, whose name was Stanisław.

Furthermore, in March 1945, when I was ill, Kozłowski Henryk made the preparations for an attempt to assassinate General Wiktor Grosz, who was staying in Warsaw at the time.

Jan Rodowicz

*Source: AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 50–51, original handwritten manuscript.*

24 Marian "Marian" Rojowski (1922–1995), rifleman in the Third Company of the Third ("Golski") Armored Battalion.

25 Jerzy "Strzała" Zalewski (1925–1998), senior rifleman in Platoon Three of the First ("Maciek") Company of Battalion Zońska.

## No. 7 Minutes of the second interrogation of Jan Rodowicz held on January 7, 1949

Minutes of the interrogation of the suspect

Warsaw, January 7, 1949

Kleina Bronisław, Lieutenant, investigating officer, Ministry of Public Security, Warsaw, conducted the interrogation of suspect

Surname and given name: Rodowicz Jan.

Personal particulars enclosed in records.

Question: "What do you know about Kończykowski Henryk?"

Answer: "Kończykowski Henryk alias Halicz is a student of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering at Warsaw University of Technology and lives at a place somewhere along the EKD suburban railway line.<sup>26</sup> As of 1943 under wartime occupation, he was in "Felek," my platoon in Company "Rudy." In 1944 he graduated from the cadet college. In the underground resistance movement his rank was cadet corporal, and when he came out and made a public declaration he was a 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant. He served in my platoon, too, in the combat during the Uprising. When I was ill, that is from the end of the Uprising to May 1945, he was in the platoon commanded by Kozłowski Henryk alias Kmita. He was not in my platoon when I returned in May 1945, so I no longer worked with him in the same organizational unit. On coming out, I used to see him, but only on a social basis. Kozłowski Henryk told me that Kończykowski had (I think it was) two hand machine guns. After the War Kończykowski lived in Podkowa Leśna. I think he now lives in Opacz."

Question: "What do you know about Sieradzki Stanisław?"

Answer: "Sieradzki Stanisław alias Świst is a student of the Warsaw School of Economics, living formerly in the Grochów district of Warsaw, and now in Zielonka or Kobyłka. Under wartime occupation, he was in my platoon as of 1944. In 1944 he graduated from the cadet college. Under wartime occupation he served in the rank of 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant. We were both in Radosław's resistance group from May 1945 until coming out and declaring in September 1945. Before making his public declaration, he gave me a machine pistol,

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26 EKD (Elektryczna Kolej Dojazdowa), the Warsaw suburban railway Line handling commuter traffic, now known as Warszawska Kolej Dojazdowa (Warsaw Commuter Railway).

one of those I buried. The last time I saw him was in October or November 1948. He works in the PKS public transport company on Chmielna.”

Question: “After coming out, did you speak to Sieradzki Stanisław about the weapons being kept hidden?”

Answer: “I never mentioned the subject to him but I presume Sieradzki knew that the weapons were being kept hidden. He did know that I buried the machine pistol he had given me. I don’t remember whether anyone else spoke to him about it. I don’t know, either, whether he received any money.”

Question: “What do you know about Zalewski aka Zaleski Jerzy?”

Answer:

<sup>a</sup> The suspect jumped out of the window and killed himself. <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a-a</sup> Written in with a different ballpoint pen, slantwise down the page under the last question.

*Source: AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 52–53, original handwritten manuscript.*

## No. 8 Minutes of the disinterment of the weapons buried by Jan Rodowicz, carried out on January 4, 1949

### Minutes

I, Cykała Bolesław, Lieutenant, an officer of the Ministry of Public Security, hereby declare that on January 4, 1949, in the presence of witnesses Lt. Masny Roman and Lt. Kleina Bronisław, dug up the weapons buried by Rodowicz Jan on the premises of the property at aleja Niepodległości 216.

The following items were dug up:

2 MP-40 machine pistols, Nos. 562 & 731 + 7 magazines,

1 Vis pistol, No. 13370 + 2 magazines,

1 P-38 pistol, No. 681 + 3 magazines,

1 Parabellum pistol + 1 magazine, 5 grenades, <sup>a</sup> statement <sup>a</sup>,

208 items of 9 mm caliber ammunition,

249 items of ammunition for a Schmeisser,<sup>27</sup>

2 holsters.

Buried by Jan Rodowicz

Dug up by Bolesław Cykała, Lieutenant

Witnesses

Masny Roman, Lieutenant

Kleina Bronisław, Lieutenant

<sup>a</sup> – handwritten addition.

*Source: AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 27, original typescript*

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<sup>27</sup> The Schmeisser (also known as the MP 40) was a German World War II submachine gun.

**No. 9 Technical Report on the weapons kept by Jan Rodowicz and disinterred on January 4, 1949**  
**Technical Report**

on the firearms belonging to Jan Rodowicz

On checking and classifying the weapons listed below, we hereby declare the following:

1. No. 601 9 mm Walther P-38 pistol, made in Germany, Category III,<sup>28</sup> covered with rust, extractor spring missing, requires minor repair and needs to be cleaned by a gunsmith, may be used in combat.
2. No. 4636 Parabellum pistol, Category III, with deep pits on the barrel and covered with rust, may be used in combat after being cleaned.
3. No. 13370 9 mm Vis pistol, made in 1938, Category III, with deep pits on the bore of the barrel and covered with rust, may be used in combat after being cleaned.
4. No. 731 9 mm automatic MP machine pistol, 1940 Model, made in 1942, Category II, has a bulge in the middle of the barrel, covered with rust, may be used in service after being repaired by a gunsmith; may be fired in its present condition.
5. No. 25621 9 mm automatic MP machine pistol, 1940 Model, made in 1943, Category III, with deep pits on the bore of the barrel and covered with rust, may be used in combat.

Examined by Stańczyk Feliks, gunsmith Lt.-Col. Przygoda,<sup>29</sup> Head of MBP Weapons Department

January <sup>b</sup>21<sup>b</sup>, 1949

Made in 2 copies

Copy No. 1 for the addressee<sup>30</sup>

Copy No. 2 deposited in the records.

*Source: AIPN, 0330/217, Vol. 21, page 28, original typescript.*

b-b Handwritten date

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28 Military weapons and equipment and its technical material resources are classified in five categories by quality. Category I – equipment which has neither been used nor issued for use but satisfies the required technical conditions, is serviceable, and has the required fittings; Category II – equipment which is serviceable, has been issued for use, and has no less than 75 % of the fittings it requires; Category III – equipment which does not satisfy the requirements for Categories I and II or is not serviceable technically but may be used after repairs, laboratory tests etc.; Category IV – equipment the standard running conditions of which have been used up but which may continue to be used after repairs to restore its running conditions; and Category V – no longer serviceable equipment not worth the cost to repair it, or due to be withdrawn.

29 Zygmunt Przygoda

30 Wiktor Herer, head of Subdepartment Four in Department Five of the MBP.

## No. 10 Minutes of the hearing of Bronisław Kleina, held on October 21, 1992

### Minutes of the hearing of the witness

On October 21, 1992, in Warsaw, Prosecutor Wanda Gałązka of the Ministry of Justice delegated to serve on the Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against the Polish Nation (Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu), an entity in the Institute of National Remembrance, acting on the grounds of Art. 2 of the Act of April 6, 1984 with later amendments (*Dziennik Ustaw*, 1991, No. 45, Item 195, and Art. 129 of the Polish Code of Criminal Procedure [hereinafter *kpk*]) on procedures conducted in the presence of a prosecutor, personally conducted the hearing of the Witness. The Witness was warned of the penalty for perjury, whereupon the Witness put his handwritten signature below, declaring that he had been warned of the criminal liability for perjury (Art. 172 *kpk*). The Witness was informed that he has the right to abstain from answering the questions (Art. 166 § 1 *kpk*).

B. Kleina  
(Witness' signature)

The Witness then declared the following:

Given name and surname	Bronisław Kleina
Parents' given names	Antoni and Zofia née Klein
Date and place of birth	April 16, 1923, Grudziądz
Residential address	02-570 Warszawa, al. Niepodległości 133/41
Occupation	Retired
Education	Completed three grades of elementary school
Convictions for perjury	None
Relationship to the Parties in the case	Unrelated

In 1943, I joined the Home Army active in the city of Kunów, Kielce Voivodeship. This group was commanded by Waclaw Wanat. I only attended the military training conducted on the premises of the local factory of agricultural tools, but did not participate in combat. In February 1945, I was instructed by Wanat to report with the group to the regional army recruiting office at Ostrowiec Świętokrzyski. On registering, I was sent to the infantry officers' college of the Domestic Military Security Corps

stationed at Andrzejów near Łódź. Next, when the War was over, I was transferred to Lublin, to the training college for commissariat officers, from which I graduated in October 1945 in the rank of cadet. On orders issued by the General Staff of the Military Security Corps in Warsaw, I was sent to the Ministry of Public Security and was due to be posted to the Ministry's central food warehouses at Ursus. However, the Security Ministry decided to keep me in an operational unit in Department Five. I was appointed a junior administrator in Section One, Subdepartment Four. The Subdepartment's head was Wiktor Herer, and its duties were to penetrate the student community and legal youth organizations. We obtained information from student activists and informers on the atmosphere and opinions of students, and on any illegal student organizations that might have been conducting activities. I ran an index card catalog for all the students in the country and a collection of opinions sent in by voivodeship security service offices on students leaving the country for study abroad. I was also in possession of materials on Catholic organizations operating throughout the country. We obtained materials from the voivodeship offices and from Bolesław Cykała and Wiktor Herer, the head of the subdepartment. I do not know when Jan Rodowicz was detained and on whose orders. I do not know what activities Jan Rodowicz had been conducting. People in the subdepartment said that those detained, or effectively arrested, were members of the Parasol and Zośka groups. I did not know the names of the arrestees. I did not conduct any cases involving illegal organizations. On orders from Wiktor Herer, the subdepartment head, Bronisław Cykała, Roman Masny, Juliusz Kubera and I used to go out to conduct searches. I was a witness at the digging up of weapons hidden on ul. Żelazna in Powsin, on Al. Jerozolimskie, and in Pruszków. I do not know who had hidden these weapons. I think that we were told about the arms hidden at Powsin by Henryk Kozłowski, who was under arrest at the time. I don't know who arrested Kozłowski and why. I don't remember if I interrogated Jan Rodowicz. If there are any minutes of Jan Rodowicz being interrogated in connection with specific persons in illegal organizations and involving hidden arms caches, it means that I was not the person who conducted these interrogations, because I had no knowledge of the case. The operations for that investigation were carried out by Wiktor Herer, Bolesław Cykała, and Masny. Jan Rodowicz was held in the Ministry's prison in the basement of the building on Koszykowa. I never gave any orders for arrestees to be escorted because, as I have stated, I did not conduct the preliminary procedure. Subdepartment Four had its premises on the fifth story of the MBP [building]. My office was a room with barred windows looking out on the yard. I remember that one afternoon in January 1949, someone from the Subdepartment, but I can't recall his name, brought Jan Rodowicz to my room and told me to interrogate him on

his illegal activities. I sat behind my desk next to the barred window, while Rodowicz sat nearer the door. During the interview or interrogation, which lasted about twenty minutes, someone, but I don't remember who it was, told me to take Jan Rodowicz to the office of our head, Wiktor Herer. The head's room was on the opposite side of the corridor. Its windows looked out onto Al. Ujazdowskie. I closed the door to my office, locked the bolt and escorted Jan Rodowicz to the secretary's office, through which you could enter Herer's room. When I opened the door to the secretary's office, I was told to go into the next room and wait a while; I was told the door was open and no one was in the room. I opened the door and went in first. Jan Rodowicz came in after me, ran up and jumped onto the window sill of the open window and jumped out. It was a double wing window and it was wide open. I did not go up to the window because I realized he must be dead. I notified the secretary's office of his suicide. I was so shocked by the tragedy that I was trembling and could not calm down. Herer and my colleagues tried to calm me down. I asked myself why Rodowicz did it, but no answer came to me. A doctor was called immediately, because there was a polyclinic on the premises of the Ministry. A moment after the incident, the doctor confirmed death. I don't know if an autopsy was conducted. I could not have stopped Jan Rodowicz because he did it so fast, he sped past me like a whirlwind. I swear by all that is holy, by my children, that I had no part in the death of Jan Rodowicz (Witness weeps). I don't know what made him take that desperate measure. I did not see any signs of violence on him and he did not complain of being badly treated. In the evening after the incident, I was interviewed by Col. Sobczak or his deputy from the Office for Staff Affairs. On the basis of that interview, I figured out they suspected me of letting J[an] Rodowicz commit suicide, thereby preventing the disclosure of further matters. No one informed me that I was to be punished with house arrest for this incident. The window which Jan Rodowicz jumped from is on the Al. Ujazdowskie streetside and had no bars. During the interrogation on January 7, 1949, Jan Rodowicz's behavior was calm, he answered questions with a "yes" or "no" and did not expand his answers, he was withdrawn. I worked in the MBP until February 1, 1955. I have nothing more to add. On reading these minutes, I confirm they comply with what I have said and I hereby sign them.

W[anda] Gałązka

B[ronisław] Kleina

*Source: AIPN, 2188/620, page 20–23, original typescript*

## No. 11 Minutes of the hearing of Wiktor Herer, held on October 13, 1992

### Minutes of the hearing of the Witness

On October 13, 1992, in Warsaw, Prosecutor Wanda Gałązka of the Ministry of Justice delegated to serve on the Main Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against the Polish Nation (Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu), an entity in the Institute of National Remembrance, acting on the grounds of Art. 2 of the Act of April 6, 1984 with later amendments (*Dziennik Ustaw*, 1991, No. 45, Item 195, and Art. 129 of the Polish Code of Criminal Procedure [hereinafter *kpk*]) on procedures conducted in the presence of a prosecutor, personally conducted the hearing of the Witness. The Witness was warned of the penalty for perjury, whereupon the Witness put his handwritten signature below, declaring that he had been warned of the criminal liability for perjury (Art. 172 *kpk*). The Witness was informed that he had the right to abstain from answering the questions (Art. 166 § 1 *kpk*).

W. Herer

(Witness' signature)

The Witness then declared the following:

Given name and surname	Wiktor Herer
Parents' given names	Michał and Zofia née Fryling
Date and place of birth	January 19, 1920, Czerniowce (now Chernivtsi, Ukraine)
Residential address	00- 592 Warszawa, ul. Spacerowa 10/ 14
Occupation	Retired
Education	University graduate; Professor of Economics
Convictions for perjury	None
Relationship to Parties in the case	

In 1943, I joined the reserve regiment of the First (Tadeusz Kościuszko) Division.\* I was second-in-command of the communications company. Next, I was transferred to the post of second-in-command of the training battery in the Tambov Officers' Artillery and Technical College. After three months of service in this college, I was transferred to the Ninth Infantry Regiment of the Third Division. Later, I was transferred from the Ninth Infantry Regiment to the Artillery Regiment in the same Division. Before the

end of the War, I was transferred to the Fourth Division, in which I was serving when the War finished. I arrived in Warsaw in May 1945 with the rest of the Fourth Division, which was then transformed into the Public Security Corps. After a couple of months of service on its Political and Educational Board, I was transferred to Department Five in the Warsaw headquarters of the Ministry of Public Security. I want to emphasize that during my entire period of service in the Polish Forces, I never held an office in the military intelligence or counterintelligence apparatus. In addition, I stress that in 1939, following the Russian invasion of Lwów, I automatically became a Soviet citizen, just like all the other permanent residents of Lwów, my hometown. I volunteered to join the Polish Forces\* as a Soviet citizen of Polish nationality. During wartime hostilities, right until 1944, every one of us could fear that he would be treated as a Soviet citizen. In September 1945, I was appointed deputy head of Subdepartment Four in Department Five. Julia Brystiger was head of Department Five. Department Five handled the penetration of legal political parties, churches and religious unions, and young people's organizations. Its Subdepartment Four conducted the observation of legal young people's organizations. Subdepartment Four had about six persons. I remember that the people working in my Subdepartment were Bolesław Cykała, Bronisław Kleina, Roman Masny, and others whose names I cannot recall. I know that Bolesław Cykała has died. Department Five was not involved in figuring out the WiN underground movement,\* NSZ,\* or other clandestine groups. Figuring out those organizations was the task of Department Three, whose head at the time was Józef Czaplicki (now deceased); while Józef Różański was head of the Investigations Department.

Jan Rodowicz's case started with the explosion of the boiler in the apartment in which Zofia Dzierżyńska, the widow of Feliks Dzierżyński (Felix Dzerzhinsky), was staying during her brief sojourn in Warsaw. If I remember rightly, it was in the Belweder Palace. That was when Julia Brystiger told me of Jan Rodowicz, a student of Warsaw University of Technology who might have been involved. I don't remember where Brystiger had this information from. She said to me, "Take this case up and clarify the situation," for if it were to be investigated along the lines of the WiN case, there will be a scandal in the University of Technology coupled with mass student arrests, even though things are absolutely quiet there. I have never heard of any business at the University of Technology about rats thrown at Bierut's daughter. I was instructed by Julia Brystiger to issue a warrant for Jan Rodowicz to be detained and brought in for questioning. I don't remember which member of staff detained Rodowicz. Neither do I remember when exactly he was detained. I suppose it must have been at the turn of 1948 and 1949. But I must insist that the initiative to detain Jan Rodowicz came from Julia Brystiger, not from me. I don't recall signing the warrant. It was not

customary for members of the Ministry's staff engaged exclusively in operations using agents for penetration to sign documents of any kind for external use. I don't remember which prosecutor issued the arrest warrant, but certainly a warrant must have been issued. I don't remember where Rodowicz was apprehended, though I knew of his detention. I don't remember whether a search was conducted in Rodowicz's apartment on the day he was detained. I suppose weapons of some kind must have been taken from Rodowicz, but I don't remember the fact, nor whether a report was drawn up on the procedure. I wish to state that the first time I heard of Rodowicz was when Brystiger mentioned him when she spoke to me about the explosion of the boiler. Jan Rodowicz was arrested to let us determine whether students from the University of Technology were involved in the boiler incident. During Rodowicz's interviews we found that students of the University of Technology had nothing to do with the explosion nor with the underground resistance movement. Presumably, I did not ask Rodowicz about the boiler explosion at all while questioning him. I insist that I was never an investigating officer. The purpose of my talks with Rodowicz was to penetrate his social environment. We had no agents in this group, which prevented us from penetrating it. In view of the specific relations with Russia, the matter was very urgent, it was a question of quickly ruling out a terrorist aspect to the matter and preventing the mass arrest of students. I conducted talks with Jan Rodowicz tête-à-tête, courteously and very politely. I did not resort to threats or violence. All of my talks with Jan Rodowicz were conducted in my office on the fifth floor. The windows looked out on Aleje Ujazdowskie and there were no bars in them. There was no padding on the door to my office, which was never locked with a key. I conducted the talks in the daytime. He was confined in the prison cells in the basement of the Ministry of Public Security building on Koszykowa. One of my subordinates brought him in for questioning, but it wasn't always the same man who escorted him. I don't remember whether any of my subordinates questioned Rodowicz. If they did, then I'm sure they treated him civilly and politely. I don't remember how many talks I had with Rodowicz and whether minutes were taken. I didn't mention the boiler at all; I thought that putting such an absurd charge would undermine my authority. Once I got to know Rodowicz, his opinions and the nature of his activities in the post-AK social environment, I realized that such a charge would be absolutely pointless. I have to admit that in the course of my talks with Rodowicz, I got to like him. From the age of fourteen I, too, had been engaged in resistance operations. I had the impression that by this time Rodowicz had clearly become disappointed with his political activities and felt let down by his superiors. He had a negative opinion of the tactics of the AK command during the Warsaw Uprising. He did not come over to the Communist side. Rodowicz's post-AK group

was not formally an underground organization but rather a social circle of veterans which had guns at its disposal and could have turned into an organization given the right conditions. Personally, I used to think about a third world war breaking out, it was a very realistic prospect, and if it had materialized, these people would not have joined the army but gone into the forest.\* One could also imagine these people playing a part—not necessarily a good one—in 1956,\* when Rokossowski’s forces<sup>31</sup> were marching on Warsaw. He answered questions readily without trying to beat about the bush. I can’t remember whether he incriminated his colleagues. He named the persons he used to meet with. He never spoke of making preparations for a specific armed operation and dropped names which I cannot recall any longer; he never divided people into those who were ready to embark on underground operations and those who took a passive approach, with regard to the future as well. If there are any extant minutes of my talks with Rodowicz and they haven’t been tampered with by the Investigations Department, then they give a true picture of what Rodowicz said. For my part, if I ever drew up minutes, what I put in them was what he said. I rule out the possibility that the following could have happened: Rodowicz being murdered by defenestration, Rodowicz’s mental breakdown due to physical violence against him, “conveyors”<sup>32</sup> and other kinds of prolonged interrogation. I rule them out on these grounds: 1) killing Rodowicz would not have made sense, it could only have brought harm to the Communist government in power at the time; 2) both his murder as well as the use of violence (to extort confessions from him) were absolutely out of the question because both my subordinates and I myself conducted the interviews in offices which were not locked with a key and had large windows without bars looking out on Al. Ujazdowskie. Neither I nor any of my subordinates conducted these talks in the basement of the MBP building. Jan Rodowicz was perfectly fit physically and mentally when he leaped out of a fifth-floor window down into the yard which was clearly visible from Al. Ujazdowskie. The window from which he jumped was in full view from the street, too; and any yells coming from that window would have been heard out in the street. I was not an eyewitness of Rodowicz’s leap, but when I was alerted, seconds after the

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31 Konstanty Rokossowski (Konstantin Konstantinovich (Xaverevich) Rokossovsky; КОНСТАНТИН КОНСТАНТИНОВИЧ РОКОССОВСКИЙ, 1896–1968), Marshal of Poland and the Soviet Union; Polish Minister of National Defense and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers (i.e. Deputy Prime Minister), 1956; member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the PZPR.

32 The “conveyor” (Pol. *konwejer*) was a method used in Communist countries for the interrogation of suspects, in which the subject was interrogated continuously for several days and nights by investigating officers working on a shift system.

incident—within a minute of it—I went into the room next door and learned from my shocked subordinate that Rodowicz had pushed him aside and then jumped out of the window. Rodowicz was a strong man physically and no one would have managed to throw him out of the window. Moreover, I rule out the presence of another person who could have helped to defenestrate him. I don't remember the name of the person who escorted him from his cell and in whose presence he jumped out. There must certainly have been a disciplinary inquiry carried out by the Department for Staff Affairs. I don't remember whether the employee concerned was punished. Finally, I want to add that my co-workers had no knowledge of the boiler business. The main danger was that Zofia Dzierżyńska might complain to the Soviet ambassador, who would then notify Bierut, and Bierut would kick up a fuss with Radkiewicz, who would hand the matter over to Różański, and then mass student arrests would start. During my term in office as subdepartment head there were no arrests of students on a mass scale, except for a short spell of detentions during the student riots in Kraków in 1946, which I did not handle. The matter was dealt with by the head of the voivodeship public security office for Kraków. The cause of the boiler explosion was ascertained, most probably prior to Rodowicz's suicide, and that is an important point. It was due to a mechanical breakdown. I want to add that in January 1952 my employment with the MBP came to an end, for various reasons, including pressure from the Soviet advisors. For the entire period from 1946 to 1952, I was on the faculty of the Warsaw School of Economics, first as an assistant and later as an adjunct. Although I had completed the full graduate program in four years of study at Lwów and Tbilisi (1941–1943), the Warsaw School of Economics required me to take some extra examinations, including one in non-Marxist political economy. On the grounds of these examinations which I had to pass, and the presentation of a dissertation I wrote under the supervision of my tutor, Professor Jan Drownowski, in 1949 I graduated with the degree of Master of Economics.<sup>33</sup> My appointment with the Planning Commission was a natural sequel to my economic studies. I want to add that when I spoke of having no agents in the Warsaw student community, I meant not having authentic informers enjoying the confidence of anti-Communist milieus. In the course of four decades, my political views have undergone a radical evolution. Already by the mid-fifties, I was being subjected to various kinds of political discrimination. I was never allowed to work abroad as

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33 Wiktor Herer's employment records preserved in the archives of the Warsaw branch of GUS (Główny Urząd Statystyczny, Statistics Poland) say that he obtained the MEcon. in 1951, which seems plausible, considering that in October 1949 he was still writing his dissertation.

an expert, from time to time my passport was withdrawn, and in 1966 I was dismissed from the Planning Commission. After the imposition of Martial Law, I left the Party (the PZPR). If Jan Rodowicz had been killed, I would have done my utmost to help with finding the perpetrators. But I am absolutely certain that no one killed Rodowicz, and it would have been impossible for him to have been killed and me not learning that it was homicide. I have nothing more to add, and on reading the minutes and determining that they agree with what I have said, I hereby sign this statement. Amendments to the original (deletions): page 6 – the expression *przy sposobności* (“when the occasion occurred”); page 8 – the words *że zarzut ten do* (“that this charge to”); page 9 – *ja pisałem* (“I wrote”).

W[anda] Gałązka

W[iktor] Herer

*Source: AIPN, 2188/620, page 14–19, original typescript*



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## Illustrations



Jan Rodowicz in a Polish uniform with lieutenant's insignia and decorations awarded during the War (postwar photograph; AIPN).



A group of Zośkaites during a postwar winter camp. Jan Rodowicz is in the middle of the top row (AIPN).



Jan Rodowicz (postwar photograph; AIPN).



Jan Rodowicz with his fiancée on a stroll in postwar Warsaw (AIPN).



Jan Rodowicz (postwar photograph; AIPN).

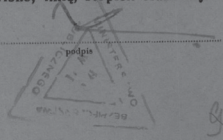
Do Nr. 1075/48 13  
Ściśle tajne! 4  
9  
413

## Rozkaz zatrzymania

Rozkazuje zatrzymać (wskazać nazwisko, imię, ewentualnie inne dane) \_\_\_\_\_  
 ● Rodowicza Jan

podjezanego o (podać treść podejrzenia) działalność antypaństwowa  
owg

\*) Podstawa: 1) materiał ~~agony~~  
 2) świadkowie  
 3) dokumenty

Miejscowość i data W-wa d. 4. 12. 48 Nazwisko, imię, stopień służbowy  
 \_\_\_\_\_  


\*) Niepotrzebne skreślić. Wyk. zero, ilość egz. ....  
 dnia/l. dz. 58/195.....

Ewid. akt dochodu, wzór Nr. 2  
 Druk MBP w Łodzi

Warrant for the arrest of Jan Rodowicz, signed by Maj. Wiktor Herer (AIPN).

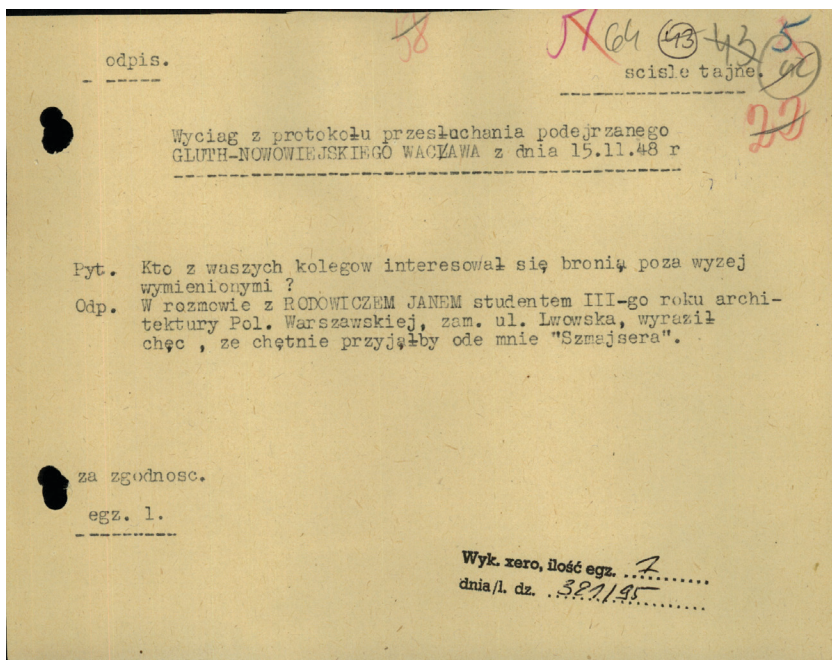


Weapons cache Jan Rodowicz buried on a property in al. Niepodległości in 1945 when Kmita's Detached Unit was disbanded, and unearthed on January 4, 1949 (AIPN).

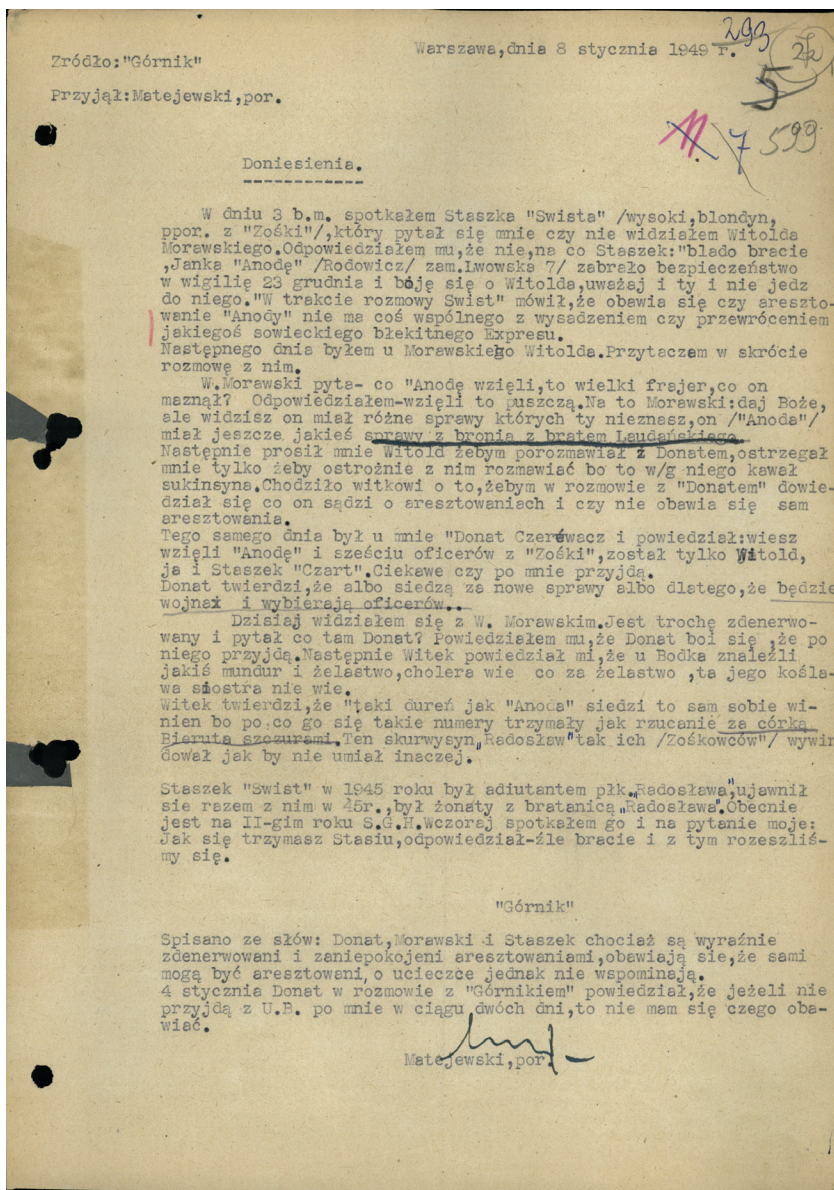




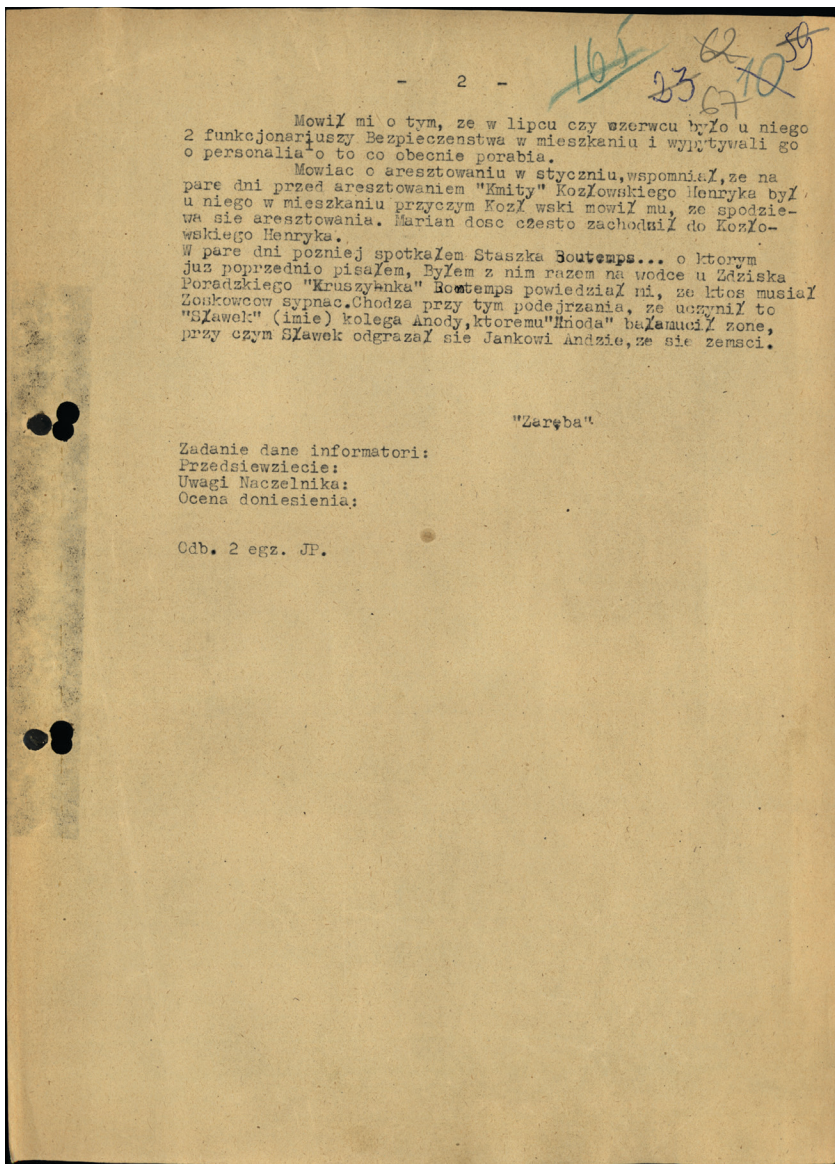
Last known photo of Jan Rodowicz, MBP mug shot taken in the Koszykowa remand prison after his arrest (AIPN).



Excerpt from the minutes of the interrogation of Waclaw Gluth-Nowowiejski, with information on Jan Rodowicz (AIPN)



Agent Górnik's report of January 8, 1949, on the reaction of Zośkaites to news of their colleagues' arrest (AIPN).



Passage from Agent Zaręba's report on the circumstances believed to have led to Jan Rodowicz's arrest (AIPN).

Zródło "Sowa".  
Przyja, I. RM z FD.

Scisle tajne.

78 64  
72 4 67  
38

-----  
DONIESIENIE AGENTURALNE .  
-----  
z dn. 19.3.49 r.

7.3.49 r. odbyła się msza sw. za RODOWICZA w kościele Zbawiciela. Na mszy był obecny senat akademicki Politechniki wraz z ~~rektorem~~ rektorem. Wiadomości te mam od TYTUSA. Podobno z "Zoski" na mszy nikt nie był, prócz niego i trzech niewiast. Było też paru studentów z Politechniki. Na moje zapytanie, co w ogóle myśli o tej sprawie, powiedział, że to jest bardzo prawdopodobne, że wyskoczył oknem.

Odb. egz. 2  
-----

"Sowa".

Zadanie dane informatorowi: 1) Odgłosy w związku z oświadczeniem min. Wolskiego.  
2) Być na dyskusji w "Dzis i Jutro".

Informer Sowa's report of March 19, 1949, on the comments of Jan Rodowicz's acquaintances after his death (AIPN).

- 2 -

904/88  
93

a nie polskich celow. "JERZY" po przyjeździe konferował najpierw w JANKIEM RODOWICZEM i HENRYKIEM KOZŁOWSKIM był także u prof. ZAWADZKIEGO, rozmawiał także z plk. "RADOSŁAWEM" przed samym zaś wyjazdem był obecny na obiedzie w Jeziornie, gdzie zjechała się większość "Zoskowców" oraz "RADOSŁAW". Na temat wyjazdu powiedział, że wszyscy Ci, którzy nie mogą pozostać w kraju ze względu na własne bezpieczeństwo niech wyjeżdżają. On urządzi ich narazie w Niemczech Zachodnich, potem możliwie w Anglii lub Brazylii, gdzie posiada kontakty, kiedy rozpoczął mówić o ewentualnym wystąpieniu z bronią tu w kraju przerwał mi "RADOSŁAW": rzucać granatami będziecie tylko na mój rozkaz. "JERZY" wyjechał zapowiadając, że tym co chce wyjechać da znać. Dalszy kontakt z "JERZYM" utrzymywali /"ANODA"/ ? i "KMITA".-

W międzyczasie na przełomie roku 45 - 46 próbował wyjechać na "Zachód" "TALUN" przez Czechosłowację został jednak aresztowany w Czechosłowacji i stamtąd wrócił po upływie 6 - 8 miesięcy.

#### B\_r\_o\_n

1. Według moich spostrzeżeń powinno być ukryte około 30 peemow, 1 Rkm niemiecki M.G., jeden pistolet maszynowy M.P.-43, 10-15 sztuk broni krótkiej, 30-50 granatów różnych typów. Bron chował "KMITA". Została ona zakopana w "jeziornie" na terenie posesji żony "KMITY" w załutowanych blaszankach fawociu.
2. Oprócz tego JANEK RODOWICZ schował gdzieś oddzielnie własną bron 1-2 peemy, 2-4 sztuki broni krótkiej.
3. Bron powinna zostać u ZENONA WĄGROWSKIEGO - Otwock ul. Szkolna, jeden karabin maszynowy Mascin oraz karabiny. rzekł on "Zosce" przed ujawnieniem M.G, niemiecki i 2 S-eny. "KMITA" i "ANODA" zaczęły o tej broni nie wiedzą. Wie o niej zapewne WITOLD MORAWSKI, który z ZENKIEM te sprawy omawiał.
4. Pistolet siódemka typ Wylter powinien posiadać WITOLD MORAWSKI, miał na nią pozwolenie.
5. 2-3 pistolety posiadali jeszcze w 1946 roku - DACZKOWSKI BOGDAN i "BORUTA".

Odb. 3 egz.LK

Excerpt from Informer Zaręba's report on the activities of the Zośkaites after their disclosure (AIPN).

Zrodlo: "Sowa" *Przegl. dok. domowosci agentur* 63 26.3.49 Seite  
 4. Ekshumacja RODOWICZA odbyła się w srodę 16.3.br. na Powązki  
 cywilne. Obecna była tylko rodzina. Na moje pytanie, czy rzeczywiście to  
 z grupy "Zoska" cos robił, p. RODOWICZOWA odpowiedziała, że absolutnie  
 pewna jest, że nic podobnego nie było. Jeśli chodzi o samą śmierć, to  
 rozmawiałem z narzeczoną RODOWICZA. Mówiła mi, że sama nie ma pojęcia  
 jak to się stało, ale jednak jest bardzo możliwe, że JANEK odebrał  
 sobie życie i uważa, że chyba go nikt o to nie będzie potępiał.  
 Jeśli chodzi o proces to uważają, że będzie w najbliższym czasie, i że  
 bardzo duzo będzie zwolnionych, gdyż zostali zabrani jakol swieckowie.  
 monia. *Bolesław Kleina* *Bolesław Kleina* *Bolesław Kleina* *Bolesław Kleina*  
 - verte: 73 68

Informer Sowa's report of March 26, 1949 (AIPN).



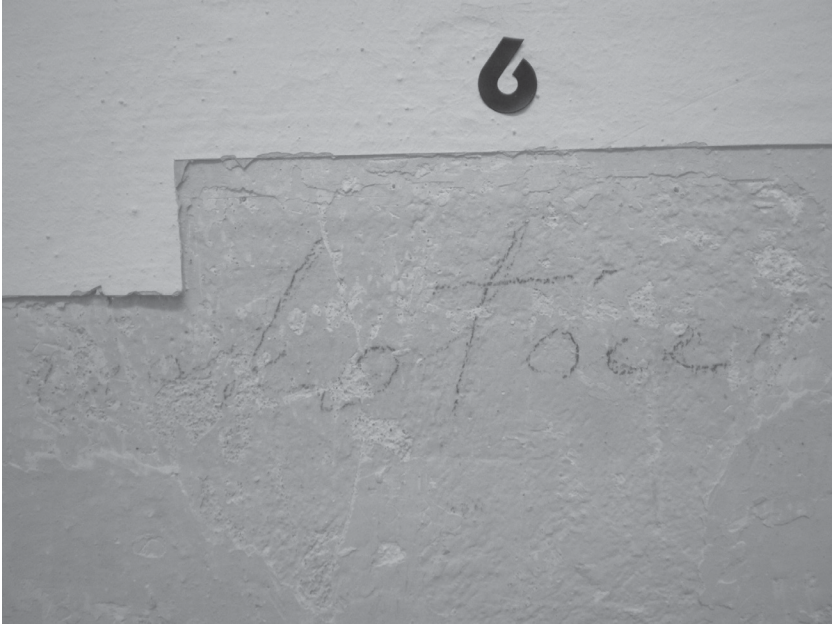
Lt. Bolesław Kleina (1947 photograph, AIPN).



Maj. Wiktor Herer (photograph taken after his promotion to lieutenant colonel in July 1949) (AIPN).



Former MBP headquarters. Jan Rodowicz is believed to have self-defenestrated from the first window left of the stairwell on the fifth story. (Photograph by Przemysław Benken).



“Mokotów”– graffiti scribbled by an inmate on a cell wall in the MBP remand prison on Koszykowa (current view; photograph by Przemysław Benken).



A cell in the basement of the MBP building on Koszykowa (current view; photograph by Przemysław Benken)



The spot where Jan Rodowicz is believed to have fallen (photograph by Przemysław Benken).

-3- 56 30 31 38 106

o przechowywaniu broni. Natomiast wiadział że 106  
zakopaniem pistolet maszynowy który on mi dał  
czy ktoś inny na ten temat z nim rozmawiał  
tego nie pamiętam. Nie wiem też czy otrzymał  
jakieś pieniądze.

Pyt. Co wiecie o dalewskim lub dalekim Jozym ?  
Odp.

Podejrzany  
wykonany obliczeń  
walczył się

38

Last page of the unfinished minutes of Jan Rodowicz's interrogation, January 7, 1949 (AIPN).



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