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### **Public enemy? Operations directed by the provincial security against the "German underground" in Lower Silesia**

The myth of an 'armed, subversive' German organisation has become an integral element of the legend of the so-called Recovered Territories. Stories about huge depots of weapons and ammunition, mysterious boxes containing 'larger sums of money belonging to the Nazi enemies'<sup>1</sup>, a network of international liaisons, paratroopers or secret passages in forests are all part of Lower Silesian myths<sup>2</sup>. Denied<sup>3</sup> by many historians, information on the existence of the 'German underground' have been perpetuated in film<sup>4</sup> and literature, including academic publications<sup>5</sup>. For instance, according to the authors of the book *By inni mogli spać spokojnie...*, between 1945 and

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<sup>1</sup> Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Wrocław (hereafter referred to as: AIPN Wr.), 032/726, vol. 2, Edward Straś, *Ostatni bastion: Wehrwolf* Reprinted article published in *Biuletyn Archiwalny Wrocławskiego Okręgu ZBoWiD*, 1964, 14, p. 5.

<sup>2</sup> Sebastian Ligarski was one of authors to comment on the topic: 'There are many myths about the above-mentioned German underground. To fuel the myth, communist propaganda used the setting of Srebrna Góra: forested hills with adits and extensive fortification system, where the treasures of the Third Reich were allegedly hidden [...]. Unfortunately (for myth lovers) we must conclude that source materials do not support this image of the Werwolf. See also: Sebastian Ligarski, *W cieniu twierdzy: lata 40. i 50. XX wieku*, [in:] *Twierdza Srebrnogórska*, Tomasz Przerwa, Grzegorz Podruchny, eds., Srebrna Góra 2006, pp. 120–134.

<sup>3</sup> See also: Tomasz Szarota, *Osadnictwo miejskie na Dolnym Śląsku w latach 1945-1948*, Warszawa 1969; Włodzimierz Borodziej, *Historiografia polska o wypędzeniu Niemców*, [in:] *Polska 1944/45-1989. Studia i materiały*, part 2, Warszawa 1996, pp. 249–269; Robert Klementowski, *Urząd Bezpieczeństwa w powiecie Lwówek Śląski (1945-1956)*, Wrocław 2006, pp. 128–131; *idem*, *Urząd Bezpieczeństwa w Lubinie (1945-1956)*, Wrocław 2007, p. 122; Jakub Tyszkiewicz, *Ludność niemiecka w Dzierżoniowie (do 1956 r.)*, [in:] *Dzierżoniów - wiek miniony*, Sebastian Ligarski, Tomasz Przerwa, eds., Wrocław 2007, p. 37.

<sup>4</sup> Werwolf's activity is depicted for example in a film entitled *Gazda z Diabelnej*, directed by Grzegorz Warchoń (1980). It also appears in the cult Polish comedy *Sami swoi*, directed by Sylwester Chęciński (1967), and even in an episode of the series *07 zgłoś się* entitled *Brudna sprawa*, directed by Krzysztof Szmagier (1978). A story of a duel between a Polish Army major and a Werwolf saboteur is the main theme of a film *Pułapka*, directed by Andrzej Jerzy Piotrowski (1970).

<sup>5</sup> See for example Edward Janas, *Działalność pohitlerowskiego zbrojnego podziemia na Śląsku Odzyskanym w latach 1945-1975*, Opole 1975; Czesław Gołąbek, *Z genezy powstania i działalności Wehrwolu na polskich ziemiach zachodnich*, *Wojskowy Przegląd Historyczny*, 8, 1963; *Dolny Śląsk w drugą rocznicę powrotu do Polski 1945-1947*, Wrocław 1947; Anastazja Kowalik, *Geneza, organizacja i działalność podziemia niemieckiego na Dolnym Śląsku (1945-1947)*, *Sobótka. Pismo Wrocławskiego Towarzystwa Miłośników Historii*, 4, 1946; Ryszard Halaba, *Z zagadnień walki z reakcyjnym podziemiem na terenie województwa śląsko-dąbrowskiego 1945-1947*, [in:] *Studia i materiały z dziejów Śląska*, vol. 4, Katowice 1964; Maciej Szczerepa, Robert Primke, *Wehrwolf. Tajne operacje w Polsce*, Warszawa 2008; *Atlas podziemia niepodległościowego w Polsce 1944-1956*, Rafał Wnuk, Sylwester Poleszak, Agnieszka Jaczyńska, Magdalena Śladecka, eds., Warszawa-Lublin 2007.



1947 secret police uncovered 'a total of nearly 70 German organisations', which destroyed 'entire trains, locomotives and buildings' in Lower Silesia<sup>6</sup>.

These 'tales of terror' could now only inspire the imagination of tourists and enthusiasts of mysterious stories about Lower Silesia if not for the fact that between 1946 and 1950 a series of cases were brought before the Military District Court (Wojskowy Sąd Rejonowy, WSR) in Wrocław<sup>7</sup>, against people accused of being members of 'German underground organisations', commonly called Werwolf. At least 26 death sentences were pronounced<sup>8</sup>, and, to date, documents have been found confirming that 11 executions were carried out. Germans in the case of whom the Supreme Military Court had annulled the WSR decision were most often sentenced to 15 years imprisonment in subsequent trials. At least 18 people died during the investigations or while serving their sentence. Others were released under amnesty in 1952, 1953 or 1954.

All convicts were arrested by Lower-Silesian Powiat Public Security Offices (Powiatowe Urzędy Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, PUBP)<sup>9</sup>, which, during the investigation proceedings, had found 'irrefutable evidence' of the involvement of 'the above-mentioned persons in an anti-Polish, subversive organisation'<sup>10</sup>.

Although we do know about German plans to create a commando force during the last months of the Third Reich, documents of the Lower Silesian secret police raise many doubts as to the actual existence of any 'German underground' in Lower Silesia.

### 1. 'One must know what [...] one is to achieve in this fight.'<sup>11</sup>

Security officers established that the 'German underground', allegedly operating in Lower Silesia, comprised smaller, local groups, such as *Freies Deutschland*, *Britische Schlesien*, *Freie Schlesien*, *Schwarzwasser*, or *Weiswasser*, and several other nameless groups. *Polonia Restituta*<sup>12</sup>, though supposed to aim at building a 'fascist Poland', was

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<sup>6</sup> *By inni mogli spać spokojnie. Z dziejów walk o utrwalenie władzy ludowej na Dolnym Śląsku*, Marian Orzechowski, ed., Wrocław 1967, pp. 31, 65.

<sup>7</sup> For details on the activity of the Military District Court in Wrocław, see for example: Krzysztof Szwarzgryk, *Winni? Niewinni? Dolnośląskie podziemie niepodległościowe (1945-1956) w świetle dokumentów sądowych*, Wrocław 1999, pp. 57-74; Sylwia Krzyżanowska, *Wojskowy Sąd Rejonowy we Wrocławiu 1946-1955. Organizacja, kadry, orzecznictwo*, *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka*, 62, 2007, 4, pp. 477-487.

<sup>8</sup> Author's own list as of 24 June 2008.

<sup>9</sup> In the present article, in accordance with the Institute of National Remembrance (IPN) — Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation Act, a 'secret police officer' is defined as a person employed in an organisational unit subordinate to Ministry of Public Security (MBP) or Civic Militia (MO), or a soldier of the Internal Security Corps (Korpus Bezpieczeństwa Wewnętrznego). See also: The IPN Act of 18 December 1988, Journal of Laws from 2007, No. 63, item 424; No. 64, item 432; No. 83, item 561; No. 85, item 571; No. 140, item 983. The Act is available at [www.ipn.gov.pl](http://www.ipn.gov.pl).

<sup>10</sup> AIPN Wr., 032/726, vol. 1, *Pismo Kierownika Sekcji III Wydziału I Departamentu I MBP kpt. M. Rychtarskiego, Podziemie niemieckie - naświetlenie ogólne*, 7 February, 1946, p. 1.

<sup>11</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/620, vol. 2, *Pismo Kierownika Sekcji III Wydziału I Departamentu I MBP kpt. Walka z niemieckim podziemiem*, Warszawa 21 September 1946, pp. 50-80.

<sup>12</sup> *Informator o nielegalnych, antypaństwowych organizacjach i bandach zbrojnych działających w Polsce Ludowej w latach 1944-1956*, Warszawa 1964 (reprint: Lublin 1993), p. 159. The document was also prepared by researchers of the People's Republic of Poland Section of the Party History Department of KC PZPR.



also listed among Werwolf organisations, and its activity was allegedly financed by the German concern I.G. Farben<sup>13</sup>.

The 'terrorist' groups were supposed to operate all over the region. At the turn of the 1980s researchers at the Ministry archive, when analysing materials from 1945–50, prepared many studies on 'German underground', including lists of Wehrwolf members in the powiats [administrative districts] of Lwówek<sup>14</sup>, Świdnica<sup>15</sup>, Jelenia Góra<sup>16</sup>, Jawor<sup>17</sup> and Kłodzko<sup>18</sup>. Several studies were devoted to particular towns of Lower Silesia, such as Świdnica<sup>19</sup>, Wrocław<sup>20</sup>, Wałbrzych<sup>21</sup>, Oleśnica<sup>22</sup>, Oława<sup>23</sup> or Jelenia Góra<sup>24</sup>.

Officers of Department I of Ministry of Public Security (MBP), described the 'German underground' as a 'military–subversive' organisation<sup>25</sup>. They believed that the process of creating the groups began in the first months of 1944, with the help of members of NSDAP<sup>26</sup>, KPD<sup>27</sup> [sic!] and *Geheimpolizei*<sup>28</sup>. Methods of 'the German military operation under new political conditions' were allegedly guided by an instruction issued immediately after the capitulation of the Third Reich in the World War II. Theoretically, the instruction referred only to the operation of German intelligence but officers of Department I, when quoting it in their operational study, suggested that close connections existed between the intelligence structures and the underground German groups. 'Sound evidence exists', MBP officers wrote, 'that nationalist German underground organisations are practically well prepared to restore the German military power'<sup>29</sup>.

The instruction described methods of training 'appropriate Germans' to make contact with Polish high-level state officials, or to try bribing Poles for example by

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<sup>13</sup> Interessen-Gemeinschaft Farbenindustrie AG — a German chemical company established in 1925 in Frankfurt am Mein. During World War II it produced e.g. warfare gas, explosives and synthetic fuels for the army. It also had shares in companies producing Zyklon B and methanol. Prisoners of various nationalities were forced to work at affiliated plants located near concentration camps. After the War, executives of I.G. Farben (24 people) were charged with war crimes and convicted in the Nuremberg Trials for 3 to 8 years imprisonment. See the Nuremberg Tribunal Archives, documents on the trial against I.G. Farben: <http://www.profit-over-life.org/main.html>.

<sup>14</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/262. If an AIPN Wr. catalogue number is only provided, given piece of information concerns the whole unit.

<sup>15</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/256; 049/257.

<sup>16</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/264.

<sup>17</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/265, vol. 3.

<sup>18</sup> See for example AIPN Wr., 0148/380, Henryk Sawicki, *Powiatowy Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego w okresie utrwalenia władzy ludowej na terenie powiatu kłodzkiego (1945-1948)*, Warszawa 1978, p. 28.

<sup>19</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/257.

<sup>20</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/251.

<sup>21</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/255.

<sup>22</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/259.

<sup>23</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/258.

<sup>24</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/264.

<sup>25</sup> AIPN Wr., 054/472, *Pohitlerowskie podziemie dywersyjno-terrorystyczne [b.d.]*, pp. 5–11.

<sup>26</sup> NSDAP — Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei. German political party, holding power in the Third Reich.

<sup>27</sup> KPD — Kommunistische Partei Deutschland (the Communist Party of Germany). From 1932, the party actively called for fighting Nazism. Outlawed after 1933. Activists who avoided being arrested set up the KPD Central Committee in exile.

<sup>28</sup> Perhaps the officers meant Geheime Staatspolizei — Gestapo.

<sup>29</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/620, vol. 2, *Pismo Kierownika Sekcji III Wydziału I Departamentu I MBP kpt. Organizacja wywiadu niemieckiego*, Warszawa 19 September 1946, pp. 34–43.



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offering them attractive buildings. The guidelines also recommended using *Volksdeutsche* in the operations, by changing their *Volkslist* category from I to II and from III to IV to keep them in Poland. Simultaneously, they encouraged Germans to apply for Polish citizenship and for 'high positions in factories and industrial plants' to facilitate future sabotage actions<sup>30</sup>. 'The instructions are clear. The method for us, Poles, is also clear,' the officers wrote, comparing tasks envisaged for German partisans to actions of the 'fifth column' in 1939: 'when considering that currently in Poland, especially in the Western Territories, there are many Polish people who are demoralized, and therefore harmful, people who are preoccupied with their own lives and profits rather than interested in working to rebuild their country — it must be admitted that the German instruction is quite well designed.'<sup>31</sup>

Given the current state of research, we cannot be sure who wrote the instruction and how MBP officers came into possession of the document. We only know that according to a study by Department I officials, 'it was obtained from one of the German intelligence centres'<sup>32</sup>.

Detailed guidelines concerning actions against the 'German underground' appeared in a later study. According to its author, due to the mass expulsion of Germans, the existence of illegal German organisations was a temporary phenomenon: 'therefore, we will not have a mass German underground movement', he wrote, 'but we will have to face an elusive, undercover enemy, who will smartly operate in our territories'<sup>33</sup>.

MBP officers demanded that the operational activities were carried out in a well organised, planned, systematic manner, according to a motto: 'one must know what [...] one is to achieve in this fight.'<sup>34</sup> Simultaneously, the authors tried to motivate provincial UB officers: 'Unfortunately, not all operational officers, i.e. counter-intelligence officers, understand that for them the war is not over yet.'<sup>35</sup>

They also insisted that, due to this temporariness, investigations should not take too long as otherwise: 'we make it [the underground] grow [...]. Any delays or investigations taking 5–6 months, pointless, unplanned and lacking right decisions, are unacceptable as they mean helplessness and gross negligence.'<sup>36</sup>

In February 1946 Department I officers prepared 'an auxiliary query sheet for investigating members of the German organisation or suspected members of the organisation'. The questions aimed at establishing the exact date of enrolment, the number of people who took part in the organisation's activities, the amount of received training, and the structure of a given group and of its subunits. The instruction emphasised that establishing the 'hierarchical structure of the organisation' was especially important: staff composition, distribution of cells and methods of

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 42.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>33</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/620, vol. 2, *Pismo Kierownika Sekcji III Wydziału I Departamentu I MBP kpt. Walka z niemieckim podziemiem...*, p. 50.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 56.



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communications between units<sup>37</sup>. The next instruction, issued by Department I in March 1946, ordered to create 'a network of residents, agents and informers'<sup>38</sup>.

As far as the operational activities of PUBP officers were concerned, guidelines prepared by Lt Col Faustyn Grzybowski, Chief of Wrocław WUBP, were also important<sup>39</sup>. His order was as follows: 'to recruit an informer in each gmina [unit of administration] town to collect information on how many young Germans live in each village and confirm if these young people belong to HJ<sup>40</sup>. If affirmative, it is certain that the German organisation "Wehrwolf" operates in such village, as HJ was ordered to go underground as "Wehrwolf".'<sup>41</sup>

On the 7th of February 1946, within Division I of Department I of MBP, Section III was created to: 'energetically and efficiently fight the German underground.'<sup>42</sup> In WUBP units, vice-directors of Section I of the Division I became responsible for investigating the underground movement.

Director of Section III, Division I of Department I of MBP, Capt. M. Rychtarski, noted that after the expulsion of Germans and closing the 'verification action': 'For us, the hard work will begin; a fight with a well prepared enemy, who operates secretly in almost every area of our lives. Therefore a special central apparatus must be created immediately to counter the German underground — an agile and efficient apparatus, fighting the German underground with their own methods.'<sup>43</sup>

The *apparatus* was to comprise a team of selected officers working on the issue of the German underground, who were to be characterised by an appropriate ideological attitude, as well as dedicated, diligent, intelligent, enterprising, clever, and loyal<sup>44</sup>. Other desirable characteristics included good moral conduct and enthusiasm for work.

However, these requirements contrast with the conclusions of an audit carried out in one of the units: 'The officers are not politically aware. When questioned, [...] they do not know who the president of Poland is, and they lack basic political knowledge [...] Officer Nowakowski believes that Mikołajczyk is the president of Poland.'<sup>45</sup>

<sup>37</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/620 vol. 1, *MBP Wydział I Departament I, Pomocniczy arkusz pytań przy badaniu członków org[anizacji] niem[ieckiej]*, Warszawa 6 February 1946, p. 109.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, vol. 2, *Instrukcja nr 4 w sprawie reorganizacji sieci agencji po linii podziemia niemieckiego*, Warszawa 14 March 1946, p. 159.

<sup>39</sup> Faustyn Grzybowski (1913–1999), Red Army soldier, trained by NKWD in Kuybyshev. From 1944 in Ministry of Public Security. Head of WUBP units in Białystok and Lublin. In Wrocław between 1945 and 1948. Dismissed in 1956. See also: *Twarze wrocławskiej bezpieki. Obsada stanowisk kierowniczych Urzędu Bezpieczeństwa i Służby Bezpieczeństwa we Wrocławiu. Informator personalny*, Tomasz Balbus, Paweł Piotrowski, Krzysztof Szwaagrzyk, eds., Wrocław 2006, p. 86.

<sup>40</sup> Hitlerjugend — NSDAP youth organisation, recruiting males aged 10–18 and females aged 10–21.

<sup>41</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/619, vol. 2, *Do PUBP w Złotoryi: 'Plan wstępnego opracowania organizacji niemieckiej'*, Wrocław 7 May 1946, p. 39. Gunter Weiss was one of the HJ members who were accused of belonging to Werwolf. On 11th October 1946 he was arrested by PUBP officers in Lwówek Śląski. On 13th November 1946 WSR in Wrocław sentenced him to death in a summary trial. According to existing evidence, the execution was carried out. When arrested, Weiss was 16 years old. See also: AIPN Wr., 049/262.

<sup>42</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/619 vol. 2, *MBP do (wg rozdzielnika), Rozkaz organizacyjny o utworzeniu III Sekcji w Wydziale I Departament IMBP*, Warszawa 7 March 1946, p. 42.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 5.

<sup>44</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/620, vol. 2, *Pismo MPB Departament I Wydział I, dotyczy: Walka z niemieckim podziemiem...*, p. 50.

<sup>45</sup> AIPN Wr., 145/106, *Protokół inspekcyjny, Wrocław 2 June 1946*, p. 58. For more details on the educations of Public Security officers, see Henryk Dominiczak, *Organy Bezpieczeństwa PRL 1944-1990. Rozwój i działalność w świetle dokumentów MSW*, Warszawa 1997.



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During an audit in a Bolesławiec police unit, a WUBP officer noted that the local chief was drunk and that the work in the powiat was 'behind the schedule'<sup>46</sup>. A special report of the Police Department in Kamienna Góra is also interesting in this context: 'On the 17<sup>th</sup> of August 1945 seven officers and the chief of police left the station in Rabank<sup>47</sup> to carry out a search in the village of Krausendorf<sup>48</sup>, when the chief, driving ahead of us [...] toppled over, thereby sustaining major head injuries, and bruising his back and chest. When his colleagues had brought him round, he started to shout that he had been shot by German partisans, but he spoke in fever because, as the policemen said, they were a bit drunk.'<sup>49</sup>

Officers also had language problems. A clerk in PUBP in Legnica, Józef Tomczak, reported to his superiors on issues 'regarding Frajes Deutrzland'<sup>50</sup>. In a bill of indictment written by a PUBP investigating officer in Jawor, a German Gerhard Jung was accused of belonging to 'Wer-Wolf'<sup>51</sup>. We do not know how many officers spoke German fluently enough to carry on their operational tasks.

When talking about UBP officers who dealt with the 'German underground' in Lower Silesia, it is worth to provide more details on Capt. Edward Straś who, having literary aspirations, popularized the topic via press publications<sup>52</sup>. Straś was sent to Lower Silesia as an 18-year old member of the Polish Workers' Party from the Olkusz powiat. Without finishing his primary school, after completing a 3-week political course organized by the so-called *Związek Walki Młodych* Kielce and 'several days of introductory briefing', he was employed by WUBP in Legnica<sup>53</sup>. In August 1945 he was transferred to PUBP in Bolesławiec<sup>54</sup>. His first assignment was to break up the group *Freies Deutschland* which operated in the powiat.

According to the ministry officers, it was the strongest and largest German underground group in Lower Silesia. It had from 200 to 1400 members<sup>55</sup>. The exact date of its establishment was unknown<sup>56</sup>. It was composed of former members of Wehrmacht<sup>57</sup>, NSDAP, and HJ as well as 'German clergymen'. The group was supposed to have a complex structure, comprising a chief and his deputies, and units on the level of powiats, towns, districts, gminas and villages. Each unit had from 5 to 8 specialised

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<sup>46</sup> AIPN Wr., 145/102, *Sprawozdanie z odbytej odprawy komendantów Powiatowych MO w dniu 7 V 1946 r.*, p. 5.

<sup>47</sup> Correctly: Ruhbank, presently Sędziszów in the Kamienna Góra powiat.

<sup>48</sup> Presently Debrznik in the Kamienna Góra powiat.

<sup>49</sup> AIPN Wr., 145/119, *KP MO w Kamiennogórze [Kamienna Góra], Raport nadzwyczajny, dn. 17 VIII 1945*, p. 87.

<sup>50</sup> Original spelling. See AIPN Wr., 024/3321, vol. 9, *Postanowienie o wszczęciu sprawy opracowania*, Legnica 1 November 1946, p. 1.

<sup>51</sup> Original spelling, AIPN Wr., 038/727, *Akt oskarżenia w sprawie Junga Gerharda*, p. 7.

<sup>52</sup> See for example the above footnote 1.

<sup>53</sup> Due to damaged infrastructure in Wrocław, the WUBP headquarters were located in Legnica until autumn 1945. For more details see *Twarze wrocławskiej bezpieki*, p. 11.

<sup>54</sup> AIPN Wr., 059/4292, *Akta osobowe: Edward Straś*.

<sup>55</sup> AIPN Wr., 032/726, vol. 2, Edward Straś, *Ostatni bastion, Wehrwolf*, p. 13.

<sup>56</sup> According to one report, the organisation operated from 15 May 1945 (AIPN Wr., 053/ 619, vol. 1, *Do PUBP w Złotoryi, Wstępny plan rozpracowania organizacji niemieckiej „Freies Deutschland”*, Wrocław 7 May 1946, p. 39), according to other sources, from the moment of capitulation of the Third Reich (*ibidem*, *Pismo kier. Sekcji III, W[y]działu] I, D[epartamentu] I, dotyczy: Podziemie niemieckie. Naświetlenie ogólne*, Warszawa 7 February 1946, p. 1).

<sup>57</sup> Wehrmacht — the armed forces of the Third Reich.



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squads<sup>58</sup>. The oath which all group members had to swear required the youth of 'new Germany' to learn shooting, close combat, subversive action and 'sabotaging the enemy at every opportunity'<sup>59</sup>. The partisans were also supposed to get ready to fight for new Germany in the next, upcoming war<sup>60</sup>. Officers established that the oath was confirmed by a handshake.

On the 7th of May 1946 PUBP in Złotoryja received a 'Draft plan to uncover German organisation *Freies Deutschland*'<sup>61</sup>. The plan ordered to make a reconnaissance in the area and to prepare the agents. Jan Kolasa from Section I, Division I WUBP in Wrocław was in charge of the entire operation; he could use 'specially prepared materials of the *Freies Deutschland* organisation and [...] depending on information received, he will direct the proceedings accordingly.'<sup>62</sup> The document also revealed how WUBP officers came into possession of these materials<sup>63</sup>. Similar documents were sent to PUBPs in Wałbrzych, Milicz, Syców and Świdnica. Allegedly, information on the existence of *Freies Deutschland* groups were also obtained by PUBP officers in Legnica<sup>64</sup> and security officers in the Opole district<sup>65</sup>.

Perhaps the *Draft plan...* was inspired by a report sent on 6th May 1946 by PUBP officers in Bolesławiec to the chief of WUBP Lt Col F. Grzybowski. It said that an investigation carried out in Bolesławiec had led to the apprehension and arresting of 90 Germans<sup>66</sup>. According to the testimonies of arrested partisans, the organisation had from 60 to 200 members, comprised different 'sections', and had connections with American intelligence<sup>67</sup> and with the headquarters in Berlin. The group was allegedly headed by engineer Artur Kuhne. A Catholic priest from Bolesławiec, Paul Sauer, was indicated as one of the chief activists<sup>68</sup>. Evidence of his guilt included information on his interests in politics, listening to the radio, smuggling mail to the Soviet Occupation Zone and his priestly service among German Catholics<sup>69</sup>. Official Church documents, of explicitly religious content, found in Rev. P. Sauer's apartment, were recognized as 'anti-

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<sup>58</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/266, *Schemat organizacyjny grupy „Freies Deutschland” opracowany w maju 1946 r. przez funkcjonariuszy MBP w Warszawie.*

<sup>59</sup> As in the text. AIPN Wr., 089/1, vol. 1, *MBP do WUBP dla Naczelnika I Wydziału [wg rozdzielnika]*, Warszawa 13 May 1946, p. 5. Original spelling.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>61</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/619, vol. 1, *DO PUBP w Złotoryi, Wstępny plan rozpracowania organizacji niemieckiej „Freies Deutschland”...*, p. 39.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibidem.*

<sup>63</sup> To date, the materials have not been found.

<sup>64</sup> AIPN Wr., 024/3321 vol. 9, *Referent Referatu Śledczego PUBP w Legnicy do Szefa PUBP w Legnicy, Postanowienie o wszczęciu sprawy opracowania*, Legnica 1 October 1946, p. 1.

<sup>65</sup> AIPN Wr., 089/1, vol. 1, *Pismo do Kierownika III Sekcji Wydziału I PUBP w Głubczycach*, [b.d.], p. 3.

<sup>66</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/383, *Raport PUBP w Bolesławcu do Szefa Wojewódzkiego Urzędu Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego we Wrocławiu, ppłp. F. Grzybowskiego, za okres od dnia 26 IV do dnia 6 V 1946 r.*, Bolesławiec 6 May 1946, p. 47.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*, *Raport PUBP w Bolesławcu do Szefa WUBP we Wrocławiu, ppłp. Faustyna Grzybowskiego za okres od dnia 6 V 1946 do dnia 16 V 1946*, Bolesławiec 15 May 1946, p. 50.

<sup>68</sup> See also: Ks. Paul Sauer 1892-1946: *materiały konferencji odbytej 14 maja 2004 r. w Bolesławcu poświęconej pamięci ostatniego proboszcza niemieckiej parafii katolickiej w Bolesławcu*, Grzegorz Strauchold, ed., Bolesławiec 2004.

<sup>69</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/383, *Sprawozdanie dekadowe PUBP Bolesławiec za czas od dnia 16 II do 26 II 1946 r.*, Bolesławiec 26 February 1946, p. 22.



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Polish materials'<sup>70</sup>. The Bolesławiec officers also considered letters of Rev. Sauer as relevant to his subversive activity. One of the letters said: 'Conditions of living under Polish occupation are dramatic, Poles treat Germans badly; there is hope, however, that the war which will soon come will put an end to the Polish domination over Germans [...]. The evacuation of Germans from Lower Silesia is being carried out in horrible conditions, with Poles robbing the German population'<sup>71</sup>.

The officers established that the *Freies Deutschland* organisation planted a mine in a city swimming pool in summer 1945, which killed 37 Red Army soldiers, organised an assassination attempt on a Polish mayor and a group of officials, and planned to plant mines under a bridge<sup>72</sup>. As a physical evidence, 300 kg of explosives and weapons was presented. However, we do not know how the officers came into possession of these materials<sup>73</sup>.

In total, over 100 people were arrested in connection with the case. In her memoirs, Ewa Reimann, also arrested by the Bolesławiec PUBP, relates that her investigating officer coerced testimonies by threatening her to kill her parents or, on other occasion, promising her that she would be able to go to Germany if she signed a statement confirming she was a member of the organisation. She also mentions being beaten in jail: 'After hitting me with his fist multiple times, he repeated the question [...] I did not manage to reply; "take off your shoes", he ordered. "Lie down!". He approached the stove, fetched a bamboo stick and started beating my feet. I screamed, it hurt badly.'<sup>74</sup>

The alleged leader of the organisation, Rev. P. Sauer, died in jail. '38 members of the group and 12 assistants' appeared before the court. On 2nd of August and 19th of December 1946 the WSR in Wrocław sentenced 15 alleged members of the organisation to death. 20 other members were to spend 15, 12 or 10 years in prison. Eventually, seven people were executed, including two women<sup>75</sup>. The case was widely commented in the Wrocław journal *Pionier*: 'The trial has clearly demonstrated that only a year after the end of the war, the Germans are already dreaming of revenge.'<sup>76</sup>

The operational activity of the secret police was less extensive in the case of other German groups suspected of belonging to Werwolf. Ca. 100 Germans were arrested by PUBP officers in Kłodzko<sup>77</sup>. For similar reasons, PUBP officers in Bystrzyca arrested 62

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<sup>70</sup> AIPN Wr., 089/1, vol. 2, *Protokół przesłuchania świadka*, pp. 1–3. In the archives with this catalogue number the following documents (probably confiscated) can be found: *Mittellungen für die römisch-katholischen Geistlichen des Erzbischof. Commissariates Breslau*. They contain sermons, philosophical texts as well as information from the Diocese (e.g. on deceased priests or churches burnt in fires).

<sup>71</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/383, *PUBP w Bolesławcu do Kierownika WUBP we Wrocławiu, Sprawozdanie dekadowe za czas od dnia 16 III do dnia 26 III 1946 r.*, p. 37.

<sup>72</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/266, *Nielegalna organizacja „Freies Deutschland” na terenie Bolesławca*, Wrocław 17 December 1968, p. 25.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 27.

<sup>74</sup> Eva Reimann, *So haustenpolnische Folterknechte, Bunzleuer Heimatzeitung*, 1992, 3, p. 2.

<sup>75</sup> Elfride Silberbach and Ernst Bachman were buried in the Osobowice cemetery: field 102, grave 176, and Elisabeth Fiebig and Herbert Munich in field 102, grave 199. I owe this information to dr. hab. P. Szwarzgryk.

<sup>76</sup> (tt), *Już w dwa lata po wojnie myślą o odwecie. 15 wyroków śmierci*, *Pionier*, 189, 1946.

<sup>77</sup> AIPN Wr., 0148/380, Capt. H. Sawicki, *Powiatowy Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego*, p. 31.



people<sup>78</sup>. Most often, investigations led to arresting several dozen people. Information on the activity of Werwolf were supplied by informers who collaborated with local security offices: *Maruszka*<sup>79</sup> (Department I WUBP in Wrocław), *Zygmunt*<sup>80</sup> (10th Sudetes Infantry Division in Jelenia Góra), *Sportowiec*<sup>81</sup> (PUBP Świdnica), *Paw*<sup>82</sup> (Department I WUBP), *Git, Olcha*<sup>83</sup> (PUBP Bolesławiec), *Busch*<sup>84</sup> (PUBP Lubań), *Lustro*<sup>85</sup> (PUBP Lubań), *Tadek*<sup>86</sup> (PUBP Lwówek) or *Włoch*<sup>87</sup> (PUBP Złotoryja). In the latter case, the liquidation of a group operating in the powiat was aided by Soviet Army soldiers from Military Commanding Office in Złotoryja<sup>88</sup>. Information was also obtained from settlers who did not collaborate with UBP<sup>89</sup>. Letters to German families living in occupation zones, smuggled through the border, were another source of information.

Existing evidence shows that some of the Werwolf groups were liquidated by accident. For example, breaking up of the *Kammeradschaft* group, which allegedly operated in the powiat of Bolesławiec<sup>90</sup> and a Werwolf organisation in the Oława powiat were not a result of investigations but... of officers' strolls in the area<sup>91</sup>.

## 2. Errors and perversions

In the 2nd half of 1960s, Security Service (SB) officers began sorting its archives from 1945–1954, and prepared many analyses pointing to numerous errors and flaws in investigations against the 'German underground'<sup>92</sup>. Officers from Bureau C considered as 'too superficial' an investigation carried out by the Lusatia Unit of Borderland Defense Troops (*Łużycki Oddział Wojsk Ochrony Pogranicza*) and PUBP in Lubań, concerning an

<sup>78</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/381, *Raport dekadowy o stanie agenturalno-operatywnej pracy Wydziału I za okres od 20 II do 28 II 1946 r.*, Wrocław 1 March 1946, p. 32.

<sup>79</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/255, *Charakterystyka nr 254/12*, Wrocław 9 October 1986, p. 2.

<sup>80</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/264, *Charakterystyka nr 254/3*, Wrocław 12 September 1978, p. 2.

<sup>81</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/379, *WUBP we Wrocławiu do Ministra BP płp. Radkiewicza w Warszawie, Raport specjalny nr [brak]*, Wrocław 14 November 1945, p. 72.

<sup>82</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/251, *Charakterystyka nr 254/14*, Wrocław 29 August 1978, p. 3.

<sup>83</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/348, *PUBP w Bolesławcu do Naczelnika Wydziału dla Spraw Funkcjonariuszy MBP w Warszawie przez Szefa WUBP Wrocław, Objaśnienie*, Bolesławiec 24 February 1947, p. 31, 33.

<sup>84</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/381, *Raport dekadowy o stanie agenturalno-operatywnej pracy Wydziału I za okres od 30 XII 1945 do 10 I 1946*, Wrocław 10 January 1946, p. 4.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibidem*, *Raport dekadowy o stanie agenturalno-operatywnej pracy Wydziału I za okres od 10 III do 20 III 1946*, Wrocław 20 March 1946, p. 44.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibidem*, *Sprawozdanie dekadowe o stanie agenturalno-operacyjnej współpracy Wydziału I za okres sprawozdawczy od 10 VI do 20 VI 1946*, Wrocław 19 June 1946, p. 100.

<sup>87</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/254, *Charakterystyka nr 254/17*, Wrocław 15 October 1986, p. 4.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibidem*. AIPN Wr. contains only fragmentary information on relevant cooperation between the Polish and Soviet parties. This includes a protocol from the interrogation of Alfons Raschorf, suspected of belonging to Werwolf, written by Capt. Kozłow from the Military Commanding Office in Wrocław (AIPN Wr., 038/139, *Protokół przesłuchania*, Wrocław 15 February 1946, bp.) and a note on two Germans suspected of belonging to Werwolf who were handed over by NKWD to PUBP in Żagań (AIPN Wr., 053/381, *Sprawozdanie dekadowe o stanie agenturalno-operatywnej pracy Wydziału I za okres od 20 IV do 30 IV 1946 r.*, Wrocław 30 April 1946, p. 70.

<sup>89</sup> See for example AIPN Wr., 049/263, *Charakterystyka nr 254/4*, Wrocław 30 December 1986, p. 7; AIPN Wr., 049/251, *Charakterystyka nr 254/14*, p. 3; AIPN Wr., 024/3321, vol. 7, *Źródło „Orzeł”, Doniesienie*, 6 August 1946, p. 5; *ibidem*, *Protokół przesłuchania Stanisława Litwina*, Wrocław 23 October 1946, p. 7.

<sup>90</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/265, vol. 2, *Charakterystyka nr 254/1*, Wrocław 15 October 1986, p. 8-9.

<sup>91</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/258, *Wykaz członków grupy Wehrwolf działającej na terenie pow. Oława*, bp.

<sup>92</sup> The materials are presently in possession of AIPN Wr., catalogued as so-called *factologies*.



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action against a Werwolf organisation which had been liquidated in Szklarska Poręba<sup>93</sup>. Information on a 'too superficial investigation' is also found in an analysis of the activity of a Werwolf group in Jelenia Góra<sup>94</sup> and in the powiats of Bystrzyca, Lwówek, Złotoryja and Lubań<sup>95</sup>. In the case of a group operating in the Oława powiat the investigation was closed after a single, quick interrogation<sup>96</sup>. According to the officers, in the case of a group active in the area of Wałbrzych, 'many elements of operational materials, often unclear and of little value, do not correspond to the investigative evidence and the findings of the court proceedings'. Historical value of the materials (for the ministry) were rated as 'doubtful'<sup>97</sup>. When characterising a group which had allegedly operated in Strzegom, Capt. Józef Majwat wrote that officer Jerzy Jordan had 'led the investigation in an inept and obstructive manner'<sup>98</sup>. More facts on investigations against Germans accused of belonging to the 'German underground' are found in a comment made in another analysis: 'it must be considered as serious error [...] that suspects were held in custody for a month without any investigation.'<sup>99</sup> In records of another case, we find a note from 1946 on beating suspects in order to coerce incriminating testimony<sup>100</sup>. In the case of suspects arrested in the powiats of Lwówek, Złotoryja and Lubań it noted that the activity of the groups was to be considered as 'unclear and not fully deciphered. Generally, the characterisation is based on information obtained from one man.'<sup>101</sup> On 10th of July 1945 in Borowa Oleśnicka, six Germans were arrested. The WSR in Wrocław pronounced two death sentences, with one executed. An analysis from 1978 says: 'the aforementioned errors in investigation and inaccuracies in documentation were most probably a result of insufficient experience of the officers, considering that [...] it was one of the first investigations in PUBP Oleśnica.'<sup>102</sup> The dilatoriness and negligence of PUBP officers in Jawor were also attributed to 'overworked employees.'<sup>103</sup>

Also, the materials contain no reliable evidence of the activity of 'German underground' groups<sup>104</sup>. Most of the organisations were accused of 'preparing' to blow up bridges or factories, practising shooting in the forests or taking part in regular meetings. The most extreme activity was allegedly that of the *Freies Deutschland* group

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<sup>93</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/261, *Charakterystyka nr 254/5 grupy organizacji „ Wehrwolf działającej na terenie Szklarskiej Poręby, pow. Jelenia Góra w okresie od 1945 do listopada 1946 r.*, p. 6.

<sup>94</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/263, *Charakterystyka grupy organizacji niemieckiej „ Wehrwolf działającej w pow. Jelenia Góra*, Wrocław 30 December 1986, p. 6.

<sup>95</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/260, *Charakterystyka nr 254/7*, Wrocław 11 January 1979, bp.

<sup>96</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/258, *Charakterystyka grupy organizacji niem[ieckiej] działającej w m. Raduszkowice pow. Oława*, Wrocław 3 April 1978, bp.

<sup>97</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/255, *Notatka z analizy materiałów archiwalnych krypt. „Antifa”*, Wrocław 20 May 1964, p. 106. Although the case's code name could indicate an action against German anti-fascists, the investigation confirmed the existence of an Werwolf group.

<sup>98</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/256, *Charakterystyka nr 254/11*, Wrocław 29 February 1979, p. 6.

<sup>99</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/270, *Charakterystyka nr 259*, Wrocław 12 December 1977, p. 2.

<sup>100</sup> AIPN Wr., 038/26, *Przesłuchanie oskarżonego Schwarze Horsta*, Środa 30 April 1946, p. 89; *ibidem*, *Przesłuchanie oskarżonego Willego Herde*, [b.d.], p. 90.

<sup>101</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/260, *Charakterystyka nr 254/7*.

<sup>102</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/259, *Charakterystyka nr 254/8*, Wrocław 17 November 1978, bp.

<sup>103</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/265, vol. 3, *Charakterystyka nr 254/2*, Wrocław 5 October 1978, p. 3.

<sup>104</sup> Also the editors of a compilation of documents entitled *Niemcy w Polsce 1945-1950. Wybór dokumentów*, vol. 4: *Pomorze Gdańskie i Dolny Śląsk*, Daniel Boćkowski, ed., Warszawa 2001, p. 290, footnote 9, admit that information on the German underground are 'suspiciously unspecific' in documents they are familiar with.



from Bolesławiec, with the spectacular assassination on Polish officials and Soviet Army soldiers in 1946. However, a thorough analysis of available material seems to support a thesis according to which it was an accidental explosion, most probably of an anti-tank mine<sup>105</sup>. What is also striking is the small number of weapons found, considering the fact that after the war, weapon was very easy to obtain. For instance, a Werwolf group, which allegedly operated in Jelenia Góra, had three guns<sup>106</sup>, as did a German group terrorising the area of Świdnica<sup>107</sup>. 'Partisans' caught in the Jawor powiat while firing weapon in a forests had two German sub-machine guns<sup>108</sup>.

What also could not constitute evidence of the activity of Werwolf in Lower Silesia is enigmatic information on armed individuals, wearing German uniforms and allegedly seen in various powiats. One must remember that due to financial constrains Public Security officers often wore 'adjusted' German uniforms. For instance, 12 officers of the Powiat Police Chief Office, wore uniforms of 'Polish type' in 1945, while 193 wore 'German type' uniforms which were most often altered German ones<sup>109</sup>. In September 1945 officers of PK MO in Zgorzelec reported to its superiors that due to upcoming winter policemen would receive old German coats<sup>110</sup>. SB archivists also denied the existence of any central headquarters of the German underground<sup>111</sup>.

It was not without significance that many priests were accused of being members of Werwolf. In a situation where there was no German administration or other official institutions, the Church was an important element integrating German community in the region<sup>112</sup>. Additionally, according to many reports from Lower Silesia, the German community was peaceful, often passive, depressed with its own situation, and showing

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<sup>105</sup> According to experts, in 1945 nearly 1/3 of Lower Silesia was mined. In many powiats from 51 to 89 percent of the land was mined. Between 1945 and 1947 in all Western Territories, sappers cleared an area of 153,251 km<sup>2</sup>, 7654 km of railway tracks and 2439 bridges. 169 sappers died in the process and 366 soldiers were injured. See also: Leszek Stanisław Styś, *Rozminowanie Dolnego Śląska w latach 1945-1948*, *Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka*, 20, 1965, pp. 401-409. This seems to be supported by information contained in the files of KP MO Bolesławiec, a few days after arresting most of suspected organisation members: 'I hereby report that a mine exploded on the 5th of May 1946, at 1 pm, at the Roli-Żymierskiego street in Bolesławiec. 12 people died, including Red Army soldiers, several Russian females and a few Poles. We do not know the exact number of Russians killed as the Military Chief Office refuses to give information. [...] According to testimony of injured Antoni Kosiuk, the mine exploded after it had been found by a Red Army soldier who was fishing in a city channel. The soldier found the mine in reeds growing by the channel; he took it in his hands and started manipulating, and then it immediately exploded, blowing him to pieces. Nearby, there were other Soviet soldiers and Russian women as well as some Poles who were coming back home from the church. The soldiers tossed grenades into the channel and then the women picked up the killed fish. The channel was shallow and narrow in that place. It runs along the street.' See also: AIPN Wr., 145/119, *KPMO w Bolesławcu do Wojewódzkiej Komendy MO we Wrocławiu*, Bolesławiec 5 May 1946, *Meldunek specjalny*, p. 22.

<sup>106</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/261, *Charakterystyka nr 254/5*, Wrocław 23 May 1979, p. 2.

<sup>107</sup> AIPN Wr., 049/257, *Charakterystyka nr 254/10*, Wrocław 15 September 1978, p. 2.

<sup>108</sup> AIPN Wr., 054/660, vol. 1, *Materiały do faktologii i do opracowania Wydziału „C”*. *Zestawienie faktów wrogiej działalności za lata 1945-1960*, p. 29.

<sup>109</sup> AIPN Wr., 145/93, *PK MO we Wrocławiu do WK MO w Lignicy [Legnicy]*, *Raport sytuacyjny*, Wrocław 19 August 1945, p. 31.

<sup>110</sup> AIPN Wr., 145/95, *KP MO w Zgorzelicach [Zgorzelcu] do KWMO w Lignicy [Legnicy]*, *Raport sytuacyjny nr 9 za czas od 1 IX 1945 do 10 IX 1945*, Zgorzelice [Zgorzelec] 10 September 1945, p. 36.

<sup>111</sup> *Informator*, p. 155.

<sup>112</sup> See for example AIPN Wr., 049/260, *Charakterystyka nr 254/7*, Wrocław 11 I 1979 r., bp.; 049/252, *Charakterystyka nr 254/15*, Wrocław 7 October 1986, bp.



no signs of 'subversive activity'<sup>113</sup>. Also, Germans displaced from the Western Territories never mention anything about 'German underground' in their many memoirs or accounts<sup>114</sup>. By contrast, Joseph Goebbels' memoirs contain interesting information. On the 27th of March 1945 the Minister of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda noted: 'In my opinion, the so-called Wehrwolf action should be organised in a grand manner. The Wehrwolf action aims at organising guerrilla on the territories occupied by the enemy. However, we did not manage to make much preparations. The military situation in the West changed so abruptly that we did not have enough time to do it. [...] Generally, the guerrilla should start operating in the enemy-occupied territories at a later time, but then it will be of highest standards.'<sup>115</sup>

In their testimonies, field marshal Wilhelm Keitel and general Ferdinand Schoerner mention that Werwolf did not exist even in April 1945<sup>116</sup>. It seems highly unlikely that, in the political and economic realities of the last weeks before and a few months after the end of the War, preparations of the guerrilla operation could be continued on a large scale. Opinion polls developed by Sicherheidtsdienst (Nazi Security Service)<sup>117</sup> state that following the defeat at Stalingrad, there was no more 'victorious euphoria' in the German society<sup>118</sup>. The results of public surveys conducted by Wehrmacht in several German cities make it possible to put forward a thesis that in the concluding months of the World War II, in the most difficult time for the Germans: 'People acted and thought

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<sup>113</sup> Such information is found in many reports from powiats, see for example AIPN Wr., 053/388.

<sup>114</sup> See for example Kathe Bahl, *Damit es nicht vergessen wird. Meine Erinnerungen an Schlesien*, Wiesbaden 1998; *Breslauer Evakuierte in Bayern. Zwei Tagebücher aus der Kriegs und Nachkriegszeit 1945-1946*, bearb. und hrsg. von Hans Volkel, Bochum 2005; *Breslauer Passion 1945-1947*, hrsg. von Wolfgang Hartmann, Rosenheim 2000; Ursula Maria von Bullow, *Flucht und Vertreibung aus dem schlesischen Kreis Oels. Eine Dokumentation*, Würzburg 1996; *Die Graftschaft Glatz /Schlesien 1945-1946. Vom Kriegsende bis zum Vertreibung*, Ludenschtedt 1991; *Dokumentation der Vertreibung der Deutschen aus Ost-Mitteleuropa*, Bd. I/1, I/2: *Die Vertreibung der deutschen Bevölkerung aus den Gebieten ostlich Oder-Neisse*, Bonn 1953; Bd. I/3: *Polnische Gesetze und Verordnungen 1944-1955*, Bonn 1960; *Exodus 1945/1946. Flucht-, Besatzungs- und Vertreibungsschicksale von Glogauern aus Stadt und Landkreis*, ausgewählt und zusammengestellt von Prof. dr. Ferdinand Urbanek, Hannover 1999; *Exodus Doliny Baryczy (Exodus des Bartschtals). Wypędzenia, przesiedlenia i nowy początek Niemców i Polaków (Vertreibungen, Umsiedlungen und Neuanfang von Deutschen und Polen)*, Ireneusz Kowalski, ed., Milicz 2009; Barbel Hein-Weismantel, *Heilende Erinnerungen. Verlorene Wurzeln einer schlesischen Familie*, Dulmen 2002; Freya von Moltke, *Wspomnienia z Krzyżowej 1930-1945*, Warszawa 2000; Helene Pluschke, *Dziennik Śląski, Karta*, 57, 2008; *Reichenbach (Eulengebirge). Tagebuch - Aufzeichnungen vom Kriegsende. Dezember 1944 bis April 1946*, Warendorf 1983; Franz Scholz, *Wachter, wie Tief die Nacht? Grolitzer Tagebuch 1945/1946*, Eltville 1986.

<sup>115</sup> Joseph Goebbels, *Tagebücher 1945. Die letzten Aufzeichnungen*, Hamburg 1977, pp. 393-394.

<sup>116</sup> When asked about Werwolf, Keitel answered that he had found out about it in mid-April 1945: 'I believe that at the time that the establishment of Wehrwolf was announced there was no such organisation, and the announcement was made for propaganda purposes - to inspire resistance in the nation, without any organisational centre. The lessons learnt while organising *Volkssturm* are a sufficient tangible example of failed attempts to create mass national organisations, especially when undertaken by the Party without the armed forces. (*Protokół przesłuchania marszałka W. Keitla, 17 VI 1945 r.*). Similar was the opinion of general Ferdinand Schoerner: 'In the region of my Army section, i.e. both in the East and West, there was no such organisation as Wehrwolf. [...] Without any doubt, any activity of Wehrwolf was impossible without my knowledge.' (Field marshal Schoerner's own testimony on Wehrwolf). Both documents in: *Gienieraty i oficyery Wiermachta rosskazywajut... Dokumenty iz slectwiennych dieł niemieckich wojennoplennych 1944-1951*, sost. W.G. Makarow, W.S. Christoforow, Moskwa 2009, pp. 35-36, 102.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>118</sup> Wolfram Wette, *Wehrmacht. Legenda i rzeczywistość*, Kraków 2008, p. 204.



rationality. They countered the pathos of the fall of the ruling elite with a strong will to survive.<sup>119</sup> Finally, even superficial reading of the archives raises doubts as to the names of subversive organisations<sup>120</sup>.

One should also note that the operational activity against the 'German underground' was carried out by the NKWD–MWD apparatus. In June 1945 Ivan Serov informed Beria about subversive German groups which had been established on the orders of highest German authorities in late February 1945. As a result of action taken by NKWD units, 600 people suspected of belonging to Werwolf were arrested<sup>121</sup>. In September 1945, Beria reported that the operation had been extended and that 49 members of the 'German underground' were arrested in Brandenburg, 11 in the area of Chemnitz and 10 near Bautzen<sup>122</sup>. However, only one year later the situation got out of control. Chief of a MWD group in Erfurt informed minister Kowalczyk of groundless, too quick arrests of Germans and of bad cooperation with the agency. 'A pursuit has begun to arrest as many people as possible,' a report from the 23rd of September says, 'Because of this pursuit, investigators sometimes used force to influence prisoners, which resulted in creating fictional underground Wehrwolf organisations.'<sup>123</sup> After inspection and detailed

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<sup>119</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 205.

<sup>120</sup> See for example *Edelweisspiraten*, translated by officers as 'Piraci spod znaku szarotki' (Edelweiss Pirates). (AIPN Wr., 049/269). It is worth to mention that according to *Naprzód Dolnośląski* journalists, members of the group were to be identified by an edelweiss badge (*Naprzód Dolnośląski*, 13 June 1946, p. 2). However, in some German regions (for example in Bavaria), edelweiss is a popular decorative element. For more information on the doubtful 'subversive and terrorist' activity of the group see also: *SWAG i religioznye konfessii sowieckoj zony okupacyi Germanii 1945-1949. Sbornikdokumentow*, W.W. Zacharow, ed., Moskwa 2006, p. 520, footnote 162; 'Hirschhorn' — 'Bandajeleniego rogu' (AIPN Wr., 049/271); 'Sieben kommen durch die Welt' — 'Siedmiu idzie przez świat' (AIPN Wr., 049/160, 038/721); 'Rauberklub' — 'Klub rozbójników' (049/247). What is interesting, apart from *Freies Deutschland*, broken up by PUBP in Bolesławiec in 1946, there was another German organisation with this name. The anti-fascist *Freies Deutschland* organisation, was established in 1942 in a POW camp in the USSR. Its members declared themselves opponents of Nazism and their activity aimed at bringing forward the defeat of German army. From 1943, members of the organisation, which was endorsed by highest Soviet authorities, included KPD activists who stayed in the USSR, to later become prominent politicians in East Germany: Walter Ulbricht, Anton Ackermann or Wilhelm Piecp. The organisation disseminated its ideas by publishing a weekly *Freies Deutschland*, via a radio broadcast and by propaganda campaigns at the back of the front. Its members carried out political activity, for instance in a camp for German POWs in Miłoszyce (powiat of Oława). See also: *Das Nationalkomitee „Freies Deutschland" und der BundDeutscher Offiziere*, hrsg. von Gerd R. Ueberschar, Frankfurt am Main 1996.

<sup>121</sup> *Dokładnaja zapiska zamiestitiela narkoma wnutriennych dieł SSSR I.A. Sierow a narkomu wnutriennych dieł SSSR L.I. Berii o sozdanii sieti podpolinich organizaciji „ Werwolf i ob ariestie ich uciastnikow operatiwnimi gruppami NKWD SSSR w Berlinie i prowincijach.*, 22 ijunia 1945 g., [in:] *Archiw nowiejszej istorii Rossii, vol. 2: Specialnyje łagieria NKWD/MWD SSSR w Germanii 1945-1950. Sbornik dokumentow i statiej*, Sergiej W. Mironienko, ed., Moskwa 2001, p. 25

<sup>122</sup> *Dokładnaja zapiska narkoma wnutriennych dieł SSSR L.I. Berii priedsiedatelju SNK CCCP I. W. Stalinu, zamestitelju priedsiedatelja SNK SSSR B.M. Mołotowu cilienu CK WKP(b) G.M. Malenkowu ob itogah raboti operatiwnich grupp NKWD na tjerritorii Germanii na 1 sjentjabria 1945, 10 sjentjabria 1945 g.*, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 33.

<sup>123</sup> *Zajawlienije zamiestitiela nacialnika erfurtskoj okružnoj operatiwnoj gruppi MWD P.A. Nizowa zamiestitilju ministra gosbezopasnosti SSSR N.P. Kowalczyku o bezobrazniach b rabotie operatiwnogo sektora NKWD-MWD zemli Tjuryngii, 23 sientjabrja 1946*, [in:] *Apparat NKWD- MWD w Germanii 1945-1953*, I. Pietrow, J. Fojtcik, eds., Moskwa 2009, p. 228.



interrogation, 56 prisoners were released from custody. Instead, chief of the NKWD group, Capt. Perepelitz was arrested<sup>124</sup>.

Simultaneously, it is difficult not to notice that actions taken by the security service against the 'German underground' overlapped with those undertaken in relation to the Polish pro-independence underground movements. According to security officers, German intelligence methods included: 'training selected Germans to search for and make contact with Polish opposition, such as NSZ ['National Armed Forces']'<sup>125</sup>. MBP assured local officers that such collaboration indeed took place and that both organisations had similar aims. In response, local offices reported: 'In Wrocław, evidence of the activity of AK ['Home Army'] and Wehrwolf was also found. According to our data, the two organisations closely collaborate with one another as Wehrwolf supplies AK with weapons.'<sup>126</sup> In a report regarding initiation of proceedings, a director of Department III, Division I WUBP in Wrocław claimed that according to information they had: 'Those Wehrwolf groups that have survived only aim to punish traitors to the German nation, and Wehrwolf supplies are designated for the purposes of Polish insurgents, AK and NSZ. [...]. In my opinion the case is very serious and real.'<sup>127</sup> According to MBP officers, attention was also to be paid to the activity of English intelligence in the Western Territories as the British government: 'increasingly uses Germans for its own purposes.'<sup>128</sup>

### 3. Public enemy?

In his book entitled *W walce o ład i bezpieczeństwo na Dolnym Śląsku w latach 1945-1948* (published in 1979) Mieczysław Sodel, when characterising the German underground, wrote: 'What makes the issue even more complicated is that the archival materials are not easy to analyse. A substantial part of these materials was clearly directed to the central authorities, often purposefully dramatizing the situation to win more support. This is especially evident in the case of assessing safety. Exaggerating the dangers of post-Nazi underground, and of other phenomena, was supposed to help acquire more police and secret service officers in the area.'<sup>129</sup>

Another author explained: 'The myth [of Werwolf] was promoted by the propaganda via an exaggerated image of the German threat. On one hand, given the national interest of Poland, this might have been necessary, as it gave our security office tools to quickly expel Germans from the Western territories; on the other hand, it affected the morale and behaviour of the newcomers.'<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>125</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/620 vol. 2, *MBP Departament I Wydział I, Organizacja wywiadu niemieckiego*, Warszawa 19 September 1946, p. 42.

<sup>126</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/381, *Do Ministerstwa Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego w Warszawie, Departament I, Raport dekadowy o stanie agenturalno-operatywnej pracy Wydziału I za okres od 30 XII 1945 do 10 I 1946 r.*, Wrocław 10 January 1946, p. 2.

<sup>127</sup> AIPN Wr., 024/3321, vol. 3, *WUBP Wydział I Referat III we Wrocławiu do kierownika I Wydziału Departamentu MBP, Meldunek o wszczęciu rozpracowania w sprawie wywiadu org[anizacji] niem[ieckiej]*, Wrocław 11 September 1946, p. 10.

<sup>128</sup> AIPN Wr., 032/726, vol. 1, [document title missing], p. 5.

<sup>129</sup> Mieczysław Sodel, *W walce o ład i bezpieczeństwo na Dolnym Śląsku w latach 1945-1948*, Wrocław 1979, p. 63.

<sup>130</sup> Janas, *Działalność*, p. 89.



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In a tutorial entitled *Niemiecka grupa narodowa w Polsce*, published by communist-party owned Academy of Social Sciences (Akademia Nauk Społecznych)<sup>131</sup>, Feliks Bielak explained: 'All attempts to disorganise economic and social life [...] as well as the acts of murder and sabotage committed by Wehrwolf groups had to be efficiently addressed by Polish authorities.' However, already in the next sentence Bielak acknowledges that Germans who stayed in the Western Territories were characterised by resignation and apathy<sup>132</sup>. Marian Orzechowski manipulated the reader in a similar manner<sup>133</sup>.

Post-war migration movements and dramatically low levels of security added credence to the legend of Werwolf. UB officers' reports, administration materials, and personal memoirs contain information on German soldiers and SS officers who were hiding in forests of Lower Silesia, and on assaults committed by them. Some incidents, for example those which took place in Wrocław, such as distributing anti-Polish leaflets<sup>134</sup> or assaults on Polish settlers<sup>135</sup>, were indeed perpetrated by hostile Germans. But even in these cases we cannot speak of any organised 'underground'. Anyhow, the expulsion of Germans put an end to such practices. The lack of safety is well depicted by Hugon Steinhaus. In February 1946 he wrote: 'Mugging happens every day, at night you hear guns of various kinds; in the countryside, assault is even more frequent. They all rob — demobilized soldiers, deserters, Russians, Poles and Germans.'<sup>136</sup>

In the light of their own experience with the strong Polish underground, it might have seemed obvious to Poles that a German resistance movement had to exist. Official, anti-German propaganda did not deny this, and local press added fuel to speculations, warning against 'the reviving German imperialism' or 'the spreading German element in all parts of Europe'. Even the paper *Gazeta Ludowa*, associated with the opposition Polish People's Party (PSL), did not escape the dominating language of propaganda. In one of articles we read about 'German scum' wreaking havoc in Lower Silesia<sup>137</sup>. In December 1945 the paper called for creating a neighbourhood watch because 'werewolves prowl the Recovered Territories'<sup>138</sup>. At the same time, the journalists assured the readers that the legend of 'werewolves' is a 'powerless afterlife spectre of Hitlerism'<sup>139</sup>.

What was equally important, new authorities which operated in the so-called Recovered Territories, needed political success. They claimed that the aversion of Polish authorities to the Soviet administration which remained in Lower Silesia and which

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<sup>131</sup> Academy of Social Sciences — a school of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (KC PZPR) with a status of an academy, created after joining KC PZPR's Higher School of Social Sciences with Basic Problems of Marxism-Leninism Institute.

<sup>132</sup> Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance in Warsaw, Biuro Udostępniania, 01243/118, Feliks Bielak, *Niemiecka grupa narodowa w Polsce*, Warszawa 1990, p. 10.

<sup>133</sup> *By inni mogli spać spokojnie...*

<sup>134</sup> See for example *Pismo Biura Ziem Zachodnich MAP do dyrektora Urzędu Pełnomocnika Generalnego do Spraw Ziem Odzyskanych w sprawie plakatu rozpowszechnianego wśród ludności niemieckiej, 28 VII 1945*, [in:] *Niemcy w Polsce*, pp. 299–300.

<sup>135</sup> See for example *Raport inspektora MAP Stanisława Jurzyka o sytuacji politycznej i społecznej panującej na Dolnym Śląsku (fragmenty), 14 sierpień 1945*, [in:] *ibidem*, p. 204.

<sup>136</sup> Hugo Steinhaus, *Wspomnienia i zapiski*, Aleksandra Zgorzelska, ed., Wrocław 2002, p. 353.

<sup>137</sup> *Dyweryje niemieckie na Dolnym Śląsku*, „Gazeta Ludowa” No. 19 from 22 November 1945, p. 4.

<sup>138</sup> *Bezpieczeństwo na Ziemiach Odzyskanych - proponujemy utworzenie straży osadniczej*, „Gazeta Ludowa”, No. 40 from 3 December 1945, p. 2.

<sup>139</sup> *Legenda Wilkołaków - Bezsilne widma pozagrobowe hitleryzmu*, „Gazeta Ludowa”, No. 11 from 3 January 1946, p. 3.



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clearly took the German's side, was a result of subversive German activity<sup>140</sup>. The widely commented trial of the *Freies Deutschland* organisation and the resulting draconian sentences could help justify the vigilance, the need for existence, and the trustworthiness of public security organisations. A report sent from Wrocław to MBP informed that the verdict in the trial of the Bolesławiec group 'made a profound impression on German population, where an increased obedience to the Polish authorities can be observed'<sup>141</sup>. Provincial chief of police, Lt Col Eugeniusz Dowkan<sup>142</sup>, in an order issued on the third anniversary of the establishment of the Civic Militia (MO), recapitulated: 'The work and attitude of the police in our region mightily helped to settle these territories, to expel the unlawful residents and to replace them with Polish population, who sought peace after the atrocities of the war, and found it with the help of our organisation.'<sup>143</sup>

Since 2005, an investigation has been conducted in the Regional Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation — Institute of National Remembrance, regarding harassment, groundless arrest and coercing testimony from a group of 40 Germans, including Catholic priest P. Sauer, by MO and PUBP officers in Bolesławiec.

Translated by Katarzyna Hussar

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<sup>140</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/619, vol. 2, *Wstępny plan rozpracowania organizacji niemieckiej „Freies Deutschland”...*, p. 39.

<sup>141</sup> AIPN Wr., 053/381, *Sprawozdanie dekadowe o stanie agenturalno-operatywnej pracy Wydziału I za okres od 30 VII do 10 VIII 1946 r.*, p. 122.

<sup>142</sup> Eugeniusz Dowkan (1912-1998), from 25 October 1945 in Wrocław, initially as deputy of Provincial Chief of Police responsible for political and educational issues, and then as Provincial Chief of Police, Wrocław MO. In 1951, acting chief of WUBP in Wrocław. Then, promoted to MBP. Dismissed from the ministry in 1954.

<sup>143</sup> AIPN Wr., 145/1913, *Rozkaz specjalny nr 49 Komendanta Wojewódzkiego MO na dzień 7 października 1947*, p. 125.