

THE HOME ARMY IN GDANSK POMERANIA

edited by Grzegorz Górski
in cooperation with Katarzyna Minczykowska



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THE HOME ARMY (ARMIA KRAJOWA)
IN GDANSK POMERANIA

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INTRODUCTION

Poland was the first victim of the allied enemies – Hitler's Germany and Soviet Russia – who started the Second World War on 1 September 1939. Nevertheless, Poland continued to struggle in the face of defeat. The legal authorities of the Polish state – the President and the Government – continued their activity first in France and later in Great Britain. Polish soldiers fought along with the Allies on all fronts in Europe.

Conspiratorial structures started to appear in occupied Poland from the very first days of the German and Soviet occupation; in time they took the form of the Polish Underground State (PPP). The core of the PPP was the Home Army (Armia Krajowa), earlier referred to as the Union of Armed Struggle – the biggest conspiratorial military organisation in occupied Europe.

The Home Army contributed considerably to the victory of the Allies. The Home Army's achievements in intelligence (from obtaining plans and bullets of type V-1 and V-2 down to uncovering the German fortifications of the Atlantic Wall), engaging a significant proportion of the German army in combat. The heroic battle of Warsaw in August and September 1944 went to prove the importance of the campaigns carried out by soldiers of the Home Army.

Pomerania, the region of Poland bordered by the Baltic Sea at the north, had been the target of the German expansion and imperialist aspirations for centuries. During WWII the Home Army operated in Pomerania despite the fact that German terror and the extermination of hundreds of thousands of Pomeranians hindered the Polish conspiracy in the extreme. However, the determination of the Poles in their aim to regain their freedom and independence kept the Home Army alive and helped continue their struggle with the German occupying forces.

This publication is an attempt to acquaint the reader with the efforts of Polish patriots in Pomerania. It has been written for non-Polish readers, who may not be particularly familiar with the history of Poland and Pomerania.

For this reason, the first part of the publication constitutes a more extensive historical introduction illustrating the conditions of the Pomeranian territory and people in the context of Polish-German relations at the end of the 18th century.

Next, we present the political-legal situation of Pomerania after it had been unlawfully incorporated into the Reich in October 1939.

What follows is a more extensive outline characterising the Polish Underground State and the position of the Home Army (AK).

Two texts constitute a fundamental part of this publication; on the one hand, they are devoted to the construction of the structures of the Home Army in Po-

merania and their evolution during the years 1939–1945; on the other hand, they address the most important elements of the Home Army's military campaigns in Pomerania.

In the final part of the book we present the tragic epilogue of the Home Army. The twilight of the German occupation opened up yet another stage in the struggle for independence. The Home Army fell victim to subsequent repressions – this time inflicted by their Soviet “liberators” supported by their Polish communist collaborators.

The study we present here was created on the basis of historical research of the recent years initiated and supported by the Foundation of General Elżbieta Zawacka. The Foundation was set up in communist times and has been disseminating knowledge about the military campaigns of the Pomeranians for almost thirty years now. This publication, now aimed at a foreign reader, is another step in bringing this knowledge to a wider audience.

Prof. Grzegorz Górski

Grzegorz Górski

Historical conditions surrounding the incorporation of Gdańsk Pomerania into the Third Reich

The territory of the Pomeranian voivodeship¹, which was incorporated into the Reich after Poland's defeat in the September campaign, corresponded more or less with the territory of Royal Prussia – the area which the Kingdom of Poland regained from the Monastic State of the Teutonic Order on the strength of the Second Peace of Torun in 1466. It was then that the territory returned to Poland for the first time since it had remained under the Teutonic rule for over 150 years from the beginning of the 14th century².

Economically, Royal Prussia was one of the most important areas in the Kingdom of Poland and later the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The territory enjoyed great autonomy within the Polish state³ and it remained so until it was almost entirely incorporated into the Prussian state as a consequence of the first partition of Poland in 1772. The most important cities of the province – Gdansk and Torun – remained beyond the Prussian authority. However, the cities were incorporated into Prussia in 1793 during the second partition of Poland.

In 1807 both areas were again excluded from the Prussian rule. On the strength of decisions imposed on the Prussians by Napoleon⁴, Gdansk became the Free City, while Torun and its vicinities were incorporated into the newly created Duchy of

¹ The term Pomeranian voivodeship is used here in the sense of a territorial unit of the administrative division in the Second Polish Republic in the years 1920–1939, taking into account the territorial changes introduced in Poland at the beginning of 1939.

² The Teutonic Knights occupied this part of Pomerania after the war 1308–1309 under the guise of helping Poland against the Margraviate of Brandenburg which attempted to capture the territory. The Brandenburgians claimed they had been given the permission to take over the area by Wenceslaus II – the King of Bohemia and Poland, who was formally a sovereign of the territory.

³ Formally, until the Union of Lublin of 1569, the Royal Prussia constituted an independent province, but still its status was lower than the one of Greater Poland or Lesser Poland in the Kingdom of Poland. As a result of the Lublin decisions the Royal Prussia became part of Greater Poland maintaining a significant part of its independence and institutional – legal autonomy.

⁴ Napoleon in the campaign of 1807 defeated Prussia twice, and as a result of the peace treaty of Tylża Prussia had to face many humiliating consequences.

Warsaw⁵. In 1815, on the strength of the Treaty of Vienna, both Gdansk and Torun were reincorporated into the Prussian Kingdom, which lasted until 1919.

The international community decided on the political affiliation of the territory after WWI ended in November 1918 at the peace conference in Versailles. According to the decisions made at the conference, almost the whole territory of former Royal Prussia was given back to Poland. Warmia [German: Ermland] (belonging to Royal Prussia from 1466 to 1772 and Gdansk (again proclaimed to be the Free City) remained beyond the boundaries of Poland.

In January and February 1920, following the decisions of the Treaty of Versailles, the Polish army commanded by Gen. Józef Haller entered Pomerania. The army took power back from the Germans. Soon after this, the Polish administrative authorities settled in Pomerania. On the strength of the decision of the Legislative Sejm, the Pomeranian voivodeship⁶ was established, the capital city of which was Toruń⁷.

When this part of Pomerania returned to Poland, at least two major problems arose. The first problem was the issue of the integration of those territories with the Rzeczpospolita, while the other was the ethnic composition of the population living in the area under discussion, particularly the prospect of the coexistence of Poles and Germans.

The Polish central authorities introduced transitional solutions which were to accelerate the integration of the territories formerly under the Prussian occupation with the Rzeczpospolita. In this way, as early as 1919 the Ministry of the former Prussian District⁸ was set up, responsible for the reintegration with the motherland. Politicians from Greater Poland connected with the national-democratic wing⁹ pre-

⁵ Toruń became the capital city of one of the departments (administrative units) of the Duchy of Warsaw, and in 1809, during the Polish-Austrian war, in the face of Warsaw being threatened by the enemies, it even became the site of the supreme authorities of the Duchy of Warsaw.

⁶ Formally, the Pomeranian voivodeship was set up on the strength of the decision of 1 August 1919 about the temporary organization of the administration of the former Prussian Province (Dz.U. RP z 1919 roku, Nr 64 poz. 385). Executive decisions were made on 12 August 1919; they were not enforced until Pomerania had been taken over by the military units of General Józef Haller.

⁷ Originally, it was planned that the capital city of the voivodeship would be Gdańsk; however, in view of Gdańsk remaining beyond the boundaries of Poland, the authorities considered Kwidzyn to become the temporary capital city (it was the capital of one of the regencies). Kwidzyn was situated centrally, so in terms of communication it was convenient for inhabitants of the voivodeship. Finally, it was decided that the capital city of the voivodeship would be Toruń, but it was assumed that Gdańsk would eventually become the capital of the Pomeranian voivodeship once it returned to Poland in the future.

⁸ The Ministry of the former Prussian District was established on the strength of the act of 1 August 1919 (see footnote 6). It started to operate on 12 August 1919, and was abolished as a consequence of the act about its liquidation (the act passed on 7 April 1922, enforced on 28 April 1922). The competences of the Ministry were taken over by other corresponding ministries.

⁹ The first two ministers – Władysław Seyda and Władysław Kucharski belonged to the National-Democrats. Juliusz Trzcński, who took office at the end of July 1921, and his successor Józef Wybicki, were not so closely connected with this political camp; yet, the existence of the institution was on the decline.

ailed in the institution. At the same time, in the Pomeranian part of the district, politicians were predominantly from the National Union of Workers¹⁰.

Differences appeared as the previously mentioned political groups saw the future of both voivodeships. While the inhabitants of Greater Poland tended to preserve their autonomy within the borders of the Rzeczpospolita and not to integrate with Poland rapidly, the Pomeranians insisted on fast integration and eliminating differences between Pomerania and the motherland. As early as 1920 the first tension erupted since the Pomeranian political centres had opposed the idea put forward by the Ministry that consisted in creating a separatist "army of the western lands"¹¹. There were even demands that Pomerania be excluded from the jurisdiction of the Ministry and that the autonomy of the Pomeranian voivodeship be extended¹². It must be underlined that these concepts were being forced by the National Democracy [*endecja*] of Greater Poland in the period when the course of the Polish-Soviet war was extremely unfavourable for Poland; some circles connected with this political formation opted for surrender¹³. It was believed that Poland within its reduced borders would survive thanks to a kind of protection from the western countries with the former Prussian province taking a leading role.

The rapid development of the course of the war in August of 1920¹⁴ weakened considerably the significance of the political group from Greater Poland; the Ministry started to lose its importance, at least in relation to the situation in Pomerania. Nevertheless, the events described above introduced a permanent conflict between both circles in Pomerania. The growing political camp of the National Democracy in Pomerania found its political enemy in the National Union of Workers [Narodowe Stronnictwo Robotników], which was connected mainly with the territories of the former Prussian occupation, and most of its advocates were in Pomerania. Its considerable influence resulted from the strong position of the

¹⁰ The National Union of Workers was created on the basis of the Polish Christian trade unions operating in Germany. What is important, both the Polish trade unions and the structures of the NSR functioned not only in the lands under the Prussian occupation, but also inside Germany, particularly in the biggest industrial districts (in Rheinland, Westphalia, the Ruhr district).

¹¹ Archiwum Akt Nowych (dalej AAN), Kancelaria Cywilna Naczelnika Państwa, t. 167.

¹² Such a demand was put forward by the politicians of the NSR in their newspaper *Głos Robotnika* on 5 September 1920 no. 178.

¹³ In the face of the Polish front being broken in Belarus and the bolshevik army progressing quickly towards Poland, politicians of the national camp, convinced about the imminent defeat and collapse of Warsaw, intended to conclude a truce with the bolsheviks through the mediation of the countries of the Triple Entente. Władysław Grabski, the Polish prime minister at that time, accepted humiliating "peace proposals" at the conference in Spa, which, in fact, meant that the independent Polish state ceased to exist.

¹⁴ It was a consequence of the Polish counteroffensive started on 15 August 1920, known as the Battle of Warsaw. In the south and north of Warsaw the Polish army defeated the Bolsheviki. In October 1920 another Polish offensive of the Neman river and the counteroffensive in the front of Lesser Poland led to the Soviet army being pushed deep into Ukraine and Belarus. In practice, Bolshevik Russia was unable to attack again, which entailed the armistice and the conclusion of the peace treaty of Riga in March 1921.

Christian trade unions confederated with the Polish Trade Union [Zjednoczenie Zawodowe Polskie – NSR]. Moreover, the NSR was connected with various social organisations associated with the Catholic Church. They originated from the period of *Kulturkampf* and the efforts of the Polish population to struggle with the Germanisation¹⁵, which was the main factor determining the strong position of the NSR and the previously mentioned circles in Pomerania.

In May 1920, the NSR united with the National Union of Workers, which was a similar organisation operating in the territories of the former Russian occupation. As a consequence, the National Workers' Party [NPR] was established, which was active throughout all Poland. Nevertheless, some activists from the former NSR did not approve of the new formation considering it to have lost its Christian-democratic character and decided to join the Polish Christian Democratic Party [Polskie Stronnictwo Chrześcijańsko-Demokratyczne – PSChD], which operated mainly in Silesia. This fact did not affect the NPR in Pomerania, but in time the political rivalry between PSChD and the NPR started to grow¹⁶.

The national-democratic political camp in Pomerania was much weaker than the Christian Democratic circles. Moreover, as the results of the first Pomeranian general election revealed, it was also weaker than the German minority. In comparison with Greater Poland where the National Democracy entirely dominated the political life on all levels, the situation in Pomerania was very unsatisfactory for the leaders of this party.

The activity of the previously mentioned Ministry of the Former Prussian District affected adversely the position of the National Democracy in Pomerania. Inhabitants of Pomerania fully accepted their return to Poland and heavily opposed any concepts involving autonomous or separatist tendencies, which ultimately stopped the development of the National Democracy in Pomerania. It was not until the Ministry had been liquidated and the social organisations associated with the National Democracy had been set up at the end of 1920 that the party saw its first successes in the subsequent general elections to the Sejm.

Let us analyse now the evolution of the ethnic situation in Pomerania and its political consequences.

When Pomerania returned to Poland, the ethnic structure in the area revealed a slight predominance of Poles over Germans. The German census of 1910 recorded that 43% were Germans. So, while taking into consideration a small percentage of other ethnic minorities, this meant that the Polish population oscillated

¹⁵ Starting from the 1870s, the Prussian authorities launched the Germanisation action towards the population inhabiting the former territories of the Rzeczpospolita. Taking into account the fact that almost all the population was Catholic, and the Prussian authorities struggled officially with the German Catholic Church, the Polish national resistance was closely connected with the defense of the Catholicism.

¹⁶ The National Democrats, struggling for support in Pomerania, indirectly supported the PSChD, being aware of the fact that in this way they effectively weakened their main opponent in the region.

around 55%¹⁷. It would not be a mistake to assume that at the beginning of 1920, the Poles constituted practically three-fifths of the Pomeranian population. However, the Poles prevailed mainly in villages and small towns, whilst in bigger cities the percentage of the German population was overwhelming. Generally, it can be assumed that the Germans constituted about 80% of the inhabitants of the major Pomeranian cities¹⁸.

On the other hand, in the first two years of Poland's independence there took place a considerable exodus of Germans from post-war Poland¹⁹. As a result, in the first census of 1921, the percentage of Germans among the inhabitants of Pomerania plummeted from over 40% to almost 19%²⁰, which was mainly visible in the cities. In Toruń, the number of Germans plunged from over 60% in 1910 to almost 13% in 1921, while in Grudziądz it fell dramatically from 88% to almost 12%²¹. In subsequent years, the exodus of Germans continued. At the beginning of the 1930s, their number in the Pomeranian voivodeship fell to less than 10% and the problem of the German minority was no longer a significant local issue. It was not until 1939 when Bydgoszcz was incorporated into the voivodeship that the problem of the German minority became again a major problem (one-third of the population of Bydgoszcz were Germans).

The first test of the power of individual political parties took place during the general election to the Legislative Sejm on 2 May 1920. As it had been predicted, the NSR achieved a convincing victory as it received 41% of votes, which provided it with nine out of 20 parliamentary seats. The second position was occupied by German lists with almost 29% of votes (6 parliamentary seats). The Popular National Union [Związek Ludowo-Narodowy – ZNL], the political organisation of the National Democrats, gained only 18% of votes (4 seats in the parliament). The Polish People's Party received one parliamentary seat, which meant that this party along with other peasant political groups and the Polish Socialist Party [the PPS] turned out to be entirely marginal political powers²², a state of affairs which lasted for a long time.

The previously mentioned ethnic changes caused a radical decrease in the political significance of the German minority, as was revealed at the turn of 1921

¹⁷ The studies prepared by E. Romer: *Ilu nas jest*, Kraków 1917 and *Polacy na kresach pomorskich i pojeziernych*, Lwów 1919, are of fundamental significance in defining the parametres.

¹⁸ However, it must be remembered that generally the German statistics referred to the Prussian Province of West Prussia. About 62% of the province was incorporated into Poland; the rest remained in the Reich or became part of the Free City of Gdańsk. The regions incorporated into Poland had a lower percentage of the population of German origin than the areas remaining within the boundaries of the Reich or the Free City of Gdańsk.

¹⁹ About 300,000 people of German origin left Pomerania in the period under discussion; they were mainly inhabitants of the cities.

²⁰ *Mały rocznik statystyczny* 1937, s. 22.

²¹ *Ibidem*.

²² *Statystyka wyborów do Sejmu Ustawodawczego. Miesięcznik statystyczny. Rok 1920 t. 1*, s. 76, 91.

and 1922 during the local elections in Pomerania. Although in some cities, the Germans managed to maintain their influence (e.g. in Grudziądz, they obtained one-third of votes), generally their political power was waning.

Those who really profited from the demographic change were the National Democrats, for they repeated their success from the general election to the Sejm having obtained about 40 % of votes. At the same time, the ZLN received a similar number of votes as the Christian Democrats, which demonstrated the changing political preferences of the Pomeranians.

This evolution resulted from Pomerania's reincorporation into Poland. When the first flush of enthusiasm faded and the patriotic upsurge connected with the Polish-Soviet war weakened, disproportions in the social and economic development of Pomerania as against other regions of Poland started to be manifest. Some negative economic effects of the developing integration for Pomerania reared their head. Among them we should mention the separation of the Pomeranian economy from the German economic zone and the impossibility to compensate for the economic losses with profits resulting from the incorporation of Pomerania into the Polish economic system, which was ruined by the war and consisted of three different systems which were now being integrated. Another factor was the growing migration of people from Central Poland and Lesser Poland to Pomerania. On the one hand, it was a natural process caused by the exodus of the Germans²³. On the other hand, it gave rise to many tensions since many new settlers were appointed to hold key positions in the government administration and other institutions (the judicial system, the state police, the army) along with national enterprises. It constituted perfect propaganda ammunition for the National Democrats, whose power in the territory was thriving.

The NPR did not feel so strongly about the phenomena described above as the new settlers were very often supporters of the party, which soon led to major consequences for this political formation.

The year 1922 brought about a significant political change. Both the increasing social tension in Pomerania and the complicated economic situation in Poland (such as the consequences of the German trade policy and hyperinflation²⁴) along

²³ It must be remembered that the first to leave Pomerania were German officials, which caused a problem in the work of the local public institutions. That is why, the gap was filled in by officials from other parts of the Rzeczpospolita.

²⁴ Formally, until the end of 1925 Germany, was obliged to follow the clause according to which Poland enjoyed the highest trade privileges. However, the hostile attitude of the authorities of the Weimar Republic caused that the trade instruments were transformed into the main tool with which the Polish economy (weakened due to a limited access to the German market) was to be forced to become dominated by Germany, which, in consequence, was to lead to the revision of the territorial decisions. In this sense, the so called customs war started at the beginning of 1925, which was the consequence of the expiry of the earlier trade agreements, was not the beginning, but the culmination of the German economic pressure exerted on Poland (particularly on the Polish western territories). The problems, apart from the difficulty connected with the economic reintegration of

with the increasing polarisation of the political parties in Poland also entailed significant changes in Pomerania.

The NPR, facing an escalating internal conflict²⁵ after the death of President Gabriel Narutowicz, started to opt for the political circles which identified themselves with Józef Piłsudski. However, the majority of the NPR's activists from Pomerania insisted on maintaining an equal distance between Piłsudski and the National Democrats, a ploy which did not succeed. The National Democrats, wanting to capture most of the NPR's voters, created an extensive nationalist-Christian coalition, which consisted of two new façade formations – the National-Christian Association of Workers and the Christian-National Party of Farmers. Both political parties were established only to weaken the influence of the NPR in Pomerania.

As a result, the National Democrats appearing under the name of the Christian National Union [Chrześcijańska Jedność Narodowa – ChJN]²⁶ obtained 56% of votes, which provided it with ten out of 14 parliamentary seats in the district²⁷. Curiously enough, only four parliamentary seats were given to the National Democrats, the remaining six seats being given to the coalition parties (three seats each). The NPR also obtained 3 parliamentary seats, but it recorded a significant decline in votes – only 24%. In fact, the Christian-democratic preferences of Pomerania did not change as politicians from this political formation obtained nine out of 14 seats. The last Pomeranian seat was won by the German minority, which reflected the rapid erosion of its political influence – the German list received a mere 15% of the votes. The result of the election confirmed the marginal significance of the peasant and socialist movement in Pomerania.

Another important breakthrough for Pomerania – like for all Poland – were the events of 1926 with the May coup d'état, which led to the appearance of a third political factor in Pomerania – apart from the National Democrats and Christian Democrats. However, before such a formation was set up, the two political parties competed against each other bitterly.

After the election of 1922, the coalition of the ChJN with the peasants' "Piast" took over the political initiative²⁸. Nevertheless, this did not entail any fun-

three different economic areas, were the main cause of the serious economic crisis, one of the signs of which was the dramatic inflation of the Polish currency – the Polish Mark.

²⁵ The national camp, particularly Gen. J. Haller, who was very popular in Pomerania, were accused of creating the political ambiance leading to the assassination of the President of the Rzeczpospolita.

²⁶ Moreover, another member of the coalition was Wojciech Korfanty and his PSChD. In the face of his popularity in Pomerania, it was another important element which weakened the position of the NPR there.

²⁷ *Statystyka wyborów do sejmu i senatu odbytych w dniu 5 i 12 listopada 1922 roku*, Statystyka polska, T. 8, 1926, s. 41 – 46.

²⁸ In May 1923 the National Democrats signed the so called Lanckorona Pact with the PSL "Piast"; as a result, the second government of Wincenty Witos was created. It survived half a year; Witos became the head of the government again in May 1925 thanks to the support of the same political powers.

damental change in the situation in Pomerania. On the contrary, the effects of the crisis affected adversely the Pomeranian population, which was used by the NPR which contested the economic policy of the subsequent centre-right governments through its trade unions. The ruling authority supported by the nationalists (including the long-lasting government of Władysław Grabski²⁹) was also attacked by the socialists and trade unions even in Pomerania – hitherto resistant to the influence of this political formation. The controversies around the reform of the agrarian system caused a growing support for the peasants' party "Piast" among village communities in Pomerania despite the fact that "Piast" cooperated with the National Democrats.

The signs of the changing political preferences in Pomerania were apparent as early as 1925. In the election to the voivodeship authorities and the municipal authorities in Pomerania, the NPR³⁰ won the highest percentage of votes – 30%. A closer analysis of the results of the election reveals that the NPR's voters were predominantly inhabitants of the cities, while the support for the party among the rural population had fallen in favour of the peasants' movement. The decline in the number of rural supporters of the National Democrats took place despite the fact that the party had a strong position in the circles connected with the Catholic Church. The growing influence of the PPS in cities was also noticeable. The PPS obtained a significant number of votes and gained importance in the Pomeranian political life. At the same time the influence of the German minority was marginal³¹. It did not manage to win any significant positions in the local authorities.

As far as the May coup d'état is concerned, most inhabitants of Pomerania supported the standpoint represented by the government³². However, this did not result from any political affinities for the government of W. Witos and the coalition of the ChJN with the "Piast". The population of Pomerania had a legalistic mentality formed during the Prussian times, which tended to resist any irredenta movements. Nevertheless, the Pomeranian National Democrats took on a hostile attitude towards Piłsudski and the new reality, which it maintained until the end of the war.

²⁹ The second cabinet of Grabski, composed of mainly National Democrats, was established in December 1923 and lasted until November 1925.

³⁰ The NPR maintained its former composition in the voivodeship authorities and town councils of the main Pomeranian cities. In practice, it meant that it regained the 40% social support in Pomerania.

³¹ See more about the significance of the elections for the political geography of the voivodeship in: R. Wapiński, *Życie polityczne Pomorza w latach 1920–1939*, Warszawa–Poznań–Toruń 1983, s. 118–119; still, we cannot agree with all the conclusions suggested by the author.

³² A symbolic example is the situation which occurred after the envoys of Marshall Piłsudski – Gen. Skierski and Gen. Thomee – had arrived in Toruń's Headquarters of the District Corps. Their task was to attempt to neutralize the Pomeranian military units preparing to support the government militarily. Both generals were arrested following the order of the commander of the District Gen. Jan Hubischt. It was not until President Wojciechowski resigned and the government of Kazimierz Bartel was established that both generals were set free; the commander of the corps had to declare his loyalty towards the new government.

The situation that arose in May 1926 constituted a very serious problem for the Pomeranian circle of the NPR. Politicians of the party constituted one of the most important national political centres which supported the May coup d'état. This must have led to political consequences concerning the situation in Pomerania. Yet, the NPR did not win the support of Pomeranians despite the fact that some of them approved of the new authorities. A serious crisis of confidence grew towards the NPR in Pomerania.

Moreover, after some time most politicians of the NPR started to distance themselves from the political camp of the May coup d'état (still some of its activists joined the Sanation faction³³). This evolution of the NPR must have affected the level of social support for the party. Additionally, a new factor in regional policy emerged – the organised post-May political camp. Its members attempted to organise themselves by engaging numerous military circles in Pomerania along with state officials (among whom there were more and more advocates of the Sanation) and landowners. The Sanation persisted in carrying out personnel changes in all the institutions supervised by the central body. Significantly, it gave rise to the so-called second wave of migration from Central and Eastern Poland to Pomerania. Naturally, it revived the tensions and emotions resulting from the first wave involving the migration of officials. Soon it turned out that the Sanation had not managed to set up political structures which were strong enough to put forward their own candidates in the general election in March 1928.

In this situation, the National Democrats returned to their separatist rhetorics underlining the negative effects of Sanation rule. In the new reality some time had to pass for the National Democrats to regain their previous position. In the meantime, the NPR did not reveal any noticeable symptoms of the party becoming weaker. This did not occur even despite the fact that as a result of the political turmoil a large group of PSChD activists left the NPR. They created a coalition with the Polish People's Party "Piast" and took on the name of the Polish Catholic Bloc [Polski Blok Katolicki – PBK].

The National Democrats won a narrow victory in the elections in which almost 90% of people eligible for voting had taken part (in the elections for the senate the turnout was lower by a few percent). Yet, they received over 50% fewer votes than in 1922 (24%). Taking into account this fact, the result of the NPR which was lower only by 2 points should be considered to have been a great success of the NPR. The evidence for the strong position of the NPR's circles is the fact that the Catholic Bloc, consisting mainly of secessionists from the NPR, held the first position having received over 16% of the votes. Another surprise was the result obtained by the German lists – they won 15% of the votes, which reveals that many Poles supported the German lists, for the German minority constituted less than 10% of

³³ The party was split, the consequence of which was that the newly created NPR – Lewica joined the camp of Piłsudski. It had serious implications for the NPR as it led to the erosion of its influence in the trade unions, hitherto controlled by this political formation.

the whole population at that time. It shows that the inhabitants of Pomerania saw the events of the years 1925–1927 in a negative light. The Polish Socialist Party [the PPS] had a resounding success having obtained as much as 13% of votes (in 1922 it received about 3,600 votes, while in 1928 – 57,000 votes). Interestingly, the National Democrats won in the cities, but the PPS held the second position having scored one point more than the NPR (respectively 19% and 18%). Paradoxically, the NPR won in the rural areas where it superseded the National Democrats and the Polish People's Party "Piast" in the Catholic Bloc³⁴. What is very curious is the extremely high percentage of votes obtained by the Polish People's Party [PPS] – 12% of the votes. It can be assumed that the PPS won the support of those Pomeranians (most of whom had settled in Pomerania recently), who were the advocates of the post-May political system of Józef Piłsudski, for in Pomerania there was no ruling political party.

The elections also revealed the strong pressure of the central authorities on the bishop of Chełmno Stanisław Okoniewski in that he was expected to restrict the participation of the clergy and the Church in the elections in Pomerania³⁵. The pressure turned out to be successful as no clergyman had received a parliamentary seat (neither in the Sejm nor in the senate). The National Democrats received 4 seats (formerly 10); the NPR, the German lists and the Catholic Bloc (within which the "Piast" got 2 seats) obtained three parliamentary seats each; the PPS won two seats in the parliament.

During the post-election period, the governing political party began to establish the Pomeranian structure of the Nonpartisan Bloc for Cooperation with the Government [Bezpartyjny Blok Współpracy z Rządem – BBWR]. The efforts of this powerful and influential groups of officials and military men bore fruit. At the turn of 1929 and 1930 a local election took place in Pomerania. They outlined the new political tendencies in Pomerania. After the political turmoil, the national political camp operated under the name of the People's Party [Stronnictwo Ludowe – SL] from 1928 (????). Internal fights within the party between the older and younger generation of activists occurred in Pomerania, like in other regions of the country, and weakened the party. The NPR, having become an opponent of the Sanation, ended up profiting from the problems of the National Democrats and the weaker position of the PPS. Last but not least, the BBWR took the stage as an important player on the political scene.

³⁴ *Statystyka wyborów do sejmu i senatu odbytych w dniu 4 i 11 marca 1928 roku*, Statystyka polska, T. 10, 1930, s. 33–39.

³⁵ One of the reasons for the organizational failure of the Sanation in Pomerania in 1926 and 1927 was the fact that it did not manage to win the support of the Catholic clergy. Despite many efforts, priests detached themselves from the new political entourage, which hindered the electoral success of the Sanation in Pomerania. Thus, the Sanation tended to weaken the political activity of Pomeranian priests, which was to bring positive results for the governing party in the nearest future.

The SN won elections to the local councils having obtained over 28% of the votes. The NPR received almost 17% of the votes in the cities, the PPS over 14%, and the BBWR over 13%. The German lists won over 12%. At the same time, the NPR were victorious in the elections to the district council having obtained almost 28% of the votes; the second was the SN with over 18%. The third place was held by the BBWR who had received almost 17% of the votes³⁶. It can be concluded that at the beginning of the new decade the political situation in Pomerania became quite stable in terms of maintaining the balance between the two most powerful political groups – the Christian Democrats and the National Democrats. The third place was held by a new political group – the organised party of the government – which was supported by a slightly smaller percentage of the Pomeranians as opposed to the two leading parties. Moreover, the PPS had acquired a relatively strong position, but was still not influential enough to threaten the three leading parties mentioned above.

Nationwide, the BBWR won the elections of 1928 having obtained the support of almost 30% of the voters. Nevertheless, the parliamentary opposition was not able to create a common front against the Sanation; thus, the number of the votes received by the BBWR was sufficient enough for this formation to govern and to introduce legislative changes.

These parliamentary elections of November 1930 reinforced the position of the Sanation. The elections resulted from the dissolution of the parliament by the governing political party and another severe political conflict. Radical measures taken against some opposition leaders – like having them arrested in Brześć³⁷ – caused, on the one hand, the consolidation of the centre-left political parties, and on the other hand the strong internal consolidation of the national political camp. However, it did not bring the expected results nationwide. Energetic actions of the governing party led to further strengthening of the BBWR, which had managed to obtain almost half of the votes all over Poland, which provided it with the independent parliamentary majority. The tactics of the opposition, which hoped to overcome the dominance of the post-May political group with the support of the majority of the society fell through. The Sanation reinforced its strong position in Polish society having achieved a level of social support previously unheard of for any political party in Poland.

In Pomerania the effects of the events were noticeable. The consolidated National Democrats won here having obtained 38% of the votes and 5 parliamentary seats. The centre-left – the coalition of the NPR, PSL “Piast”, the Christian Democrats and the PPS won 33% of the votes, which was a great loss for the parties taking into account the number of the votes they had obtained separately in the

³⁶ Data concerning the collective results of the elections see R. Wapiński, *op.cit.*, s. 162 and 167.

³⁷ It happened to i.e. Wincenty Witos, Wojciech Korfanty, Władysław Kiernik, Adam Ciołkosz, Adam Pragier.

elections two years before. Although the coalition received 5 seats in the parliament, the NPR managed to keep their three seats and PPS "Piaśt" held onto their two seats. The biggest loser in the elections was the PPS, who did not manage to get any seat in the parliament. At the same time, the BBWR received 21% of the votes and three seats in the parliament, which meant that the governing party had become the second most powerful political group in Pomerania, which would be confirmed in the year to follow. Pomerania ceased to be an area of political rivalry between the National Democrats and the Christian Democrats; now, in Pomerania the National Democrats competed against the Sanation.

The elections of Brześć were the last elections before WWII and the last test of political support for individual parties. The parliamentary elections of 1935 and 1938 may not give us a complete answer about the evolution of political sympathies in Pomerania.

The elections were conducted according to new legal regulations consequent upon the new Constitution of the Rzeczpospolita which came into force in April 1935. The influence of the political parties on the choice of MPs and senators was significantly reduced. The political parties could only affect the composition of the so called district assemblies, whose task was to prepare poll lists. In the case of the elections to the senate, political parties had no influence whatsoever.

Before the elections of 1935, when it turned out that the opposition parties had not managed to contribute to the composition of the district assemblies³⁸, they called on Poles to boycott the elections. In Pomerania, there were 501 seats in the district assemblies, merely ten percent of which were occupied by the SN (30), the NPR (11) and the PPS (7). During the elections of September 1935 the call to boycott the elections resulted in a lower turnout all over Poland – only 45% of voters took part in it, which constituted a considerable fall in comparison with the election of 1930 when over 60% of voters had given their votes in Poland. The tendency is even more visible in Pomerania where the turnout of the election of 1930 was 82%, but which dropped in 1935 to 44.6%.

On the other hand, the mere participation in elections was at that time a sign of support for the governing party represented on the polling lists mainly by politicians from the BBWR³⁹. Hence, it can be concluded that the turnout in Pomerania was evidence that the Sanation had managed to balance its power with the hitherto dominating National Democrats. The truth of such an interpretation can be con-

³⁸ The failure resulted from two factors. Firstly, the governing camp did their best to fight the influences of the party and succeeded in achieving this aim. Secondly, in the circumstances of improving economy and overcoming the economic crisis, the actions undertaken by the governing party were perceived as constructive and beneficial for the country. In contrast, the opposition with its many factions fighting against one another was considered to be destructive for Poland. Thus, the support for the Sanation was very high among Poles.

³⁹ Polling lists were dominated by the BBWR, the second major force being ethnic minorities (about 20% of the seats). In Pomerania, the result might have been determined by the high participation of the Germans, who were normally always very disciplined in carrying out their civic duties.

firmed by taking into account the nervous reactions of the politicians from the SN and the NPR, who became painfully that they had been defeated by the governing party.

At the turnout of 1938 and 1939 this diagnosis was confirmed. In November 1938 the parliamentary elections took place, and in the subsequent years the local elections were held. The governing party was represented by a new political formation – the Camp of National Unity [Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego – OZON]. The NPR, having united with the PSChD created a new political formation called the Labour Party [Stronnictwo Pracy – SP] set up in 1937 as a result of an unsuccessful attempt to consolidate part of the opposition around Ignacy Jan Paderewski, Gen. Władysław Sikorski and Gen. Józef Haller who was quite popular in Pomerania and identified so far with the National Democrats (the so-called Front Morges⁴⁰).

In view of the fact that the next elections were to be carried out according to the new election ordinance, the opposition decided to call on society to boycott the elections. However, in the circumstances of the autumn of 1938 this was an act of sheer madness. Many factors contributed to this, but I shall concentrate on the three most important ones.

Firstly, the social-economic situation of Poland at that time had radically improved as opposed to the previous years. Poland had managed to overcome various crises, including the toughest ones – the Great Depression of the 1920s and 30s. The country had been developing dynamically, and Pomerania was the best evidence of this. The boycott was doomed to failure.

Secondly, the country was overwhelmed with euphoria connected with regaining Zaolzie. Irrespective of political judgements of the event, it must be underlined that regaining Zaolzie, which had been insidiously seized by the Czechs in 1920, was hyped by the government propaganda as one of the greatest historical victories of Poland. The Poles embraced this euphoric attitude, as did the Pomeranians – the direct executor of the military operation connected with this event was Gen. Władysław Bortnowski who was based in Toruń. The governing party made effective use of this event during the election campaign.

Thirdly, the more than ten year dominance of the Sanation over government bodies in Pomerania must have borne fruit in the form of a network of influences and connections, which certainly affected the level of social support.

In such circumstances, calling a boycott of the election naturally did not succeed. Nationwide, 70% of voters took part in the elections to the Sejm. In Pomerania

⁴⁰ The initiative was an attempt to consolidate the anti-Sanation opposition around outstanding politicians. It was to be a reaction to the inability of the main political parties to create an effective alternative for the governing party. However, the parties – mainly the SN, PPS and SL (set up from the combination of the PSL “Piast” and PSL “Wyzwolenie”) – opposed the initiative and attempted to carry out their own internal consolidation. Thus, the only realistic achievement of the Front Morges was the creation of the united party of Christian Democrats – the Labour Party [Stronnictwo Pracy – SN].

nia, despite the considerable involvement of the SN and the SP in promoting the boycott, as much as 66% of voters participated in the vote. In the context of the political situation in the area, this was an unprecedented success for the OZN.

The opposition attempted to regain their influence during the local elections, with only partial success. The elections (which lasted a long time – from the beginning of December 1938 to the beginning of August 1939) confirmed the overwhelming victory of the governing party in rural areas, where the OZN and its factions defeated the opposition heavily. The Sanation also profited from the unfavourable situation in terms of relations with Germany and the growing propaganda to concentrate all the powers around the government to defend Poland. As a consequence, the OZON gained about 70% of seats in the county authorities, whilst the SN won a mere 20%. The SP and the PPS suffered a great loss. In the cities the SN managed to defend their position, having obtained 40% of the votes, while the OZN received 30%. The erosion of the influence of the SP was confirmed, for the party received only 11 seats and was defeated even by the PPS (14seats)⁴¹. It must be stressed that this change may be explained partly by the consequences of the administrative reform taking place at that time. Owing to the reform, the shape of the Pomeranian voivodeship evolved since the county of Działdowo was excluded from it, while the counties of Rypin and Włocławek were incorporated into it from the Warsaw voivodeship, and the counties of Inowrocław and Bydgoszcz – from the Poznań voivodeship. If the eastern counties were dominated by the OZON and the PPS, in the western counties the prevailing political force was the SN. The position of the SP was weak in all the counties incorporated into Pomerania.

As a result, prior to WWII the political leader in Pomerania was the governing party, while the national camp became the second important political force, as in 1918. However, the advantage of the Sanation was not considerable. The two leading parties were followed by the SP and the PPS, which had similar support, but much lower than the two political leaders. All other political powers had virtually disappeared (including the SL). Politically, the German lists lost their importance, but owing to the incorporation of Bydgoszcz into Pomerania, the German presence in the life of Pomerania intensified.

Irrespective of the fluctuations of the political life in Pomerania, which was a natural phenomenon in the democratic system, other salient factors must be underlined.

First of all, Pomerania had become a truly Polish territory after almost twenty years of being part of Poland. As a consequence of the mass migration of the German population, its percentage among the inhabitants of Pomerania had fallen to below 10%. The Pomeranian voivodeship, having been inhabited by the smallest number of Poles in 1918, became one of the two (along with the Poznań voivodeship) regions with the highest percentage of Polish inhabitants in the Rzeczpospolita. Toruń, as the capital of the voivodeship, became a truly Polish town, for

⁴¹ Data from R. Wapiński, *op.cit.*, s. 230.

the percentage of the German minority dropped to below 5%. In this sense, Toruń was an exceptional phenomenon since few were the cities where the percentage of the Polish population exceeded 70%. The situation of other towns in the regions looked similar, with the exception of Bydgoszcz, where the German minority constituted one-third of the inhabitants.

Undoubtedly, the fact that Poles managed to compensate for the falling population of Pomeranians (due to the emigration of Germans) was a great Polish success. The shortage was not only completed, but even surpassed within the period of one generation (from 1920).

Pomerania also experienced a spectacular economic development. Although Pomerania had lost touch with the German economy, it managed to integrate with Poland economically. A negative factor which affected the economy of Pomerania adversely was the exclusion of Gdańsk, which for centuries had been the economic binder of the Pomeranian economy. Now, Gdańsk was beyond the boundaries of Poland, in the territory of the political enemy. In this context, it was a great success of Poland and Pomerania to choose Gdynia as a new economic binder for this economic area. The development of the city and the harbour was one of the most spectacular economic achievements of Poland on a European scale.

Thanks to this, Pomerania maintained the status of the most advanced region in terms of its social and economic infrastructure. Both the general level of life of its inhabitants and facilities available to them meant that Pomerania held first place in Poland in the interwar period, which was to a great extent the effect of the Polish rule in Pomerania.

These previously mentioned facts meant that, to the disappointment of Germany, the seizure of Pomerania by the Germans in 1939 did not encounter any signs of approval among any Polish circles in Pomerania. Nobody expected and welcomed the German aggressors in Pomerania (apart from the scarce German minority).

The authorities of the Third Reich decided that the area of the Pomeranian voivodeship be incorporated into the boundaries of Germany. The legal basis for the decision was the decree issued by the Chancellor of the Reich on 8 October 1939⁴². However, it must be emphasised that the German acts were entirely unlawful since they breached the regulations of the Fourth Hague Convention, which prohibited the issue of any decrees concerning any occupied territory until a final decision be made in the peace treaty concluded after the end of the military campaign⁴³.

⁴² On the strength of this decree the following voivodeships were incorporated into the Reich: the Pomeranian voivodeship, the Silesian voivodeship, the voivodeship of Greater Poland, the northern part of the Masovian voivodeship, the western part of the Łódź voivodeship, fragments of the Kielce voivodeship and of the Cracow voivodeship.

⁴³ Poland and Germany were both signatories of the Fourth Hague Convention approved of in 1907. Upon the convention, Germany could only establish their occupying administrative forces subjected to military factors. Germans were obliged to respect the legal system in Pomerania modify-

As a result of this unlawful act perpetrated by the German authorities, the territory of the Pomeranian voivodeship was expanded by the incorporation of the Free City of Gdańsk and small fragments of the German province of East Prussia⁴⁴. The whole territory created a new administrative unit – District Gdańsk–West Prussia (*Gau Danzig-West Preussen*). Against the regulation of the Fourth Hague Convention, the German administrative authorities, the police and the German judicial system took root in Pomerania.

The inhabitants of Pomerania found themselves in a specific situation. The incorporation of the voivodeship into the Reich did not mean that its inhabitants automatically became German citizens. According to their racist ideology, Germany treated the Polish inhabitants of the incorporated lands⁴⁵ as stateless people deprived of basic civic rights.

What is more, it must be underlined that during the military actions, the German authorities undertook the first felonious acts against the Polish population. The most brutal of these took place in Bydgoszcz, where hundreds of Poles were murdered in street executions. There were acts of this kind all over Pomerania.

It seems that from the very beginning of the war the Germans were determined to eliminate from Pomerania people who had inhabited the area in the interwar period. It was a kind of ethnic purge whose aim was to make it possible for the Germans who had left Pomerania voluntarily after WWI to return to the territory.

To sum up, Pomerania, after a short period of belonging to the Polish state, was incorporated into the Reich on the basis of unlawful decisions and actions. Historically, it was the third German attempt to connect Pomerania with Germany.

ing it only in the scope which would be necessary for military purposes. Germany was also obliged to maintain the Polish administrative and judicial authorities. The incorporation of Pomerania into Germany made it impossible for Germany to follow the regulations of the Fourth Hague Convention, which Germany voluntarily had accepted.

⁴⁴ A small area situated on the right bank of the Vistula River.

⁴⁵ It also concerned other territories incorporated into the Reich such as Greater Poland, the northern part of Masovia, Silesia, part of the Łódź voivodeship and the Cracow voivodeship.

Jan Sziling

Gdańsk Pomerania under the German occupation

On 1 September 1939 the German army attacked Poland and conquered some Polish territory after a few weeks of fierce fighting. After September 1939 the Rzeczpospolita was occupied by four adjacent states: Germany – 187,599 km inhabited by 20,192,000 people; the Soviet Union (correspondingly) – 194,548 km and 11,498,000 people; Lithuania – 6704 km and 426,000 inhabitants; and Slovakia – 586 km and 27,000 people (according to the German sources of 1940).

In the spring and summer of 1939 the authorities of the Third Reich defined clearly their prospective aims in Eastern Europe, as declared by Hitler at the meeting of 23 May 1939: “The German state of 80 million inhabitants has resolved its ideological problems [...]. Gdańsk is no longer our main objective. What we need is to extend our lebensraum in the east, to provide food deliveries and to solve the Baltic problem”. Earlier – on 25 March 1939 – Hitler stated that the German border in the east should run “from the eastern cape of East Prussia down to the eastern end of Silesia”, which meant the incorporation of Gdańsk Pomerania, Greater Poland and Upper Silesia into the Reich. The territory was to constitute an element of the “territorial core of the German state” from Alsace up to the Vistula river.

On 8 October Hitler issued a decree about the structure and administration of the eastern lands, which came into effect on 26 October 1939. On the strength of this decree, the northern and western lands of Poland were incorporated into the German Reich, the aim of which was to Germanise them entirely and integrate them economically with Germany. To this aim, the German authorities began to exterminate Polish leaders (political activists, members of local authorities, economic and cultural leaders, teachers, clergymen, free professionals, etc.), in order to eject Poles from towns and farms where they subsequently settled German people from the Baltic countries and the Soviet Union; they also introduced the Deutsche Volksliste (German People's List), the result of which was to Germanise a selected part of the Polish population. All these activities were to lead to the annihilation of Polish leaders, the displacement of some Poles on the basis of political, national, economic and social criteria, leaving behind only those Poles who were suitable for Germanisation and those who were to be used as a physical labour force. The other group of activities embraced the liquidation of any institutions of

the Polish state, the prohibition of the existence of Polish political parties, organisations and societies, the closure of Polish schools of all levels, the elimination of Polish cultural life (theatres, libraries, cinemas, music bands, singers, etc.), the removal of Polish signs, emblems, statutes along with the prohibition to use the Polish language. Economically, all the wealth of the Polish state and the Polish people was confiscated, which on the one hand strengthened the economic potential of the German occupying forces, while on the other hand led to the impoverishment of the Poles. The decree of 8 October 1939 mentioned above established an administrative unit known as the Reich District of Gdańsk West Prussia (Reichsgau Danzig-Westpreussen), which embraced the following areas:

- 1) the Free City of Gdańsk (1893 km and about 390,500 inhabitants),
- 2) six counties of the province East Prussia/ Provinz Ostpreussen (2927 km and about 302,000 inhabitants),
- 3) part of the territory of the Polish state: most of the Pomeranian voivodeship and a small piece of the Warsaw voivodeship (21 236 km and about 1,595,000 inhabitants).

In administrative terms, the Reich District of Gdańsk West Prussia was divided into three regencies – the regencies of Bydgoszcz, Gdańsk and Kwidzyn; the regencies consisted of counties (both municipal and rural) which were further divided into the lowest administrative units – boroughs.

Albert Forster (1902–1952), who since 1930 had been the head of the National Socialist German Workers' Party in the Free City of Gdańsk, held the highest position in the district. Forster had the function of governor and Gauleiter and as such he was the head of the whole German administration, his direct superior being the Reich's Home Minister. The heads of the lower civil administration were the presidents of regencies, landrats or burgomasters along with district commissaries or mayors. The apparatus of the civil administration was set up directly after the territories had been conquered by the Wehrmacht, which was supervised mainly by Forster and to a smaller extent by the Home Ministry of the Reich. The administrative staff were recruited from the Free City of Gdańsk, the Reich and adjacent provinces.

The second pillar of the German occupying authority was Hitler's party – the National Socialist German Workers' Party, the organisational structures of which were finally created in the district at the end of 1939. Forster was appointed head of the party in the district and as SS Gauleiter der NSDAP he was answerable directly to Hitler. The combination of the administrative and party functions meant that Forster had a decisive influence on the formation and implementation of the German authorities' plans in Gdańsk Pomerania. In territorial terms, the organisational structure of the NSDAP had several levels from that of a district through to a county down to a so-called block embracing a few dozen families. Such a structure guaranteed full control over members of Hitler's party and both the German and Polish population. Among members of the NSDAP there prevailed German

people from the Free City of Gdańsk and the Reich, who held the most powerful positions in the civil and party administration; local Germans were admitted to the party under some conditions.

The third pillar of the Nazi apparatus of power was the police. Not only did it play the fundamental executive function in the implementation of terror and extermination of the Polish nation, but also played an inspiring role too. The head of the police apparatus of the Third Reich was Reichsführer SS Heinrich Himmler; he supervised two main central police institutions – The Main Security Office of the Reich (Reichssicherheitshauptamt – RSHA) and the Main Office of the Public Order Police (Hauptamt der Ordnungspolizei – HA Orpo). The RSHA included: the Secret State Police (Geheime Staatspolizei – Gestapo), the Security Service (Sicherheitsdienst – SD) and the Criminal Police (Kriminalpolizei – Kripo). The Public Order Police consisted of the following divisions: the Protective Police of the Reich (Schutzpolizei des Reiches – Schupo), The Police for the Protection of Boroughs (Schutzpolizei der Gemeinden), Gendarmery (Gendarmerie), compact and confined police units (geschlossene und kasernierte Einheiten), the water police (Wasserschutzpolizei), the auxiliary police (Hilfspolizei), the fire prevention police (Feuerschutzpolizei) and others.

The organisational structure of the German police force in the occupied Polish territories was finally established in October 1939, but some police formations had arrived in September along with the Wehrmacht units. They included operational groups of the Security Police (Einsatzgruppen der Sicherheitspolizei – EG), consisting of several operational units (Einsatzkommandos – EK), which had been established as early as July 1939 and assigned to individual armies. In Gdańsk Pomerania, operational groups IV and V functioned which were later relocated to another area and their role was superseded by Einsatzkommando 16 set up in Gdańsk on 12 September. Moreover, in the northern regions of Gdańsk Pomerania the SS-Wachsturmbann Eiman was highly active. The main task of these police groups was to pacify the area occupied by the Wehrmacht, which meant “fighting with any hostile and anti-German elements in the enemy state in support of the German army”.

The permanent German police apparatus was formed in Gdańsk Pomerania in October 1939, headed by SS-Gruppenführer Richard Hildebrandt – a higher SS and police commander, and from 20 April 1943 by SS-Gruppenführer Fritz Katzmann. The following police divisions: the Gestapo, the Criminal Police, the Security Service, the Public Order Police (including Schutzpolizei, Gendarmerie and SS) were subject to the higher SS and police commander. What is more, compact and confined police units called police battalions were quartered in the district. The core of the police system in the Third Reich was the Gestapo, on which the policy to fight political opponents and enemies of the state was based. The activities of the Gestapo were not subject to either administrative or judicial control. Gestapo officers were responsible for the organisation and realisation of extermi-

nation campaigns among the Polish population in the autumn of 1939, for arrests, executions, sending to concentration camps, displacements, fighting against the Polish conspiracy and many other activities directed against the Poles. The range the Gestapo's competence was "exceptionally wide and embraced – without exaggeration– all spheres of life. Not only did it chase criminals, but it also arrested likely opponents".

In September 1939, three districts of the paramilitary organisation Selbstschutz were set up in the so-called incorporated territories. The Pomeranian Selbstschutz constituted the Pomeranian district and was divided into six inspectorates, each of which consisted of several counties. Originally, the commander of the Pomeranian Selbstschutz was SS-Oberführer Walter Langleist, who was followed by SS-Oberführer Ludolf Hermann von Alvensleben,; the commanders of the inspectorates were SS officers from the Reich, whilst lower commanding positions were taken by local Germans (Volksdeutsche). The list of the members of the Pomeranian Selbstschutz on the day prior to its dissolution – 26 Nov 1939– included 38,279 people. This paramilitary organisation was involved in the mass murders committed in Gdańsk Pomerania in the autumn of 1939.

The extermination of the Polish population (particularly the Polish leaders) reached its zenith in the autumn of 1939 in Gdańsk Pomerania and was determined by both general and local factors.

On 22 August 1939 Hitler informed all higher-ranking military commanders that after the end of the September campaign in Poland the SS units would annihilate "the Polish leading class", and two weeks later Richard Heydrich, the head of the security police and the security service, stated that "the Polish leading class should be rendered harmless as far as possible". As early as March 1940 at a meeting with the commanders of concentration camps, Reichsführer SS H. Himmler stated that the German nation should consider the annihilation (vernichten) of all Poles to be their priority. The occupying German authorities eliminated the social-professional groups which in the past had been engaged in maintaining and developing the Polish national identity through their political or cultural activities; after September 1939 such people could have become organisers and leaders of the Polish resistance against the Germans.

As far as the local aspect is concerned, there exist a few crucial elements. Throughout the whole interwar period, German propaganda introduced the problem of the "Polish corridor" dividing the "old" Reich (Altreich) from East Prussia. The military victory and the incorporation of Gdańsk Pomerania was to lead to the Germanisation of the territory so that no one would question its German character in the future. It should be underlined that the anti-Polish spirit was aroused and fuelled in the Free City of Gdańsk by the NSDAP, members of which were appointed to the most significant positions in the apparatus of power after 1 September 1939; an important role was also played by German propaganda concerning the so-called Bloody Sunday in Bydgoszcz. All these elements were fostered by the

criminal activity of the Selbstschutz. J. Goebbels in his diary wrote on 14 October 1939 that Poles from Gdańsk Pomerania had to be ejected in their entirety so that the territory become truly German. The same idea was developed by A. Forster on 27 November 1939 in his speech at a rally in Bydgoszcz.

It was Hitler himself who issued the decree to exterminate the Poles, which was recorded by SS-Sturmabführer dr. Franz Röder in his memorial of 20 October 1939: "Following the Führer's wish, Polish Pomerania should be converted into German West Prussia as quickly as possible. The following actions are necessary in order to carry out the task:

- The physical elimination of all Polish elements which:
- a) in the past supported the Polish party in any significant way
 - b) might inspire the Polish resistance movement".

It was in the Free City of Gdańsk that arrests of Poles began – in the night 31 August –1 September 1939. Poles were moved to the school Victoriaschule, the prison at Schiesstange, and nearby camps such as Stutthof, Neufahrwasser and Grenzdorf. On the first days of September 1939 a total of 4000–4500 people were arrested in the Free City of Gdańsk. In Bydgoszcz and Gdynia, mass arrests of the Polish population took place immediately after the cities had been overrun by the Wehrmacht. However, in most Pomeranian counties, the mass arrests took place in October.

In each county, the German police authorities had prisons and camps set up ad hoc; they were situated in forts, barracks, schools and factories. Special "committees" consisting of police members and the Selbstschutz decided about the lives of arrested Poles – they were categorised into four groups: those to be shot, to be placed in Nazi concentration camps in Germany, to be moved within the General Government or to be released. Executions were conducted shortly after arrests and lasted until the end of 1939. For instance, in the county of Starogard during the night of 13/14 October 1939 thirty-one priests were arrested, thirty of whom were shot in the Szpęgawa Forest on 16 October. In Toruń and the county of Toruń the situation looked similar – about 600 Poles were arrested between 17 and 21 October 1939, and on 28 October the mass execution of 130 people took place in the Barbarka Forest.

In each county there was at least one site for mass executions of the Polish population. The largest of them included: Barbarka (the county of Toruń), Fordon (the county of Bydgoszcz), Karolewo (the county of Sepólno), Klamry (the county of Chełmno), Łopatki (the county of Wąbrzezno), Mniszek-Grupa (the County of Świecie), Paterek (the county of Wyrzysk), Piaśnica (the county of Wejherowo), Rudzki Most (the county of Tuchola), Skrwilno (the county of Rypin) and Szpęgawsk (the county of Starogard). According to incomplete data (the German authorities ordered the exhumation and cremation of the corpses of those murdered in the autumn of 1944) the total number of Poles slaughtered in Gdańsk Pomerania in the autumn of 1939 is 30,000–40,000.

German camps played a particularly sinister role in the extermination of the Polish population and inhabitants of other states occupied by the Third Reich. In Gdańsk Pomerania, Hitler ordered the establishment of a concentration camp as early as 2 September 1939 in the village of Stutthof (before 1 September 1939 it was within the borders of the Free City of Gdańsk), which on 6 January 1942 received the status of a German concentration camp – Konzentrationslager Stutthof; it consisted of several sub-concentration camps. In the years 1939–1945 about 110,000 prisoners of different nationalities were kept there, 65,000 of whom were killed. KL Stutthof became a prison for members of the Pomeranian conspiratorial organisation – in the years 1940–44 about 4,000 people, including 2,000 Poles supporting partisan units in particular.

The aim of the liquidation of Polish political and social activists along with the Polish intelligentsia in the autumn of 1939 was to deprive the nation of its political, intellectual and moral elites, to prevent the formation of conspiratorial organisations, the destruction of Polish culture along with the intimidation and subjugation of Polish society. Reichsführer SS, H. Himmler, in 1940 stated explicitly that “first we had to do away with the leading social strata of the enemy, and those were people from the Western Union, from insurgent units (i.e. the Greater Poland Uprising 1918/1919 and the Silesian Uprisings 1919/1921 – J.S.), from the Polish intelligentsia [...]. Even if this is outrageous, we will repeat this if need be in other cases”.

Mass executions in Gdańsk Pomerania ceased at the end of 1939. In the years 1939–1944/45, the German occupying forces carried out the policy of the biological annihilation of the Polish nation using different methods and resources. In those years arrested people were placed in concentration camps in the Reich or passed over to the judicial bodies. Arrests of Poles took place for various reasons including: belonging to conspiratorial organisations or cooperation with such organisations, economic sabotage, work evasion, illegal trade, helping prisoners of war, anti-German statements and not complying with the various occupying authorities.

From the spring of 1940 in Gdańsk Pomerania there took place several more major arrests and executions, including public executions. The German police bodies carried out mass arrests in April 1940, the aim of which was to catch people dangerous for the Third Reich who had avoided arrest in the autumn of 1939 and who were suspected of conspiratorial activity. As a result, on 15 April the Gestapo sent to KL Sachsenhausen a transport with over 1000 people arrested shortly before. On 9 April, around 1000 prisoners were sent from the Stutthof camp to KL Sachsenhausen, and on 19 April – another 900 prisoners.

The Germans also organised some preventive actions such as the arrest in Toruń on 6 July 1941 of about 300 people leaving churches after Sunday mass, 170 of whom were transported to the Stutthof concentration camp.

In the years 1940–1944/45 the German occupying forces carried out mass executions of arrested Poles; for example, following the decision of the police summary court on 11 January 1940, twenty prisoners were shot in the forest near the Stuthof camp, while on 22 March 1940 sixty-seven prisoners were executed (Polish activists from the Free City of Gdańsk); on 3 November 1940 in Bralewnica (the county of Tuchola) ten people were executed; the same number were executed in Lipno; on 19 May 1941 in Bydgoszcz ten people were shot, and in Toruń – twenty people; on 27 April 1942 in a village in Masovia (the county of Lipno) ten Poles were hanged, while on 21 September 1944 about twenty people were executed in Ocypel (the county of Starogard).

An essential element of the nationalistic policy in Gdańsk Pomerania was the displacement of the Polish population and bringing in German settlers. The deportation concerned mainly “particularly hostile elements of the Polish population”, the intelligentsia, families of Poles murdered in the autumn of 1939, Poles who had settled in the Pomeranian voivodeship after 1920, farmers, inhabitants of central municipal districts, so-called asocial elements and the Jewish population.

On 7 October 1939 Hitler signed a decree about the reinforcement of the German language and culture, which consisted of: 1) bringing Germans to the Reich, 2) displacing foreign nationals from the Reich, 3) creating new German settlement areas.

Reichsführer SS and the head of the German Police Heinrich Himmler became responsible for executing these tasks as the Reich Commissary for the Reinforcement of the German Language and Culture. In Gdańsk Pomerania, the higher SS and police officer Richard Hilderbrandt was appointed the plenipotentiary of Himmler. Generally speaking, the preparation and the execution of the displacements lay within the scope of the police, but at the initial stage it was the local party and administrative authorities that selected which families were to be deported.

I distinguish four periods among the deportation action carried out in Gdańsk Pomerania:

1) from September to November 1939 when deportations were carried out at the initiative of the local authorities; they were not coordinated at the district level and were often referred to as “wild”;

2) from the turn of 1939–1940 to March 1941, when the deportation apparatus and centres running deportation campaigns were formed; deportation transports from gathering points were directed to the General Government;

3) from March 1941 to the first weeks of 1943, in March 1941 deportation transports from the General Government were stopped due to the preparations by the Germans to attack the Soviet Union; deported people were placed in special deportation camps created in Gdańsk Pomerania: in Potulice (in the former manor of the Potulicki family), in Toruń (in the former lard factory) and in Tczew (in the former “Arkona” machine factory); transportations were few and most de-

ported people remained in the deportation camps and were later sent to seasonal agricultural work or to industrial plants;

4) from the beginning of 1943 mass deportation actions became less and less frequent due to the military losses suffered by the German army on all fronts.

In the autumn the biggest deportations took place in Gdynia – about 40,000 inhabitants, while in 1940 major deportation campaigns were carried out in May, September and October. Deportations normally took place at night or in the morning so that the whole family was present at home. People were given from 15 to 60 minutes to take their possessions. They were allowed to take food for a few days, hand luggage weighing from 20–50 kg. The remaining possessions had to be left and were confiscated by the Third Reich. Deported people were moved to gathering points in carts, trains or on foot.

The number of Poles deported from their homes, workplaces and farms in Gdańsk Pomerania is estimated at around 170,000. It must be noted that about 90,000 of them were transported to the General Government.

The deportations of the Polish population bore signs of indirect extermination – the number of deaths increased due to difficult transport conditions especially in winter; deported families were not given any help having arrived in the General Government, and in deportation camps the living conditions were harsh. The General Governor Hans Frank at the meeting of the GG government on 9 December 1942 said “You must remember those terrible months when each day freight trains arrived in the General Government, loaded with people, many of whom were already dead”.

In the context of deportations I would like to point out the fact that men and women were forced to work in the Reich. This element of the campaign of the German occupying forces was determined by other factors, but in many spheres of life it brought about the same effects as deportations.

The deportation of the Polish population changed the national-ethnic structure in Gdańsk Pomerania; its aim was to weaken the Polish community. Deportations adversely affected the activity of conspiratorial organisations and constituted the depredation of the possessions and real estate belonging to the Polish population.

To Germanise the occupied territory, German settlers were brought to Gdańsk Pomerania; they took over Polish flats, workshops, farms. In the first months of the war most German settlers came from Gdańsk and the Reich – they were mostly officials from the civil, party or economic administration, policemen, etc. In the autumn of 1939, Germans from the Baltic states started to arrive, while in 1940 German settlers came from Eastern Europe. Until the end of 1944 about 130,000 Germans from the Reich, Gdańsk, the Baltic states and the Soviet Union installed themselves in Gdańsk Pomerania. Settlement actions strengthened the German spirit in the occupied territory of the Polish state.

This activities of the occupying authorities constituted an indispensable element towards achieving the goal – the final Germanisation of Gdańsk Pomerania.

The final means of the Germanisation and its foundation during the war was the Deutsche Volksliste (German People's List – DVL).

In 1940, Forster made a decision to Germanise part of the Polish population of Gdańsk Pomerania, his initial criterion being residency in the territory prior to 1918. Poles who fulfilled this criterion were referred to as the “intermediary strata” (Zwischenschicht). At the meeting in Gdańsk on 17 May 1940 a clerk dealing with nationalistic issues in the district headquarters of the NSDAP, Wilhelm Löbsack, informed that from 1 January Forster had ordered the “systematic Germanisation of the intermediary Polish strata” (Eindeutschung der Zwischenschicht) to commence. Originally, the action was to include 30,000–40,000 families. In memorials of 27 July and 14 December 1940 Forster developed his Germanisation plans. He stated that he intended to gradually Germanise the Polish population who had been living in Gdańsk Pomerania for a long time. In the first stage, about 30,000 families were to be found to undergo the Germanisation process. He also demanded that in the first place agricultural and factory workers along with craftsmen be Germanised. For Forster, the following criteria were important: German ancestors, political-nationalistic attitudes during the interwar period, professional qualifications, connections with the Church, attitude toward the Volksdeutsche and racial characteristics.

The campaign to select Polish families to Germanise undertaken in 1941 was modified according to new legal and organisational foundations announced in Himler's ordinance of 12 September 1940 and the circular letter of the Reich's Home Office Minister of 14 November 1940 concerning the certificate of not belonging to the Polish nation, established by the central authorities of the Third Reich which made the Germanisation process more extensive. On 4 March 1941 the Home Office Minister of the Reich in cooperation with Hitler's deputy and the Commissary for the Reinforcement of the German Language and Culture, issued a decree regarding the German People's List and belonging to the German state in the eastern incorporated areas (Verordnung über die Deutsche Volksliste und die deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit in den eingegliederten Ostgebieten vom 4 März 1941). The decree, with further executive regulations, constituted the legal-organisational basis for the Germanisation of the Polish population. “Only former Polish citizens and former inhabitants of Gdańsk” were allowed to sign the Volksliste. According to paragraph 1, the German list was created in order to include in it all the German population residing in the incorporated eastern territories. According to the implementing regulation of the Reich's Home Office Minister of 13 March 1941, the aim of signing the Volksliste was “not to lose even a single drop of German blood nor allow it to be used by other nations”.

The German People's list consisted of four groups: 1) the first group included people of German nationality who, in the interwar period, had demonstrated some form of nationalistic activity; belonged to German political, economic, cultural or sports organisations; perhaps they sent their children to German school or spoke German in private and in public; 2) to the second group they admitted people who

were not actively engaged in the life of the German minority in Poland, but still maintained their German identity; 3) the third group included people of German origin who had been Polonised, but their attitude and conduct guaranteed that they would “again become fully-fledged members of the German community”, and people of non-German origin who were married to German nationals and remained under their influence, or of unidentified national origin who used “the Slavonic language at home”, but at the same time “their blood and cultural bonds” inclined them to be Germanised despite the fact that before 1 September 1939 they had not admitted so; 4) the fourth group consisted of people of German origin who “were politically absorbed by Polish culture” which meant that they had been totally Polonised, the sign of which was their belonging to anti-German Polish organisations and Polish political parties as well as their anti-German attitude.

Newly established bodies of DVL were made responsible for enrolling people in the Volksliste. In Gdańsk at the governor's office, the central institution of the German people's list was established (Der Zentralstelle der Deutschen Volksliste), while in the office of the president of the regency – the district institution of the German people's list (Die Bezirkstelle der Deutschen Volksliste); the fundamental organisational unit – the body of the first instance – was the branch of the German people's list (Die Zweigstelle der Deutschen Volksliste) in the landrat, while in towns such bodies were part of the burgomaster's office. These institutions consisted of heads of the civil and party administration, plenipotentiaries of the Gestapo and SD along with representatives of the German minority.

On 21 May 1941, Forster issued secret guidelines defining the criteria for admitting people to the Volksliste such as German origin, the sound of the first name and family name, their command of the German language (including children) and racial-biological values. He also underlined that the DVL was not a means of assimilating foreign nationalities, but a way of regaining “German blood”, which he defined as “Rückendeutschung” and “Wiedereindeutschung”. In the regulation of 9 January 1942, Forster defined more precisely the groups which should be given priority in signing the DVL. They included medical staff, intellectuals and workers of the public service, representatives of sought-after professions (particularly technical workers and craftsmen), family with many children and people whose relatives fought on the front or lived in the Reich. As we can see, the attitude was quite pragmatic.

In the regulation of the governor's DVL office of 7 February 1942 it said that the data concerning people admitted to the German people's list should be sent to the police registration authorities, which in turn should notify the appropriate military authorities. Moreover, it was pointed out that people born in 1908 or earlier should be given DVL identity cards immediately. In the subsequent month, Forster decreed that information concerning people who fulfilled the conditions for signing the Volksliste but had refused to do so be sent to the SD and the Central Office of the DVL. He insisted on inviting such people to meetings of the DVL

committees and informing them that the German Reich fought for its existence and each inhabitant of the “incorporated territories” should explicitly declare their nationality – whether Polish or German. The deadline for submitting such declarations was 1 September 1942. According to Forster, after the end of the war it would be no longer possible to sign the German people’s list, and those who had refused to sign it would be treated as enemies.

The turn of 1941/42 reveals the changes in the policy of the Germanisation. From these regulations and guidelines issued by the authorities in Gdańsk Pomerania it may be concluded that on the one hand they extended the range of people eligible to sign the DVL, but on the other hand the avoidance to apply for it or the refusal to accept the positive decision of the DVL authorities could lead to serious sanctions. What is more, the bureaucratic manner of dealing with applications and minimal interest among the Polish population in signing the Volksliste made the German authorities simplify the procedures and treat the resistant people less rigorously. The changes resulted from the new political situation at the international level (Germany’s attack on the Soviet Union, the USA’s joining the war) and the first military losses of the Wehrmacht on many fronts. All those factors entailed noticeable consequences in the Reich. Nevertheless, the most significant reason was the paucity of people signing the Volksliste – by 31 December 1941 only 113,434 people were enrolled on the DVL in the Reich district of Gdańsk-West Prussia.

The amendment to the regulation on the DVL of 31 January 1942 and Forster’s decree of February 1942 indicate the direction of changes in the process of the Germanisation of the Polish population in Gdańsk Pomerania. However, the basis for this change was the regulation issued by the Reichsführera SS and the Reich’s Commissary for the Reinforcement of the German Language and Culture Himmler on 10 February 1942. He demanded that the “German population” from the Polish lands incorporated into the Reich should apply to sign the DVL by 31 March; he threatened that people who would not do so would be treated “as not belonging to the German nation”. He also pointed out that “foreign, uncertain or racially undesirable elements” should not be enrolled on the DVL. Generally, Himmler’s regulation aimed at simplifying the procedures of the DVL committee and speeding up its operations. Moreover, the next regulation issued by Himmler on 16 February 1942 ordered that people of German origin who had not applied for the DVL should be denounced to the Gestapo which, in turn, was to give such people eight days to fill in an application form; people who avoided doing so were to be put under protective arrest (Schutzhaft) and sent to a concentration camp.

In this situation on 22 February 1942 Forster made a speech (Aufruf) to the inhabitants of the district of the Reich Gdańsk-West Prussia in which he stated that the selection of the population carried out over 2.5 years was over. He added that people who had not applied yet were allowed to do so by 31 March. At the same time he stressed that people who had fulfilled the criteria to sign the DVL but had failed to apply would be treated as the worst enemies of the German nation.

The Polish population in Gdańsk Pomerania had to face an alternative: either apply to sign the DVL or be treated like the worst enemies of Germany. From March 1942, mass applications were submitted. There were many reasons why Poles applied for the German people's list. First of all, they remembered the mass extermination in the autumn of 1939; they feared being deported or sent to forced labour in the Reich; they were concerned about being expelled from their homes. Other factors affecting their decision were: the pressure of the occupying authorities and the German employers, the possibility of being sent to a concentration camp and of being exposed to repressions of various kinds. Last but not least, they were determined to survive. In a few cases, the Poles were motivated by temporary profits. The Polish population did not treat signing the DVL as the renunciation of their Polish nationality. Very few Poles resisted submitting an application for the DVL; they did so despite the threat of harassment and terror.

Those who were admitted to I and II group of the DVL received German nationality (*Deutsche Staatsangehörigkeit*) on 26 October 1939 irrespective of the day they had been enrolled on the list. Those who were admitted to III group of the DVL received German nationality until further notice (*auf Widerruf*) – each of them was granted the nationality individually until which time they had had the status of dependents of the German Reich (*Schutzangehörige des Deutschen Reichs*). From February 1942 they were automatically granted German nationality until further notice – annulment could take place within 10 years. Those admitted to group IV DVL could receive German nationality until further notice only on the strength of individual conferment, until which time they remained dependents of the Reich.

The number of people admitted to the German people's list in January 1944 were as follows:

I DVL group – 115,000 people, II DVL group – 95,000 people, III DVL group – 725,000 people, IV DVL group – 2,000 people, which in total amounted to 937,000 people. In comparison with the data before 1 September 1939, it may be noticed that the number of people admitted to I and II DVL groups is comparable with the percentage of the German minority in Gdańsk Pomerania. III DVL group included people of German origin who had been forced to sign the *Volksliste*.

Admitting the Polish population to the III DVL group constituted the first stage in the Germanisation process, the second stage being the application of various means and methods to convert Poles into fully-fledged Germans. This included: ideological and political indoctrination at obligatory meetings, parties and propaganda campaigns; belonging to Hitler's organisations – mainly to the National sozialistische Frauenschaft (women), Deutsche Arbeitsfront (men), Arbeitsdienst and Wehrmacht (men over 18 years old), Hitlerjugend (girls and boys); obligatory courses in the German language; a ban on the use of Polish, the decree to make first and last names sound more German; sending Polish children to German schools; the prohibition for Germans to marry Poles and maintain any social

contact with them. Admission to the III DVL group entailed mandatory military service in the Wehrmacht. The necessity to make up for the huge loss of German soldiers by drafting in new soldiers constituted an important element of Forster's Germanisation policy. In total, 85,000–90,000 Poles from Gdańsk Pomerania belonging to the III DVL group were recruited into the German army, but it must be stressed that many of them deserted from the Wehrmacht and joined the Polish army, which supported the allies, or partisan units.

In the autumn of 1939 the German occupying forces prohibited the activity of all Polish parties, political and sports organisations and societies. They did away with Polish schools of all levels and the Polish cultural life. At the turn 1939–1940 the ban on the use of the Polish language in public was introduced – in the Catholic Church the ban was introduced in May 1940. The occupying forces systematically embezzled all Polish wealth – including properties belonging to the state, local authorities, cooperatives and private possessions. In September, special offices to confiscate and manage property were set up; at the central level, H. Göring issued a regulation on the strength of which he established the Main Trust Fund – East.

The attitude and conduct of Poles forcefully admitted to the III DVL group proved that their true nationality remained Polish. The German authorities were aware of this fact and frequently referred to numerous cases of “shameful behaviour of III DVL group members”. The aim of the governor and gauleiter Forster to Germanise the Polish population in Gdańsk Pomerania was not achieved.

The Germanisation process could not succeed owing to the attitude of the Poles and the nature of means and methods applied by the Germans. On the contrary, the process constituted a huge loss for the German occupying forces despite the fact that the situation in Gdańsk Pomerania gave the impression that the aim was close to realisation. Statistically, the “German population” constituted as much as 89% in 1944, while the Poles numbered about 10%. The retreat of the German military forces caused by the approaching Soviet army and the Polish forces, the escape of German settlers in the winter of 1944/45 finally proved how weak the foundations of the Germanisation policy had been.

To recapitulate the policy of the German occupying forces in Gdańsk Pomerania, it must be emphasised that the extermination campaign in the autumn of 1939 and the police terror in the following years, the displacements to the General Government and deportation to forced labour to the Reich, forcing Poles to sign the DVL and recruiting them into the Wehrmacht reduced to a large extent the group of Polish organisers and leaders of the Polish conspiracy. What is more, the considerable number of German settlers and Volksdeutsche facilitated the invigilation of Poles and the exposure of their conspiratorial anti-German activities. Despite the difficulties and obstacles, the involvement of the Polish population in the conspiracy –in terms of magnitude and scope in Gdańsk Pomerania – was considerable and constituted an important element of the struggle with the German occupying forces on a nationwide level.

Stanisław Salmonowicz

The Polish Underground State in the years 1939–1945

Introduction

The Pomeranian Province, like Greater Poland and Upper Silesia, belonged to the regions of the Polish state that, as early as the first half of September 1939, were conquered by the German army and were heavily affected by atrocious repression directed against the Polish population¹. At the same time, those were the territories where, despite the victorious German “Blitzkrieg”, underground activities were launched. The unexpected attack on the Polish territory carried out by two totalitarian states – the Soviet Union and Hitler’s Third Reich – considerably limited the probability of the isolated Polish army being victorious. Yet, the regular combat of the Polish army lasted until the beginning of October².

Having occupied the whole territory of the Polish state, the Third Reich and the Soviet Union signed a final agreement concerning the division of the Polish land, which was unlawful in the light of international law. On 28 September 1939 in Moscow Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov changed the rules of the territorial division of Eastern Europe established earlier in the secret agreement of 23 August 1939 in that Russia now relinquished control over Warsaw, the Lublin territory and part of Masovia, whilst Germany gave up its claims concerning Lithuania, which, like Latvia and Estonia, remained under the Soviet influence³. According to both totalitarian superpowers, the Polish state ceased to exist, and its lands were subordinated to the authority of Soviet Russia and Hitler’s Germany. Contrary to decisions which constituted a breach of international law, the Polish

¹ Bydgoszcz was taken over by the Germans on 5 September, Grudziądz on 4 September, Toruń in the night of 7–8 September.

² Warsaw and the Modlin stronghold surrendered in the night of 28–29 September. On 5 October General Franciszek Kleeberg, the commander of the last major military unit of the Polish army surrendered: the Independent Operational Group “Polesie” withdrew under the pressure of the Red Army towards Warsaw, but it was forced to surrender in the face of the Wehrmacht forces, which saved his superiors from the Soviet atrocities committed to the Polish prisoners of war (the Katyn issue).

³ Territorial details were included in the additional protocol of 4 September 1939. The remaining regulations of the agreement of 23 August remained in force.

state, the Second Polish Republic, ceased to exist, and on its territory captured by two occupying forces – the aggressors – the Underground State began to be built.

The Second Polish Republic at home and abroad in the years 1939–1941

In the face of the Red Army entering the eastern territories of the Polish state, the highest state authorities had no other option but to cross the Polish-Romanian border. The government of the Polish Republic, bound by their alliance with Romania, hoped to obtain the so-called “droit de passage” – free passage to its ally, France – to continue the fight. However, the Sanation, who had exercised power in Poland since 1926, failed to realise that the unexpected defeat in the fight against the two superpowers had made their authority illegitimate. The Romanian government was under the significant pressure of the German and Soviet authorities who insisted that the Polish government and Polish soldiers be interned in Romania. The French ally, inspired by the Polish pre-war political opposition (particularly the right wing and the peasant movement), was quite reluctant to support the Sanation government. As a result, the President of the Republic of Poland (Ignacy Moscicki) and the Government of the Polish Republic and the Commander-in-Chief (Marshall Rydz-Smigły) were interned in Romania. Poland was threatened with the loss of its subjectivity in international law, or even abandonment by the Allies. Omitting to address the complicated legal details and political backgrounds of the dramatic days at the end of September 1939, it must be underlined that the international legitimisation of the Polish government was saved as a result of a compromise also involving the French who advocated General Władysław Sikorski – a well-known figure in the opposition to the Sanation government. The April Constitution of 1935 made it possible in extraordinary situations for the president of the country to resign and to appoint a successor. After the negotiations between Paris and Romania, a compromise was reached: it was Władysław Raczkiewicz, a moderate Sanation activist and prewar governor of the Pomeranian Province, who was appointed president in Paris. He obliged himself to exercise his wider duties as president in agreement with the prime minister. Following the suggestion of the pre-war opposition, Władysław Sikorski was appointed prime minister, while the government mainly included representatives of the pre-war opposition (the National Party [SN], the Labour Party [SP], the Polish Socialist Party [PPS], the People's Party [SL])⁴. Next, after the formal resignation of Marshall Rydz-Smigły, General Sikorski held the office of Commander-in-Chief⁵. The reorganised authorities of the Second Polish Republic were immediately recognised by France, Great

⁴ Comp.: E. Duraczyński, *Rząd Polski na uchodźstwie 1939–1945. Organizacja. Personalia. Polityka*, Warszawa 1993, M. Hałas, *Goście czy intruzy? Rząd polski na uchodźstwie, wrzesień 1939 – lipiec 1943*, Warszawa 1996, H. Batowski, *Polska dyplomacja na obczyźnie 1939–1944*, Kraków 1991.

⁵ All the changes were formally possible since the subsequent decisions of President Mościcki sent to Paris and making it possible to set up the new state authorities were antedated on the day of Mościcki's stay on the Polish territory prior to crossing the Romanian border.

Britain and virtually the whole world apart from the satellite states of Germany, Italy and the Soviet Union. The Polish government-in-exile obtained the right to act extraterritorially in France (and later in Great Britain); soon its land, sea and air forces acted alongside their Allies. The Polish air forces played a considerable role in the Battle of Britain in 1940. The role of Poland in international diplomacy was significant, but only until June 1941 when the USA and Great Britain concentrated their European interests on the alliance with the Soviet Union, which from the end of 1941 led to the policy of concessions to Stalin at the expense of not only Poland, but all of Central and Eastern Europe (Moscow agreements, Teheran, Yalta). That is why the Polish government in London lost its importance despite the fact that the Polish Underground State [PPP] played a great role in the struggle against the Germans. In formal terms, until the final agreements of the Big Three (February – July 1945), which affected Poland unfavourably, were made, the highest authorities of Poland enjoyed international esteem and contributed to the victory mainly thanks to the Polish Resistance Movement. Thus, it is worth presenting how the Polish Underground State [PPP] was created and how it functioned⁶.

At the end of the September campaign, underground activity took place in various places around Poland. Although many initiatives were spontaneous, the fact was that the authorities of the Second Polish Republic gave power of attorney to create underground military structures in Warsaw. Their task was to continue the struggle with the German occupying forces according to decisions made by the state authorities. That is why it was Warsaw's decisions that were the most important in the establishment of the Underground State. Following an order from Warsaw, General Michał Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski, the pre-war commander of the Military District Pomerania, in the night of 27–28 September 1939 set up an underground military-civil organisation in Warsaw called Service for Poland's Victory [Polish: Służba Zwycięstwu Polski – SZP]. As a result, despite the September defeat, the disappointment and pessimism, the Polish underground movement developed fast. Originally, various local military or youth initiatives were set up, which were often disclosed and repressed by the Germans. All the political parties of pre-war Poland embarked on underground activity. Despite various conceptual and personal controversies between the authorities of the Second Polish Republic in Paris and the underground authorities at home, one may declare that the legal underground state was created in stages; it was formally subordinated to the highest authorities of the Second Polish Republic, originally in France and later in Great Britain. It must be noted that the Polish Underground State included only those civil and military structures which gradually or immediately fell under the

⁶ In general about the Polish Underground State (PPP) comp. S. Salmonowicz, *Polskie Państwo Podziemne. Z dziejów walki cywilnej 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1994, G. Górski, *Polskie Państwo Podziemne 1939–1945*, Toruń 1998, S. Salmonowicz, M. Ney-Krwawicz, G. Górski, *Polskie Państwo Podziemne, Polish Underground State*, Warszawa 1999 (bilingual edition) W. Grabowski, *Polska tajna administracja cywilna 1940–1945*, Warszawa 2003.

authority of the legal government of the Second Polish Republic. It must be underlined that apart from the Polish Underground State's structures there existed also some local or political underground organisations that, until 1944, remained marginal rivals of the Polish Underground State. If they did not comply with the Polish Underground State, or the authority of the Polish Government-in-Exile in Paris or London, they remained beyond the official Polish Underground State. Such structures included the faction of the extreme right wing, whose military branch became the National Military Forces, which as a whole never subordinated themselves to the Home Army; in fact, their activities undertaken in the years 1943–1944 allow us to declare them as fascist. The activities of the communist movement, set up at the beginning of 1942, were completely different. The communist party established in Poland under the name of the Polish Workers' Party was controlled by Moscow, as was its military branch – the People's Guard [Gwardia Ludowa – GL], later known as the People's Army [Armia Ludowa – AL]. It remained on the margin of the underground system at home; it managed to gain some influence thanks to the support of the Red Army in the spring of 1944.

The dynamics of the Polish underground activity is based on the national tradition of "the underground Polish state" of the times of the January Uprising against Russia (1863–1864) along with the underground activities that took place between 1914–1921. The Polish Underground State [PPP] was the only legal current of the Polish underground movement as it was based on the assumption that the Polish state continued to exist, and its highest authorities, temporarily seated outside Poland, granted authorisations to the Polish Underground State to act. From this point of view, we should define the Polish Underground State as a complex of legal, political, military and civil structures that provided the constitutional continuity of the functioning of the Polish state in its own territory despite numerous unlawful actions undertaken by the occupying forces⁷. The Polish Underground State was set up in stages, faced with the struggle against two enemies occupying Poland and the political conflicts concerning current and future visions between the authorities at home and the authorities of the Second Polish Republic abroad. The main problem in 1939–1940 was that the decision-makers in Paris wrongly expected a quick victory in the war believing in the military power of France and overestimating the role of the Sanation factors in the Polish underground movement. As a result, the Main Headquarters of the Service for Poland's Victory [Polish: Służba Zwycięstwu Polski – SZP] in Warsaw did not win the trust of the politicians from General Władysław Sikorski's circle despite the fact that it won the support of the leading Polish non-Sanation politicians. That is why the first official decisions made

⁷ Formal-legal aspects caused that despite the fact that throughout the whole war the prewar democratic opposition ruled, which invariably criticized the authoritarian nature of the April Constitution of 1935, the authorities tried to obey the legal regulations included in the constitution; yet, several times it led to conflicts in London between President Raczkiewicz and the state governments.

in Paris about the underground activities at home were unclear and unrealistic in view of tremendous communication problems between Poland and Paris. The government of the Polish Republic in Paris established the Government's Committee for Home Affairs [Polish: Komitet do Spraw Kraju Rządu RP] and transformed the Service for Poland's Victory – a homogenous civil-military body – into a strictly military organisation, whose Main Headquarters were based in Paris; the new body, referred to as the Union of Armed Struggle, was divided into as many as six domestic headquarters, which were subordinated to Paris. In this way, the Main Headquarters of the Service for Poland's Victory in Warsaw was demoted to be one of the six military headquarters in Poland, now occupied by the Soviets and Germans. After a few attempts to show the unfeasibility of the concepts, the Warsaw headquarters under new leadership (General Stefan Rowecki alias "Grot") complied with the new decisions becoming an exclusively military organisation in one of the districts occupied by the Germans. However, the reality – particularly the defeat of France and the chaos in the communication with the state authorities now seated in London – meant that upon subsequent decisions from London and France, General Rowecki became first the main decision-maker in issues concerning the German occupation and the official deputy of the Commander-in-Chief of the Union of Armed Struggle in Paris (K. Sosnkowski); finally, Rowecki also became responsible for issues connected with the Soviet occupation and the Main Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle abroad were dissolved (29–30 June 1940). As a result, the Main Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle were eventually based at home as the Warsaw staff of General Rowecki. Later (14 March 1942) the Union of Armed Struggle was officially named 'the Home Army' [Polish: Armia Krajowa]⁸.

The decision to set up the main political centre at home to supervise the civil administration was delayed for a long time. Politicians, centred around General Sikorski, were reluctant to give more independence to politicians in Poland. Meanwhile, the agreement of politicians in Warsaw connected with the Service for Poland's Victory maintained the Political Conciliation Committee [Polish: Polityczny Komitet Porozumiewawczy – PKP], created formally on 26 February 1940, which, contrary to General Sikorski's intentions, considered itself to be the real political representation of the country⁹. It was the defeat of France that made the Polish au-

⁸ From the comprehensive literature about the history of the Union of Armed Struggle the Home Army particularly: M. Ney-Krwawicz, *Komenda Główna Armii Krajowej 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1990, G. Mazur, *Biuro Informacji i Propagandy SZP–ZWZ–AK 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1987, M. Ney-Krwawicz, *The Polish Resistance Home Army 1939–1945*, Londyn 2001, Chiari B. (ed), *Die Polnische Heimarmee. Geschichte und Mythos der Armia Krajowa seit dem Zweiten Weltkrieg*, München 2003, K. Komorowski (ed.), *Operacja „Burza” i Powstanie Warszawskie 1944*, Warszawa 2004.

⁹ Originally they were representatives of the National Party (SN), the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), the People's Party (SL) and the minor Alliance of Democrats (SD). The Labour Party (SP), the closest to General Sikorski, was not included here; it later replaced the SD. Originally, Sikorski's Government in Paris wanted to develop another political initiative connected with Sikorski and his

thorities in London aware that the war would last a long time and it was necessary to recognise the standpoint of the main politicians in Warsaw only to control the military structure in the underground, which now were the only fully organised structures in the whole country. The PKP in Warsaw suggested appointing one Delegate of the Government at Home; they proposed a candidate and predicted that he would create the civil apparatus of the underground administration. The Government's Committee for Home Affairs in Paris chose a different conception, which weakened the role of the domestic apparatus: they stipulated the appointment of three Delegates of the Government at Home: for the General Government based in Warsaw, for the Soviet occupation based in Lviv (which was never fully completed), and for the territories incorporated into the Third Reich, based in Poznań. The appointments for the office in Poznań (Adolf Bniński) and for the General Government in Warsaw (Cyril Ratajski) were executed, and the decisions were finally accepted at home. Adolf Bniński and his co-workers mainly developed the apparatus of the Government Delegate's Office (DR) in Greater Poland and in Pomerania; yet, numerous arrests (Bniński was arrested on 26 July 1941 and murdered) meant that the Government of the Second Polish Republic made a decision on 9 December 1941 that Ratajski should become the only Government Delegate in the country. This is how the first stage of the existence of the Polish Underground State, the structures of which had been set up in Warsaw in mid-1940, finished¹⁰.

The Underground State from the end of 1941 to 1943

This period is marked with the development and stabilisation of the structures of the Polish Underground State in terms of both its representation and the structures of the civil administration and the organisation of military issues. Naturally, in various occupied territories the organisation varied as a result of the fact one area had been occupied by the Soviets until June 1941 while other regions had been incorporated directly into the Third Reich. Generally speaking, in the whole territory of the pre-war Polish state the structures of the Polish Underground State operated fulfilling political, administrative, military, judicial, cultural educational, social and informative roles. In its actions the Polish Underground State founded its existence and its possibilities on the general support of the society, executed its

spokesman at home – Ryszard Świątochowski, but they did not manage to get the support of any of the main parties.

¹⁰ Around the Government Delegate for Poland Ratajski the civil administration was represented by the so called Committee of Three (Jan Skorobohaty-Jakubowski, Stanisław Kauzik and Ludwik Muzyczka). Muzyczka as the 'head of the coordination' established the first structures of the civil administration, but conflicts among the political parties caused that the Main Headquarters – the Union of Armed Struggle withdrew their representative from the Committee and Muzyczka set up the Militarized Administration (cryptonym 'Teczka'), which very fast developed the administrative structures of the Union of Armed Struggle – the Home Army; comp. G. Górski, *Administracja Polski Podziemnej w latach 1939–1945*, Toruń 1995, pp. 70–91.

roles according to the regulations of Polish law and international law, and it carried out the decisions of the authorities of the Second Polish Republic in London. In the years 1914–1943 a plethora of previously independent underground structures joined the structures of the Polish Underground State. Some extreme right-wing organisations and communist factions steered by Moscow evinced a hostile attitude towards the official Polish Underground State. The Polish communist party – the Polish Workers' Party [PPR], established in 1942 – managed to gain some support at the end of the war, but mainly in the General Government. As a rule, it did not have extended underground structures in Pomerania and Greater Poland. Short talks conducted between the Government Delegate's Office at Home in Warsaw with the communist leaders did not bear fruit. At the end of 1943, the PPR began to sharply attack the legal Polish authorities both in the underground and in London, as a result of the directives they had received from Moscow. The Polish Underground State treated communist structures as agencies of a foreign and hostile state, but the struggle with the communist camp, which, as we now know, aimed towards the future liquidation of the Polish Underground State by the Red Army, was generally confined to a war of propaganda. In the description of the structures and activities of the Polish Underground State one must stress the formal supremacy of the representational (political) factor and civil authorities over the military authorities in the underground. After the conflicts in the years 1940–1941, the Political Conciliation Committee took the name of 'Home Political Representation' [Polish: Krajowa Reprezentacja Polityczna KRP] on 15 March 1943 as the representation of only four most important political parties: the National Party [SN], the Labour Party [SP], the Polish Socialist Party [PPS], the People's Party [SL]. Minor Sanation factions, left-wing socialists (infiltrated by communist agents) and other small groups remained beyond the official political representation. The basic change, gradually implemented at the end of the war, was the replacement of the KRP with the Council of National Unity [Polish: Rada Jedności Narodowej RJN], which officially started its work at the meeting of 9 January 1944. It was to continue its supervisory role in the Government Delegate's Office at Home over executive bodies and to issue programme or political resolutions in important matters. Originally, it consisted of the representatives of four big parties headed by the veteran of the socialists Kazimierz Pużak, his deputy being Józef Gruziński from the People's Party. Later, representatives of smaller political groups were incorporated into the RJN. Eventually, the Council of National Unity consisted of 16 members, but normally the most urgent decisions were made by the Main Committee consisting of five members¹¹. The Government Delegate, the Commander-in-Chief of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army and other relevant people were invited to talk about important issues at meetings of the KRP-RJN¹¹.

¹¹ Comp. legal and political acts in the work by S. Dzięciołowski, *Parlament Polski Podziemnej 1939–1945*, Warszawa 2004.

The central figure of the executive power at home was the Government Delegate at Home, residing in Warsaw. He was responsible for choosing the forms of social resistance against the German occupying forces, running the current activity of the underground civil administration including the informative and propaganda activity and civil struggle, preparing the Polish Underground State to assume power in the country once it had been liberated. He also prepared – having consulted other political parties – the scope and content of necessary legal, social and economic reforms to be conducted after Poland had gained independence¹². In his actions he cooperated and supervised the activity of the best organised underground structure – the military branch of the Union of Armed Struggle, the Home Army [ZWZ-AK]. Nevertheless, it must be emphasised that the Main Headquarters of ZWZ-AK from the very beginning of its existence until its end were dependent upon two superior bodies: the civil authorities at home and the Commander-in-Chief and his officials in London. The apparatus of the civil administration in the underground was called the Government Delegation for Poland [Polish: Delegatura Rządu – DR]; it consisted of the central authorities of the DR in Warsaw and local authorities of the underground administration. On a large scale (but not completely) the local authorities of the DR existed on the level of the pre-war provinces (voivodeships), counties, towns and parishes (gminas). The office of the DR in Warsaw, along with the Presidential Office of the Government Delegate for Poland, was divided into departments, which corresponded with the pre-war ministries plus the bodies created because of the war¹³. In terms of ongoing campaigns, the department of home affairs, which supervised the intelligence service and the counterintelligence of the DR, was of great significance. Another important department was the underground police (the State Corps of Security)¹⁴. Major organisational difficulties faced the DR regarding the territories that, until June 1941, had been occupied by the Soviets and the territories incorporated directly into the Third Reich. The first Government Delegate for Poland, Cyryl Ratajski, resigned from office on 5 August 1942 for age and health reasons. His successor was a representative of the SL, Jan Piekalkiewicz, who had played a major role in organising the civil administration as Ratajski's deputy. He was arrested on 19 February 1943 and murdered by the Gestapo, which was a considerable blow for the Polish Underground State. A new Government Delegate for Poland was a representative of the SP, Jan Stanisław Jankowski, who held office almost until

¹² Comp. J. Paśnik, *Status prawny Delegatury Rządu na Kraj 1940–1945*, Warszawa 1991.

¹³ From 1943 there existed 12 departments, including the department of press and information, of the liquidation of the results of the war, of the reconstruction of the country and of the public works.

¹⁴ Apart from military courts of the Union of Armed Struggle – the Home Army, there was also the underground judicial body for criminal issues. The apparatus of the Government Delegate's Office (DR) cooperated with numerous underground social, economic, cultural and educational organizations. With the money from London, the DR supported various social underground activities, including helping the Jews.

the very end of its existence. To ensure stability, three deputies were appointed to Jankowski. In case of Jankowski's arrest, they were to take over the duties of the Government Delegate in the previously established order.

ZWZ-AK was the biggest military underground organisation in Europe occupied by the Germans. Using the limited amount of the military equipment offered by the Allies, it was capable of organising a dynamic military structure throughout Poland (also in Hungary and Germany). The intelligence service provided the Allies with a mass of important information about the Third Reich and Russia, particularly in the years 1940–1943. The ZWZ also extended its informative role and developed various forms of civil struggle. Numerous sabotage campaigns were transformed into a mass partisan movement from the autumn of 1943 in territories with favourable geographical conditions. The Militarized Administration of ZWZ-AK, a non-party apparatus of experts, part of which was gradually incorporated by the DR from the autumn of 1943, dealt with planning future campaigns, including preparations to take over German territories after the war and reconstruct the country.

The ZWZ-AK was subordinate to the Headquarters in Warsaw, which was a huge underground apparatus consisting of an expanded Department VI – the Bureau for Information and Propaganda – and its own communication networks along with a number of specialised structures (including sabotage) and units for the defence of the staff.

At home, the organisational structures of the Home Army [Polish: Armia Krajowa – AK] were greatly extended and quite stable from 1941. Some territories were led by the Territorial Commands subordinated to the Districts. A great deal of districts, whose territory normally corresponded with the territories of the pre-war provinces, were directly subordinate to the Headquarters of the Home Army. Sometimes there were also Sub-Districts including inspectorates, zones, regions and posts. In Lithuania, Hungary and Berlin, powerful structures of the Home Army existed. In the years 1942–1944 some changes took place in the organisation of the Home Army; the number of sworn soldiers of the Home Army changed constantly due to the losses caused by the occupying forces and the incorporation of various military organisations, previously independent, into the Home Army from 1943. In the summer of 1944, during the time of Operation Tempest, the Home Army is considered to have numbered about 350,000 soldiers¹⁵.

To demonstrate the role and achievements of the Polish Underground State, it is necessary to describe the directions of their actions both militarily and in terms of the civil struggle with the occupying forces. How they proceeded did not

¹⁵ Most soldiers of the Home Army served voluntarily, not expecting any material profits. Some of them who devoted themselves entirely to underground work and had falsified identity cards had "full time jobs" within the underground system. In the Main Headquarters of the Home Army in Warsaw in the spring of 1944 (including the communication networks and protection units of the Headquarters) 1500–2000 people worked.

depend solely on the situation of a given region. Even within the boundaries of the General Government, what was possible in Warsaw differed from Cracow (the German capital city of the General Government), not to mention various other areas of the countryside.

Apart from the current military and civil struggle with the occupying forces, the Polish Underground State prepared plans of what should be done once Poland had been liberated. The structures of the ZWZ-AK and the Government Delegation took part in the struggle along with various political parties and numerous underground social organisations. It must be kept in mind that the situation of Poland under the occupation of the Third Reich can by no means be compared with the conditions in France, the Netherlands or Bohemia, not to mention Norway or Denmark.

The military forces had the best intelligent service in German-occupied Europe; their actions included sabotage, subversion and counterintelligence. The peak of the partisan campaigns took place in the spring of 1944 in the mountainous territories of Lesser Poland, the Kielce province, the Lublin province, Masovia, the Vilnius Region and Volhynia.

The civil combat included all forms of social, economic and any other type of struggle against the occupying forces carried out by all the structures of the underground state.

As we know, in Poland, unlike in Western Europe and the Scandinavian countries, none of the political forces was willing to collaborate with the Germans; small fascist right-wing groups were not encouraged by the Nazis. Hitler did not want to cooperate politically with the Poles after the bloody September campaign. However, there existed, like in many occupied countries, the phenomenon of so-called "bottom-up collaboration", which consisted in individual people working for the Germans, or was based on the existence of some supervisory institutions in the General Government which used the voluntary or forced actions of Polish citizens for the benefit of German interests (some of the lowest bodies of the local or economic administration along with the so called Navy-Blue Police purposed to keep law and order in the General Government territory). The Navy-Blue Police was supervised directly by the Germans, but some of the Navy-Blue policemen cooperated with the underground. Some of them executed atrocious orders issued by the Germans. After the war, members of the Navy-Blue Police faced heavy repressions.

The situation of the Poles under German authority was not the same in all the territories. It was definitely the worst in Pomerania, Greater Poland and Upper Silesia. In the remaining territories much depended on the local situation. The most tragic problem was the question of the Jewish population, exterminated from the first day of the war. A Pole in the General Government, despite a wide range of various forms of terror and persecution, was theoretically subject to German law (which could be interpreted differently depending on the circumstances). If a Pole

did not breach the directives issued by the Germans, they remained free from mass extermination. The Jewish population was marked for elimination. Any actions or attempts undertaken by the Polish Underground State in this issue were not sufficient in view of the magnitude of the problem. The policy of German terror exercised by various methods led to the total extermination of the Jewish population. Only a small percentage of the Jewish population constituted fully assimilated Polish Jews. In the Rzeczpospolita there lived the highest per capita number of Jews in Europe. The majority of the Jews (particularly in the eastern territories) constituted an ethnic-religious minority that spoke a different language and stood out against the background of a predominantly poor population. The fact that Jews were far from being culturally assimilated with the Polish population made it easier for the Germans to carry out the extermination process. Moreover, in many villages and small towns, the poor economic situation of the country in the 1930s connected with the global economic crisis generated profound anti-Semite animosities. Anti-Semitism made it more difficult to help the Jewish population, and any form of assistance towards the Jews was heavily punished (including the death penalty). As a result, all the actions undertaken to save individuals of Jewish origin were marginal in view of the needs and the reality they faced. The German occupation of the Polish territories lasted almost 6 years. However, it could not have been different. There were not enough financial resources, technical equipment and courageous people to hide Jews sentenced to death by the Germans. The post-war period, full of contradictions in the Stalinist and post-Stalin policies regarding the Jewish issue, did not facilitate objective research on the subject. Still, it is beyond doubt that the people who were found guilty of taking part in the extermination of Jews during the war were severely punished by the Polish courts in the years 1945–1956. Apart from help from individuals, Jews were also assisted by some Catholic institutions that saved mainly children. In the Government Delegate's Office for Poland a special social committee was set up – the Council for Helping the Jews – known under the cryptonym “Żygota”, whose members were mainly socialist and Catholic activists. To sum up, like in all the West European countries, where it was much easier to save the Jews, the Poles did not manage to create conditions which could effectively resist the policy of the Holocaust. However, the conditions in Poland were much harder, which is frequently not understood since the global knowledge about the reality of the German occupation in Poland is scarce.

The most important, and perhaps the most effective (in terms of future effects), were the Polish Underground State's actions concerning the struggle for the national culture and education. It must be underlined here that Poland was the only country under the German occupation where the Germans fought against the national culture and education. There were countries such as France or Norway where education functioned without any obstacles, and culture developed freely as long as it did not breach the rules of the German censorship. In France theatres, universities, concert halls, literary and scientific publishing houses operated

normally under the German occupation. The Polish territories incorporated into the Third Reich were completely deprived of any education in the Polish language. It was even forbidden to speak Polish in public. All the Polish cultural institutions, museums, publishing houses and libraries were destroyed. The Poles who did not sign the German People's List had very limited access to elementary education in German schools. Any private forms of teaching the Polish language, literature or history were illegal and heavily persecuted. In the General Government the situation was somewhat different: there was a limited number of vocational schools (trade schools, craftsmen's schools) which were available to the Poles along with elementary schools strictly controlled by the Germans. The governor Hans Frank wrote the following in his official diary: "The Poles should be provided with an education that will show them the hopelessness of their national situation"¹⁶. As a result, any forms of educational activities were illegal. In the General Government (and partly in other territories) underground education in Poland was provided at a secondary-school level; in some areas (mainly Warsaw and Cracow) higher education also existed underground. It should be stressed that underground university studies involved thousands of students who in this way finished the studies they had started before the war, or even started studying during the war. After the war, the diplomas and results obtained as a result of underground education were recognised. In some areas even PhD degrees were conferred.

Artistic, literary and theatrical culture in the national form was also forbidden in the General Government. There was a small group of journalists or writers who used to write articles for official newspapers approved of by the Germans. However, such newspapers were boycotted by the Polish Underground State and the journalists were punished in various ways for their collaboration with the Nazis. The underground press and publishing movement developed in Poland on a large scale – much more than in any European country. There were about 1500 titles of papers, several dozen of which were published for years. Some secret books were even published concerning political, literary, historical and military issues. In Warsaw the leading poet of the epoch – Czesław Miłosz, the future Noble prize winner – created his works. As far as film was concerned, only German productions were allowed, which mainly served the Nazi propaganda. Thus, the Polish Underground State organised the official action of boycotting cinemas as places of entertainment for the Poles. The Germans did away with all Polish dramatic theatres; in the major cities, only small entertainment theatres and low-quality musical performances were permitted. The Polish national dramatic repertoire and music (Chopin, Moniuszko or Szymanowski) were strictly forbidden. The activity of small theatres licensed by the Germans was boycotted, and its actors were persecuted by the Polish Underground State. As a result, the leading Polish actors normally did not work in their profession during the war. They were underground

¹⁶ H. Frank, *Okupacja i ruch oporu w dzienniku Hansa Franka. 1939–1945*, T. I, Warszawa 1970, p. 396.

soldiers and waiters; some of them ran cafeterias. At times, secret private theatrical or paratheatrical meetings were organised, where the main event was the words spoken by an outstanding and well-known Polish actor who frequently had to hide from the Germans under a false name.

The Polish Underground State was consciously set up by the authorities of the Second Polish Republic, predominantly in Poland. From the very beginning they thought in terms of lawfulness, but for obvious reasons the term Polish Underground State did not appear either in the underground press at home or in exile for a long time. However, this policy of sobriety changed as a result of the deceitful Soviet propaganda, according to which the only underground force in Poland were the communists (the propaganda was widely considered credible by the Anglo-Saxon media, enchanted by the successes of the Red Army). Jan Karski, an emissary from Poland, announced his revelations about the Polish Underground State in English, and earlier in Polish in London, which prompted the minister Stanisław Kot to issue a circular letter in February 1944 to all the Polish diplomatic posts that from now on they should use the term PPP (the English term “the Polish Underground State”) when writing about the underground struggle in Poland¹⁷.

People belonging to the PPP were not only involved in the current struggle, but they also prepared for Poland's future. Throughout the whole war period in the underground press and in talks on various levels, discussions were held concerning how Poland would look after the war. Generally, the authoritarian rulings of the Sanation prior to the outbreak of WWII were rejected. Only the extreme right-wing (the National Armed Force – NSZ) promoted concepts that were close to nationalism or dictatorial concepts. The programme of the People's Poland (finished in June–July 1941) was prepared by the PPS [the Polish Socialist Party] and SL [the People's Party]. It was socially radical, but far from communism. In December 1943, the SL announced a radical declaration of ideas and the programme of the People's Movement in the countryside. It is curious that some far-reaching projects for reforms (the nationalisation of heavy industry, the radical reform of the labour law and local government etc.) were conceived in the offices of the Military Administration of the Main Headquarters of the Home Army where many experts (economists and lawyers), whose political views were close to socialism, worked. The central right-wing groups in the Polish Underground State (the SN – the National Party – and the SP, the Labour Party) were against radical social-economic reforms, which facilitated the successes of the communist propaganda at the end of the occupation period. Thus, the political bureau of the Polish Underground

¹⁷ In English for the first time in *Polish Fortnightly Review* of 15 December 1943. Next Jan Karski published a book titled *Story of Secret State*, 1st edition Boston 1944, but from the perspective of its influence on the American media, glorifying only the Red Army, the book was of little significance. After the war in Poland under the communist censorship, the term “underground state” was prohibited for a long time. Comp.: S. Salmonowicz, *Czasopismo Prawno-Historyczne*, vol. 35: 1983, z. 1, pp. 368–369.

State issued quite a radical manifesto of reforms announced at the Council of National Unity (RJN) of 15 March 1944 under the title of "O co walczy naród polski" (What the Polish nation is fighting for).

The Underground State of 1943–1945: the apogee and the defeat

The Polish case during WWII from 1941 became determined by the relations between the Western Allies and the USSR. The heads of the Anglo-Saxon policy, mainly inspired by President Roosevelt, agreed to accept farther-reaching Soviet demands, as a result of which the whole of Central Eastern Europe found itself under Soviet dominance in the years 1944–1945. As far as Polish questions were concerned, the skillful Soviet tactics concerning the incorporation of the eastern territories with Vilnius and Lviv into Poland was originally totally approved of by the Allies of Poland. However, over time Stalin put forward a demand that the communist government should assume power in Poland instead of the legal authorities of the Second Polish Republic in London, with whom Stalin had fractured relations. He created the Polish army under the umbrella of the USSR and the communist structures which were to take power in Poland with the help of the Red Army¹⁸. The outcome of the Conference of the Big Three in Tehran (18 November – 1 December 1943) was the Western Allies' consent to the territorial claims of the Soviets. Roosevelt only forced the Soviets to agree that the Poles should not be informed about the final decisions until the presidential elections in the USA in October 1944 (he expected to maintain the support of the Polish American ethnic group). The fact that the Allies failed to inform the Polish Government-in-Exile in London about the decisions made in Tehran was cataclysmic for the situation of the Polish Underground State. Roosevelt many times made false promises of support to the prime minister Stanisław Mikołajczyk. The Polish Government-in-Exile was aware of the fact that Poland would lose some of its eastern territories, but they still believed this would not affect either Vilnius or Lviv. They believed that the final decisions could not be made without negotiations with the legal Polish government. The Soviet preparations to introduce the communist system in Poland were more and more transparent to them, but they wrongly assumed that the Allies would support the Poles in their defence of sovereignty. Apart from the new Commander-in-Chief, General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, nobody could imagine that the president of the biggest capitalist state in the world would hand half of Europe

¹⁸ 28 April 1943 in Radio Moscow, Wanda Wasilewska, who was a kind of spokeswoman of Polish communists near Stalin, announced that 'according to Poles in the USSR' the Sikorski's government-in-exile did not represent the interests of the Polish nation, did not fight with the Germans. In the USSR the communist government for Poland was set up – it received a propaganda name the "Association of Polish Patriots" (ZPP), which was formally announced to the public in June 1943. The army made up of Poles was formally subordinated to the ZPP, but in fact it was completely dependent on the Red Army and was named Polish People's Army.

over to communist rule without hesitation¹⁹. Nevertheless, the feeling of insecurity and uncertainty led the Polish party to make decisions to show the powerful involvement of the Polish Underground State in the defence of Polish sovereignty and territorial integrity. The Government of Poland in London approved of the intensification of military operations conducted by the Home Army throughout the state, named after Operation *Tempest*. The aim of the operation was to liberate the Polish territories after the Germans had withdrawn to demonstrate to the Soviet Red Army that they were entering Polish territory. In terms of international law, the defence of the interests of the Polish population in Vilnius and Lviv was justifiable, but they were futile as neither the Allies nor the Red Army intended to respect Polish rights. After liberating the territories from the German occupation, the Home Army was defeated in the confrontation with the Red Army. In this situation, in July 1944 the last attempt to save Polish sovereignty was undertaken whereby the Home Army would take Warsaw free from the Nazis and stop the Red Army entering Poland.

Let us recapitulate the situation at the beginning of 1944. The Soviet territorial demands had been already approved of by our Allies, but the Polish authorities were not informed about this fact. Great Britain expected that the Poles would accept the Soviet demands themselves and insisted that Polish-Soviet negotiations take place. The short-sighted policy of Roosevelt was based on the wrong assumption that the USSR would become the loyal global partner of the USA once their territorial demands had been fulfilled. Roosevelt did not understand communism, Stalin's policy or its criminal character. We should not be surprised that Polish politicians were betrayed by Roosevelt's promises.

Prior to the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising, the Polish Underground State extended its structures as a result of the decisions made in London and Warsaw²⁰. Eventually, the Government's Delegate in Poland, Jan S. Jankowski, was formally appointed (23 February 1944) and along with his three deputies he set up a kind of official branch of the Government of the Second Polish Republic named the Council of Ministers at Home [Polish: Krajowa Rada Ministrów – KRM] in Warsaw on 30 July 1944; it was to perform the functions of the legal government at home until the highest authorities of the Second Polish Republic returned from London. All these decisions, revealed to the public during the Warsaw Uprising,

¹⁹ Nowadays the critical literature concerning Roosevelt's policy towards Stalin is very rich, comp. R. Lukas, *The Strange Allies: The United States and Poland 1941–1945*, Knoxville 1978, W. F. Kimbal, *The Juggler. Franklin Delano Roosevelt as Wartime Statesman*, Princetion 1991, R. C. Raack, *Stalin's Drive to the West, 1938–1945: The Origins of the Cold War*, Stanford 1995, P. Wandycz, *The United State and Poland, Cambridge Mass*, 1980. Comp. also: A. J. Prażmowska, *Britain and Poland 1939–1945. The Betrayed Ally*, Cambridge 1995.

²⁰ The President's decree of 1 September 1942 about the organization of the temporary authorities at home was replaced by the decree about the temporary organization of the authorities on the territory of the Rzeczpospolita of 26 April 1944. Many political decisions from that period were antedated owing to the international political situation.

were the final stage of the evolution of the structures of the Polish Underground State and their significance. It is of utmost importance that all the decisions were to prevent Moscow from introducing communist rule in Poland. Now we know that even the imaginable military success of the Warsaw Uprising would not have changed anything. In view of the total lack of interest in Polish issues on the part of the Allies, Stalin would have taken power anyway. On 21 July 1944 Stalin decided to announce the creation of the official temporary communist authorities in the liberated Polish territories. The so-called Polish Committee of National Liberation [Polish: Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego – PKWN], as the executive power of the Polish communists, announced via the Moscow radio on 22 July 1944 that the Committee had been set up in Chełm Lubelski having been liberated by the Red Army. It was false information in the sense that on 22 July in Chełm there were no people associated with the PKWN – they arrived there from Moscow several days later. The PKWN announced that the highest authority in Poland belonged to the State National Council [Polish: Krajowa Rada Narodowa – KRN] (a fictional political body established by the communists in Warsaw on 31 December 1943), which would later act as the quasi-parliament under the communist rule, and the PKWN would take over administrative power in Poland from the river Bug to the west with the assistance of the Red Army.

After the tragic defeat of the Warsaw Uprising (1 August – 2 October 1944), the Big Three at the Conference of Yalta (4–11 February 1945) approved of all the Soviet demands concerning Poland. Some Soviet promises such as the promise of “free parliamentary elections” in Poland were mere propaganda, which the Allies were aware of. Stanisław Mikołajczyk accepted the Yalta decisions as condition sine quo non for possible cooperation with the communists and left the Polish Government-in-Exile. The Government headed by the socialist Tomasz Arciszewski rejected the Yalta decisions and declared them to be a violation of Poland’s sovereignty. At home, the authorities of the Polish Underground State – seeing the hopelessness of further opposition in the underground – announced that they approved of the Yalta decisions and undertook political talks with the Soviet authorities. They hoped that Stalin would want the Yalta decisions to look like a kind of compromise. As a result of a trap prepared by the Soviets, all the political and military leadership of the Polish Underground State, reorganised after the Warsaw Uprising, was arrested by the NKWD and transported to Moscow (27–28 March 1945) where the Polish heroes were put on trial. At the same time, under Soviet pressure, the so called Polish Provisional Government of National Unity [Polish: Rząd Jedności Narodowej – RJN] was set up (28 June 1945); it was completely dominated by the communists. The main leaders of the Polish Underground State lost their lives in Soviet prisons, and the introduction of Stanisław Mikołajczyk into the structures of the RJN as a figurehead satisfied the Allies, who immediately ceased to recognise the Polish Government-in-Exile in London (5 July 1945), giving recognition to the new communist government in Poland. It should be added

that before all this occurred, the Allies had agreed that the Polish Government-in-Exile would not be represented at the founding conference of the United Nations in San Francisco. The leaders of the RJN and DR (renewed after the Soviet arrests), still working in the underground and seeing the hopelessness of the situation, announced the dissolution of the RJN and the Government Delegate's Office at Home at the last conference of the authorities of the Polish Underground State in Cracow at the beginning of July 1945. They published a kind of political testament of the Polish Underground State in the form of a resolution of the RJN addressed to the world and Polish society²¹.

For fifty years the Polish state was replaced by a satellite communist regime. The Polish Underground State became history, as did the Home Army, after which only the national legend remained. The Polish Underground State – unique in terms of its legal structure and magnitude – was unique in Europe during the occupation by the Third Reich. Eventually, the country which, as the first in Europe, had resisted totalitarianism was defeated in an unprecedented manner. The country lost the highest percentage of its citizens, killed by two felonious political systems in the years 1939–1945. One-third of the Polish territory was lost. Millions of Poles were deported. The country lost its sovereignty. The economy was devastated, as was the capital city of Poland. As a result of the war, millions of Poles found themselves beyond Polish borders – they became refugees or immigrants in Western Europe and other parts of the world. Hundreds of thousands of Poles were forced to stay in the USSR. No other country in Europe suffered such great losses in the futile fight for its rights as Poland.

²¹ Comp. the collective work titled *Testament Polski Walczącej. Myśl programowa Polskiego Państwa Podziemnego*, Warszawa 2007, comp. also S. Salmonowicz, *Testament Polski Podziemnej*, „Czasy Nowożytnie”, vol. I: 1996, pp. 23–32.

Bogdan Chrzanowski

The Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle – the Home Army in the years 1939–1945

General comments

The previous chapters presented the origin of the Polish Underground State and the conditions in which it operated. The structure of the PUS was created on the basis of pre-war initiatives carried out under the auspices of Division II of the Headquarters of the Polish Army. This chapter refers to the creation and functioning of the underground network of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army (ZWZ–AK).

The authorities of the Polish Underground State divided the territory of Poland conquered by the German army into districts. Pomerania was the District of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army (ZWZ–AK) which, along with the Poznań District, constituted part of the Western Area of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army, which shall be discussed further within this article. The (Pomeranian) District of the Government Delegation for Poland¹ was also set up.

Among the political parties in the Western territories including Pomerania and Greater Poland, the most popular party was the National Party [Polish: Stronnictwo Narodowe] which was in opposition to the party composing the pre-war Polish government. Nevertheless, it was the members and advocates of the latter that turned out to be the most helpful in the organisation of both the Service for Poland's Victory [Polish: Służba Zwycięstwu Polski] and the Union of Armed Struggle.

One may distinguish three basic stages in the organisation of the military structures of the Polish Underground State:

¹ See more: G. Górski, *Administracja Polski Podziemnej w latach 1939–1945. Studium historyczno-prawne*, Toruń 1995, s. V–X i n.; idem, *Polskie Państwo Podziemne 1939–1945*, Toruń 1998, s. 13–21 i n.; B. Chrzanowski, A. Gąsiorowski, K. Steyer, *Polska Podziemna na Pomorzu w latach 1939–1945*, Gdańsk 2005, s. 117–122; A. K. Kunert, *Ilustrowany przewodnik po Polsce Podziemnej 1939–1945*, Warszawa 1996, s. 96, 444–445; *Armia Krajowa w dokumentach* (dalej: AK...), t. I, Londyn 1970, s. 73.

- 1939–1940 – the first nuclei of the Service for Poland's Victory were created; next, the organisational network of the Union of Armed Struggle was developed, for it was expected that Germany would attack Western European countries; nevertheless, after the autumn arrests of 1940, the conspiratorial campaigns were discontinued;
- 1940–1942 – the organisational structures of the Union of Armed Struggle-Home Army (ZWZ-AK) dispersed after the spring arrests of 1941 and the autumn arrests of 1942 were in full swing;
- 1943–1945 – the Home Army consolidated again despite the actions undertaken by the Gestapo in 1943 and 1944; the preparation for the general uprising and for the struggle with the Soviet occupying forces.

The first emissaries of the Service for Poland's Victory reached Pomerania as early as the autumn of 1939. Michał Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski, who had commanded the District of VIII Corps in Toruń, passed appropriate passwords for some members of the conspiratorial bodies in Pomerania before he left the city at the beginning of September 1939. When he arrived in Warsaw after the city's capitulation at the end of September 1939, he began to gather around himself refugees from Greater Poland and Pomerania as the Commander of the Service for Poland's Victory. There appeared an idea to create the common Service for Poland's Victory for Poznań and Pomerania.

At the beginning of November 1939, there was an intention to create the nuclei of the Headquarters of the Provincial Service for Poland's Victory, but, as mentioned in the previous chapter, these attempts turned out to be futile. Only the organisational nuclei were formed, while the underground activity was conducted within the Union of Armed Struggle, which benefited from the achievements of the Service for Poland's Victory. General Władysław Sikorski disavowed the Service for Poland's Victory (set up in Warsaw at the end of September 1939) since he considered it to be associated with the pre-war political system, to which he had remained in opposition².

As early as the beginning of January 1940 the pre-war officer of the Polish army Captain Józef Chyliński – alias “Kamień” or “Rekin” – (from May 1942 – a major, and from January 1945 – a colonel) went to Pomerania as the organisational officer of the Service for Poland's Victory, the Union of Armed Struggle. In Toruń he got in touch with scout organisations such as the Grey Ranks [Polish: Szare Szeregi] and the National Party – SN (in particular with the party's activist in Pomera-

² On 13.11.1939 Gen. Sikorski set up the Union of Armed Struggle along with Gen. K. Sosnowski as the Commander-in-Chief (he held the position until 30 June 1940, when he was replaced by Gen. Stefan Rowecki alias “Grot” (the pre-war colonel of the Polish Army appointed general on 3.05.1940). In the “Instruction no. 1” of 4 Dec 1939 the organizational guidelines were listed, which reached Poland on 4–5 May 1940. The date is considered to have been the foundation date of the ZWZ under the German occupation. „Instruction no. 1” of 29 Nov 1939 reached Lviv on 19 Dec 1939, which is the day the organization of the ZWZ commenced under the German occupation. A. K. Kunert, *dz.cyt.*, s. 32–38.

nia– Waław Ciesielski), the “Grunwald” organisation and others. He also went to Bydgoszcz and Włocławek where he got in touch with the newly created conspiratorial bodies. The organisation of intelligence, counterintelligence, liaison and sites for the future headquarters of the district commenced. In February 1940 Reserve Lieutenant hm. Benedykt Porożyński arrived in Toruń; his task was to spot and contact the scout organisation Grey Ranks and the Union of Armed Struggle (ZWZ).

The tasks connected with the creation of the Pomeranian structures of the Union of Armed Struggle were also associated with the idea of setting up one District of Poznań–Pomerania. The headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle in Warsaw held the view that both regions shared some economic and administrative features. As we know, the National Party and the conspiratorial organisation “Ojczyzna” set up by the party was a leading political power during the times of the Nazi occupation. Nevertheless, the terror spread by the occupying forces and a shortage of people involved in the underground activities constituted a considerable setback to the conspiratorial activities. Appropriate officers had to be sent to Pomerania and Greater Poland. Still, organisational works proceeded and many underground structures were created as a result of bottom-up initiatives. Among the people of Pomerania there were many patriots who did not wait for orders and set up conspiratorial units by themselves. The initiatives were later used by separate organisational levels of the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle.

In February 1940 Chyliński returned to Warsaw and presented the organisational condition of the Union of Armed Struggle in Pomerania to the ZWZ commander in German-occupied Poland Colonel S. Rowecki and Major Józef Ratajczak, who originally acted as the Commander of the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle. The latter and the so-called first team were to be sent to Pomerania, but Major Ratajczak was temporarily unable to leave Warsaw due to his illness. Eventually, on 16 April 1940 Major Ratajczak left for Pomerania. At that time Toruń was the centre where the major decisions were taken – the Headquarters of the District and the courier connection with Warsaw were established there. Major Ratajczak also visited Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz and Ciechocinek.

Owing to dangerous conditions he could not stay longer in Pomerania and moved from Toruń to Rembertów near Warsaw, from where he commanded the areas under his jurisdiction. Captain J. Chyliński – acting commander of the headquarters and later the commander of the headquarters of the Pomeranian District of ZWZ–AK – stayed in Pomerania permanently and was responsible for the organisation of territorial structures. He started to prepare commanding units in Toruń, Grudziądz, Chełmno, Bydgoszcz, Chojnice. He attached great significance to the construction of the intelligence network based on the work of the “Grunwald” organisation mentioned in the previous chapter and on the achievements of the scouting community. Assistance was provided by Lieutenant Franciszek

Włodarczyk alias "Majewski" and pre-war Captain of the State Police Józef Gruss alias "Stanisław" (from 1941 holding the rank of major). In the first half of 1940 conspiratorial activists attempted to reach the northern parts of Pomerania.

By the autumn of 1940 the headquarters of the District had been partly set up. The contact point in Toruń was the flat of a well-known pre-war scout activist Anna Dydyńska (Paszowska) alias "Dyńia", "Marta" at 45 Bydgoska Street and the flat of Roman Dalkowski from "Grunwald" at 30 Łazienna Street. The cooperation with political parties developed, for example, with W. Ciesielski from the National Party, who became the commander of the Organisational Department of the District Headquarters. More and more activists from the National Party and another political party referred to as the Labour Party [Polish: Stronnictwo Pracy] were involved in conspiratorial campaigns. Among them was Antoni Antczak, who later became the District Representative of the Government in Pomerania. On the basis of those two parties, the structures of "Grunwald" were developed, which in turn were incorporated with the Union of Armed Struggle. The Headquarters of German-occupied Poland considered the National Party to be the best organiser of the Union of Armed Struggle in the western territories including Pomerania.

In the meantime, twelve so-called skeleton Headquarters of the Districts were set up: in Bydgoszcz, Toruń, Brodnica, Grudziądz, Chełmno, Gdynia, Inowrocław, Kościerzyna, Włocławek, Tuchola, Chojnice and Tczew. Activists cooperated with the Poznań District and got in touch with regional and national organisations from Pomerania such as the Secret Military Organisation "Gryf Kaszubski" ("Pomorski"), the Headquarters of Defenders of Poland, the Military Organisation Lizard Union and others. By 15 October 1941, Major J. Ratajczak was to present to the Commander-in-Chief of the ZWZ – General S. Rowecki – the organisational and military capabilities of the Pomeranian District. In October and November 1940 mass arrests took place in Pomerania mainly among members of the "Grunwald" organisation and the Headquarters of Defenders of Poland. In the night of 23–24 November 1940 Major Ratajczak was arrested as A. Dydyńska (Paszowska) had not managed to warn him in time. The arrests were caused by the fact that his liaison officer Józef Olszewski, captured earlier by the Gestapo, had broken down under interrogation and revealed the whereabouts of the Commander-in-Chief of the Pomeranian District. Conspiratorial campaigns discontinued for some time.

The autumn arrests of 1940 in Pomerania and in 1941 throughout Greater Poland finally shattered the plans for creating the area of Poznań-Pomerania. In the spring of 1941 the area, which from the autumn was referred to as the Western Area of the Union of Armed Struggle, was set up. Its seat was to be Warsaw.

The Pomeranian District was commanded by Captain J. Chyliński. He left for Warsaw where he contacted J. Gruss and appointed him his deputy; in February 1941 he sent him to Toruń and Grudziądz in order to examine the situation after the German repressions. In June, Chyliński returned to Pomerania and together with Gruss they started to organise the Headquarters of the District and the terri-

torial network. Again they began to get in touch with separate regions of Pomerania and to set up inspectorates. Arrests carried out by the Gestapo in 1940 and 1941 meant that in many cases such works had to be started afresh. The activities of the occupying forces and shortages of the staff complicated the underground activity. In some cases one person had to run several inspectorates. In this period some difficulties in communicating with Warsaw occurred. In the years 1940–1941 new inspectorates were established in Toruń, Włocławek, Brodnica and Grudziądz by Reserve Lieutenant Bronisław Piętkiewicz alias “Żbik”, Captain Józef Olszewski alias “Andrzej”, Reserve Sublieutenant Alfons Jarocki alias “Juhas” and J. Gruss cooperating with Lieutenant Zygmunt Kozlikowski alias “Ogrodnik”. However, the Inspectorate of Grudziądz was destroyed in April 1941 when Z. Kozlikowski was arrested and Warsaw lost touch with the Grudziądz group.

In the north of Pomerania the inspectorates of Gdynia, Gdańsk, Tczew, Chojnice and Tuchola were set up. During this period communication with Warsaw was complicated.

In the summer of 1941 the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle commanded by Chyliński managed to restore partly its organisational network. As the position of the Commander was vacant, Subcolonel Rudolf Ostrihansky (alias “Aureliusz”) – the Commander of the Poznań District – supervised the District. At the beginning of 1942 he was appointed Commander of the Pomeranian District. He contacted J. Chyliński who had just arrived in Warsaw and familiarised him with the organisational condition of the district. Nevertheless, Subcolonel Ostrihansky did not manage to legalise his residence in Pomerania, where he stayed mainly in Bydgoszcz for about two months conducting inspections in a few Pomeranian cities. Before he left Bydgoszcz and returned to Warsaw, he had ordered Chyliński to develop the organisational structures, which was tantamount to the Pomeranian District being not only organised but also commanded by the Chief of Staff. The most important task became to organise the internal communication system between sub-districts and the external liaison system with the Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle in Warsaw. The question of maintaining liaison in the Warsaw – the Poznań District – the Pomeranian District line was a matter of concern for the Commander of the Western Area – General Tadeusz Bór-Komorowski (later the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army after Gen. S. Rowecki “Grot” was arrested in June 1943), who attempted to restore the headquarters of both districts.

Some further waves of arrests cascaded through Pomerania in the summer and autumn of 1942 starting with the arrest of the Regional Inspector of Bydgoszcz Colonel Brunon Jasiński alias “Kuno”, “Henryk II” on 29 June 1942 in the forester’s house in Długie (the county of Starogard). German repression reached the northern parts of Pomerania. In October 1942 the Commander of the Northern Subdistrict of the Home Army – J. Olszewski alias “Andrzej” – was caught.

The campaign undertaken by the Gestapo unfolded. On 13 May 1943 Subcolonel R. Ostrihansky was arrested while trying to cross the border with the General Government in Nowy Dwór. The duties of the District Commander were taken over by Major J. Chyliński. In the summer of 1943 the Main Headquarters of the Home Army appointed Subcolonel Jan Pałubicki alias "Piorun", "Grom" to be the District Commander.

Subsequent arrests taking place between March and September 1943 weakened the communication with Warsaw; nonetheless, the structures of the Pomeranian District continued to develop even in smaller towns despite German repression.

Throughout 1944, the Nazi authorities carried out further arrests among members of the Headquarters of the District. In January the head of the Department of Liaison – Reserve Sublieutenant Gustaw Olszewski – was arrested, while in May the head of Department II, J. Gruss was captured. The Gestapo intensified its campaign in the autumn of 1944, which again slowed down the operations of the Pomeranian District of the Home Army.

The internal and territorial structure of the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army

As previously mentioned, the origins of the activity of the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle date back to mid-April 1940, when the team of Major J. Ratajczak arrived in Pomerania. Basically, the structures of the Headquarters of the District were created in the years 1941–1942. During this period members of its departments were appointed. The following departments were organised:

- the Organisational Department (I),
- the Information-Intelligence Department (II),
- the Operational- Instructional Department (III),
- the Quartermaster Department (IV),
- the Liaison Department (V)
- the Department of the Office for Information and Propaganda (VI),
- the Railway Department,
- the Department of Agriculture and Supplies,
- the Military Department,
- the Association of Retaliation – the Directorate for Subversion ("Kedyw"),
- the Department of the Military Service of Women,
- the Department of Health Care,
- the Department of Priesthood,
- the Military Special Court,

The office of District Commander was held respectively by:

- Major J. Ratajczak alias "Englert", "Karol", "Karolczak", "Krauże", from February 1940 until being arrested in November 1940;
- Subcolonel R. Ostrihansky alias "Ludwik", "Rudolf", "Pawełek", "Gawel", "Aureliusz" from the beginning of 1942 until his arrest in May 1943;

- Lieutenant-Colonel J. Pałubicki alias “Gradus”, “Grom”, “Janusz”, “Piorun” – from the summer 1943 to July 1944 and from January 1945 until the dissolution of the Home Army on 19 January 1945;
- Major Franciszek Trojanowski alias “Fala”, “Trojańczyk”, “Toruńczyk” – from mid-July 1944 until the end of December 1944;

Throughout all the period of the Nazi occupation the Chief of Staff was Captain/Major/ Subcolonel J. Chyliński, who was responsible for operations in the District, particularly during vacancies in the position of the Commander-in-Chief, despite the fact that he had not been formally appointed. His deputy was the Head of Department II – J. Gruss. Apart from them, the most active workers of the Main Headquarters of the District of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army in Pomerania included: Franciszek Bendig alias “Ksawery”, Marian Górski alias “Rumianek” (the head of the intelligence), Henryk Gruetzmacher alias “Michał”, “Maria”, Leszek Biały alias “Jakub”, “Radius” (the head of the liaison), Leon Tojza alias “Kiliński” (special tasks force officer), Halina Strzelecka alias “Angora”, “Zofia”, Halina Krzeszowska-Pietkiewicz alias “Ludmiła” (the Commanders of the Military Service of Women at the Staff of Headquarters of the District), Irena Jagielska alias “Ewa” (also Nowak) – the liaison officer of the Staff of the Pomeranian District of the Home Army and many others who are not listed here.

In the second half of 1944 two controversies arose inside the Headquarters of the District. They concerned Major F. Trojanowski sent from Warsaw in July. He was appointed District Commander by the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army General T. Bór-Komorowski. Major Trojanowski stayed in Pomerania from mid-July to the end of December 1944, or even longer. On 3 August 1944 he took part in a two-day briefing of the Staff of the District in Brodnica along with the previous District Commander Subcolonel J. Pałubicki, the Chief of Staff Major J. Chyliński, the head of the intelligence F. Bendig, the head of the liaison H. Gruetzmacher and others. Trojanowski was to take command over the Pomeranian District. However, Chyliński did not recognise this appointment signed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army. He attempted to block Trojanowski's path to power. The argument justifying the decision was the new commander's lack of knowledge about conditions in Pomerania and the risk of exposure. The new commander's plans to organise an uprising in Pomerania, to start the campaign to restore the military forces and to kick start a major onslaught of military activity in Pomerania (intensifying subversive attacks, assassinations of officers from the occupying forces, recording notes with addresses and names, the ostentatious inspection of the partisan units which he wanted to locate in Bydgoszcz and next to send to Kampinos Forest in order to provide assistance to people fighting in Warsaw) encountered severe criticism. J. Gruss maintained that applying conspiratorial methods from the General Government in Pomerania might lead to mass arrests and complicate the work of the District again. Some other workers from the District of the Government Delegation for Poland shared his view. Although Trojanowski was

familiar with the territories of Pomerania since before the war he had served in 61 infantry regiment in Bydgoszcz for 9 years, he did not take into account the specific situation of Pomerania under the German occupation; he did not realise the fact that in Pomerania even a louder conversation held in Polish could lead to serious consequences, which did not happen in the General Government. On the other hand, he understood some issues which were not always dealt with appropriately in the General Government. An example of this may be the question of the German People's List. Major Trojanowski also allowed Poles belonging to Group III of the Volksliste to be recruited into the Home Army (as discussed in chapter 1). He understood the dramatic situation of the Pomeranian population who was forced to renounce their Polish origin. He accepted the earlier standpoint of the Headquarters of the District in this matter. It should be underlined that the incredibly hard conditions which hampered the operations of the Pomeranian conspiracy, could have given a false impression of lacklustre activity. The Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle- Home Army created its structures and struggled with the enemy as much as the conditions in the Reich District of Gdańsk-West Prussia allowed. It seems that the new Commander should have listened to the opinion of experienced members of conspiracy who were acquainted with the specific conditions in Pomerania. The conflict was not resolved and in January 1945 Subcolonel J. Pałubicki again took the position as the Commander of the Pomeranian District of the Home Army.

The Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army covered the area of East Pomerania, Kuyavia, reaching as far as the so-called Reichsgau Wartheland and other regions of West Pomerania and East Prussia. As is known, from the spring of 1941 the Pomeranian District along with the Poznań District were part of Area V which since the autumn of 1941 was referred to as Western Area based in Warsaw, for the Nazi terror in the territories annexed to the Reich (Pomerania and Greater Poland) made the work of the Polish Underground State much more difficult. Thus, decisions concerning the territories were made in Warsaw, later transmitted to Pomerania and Greater Poland. The Western Area was referred to using the following code names: "Las", "Kantor", "Zamek", "Klucz"). The commanders of the area were General T. Bór-Komorowski, Colonel Stanisław Grodzki alias "Sadowski", Colonel Zygmunt Miłkowski alias "Denhoff" and Colonel Jan Szczurek-Cergowski alias "Sławbor". The Pomeranian District appeared under the code names: "Borówki", "Tartak", "Pomnik", "Reich", "Saki", "Luneta".

The territorial structure underwent modifications, which was connected with the command and complicated communication with the Main Headquarters.

Originally, until March 1943 the territory of Pomerania was divided into three so-called sub-districts: the Kuyavian sub-district (alias "Mosty"), the Central sub-district (alias "Globus") and the Sea sub-district (alias "Bursztyn", "Mosiądz"). In March 1943 the Pomeranian District was divided into two sub-districts - the Northern sub-district and the Southern sub-district. The names of the sub-dis-

tricts were later slightly modified: the North-West Sub-district ("Mosiądz", "Jary") and the South-East Sub-district ("Porfir", "Globus"). The so-called external sub-districts began to be set up: the North-West Sub-district (Szczecin) – alias "Tra-twa", "Mewa" – and the North-East Sub-district (Königsberg) alias "Zamek". Forced labourers employed in the war industry and agriculture were involved in conspiratorial operations which never went beyond the preliminary organisational stage.

The last changes in the territorial structure took place in 1944. The reorganisation of the territorial structure was connected with personnel difficulties. It was not possible to command three sub-districts without complete staff. Moreover, the eastern front was approaching along with the new occupation. The area along the Vistula river had to be reorganised in such a way so as to prepare it for command in the event of a further loss of independence. Such was the directive of the Main Headquarters of the Home Army, which considered this threat to be quite realistic. The plans of the uprising were prepared taking into consideration such dangers.

An important element of the work of the district became chancellery tasks along with maintaining communication at an appropriate level. All orders, reports or regulations had to be written quickly and passed over to higher or lower organisational structures. The courier liaison and the chancellery of the Staff of the District worked very efficiently thanks to the devotion and commitment of many people working as secretaries or female couriers such as: Kazimiera Bartel (Rogozińska) alias "Jadwiga", Zofia Bartel alias "Dobra", "Goebbelsowa", Maria Biała alias "Magda", Adela Dejewska alias "Topola", Jadwiga Derucka (Glińska) alias "Maria", "Jadzia" – she was also a coder in the Headquarters of the District, Helena Derucka (Szajkowska) alias "Bogna", "Tekla", Hanna Dulcka (Nowicka) alias "Iskra", Barbara Dulcka alias "Danka", Janina Dulcka alias "Maria", "Malinowska", A. Dydyńska (Paszowska), Franciszka Gendaszek alias "Teresa", Kazimiera Hoffmann alias "Ciocia Irka", I. Jagielska (Nowak) alias "Ewa", Leokadia Jagielska alias "Kajtek", Helena Leszczyńska alias "Janka", Halina Melzacka (Szewczyk) alias "Halinka", Halina Nowicka alias "Halinka", Helena Orszt (Burdy) alias "Kala", Zofia Rasz alias "Myszka", Teresa Rux (Rydzkowska) alias "Ania", Ludmiła Stencel alias "Lisia", "Janka", H. Strzelecka, Maria Sypniewska alias "Teresa", Władysława Tojza alias "Teresa" and many others. The list of meritorious women is endless. We have listed only some of them, but all the women who worked in various structures of the Polish Underground State deserve a separate study.

The work in the chancellery consisted of typing orders, instructions and reports for the Headquarters of the District and the Main Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle. The personal data of people proposed for promotion or decoration were coded. In the chancellery they also stored genuine rubber stamps, identity cards and headed paper of the occupying forces. Every female courier had to speak German. Wanting to avoid suspicions the person transporting the so-called mail by train tried to lead a lively conversation, but not too cheerful. A hostile attitude or ostentatious silence aroused the distrust of the police. Couriers reached the

destination point usually by bike or on foot since journeys over 100 km required a permit. Great help was provided by railmen transporting couriers, intelligence agents or unmasked people from Pomerania to the General Government. It should be remembered that crossing the border of the General Government – Pomerania was not easy; people attempting to cross it were at risk of being arrested, imprisoned or sent to a concentration camp, as frequently took place.

All the work conducted in the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army was the fruit of the effort of many people and their families. Examples of such families include: the Bartel family, the Biały family, the Gendaszek family, the Guzowskis, the Hoffmanns, the Jagielskis, the Kudlińskis, the Leszczyńskis, the Lipskis the Nowickis, the Stencel family, the Spodniewskis, the Tojza family, the Zakrzewskis, the Zieleniewskis, the Żołobińskis and many others. The families were contacted by the District Commander – Subcolonel J. Pałubicki, the Chief of Staff – Major/ Subcolonel J. Chyliński (who normally travelled by bike disguised as a chimney sweeper) and heads of separate departments. The families listed above and other families not included in the list lent their flats to be used as the sites for the Headquarters of the District. Such centres were set up all over the territory of Pomerania i.e. in Brodnica-Opalenica (at the place of the Dziegielewski family), in Kruszyny Szlacheckie near Brodnica (the quarter coded as “Maliny” in the house of the Dulskis), in Wąbrzeźno in the farm Mlewo (alias “Wujek” in the house of the Dejewskis), in Golub-Dobrzyń (at the place of Maria Grajkowska and the Nozdrzykowski family), in Rypin-Długie (in the house of the Pawłowskis), in Lipno-Skępe (at the place of the Grabowski family), in Włocławek in Starodębska street (in the house of the Guzowskis), in Chełmża (at the place of J. Kowalczyk), in Grudziądz (at the place of the Zielińskis). There also existed quarters in Toruń (in the houses of the Jagielskis and Paszkowskis) and in Bydgoszcz at the places of K. Hoffmann at 12 Długa street, Z. Bartel at 38 Śniadeckich street, W. Tojza at 31 Dolna street, F. Gendaszek at 3 Św. Trójcy street, T. Rux at 1 Plac Poznański and the Szymański family in Dworcowa street – “Katakumby”. The Military Service of Women helped to organise quarters and contact points.

Some of the people and families listed above were in Group III of the German People's List having been forced to sign it – a tragedy for the Pomeranian people (see r. I)

The communication between the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District and the Headquarters of the Western Region – the Main Headquarters in Warsaw was not regular, for it was difficult to cross the border between the Reich District of Gdańsk-West Prussia and the General Government. Falsified documents were made in the Department of the Legalisation of the Organisational Division of the Main Headquarters of ZWZ-AK, which was originally run by Halina Stabrowska alias “Wita”, who later became the head of the secretarial office of the Commander

of the Western Region – General T. Bór-Komorowski. Halina Korniak alias “Doro-ta” administered the liaison of the Headquarters of the Western Region.

With the help provided by the Military Service of Women, the Pomeranian District organised three main routes to Warsaw: Bydgoszcz–Kutno–Warszawa, Toruń– Łódź–Warszawa, Włocławek–Łódź–Warszawa. Sometimes contacts with the capital city were broken off owing to the threat of arrests. The Main Headquarters of ZWZ–AK did not carry out any inspection in Pomerania. The Chief of Staff of the District tried to attend briefings at the place of the Commander-in-Chief or in the Headquarters of the Western Region. He discussed there Organisational issues connected with Pomerania with the Commander-in-Chief and heads of separate Divisions of the Main Headquarters: the Organisational Division (I), the Information-Intelligence Division (II), the Operational Division (III), the Division of Command and Liaison (V), the Office for Information and Propaganda (VI), the head of “Kedyw” and representatives of the Government Delegation for Poland. Talks were held in Saska Kępa, on Marszałkowska, Konopnickiej and Smulikowskiego street, on Aleje Jerozolimskie, in Plac Trzech Krzyży. In Warsaw, Chyliński was quartered in Saska Kępa and on Aleje Jerozolimskie. J. Gruss – the head of the intelligence of the Pomeranian District also maintained contacts with the Main Headquarters (he met General T. Bór-Komorowski on Senatorska street). Gruss used to send F. Gendaszek to Warsaw. One of the points where the mail for the Headquarters of the Western Region was left was the flat of Zofia Rasz alias “Myszka” in Włocławek. One of the couriers who left messages there was I. Jagielska.

Apart from the Headquarters of the District in Pomerania there operated also networks of the Main Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle – the Home Army. Theoretically, they were to operate beyond the district and were sent directly from Warsaw; practically, they cooperated with individual departments – networks of the offensive long-range intelligence (codename “Stragan” and “Lombard”), the Department of the Maritime Force (codename “Alfa”), the Liaison with Abroad (codename “Zagroda”), the Office for Information and Propaganda, including the action “N”, the Liaison with camps of POWs (codename “IKO”), or the cell unit marked as “Zagra-lin” (foreign line) which was part of the Organisation of Special Combat Actions (OSA) executing subversion acts in the occupied and annexed territories as well as in the Reich.

We have already mentioned the numerous problems which the Pomeranian conspiracy had to face. Thus, the work of the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District ZWZ–AK differed from the activity of the same structures in the General Government. For safety reasons the Staff of the District, which consisted sometimes of only a few people, had to change its place of residence. Frequent arrests entailed the necessity to make changes in individual positions in the Headquarters of the District, which suffered serious shortages of officers, which resulted in the fact that one person had to fill two positions. For example, J. Gruss, the intelligence

commander also held the position of the deputy and the Chief of Staff as well as the Commander of the South Sub-district. He was also from time to time delegated to run trainings in the civil apparatus – in the District of the Government Delegation for Poland. In critical moments, for example, after the arrests in 1940 and 1941 Gruss organised the network of the district while holding the function of Organisational Officer. At the same time, the District Delegation sent to the district some workers: Józef Eischtaedt alias “Jacek”, “Mikrus” and Aleksander Schulz alias “Michał”, “Maciej”. In the same way, H. Gruetzmacher was both the Commander of the North Sub-district and the liaison commander in the north-south line. General S. Rowecki informed the Polish authorities in London about the shortage of staff in the Poznań-Pomerania Region.

The intelligence of the Pomeranian District ZWZ-AK commanded mainly by J. Gruss and F. Bendig created a very dynamic organisational network. The liaison system commanded by H. Gruetzmacher was highly developed. On the district level, the separate intelligence structures had not been set up, which was caused by staff shortages. Reports for the heads of the intelligence were rewritten by people who also worked for the Commander of the District or the Chief of Staff or the liaison commander. There was a similar situation in other departments of the district.

The intelligence of the Pomeranian District ZWZ-AK had well established contact points, which were situated in Pomerelia (Gdańsk-Gdynia), Elbląg, Królewiec, Kwidzyn, Malbork, Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz, Toruń, Włocławek, Inowrocław, Gniezno, Piła and West Pomerania (Szczecin, Police). Intelligence activity was also conducted in Bydgoszcz, Toruń and Grudziądz. The district intelligence commander, J. Gruss, organised contact points in the Reich, for example, in Hamburg, Bremen, Cologne, Berlin. The district intelligence cooperated closely with the previously mentioned long-range offensive intelligence “Stragan” of the Main Headquarters ZWZ-AK. The evidence for this are reports transmitted in March–April and May 1942 signed by the Commander of the District Subcolonel R. Ostriansky. The cooperation with another network of the Main Headquarters within the Home Army – “Lombard” – became even more profound. It embraced the organisational sphere such as delivering, correcting and transmitting information from Warsaw or via Sweden to London. These contacts existed at least from 1943 and were maintained by I. Jagielska who represented the Headquarters of the District and who contacted Reserve Lieutenant Jan Belau alias “Mewa”, “Morski” in Pomerelia. The network of “Lombard” was scattered along the whole Polish and German sea coast. In Gdynia, reports were sent to Sweden with the assistance of the Swedish church and the Swedish parish priest who worked there. The intelligence of the Pomeranian District ZWZ-AK was also interested in the marine issue.

In the years 1942–1943 the creation of the Quartermaster Department started; it was developed in the years 1943–1944, which was connected with the prepara-

tions of the uprising. The reason for this was the need to make supplies for the military units of the Home Army and civilians.

In order to obtain and secure the sources of supplies the Department "Rolnik" was set up, whose operations were conducted according to the instruction concerning the organisation of agriculture. The instructions were signed by the Head of the Quartermaster Department – Stanisław Dzięgielewski alias "Mikołajski" and approved of by the Chief of Staff – J. Chyliński.

The functioning of the liaison constituted one of the most important tasks of the Headquarters of the District, for it was the appropriately organised system of communication that determined the success of the conspiratorial campaign. The so-called relay liaison also referred to as the bike liaison was the most efficient and best developed form of communication in Pomerania. It was organised in both directions: "downwards" and "upwards" within all territorial levels including sub-districts, inspectorates, districts and municipal garrisons. There was also railway communication, radio communication and the so-called backup communication in which the person concerned could act only if a given network had been unmasked by the Gestapo.

At the level of the Pomeranian Headquarters of the District ZWZ-AK issues connected with propaganda were dealt with by the Office for Information and Propaganda (BiP). The Pomeranian District ZWZ-AK did not issue its own press; from time to time the communications were published and "Przegląd Prasy Niemieckiej" (published from the end of 1944) was distributed. In 1944 in Toruń "Strażnica Bałtyku" and "Głos Prawdy" were issued.

The Pomeranian District also launched action "N", which was a psychological form of subversion among Germans carried out by publishing in German various appeals with the aim of unmasking the policy and aims of the Reich. It was written in such a way so as to create the impression that it was printed by an anti-Hitler opposition. In fact, it was printed by the Polish conspiratorial structures.

The "N" press was distributed to Lipno, Grudziądz, Bydgoszcz, Tczew, Pomorze and East Prussia. Moreover, scouts from Grey Ranks [Polish: Szare Szeregi] were also involved in the campaign as they had extensive contacts in Germany. In August 1944 the Commander of the District Major F. Trojanowski issued Order no. 3 which ordained the intensification of action "N", which was connected with the preparations for and the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising.

Little is known about the Organisation of the Military Special Court (WSS) in Pomerania. Basically, the Headquarters of the Judicial Service of the District (Region) constituted the personnel of the judicial service in the districts and the Military Court of the District was subordinate to it. It seems that P.M. Lisiewicz is not right in saying that the Western Territory of the Home Army did not set up the Military Special Court and all the cases connected with Pomerania and Greater Poland were examined by the Military Special Court in Warsaw.

The Military Special Court operated in the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District, but was understaffed. The Pomeranian Military Special Court followed the instructions sent to Pomerania by the Main Headquarters of the Home Army through the agency of the Headquarters of the Western Region. The Commander of the Pomeranian District was to appoint the prosecutor, the chairman and district judges of the Military Special Court. In Pomerania, Józef Brajczewski alias "Dąb" held the function of Chairman of the Military Special Court. A member of the Department of Justice was Wawrzyniec Żbikowski alias "Myśliwy", "Wala". The District Prosecutor originally was Hebrzyk Rasz alias "Józef", "Andrzej", vel Brzeski. As early as the end of 1941 he started establishing the underground judiciary system in selected towns in Pomerania such as Toruń, Inowrocław and Gdynia. His task was also to collect information about the conduct of the occupying forces and Poles who cooperated with the German authorities – they were to be tried and sentenced.

Little is also known about the work of the Military Special Court of the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the Home Army. There was a case concerning a deserter from the Partisan Unit commanded by Alojzy Bruski alias "Grab". It was examined in 1944 by J. Brajczewski and W. Żbikowski. The deserter's commander gave notification of his lawless abandoning of the unit, his abuse of alcohol and losing his weapon. Moreover, in December 1944 the Military Special Court of the Pomeranian District issued a death sentence to the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Uprising Army– Edward Słowikowski for his cooperation with the Gestapo.

The Headquarters of the District did its best to encourage pastoral activity, but information on this matter is scarce. The majority of the clergy were also involved in intelligence activity, transfers from Gdynia to Sweden or charity work.

A significant element in the work of the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District ZWZ-AK was the pillar of the Military Service of Women. Its activity in Pomerania may be divided into four stages. The first period, lasting from the spring to November 1940, consisted of organising the first contact points, liaison, quarters, intelligence service and counter-intelligence along with the nuclei of the structures of the military service of women. In the second period, lasting throughout the whole of 1941 until the subsequent arrests in the summer of 1942, the process of allocating women to individual services commenced: they were recruited to the intelligence service, the health service, the liaison, legalisation or quartermaster departments (in this case they had to organise quarters for the Staff of the District which frequently changed its place of residence). In the third stage (autumn 1942 – spring 1943) the Department of the Military Service of Women did not formally exist in the Headquarters of the District, but the conspiratorial activity of women on various levels of the Pomeranian District was quite significant. In Pomerania the structures of the Military Service of Women evolved, with special emphasis on the sanitary service including assistance provided to partisan units and people

imprisoned in the concentration camp in Stutthof, in the camp in Potulice and other prisons. The fourth period, embracing the spring of 1944 until the dissolution of the Home Army in January 1945, was characterised by the activity of the Military Service of Women in the Headquarters of the District and sub-districts. Working off-site was conducted according to the "Instruction of the work of the Military Service of Women" (WSK). The sanitary service, the intelligence service, care of the repressed and the liaison expanded. The number of people working in the Military Service of Women totalled around 1500.

According to the orders of the Main Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle– Home ARMY (ZWZ–AK), the integration action commenced in Pomerania. Talks concerning this were held with such organisations as the Grey Ranks (Szare Szeregi), the Headquarters of the Defenders of Poland, the Union of the White Eagle, The Military Organisation of Western Regions, the Military Organisation Lizard Union, the National Armed Forces, "Sword and Plough" [Polish: "Miecz i pług"] (the United Organisations of the Movement "Miecz i Pług"), the Polish Military Organisation, the Polish Army of the Uprising, the Secret Military Organisation "Gryf Pomorski", the Organisation "Odra" and smaller organisations such as the Secret Scouting Regiment in Gdynia, "Polska Żyje" or the organisation "Wolność".

At the talks concerning this integration, the Headquarters of the District were represented by: J. Chyliński, H. Gruetzmacher, J. Gruss, M. Górski, B. Pietkiewicz, A. Jarocki, A. Schulz, J. Olszewski, F. Bendig and other commanders. Some organisations became totally subordinated, while others decided only to cooperate. Some disparities appeared which concerned the form of the integration, particularly in the case of organisations characterised by a developed internal and territorial structure. Those who led the integration talks tried to convince their interlocutors about the necessity and advisability to integrate the Polish Underground State. Participants were at odds not only in terms of political ideas. The Chief of Staff J. Chyliński underlined that they should act tactfully for in the Western territories and Pomerania the National Party – which had been in opposition to the government before 1 September 1939 – had most supporters. At the Headquarters of the District and among lower ranks it was emphasised that the whole Pomerania conspiracy should remain apolitical, thanks to which political frictions among the superior staff of the District could be avoided.

Most conflicts appeared during the attempts to integrate the two biggest regional Organisations: TOW "Gryf POMORSKI" and the Polish Army of the Uprising.

Thanks to the integration process the Pomeranian District ZWZ–AK evolved in number, but only the head of a given organisation knew about the merger. The organisational structures extended their influences and the intelligence network, which were the main areas where the positive effects of integration were visible. After the merger, the intelligence network of a given organisation received reports;

if complete integration was not accepted, the Pomerania District ZWZ-AK started to cooperate in various fields such as intelligence, liaison or partisan activities. This phenomenon occurred, for example, in the relations with Military Organisation Lizard Union, "Gryf Pomorski", "Miecz i Pług" and others.

The process of creating the internal and territorial structure of the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle – the Home Army – was much slower than in other areas of the occupied country. In Pomerania, the harsh conditions dictated the staff shortages and the existence of skeleton staff.

The organisational development of individual sub-districts was diversified. The functions of the Commanders of the Sea-North Sub-district were held by: J. Olszewski and H. Gruetzmacher. After the reorganisation, when it was divided into two sub-districts and the name changed into North-West Sub-district, the Commanders were H. Gruetzmacher, A. Jarocki and A. Schulz.

Operations in this sub-district, earlier referred to as the coastal sub-district, were intensified after J. Olszewski alias "Andrzej" arrived in Pomerania in the summer of 1941. Following the order of the Main Headquarters and the Headquarters of the District he was to carry out three tasks: 1) activate and develop the underground network; 2) conduct the integration process; 3) establish the intelligence and transfer network from Gdynia to Sweden. These tasks were to facilitate the preparation of the uprising in Pomerania, which shall be discussed later in the chapter. J. Olszewski understood and invariably stressed the difference in conditions in the General Government and the annexed lands. Thus, all operations were determined by the specific nature of Pomerania. J. Olszewski lived in many sites in Gdynia, at the Rogozińskis' place at 18 Poprzeczna street. The former MP from the National Party – Jan Kwiatkowski – helped him to establish contacts. The conspiratorial network in inspectorates of the sub-district was created based on existing organisations such as the Grey Ranks – Szare Szeregi scoutmaster Bernard Mysliwek alias "Konrad") and scoutmaster L. Cylkowski alias "Lucek"), the ZWZ group organised by Jan Witt and Adam Feigl. They also contacted the Secret Military Organisation "Gryf Pomorski". In talks held with the latter, J. Olszewski emphasised the necessity to be united in the face of the forthcoming general uprising. Assistance was provided by the Inspector of Tczew – A. Jarocki and the head of the liaison – H. Gruetzmacher. Cooperation also began between the intelligence of the sub-district and the offensive long-range intelligence ("Stragan", "Lombard") of the Main Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army as well as with other organisations operating in Pomerania such as the Military Organisation Lizard Union, the Polish Army of the Uprising, "Mieczem i Pługiem", the Secret Regiment of Scouts and others. The network of marine intelligence was developed thanks to the recruitment of workers from the Department of Maritime Force ("Alfa") of the Main Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army.

On the coast, J. Olszewski organised the transfer route to Sweden. The network operated as part of the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District. H. Gruetzmacher took part in the operation.

The Headquarters of the North-West Sub-district maintained contacts with all organisational structures subjected to him. Arrests carried out by the Gestapo in the summer and autumn of 1942, May 1943 and March 1944 (particularly in Bydgoszcz) adversely affected the activity of the North-West Sub-district.

The South-East Sub-district was commanded by: J. Gruss, probably by Major/Subcolonel Florian Sokołowski alias "Jerzy", Major W. Orłowski alias "Orzeł" and Second Lieutenant B. Pietkiewicz. The head of the Toruń Inspectorate was B. Pietkiewicz. He organised commanding points in Toruń. The network of the Military Service of Women was organised by H. Krzeszowska. Throughout the whole sub-district a network of intelligence and liaison was developed. The underground press such as "Strażnica Bałtyku" and "Głos Prawdy" was published here. In Toruń there were attempts to integrate the Union of Armed Struggle-Home Army with the Polish Army of the Uprising, the structures of which were relatively strong in Toruń. Unfortunately, as already mentioned, the talks were not successful owing to the cooperation of the commander of the organisation with the Gestapo.

It is difficult to estimate the number of members of the Pomeranian District. Generally, it is assumed that in the Pomeranian District of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army in the second half of 1943 there were about 18,000 soldiers, 8000 of whom served in the troops along the line (including 12 officers of staff and 49 officers in the troops along the line). The Germans killed several hundred people, murdered after their arrest or in direct combat. However, this data should be verified and may need to be adjusted.

The plans for the general uprising

The Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle – Home Army set itself the goal of preparing the uprising which with the help of the Allies was to liberate Poland. The outbreak of the uprising was planned to take place in the final stage of the war, after the Third Reich had broken. The plans took into account the area of Pomerania, which affected the main directions of the organisational operations in the area.

The plans for the uprising were prepared by the Main Headquarters ZWZ-AK, and later by the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the Home Army.

The uprising plans prepared in London in November and December 1940 referred to the areas of Northern and Central Pomerania as the so-called second region to be selected as the site where the Polish Military Forces were to land. Region "P" – Pomerania was to constitute the base of supply for the Polish army fighting with the German and Soviet occupying forces.

The first plan of the uprising was drafted in the Main Headquarters ZWZ-AK at the turn of 1940–1941. The document is known as "Operational Report No.

54” of 5 February 1941. The plan realistically estimated that the possibilities of uprising operations in Pomerania were limited; however, landing troops were to be sent by sea from the West. The airforce was also to participate in the combat. After landing, it was to have a decisive influence on the military activities in the most important centres such as Toruń, Bydgoszcz and Grudziądz. The operational significance of Gdańsk Pomerania, where the landing troops were to arrive, was underlined.

The Main Commander of the Union of Armed Struggle, General Rowecki, checked the feasibility of executing the uprising plans in Pomerania. He was aware of the organisational difficulties and the limited quantity of weapons in the region. Thus, after the outbreak of the uprising there was an intention to send additional diversionary patrols to some districts including Pomerania.

In the final part of the report, General Rowecki included remarks referring to tasks of the Union of Armed Struggle in the context of the struggle for the western border. There appeared a demand to incorporate East Prussia, Opole Silesia and the Oder river into Poland, which was exactly what London expected.

The outbreak of the German–Soviet war changed the situation and the plans had to be modified. Despite the fact that the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish army General W. Sikorski was very critical of some points concerning the landing of troops in Pomerania, he took into consideration the possibility to use the coast for operational activities.

This is why in mid-1941 following the order of the Main Headquarters ZWZ, the structures in the northern part of Pomerania were developed. At that time J. Olszewski was appointed the Commander of the Sea and North Sub-district. Before he left Warsaw, he was informed about the plans for the coastal operation by the Chief of the Branch of I Headquarters ZWZ–AK Colonel Antoni Sanojca alias “Kortum”, who sent him to Pomerania, in connection with the preparations for the uprising. This fact shows how important the mission was. Following the guidelines of the Main Headquarters and the Headquarters of the District, he ran the organisational operations in the territory, particularly in Gdynia. Apart from ongoing tasks, preparations were underway for the supply base for the amphibious landing of troops and the administrative-economic apparatus was established. The nuclei of the marine battalion were set up, which mainly consisted of members of the Grey Ranks; the marine battalion became part of the Department of the Navy “Alfa”. Teams of experts were brought in to provide support for the proper functioning of machines in the harbour and the city while the troops were landing. Scouts involved in operation “Alfa” examined areas where the troops were expected to land and selected sites for the drop. An inspection of selected regions situated between Władysławowo, Reda and Puck was carried out.

In 1942 Gen. S. Rowecki prepared “Operational Report no. 154” including “The Plan of the uprising”. According to the plan, the base for the uprising was to be the territory of the General Government. Pomerania and the western lands

were considered to be of secondary importance due shortages of staff and weapons. Pomerania lost its primary operational importance, which meant that the concept of organising the landing of marine troops in Gdynia and Gdańsk was no longer treated as priority. The idea cropped up again a few times throughout the period of 1943–1944. In the event of the threat of the Soviet Union's attack, General Rowecki suggested focusing the forces of the Home Army in the Pomeranian region which was in touch with the West – a source of potential assistance.

The changing military-political situation entailed the need to prepare new operational assumptions. The Main Headquarters of the Home Army started to draw up plans for intensified subversion in the Polish territories, which were included in operation "Burza". However, in Pomerania there were no conditions to carry it out.

Preparations for open military action were launched by the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the Home Army in the second half 1943. The body to be contacted regarding this matter was the Headquarters of the Western Territory. Open combat was to be preceded by a period of vigilance; the Polish forces were to be ready to launch the operation at moment's notice. During this time, the shortages of personnel and weapon were to be eliminated. In November 1943 passwords were distributed in case the military campaign started earlier than expected. In April 1944 the Headquarters of the District were ordered to present a report from the conspiratorial operations by 15 June 1944. It included some information about the personnel, the feasibility of engaging in an open military campaign and selected sites for his eventuality, and the options for communicating quickly with the partisan units in Bory Tucholskie. An important element was the preparation of the drops and liaison. In August 1944 A. Jarocki sent to the head of the liaison in the district – Gruetzmacher – the coordinates of the drops situated west and south of Tczew. Moreover, the Chief of Staff Chyliński selected at least ten drop fields between Bydgoszcz and Nakło – he brought them to Warsaw prior to the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising himself.

The intensification of the uprising plans drafted by the Main Headquarters of the Pomeranian District fell on July 1944, when the new Commander of the District – Major F. Trojanowski – arrived in Pomerania. In July–August 1944 he issued a number of orders defining the terms and conditions for executing military tasks. Detailed orders concerning the general uprising referred to towns and counties: Pomerelia, Chojnice, Tczew, Brodnica, Toruń and Włocławek. Military campaigns were planned in the so-called Combat Zones (OW)– sites where the military action was to be initiated. In Pomerania 34 such combat zones were planned. Unfortunately, the plans did not take into account the reality in Pomerania during the war. Thus, they were hard to implement. It was impossible to start fighting openly on a larger scale in towns and sensitive sites situated in Pomerania. What is more, frequent arrests carried out by the Gestapo complicated the campaign connected not only with the current conspiratorial activity, but also with the uprising prepa-

rations. In the autumn of 1944 the Chief of Staff – Major J. Chyliński adjusted the assumptions concerning the launch of the military to the conditions in Pomerania. The priority was to indemnify military objects, to intern the German security apparatus and to liberate political prisoners. The Gestapo and the Volksturm units were to be closely observed. The new assumption emphasised the importance of the liaison system and the Quartermaster Service. A major element was the quick flow of orders. In the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District several options for combat were drafted. The instructions also underlined the importance of acquiring a suitable quantity of weapons which were to be properly stored in the period prior to the outbreak of the uprising. It was stressed that every single item of weaponry was important. The order was issued to man all the military units.

In the period prior to the outbreak of the military campaign, the District of the Government Delegation for Poland intended to make it easier for officers and non-commissioned officers remaining in the civilian pillars to join the Home Army. The initiator of the close cooperation with the Home Army was the Head of the Security Department of the Delegation – Bolesław Lipski alias “Bartel”. The Head of the Branch of the Office for the District Delegation – Franciszek Rochowiak ordered that a register of officers and non-commissioned officers be made.

The uprising plans were closely connected with the Restoration of the Military Forces of the Country (OSZ) – the process of restoring the army. The uprising plans of the Home Army were divided into three basic periods of activity: the period of underground work for the preparation of the uprising, the period of open combat and the period “0” – the Restoration of the Military Forces of the Country (OSZ). The Pomeranian District was to restore Staff 4 of the Infantry Division in Toruń, 15 Infantry Division and 15 Regiment of Light Artillery in Bydgoszcz along with 16 Infantry Division in Grudziądz. During the first stage, the restoration of one infantry division was planned. Its nuclei were the Partisan Units (OP) marked with the numbers “101”, “102”, “103”, “104”, which operated in Bory Tucholskie. The units became part of the “Bory” Group commanded by Captain Alojzy Bruski alias “Grab”. The group was assigned subversion operations during the combat in Starogard, Świecie, Kościerzyna, Czersk, Tuchola, Chojnice. Later on, the group was to be prepared to undertake further military activities.

The “Alfa” Department of the Navy of the Main Headquarters of the Home Army, which was in touch with the Pomeranian District of the Home Army, was connected with the preparations for the uprising and the Restoration of the Military Forces of Poland. When the uprising broke out, “Alfa” was to take charge of all matters concerning maritime administration and operations. It played a leading role in everything connected with the sea and rivers throughout Poland. In “Organisational Report no. 2” of November 1942 sent to the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army it mentioned that the task of “Alfa” would be to make it easier for the allies and the Polish army to take over Gdańsk Pomerania. That is why the Staff of the Department of the Navy started to work on the operational-tactical study

of insurgent activities along the coastline. It was underlined that the tasks should be adjusted to the organisational and offensive feasibilities. The uprising plans and the Restoration of the Military Forces of the Navy were closely connected with the assumptions prepared by the Main Headquarters of ZWZ-AK, according to which Gdańsk Pomerania was to be conquered by the Polish and British landing troops.

The Western Corps set up by Gen. S. Rowecki in the spring of 1942 was to be used in the Restoration of the Military Forces. This formation, established in the General Government, was made up of people displaced from Greater Poland and Pomerania.

After 1942 an initiative to organise the Operational Group "East Prussia" designed to fight in East Prussia was launched. Its commander was Brigadier General Kazimierz Sawicki alias "Prut". He was ordered to examine East Prussia and Gdańsk to prepare to take over Gdańsk and East Prussia in administrative and military terms.

The plans were connected with the concepts of the economic restoration of the country and, in the case of Pomerania, with the restoration of the sea industry. Studies connected with the operation of sea harbours such as Königsberg, Elbląg, Gdańsk, Gdynia, Kołobrzeg, Szczecin were prepared. The administrative division of the regained Polish territories was prepared as was the list of administrative personnel for cities and smaller towns in Pomerania. One of the bodies responsible for this was the Department of the Navy ("Alfa") and the Sea Department of the Military Bureau for Industry and Trade, the Heads of the Military Offices of the Main Headquarters of the Department of Industry and trade of the Government Delegation for Poland.

The uprising plans were never realised, but they thought how to help people fighting in Warsaw. The Warsaw Uprising affected Pomerania. After the war the Commander of the District Colonel J. Pałubicki stated that the outbreak of the uprising had astonished the Staff of the Headquarters of the District. Some orders issued by the Headquarters of the District referred to the idea of the Warsaw Uprising. Supposedly, the outbreak of the uprising in Warsaw caused the Commander of the District to order his people to listen more extensively to the Polish Section of the BBC Radio – it was expected that the order to start a fight should be given in this way. It should also be noted that ammunition was stolen successively in Bydgoszcz, which was later to be transported to Warsaw. Nevertheless, the task exceeded the capabilities of the Garrison Bydgoszcz and higher levels; as a result, the weapons were delivered to partisan units in Bory Tucholskie.

However, Pomerania tried to help civilians transported from Warsaw to the Stutthof concentration camp. In several transits the Germans brought there almost 7000 people: men, women and children (including 40 paramedics and couriers from the "Baszta" regiment and the "Oaza" battalion of the Home Army). Some of them were later transported to sub-camps of Stutthof or to labour camps. A few Pomeranians took part in the fights – they were people who had been displaced to

Warsaw or had been forced to leave their homes in Pomerania for fear of repression.

The events on the Eastern front, the outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising and its defeat meant that the Headquarters of the District realised that the Soviet Army would enter Pomerania. The decision was to do one's best to protect the Pomeranian population against repression.



Andrzej Gąsiorowski

The activity of the military underground

From the very beginning of the occupation, the Polish underground engaged in military activity. This resulted from the inclination of the first resistance organisations to fight to regain their lost independence. In the long term, the Polish resistance movement planned a general uprising throughout the Polish state. For this reason, a special task-force was created which was not involved in ongoing resistance activity, but whose aim was to prepare for the military combat which would break out at the most favourable moment when the military power of the Third Reich was on the point of collapse. Ongoing military activity was determined by organisational, personnel and material constraints and its scope was adjusted on an ad hoc basis. The military resistance movement was most active in Central Poland – in the territory of the General Government. It was weaker in the western parts of Poland incorporated into the Reich (Pomerania, Greater Poland, Silesia and North Masovia) and in the Eastern lands occupied first by the USSR and subsequently taken over by the Third Reich in 1941. The basis of the military underground was the military task-force of the Polish Underground State – the Polish army created in hiding on 27 September 1939 named the Service for the Victory of Poland [Służba Zwycięstwu Polski], which relatively quickly transformed into the Union of Armed Struggle [Związek Walki Zbrojnej ZWZ], and in February 1942 into the Home Army [Armia Krajowa AK]. Following the order of the Commander-in-Chief General Władysław Sikorski all the military organisations set up in the occupied areas were to be subordinate to the Union of Armed Struggle – the Home Army [ZWZ AK] so that all military activity should fall under one command and the resistance structures could be better used both in ongoing projects and during the general uprising. During the consolidation, there appeared many serious obstacles of either a political or personal nature, which meant that not all the military organisations or task-forces with the Home Army were integrated successfully.

In Pomerania during the initial stage of the occupation it was the military resistance organisations based on the prewar underground structures in the rear areas that became active first. They had been created from 1930 onward by Branch 2 of Division II of the Main Staff of the Polish Army. The Pomeranian resistance networks in the rear areas were prepared to act in the territories occupied by the en-

emy. They had well trained personnel, numerous structures and secret warehouses to store equipment. The structures did not launch any action (apart from a few rare cases) in September 1939 since they were taken aback by the rapid evolvement of the situation. Thanks to this, they were not unmasked and could start operating. In Pomerania there existed quite complex military intelligence service structures which were not to operate until the military campaign had started. Prior to the war, to avoid the possible destruction of the resistance units, the rule was not to involve people who were connected with the army or were involved in anti-German activity within the network of the intelligence service or the resistance movement in the rear areas.

However, not everything could be predicted before the war. Pomerania was unlawfully incorporated into the Reich and the police border between the Reich District Gdansk-West Prussia and the General Government was established. In this way it was difficult to maintain steady contacts between Pomerania and Warsaw, which was the centre of the Polish resistance movement. The activity of the military underground in Pomerania was restricted by difficult conditions created by the German occupying forces as early as the beginning of the occupation. In Pomerania, no Polish institutions existed. Moreover, Poles in Pomerania could not move freely; the number of Germans in Pomerania grew systematically, which caused the fragmentation of the Polish community and the attempt to convert Pomeranian Poles into Germans. All this made it harder to develop Polish resistance structures in Pomerania and to embark on the various forms of underground activity which were possible in the General Government. Various structures of the Pomeranian resistance movement and individual members of the resistance organisations imposed additional restrictions on themselves. What counted most in Pomerania was responsibility and the desire to avoid retaliatory actions inflicted on the Polish community. This was understandable since Poles in Pomerania had been affected by mass repressions and persecutions as early as the beginning of the occupation – in the autumn of 1939. Many Poles were intimidated by the mass executions of many members of the Pomeranian intelligentsia secretly carried out in the Pomeranian forests.

The Germanisation policy conducted by the occupying forces in Pomerania meant that propaganda and information became the major focuses of the Pomeranian resistance movement. Yet, it must be stressed that the resistance propaganda was not as intense as in the General Government. In Pomerania, there was less underground press published, and access to such papers issued in the General Government (mainly in Warsaw) was limited.

In Pomerania the specificity of the local conditions determined how the military underground would proceed. These concerned mainly personnel issues. Pomerania was deprived of its prewar officers as the military units had left Pomerania quite early, while officers fighting in the northern part of Pomerania (in Gdynia) had been captured by the Germans. The number of Polish professional officers in

Pomerania was relatively low, much smaller than in Central Poland. As a result, the most important functions in the ZWZ AK and resistance organisations were held by junior reserve officers, or even reserve sub-officers, which must have adversely affected the quality of the military campaign. The Baltic coast and its harbours along with some major arms factories fostered the development of the intelligence service and the communication network. The incorporation of Pomerania and the District Gdansk – West Prussia (*Reichsgau Danzig–Westpreussen*) into the Reich allowed the area to be used as the base for campaigns undertaken in Germany since it was much easier to enter the Reich from Pomerania than from the General Government.

The following forms of combat were the most significant in Pomerania: intelligence, sabotage and resistance, guerrilla campaigns in the Tuchola Forest, and propaganda. Military trainings connected with the preparation for a general uprising were much more limited in Pomerania than in the General Government. Military training was carried out on an individual basis and included only basic information. Unlike in Central Poland, in Pomerania there were no secret schools for officer cadets and reserve sub-officers.

The intelligence activity

Of all these forms of combat, the intelligence service was quite well developed in Pomerania and was conducted to a various extent by almost all the resistance organisations. Despite many restrictions, the most important was the intelligence arm of the Service for the Victory of Poland – the Union of Armed Struggle – the Home Army [ZWZ AK], which boasted the most personnel and resources to be able to evaluate the usefulness of the material acquired by the intelligence service. It was also easier for them to transmit intelligence reports to the West. Many people, who before the war had been connected with Division II of the Main Staff of the Polish Army, became members of the intelligence structures.

At the beginning of the occupation – when the frameworks of the military resistance movement were created – the main activity was counterintelligence, the aim of which was to prevent German agents (both from the Gestapo and Abwehr) from entering the newly created resistance structures. Later the most important goal was to send information concerning the German army and arms industry to London. In the initial stage, the conditions for running the intelligence activity in Pomerania were incredibly tough, resulting mainly from a shortage of personnel. In Pomerania there were not enough experienced secret intelligence officers trained prior to the war. The intelligence networks of the SZP–ZWZ AK operating in Pomerania in the years 1940–1945 changed their organisational forms, scope of interest and activity. This was due to the fact that guidelines and tasks for the undercover intelligence units very often reflected the course of operational activities in various theatres of war and the needs of the Commander-in-Chief in London, who followed the guidelines of the Allies. Thus, the Pomeranian district of the

ZWZ AK was to carry out the same intelligence tasks as the remaining districts. Special undercover intelligence operations were conducted too. They concerned mainly the coast and the sea in general, which were in fact the focus of the extraterritorial networks of the Main Headquarters of the ZWZ AK.

Gdynia, where the largest base of Kreigsmarine Gdansk (an important institution of the war industry) was located, was not the only place to be infiltrated by the activity of the intelligence service. Pomerania was a springboard for the intelligence networks, which attempted to control the sea territories from Szczecin in the west to Königsberg and Piława in the east. Thus, it must be underlined that Gdansk Pomerania played a major role in the activity of the ZWZ AK intelligence service. The interest of the Allies in the sea issue and arms industry located in Pomerania were not the only reasons for this. The region of Gdynia and Gdansk was systematically infiltrated in connection with the plans to carry out there both an airborne operation and an amphibious landing of Polish troops from the West and to create there a base from which the liberation of the occupied Polish territories would begin.

That is why in Pomerania there were two types of networks conducting the secret service activity within the ZWZ AK: 1) the network of the intelligence service of the Pomeranian district of the ZSP-ZWZ AK (1939–1945); 2) the network of the offensive intelligence service of the Headquarters of the ZWZ AK under the cryptonyms “Stragan” (1941–1943) and “Lombard” (1943–1945).

At the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District of the ZWZ AK, Information-Intelligence Department III was set up as early as the beginning of 1940; it dealt with issues connected with the intelligence and counterintelligence service. The first head of the department was Lieutenant Franciszek Włodarczyk alias “Irena”, “Wojna”, “Majewski”, who was an experienced professional officer of Division II of the Main Staff of the Polish Army. During the years 1934–1937 he carried out counterintelligence work in the 63 infantry regiment in Toruń, while in the years 1938–1939 he executed special tasks in the Free City of Gdansk. Living in Toruń, from the beginning of the German occupation he was involved in organising the secret intelligence network throughout Pomerania – firstly in the “Grunwald” organisation and next in the Pomeranian district of the Service for the Victory of Poland. The heads of the district intelligence service working in all the lower organisational units (sub-districts, inspectorates, oblasts) and the branch of the intelligence service of the Military Service of Women (1943–1945) were subordinated to the head of the Information-Intelligence Department. In Pomerania, the district intelligence service had two main purposes. The first one was to provide information on the allocation of the main German forces (military, SS, the police) not only to the Headquarters of the ZWZ AK, but also to the Headquarters of the Western Region and the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District. This information was necessary to formulate their own plans and to take operational decisions (the closer the Eastern Front was, the more important the information). The second

range of duties concerned the systematic reconnaissance of the German military garrisons and the police forces located all over Pomerania, which was of utmost importance in preparation for the general uprising. The local network of the district intelligence, subordinated to local commanders, worked mainly on the ongoing needs of those organisational units. It carried out important tasks commissioned by the Headquarters of the Western Region of the ZWZ AK or the Headquarters of the ZWZ AK sporadically.

It must be underlined that although the significance of the secret intelligence was noticed, the intelligence network of the Pomeranian district of the ZWZ AK in the years 1940–1945 never managed to become so dense and efficient in acquiring and transmitting information as the intelligence service in the General Government. Despite this, the secret intelligence networks were the most extensive and most active structures of the ZWZ AK in Pomerania. For this reason, the task-force of the secret intelligence was particularly vulnerable to Gestapo exposure. The frequent rotations of personnel caused by mass arrests meant that almost all the officers of the headquarters of the districts, sub-districts and inspectorates were involved in secret intelligence. In March 1940 the leadership of the Information-Intelligence Department of the Headquarters of the Pomeranian District was transferred to Lieutenant of the Polish army Józef Gruss alias “Stanisław”, who had prior to the war been associated with Division II of the Main Staff of the Polish army and had acquired significant experience in intelligence and counterintelligence work. In 1935 he moved from the army to the State Police, where he was promoted to Captain. At the beginning of the occupation he was the officer of the secret intelligence and counterintelligence at the Headquarters of the ZWZ Warszawa-Miasto, where he set up an intelligence network of policemen. Having arrived in Pomerania he was one of the most active officers of the ZWZ AK. Gruss not only ran the intelligence service, but he also played a very important role in the Pomeranian branch of the ZWZ AK as the deputy of the head of staff. He remained active until his arrest by the Gestapo in Bydgoszcz on 7 May 1944. He invited numerous people to join the intelligence. Thanks to him the structures of the district intelligence network were set up in each place where the Germans had started arms production on a large scale or had built new armaments plants.

Many members of various Pomeranian structures of the ZWZ AK participated in the underground intelligence work in Pomerania. They were people who worked in institutions that could potentially be an important source of information although formally they did not belong to the secret intelligence task-force. In fact, all members of the ZWZ AK were obliged to systematically pass secret intelligence information obtained in their region to their superiors. In the regions of Gdynia and Gdansk there were many more intelligence cells than in the remaining areas. Throughout the whole period of the occupation the region was particularly infiltrated by many underground intelligence networks (of the district intelligence service, the Inspectorate Wybrzeże ZWZ AK and the extraterritorial networks of Di-

vision II of the Headquarters of the ZWZ AK). However, the most important centre was Gdynia, which had transformed into the largest German naval base on the Baltic sea immediately after it had been taken over by the Wehrmacht. In Gdynia, the Germans created the largest Kriegsmarine base on the Baltic sea, the significance of which grew systematically. It was there that the largest German ships (battleships and cruisers) along with submarines were stationed. Gdynia and Gdansk became important centres for training submarine crews. In Gdynia, the 22 and 27 Unterseebootsflottille were stationed, whilst in Gdansk the 24 and 25 Unterseebootsflottille were based. Furthermore, the shipyards of Gdynia and Gdansk not only dealt with the reparation of large vessels, but also with the production of submarines and the most up-to-date equipment. In Gdynia the Kriegsmarinearsenal was located, which produced equipment for ships. The significance of Gdynia was noticed at the beginning of the war, but it was quite difficult to set up underground intelligence cells there. Workers of the intelligence service were recruited from among members of the prewar intelligence networks including the maritime intelligence created in 1935 as part of Division II of the Main Staff of the Polish army.

Little is known about the first stage of the underground intelligence activity in Gdynia. What we know is that at the beginning of 1940, an independent section of the secret intelligence of the ZWZ was set up in Gdynia, which maintained direct communication with Warsaw. It was commanded by Captain Antoni Wisniewski vel Anton Wiens who before the war had conducted underground intelligence activity in Gdansk and the Reich. The fact that Colonel Stefan Rowecki alias "Grabcia", "Grot", who was the commander of the German occupation within the ZWZ, contacted Wisniewski himself in Warsaw shows how important Wisniewski's mission was. Wisniewski ran a tobacco shop in Gdynia on Swietojanska street and he supervised the work of his several prewar coworkers from Gdynia. After some time his group was incorporated into one of the networks of the offensive intelligence service under the cryptonym "Stragan", one of whose tasks was to acquire information from the Reich. The considerable extension of the structures of the ZWZ and then the Home Army [AK] in the years 1941–1942 created favourable conditions for the development of the district intelligence network of the ZWZ AK. The extension resulted from the fact that it was planned to carry out both an airborne operation and an amphibious landing of regular troops of the Polish army from Great Britain in the future. The region of Gdynia–Gdansk was infiltrated also in the context of the aforementioned plans. During the years 1941–1942 the Commander of the Sea Sub-district of the ZWZ AK was Jozef Olszewski alias "Andrzej". He attached much importance to the issues connected with the secret intelligence and was personally involved in the creation of the intelligence networks and transmitting information to Warsaw. Many members of this Sub-district of the ZWZ AK – employed in various institutions and military areas – were involved in the underground intelligence. On a daily basis they would pass on vital information concerning the functioning of the German naval base and har-

bour in Gdynia. They infiltrated not only military and police areas in Gdynia, but also adjacent areas where the airborne operation was to take place. Weekly reports were sent from the harbour of Gdynia (the movement of ships was observed) and from the Kriegsmarine base and shipyard in Gdynia. Those who played a major role in transmitting the secret information to Warsaw during the years 1941–1942 were scout-master Lucjan Cyłkowski alias “Lucek”, the commander of the scouting regiment in Gdynia and later the commander of the Gdynia regiment of the “Grey Ranks” [Szare Szeregi] and the head of the courier communication of the sub-district, along with scout-master Bernard Mysliwek alias “Konrad”, the commander of the Pomeranian standard of the “Grey Ranks”. The intelligence activity conducted in Gdynia by the Home Army was intense, the evidence of which was the fact that when in October 1942 the Gestapo arrested J. Olszewski, they were convinced that he was actually the head of a major English intelligence network.

It must be underlined that despite the fact that the plans for the airborne operation on the Gdansk Coast had been renounced, the area still remained attractive for the intelligence service mainly due to its arms industry. The commanders of the Sub-District North-West of the Home Army: Lieutenant Zygmunt Szatkowski alias “Wiesław”, Sub-Lieutenant Henryk Gruetzmacher alias “Marta” and Sub-Lieutenant Alfons Jarocki alias “Juhas” or “Antoni” were deeply involved in the underground intelligence. After some time, Reserve Sub-Lieutenant of the Polish Army Jan Belau alias “Mewa” or “Morski” began to play the main role in the organisation of the intelligence service in the sub-district. During the years 1941–1944, supposedly as an officer of the intelligence service of the Inspectorate Wybrzeże, he created an effective intelligence network. This mainly included the region of Gdynia and Gdansk, but in fact it obtained information from the Baltic region from Szczecin to Königsberg and Piława. Belau went to Szczecin in order to acquire some secret information. Members of his intelligence network were employed in two experimental arms factories set up in Gdynia: *Torpedowaffenplatz Gotenhafen-Hexengrund* (TWP) in Gdynia – Babie Doly and *Torpedoversuchsanstalt Oxhoft* (TVA)– in Gdynia-Oksywie, where in total about 2500 people were employed. About 200 experimental torpedoes were launched everyday from the naval bases and aircrafts taking off from the airport in Babie Doly built by the Germans. The intelligence network of Belau not only passed the data about the work of those research centres, but they also sent drawings of the area and the technical data of some torpedoes.

In the Sub-District South-Wests of the ZWZ-AK including the southern part of Pomerania, the intelligence activity of the district network was originally not particularly extensive, despite the fact that it was there that the first cells of the intelligence service had been set up. However, they limited themselves to passing information about the German military units stationed there as well as German transportation. Some time later some major centres for the arms industry fell under close observation. It was not until 1943 that the infiltration of the southern

part of Pomerania intensified, as a result of the systematically rising significance of the arms industry situated there. The intelligence cells in the external sub-districts (Szczecin, Königsberg) were the least developed, due to the organisational problems of the ZWZ AK in that territory. Namely, the structures of the ZWZ AK could be created among forced labourers since the territory had been inhabited by a only low percentage of Poles before the war. It rarely happened that permanent intelligence bases or observation points were established in those areas. While collecting the data accidental sources of information were used during sporadic visits in the territory. All opportunities to acquire information were welcome. For example, members of the "Pomeranian Griffin", mostly forced labourers, helped the intelligence service of the Home Army to collect data from the area of Königsberg. They worked under the command of Reserve Lieutenant of the Polish Army A. Arendt alias "Konar", who was the chief commander of the "Griffin" and maintained contacts with Franciszek Bendig alias "Ksawery" from the district intelligence service of the Home Army. The information from the region of Pilawa was obtained thanks to members of the intelligence network from the Military Organisation Lizard Union.

It was not until mid-1941 that the intelligence service of the ZWZ was reorganised. Exterritorial networks of the offensive intelligence service were set up as part of Division II of the Headquarters of the ZWZ; they were branches of the Warsaw centre and were considered to be crucial for intelligence network. In Pomerania, exterritorial networks of the intelligence of the ZWZ AK were also set up and subjected directly to Division II of the Headquarters of the ZWZ AK. Tasks assigned to the networks did not concern the whole of Pomerania, but only selected industrial or military sites such as naval bases (in the coast). That is why exterritorial networks were established in Pomerania directly by the headquarters in Warsaw, where the inspector of the network was based, and assigned to a particular site where an agent operated. Through the exterritorial networks it was possible to reach territories far away in the Reich and in other countries occupied by the Germans thanks to the large number of Polish workers sent there for forced labour. Poles who had been sent by the Germans to work in factories in the Reich were recruited into the intelligence network. Members of the intelligence network of the ZWZ AK from Pomerania infiltrated the Reich and carried out general and detailed intelligence tasks. They mainly involved:

- 1) military and economic issues along with effects of Allied bombing,
- 2) the infiltration of Baltic harbours (the German one and those occupied by the Germans) and harbours of the North Sea, with particular emphasis on shipyards and German naval bases.

Pomerania was infiltrated systematically by two exterritorial networks of the offensive intelligence of the Headquarters of the ZWZ AK. Firstly, the structures of the intelligence network under the cryptonym "Stragan" were established there;

they operated during the years 1941–1942. The Network was unmasked in mid-1942 and broken up by the Gestapo by the end of 1942.

According to the preserved sources, reports from Pomerania in the years 1941–1942 were sent by the intelligence networks as part of “Stragan”; they were marked with the letters: A, C, D, F, G, K, P and the so-called J and “Morze” branches. Four of them were particularly extensive:

1) “A” – set up by Stefan Kamiński from Tczew; dealing with the railway transport;

2) “C” – dealing with the collection of data referring to the sea (Kriegsmarine bases, harbours and shipyards). This was supervised by Commander Sub-Lieutenant Józef Woznicki alias “Walek”, the head of the sea intelligence service within the “Alfa” organisation, later the officer of the Naval Department of the Headquarters of the Home Army and an expert in maritime issues. Scout-master Bernard Myśliwek alias “Konrad” was responsible for the communication with Warsaw. Scouts from sailing teams played a major role in this network; they were employed to work for the intelligence service by Ludwik Walasik, a prewar boatswain in the scouting sailing ship “Zawisza Czarny” who, having been sworn in in Warsaw, reached the Baltic coast and ran his own intelligence network there.

3) “F” – run by Lieutenant Witold Strusiewicz alias “Witold” directly from Warsaw; he contacted Pomerania through Jan Szamreto and the liaison Leon Grabowski alias “F-1” – both from Starogard.

4) The “Mare” branch – created by members of the Military Organisation Lizard Union, which in Pomerania cooperated closely with the intelligence of the ZWZ AK. It concentrated on the maritime issue, and its structures were the most developed in Gdynia and Gdansk.

The work of all extraterritorial networks of the ZWZ AK was inspired not only by Division II of the Headquarters of the Home Army, but mostly by the intelligence service of the Allies – mainly the British. In this way, they concentrated exclusively on sites and issues which at any given moment were the most significant for the Allies. It made the work of the intelligence service more effective, for the intelligence staff were efficiently employed and the information was passed quickly to the Headquarters of the Home Army and to London. Intelligence tasks varied. Questions and concrete tasks were sent from London, while members of the offensive intelligence network were expected to provide the required data.

In 1942 the focus of attention were German liners renovated in Gdynia (“Gneisenau”, “Scharnhorst”, “Prinz Eugen”) and the aircraft carrier (“Graf Zeppelin”) constructed in the shipyard in Gdynia. The Allies expected to receive information about the production capacity of the German shipping industry (from Szczecin to Königsberg) and arms industry (in connection with the production being shifted from Germany to Pomerania after the Allied bombings). The intelligence infiltration was the strongest and most effective in Gdynia, from where reports concerning the functioning of the harbour and the Kriegsmarine base were

sent systematically. The significance of the data obtained in Gdynia was so great that it was difficult to pass the information quickly enough so that it reached Western Europe without having lost its validity. Normally liaisons from Warsaw visited Gdynia once every other week and collected the reports from agents of the intelligence service in Gdynia. Thus, some of the information (particularly concerning the movement of ships) which was passed to Warsaw and later to London was no longer valid. There were attempts to improve the communication system of the intelligence service; for example, there was a plan to set up a radio station in Gdynia, which would function exclusively for the intelligence service. In August 1943 the British intelligence sent the following evaluation to the Poles: "Reports from Gdynia and northern German harbours east of Kiel are good and prove that the organization has been improved; information from Gdynia are particularly valuable. The admiralty have often underlined that they hope the radio communication with the harbour be established soon" [*Polskie Siły Zbrojne w drugiej wojnie światowej*, Londyn 1957, vol. 3]. However, many attempts to realise this plan fell through. In February 1944 the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army General Bor-Komorowski informed London that it was not possible to launch the radio station in Gdynia. According to the documents, it was not possible in the future either. Thus, reports were transported twice or three times a month by couriers to Warsaw, from where they were sent via radio to London. Some of the more important reports were sent to the West via Sweden thanks to the intermediary of the priest for Swedish seamen in Gdynia or captains of Swedish ships docked in Gdynia and Gdansk who had been involved in the cooperation with the British intelligence service. The only information sent by official post from Gdynia to Warsaw was the information concerning the arrival or departure of Kriegsmarine liners to or from Gdynia. The text written on the a postcard sent from Gdynia was not significant since each liner had been given a male name with which the sender undersigned the text; in the date written on the postcard the month written in a Roman numeral means the departure of a given liner from Gdynia, while the month recorded with an Arabic numeral – the arrival in Gdynia. In this way within two days the information could reach London via the radio station in Warsaw.

Reports from Pomerania concerning the maritime problem were passed to the Research Bureau of Division II of the Headquarters of the Home Army in Warsaw. They were analysed there by two experts in maritime issues: Sea Commander Sub-Lieutenant Józef Woźnicki alias "Walek" specialising in the navy and Reserve Sub-Lieutenant of the navy Engineer Aleksander Potyrała alias "Tarnowski", "Christian" – an expert in shipbuilding. Let us quote the evaluation of the work of the intelligence network in the field of the shipbuilding industry made by A. Potyrała after the war: "The intelligence network hardly ever remained inert after any request we made to work on a given problem, to provide some data or other, to obtain a plan or drawing of something or other. They provided us with a lot of interesting material, sometimes of great importance and sealed with the

words: "Geheim" (secret), "Streng Geheim" (top secret). Myself and my colleague Woznicki never accompanied them during their work, so I cannot say who the people who put their lives at risk to obtain the requested information were. They might have been Polish cleaners, technicians – Poles employed in the production departments of the German shipyards, workers – Poles who managed to steal engineering drawings despite the tight control of the Werkschutz (the factory wardens) and to deliver them to the network of the Polish intelligence service. How they managed to smuggle those documents and go through the repeated and suspicious controls in the shipyards, arsenals and harbours. I don't know either how many of them were shot for this and I am afraid I will never get to know. There must have been victims, but their lives were not lost in vain." [A. Potyrała, Wspomnienia dotyczące spraw Marynarki Wojennej, maszyny w Archiwum Muzeum Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni, pp. 192–193].

Human losses in the intelligence task-force in Pomerania were in fact significant. This resulted from the fact that the Gestapo and Abwehrra concentrated their efforts on breaking up the intelligence networks in Pomerania. The office of the Gestapo in Gdansk was particularly active in this field. Unmasked and arrested members of various intelligence networks underwent brutal interrogations and prolonged investigations in the premises of the Gestapo in Gdansk and Gdynia; they were often tortured to force them to reveal secret information. After the investigation finished, they were imprisoned or sent to concentration camps. Those who were most involved in the intelligence work died during the interrogation or were tried in German courts. Some members of the Pomeranian intelligence networks were brought to the War Court of the Reich (*Reich kriegs gericht*) in Berlin, where they were sentenced to death. Executions took place in large prisons (they were hanged or beheaded). From among the Pomeranian networks of "Stragan" the "Mare" branch was the first to be disbanded by the Gestapo at the beginning of 1942. Next, the Gestapo eliminated the network of sea intelligence referred to as "C", which was connected with the "Grey Ranks" in Gdynia. The first arrests of its members took place in the autumn of 1942. The scoutmaster Bernard Mysliwec alias "Konrad" committed suicide in the building of the Gestapo immediately after he had been arrested on 30 September 1942. Before the war he had been a commander of sailing teams for the Pomeranian scouting standard, and it was then that he became involved in the sea intelligence service organised from 1935. From the autumn of 1939 he was engaged not only in obtaining information but he also planned the communication route between Gdynia and Warsaw. He repeatedly transported reports from Pomerelia and met Commander Woznicki in Warsaw and Commander Konstanty Jacynicz from the Department of the Navy of the Headquarters of the Home Army. Another scoutmaster, Lucjan Cyłkowski, was also arrested. He was the commander of the Gdynia regiment of the "Grey Ranks", who maintained contacts with the network of sea intelligence within which scouts from sailing teams had been incorporated. The Gestapo found the drafts of the

battleship "Gneisenau" in a secret hiding place in the shoemaker's shop where Cylkowski worked. The drafts had been taken out of the shipyard by a draftsman named Zygmunt Garbe, the commander of one of the companies of the "Grey Ranks" in Gdynia. He was also arrested along with other members of the network including the organiser of network "C" in Pomerelia Ludwik Walasik, who before the war had been a boatswain on the scouting yacht "Zawisza Czarny"; he recruited Gdynia's scouts from sea teams for the intelligence network. After the end of the investigation on 1 December 1942, Garbe and Walasik were sent to the concentration camp in Stutthof. In March and May 1943 the Gestapo arrested more members of the "C" network, who after the investigation were also sent to Stutthof. In August 1943 the remaining members of the same network were detained; they were also destined for Stutthof. In the Museum of Stutthof there is a letter from the Main Security Office of the Reich in Berlin to the Gestapo in Gdansk, a fragment of which mentions that two prisoners – members of the Polish resistance movement – should be treated according to a special procedure (*sonder Behandlung*), for they had conducted a particularly daring piece of intelligence work. The letter mentions that Zygmunt Garbe stole plans for the redecorated battleship "Gneisenau", whilst Teofil Kur eloped with the mining plans for the Bay of Gdansk in the Gdynia region. The former was a member of the Grey Ranks in Gdynia, while the latter was a member of the intelligence network of the Home Army [AK]. In February 1943 the Gestapo smashed the "F" network, whose arrested members were packed off to Stutthof after an investigation conducted in Gdansk by the Gestapo. In August 1943 the Gestapo liquidated the "Wybrzeże" group which was part of "Stragan", whose members from Pomerania were placed in the Gestapo's investigative camp in Inowrocław. Next, they were sent to concentration camps (mainly Mauthausen-Gusen), where several of them died.

The destruction of the "Stragan" network meant that the importance of the new network of the offensive intelligence of the Headquarters of the Home Army [KG AK] under the codename "Lombard" grew. From the beginning of 1943 it was organised by intelligence officers secretly parachuted into occupied Poland as the Silent Unseen [Polish: Cichociemni]. The remaining members of the Stragan group and new intelligence workers were incorporated into the Silent Unseen. Moreover, in 1943 there was a change in the intelligence priorities, but the tasks continued to concern the shipping industry. In the instruction sent to Poland the great significance of sea intelligence service was emphasised: "The admiralty of the Allies still find it essential to maintain the permanent observation network on the coast from Riga to Hamburg, with particular attention given to Klaipėda, Königsberg, Pilawa, Elbląg, Gdansk, Gdynia, Swinemünde, Rostock and Rügen. Indicate in which harbours you have already established observation points and where it is possible to establish them" [B. Chrzanowski, A. Gąsiorowski *Wydział Marynarki Wojennej „Alfa” Komendy Głównej Armii Krajowej*, Toruń 2001, s. 175]. From mid-1943 the focus of interest became the production of a new type of submarines

and the appropriate engines for them. This was connected with the sea war started by the Kriegsmarine, which was to be conducted mainly by submarines. In retrospect, from Gdansk and Gdynia in 1944 there was a great deal of exact information concerning not only the capacity to produce new submarines, but also about the reconstruction of submarines, arming the submarines and installing new equipment. On the basis of the intelligence reports from Pomerania in Branch II KG AK at the end of 1943 a study was written entitled "Capacity for the reconstruction of the shipping industry and auxiliary industry", the aim of which was to prepare solutions in the post-war situation.

The permanent observation was extended to the aviation industry, the motor industry and the railway industry. Much significance was attached to the information regarding airports and aviation plants in Rumia, Gdynia, Malbork, Grudziądz and Tczew. In the years 1943–1944 the infiltration of the southern part of Pomerania increased – mainly in the regions of Bydgoszcz, Toruń, Grudziądz. This resulted from the increasing significance of the arms industry. The territories were examined by both the networks of the offensive intelligence of KG AK ("Lombard") and the intelligence of the Pomeranian district of the Home Army [AK]. This task was easier thanks to the fact that many members of the Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz and Toruń inspectorates worked in the arms plants situated there. In the region of Bydgoszcz information was collected mainly from Metalfabrik, Fabryka Elektrotechniczna, Maschinenfabrik and Łęgowo.

During the years 1943–1944 the information concerning the German missile arms grew in significance ("V"-1, "V"-2). The intelligence service of AK in Pomerania was highly successful in this field. The first reports about the experimental centre in Peenemünde in the island of Usedom were sent through Bydgoszcz to Branch II of KG AK in Warsaw – supposedly in April 1943. Since the data from the reports was confirmed by aerial photographs taken by the Allies, the Pomeranian intelligence networks were ordered to pass any information about Peenemünde. Both the Pomeranian cells of the "Lombard" network of KG AK and the intelligence service of the Pomeranian District of AK commanded by Captain J. Gruss alias "Stanisław" collected information concerning German missiles. The campaign was coordinated under the codename "Błyskawica" [English: lightning]. In November 1943 and February – March 1944 from the Pomerania district of AK some vital data concerning the "V" missiles and drafts were sent. Of crucial significance was the list of plants producing parts for missiles in Pomerania (Grudziądz), in the Reich and in Silesia. The destruction of the district intelligence network made it impossible to continue further work in this field. In 1944 the focus of the intelligence service were rocket launchers situated in Pomerania. Reserve Sub-Lieutenant J. Belau from Gdynia together with a group of his co-workers observed two rocket launchers in the region of Leba – near the quicksand and the canal. The rocket launchers located in forests, in the region of Wierzchucin–Sarnówek– Lis-

iny– Suchom, were originally observed by members of the offensive intelligence network from Gdynia and next by partisans from the AK group of “Cisy-100”.

In 1944 the intelligence service of the Pomeranian AK district suffered the greatest losses. Several waves of arrests took place in Pomerania at that time, during which the Gestapo destroyed the intelligence structure of AK. At the end of 1944 Robert Burczyk, alias “Kaszuba”, the head of the intelligence service of the Grudziądz Inspectorate of AK was arrested, as were several of his co-workers. On 7 May 1944 Captain J. Gruss alias “Stanisław” (from 1940 – the head of the intelligence service of the Pomeranian AK district) was arrested in Bydgoszcz. He was transported to the Gestapo in Łódź, where he was interrogated until January 1945 in connection with his personal involvement in the disclosure of the “V” weapon. In August 1944 in Bydgoszcz Franciszek Bendig alias “Ksawery”, who had taken over the position of Gruss, was arrested. In Tczew the Gestapo arrested Reserve Lieutenant of the Polish Army Engineer Witold Wojciechowski alias “Mewa”, who was involved in the work of the intelligence service in the north of Pomerania. He was murdered during the interrogation by the Gestapo in Gdańsk. However, the major arrests in the network of the intelligence of the Pomeranian district took place at the end of August 1944 in Gdynia, where Sub-Lieutenant Belau and several of his co-workers were detained. After the investigation they were sent to Stutthof. They were shot in September 1944 in the public revenge execution in Ocypl administered after the assassination of the head of the Gestapo in Tczew Adolf Leister. In this way, in August 1944 the Gestapo managed to destroy almost completely the administration of the network of the intelligence of the Pomeranian AK district. As a result, in the second half of 1944 Reserve Captain of the Polish Army Bronisław Pietkiewicz alias “Wiktor”, at that time the commander of the South-Eastern Sub-district of AK, succeeded in reconstructing a new intelligence network, which was most active in the Toruń Inspectorate. The priorities changed. At the end of 1944, intelligence activities in the field of industry were given up. As the eastern front moved westward and an increasing number of Wehrmacht units arrived in Pomerania, the intelligence service concentrated on collecting information about German military units and military transports, plans for the defence of individual towns and objects which were the targets of a German attack. It was in Toruń, Inowrocław, Nieszawa and Lipno that reconnaissance on the German army was the most successful. The intelligence service of AK in the north of Pomerania worked much less efficiently. In this way, in the final period of the occupation the burden of the intelligence work of AK moved from the north to the south of Pomerania, where attempts to reconstruct the intelligence structures were undertaken.

Throughout the whole period of the occupation the intelligence service of the ZWZ-AK in Pomerania took advantage of the information acquired by members of various underground organisations. While on the subject of the intelligence activity conducted in Pomerania by ZWZ-AK, one should recall the information collected by other underground organisations. The intelligence service of the Po-

meranian district of ZWZ-AK acquired mainly data concerning the ongoing operations of those organisations. Collecting information about other organisations intensified when AK aimed at merging all the organisations. To provide maximum security it was vital to screen people who held major positions in the organisations lest there be agents of the Gestapo lurking among them. Moreover, it was important to verify the size and the capabilities of these organisations, which frequently provided exaggerated data. It was not so common to incorporate members of other organisations to conduct observations of objects whose importance was fundamental for the district intelligence service. Different factors were taken into account in the work of the offensive intelligence of the Headquarters of the Union of Armed Struggle of the Home Army [KG ZWZ-AK] due to security reasons. The main intelligence task-force carried out ongoing operations, which made it more vulnerable to exposure. That is why, the intention was to secure other structures of ZWZ-AK from arrests (particularly those prepared for the general uprising). The Pomeranian AK district also suffered a shortage of personnel. Not only individual members of other organisations, but whole teams of people were incorporated into the network of the offensive intelligence of KG AK. In the case of pan-Poland organisations, intelligence exchange took place in Warsaw between the Headquarters of ZWZ-AK and the heads of the military or underground organisations – particularly their military task-forces.

In Pomerania the ZWZ-AK cooperated with the Pomeranian district of the Military Organisation Lizard Union [Organizacja Wojskowa Związek Jaszczurczy] (1941–1942) and the Pomeranian district of the organisation “Sword and Plough” [“Miecz i Plug”] (1943–1944) – organisations which had not only extended structures, but also significant intelligence capabilities. That is why, it is worth discussing the problem as it seems that at least some members of the management of the territorial structures of both organisations in Pomerania had had connections with the military intelligence service before the war. The cells of the Military Organisation Lizard Union [OW ZJ] in Pomerania created in 1940 in Pomerania mainly focused on the intelligence activity. OW ZJ quickly managed to extend its structures in Pomerania and set up an effective communication with Warsaw. The intelligence exchange between OW ZJ and ZWZ-AK was established centrally in Warsaw and concerned mainly the military intelligence in the western territories of Poland and in Germany. Originally, OW ZJ only transmitted intelligence information to Warsaw. Monika Dymśka (arrested on 23 August 1942, executed on 25 June 1943 in Plötzensee) and Sub-Lieutenant Arnold Nierzwicki alias “Krzysztof” were responsible for transmitting the information. It is known that both of them had taken part in the pre-war preparations conducted by General Tokarzewski, who at that time was the commander of the District of Corps VIII in Toruń. In fact, almost all members of Pomeranian cells of OW ZJ set up in Gdynia, Gdańsk, Brodnica, Bydgoszcz, Toruń, Wejherowo, Jabłonowo conducted their intelligence activities according to instructions from ZWZ-AK. This intelligence cooperation was so

strong that the Gestapolater treated the Pomeranian intelligence network of OW ZJ as the network of ZWZ-AK. Gdynia played the major role in the intelligence activity of OW ZJ. The intelligence work was inspired by Andrzej Eliaszewicz alias "Ala", who ran the local branch of OW ZJ (prior to the war Eliaszewicz had had connections with Commander Jacynicz, one of the creators of the maritime intelligence network), along with Stefan Hensel alias "Gustaw II". Relatively quickly, they established in Gdynia an effective intelligence network, recruiting graduates of the Maritime College and people working in various maritime institutions. Such people had the necessary knowledge to allow them to acquire a great deal of valuable data from the Gdynia harbour, the Gdansk harbour and the Kriegsmarine base in Gdynia. They also made in Gdynia a springboard for couriers from Warsaw who ran intelligence missions into Germany.

Probably from mid-1941 the intelligence cooperation between ZWZ and OW ZJ took on a slightly different character. ZWZ-AK was represented in Warsaw by Mieczysław Rutkowski – the head of the Section "Zachod" of the offensive intelligence network of KG ZWZ-AK referred to by the codename "Stragan"; he maintained contacts with the representatives of OW ZJ such as Stanisław Jeute alias "Stach Zachodni – the boss of the "Z" Branch of the intelligence of OW ZJ and Mieczysław Dukalski alias "Mietek", the commander of the Pomeranian district of OW ZJ. Reports from Pomerania went to S. Jeute, who passed them on to II Department of KG ZWZ-AK. In 1941 the intelligence cooperation intensified. Most members of the intelligence of OW ZJ in Pomerania were incorporated directly into the basic network of the offensive intelligence of KG ZWZ "Stragan". The intelligence unit of ZJ in Brodnica was especially active – its activity was based on pre-war scouts from the gymnasium school. They were subjected to the so-called "Mare" branch, which was part of the intelligence group "Wybrzeże". Kazimierz Wrzosek and Tadeusz Pudcelko played a major role in inspiring their intelligence work. Members of OW ZJ from Pomerania became part of the intelligence group "Wybrzeże" of ZWZ-AK, whose network "a" was set up by Stefan Kamiński alias "Zygmunt" from Tczew. The "Mare" branch was outstandingly active. The reports from this intelligence network reveal the professional preparation of its members in the maritime issue. For example, the report of 17 September 1941 included information acquired from office workers employed in Gdynia in Festungskommandatur and Standortverwaltung. The report describes in detail how the Gdynia harbour was artificially fogged; it also discusses the movement of ships in the Kriegsmarine base and includes the photo of the plan of the anti-aircraft defence of Gdynia. In the subsequent report of 27 September 1941 more extensive data about the Kriegsmarine base in Gdynia were included. On the basis of the information acquired from the people employed in German institutions in Gdynia, it was established that in Oksywie Kommando II Unterseeboot Lehr Division was situated and the Torpedoversuchsanstalt (TVA) was set up, where the delegation of the Italian navy stayed while they discussed the details of the Italian torpedo trials. The

report also includes precise information from the harbour in Königsberg and the Gdansk shipyard Danziger Werft. The last preserved report of the "Mare" branch came from the period between December 1941 and January 1942. It described the movement of ships in the Gdynia harbour and the increasing number of submarines. The report also included an exact specification of the equipment of the liner "Admiral Hipper" along with the devices installed in it. Moreover, the report mentioned acts of sabotage carried out on the ships "Luzon" and "Hamburg" docked in Gdynia. As a result of the exposure of the "Z" branch of the intelligence of OW ZJ in the first months of 1942 about ninety people were arrested. In April 1942 the sites of OW ZJ in Gdynia and Bydgoszcz were exposed, whilst in June and July 1942 the network of Sub-Lieutenant Klemens Wicki from Gdynia was liquidated (he cooperated with OW ZJ and was executed in Halle in September 1943). In December 1942 and January 1943 the Gestapo officers liquidated the cells of ZJ all over Pomerania. Some of its members who were particularly engaged in the intelligence work were tried by the Military Court of the Reich. Stanislaw Jeute, Stefan Hensel, Jan Tomanek alias "Günter", Czeslaw Kalek alias "Maly", Zenon Narojek alias "Zenon Nawrocki" and Marian Sauer were executed, while the remaining members who had been detained were sent to various concentration camps.

The organisation "Sword and Plough" ["Miecz i Plug"] was the second pan-Poland organisation in Pomerania which did not start a close intelligence cooperation with AK until the years 1943–1944. Reports from Pomerania were transmitted by couriers in the contact point in Warsaw situated in Plac Grzybowski above a shop run by Bernard Kaczmarek alias "Jur", "Wrzos". Particularly valuable was the information acquired in the spring of 1943 about the German experimental missile centre ("V") in Peenemünde in the island of Usedom. The information was transmitted to the commander of the Pomeranian district of the "Sword and Plough" ["Miecz i Plug"] Augustyn Träger in April 1943 by his son Roman Träger (from 1942 a member of the "Sword and Plough"), who was temporarily posted in Usedom as a Wehrmacht soldier. A. Träger collected the information in person in Warsaw, from where it was sent to Branch II of KG AK. As the case was of extreme importance, it was dealt with by Lieutenant Stefan Ignaszak alias "Nordyk", the "Silent Unseen" and the deputy of the head of the offensive intelligence of KG AK (under the codename "Lombard") and the inspector of several intelligence networks of AK. He maintained intelligence contacts with members of the "Sword and Plough" from May 1943 and incorporated some members of the Pomeranian district of the "Sword and Plough" into the offensive intelligence service of KG AK. After they had been sworn in as part of AK, they became members of the intelligence group "Baltyk" headed by B. Kaczmarek. The majority of the members of the Pomeranian district of the "Sword and Plough" became part of the intelligence sub-group run by A. Träger "Baltyk-303". In the summer of 1944 a few members of the network were arrested as a result of the destruction of the structures of the

“Sword and Plough” in Pomerania. A. Träger managed to leave Bydgoszcz and had to remain in hiding until the end of the war.

Members of the “Sword and Plough” from Pomerania along with members of AK were incorporated into one of the networks of the offensive intelligence of KG AK “Lombard” referred to as “Grupa Pomorska” [English: the Pomeranian group] or “P” which was subordinated to Lieutenant S. Ignaszak. The network was administered by Alojzy Jedryczka alias “Pomorski” from Bydgoszcz – a member of the “Sword and Plough”. The main task of the group was to examine the plant of synthetic fuel in Police and to observe the Baltic harbours (Szczecin, Gdansk, Gdynia) along with the region of Bydgoszcz (including łęgnowow). The Gestapo destroyed the group in April 1944 (A. Jędrzycka, A. Sobolewski and L. Sowinski were beheaded on 20 April 1945 in Brandenburg).

The next organisation which was used by the intelligence service of AK was the Secret Military Organisation “Gryf Pomorski” operating in the north of Pomerania, mainly in Kashubia. It has not been possible so far to acquire complete information about the intelligence activity of “Gryf” and its cooperation with the intelligence service of AK. Our knowledge of this area is scant. What we know is that Józef Dambek alias “Jur”, who ran “Gryf Pomorski” was engaged in the intelligence activity. Upon the order issued by Józef Dambek and the chief commander Reserve Lieutenant Grzegorz Wojewski, in the second half of 1942 Józef Klawikowski, the county commander of TOW “Gryf Pomorski” in Tczew sent his several workers employed at the railway junction in Tczew to be at the disposal of E. Czarnowski from “Stragan”. The intelligence exchange between AK and TOW “Gryf Pomorski” took place in Gdynia in the years 1943–1944. It was there that Reserve Lieutenant A. Arendt alias “Konar”, the chief commander of TOW “Gryf Pomorski”, held meetings with a worker of the district intelligence of AK – F. Bendig alias “Ksawery”. He provided the intelligence network of the Pomeranian AK district with some members of “Gryf” who constituted a precious source of information thanks to being employed in such important towns as Königsberg and Pilawa.

In the final stage of the occupation the intelligence of AK focused mainly on how to operate in the new reality after Pomerania had been taken over by the Russian army. In 1945 Lieutenant S. Ignaszak alias “Pegaz” established in Bydgoszcz a branch of the intelligence of the Representation of the Armed Forces under the codename “Karo”. He incorporated there some of his co-workers from the “Sword and Plough”. For the sake of self-defence the emphasis was originally focused on counter-intelligence issues. Former members of the inspectorates of AK of Bydgoszcz, Grudziądz, Toruń and the Wybrzeże Inspectorate infiltrated communist bodies such as the Civic Militia and the Security Bureau.

Sabotage and subversion

In Pomerania mainly economic sabotage was carried out. Subversive acts took place rarely. Originally, the scope of the sabotage was extremely limited, but its im-

portance grew with time, determined by many factors the most important of which were: the organisational condition of the Pomeranian underground, the changing guidelines for actions and the military situation of Germany. Within ZWZ-AK in Pomerania – as in other parts of occupied Poland – long-term preparations for sabotage campaigns were launched. Firstly, it was to embrace all the major arms plants, propellor factories and warehouses, railway transports and the food industry working for the benefit of the German army. The guidelines for the acts of sabotage of 1940 stated that: “The activities cannot [...] be the sole burden of members of ZWZ. It is desirable that they be assisted by professional organisations represented by railwaymen, workers and the personnel of a given institution. They should bear the signs of casualness not to expose the population to repression; they should encumber only Germans making them doubt in their organisational effectiveness and security” [*AK w dokumentach*, t. I, s. 181].

At the beginning of the occupation the organisation of ZWZ in Pomerania had very optimistic prospects. It seemed that it would allow the undertaking of more extensive sabotage and subversive campaigns since at its core were the members of the pre-war subversion networks who had been trained to carry out acts of sabotage or subversion. Colonel Rowecki, at that time the Commander of the German Occupation of ZWZ, ordered that commanders of the ZWZ districts presented the preliminary plan of subversion in their districts as the predicted date of launching military campaigns was set for 15 May 1940. However, it was not feasible to execute the order in Pomerania. At that time Major Ratajczak – acting commander of the Pomeranian district of ZWZ – started to set up the structures of ZWZ in Pomerania. Apart from this, the military situation in Europe changed quickly as France had been defeated. This made KG ZWZ concentrate on a long-term campaign, which also affected their attitude to the question of sabotage. In July 1940 General Sosnkowski ordered to partly give up not only subversion, but also sabotage. In November 1940 General Sikorski prohibited carrying out sabotage and subversion in the General Government and in the territories incorporated into the Reich (including Pomerania). General Sosnkowski suggested that preparations to conduct acts of subversion on a large scale towards Germany and Russia be launched. Their aim was to overpower the authorities of the occupying forces and to destroy their means of communication (mainly railway). Within ZWZ at a central level, the work was to be executed by the Związek Odwetu [English: the Association of Retaliation] – (ZO) – set up in April 1940. Its departments were quickly established in all the headquarters of the ZWZ districts in the General Government. As part of the headquarters of the Pomeranian district the Związek Odwetu (ZO) was set up. It was run by Reserve Lieutenant of the Polish army Engineer Kazimierz Paszkowski alias “Kopernik”. Owing to the lack of documents from the years 1941–1942, it is impossible to reconstruct the manner in which ZO operated in Pomerania since Paszkowski was arrested in the summer of 1942 and died in the Stutthof concentration camp. According to postwar accounts, acts of sabo-

tage were frequently carried out by members of the intelligence network employed in important industrial institutions, as a result of organisational and personnel problems in the Pomeranian district of ZWZ-AK.

The difficulties mentioned above and limitations in the resistance campaigns of the Pomerania district of ZWZ meant that in the years 1940–1942 the major acts of sabotage were conducted in Pomerania not by members of ZWZ, but by members of the regional resistance organisation of the Polish Army of Uprising [Polska Armia Powstania – PAP], whose headquarters and structures were mainly located in Toruń. In the night of 12–13 May 1941 members of the Polish Army of Uprising set fire to a mill in Lubicz, while in the night of 14–15 May 1941 they burnt some major Rychter mills in Toruń. The Gestapo retaliated by arresting workers of the mills and about 80 Poles from Toruń. Several of them were sent to Stutthof, where they soon died. The most famous acts of subversion in Pomerania in 1942 were executed by members of PAP. On 9 June 1942 a fast train from Berlin to Königsberg was derailed near Zblewo. After the war this event was sometimes represented as an attempt to attack Hitler's train, although this had been rejected by many historians. It was not until quite recently that the information was confirmed as correct, since in the archives of the British intelligence a document was found which included the description of this even titled *The attempt to attack Hitler's train in Czarna Woda in Pomerania*. According to the document, the perpetrators used special equipment and placed explosive charge under the tracks, detonated by a remotely operated radio signal. Supposedly, the British intelligence had furnished the members of PAP with such equipment. On 21 June 1942, not far from this initial campaign, the members of PAP derailed another German military transport. However, disruption in communication and material losses were insignificant, as was the toll of victims. Both attacks had fundamental significance in terms of propaganda. Their aim was to show that Germans could not feel safe even in territories under their yoke such as Pomerania. At the same time in Pomerania an intensive Germanisation process was underway; as a result, many Poles from Pomerania were forced to sign the German People's List (*Deutsche Volksliste*). Both events were even commented on in the Swedish press. The authorities of the occupying forces offered a significant reward for the identity of the perpetrators – notices about the reward were hung in many public places. After the derailment, the reward amounted to 100,000 Marks, while after the second attack – 250,000. Repression ensued as a result of which several dozen Poles were sent to the Stutthof concentration camp. Both acts of the resistance movement were conducted by the group commanded by Stanisław Lesikowski alias "Las", the commander of the Kosciierzyna Region of the Polish Army of Uprising [PAP] supported by members of the partisan unit of PAPA of Stanisław Miskier and the partisan unit of TWO "Gryf Pomorski" commanded by Jan Szalewski alias "Sobol".

In the years 1942–1943 the Polish Army of Uprising did not manage to carry out any more actions of such a spectacular nature. They executed various small-

er acts of sabotage, mainly in Torun and Gdansk. Members of PAPA working in military barracks, various military warehouses and gunsmith's shops in Torun and Grudziądz systematically stole weapons and ammunition, which was next sent to the partisan units of PAP in the Tuchola Forest or hidden in warehouses run by the resistance movement. It is known that pistols, ammunition and explosives were systematically pilfered from the ammunition plant in Torun-Wrzosy. Zygmunt Neumann, who ran the gunsmith's shop in Torun, provided the organisation with some weapons. The Gestapo came into possession of some weapons while they were liquidating PAP in August 1943; the origin of the weapons was established, as a result of which on 13 October 1944 the following members of PAP were executed in Gdansk: Zygmunt Neumann, Jozef Nowak and Feliks Makowski.

It was not until the years 1941–1942 that in the Pomeranian district ZWZ–AK started to organise acts of sabotage in the north of Pomerania, mainly in Gdynia and Gdansk. This was possible as the structures of ZWZ–AK had been extended in Gdynia and Gdansk. The sabotage was also inspired by the increasing significance of the Kriegsmarine base in Gdynia and the change of the attitude towards sabotage by KG ZWZ–AK. Members of ZWZ–AK in Gdynia – trained before the war to carry out underground activities – secretly launched a campaign of economic sabotage. Many members of ZWZ–AK worked in the Gdynia harbour, in the shipyards and various institutions around the Gdynia Kriegsmarine base. They could enter the heavily guarded areas and carry out sabotage unobtrusively while at work. The pre-war sub-officers of the navy who were also members of the local centres of the Naval Department of KG AK along with members of the “Gray Ranks” were particularly active. Only in exceptional cases did they organise more daring acts of sabotage, the target of which were Kriegsmarine ships docked in Gdynia and Gdansk. The sabotage involved damaging important parts of the ship, setting fire to warships, auxiliary ships and merchant ships. According to the preserved accounts, in November 1941 fires broke out a few times in the ship “Cap Arkona”. The hospital ship “Hamburg” was also the target of an arson attack on 20 April 1942; the fire was extinguished after 27 hours. In the Kriegsmarine base in Gdynia in September 1942 the ships “Admiral Scheer” and “Pretoria” were partly damaged; in October 1942 the engine room of the heavy battle-cruiser “Prinz Eugen” was damaged; on 15 January 1943 a bomb exploded in the boiler room of the battleship “Tirpitz”. In May 1943 the hospital ship “Stuttgart” was sabotaged while being renovated in Gdynia. In February 1944 the lift on the ship “Admiral Scheer” was damaged. The above list includes only the major acts of sabotage on German liners conducted during the occupation period in Pomerania. Although the Gestapo carried out a detailed investigation, they did not arrest any of the perpetrators.

From 1942 some German submarines, constructed or renovated in Gdynia and Gdansk, became targets for sabotage. Members of AK employed in the shipyards acted systematically to damage the equipment. In doing so, they generated

not only material losses, but they also delayed the ships' departure. In 1943 the first major acts were carried out. In May 1943 the submarine "U-735" sank in the industrial canal. In November 1943 a series of successful actions were conducted, resulting in damage to the "U-998" (a torpedo launcher), "U-476" and "U-480". In January 1944 on the submarine "U-297" the helm and the drive shaft were damaged, while in February 1944 a submarine sank near Hel having left its Gdynia base.

In Gdynia members of AK sometimes inspired foreign forced labourers (Frenchmen, Italians, people from Yugoslavia and even German anti-fascists) to get involved in the sabotage. Until 1943, vandalism was restricted to military airports and factories serving the aviation industry. For example, actions of this type were conducted at the airport of Rumia-Zagorze, where planes assembled in Gdynia were tested. Sabotage was also carried out in Grudziądz, in repair facilities at the airport and in the factory of Flugzeugwerke which assembled Ju-88 aircrafts. Upon the request of the Allies – in June 1943 – the main target of the sabotage became the production of fighter planes. Damage was also caused on a large scale by members of ZWZ-AK working in major ammunition plants in the region of Bydgoszcz, where in Osowa Góra the Germans had built a factory of explosives and ammunition. The rifle ammunition and air-dropped bombs were reloaded in Osowa Góra where there operated a sabotage-resistance group of AK run by the pre-war sub-officer of the Polish army Sergeant Leon Stobrawa alias "Andrzej" and Alfons Talkowski. Members of the group systematically damaged the igniters of air-dropped bombs. Acts of sabotage were also carried out in the underground plant of explosives and ammunition Dynamit AG (DAG) in Iędnów near Bydgoszcz. They were organised by members of AK who were employed there: Jan Tyłmanowski and Franciszek Karczewski, who were arrested by the Gestapo and sentenced to death. Later, the sabotage in DAG was executed by members of the Bydgoszcz inspectorate of AK: S. Gackowski, Z. Narzyński, B. Bruski and L. Biały. Railway workers conducted minor acts of sabotage. They damaged parts of cars and steam locomotives. They disorganised the work of the railway placing freight in inappropriate cars. It was done in such a way that the Germans should think it was the effect of a lack of order rather than conscious sabotage. Actions of this type were made not only by members of ZWZ-AK, but also of TOW "Gryf Pomorski" and PAP.

Originally, no resistance unit was set up at the headquarters of the Pomeranian district of ZWZ-AK. In the Pomeranian district the only larger unit of this type was established in Gdynia in 1942. It was called the Sea Battalion and consisted of several dozens of people inspired by scout-master Bernard Mysliwék – the organiser of the local units of the Naval Department of KG AK under the codename "Alfa". The core of the team were members of the Gdynia regiment of the "Gray Ranks". They did not carry out any ongoing offensive strikes. They only infiltrated the area and prepared to take the strategic points in Gdynia while the airborne

assault and the amphibious landing of the Polish army would take place. In the summer of 1942 – after PAP had conducted two acts of subversion near Zblewo – members of the unit made preparations to derail a train in the region of Gdynia, under the supervision of scout-master B. Mysliwek. The action was to be executed by members of the “Gray Ranks” battalion in Gdynia. Nevertheless, it was feared that a passenger train transporting Poles to work in Gdynia might be derailed by mistake, and afterwards repression would affect the Polish population in Gdynia. Another factor which thwarted the plan was the Gestapo’s arrest of numerous members of the unit in the autumn of 1942 during the liquidation of the structures of AK and the “Gray Ranks”.

Besides, as part of the local structures of “Alfa” in Pomerania three resistance groups were formed, consisting of former professional sub-officers of the navy; they were also eliminated by the Gestapo in the autumn of 1942 before they had actually started operating. According to the documents of KG AK, in the later period (from March 1943 to March 1944) in the Pomeranian district no Kedyw [AK Resistance Directorate] was established; neither was there any resistance team. This was evidence of basic organisational problems. Kedyw constituted the most active part of the structures of AK in all the districts created in occupied Poland. Another territory where Kedyw was not set up was the Poznan district of AK.

It seems that owing to the difficulties mentioned above, it was decided to incorporate the Gray Ranks to prepare resistance groups, which succeeded in Bydgoszcz. In 1944 scout-master Maksymilian Jakubowski alias “Jur” as the commander of the Pomeranian standard of the Gray Ranks started to establish the so-called cadre company of the Gray Ranks in Bydgoszcz, which supposedly constituted the initial organisations of Kedyw of the Pomeranian AK district. Apart from this, the inspector of the so-called Western Poland representing the Headquarters of the Gray Ranks – scoutmaster Edward Zörnps alias “Jacek” asked sub-scoutmaster Ferdynand Ziętek to provide military training for several members of the Gray Ranks from Pomerania and Poznan who were based in Warsaw. All of them had graduated from the underground academy of Reserve Sub-Standard-Bearers. In the future they were to be used in Pomerania, where they were supposed to strengthen the cadre company in Bydgoszcz. The outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising and the death of E. Zörn, who was killed in combat as the commander of the scouts’ company, thwarted the plans.

Despite huge difficulties there were also attempts to conduct attacks in the territory of the Reich. In Pomerania, bases were created which constituted the support for KG AK resistance groups responsible for carrying out acts of subversion in Berlin. Members of the “Zagralin” group, which was part of the Unit for Special Offensive Actions “OSA-KOSA” at the Headquarters of AK, left the base in Bydgoszcz for Berlin in April 1943. They conducted a successful bombing attack in one of the railway stations. According to one of the accounts, members of AK from the Pomeranian district: Franciszek Bendig, Marian Gorski and probably B. Mysli-

wiek participated in acts of subversion in Berlin. Despite intense investigation, the Gestapo did not manage to catch the perpetrators; however, they managed to establish that the attackers had stayed in Pomerania prior to their arrival in Berlin.

In Warsaw and other cities of the General Government there were various crack-downs carried out by specialist organisational units. People sentenced to death by the Military Special Courts of AK were killed. In Pomerania operations aimed at assassinating the representatives of the occupying authorities and Gestapo informants took place very rarely. Instead, special improvised (organised ad hoc) death squads were formed. The best known actions of this type include: 1) the shooting of an SS-man named Rasch in Lębork in 1944 by Sub-Lieutenant J. Belau; 2) the shooting of Edward Rudzki vel Edward Slowikowski alias "Biały Grot" in Toruń on 11 January 1945 by Józef Sliwowski alias "Skrzat" (following the sentence of the Military Special Court of AK) – Slowikowski was the second commander of the regional organisation of the Polish Army of Uprising [PAP], who was said to be collaborating with the Gestapo for whom he provided information about the structures of the headquarters of the Pomeranian AK district. Actions of this type – although undertaken without sentencing by the underground courts – were most frequently executed by partisans in the forests. German gendarmes involved in fighting the partisan groups and Germans persecuting Poles were the targets of assassinations.

Partisan Activity

In the summer of 1939 – prior to the outbreak of the war – there was a plan to leave the battalion of the National Defence "Koscierzyna" on the territories taken over by the Germans in order to fight using partisan methods. Finally, the plan was abandoned as it was decided that it was impossible to hide so many soldiers in the forests for a longer period of time. Activities of this type were launched spontaneously in September 1939 when soldiers from the units of the defeated "Pomorze" army in Bory Tucholskie created a few partisan groups. The documents of the German operational units of the security police in Pomerania mentioned the activity of an individual partisan who sniped at the Wehrmacht units in September 1939. Near Grudziądz several cars were sniped at; in one of the cars Hitler was riding. The German search for the partisan groups were fruitless. However, none of the partisan groups created in September 1939 by soldiers from the defeated regular military units survived for a long time. Nor did they convert to partisan units, either. It was not until much later that the Poles started to hide in the rural and forest territories of Pomerania to avoid Gestapo arrest and execution for their pre-war activity. Most of them were teachers (often reserve officers), officials and various social activists. They hid in the houses of their relatives and friends, in sparsely populated sites, situated far from the main communication routes. Originally, they planned to wait there until the end of the war. However, in time they started to establish contacts, cooperate and set up informal groups which later transformed

into partisan units. They had a very limited amount of arms and military supplies: mainly hunting weapon, some rifles and pistols. The process of creating small forest groups started in the years 1940–1941 and intensified in mid-1942. This was caused by the influx of a second wave of escapees. They were mainly Poles who, having signed the German People's List, were called up to serve in the Wehrmacht. Other groups seeking shelter in the forests were Poles whose identity had been revealed – members of the Pomeranian resistance movement under the threat of being arrested after the Gestapo had acquired information about their underground activity. They created partisan groups, which were later combined and incorporated into regional subversion organisations (TOW "Gry Pomorski" and PAP0. In 1942 the Home Army [Armia Krajowa – AK] did not have any partisan units in Pomerania. It must be underlined that in Pomerania partisan units often changed their leaders, composition, structure and the operational territory. Partisan warfare in Pomerania was never as extensive as in the General Government, where many territories were controlled by partisan units in the years 1943–1945. The sparse partisan activity in Pomerania was justified by unfavourable geographical conditions. Although in Pomerania there were major forests (the largest of which was Tuchola), partisan-style combat was difficult owing to the dense network of roads, numerous forest tracks and clearings, which made it easier for the occupying forces (the police, SS and the army) to move quickly through the forest area. Besides, in Pomerania there were many German gendarmerie stations and many Germans were employed in the forest service; the area was also full of German informants. All these factors limited the security of the partisans. The only factor which made it possible to set up some partisan units in the territory was the fact that the forest territories were inhabited mainly by the Polish population and some lower-rank posts in the forest service were held by Polish people. The Germans were aware of the fact that Polish foresters supported the partisans. That is why they started to replace Polish foresters with German rangers from the Reich.

The Secret Military Organisation "Gryf Pomorski" [TOW GP] was the first to begin partisan activity. Its structures were first established in the forest and rural areas. In mid-1942 "Gryf Pomorski" organised its structures mainly in the rural counties of Kosciierzyna, Kartuzy and Chojnice. It incorporated several informal partisan groups and became the starting point for the creation of the county and municipal headquarters of "Gryf". In this way, in 1942 TOW GP had the largest number of partisan units in the northern territories of Pomerania. Small partisan units of the regional organisation of PAP existed only in the county of Kosciierzyna. They were groups run by Stanisław Miskier and the priest Franciszek Wołoszyk alias "Konar". The Home Army [AK] did not have any partisan units in the area at that time. In the summer of 1942 the identity of Reserve Sub-Lieutenant Alfons Jarocki alias "Antoni" "Juhas", who ran the Chojnice inspectorate of AK, was exposed and he was threatened with arrest. He had to hide in forest bunkers of "Gryf" in the region of Sumin in the county of Kosciierzyna.

Nevertheless, it must be underlined that the partisan units of "Gryf" were not numerous at that time and suffered shortages of weapons. In 1942 they did not engage in any provocation. They restricted their activity to providing safe shelter. All informal partisan groups behaved in a similar way. They mainly concentrated on acquiring food. In 1942 only police hunts caused occasional skirmishes with the German gendarmerie or the forest service. In July 1942 near Suminy a groups of twenty partisans of TOW "Gryf Pomorski" fought under the command of Leon Kulas. An unidentified partisan group skirmished with the police in the forest near Tuchola in November 1942. Police hunts sometimes led to a complete destruction of partisan units, as was the case on 17 October 1942 in the region of Zduny in the county of Starogard, on 19 October 1942 in Gniezno in the county of Swiecie and on 5 December 1942 in Rozanna in the county of Bydgoszcz.

The situation changed in mid-1943. Small units of TOW GP (normally not exceeding 10 people) were fed with other members of "Gryf" who were searched for by the Gestapo due to their earlier underground activity. They had been warned soon enough to be able to escape and avoid arrest. They left their homes and hid in the forests. Moreover, more and more Poles who had signed the German People's List deserted from the German army. They often escaped to the forest armed and still wearing German uniforms, which made it hard for the Germans to recognise Pomeranian partisans. They wore German uniforms, SS and SA uniforms and uniforms of the German forest service. It is estimated that deserters from the German army constituted about 50% of the members of the partisan units in Pomerania. The year 1943 was a turning point also for another reason. In May 1943 – after the conflict among the leaders of "Gryf" and the dismissal of Jozef Gierszewski alias "Rys" from the position of the chief commander – in May 1943 the commander of the Kosciierzyna county J. Szalewski alias "Sobol" broke away from "Gryf". He joined the Polish Army of Urpising [PAP] along with his large unit of partisans. The unit was subject to the Headquarters of PAP of the Region of Kosciierzyna with whom he had cooperated earlier. The partisan unit of Szalewski in November 1943 – after the Headquarters of PAP were destroyed in Torun by the Gestapo – along with the Headquarters of PAP of the Kosciierzyna Regiona became subordinated to the Home Army [AK]. It originated the process of other "Gryf" partisan units joining AK, which included the units of Alfons Kwiczor alias "Czarny", "Jeremi", Jan Sikorski alias "Wilk", "Janek", Czeslaw Depka alias "Gryf", the Kulas brothers and Jan Klamann alias "Ludwik".

The German authorities observed the development of the Pomeranian partisan units with concern, as they felt that the level of security in the Pomeranian forests had worsened. The police undertook a series of actions, the aim of which was to destroy partisan units and cut off their cooperation with the Polish population. In Pomerania in 1943 there were many skirmishes with the German occupying forces. The partisans no longer limited themselves to protecting their sites. Now they initiated various undertakings aimed not only at getting food and clothing,

but also weapons and ammunition. In 1943 the partisans of “Gryf” conducted several offensives. The first involved attacking the German training airport situated near the pre-war Polish-German border in Strzebielino in the county of Wejherowo. The action was carried out on 21 November 1943 by the combined “Gryf” units of Bernard Michalko alias “Batory”, Reserve Sub-Lieutenant Alfred Loeper, Franciszek Deyek and Kaminski – all commanded by Reserve Lieutenant Grzegorz Wojewski. The partisans managed to acquire weapons and ammunition; they also destroyed six training aircrafts. The next action led to the disarming of a dozen or so German soldiers in the forester’s lodge in Oslawa-Dąbrowa. In December 1943 two actions were conducted by the units of B. Michalko and A. Loeper in the region of Strzebielino and Lesniewo. They managed to kill two gendarmerie patrols and obtained several weapons along with ammunition. Three partisans were killed in the action, while three were injured. The increased activity of the Pomeranian partisans in 1943 played an important propaganda role undermining the authority of the Germans in the Reich District of Gdansk – Western Prussia during the intensive Germanisation. The Tuchola Forests served as a hiding place for the increasing number of Poles who had deserted from the Wehrmacht. This caused a serious problem for the German authorities as far as security was concerned since the territories were formally within the borders of the Reich. Thus, Heinrich Himmler, *Reichsführer* SS and the head of the German police, dealt with fighting the Pomeranian partisan units personally. He ordered the police to step up their activity connected with fighting the partisans. The infiltration of the Polish resistance organisations in Pomerania increased and more German forces became involved in fighting the partisans. First of all, the tactics of ad hoc chases undertaken immediately after partisan actions were reevaluated. They turned out to be not very effective and many partisan units managed to escape the area. That is why the German police forces organised a chase after they had thoroughly searched the area and established the place where the partisan units were stationed, their composition and weaponry. New hunts were conducted with the assistance of much larger police and military forces which significantly outnumbered the partisan units. First, the police and military forces blocked all the roads and villages near the area where the hunt was to take place. Next, the forest territories were combed thoroughly in search of partisan shelters and camps.

Some anti-partisan actions were inspired by the Gestapo officers who acquired information about partisan bunkers not yet destroyed. For example, on 10 January 1944 the Gestapo officers from Gdansk, supported by a powerful unit of the German gendarmerie, liquidated the shelter of TOW “Gryf Pomorski” (the so-called “Gniazdo Gryfitow”) in Kamienica Krolewska. During the combat with the gendarmerie, B. Michalko and Jan Kwidzynski (the shelter was situated in his premises) lost their lives. In March 1944 in Dąbrowa near Wiele a partisan from the AK unit “Szyszki” commanded by J. Szalewski was arrested. His testimony and the materials left in the shelter led the Gestapo to expose some inhabitants of Koscierzyna

who had cooperated with the partisans: Stanisław Lesikowski (Commander of the AK District of Koscierzyna) and a medical doctor Stanisław Zawacki. The Gestapo arrested about 30 people destroying completely the Headquarters of the AK District of Koscierzyna.

In the second half of 1943 essential changes took place in the Pomeranian partisan organisations. In the Tuchola Forests a few large AK partisan units were set up. A major role in their creation was played by pre-war teacher Stefan Guss alias "Dan" who had remained hidden in the county of Swiecie since the beginning of the occupation. In 1943 Guss with his deputy Standard-Bearer Franciszek Wojciechowski organised the first AK partisan unit under the codename "Swierki". He also created a base for AK partisan units operating later in the Tuchola Forests in the territory of the North-West AK Sub-district. The partisans from the "Swierki" unit carried out several campaigns aimed at disarming the Germans stationed in the forests. Actions of this type took place in April 1943 in Zdroje, in September 1943 in Brzezno, Stara Huta and Osie. In September 1943 the "Szyszeki" unit skirmished with the Jagkommando in the region of Smolnik. The partisans from the "Swierki" unit also carried out acts of sabotage. They damaged telephone connections and signalling devices in the railway stations in Ocypel and Osieczno in the county of Starogard. In November 1943 the partisan unit commanded by S. Guss rescued several members of their unit from gendarmerie arrest in Osiek in the county of Starogard. In the years 1943–1944 the "Swierki" unit increased in membership after merging with a few other partisan units which subordinated themselves entirely to AK as part of a consolidation. In April 1944 Sub-Lieutenant of the Polish army Alojzy Bruski alias "Grab", the commander of the Tczew Inspectorate, took over the command of the "Swierki" unit which consisted of 30 partisans. He had to leave Tczew as his activity had been revealed by the Gestapo. Guss and Bruski created a series of support points for AK partisan units in the counties of Swiecie, Starogard and Tczew. They were set up near Błędno, Cekcyn, Dębia Góra (the main base), Kasparus, Lipinki, Nowa Huta, Osiek, Przewodnik, Skorcz, Stara Jania and Rynków. The development of the AK partisan units in the Tuchola Forests was so significant that in the period from May to June 1944 S. Guss established a second major AK partisan unit "Jedliny", "102". Originally, the unit served as a hiding place for officers of the Pomeranian AK district who were forced to hide. One of them was Aleksander Schulz alias "Michał", "Maciej", the commander of the North-West AK Sub-district. In June 1944 the forester's lodge in Wypalanki, which was the forest base of the "Jedliny" unit, was the hiding place for Sub-Colonel Jan Palubicki alias "Borowy", the commander of the Pomeranian AK district. The third major AK partisan unit – "Szyszeki" operating in the Tuchola Forests was set up on the basis of the unit of J. Szalewski alias "Sobol", who in November 1943 moved from PAP to AK along with his people.

In 1944, the three largest AK partisan units operated in the Tuchola Forests under the codenames of "Swierki" ("101") – commanded by Sub-Lieutenant Alo-

jzy Bruski alias "Grab"; "Jedliny" ("102") – commanded by Jan Sznajder alias "Jas", "Dąb"; and "Szyszki" ("103") – commanded by Jan Szalewski alias "Sobol". In the summer of 1944 all the units were combined into the partisan group "Cisy" ("100"), "Bory" – commanded by A. Bruski alias "Grab", which was part of the preliminary preparations for the uprising and the Reconstruction of Armed Forces [Odtwarzanie Sił Zbrojnych – OSZ]. It was part of the plan to convert the AK partisan units into regular units of the Polish army. However, this idea was abandoned very quickly as the structures of AK in Pomerania were too weak to carry out the plan.

The AK partisan units in Pomerania were the weakest in the South-East Sub-district due to unfavourable geographical conditions. Yet, some small partisan units were created in Brodnica and Nowe Miasto. The largest of them were the units of Lieutenant Jan Lipinski alias "Sprężyna", the codename "Sprężyna", "104" (the Brodnica forests) and of Reserve Lieutenant Paweł Nowakowski alias "Lesnik".

The AK partisan units did not undertake any major campaigns until the spring of 1944. One such action was carried out by the partisan unit of J. Szalewski aimed at rescuing the liaison officer Warsinski and several other prisoners from municipal arrest in Brusy in April 1944. The partisans usually concentrated on confiscating the weapons from the Germans who inhabited the forest territories. The situation changed in mid-1944. Pomerania became the direct base of the eastern front for the Germans, who started building various fortifications there. More and more military units arrived in Pomerania. The need to secure the base of the front made the German security forces organise major anti-partisan expeditions, involving the police, SS units and the army. The largest threat for the partisans constituted the special anti-partisan units (*Jagdkommando*) subordinated to the command of the SS and the police. From the second half of 1943 they were installed in the larger villages of the Tuchola Forests, near the sites affected by partisan activity. The units were motorised and well-armed; they moved rapidly from place to place. Not only did they have their own network of informants, but were also specially trained to fight with partisans. Members of the *Jagdkommando* were known for their brutal interrogations of detained partisans and people suspected of supporting them. In their desire to fight the partisan units effectively, the *Jagdkommando* changed location, operating in the areas where the partisan units had been recently seen. In this situation, it was increasingly difficult to hide the existence of major partisan units stationed in the Tuchola Forests. Crack-downs frequently forced the partisans to defend themselves while surrounded. In order to prevent such situations a whole network of reserve forest shelters was created. They were perfectly hidden and constructed underground – most frequently in the so-called young forests where the Germans did not suspect there would be any shelters. Partisans used them only when they were directly threatened. Still, they suffered great losses during combat with the powerful police-military forces. Many of them died or were injured. Those who were captured by the Germans were subjected to cruel torture in order to force them to disclose the location of the remaining shelters; after-

wards, they were even killed. Sometimes whole partisan units were liquidated. Police repression also affected the local Polish population who provided the partisans with food, medicine and clothing. The Germans terrified local people to deprive the partisans of their assistance. In 1944 sometimes whole families suspected of helping partisans were shot on the spot. Over time, the Germans uncovered more and more shelters, which caused a decline in the number of partisans. The German forest service and foresters sent to Pomerania from the Reich played a major role in informing the Gestapo or the gendarmerie about partisan shelters.

The partisan unit of Alfons Kwiczor alias "Jeremi" was surrounded twice by the units of the Jagdkommando: first, in the forest near Sarnia Góra, the county of Swiecie; second, in May 1944 near Dębina Góra in the county of Starogard. Despite being greatly outnumbered by the Germans they managed to escape siege twice. In May 1944 occurred the two largest battles between the AK partisan units and the Germans. On 6–8 May in the region of Dębina Góra – Stara Huta in the county of Starogard, the unit of Sub-Lieutenant Bruski alias "Grab", consisting of 29 people, fought a fierce battle with the powerful forces of the Jagdkommando and the police and managed to escape siege. Several partisans died or were injured. However, the Germans suffered much greater losses. Another significant battle took place on 26 May 1944 in the region of Lubiana near Koscierzyna. The anti-partisan chase was carried out with the involvement of considerable police forces (about 300 Germans, including SS units from the SS training camp – *SS Übungsplatz Westpreussen*) in Brusy. A few partisan units were taken by surprise and surrounded including the AK unit "Szyski" of J. Szalewski alias "Sobol" and the TOW GP units commanded by the brothers Kulas and Augustyn Breska alias "Zbych". All the units consisted of about 50 partisans in total. After a whole day of fighting three groups of the partisans along with their commanders managed to break free despite the relatively tight blockade. Yet, the partisans suffered serious losses. Fifteen were killed, including the whole staff of one of the surrounded shelters. J. Szalewski with a group of partisans moved to the county of Chojnice; however, the Germans quickly discovered his whereabouts. On 29 June 1944 he was trapped again by the gendarmerie near Trawice. After fierce combat, the partisans managed to escape, but J. Szalewski (at that time the deputy of the commander of the Chojnice–Tczew Inspectorate of AK) was badly injured. He was taken away from the endangered area by one of his partisans.

The situation changed as the eastern front approached. A few Soviet landing troops were dropped into the Tuchola Forest in 1944; they consisted of Poles and Russians. In the summer of 1944 the AK partisan units got in touch with them, which extended the partisan activity with new elements. The AK units helped and protected the Soviet landing troops. The partisan unit "Jedlin" began to swap intelligence with the Russians. An effective courier network was established, thanks to which the commander of the AK unit "Jedliny" received reports on the situation of the German military forces, their condition, magnitude and armament, the loca-

tion of military objects and arms factories. J. Sznajder, the commander of "Jedliny", passed reports to two Soviet radio telegraphers who encrypted the information and sent it to the Belarusian Front. Yet, the mutual contacts were marked by mistrust. The Russians attempted to carry out communist propaganda among the partisans of AK in order to win their political support. Treacherously, they promised the AK partisans drops of Soviet weapons, which never took place. Sometimes the AK partisan groups worked in cooperation with the landing troops, as in the attack on Czersk Swiecki in the night of 21–22 September 1944. The "Swierki" and "Jedliny" units commanded by Sub-Lieutenant Bruski alias "Grab" along with the unit of Soviet parachutists commanded by Lieutenant Alojzy Waluk (in total about 100 partisans) attacked storehouses and the school in Czersk Swiecki, where German airmen and the anti-partisan unit consisting of the Vlasov army soldiers were stationed. The partisans managed to capture the storehouses with food and uniforms. However, they did not succeed in taking over the school as military units from Swiecie, Grudziądz and Grupa arrived to help the Germans. The partisans withdrew with no losses taking with them all the food and clothing.

On 26 October 1944 in the forest complex near Stara Rzeka and Błędno there was combat with one of the largest anti-partisan round-ups. The following units were surrounded by the Germans: the AK unit of Hubert Bukowski alias "Sojka" (from the "Cisy-100" group), the AK unit of Feliks Warczak alias "Bach" and three Soviet landing troops groups (of Lieutenant "Sasza", Captaina "Wiktor" and Sub-Lieutenant Stanisła Mikielawicz) – in total about 50 people. The partisans and parachutists were relatively well-armed with machine guns and grenades, so they decided to attempt to break through. Their efforts during the day were to no avail. It was not until night fell that their attack enabled them to escape the trap. However, many people were killed – about 20 partisans and 6 parachutists. The number of victims on the German side is unknown, but as the fight was fierce the German losses must have been significant.

Information about the hostile attitude of the Soviet army towards the AK partisans in the eastern territories of the Rzeczpospolita also reached Pomerania. Thus, the commander of the Pomeranian AK district Sub-Colonel J. Palubicki on 5 January 1945 issued an order to the partisan units to break away from the Soviet landing troops before the offensive of the Soviet army. It was assumed that the earlier cooperation would protect the partisans from harassment. After Pomerania had been taken over by the Soviets, members of the AK partisan units and TOW "Gryf Pomorski" were victimised. Some of those who revealed their underground activity were encouraged to set up stations of the Civic Militia in larger villages. However, under the pretext of having them trained to carry out new tasks, they were transported from the villages, arrested and deported to the USSR, where they were sent to various camps from which they returned after several years. This happened to the partisans from the "Jedliny" unit along with their commander J. Sznajder despite the fact that the "Jedliny" partisans for a few months had helped

the Soviet reconnaissance group of S. Mikielwicz. Many partisans who were not deported were later interrogated in various bodies set up by the communists of the Polish Security Bureau.

The information and propaganda campaign

In occupied Poland the information and propaganda campaign of the resistance movement was of great importance. The Polish secret press consisted of over 1,500 underground papers. In Pomerania, isolated from Central Poland (the General Government) with a police border, this kind of underground activity underlined the connections of Pomerania with the rest of the Polish territory. Since initially some resistance organisations were not very active, the distribution of various papers and texts constituted one of the few signs that the underground existed. Poles living in Pomerania were exposed to Nazi propaganda. So, they needed objective information. However, throughout the whole period of occupation the extent of the information activity was never as developed as in the General Government. As the contact with the General Government was quite difficult, sometimes even small Pomeranian organisations made an effort to issue various publications. They were mostly bulletins providing up-to-date information from the radio since Poles were prohibited from owning such devices. Less frequently, texts with articles or appeals were issued. They were normally written by people with no previous experience, so were of low quality.

The distribution of various subversive texts sometimes revealed the existence of Polish underground organisations, which was particularly visible in the initial stage of the occupation when Poles lacked experience in matters of resistance. As a consequence, such texts were a source of information for the German police, which led to arrests and investigations. In the first months of 1940 the distribution of leaflets entailed the arrest of a group of scouts from Brusy and members of the youth organisation from Starogard along with a few Polish adults. The German press featured this case in September 1941. Announcing the sentence of *Volksgericht* in Berlin it was stressed that they had been sentenced for high treason, which was the distribution of Gen. Sikorski's appeal. In Toruń in the years 1939–1940 the following underground publications appeared: "Wolna Polska" – issued by "Grunwald", "Za Naszą Wolność i Waszą" – issued by the "Battalions of Death", and "Tu Mowi Londyn". Their distribution led the Gestapo to reveal the activity of the "Battalions of Death", which resulted in a series of arrests among members of the Toruń resistance movement in March and April 1940 and a total destruction of the resistance network in Toruń.

It must be underlined that the distribution of the underground press in Pomerania was smaller than in the General Government. What is more, it was not conducted on a regular basis. However, in Pomerania even a single copy of the Polish underground press was significant as there were no publications in Polish. Subversive texts and underground publications reached a narrow groups of recipi-

ents – mainly members of all-Poland resistance organisations. Such publications were from time to time given to trustworthy Poles who did not belong to any underground structures. The cells of the Polish underground played a major role in the distribution of the subversive press. They distributed the underground publications issued in the General Government, transported by Polish railway men. The most popular paper was “Polska Zyje!” issued by the Headquarters of Defenders of Poland [Komenda Obronców Polski KOP]. In the years 1940–1941 it reached many Pomeranian towns, also thanks to sailors sailing on barges along the Vistula river on the Warsaw–Włocławek–Toruń–Gdańsk route. In the years 1941–1944 “Biuletyn Informacyjny” was the most popular. It was issued by the Bureau for Propaganda and Information of KG ZWZ–AK and transported from Warsaw by Polish railway men. Members of the Military Organisation Lizard Union [“Związek Jaszczurzy”] also developed an effective network press distribution in Pomerania. In the years 1940–1941 they distributed in Pomerania the paper “Szaniec” and “Na Zachodnim Szancu” – the latter issued in Łódź. In the years 1943–1944 publication of the organisation “Sword and Plough” [“Miecz i Plug”] also reached Pomerania.

The underground press in Pomerania had a local range and were copied machine-typed texts. In Bydgoszcz in the years 1939–1940 the paper “Na Strazy Ziemi Polskiej Zostal I Czuwa Lud” was issued. In Gdynia in 1942 AK distributed “Biuletyn Informacyjny”, and in 1944 a few editions of the paper “Słowo Polskie” appeared – distributed by a small organisation called “Niepodległość”. The paper “Głos Serca Polskiego”, issued from 1941 in Jastrzębie near Czersk, was quite exceptional. It was printed on the premises of the Weltrowski family using a small printing machine from Czersk.

Among the underground papers issued in Pomerania, the paper issued by TOW “Gryf Pomorski” had the most extensive coverage. In the years 1942–1944 it was printed under the title “Gryf Pomorski” in a few towns in the north of Pomerania. For security reasons the printing location was frequently changed. It was printed, for example, in the villages of Czarlin, Kamienica Królewska, Bącka Huta and Zblewo. The paper was distributed mainly among members of “Gryf Pomorski” and people supporting the organisation.

Despite the difficult geographical conditions in Pomerania, AK disseminated subversive propaganda among the Germans. This was the so-called action “N” organised by the Bureau for Information and Propaganda of KG ZWZ–AK. The action consisted in publishing various leaflets and papers in German. The aim was to suggest that they had been issued by German anti-fascists. The main distribution points of the “N” publications in Pomerania and East Prussia received the code-names : “Delta” (Königsberg), “Kaplica” (Malbork), “Latarnia” (Gdynia), “Maszty” (Gdańsk), “Odra” (Szczecin), “Pralnia” (Lipno) and “Rzeźnia” (Iława, Elbląg, Olsztyn). The papers were dropped at barracks, railway stations, public places, means of transport, and even ships. A major role in transporting the “N” materials from Warsaw to Pomerania was played by Stanisław Poraj-Tucholski (Stanisław

Witkowski) alias “Zbik”, subordinate to Zdzisław Jezioranski alias “Jan Nowak”, and a courier Helena Urbanska alias “Lena”. Marian Gorski alias “Rumianek” (the head of BIP KO Pomerania AK responsible for carrying out the “N” action in the Pomeranian district of AK) and Bronisław Pietkiewicz alias “Zbik” – the commander of the Toruń Inspectorate of AK, were involved in the distribution of the “N” materials. The transfer of the “N” materials was probably supervised by Kazimierz Orientel alias “Grot”, “Mikołaj z Torunia”. The Gray Ranks were also engaged in the distribution of the “N” materials in Pomerania. Until the summer of 1942 the materials were transported by the commander of the Pomeranian standard the scoutmaster Bernard Mysliwek alias “Konrad”. In the period 1943–1944 the transfer of the “N” materials from Warsaw to Bydgoszcz was the responsibility of scoutmaster Edward Zürn alias “Jacek” – the inspector of the western standards representing the Main Headquarters. The outbreak of the Warsaw Uprising on 1 August 1944 put an end to the publishing of the “N” materials. At the end of the occupation period, members of the Pomeranian AK district were ordered to issue anti-German propaganda addressed both to German soldiers and the German civilians.

The various aspects of the resistance in Pomerania in the years 1939–1945 discussed in this chapter do not exhaust the topic. The author has attempted to show how difficult it was to fight the German occupying forces in Pomerania and what limitations the Poles had to face when struggling with the enemy. Pomerania was one of the weakest regions of occupied Poland. After the war some participants of the Pomeranian resistance movement suffered from an inferiority complex in relation to those who had conducted a much more extensive resistance campaign in the General Government and did not understand the specific situation of the underground in Pomerania during the war.

Grzegorz Górski

Polish Underground State as a unique element of the European resistance movement during WWII

Throughout the last quarter of the century the Polish Underground State (PPP) as a political-legal phenomenon, became the generally accepted term. Even in the conditions which were reluctant to recognize this form of the Polish state – in historical-legal sciences – gradually the historical reality became acknowledged as part of the political history of Poland. However, it does not mean that there do not appear attempts to question the existence of the PPP both in the historical-political dimension and generally as a specific historical phenomenon. The attempts are not serious and resemble strikingly the political period which finished in 1989. Still, they generate confusion among the people who are less knowledgeable as far as the historical reality is concerned.

What remains to be a serious problem is the shortage of studies addressing this exceptional phenomenon, which are published both in Poland and abroad and are aimed at the foreign reader. It is sad that fundamental differences between the PPP set up in the Polish territory and the European resistance movement (ERO) during WWII are not understood. The evidence for this lack of understanding is the fact of referring to the PPP as a resistance movement, which perpetuates the misunderstanding of the phenomenon of the PPP particularly abroad.

It results from the fact that both Polish historians and Polish official centres responsible for running (or rather failing to run) the historical policy in the last several decades have not bothered to create a positive image of the Polish resistance movement against the German and Soviet totalitarianisms during WWII. Thus, we should not be surprised that the average foreigner is convinced that Polish people are completely or at least partly responsible for the Holocaust and the extermination of the Jews, including even the alleged crimes against the Germans (the “expulsion”) or similar imagined crimes against the Ukrainians, Belarusians and Lithuanians.

As a starting point for our discussion we should indicate the fact that the PPP constituted a phenomenon which was deeply rooted in the Polish tradition of the struggle for independence originated as early as the partition period. People who

originated the PPP (Gen. M. Karaszewicz-Tokarzewski, S. Starzyński, L. Muzyczka, Colonel S. Rowecki) came from the camp of the supporters of Józef Piłsudski [Polish: obóz piłsudczykowski]. It was in this entourage that the references to the tradition of the January Uprising and the "secret state" existing at that time were the strongest.

Naturally, the conditions in which operated various resistance structures in Poland differed greatly from similar organizations in other countries occupied by the Germans. However, it was this ethos of the underground political structures referring to the tradition of the National Government of 1863–1864 that was an important element of the ideology of the PPP. It was this tradition that significantly affected the young generations of conspirators undertaking the struggle for independence and that differed the Polish underground movement from other similar movements in Europe.

The next characteristic element which distinguished the PPP was the Polish Military Organization [Polish: Polska Organizacja Wojskowa – POW] operating in the Polish territory during WWI. The POW, developed in the last stage of the war, determined the success of the Polish independence uprising in November 1918. The majority of the creators of the PPP had experience in the underground work during WWI – the period resembling the conditions of the new reality.

It must be remembered that in the period prior to the outbreak of WWI and during the war, the underground activity against the occupying states which had partitioned Poland, became a common phenomenon going beyond the POW, which consolidated most prewar initiatives. As a result, a significant number of underground members commencing their secret activity in the autumn of 1939, had already acquired experience working in resistance organizations.

Last but not least, an important factor influencing the creation of the PPP was the tendency to underline the durability and continuity of the Polish state. This *sui generis* manifestation character of the PPP was essential as many generations of Poles remembered the times of the partitions. Thus, for a major part of Polish society, the twenty-year-long interwar period of independent Poland could seem to be an exception from the condition of the hated normality.

That is why the continuity of the existence of the Polish political structures was underlined. They functioned not only in the form of the central authorities in exile, but mainly as the authorities operating at home, which consolidated the awareness of the irreversibility of the existence of the sovereign Polish state.

What constituted an important context for the work of the PPP was the fact that both aggressors in September 1939 announced that due to the defeat in the September campaign the Polish state had ceased to exist in the legal-international dimension. Such was the substance of the declarations of the Soviet government in September and October 1939. The announcements of the Third Reich of the same

period were similar. The aim was to show to Europe that Poland had collapsed as a state, which was to justify its being partitioned.

However, from the point of view of national law and in the light of the norms of international law, the Republic of Poland remained a sovereign country not only in the legal-international dimension.

The regulations of the Constitution of 1935 allowed maintaining the legal continuity of the highest national authorities. There existed the legally elected President of the Republic of Poland; there was set up a new Government of the Rzeczpospolita, and the Polish Army was commanded by the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief. It was those authorities of the Rzeczpospolita that were recognized by the overwhelming majority of Europeans, who opposed the fact of creating new political orders at the expense of defeated and occupied Poland and against international law. Both in the national and legal-international dimension the facts contradicted the propaganda theses and (un)lawful usurpations of both the Soviets and the Germans.

The necessity to manifest the continuity of the existence of the Polish state had both the national and international dimension. It was the presence of the constitutional authorities of the Republic of Poland in exile on the one hand, and on the other hand the activity of the underground structures established and supported by those authorities that were to be the real evidence of the existence of the Polish state.

A similar manifestation was necessary also abroad. The European opinion was bombarded by the attacks of the German and Soviet propaganda, which underlined the temporary nature of the Polish state after the post-Versailles period. The defeat in 1939 at least in its original period – until the defeat of France – could create the impression of the veracity of the propaganda. In the context of the existence of the Polish state both through its constitutional bodies in France/ England and through the resistance structures operating at home was to demonstrate the falsehood of the image of Poles as unable to have their own state. It must be stressed that the awareness of the necessity to manifest this protest was one of the most important factors determining the activity of General Tokarzewski and his co-workers at the turn of September and October 1939.

The policy of the German and Soviet authorities carried out in the occupied Polish territory paradoxically became the factor which facilitated the rapid development of the PPP owing to the occupying forces brutality and ostentatious negligence of the international norms and customs.

First of all, it must be reminded that according to the regulations of international law, in particular the regulations of the 4th Hague Convention about the rights and customs of the land war of 1907, the occupying forces were bound by a number of obligations. In the first place, they concerned the prohibition to dispose of the occupied territories (e.g. through any form of incorporating it to their

own state) until the peace treaty was concluded after the military actions had finished. Another ban concerned the prohibition to force citizens of the occupied territories to take up the citizenship of the occupying state. The occupying forces were bound to maintain the fundamental administrative or judicial institutions operating in the occupied territories. They had to maintain the legal order which was enforced in a given area (taking into account the modifications resulting from the military needs of the occupying forces).

However, both Germany and the Soviet Union (who formally were not the signatories of the convention, but declared frequently the approval of its stipulations), carried out actions which radically contradicted international law.

In the first place, it concerned the unlawful incorporation of the Polish territories into the territories of both states. Although the annexations differed in form – Germany conducted in on the strength of the internal acts of the Reich, while the Soviets granted the incorporation acts the ostensibly democratic character by carrying out an illegal referendum and putting forward a motion to incorporate the territory of the Republic of Poland into the Soviet Union – both incorporations breached the regulations of international law.

What happened next was that the occupying forces forced Poles to change their citizenship, to accept the new legal and institutional order introduced by the aggressors. Also in the central part of Poland, where the *quasi* political state was set up – the General Government – the German military and police forces eliminated any solutions which obliged them to respect the civilized legal order.

It was in this dimension that the formal-legal situation in the Polish territories differed from the situation in other occupied European states. The political structures existing in the occupied territories were maintained as part of the German occupying authorities. Let us analyze this situation.

In Norway and Denmark, the Germans left the national governments and parliaments. A similar thing happened in the non-occupied part of France. In Belgium and Holland the operating political structures were hardly affected by the war, including the government structures. In a residual form there also operated similar administrative structures in various states of former Yugoslavia. From the Polish perspective, we can hardly believe that for example in Denmark there took place legal general strikes, and various social and trade organizations, or even political parties, operated all over the country. To realize the magnitude of the difference between the situation in Poland and other occupied European states, it must be indicated that in Denmark there even took place general parliamentary elections.

In hardly any state did the Germans do away with the social infrastructure (schools, universities, scientific or cultural institutions, media – despite them being tightly controlled, etc.). The social-political life was quite normal taking into account the war conditions. The local economic system was never attacked. On the

contrary, the Germans even attempted to develop it through connecting it with the interests of the military industry of Germany.

Naturally, all those territories were subjected to the German authority, which was more or less painful depending on the area. What was against international law was the location of the aggressive and ruthless German civil security forces or police in the occupied states. Another unlawful action was the introduction of restrictive legal regulations which went beyond the norms marked by international conventions.

The life of the majority of the Europeans under the German occupation was nowhere easy. However, in no other state did the Germans dismantle the political institutions and the social infrastructure to such an extent as they did in Poland.

It is at this point that we find an additional factor that forced Poles to establish the PPP, which was the only place where they could secretly continue to execute the basic functions of the state in the situation when the occupying forces aimed at eliminating such structures. Only in this way was it possible to act to secure the minimum of basic social needs.

It was the above-mentioned conditions that distinguished Poland from other European states, and the PPP from other European resistance organizations.

As it has already been mentioned, in the Polish conditions the legal context was an important factor influencing the development of the PPP. It caused that it was possible in the Polish territories to form the structures of the PPP in such a way that they had an individual legitimization for their actions.

It resulted from the fact that on the one hand the prewar legal system and on the other hand the decisions of the Polish government in exile provided Poland with a unique formal basis to act. The authorities of the Republic of Poland had a constitutional mandate to modify the regulations of Polish law in the extraordinary conditions, depending on the external situation and the necessity to act in conspiracy. The authorities in exile of no other occupied European state owned such a legitimization.

Unlike all other emigration centres of the state authority, the government of the Republic of Poland did not have to improvise solutions in the light of its own constitutional order. The Polish authorities did not have to base on the so called Belgian precedence of WWI, when the authorities of the country in exile had been recognized despite the fact that the whole territory had been occupied by the Germans.

The first period of the occupation brought about political controversies and conflicts both on the line the state – emigration and inside the country. They concerned the form of the PPP. Eventually, it adopted the structure consisting of two pillars which were independent of each other.

In the military pillar there operated the Union of Armed Struggle (ZWZZ), which was set up on the basis of the military part of the Service for Poland's Vic-

tory (SZP), and was later transformed into the Home Army (AK). It was in mid-January 1940 that the ZWZ became recognized as part of the military forces of the Republic of Poland subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief. In consequence, the authorities of the Republic of Poland regarded the service in the ZWZ as the constitutional duty of the citizen. This status of the ZWZ-AK was confirmed by subsequent decisions of the authorities of the Republic of Poland made at the turn of 1941 and 1942, and finally in the spring of 1944.

At the same time, which should be underlined here – the ZWZ-AK was not one of the many secret military or paramilitary organizations operating in the occupied State. It constituted the secret form of the Polish Army; its commanders – the headquarters of the ZWZ-AK had a formal legal status of the authorities of the military administration.

In the civil pillar, after the prolonged debates concerning the constitution of this pillar, the central role was played by the Government Delegate for Poland, who was a representative of the Polish Government at Home and the superior of the whole administrative apparatus in the underground. In 1944 the Government Delegate became appointed cabinet minister of the Government of the Republic of Poland and promoted to the rank of the Deputy of the Prime Minister. The Delegate's deputies were promoted to the rank of ministers, with whom in July 1944 he set up the Home Council of Ministers as part of the government functioning in the underground in the territory of occupied Poland.

The Delegate managed the extensive administrative apparatus, which on the central level consisted of a dozen of departments. On the one hand, the departments continued the work of the prewar ministries. However, also other departments were established in new administrative territories, the existence of which was determined by the needs in the times of war and the plans to restore Poland after the end of WWII. Along with the network of the local structures of the government administration (the District Delegates in the voivodeships and County and City Delegates in the counties and towns), the Temporary Government Administration embraced the territory of the whole country within the borders of 1 September 1939.

What was an essential element of the PPP was the extensive administrative apparatus, created by both the military and civil organizations. It was prepared to take over the administration of the territories expected to become part of Poland after the war at the expense of defeated Germany. Eventually, organizational structures were prepared; their aim was to provide the administration of the whole territory of East Prussia, the Free City of Gdańsk, Western Pomerania and Lower Silesia in the transition period (until the signing of the peace treaty).

The second area of the activity of the PPP in the civil pillar was the common political representation of the most important prewar groups. In 1940 the most important of them set up the Political Conciliatory Committee (PKP). In August

1943 this body was transformed into the Home Political Representation (KRP), on the basis of which in March 1944 the Council of National Unity (RJN) was established, which represented the political standpoint of the majority of people at home.

All the most important political and social organizations operating in occupied Poland centered around the RJN. Only extreme political groups remained beyond the structures of the RJN; on the one hand, they represented the most radical faction of the national front (part of the National Military Forces and their civil formation – the Civil Service of the Nation); on the other hand, they included the Polish Workers' Party associated with the Soviet Union, which along with its satellite groups formed the so called home national council.

What complemented this structure was the judicial system operating in the underground. It consisted of special criminal courts run by both military centers (the Military Special Courts) and civil courts (the Criminal Special Courts). The military judicial system adjudicated cases breaching the interests of the military forces and crimes committed by military men. The special judicial system operating next to the Government Delegates along with the so called adjudicating committees of the civil struggle provided a relatively effective execution of the basic duties of the remaining Polish citizens towards their state.

The existence of the underground jurisdiction had an enormous significance for maintaining the resistance against the occupying forces. Thanks to it, any people revealing the intention to cooperate with the enemy or to capitulate were officially penalized by the structures of the Polish state.

The above mentioned structures of both pillars of the underground state were established by the constitutional decisions of the authorities of the Republic of Poland, taking into account the legal order which was constitutionally modified when it was necessary in the underground work. Changes in the law were introduced by decrees of the President of the Republic of Poland issued in accordance with constitutional norms. Even if the pace of the changes did not meet the expectations of the centers at home, particularly in the first years of the occupation, the structures and procedures of their work were invariably based on the legal order which had been in force until the outbreak of WWII.

Here it must be underlined that it was justified not only by practical reasons. Let us emphasize once again that it was the form of demonstrating the firm resistance against attempts to impose the impression that the Polish state had been annihilated. That is why, particularly in the centres at home, the need to maintain the legal continuity and to ensure that the underground structures should work on the basis of the prewar legal order was stressed.

It is also worth looking at the structures of the PPP in comparison with organizational solutions adopted in other countries of occupied Europe. Some simi-

larities occur only in a few cases concerning the work of underground military organizations.

The military organization ZWZ set up by the authorities of the Republic of Poland – as we have shown above – in mid-January 1940 was recognized to be part of the military forces of the Republic of Poland subordinated to the Commander-in-Chief.

Similar organizational solutions following the Polish solutions were adopted:

- in September 1941, when the Norwegian authorities in exile granted the similar status to the Norwegian Military Organization (*Milorg*),
- in January 1942, when similar solutions were adopted while creating the Yugoslavian Home Army (JVO),
- in October 1943, when the Army of Belgium (AB, later known as the Secret Army – AS) was recognized to be part of the military forces of the state;
- in September 1944, when the Dutch Internal Military Forces were set up following the similar pattern.

As the constitutional capacity of the emigration Norwegian, Belgian and Dutch authorities was doubtful, only the Yugoslavian solution could be considered to have resembled the Polish situation. It must be added that the commander of the JVO was at the same time appointed the minister of defence in the government in exile (in the Polish system it was finally decided that the commander-in-chief of the Home Army was the delegate of the minister of the national defence).

At the same time it must be kept in mind that the Polish underground military forces operated and planned its operations on the basis of the Polish legal order to the extent which was totally distinct from the Yugoslavian formation. It resulted from the fact that the partition of prewar Yugoslavia into several political bodies made it extremely difficult for the JVO and the Yugoslavian underground civil authorities to work.

Underground military organizations were also set up in the remaining occupied countries upon the decision of the governments in exile. However, their formal-legal situation differed significantly from the Polish reality. None of those centres had the constitutional legitimization to issue constitutionally adequate legal regulations for the military underground organizations.

Despite the fact that it is possible to spot some analogies in the field of the military underground, in the case of the civil underground there are no similarities. The reasons for this difference have been discussed above; they were connected directly with the intention of the German and Soviet occupying forces to annihilate the Polish state. That is why, the underground state was the only possibility to ensure the political existence of Poland in the face of the liquidation of almost all Polish political institutions.

In no other European state did such a situation take place, as most public institutions there continued their prewar activity. For example, underground education

in Poland was a typically Polish phenomenon as the occupying forces had done away with any legal forms of education of the youth (apart from partly maintained elementary and vocational education). That is why teaching on the secondary or tertiary level could take place only in the underground. In the remaining European countries this problem did not exist since education (including tertiary education) continued to exist even if it was subordinated to some restrictions.

Analyzing the exceptional nature of the PPP in Europe it must be indicated that it was the Yugoslavian resistance movement that resembled most the Polish underground. The history of the centres of the emigration authorities of both states and their national branches paradoxically resembled each other. However, there also appeared some differences:

- The position of the Yugoslavian authorities in exile did not correspond to the situation of the Polish government in exile, which resulted from the fact of Yugoslavia's having been divided into a few political states.
- In Yugoslavia the communist centre was increasingly powerful, while in Poland the position of communists was weak and marginal until the Soviets entered Poland.
- In Yugoslavia partisan forces were very active, whilst in Poland the tendency was to fight by means of sabotage and subversion.

Another important element of the PPP should be added here. The Polish Underground State created on the basis of the legal-political order of the Second Polish Republic could survive only because the great majority of Polish people remained loyal to it.

In the extremely hard conditions, Poles, being forced to respect inhumane legal regulations introduced by both the Germans and the Soviets, respected the legal order of the Republic of Poland and the authority of the underground structures of the Polish state. Even if they did not get involved in the activities of the underground structures, even if they remained detached towards some underground institutions or contested their political form, Poles invariably remained loyal towards the authority of the Republic of Poland with which the structures of the PPP were identified.

The Polish government in France, and later in England, along with the institutions set up by it, remained the only source of the legal authority throughout all the war for the majority of Poles. Only some groups of communist extremists represented a distinct attitude towards the Second Republic of Poland, its authorities and legal order. That is why they constituted a marginal group until the Soviets entered the Polish territory.

Within the PPP the frameworks for the normal political life were created. Thanks to it, tactical compromises and impressive political agreements, impossible to achieve during the times of the Second Polish Republic, were concluded. The consequence of this was the common vision of Poland after the war shared by

all the most important political centres in Poland. The utmost expression of this major political compromise was the declaration of the Union of the National Unity (RJN) "*What the Polish nation fights for*" adopted in March 1944.

The document, the content of which had been prepared for many months (which was the reason for the delay in announcing the decision about the creation of the RJN), reflected the unprecedented political and ideological agreement. Reading the political program of the Polish Underground State we can understand how much Poland lost by being unable to bring the commonly accepted aims into existence.



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