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The National Military Organization, the National Armed Forces and the Jews near Kraśnik: A Picture Corrected

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For Szymon Rudnicki

The issue of the attitude of the Polish underground toward hiding Jews is complex, difficult to analyze and extremely emotional. Presented almost exclusively in a bad light in the People's Republic of Poland (*Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa*, PRL), the National Armed Forces (*Narodowe Siły Zbrojne*, NSZ) sparked the most controversy.[1] The accusations against that formation started immediately after the war, not only in the communist milieus, but also among the members of both the peasant party and the Home Army (*Armia Krajowa*, AK). Those accusations were a continuation of bitter disputes and conflicts of the occupation period.[2] From the very beginning the NSZ was accused not only of collaboration with the occupier, insubordination and fratricidal murders but also of a program of anti-Semitism, which supposedly led to a number of murders of Jews. That image took strong root in foreign texts.[3] Even though nowadays mechanical repetition of such opinions has been largely abandoned, the approach

[1] For the fullest overview of the strategy of depicting the NSZ see: Dariusz Małyszek, "Narodowe Siły Zbrojne w PRL i na emigracji w latach 1945–1989 w świetle historiografii, publicystyki, literatury oraz filmu," *Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość* 2(10) (2006): 245–292.

[2] For example, the PSL press organ wrote, "The NSZ – a real stain on the body of Poland from the occupation period […] it is a mold on the Polish organism ("Dyktatura, totalizm, więzienie. Czemu służy i co niesie z sobą NSZ," *Gazeta Ludowa*, 19 April 1946. Yet the text lacks any references to killings of Jews. After 1956 certain high-rank AK officers severely criticized the organization (one of the most memorable texts was: Jan Rzepecki, "Mówi dokument," *Po Prostu* 32 (1956) (the article was published in Jan Rzepecki, *Wspomnienia i przyczynki historyczne* [Warsaw: Czytelnik, 1956], 255–280). See also Stefan Korboński, *Polskie Państwo Podziemne*. *Przewodnik po podziemiu z lat 1939–1945*, ed. Waldemar Grabowski (Warsaw: Świat Książki, 2008), 112–115.

[3] See e.g. Shmuel Krakowski, "NSZ," in *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust*, ed. Israel Gutman (New York–London, 1990), file 3, 1031–1032. The author bases his text on the authority of Stefan Korboński.

to the issue is still not a matter-of-fact one. Glorification was the answer to those accusations. Already about a dozen years ago Krystyna Kersten pointed to the substantial gaps in the knowledge about the NSZ's functioning and to the manner in which the "golden" and "grim" legends about the organization intermingled in the public sphere. The organization's treatment of Jews was one of the most obscure issues.

Krystyna Kersten, the author of the memorable book entitled *The Establishment of Communist Rule in Poland, 1943–1948* (Polish edition 1984, American edition 1991), stressed that even though the organization's ideology was anti-Semitic, "its platform did not include killing Jews as Jews. But it did happen during the war, and particularly after the war, that the NSZ killed Jews (and not only those connected with communists). […] but Jews were not killed only by the NSZ, as Polish forests were generally unsafe for them." She also stressed the need to carry out basic research on that topic: "The truth about the NSZ awaits its historian: an objective and – which is equally important – a professional one who can critically interpret both trial files as well as testimonies and memoirs." She also pointed out that the issue should be seen in a broader context: "The issue of killing of Jews by groups connected with the Polish underground during and after the war must be researched, facts and circumstances must be established, and those responsible for the murders must be identified."[4] Those postulates have been partially fulfilled with respect to the military underground organizations active during the German occupation. Krystyna Kersten emphasizes that after the fall of communism, it was understandable that the society "demanded history to be set straight, [it demanded] restoration of the omitted or misrepresented events and persons, a break from the Aesopian language and newspeak" and that it yearned for texts about the "heroic partisans from the Freedom and Independence [*Zrzeszenie Wolność i Niezawisłość*, WiN] and the NSZ" instead of glorification of the People's Guard (*Gwardia Ludowa*, GL) and the People's Army (*Armia Ludowa*, AL).[5] For many years the imperative of historical research objectivity clashed, at times viciously, with the efforts (more or less ostentatiously supported by the state) to develop historical policy, which usually ended with consent to idealize the past for some loftier reasons. The case of the NSZ is particularly conspicuous, especially with respect to the context we are interested in here. Most contemporary historians of that organization consciously take over the role of advocates of the "cursed soldiers" – they either treat all information on those soldiers' attitude toward Jews as an effect of ignorance resulting from communist propaganda (it is sometimes difficult to deny such arguments' validity) or they try to find "objective" justification for instances of "liquidation" of Jews that have been confirmed by the sources. Incidentally, this

[4] "Oblicza prawdy. Z prof. Krystyną Kerstenową rozmawia Anna Baniewicz," in Krystyna Kersten, *Pisma rozproszone* (Toruń: Adam Marszałek, 2006), 31–32.

[5] Ibidem, 27.

is an exact repetition of the traditional argumentation of the veterans of that organization.[6] Research difficulties result partly from significant gaps in the source materials. The documentation is dispersed and – with the exception of the state and Institute of National Remembrance (*Instytut Pamięci Narodowej*, IPN) archives – difficult to access. The organization documents selected by Leszek Żebrowski do not talk about the treatment of the Jewish ghetto escapees.[7] Those few NSZ members who wrote memoirs, even those who were accused of killing Jews, usually disregard such accusations. Their memoirs use twisted casuistry, which is quite understandable after all.[8] By contrast, the topic of the NSZ press has been quite well researched and thoroughly discussed. The NSZ periodicals' content proves beyond doubt the organizations' unchangeable devotion to the pre-war credo of the nationalists (National Radical Camp [*Obóz Narodowo-Radykalny*, ONR] and National Party [*Stronnictwo Narodowe*, SN]) with respect to the "Jewish question" and its deep indifference toward the extermination of the Jews.[9] It is difficult to discuss this topic for other reasons too. As for the subject

[6] The former NSZ members suggested such a "justification" already in 1950. See Stanisław Żochowski, "Narodowe Siły Zbrojne (wspomnienia osobiste)," *Kultura* (Paris) 5 (1950): 100–126; idem, "Dyskusja w sprawie NSZ," *Kultura* (Paris) 10 (1950): 126–127; a voice in the discussion: Władysław Kaniewski [W. Kołaciński], ibidem, 128–130. Polemizing with the accusations made by the Jews, the latter claimed that the Jews terrorized the Poles, requested help "at any price," that "they accused the landlords in order to take revenge on them" and that those from the communist detachments "must have actively participated in the robberies and murders of the Poles." If they were liquidated it was done to "protect the local people against the attacks and barbarian consequences on the part of the occupier" and not due to anti-Semitism.

[7] *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. Dokumenty, struktury, personalia*, selection, edition and introduction by Leszek Żebrowski (Warsaw: Burchard Edition, 1994–1996), vol. 1–3. In the introductions to each of the volumes the editor fiercely polemized with the false accusations against the organization.

[8] For example, the aforementioned Władysław "Żbik" Kołaciński, *Między młotem a swastyką* (Warsaw: Słowo Narodowe, 1991) (1st edition: Chicago, 1961). The author, the Special Action chief of the NSZ Włoszczowa County claims that during the German occupation and after the war his detachment executed only communists regardless of their nationality and that his family had helped the Jews. He stated having only acted "in the name of truth, with a certain dose of grievance against the Jews, thousands of whom avoided the gas chambers thanks to the Poles, and who […] generalized about 'Polish anti-Semitism' on the basis of sporadic incidents" (ibidem, 234). The presence of a Jewish physician in Kołaciński's detachment was to serve as the ultimate argument (ibidem, 120). Kołaciński's detachment executed a few Jews in Przedbórz in May 1945.

[9] Recently: Szymon Rudnicki, "The Attitude of the National Armed Forces. Propaganda towards the Jews," in: *The Holocaust History and Memory. Essays Presented in Honor of Israel Gutman*, Jerusalem: Yad Vashem, 2001, 79–103. It is obvious that the apologists' texts present totally different interpretations. One of the most recent ones: Wojciech Jerzy Muszyński, "Polscy narodowcy: antyżydowskość głównie teoretyczna," in *Złote serca czy złote żniwa? Studia nad wojennymi losami Polaków i Żydów*, ed. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz and Wojciech Jerzy Muszyński (Warsaw: The Facto, 2011), 319–352.

of our interest, Krzysztof Komorowski – not connected with the milieus building the heroic myth and author of a fundamental synthesis on the national camp's military activity – states only that "during many years of studies […] [he] had not found any sources confirming that the NSZ had been murdering the Jewish population." He admits, however, that the NSZ murdered both GL-AL detachments, some of whose members were Jews, and "Jewish forest groups" that professed to be communist partisan units.[10] It turned out that such an approach was inappropriate. Influential NSZ historian Leszek Żebrowski pointed to the reluctance to discuss that subject matter, to the omission of Jewish sources, and to the lack of references to foreign literature ("including the Jewish historiography"), and he ventured a claim that "the author's 'avoidance' of this difficult issue, which nevertheless should be researched in detail, disqualifies his work."[11] In his opinion, however, the shortcoming lay not so much in the lack of a matter-of-fact analysis of the problem as in the author's avoidance of polemics with Żebrowski or with other scholars connected with him, which meant that the author did not teach the slanderers an exemplary lesson. From the point of view of that milieu the subject had been sufficiently discussed many years ago and the case has been definitely closed.[12]

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[10] See: Krzysztof Komorowski, *Polityka i walka. Konspiracja zbrojna ruchu narodowego 1939–1945* (Warsaw: Rytm, 2000), 480. Zbigniew S. Siemaszko, the author of the first independent book about the NSZ, also distanced himself from the topic (*Narodowe Siły Zbrojne*, [London, 1982]). But he had taken up polemics with Stefan Korboński (the occupation period chief of the Directorate of Civil Combat [*Kierownictwo Walki Cywilnej*]), who accused the NSZ of murdering Jews. But he did not give any examples, which the polemist pointed out. In his opinion blaming the NSZ was "in accord with the national propaganda." Korboński claimed that the fact that it is objectively difficult to present a list of such murders does not mean that they did not take place. The Jews have such a list and "it is better if Mr. Siemaszko lets sleeping dogs lie. I know about those shameful acts of the NSZ from the underground reports; besides, the NSZ never really tried to keep them a secret. There were even some that boasted about it." Zbigniew Siemaszko, "Gloryfikacja pomyłek," *Zeszyty Historyczne* (Paris) 34 (1975): 187–193; Stefan Korboński, "Gloryfikacja bezczynu," ibidem, 195.

[11] Leszek Żebrowski, "Monografia ruchu narodowego 1939–1943, czyli Krzysztofa Komorowskiego droga przez mękę," *Mars* 13 (2002): 163–188. Quoted after the Internet version: http://www.glaukopis.pl/pdf/rec-1-2.pdf, retrieved 5 September 2011.

[12] There is almost nothing on the NSZ's attitude toward the Jews in the works on the Rzeszów region national camp (Krzysztof Kaczmarski, *Podziemie narodowe na Rzeszowszczyźnie* [Rzeszów: IPN, 2003]; the chapter "Pomoc Żydom" [Helping the Jews] describes three instances of help provided by the nationalists, 221–223) or in Podlasie, with the exception of the complaints about the persistence of the propaganda cliché of the NSZ murdering the Jews (Mariusz Bechta, *Między Bolszewią a Niemcami. Konspiracja polityczna i wojskowa Polskiego Obozu Narodowego na Podlasiu w latach 1939–1952* (Warsaw: IPN–Rytm, 2008), 9. Those milieus have been publishing *Glaukopis* since 2003. Even though the periodical takes interest in the "Jewish subject matter" not even one text was devoted to that topic. The only material based on the August decree trials talks about the communist underground (Mariusz Krzysztofiński, "Działalność grupy GL "Iskra". Przyczynek do badań

This article aims to question the legitimacy of this moral and professional self-satisfaction. The starting point of my analysis is the text written by Polish-American historian Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, published in 1996 in *Zeszyty Historyczne WiN-u* (journal edited by Janusz Kurtyka), "O globalną emancypację ze stereotypów, czyli kto mordował Żydów" [For a Global Emancipation from Stereotypes, or Who Killed the Jews], one of the most important statements in the post-1989 discussion on the NSZ's treatment of Jews. The text is a polemic with Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, who in his book *Polski ruch socjalistyczny 1939–1945* (1993) accused the NSZ of the murder committed at the end of 1942 against a few dozen former Polish Army soldiers who had escaped from the camp at Lipowa Street No. 7 in Lublin. Chodakiewicz (at that time working on a biography of Leonard Zub-Zdanowicz "Ząb", NSZ Special Action [*Akcja Specjalna NSZ*] commander in the Lublin District) ventured a bold thesis that the murder was committed either by the Polish Socialist Party members cooperating with the camp underground (Bronisław Baranowski "Czarny" was to be among them) or by a group of ordinary bandits under Stanisław Kiełbasa's command who had been terrorizing the area.[13] Yet he doubted the involvement of the communist partisan units operating in the area under Grzegorz Kilianowicz's (better known as Grzegorz Korczyński) command which was suggested e.g. by Israeli historian Shmuel Krakowski in his monograph on Jewish partisan units in the General Government.[14] Chodakiewicz presented many seemingly matter-of-fact arguments to support his stance and argued that "[i]f RPPS [should be PS – D.L.] was really guilty of the Jewish partisans' murder, then the socialist movement history researchers should explain to us why it happened."[15] Called to the board,

nad stosunkiem PPR i GL do ludności żydowskiej na Rzeszowszczyźnie," *Glaukopis* 11–12 (2008): 170–181).

[13] Stanisław Kiełbasa "Dziadek" from the village of Andrzejów had nothing to do with it even though he commanded a group of armed peasants that murdered the hiding Jews. I found no post-war investigation files regarding that group (post-war testimonies were quoted by various historians, not only by Chodakiewicz). We only know that the Lublin WUBP undertook some efforts in that direction. The circumstances of that case are quite curious. Everything started with the statement of Kraśnik inhabitant Józef Stolarz. On 18 May 1953 he reported about the meeting in the "Knieja" forest with a man claiming to be Stalin's son (allegedly the man belonged to Kiełbasa's band and was soon killed). Captain Dudek from the Lublin WUBP ordered an in-depth investigation regardless of the Soviet officer's identity (see: Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej Oddział w Lublinie [Archive of the Lublin Branch of the Institute of National Remembrance] (later: AIPN Lu), 011/188, file 1, pp. 206–207). That group's grim activity requires a separate description for which there is no space here.

[14] Shmuel Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed. Jewish Armed Resistance in Poland, 1942–1944* (New York–London, 1984), 84.

[15] Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, "O globalną emancypację ze stereotypów, czyli kto mordował Żydów," *Zeszyty Historyczne WiN-u* 8 (1996): 225–234. He did not remark on the fact that the Polish Socialist Workers' Party (*Robotnicza Partia Polskich Socjalistów*, RPPS) was established only in April 1943.

Professor Dunin-Wąsowicz replied sharply, accusing Chodakiewicz of ignorance and extreme incompetence, and then stated that Chodakiewicz's ideas "are not fit for a serious scientific discussion due to their low level."[16] Another text by Chodakiewicz, who worried about "the condition of Polish science," appeared in the next volume of *Zeszyty Historyczne WiN-u*. Its title "Logika faktów" (Logic of Facts) was highly telling. Using his characteristic poetics, he unceremoniously instructed his opponent about the necessity of objectivity ("we should focus on the scientific process itself and learn to differentiate its subtle facts"), accusing him of intellectual dishonesty and use of Soviet methodological models. He then called his own stance "a hypothesis based on solid foundations" and many years of source research. Żebrowski came to Chodakiewicz's aid, postulating "decommunization" of science. In his opinion the incriminated article "defends itself" against the attacks, which resemble tirades at party meetings, "since [it presents] a wide selection of sources."[17] It seems that Professor Dunin-Wąsowicz convinced few, since Chodakiewicz appeared to the reader as the unquestioned expert on the subject who had carried out substantial search queries regarding that territory and who boldly opposed ritual misrepresentation of history. The presented "discoveries" entered the scientific circulation. The author of this article was one of those led up the garden path.[18]

But let us return to the heart of the matter. In his first text discussed here, Chodakiewicz did mention the fact that the Provincial Court in Lublin discussed the fate of the POWs from Lipowa Street No. 7 in November 1953 during the examination of the case of the NSZ members accused of participation in the murder of a People's Guard detachment committed on 9 August 1943 near Borów. The court acquitted the accused of that charge, stating that the murder was committed by a detachment of the National Military Organization-National Army (*Narodowa Organizacja Wojskowa-Armia Narodowa,* NOW-AN) under "Tyrała Placek's" command. The reader could be sure that the verdict had little to do with reality, as the trial had been manipulated from its beginning. Besides, in "Ząb's" biography the information appeared only in the footnotes.[19] But Chodakiewicz had never read the files regarding that case, even though the trial files

[16] Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, "Odpowiedź," ibidem, 234–235.

[17] Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, "Logika faktów," *Zeszyty Historyczne WiN-u* 9 (1996): 275–279. Leszek Żebrowski, "'Odpowiedź' prof. Krzysztofa Dunin-Wąsowicza, czyli o potrzebie dekomunizacji nauki," ibidem, 280–292.

[18] While describing the biography of Jan Szelubski – massacre survivor and Warsaw Uprising participant – I wrote that it was difficult to identify the perpetrators of the murder of his comrades from the Lipowa Street camp (see: Barbara Engelking, Dariusz Libionka, *Żydzi w powstańczej Warszawie* [Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Centrum Badań nad Zagładą Żydów, 2009], 150).

[19] Chodakiewicz, "O globalną emancypację ze stereotypów," 226; idem, *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. "Ząb" przeciw dwu wrogom* (2nd edition, Warsaw: Stowarzyszenie Kulturalne Fronda, 1999), 116, 350, footnotes 186 and 187.

were available for researchers already when he was writing the text. The investigation files kept in the Archive of the Lublin Branch of IPN also studied by other historians of the NSZ but none of them was eager to set the canonic description straight.[20] Surprisingly, in the meantime Chodakiewicz secretly began to withdraw his theses.[21] It would be useless to wonder whether it was an example of extreme ignorance or ill will and manipulation since, let us say it right away, the archival materials unambiguously settle the matter of our interest. The course of events in the Zamość fee tail (*Ordynacja Zamojska*) forest near the village of Rudki and a few other episodes in its vicinity is far more interesting than wondering why the technical standards were breached by the representatives of that milieu, who for years have been shocking readers with pseudo-methodological platitudes.[22]

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Soon after the end of the war, Jan Szelubski – the last living member of the group – tried to reveal the secret of the murder of the Lipowa Street POWs committed near Kraśnik.[23] For a few tragic months at the end of 1943 he was a member of the partisan units in the Lublin region;[24] he belonged to the War-

[20] Rafał Jan Drabik, "Wydarzenia pod Borowem z 9 sierpnia 1943 r. Rzeczywistość i oblicze polityczno-propagandowe", M.A. thesis, Institute of History of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin (Lublin, 2002) (typescript in the IPN library in Lublin); idem, "Zarys historii III Okręgu Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych," in *Obóz narodowy w obliczu dwóch totalitaryzmów*, ed. Rafał Sierchuła (Warsaw: IPN, 2010), 101–116.

[21] In his opus magnum (*Żydzi i Polacy 1918–1955* [Warsaw, 2000]) Chodakiewicz does not refer to that episode at all. In his doctoral thesis ("Accommodation and Resistance: A Polish County During the Second World War and its Aftermath (1939–1941)," Columbia University, New York, 2001) he wrote (of course in a footnote) that he had not managed to explicitly establish the circumstances of the murder of the forty Jews near the village of Rudki. The perpetrators could have been ordinary bandits as well as rank and file members of the pro-independence organizations! (p. 236). He did not, however, say whether they were socialist or nationalist. The same applies to the printed version (*Between Nazis and Soviets. A Case Study of Occupation Politics in Poland 1939–1947* [New York–Toronto–Oxford, 2004], 180, footnote 111). This footnote regards the following sentence in the main text: "Most Jews died during the bloody struggle for power in the party (November 1942–February 1943) and during the conflicts within the communist partisan units (October 1943)."

[22] The last example is Chodakiewicz's quite curious introduction entitled "Refleksje: nowa praca, stare podejście" to *Złote serca*, 13–26.

[23] For more on the camp see: Marta Grudzińska, Violetta Rezler-Wasilewska, "Lublin, Lipowa 7. Obóz dla Żydów – polskich jeńców wojennych (1940–1943)," *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 4 (2008): 490–515; Wojciech Lenarczyk, "Obóz pracy przymusowej dla Żydów przy ul. Lipowej w Lublinie (1939–1943)," in *Erntefest 3–4 listopada 1943. Zapomniany epizod Zagłady*, ed. Dariusz Libionka and Wojciech Lenarczyk (Lublin: Państwowe Muzeum na Majdanku, 2009), 37–72.

[24] He had to leave the RPPS detachment active near Ryki which he co-created due to its members' anti-Semitism. A few of his Jewish members were assassinated. After the war the

saw underground and finally took part in the Warsaw Uprising in the AL ranks. At the end of September 1944 he was decorated by Gen. Tadeusz Komorowski "Bór" with the Virtuti Militari Silver Cross. After the fall of the Uprising he joined a communist partisan unit in Podhale. He returned to Lublin in 1945 where for over a year he was a deputy commandant for administrative affairs of the Lublin Citizen's Militia (*Milicja Obywatelska*, MO).[25] But his informal investigation came to a standstill. Besides, he soon left Lublin. He joined the diplomatic service and was sent to a post in Egypt. Apparently, the matter was haunting him as he reinstigated the investigation after his return. He got the Jewish Historical Institute (*Żydowski Instytut Historyczny*, ŻIH) interested in the matter and at the end of 1950 an exhumation was conducted in the forest near the village of Rudki. At that time Szelubski submitted a written testimony on the course and circumstances of the murder. According to the testimony a group of POWs in Lublin under Wolf Gleicher's command[26] contacted a mysterious underground organization commanded by a "Czarny" during the bloody conflict for power in the party (November 1942–February 1943) and during the conflict in the communist partisan units (October 1943). It was fairly easy to contact the organization as some Lipowa Street POWs could move freely about the city. Szelubski writes that it was a fascist group "camouflaged with patriotic platitudes." It is not entirely clear why Szelubski, who after the escape from the camp maintained contacts with socialist activists, joined Glaicher's group. But it is of secondary importance. Allegedly, the escapees met in a store in Leśniczówka (where a train station on the Lublin–Kraśnik route used to be). Forty-two people arrived within a few days. The "red scouts from Lublin" guided the Lipowa Street escapees, who were from the Polish Eastern Frontier and did not know the area. Szelubski writes that after a skirmish with a "blue" police detachment, the escapees went into the Kraśnik forest, where they built two dugouts. The people of "Czarny" swindled the POWs out of money for weapons, which as it soon turned out they did not intend to deliver. Consequently, the author of the testimony went with his friend to Lublin to contact his Polish acquaintances. A messenger sent from Kraśnik found him there and informed him that the last delivery of weapons had arrived and that the detachment was ready to immediately set out into the Janów forests. On the return he met an injured comrade who told him that the

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case was the subject of a party (PPS) investigation regarding the RPPS detachments' commander Jan Mulak, accused of being morally responsible for the situation.

[25] See: Engelking, Libionka, *Żydzi w powstańczej Warszawie*, 149–153.

[26] In the quoted testimony the surname is spelt Glajcher. He was a soldier of the 6th Mountain Infantry Regiment. See: Archiwum Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego [Archive of the Jewish Historical Institute] (later: AŻIH), 208, Kartoteka Jeńców Wojennych – Żydów z obozu w Lublinie przy ul. Lipowej 7, 1939–1941 [Files of Prisoners of War – Jews from the Camp in Lublin at Lipowa Street 7, 1939–1941]; see also: Benjamin Meirtchak, *Jewish military casualties in the Polish armies in World War II*, (Association of Jewish War Veterans of the Polish Armies in Israel, 1994), 183.

people of "Czarny" had murdered the POW detachment with bayonets and grenades.[27]

Already in spring 1947, when Szelubski was abroad, Chil Grynszpan (the commander of a Jewish detachment in the Parczew forests) and Józef Birger (a former Lipowa Street camp POW) submitted a joint statement on the fate of the group. They claimed that the perpetrators belonged to a POW/AK detachment and that they threw gas grenades into the dugouts. The Polish Military Detachments (*Polskie Oddziały Wojskowe*, POW) are also mentioned in the testimony of another escapee from Lipowa Street, Mieczysław Gruber, who similarly to Birger left the camp with a group associated with the PPR and then went into the Kozłów forests.[28] It is probable that their information was second-hand and most likely it came from Szelubski, whom they knew. At that time Roman Fiszer – another Lipowa Street camp underground member – also gave his testimony. He stated that the escapees' murder committed by the NSZ, which they found out about from three escapees who returned to the camp, undermined the faith in the success of group escapes.[29] Local peasants showed the location of the bunkers near Rudki, from where thirty-eight bodies were removed. Initially, the History Department of the Lublin PZPR Provincial Committee (*Wydział Historii Partii Komitetu Wojewódzkiego PZPR w Lublinie*) objected to the planned funeral ceremonies with the participation of veterans' organizations, claiming that the perpetrators had been a group of civilians and even that "there had been no murder at all." In the end the ŻIH directors intervened with the Party History Department of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (*Komitet Centralny Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej*, KC PZPR). The witnesses believed to be able to confirm the victims' status were: Szelubski, a few socialist activists from Lublin and Helena Wolińska, who learned about the course of the events from Szelubski in 1943 when she was a secretary of Franciszek Jóźwiak "Witold," chief of GL staff. In the end, the opposition of the Lublin comrades was broken and the ceremonious funeral took place on 10 February 1951 in Lublin on Lipowa Street near the former camp site.[30] On 10 April another exhumation

[27] AŻIH, 301/4857, Zeznanie Jana Szelubskiego [Jan Szelubski's Testimony], Warsaw, December 1950, pp. 2–6.

[28] AŻIH, 301/4858, Zeznanie Grynszpana i Birgera [Grynszpan and Birger's Testimonies], Łódź, April 1947, p. 1; ibidem, Relacja Mieczysława Grubera [Mieczysław Gruber's Testimony], no date, p. 3. It is difficult to establish the exact chronology of the escapes on the basis of the post-war testimonies. For more on the topic see: Krakowski, *The War of the Doomed*, 265–269; Lenarczyk, "Obóz pracy przymusowej dla Żydów przy ul. Lipowej," 58–62.

[29] AŻIH, 301/2808, Relacja Romana Fiszera [Roman Fiszer's Testimony], Wrocław, 5 September 1947, p. 8. Fiszer escaped from the camp in March 1943.

[30] AŻIH, 301/6448, List do Wydziału Historii Partii KC PZPR [A Letter to the History Department of the Central Committee of the PZPR], Warsaw, signed by Bernard Mark, 31 January [1951]; ibidem, Protokół komisji ekshumacyjnej [Exhumation Commission Report], 20 January 1951. Interestingly, the first text on the extermination of the Jews in the Lublin region

of the Jewish partisans' bodies was conducted near the village of Rudki. Eleven bodies, two pistols and a defense grenade were found. The objects were handed over to the Jews' Social-Cultural Association (*Towarzystwo Społeczno-Kulturalne Żydów*, TSKŻ).[31] *Sztandar Ludu* – the Lublin KW PZPR press organ – did not mention the funeral ceremony.

Szelubski's testimony given already after his emigration to Israel introduces new and quite surprising details. It presents a significantly different chain of events. It turns out that in fear of arrest, Szelubski escaped from the camp (in fact from a post in the city), already in August 1942. He was hiding in an apartment of the Baranowskis – socialist activists he met by chance. Allegedly he even came to Warsaw where he unsuccessfully tried to get the AK to help the POWs. After the escape of the first group of POWs, who feared possible repressions, it was the socialists who directed the subsequent groups toward Kraśnik, even though there was no logistical support. The Leśniczówka storekeeper Sobol supposedly acted as an intermediary in the escapees' contacts with the Polish group active in that area. The group they wanted to buy weapons from called itself Polish Military Detachments. This time Szelubski does not mention anybody by the pseudonym of "Czarny." The escapees were to stay in the forest for a month. Szelubski specified that the soldier named Feld,[32] an eyewitness of the massacre, ended up in a hospital (the Lipowa Street POW camp operated until 3 November 1943) and died after the war in Lublin in unknown circumstances. After his arrival in Warsaw, Szelubski immediately notified the PS and PPR authorities about the murder, but the perpetrators were not identified. He added that he

does not say what happened with that group (see: Tatiana Berenstein, "Martyrologia, opór i zagłada ludności żydowskiej w dystrykcie lubelskim," *Biuletyn ŻIH* 21 [1957]: 50. Without going into details, the author made a reference to Szymon Fajersztajn's testimony given on 17 July 1946, see footnote 32).

[31] In the document: to the Jewish Provincial Committee in Lublin. AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 3, Pismo kierownika ekipy ekshumacyjnej Witaliusza Stasiuka do prezydium WRN [Exhumation Crew Director Witaliusz Stasiuk's Letter to the WRN Presidium], 14 April 1951, p. 100. The funeral was held on the day the report was written.

[32] Yad Vashem Archive (later: AYV), O3/3630, Relacja Jana Szelubskiego [Jan Szelubski's Testimony], 19 February 1973, part 1 and 2. The information on Feld – Szelubski's note attached to the testimony written after the confrontation with Roman Fiszer. Szelubski also said that his friend Abraham Gordon was among the murdered. Fiszer also says that the surname of the commander of the escapees' group should be spelt Rassler. The same thing is said in Shmuel Krakowski's *The War of the Doomed*, 266–267. But it cannot be so since there is no Ressler on the list of the Lipowa Street camp POWs. According to a different testimony, the soldier's name was Bisen and in spring 1943 he was in a cell with the author of the testimony at the Lublin Castle. He told him about the group near Kraśnik that contacted the Poles and gave them money for weapons. But the Poles murdered the Jews by throwing smoke grenades into the bunker (AŻIH, 301/1813, Relacja Szymona Fajersztajna [Szymon Fajersztajn's Testimony], 17 July 1946, p. 7). There was a Lipowa Street camp POW by the surname of Basen, and it could have been him.

appeared as a witness at Sobol's trial held in 1952 in Lublin. All in all, few facts were determined. Chodakiewicz used Szelubski's testimonies to attribute the blame to socialists. But no testimony allows for identification of "Czarny" with Bronisław Baranowski, with whom Szelubski was later in the same RPPS detachment (Baranowski died during an attack on a gendarme station in Życzyn) and whose sister he married already during the occupation.[33]

Let us then gradually reconstruct the events that took place near the village of Rudki on the basis of the investigation documentation from the Archive of the Lublin Branch of IPN.[34] At first, a few general remarks. From the communist authorities' point of view, the Borów murder was the most infamous political murder of the occupation period.[35] Its perpetrators' trial, which took place during 28 October–5 November 1953 before the Provincial Court in Lublin, had an obvious political dimension and was to meet both short-term and long-term propaganda objectives, which was openly stated in detailed directives. The public trial was to "expose the atrocity of the activity of the fascist NSZ bands that operated at the service of the Nazi occupier." Equally important was that it was "to show the society that the Polish bourgeois had betrayed the nation." The whole setting was meticulously prepared and the authorities went to great lengths to create dramatic tension by setting the order of interrogations of defendants and witnesses.[36] Similarly to other proceedings of that kind, the accused were subjected to physical coercion[37] and some incriminating evidence was simply fabricated.

[33] It is also untrue that Szelubski made an accusation against Korczyński. He learnt about the accusations against him regarding the murder of the Jewish partisans near Kraśnik from a program broadcast by the Polish section of Radio Free Europe in 1969. His surname was mentioned during the program. Before his departure from Poland he unsuccessfully tried to meet with Korczyński and talk to him about it (AYV, O3/3630, part 1, p. 11–12).

[34] AIPN Lu, 011/188, Sprawa Leona Cybulskiego i innych [The Case of Leon Cybulski and others], files 1–9. While writing the text I had no access to the trial files which had been rented from the State Archive in Lublin [Archiwum Państwowe w Lublinie] (APL, Akta karne Sądu Wojewódzkiego [Provincial Court Penal Files], "K", list No. 3, 266/53) to the District Court in Lublin. The court files also include the testimonies given during the investigation.

[35] On 9 August 1943 by order of its commanding officer Leonard Zub-Zdanowicz the NSZ detachment "liquidated" twenty-six members of a GL detachment under the pretext of punishing their bandit activity. The High Command of the Home Army distanced itself from that "horrific murder" (see: order No. 122 of Gen. Tadeusz Bor-Komorowski of 9 November 1943 and *Biuletyn Informacyjny* 46, 18 September 1943, 1). I do not deal here with the assessment of the literature on the topic or with the reconstruction of that bloody episode and its context.

[36] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 8, Plan zabezpieczenia procesu [Trial Security Plan], signed by Dobrzyński, Head of the Investigation Section of the Lublin WUBP, September 1953, p. 30.

[37] As his cellmate reported, Leon Cybulski complained during the trial about the violence used against him by Captain Kazimierz Prośniak, who was carrying out the investigation (ibidem, file 1, Doniesienie parafowane przez "Z" [Report signed by "Z"], 28 October 1953, p. 258). For more on the tortures used by the investigating officers in Lublin see Kazimierz Wybranowski's memoir, which I quote later, and the testimonies given during the rehabilitation trials of some persons involved in the case.

As for the indictment as a whole, the issue of the Jews' murder was of secondary importance, but at the same time such accusations validated the propaganda cliché used with respect to that organization. All this should be taken into consideration before reading these materials.

The six men arrested in connection with the murder of the GL members near Borów were: Leon Cybulski "Znicz" captured on 6 December 1951 and arrested on 20 December that year, Stanisław Skowroński "Knoll" arrested on 7 January 1952, Kazimierz Wybranowski "Kret" arrested on 28 March, Ryszard Ławryszczuk "Zagłoba" arrested on 8 May, and finally Jan Wtykło "Wojna" arrested on 1 September 1952. At the moment of the arrest Cybulski (born in 1915) – the commander of one of the first NSZ partisan units in the Kraśnik district – was the director of a state-owned farm (*Państwowe Gospodarstwo Rolne*, PGR) in Syrków near Kołobrzeg and a PZPR member. Skowroński (employed in the borough court in Kraśnik during the occupation) and Ławryszczuk (born in 1904) were party members too. Similarly to Wybranowski (born in 1917, PPS member since 1946, not admitted to the PZPR), who was an officer in the Henryk Figuro-Podhorski "Step" partisan unit, all three of them came from outside the Lublin region. Wtykło, born in 1907 in the village of Dębina in the Zakrzówek municipality, was an exception. Unlike the others he had a criminal record. He spent a few years in prison and was released in September 1939. None of the accused had any pre-war associations either with the National Party or with the National Radical Camp. Skowroński, who died in prison a few months before the trial, and Borów parish priest Władysław Stańczak, who was tried during that trial, had nothing to do with the murder of the Lipowa Street camp POWs. Nor did Wybranowski, pre-war student of the Lvov University of Technology, who arrived in the Janów district in spring 1943.[38] His family lost its estate in the Poznań district so his father and brother rented a farm in Borów and sent for their remaining relatives. Their farm soon became the headquarters of the local NSZ. It is not without significance that the 50-hectare farm was a post-Jewish property the Wybranowskis rented from the Germans by the agency of the Land Registry (*Urząd Ziemski*) in Lublin.[39] When they moved onto the farm in spring 1942 the rightful owners' family of five was still there. Initially, they worked for the Wybranowskis and then they illegally stayed on the farm or near it during the deportations and the following months. None of the Jews survived the war.[40]

[38] In the text I use the names Janów district and Kraśnik district interchangeably. At the end of 1942 the seat of the German authorities was transferred to Kraśnik.

[39] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 7, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Wybranowskiego [Typescript of Kazimierz Wybranowski's interrogation], 13 December 1953, p. 100.

[40] Chodakiewicz quotes the testimony of Maria Zub-Zdanowicz (nee Poray-Wybranowska), Wybranowski's sister, which evokes an idyllic image of the two families' relations (she says that the Jews' surname was Zielonka-Majeri). The owner's wife and her aunt were allegedly arrested by accident in Borów in November 1943 together with the Jews hiding in the area. Later the owner of the farm and his son allegedly sneaked onto the farm looking for food.

We do not know what exactly the UB (*Urząd Bezpieczeństwa*, The Security Office) investigating officers knew in the beginning about the anti-Jewish activity of the accused. One of the notes on Cybulski written in January 1951 on the basis of the agents' reports mentioned the murders of the Jews, including the murder of forty Jews in a forest near Rudki. The "gangs" of Stanisław Kucharski "Krzemień" and Leon Cybulski "Znicz" were thought to be responsible for the massacre. Mieczysław Zeń, Stanisław Poźniak, Marian Jakimiak and others who later "wore the clothes of the murdered" were also mentioned in that context. "The bandits themselves, Ludwik Sekuła and his sons from Kraśnik and [Lublin] WUBP [(Provincial Public Security Office (*Wojewódzki Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego*)] employee Stanisław Wtykło, Paweł Kołtun and the members of the gang, should know something about it." The Security Service functionary to whom the report was submitted noted that the last two were mentioned because the events which were the subject of the examination of the case took place near their place of residence.[41] Jan Oleszko from the Kłodnica settlement and two other locals suggested that Cybulski "Znicz" had something to do with the case. It is significant that the NSZ liquidated Jan Oleszko's brother on suspicion of his being a spy.[42] But the testimonies were extremely general.[43] Bolesław Kowalski (real name Kaźmierak) "Cień" – a local GL-AL commander from Zakrzówek – submitted a short statement in which he groundlessly accused Cybulski "Znicz" of the murder of the Jews.[44] It was sufficient, however, for the charge regarding

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They were supposed to have slept in the barn. Allegedly the Wybranowskis had protected them until the NSZ withdrew from Borów (Chodakiewicz, *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. "Ząb"*, 341, footnote 124). This statement is dubious, particularly the information that the Jews were removed from the farm, let alone the information that the new landlords left them with nothing to live on. From Chodakiewicz and his interlocutor's point of view it was an act of help. In a different text, he writes about the Jews being provided with a hiding place but does not mention their future fate (*Between Nazis and Soviets*, 178). In fact the Jewish family's surname was Zielonka. In 1925 Majer and Moszek Zielonka received the farm from Berek's father. Two years later Majer handed the farm over to Salomon's son. I would like to thank Ph.D. Tomasz Osiński for this information.

[41] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 1, Notatka urzędowa. Informacje w sprawie "Znicza", przyjął Haponiuk [Official memo. Information on "Znicz," submitted to Haponiuk], 4 January 1952, 145–147.

[42] Ibidem, file 3, Raport do dyrektora Departamentu Śledczego MBP [Report to the MBP Investigation Department Director], 24 December 1951, 64–65. Józef Małek and Bronisław Sumera from Zakrzówka confirmed that.

[43] Oleszko's testimony given in the PUBP in Kraśnik on 13 April 1948 mentioned only "a murder of a number of Jewish supporters of democracy" (ibidem, file 2, p. 37v). Małek's testimony was not included in the files. Bronisław Sumera's testimony on the murder of forty people of Jewish nationality near the village of Rudki opposite the house of late Michalak was based on "what the locals said" (ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania [Typescript of interrogation], 4 December 1951, p. 169v).

[44] Ibidem, file 1, Oświadczenie Bolesława Kowalskiego [Bolesław Kowalski's Statement], 13 January 1951, p. 172.

the murder of 30 Jews near Rudki by Cybulski's unit to be included in the motion for his temporary arrest.[45] I analyze the information on the role of Kucharski "Krzemień" later.

The issue of the murder near Rudki came up already during the first interrogation of Cybulski "Znicz" conducted on 12 December 1951 by Henryk Goleń from the District State Security Office in Kraśnik. Cybulski "Znicz" came from the Poznań province, was a functionary of the State Police (Precinct Ceremonial Guard Company [*Kompania Reprezentacyjna przy Komendzie Głównej*]) and participated in the September 1939 campaign after which he accidentally came to Zakrzówek and soon joined the "blue" police ranks. Fearing arrest after a giveaway in the Armed Combat Union (*Związek Walki Zbrojnej*, ZWZ), he went into hiding in May 1940. He came into contact with the local National Military Organization at the end of 1942 by the agency of a Sprawka from Kiełczewice, who introduced him to the deputy district commandant by the pseudonym of "Placek" and then to his superior "Prawdzic" [surname unknown]. He also talked about the extremely anti-Semitic atmosphere in the NOW (*Narodowa Organizacja Wojskowa*, National Military Organization) ranks. The district commanders were to agitate for the liquidation of Jews whom they indentified with communists. Supposedly Cybulski accepted those theses without enthusiasm but it did not stop him from joining the organization. One day he handed four grenades to "Placek." "The next day," continued Cybulski, "Sprawka told me that in the Kraśnik forest a number of [people of] Jewish origin had been murdered, and 'Placek,' Sprawka himself and others he did not mention participated in that murder. The following day we went there where the Jews had been murdered, so I saw that there were about 20 people. I was accompanied by Wacław Cieśla from Zakrzówek, Zen from Zakrzówek and Poźniak, who was killed later. When we got to that place there were Sprawka and 'Marynarz' [Bartkiewicz] and 'Zuch' [Strzemieszny] and one other man whose surname I do not know from the Leśniczówka outpost." Cybulski said that it was in spring 1943.[46] In a statement he signed on that very day he again accused "Placek." "[H]e gave instructions and orders to liquidate the Jewish population and even the Russians, which he did in Zakrzówek at a certain farmer's and in the Kraśnik forest where he took the grenades from me and he said he needed them, only the next day did I learn from cit[izen] Sprawka from Kiełczewice, that some Jews had been murdered in the Kraśnik forest."[47] It is difficult to say whether Cybulski suspected what the investigating officer

[45] Ibidem, file 3, Wniosek skierowany do szefa WUBP w Lublinie przez kierownika PUBP w Kraśniku [Petition to the Lublin WUBP Head Submitted by the Kraśnik PUBP Head], 17 December 1951, p. 60.

[46] Ibidem, file 5, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of interrogation of suspect Leon Cybulski], 12 December 1951, pp. 4–5.

[47] Ibidem, file 1, Oświadczenie Leona Cybulskiego [Leon Cybulski's Statement], 12 December 1951, pp. 184–185.

knew and if he tailored the answers to fit the questions he was asked. According to the interrogation typescript, it seems that the investigating officer asked open-ended questions ("tell me your biography") but one cannot be sure.

Three days later when asked about the originator of the Jews' murder, Cybulski added a handful of new details. He admitted that he heard the grenade explosions at night and that the following day during the penetration of the bunker twenty kilograms of peas and some clothes were found. Cieśla took some shoes and Poźniak took a bucket and jacket. The previously set meeting with Sprawka and his people (including Ławryszczuk "Zagłoba" and Soboń "Wiśnia" from Kiełczewice, who showed the location of the other bunker) took place only later. Some money and watches were found on the victims.[48] The version of the events was further modified during the interrogations conducted by Zbigniew Kowalski from the Lublin WUBP. It turned out that Sprawka was known under the pseudonym of "Czarny," that he had been a trader since 1939 and that he was a scout in the NOW structures. He met Cybulski already during his service in the "blue" police in Zakrzówek. On 15 February 1952 (the interrogation was entirely devoted to the murders of the Jews committed by the NSZ) Cybulski mentioned the resistance of the Jews who were attacked in the bunkers. Later on he specified that they were "refugees from various parts of the Lublin province out of whom Sprawka formed a partisan unit." He allegedly told Cybulski "Znicz" that no perpetrators would ever be found.[49]

Cybulski mentioned the organization's anti-Semitism in all of his testimonies: "The sentences were not passed directly on each Jew. At the NOW organization briefings it was said that it was each member's duty to ruthlessly liquidate the Jews, because the Jews were true communists and they governed Russia and later they would govern Poland and that was why they should have been liquidated." According to Cybulski, the NOW members were even ordered to murder the Jews kept by their families. Failure to disclose such information was to be punished with death![50] It is almost certain that the UB investigating officers demanded such compromising self-accusations. At the same time it was common to shift the responsibility to one's superiors. Besides, no documents containing orders to murder the Jews were presented.

But the details of Cybulski's testimonies regarding the circumstances of the murder of the Lipowa Street camp escapees seem entirely plausible. There is also no doubt whatsoever that Sprawka "Czarny" who appears in those testi-

[48] Ibidem, file 5, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of interrogation of suspect Leon Cybulski], 15 December 1951, pp. 17–18.

[49] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of Leon Cybulski's interrogation], 8 January 1952, p. 32; ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of Leon Cybulski's interrogation], 15 February 1952, pp. 52–53, 60v–61.

[50] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of Leon Cybulski's interrogation], 8 January 1952, p. 33.

monies is the person known to us from Jan Szelubski's testimonies. It does not follow from the case files whether the surname was familiar to the investigating officers. But the "Placek" and "Zuch" pseudonyms had already appeared in the testimonies of arrested conspirers or the conspirers who came out. I discuss the details later. All three men (Sprawka "Czarny," "Placek" and Strzemieszny "Zuch") and the other participants of those events were dead, which made it easier to shift all responsibility onto them, particularly since the witnesses' testimonies did not sound too convincing. Henryk Gryta from Zakrzówek, who worked in the Szczecin security apparatus during the investigation, was one of the persons who accused Cybulski of participation in the Kraśnik forest murder. He testified that Ludwik Sekuła, an AK member from Zakrzówek, told his father that Cybulski and brothers Jan and Stanisław Poźniak (who later on wore the victims' elegant shoes) had murdered forty Jews. Allegedly, the case was transferred for examination to the ZWZ-AK command, which failed to take any action.[51] As was the case with the above-mentioned Oleszka's testimonies, personal revenge could have been the motive as an NSZ detachment liquidated Tadeusz Gryta's brother who belonged to the AL and who shot one of the Poźniak brothers.[52] Sekuła could have been a reliable witness since a member of that family, Zygfryd, was hiding before the Germans in 1941 together with Cybulski. But he gave only second-hand information during his interrogation by the UB.[53] Ludwik Sekuła himself was not interrogated with regard to that matter, which was not mentioned in any of the materials that regard him.[54]

The Lublin TSKŻ chairman, Moszek [Marian] Adler, was interrogated only in September 1952. He said that he had found out about the graves in the forest near the Rudki settlement from Stanisław Wtykło from the Lublin County Public Security Office (*Powiatowy Urząd Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego*, PUBP) – the same Wtykło as the one mentioned in the report of January 1951! The locals also accused the NSZ of the murder. Adler testified that shattered skulls, ribs and bones were found in the graves. He also said that Szelubski could be a witness in that case.[55] But Szelubski was neither interrogated nor did he appear as a witness during the Borów trial. By order of the Ministry of Public Security Investigation Department (*Departament Śledczy MBP*) vice director Adam Humer, three GL partisans were chosen, in consultation with the PZPR and MBP, to be witnesses. At that moment the victims attributed to the NSZ became identified with the Lipowa Street camp escapees in the investigation materials. The

[51] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania Henryka Gryty [Typescript of Henryk Gryta's interrogation], 9 February 1952, pp. 73–74.

[52] Chodakiewicz, *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. "Ząb"*, 157.

[53] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania Zygfryda Sekuły [Typescript of Zygfryd Sekuła's interrogation], 26 February 1952, p. 91.

[54] Ibidem, 016/639, Teczka Ludwika Sekuły [Ludwik Sekuła's Files].

[55] Ibidem, 011/188, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania Moszka Adlera [Typescript of Moszek Adler's interrogation], 8 September 1952, pp. 148–150.

surviving documentation also lacks testimonies of Stanisław Wtykło (GL commander in Zakrzówek during the occupation, pseudonym "Kot") mentioned by Adler. There might not have been enough time to interrogate him as he was ill and died in August 1953. It seems that he was not related to Jan Wtykło "Wojna" tried during the Borów trial.[56]

The testimonies of Ryszard Ławryszczuk "Zagłoba" (other pseudonym – "Kmicic"), arrested at a PGR in Skoszeń in the Bydgoszcz province, cast new light on the events.[57] According to Cybulski, Ławryszczuk was present at the crime scene the day after the murder and the two men met first in January 1943 in a forest bunker in the company of Polish and Jewish partisans![58] Ławryszczuk fought as a volunteer during the Polish-Soviet war, graduated from an officer cadet school and became active in the Garwolin district underground in 1939. At the turn of 1942 and 1943 he became involved with the nationalist underground only to return to the AK in August 1943. He was deported to the USSR immediately after the "liberation" and he stayed there for two years. His testimonies introduce new details regarding certain threads of the testimonies of Cybulski. "Tyrała" (other pseudonym of "Placek"), who accepted him into the organization, worked as a guard at a plant in Budzyń. People addressed him as "engineer." He lived at a grange near the village of Stróża and was soon arrested in Lublin. Ławryszczuk did not know his surname or at least he claimed so. The activity of the NOW district executive concentrated around Leśniczówka. It was there where Ławryszczuk met its commander, a certain "Wołodia," "Marynarz" [Bartkiewicz] domiciled nearby and "Wiśnia" [Soboń] – a colonial store owner. On the basis of their conversations, he concluded that a group of Jews had recently been murdered in the area and that "Tyrała" ("Placek"), Jan Wtykło and Sprawka participated in the crime. The killers tricked the Jews: they pretended that they wanted them to form a partisan unit. Ławryszczuk also witnessed "Tyrała" ("Placek") talking about gold, money and objects stolen from the Jews. Adam Soboń, the storekeeper, supposedly took some of the loot.[59] He remained in the unit after Ławryszczuk had become its commander. But investigating officer Kowalski did not ask the witness if he had been at the crime scene the day after the murder. No confrontation with Cybulski was conducted either.

It is easy to see that Soboń is "Sobol" from Szelubski's testimony. Finding him was not a problem for the UB. He was captured on 12 December 1952 in

[56] Ibidem, 028/1462, Teczka Stanisława Wtykły [Stanisław Wtykło's Files].

[57] Ibidem, 011/188, file 4, Raport do dyrektora Departamentu Śledczego MBP o przejęciu sprawy do prowadzenia, sporządził por. Dobrzyński [Report to MBP Investigation Department on the taking over of a case, written by Lieutenant Dobrzyński], 16 May 1952, p. 35.

[58] Ibidem, file 5, Protokół przesłuchania Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of Leon Cybulski's interrogation], 8 January 1952, p. 32; ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of Leon Cybulski's interrogation], 15 February 1952, pp. 52–53, 60v–61, 67v.

[59] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 6, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 10 May 1952, p. 12.

the village of Grochowo in the Trzydnica district in the Wrocław province. The next day a temporary arrest warrant was issued on suspicion of his participation in the murder of the GL-AL members. Soboń was born in 1901 in the village of Wierzchoniów. He graduated from a non-commissioned officers' school in Dubno in 1922 and did his military service there in the 43rd Infantry Regiment. He moved to Leśniczówka in 1934 and ran a store there until 1944. In August that year he was interned and deported to the USSR where he stayed until November 1947. He lived in Lublin until May 1949 and then he disappeared from that area.[60] Yet according to other testimonies, he spent the whole occupation in Majdan Sobieszczański.[61] Allegedly he began to hide from the Germans in mid-1943. Only the record of Soboń's interrogation by Kowalski in September 1953 was included in the Borów case files. Asked about the group of "Placek," he testified that it functioned within the framework of the ZWZ. He listed its members: "Zuch" (Strzemieszny), "Marynarz" (Leon Bartkiewicz from Majdan Sobieszczański), Sprawka and Jan Wtykło, whom we already know, and local inhabitants: Zygmunt Skulimowski, Szczepan Szymański and finally "Jacek" (surname unknown) from Lublin.[62] The last surname appeared for the first time. Let us note right away that oddly enough Soboń, who was in a prison in Lublin, was not summoned to appear during the Borów trial as a witness for the prosecution.

Among the investigation materials against Soboń,[63] beside the certified copy of Ławryszczuk's testimony, there was also a short testimony given by Wacław Cieśla, whom we already know from the testimony of Cybulski. It does not come as a surprise that that farmer from Zakrzówek had problems with his memory during the interrogation conducted by investigating officer Stefan Lenart. He did not know the perpetrators' surnames. But he did confirm that "on the second or third day" after the murder of the Jews, he went to the crime scene as a NSZ post member "to see the murdered persons." Cybulski and one of the Poźniak brothers accompanied him. In the thick pine coppice they saw forty stripped male bodies with bullet holes. They took a look and went home. Two days later Zakrzówek's mayor ordered the firefighters, including Cieśla, to bury the corpses.[64] This is a new thread in the case.

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[60] Ibidem, file 8, Raport do dyrektora Departamentu Śledczego MBP o przejęciu sprawy przeciwko Adamowi Soboniowi [Report to the MBP Investigation Department on the taking over of the case against Adam Soboń], 19 December 1952, pp. 250–252. Written by Captain Kazimierz Prośniak.

[61] On the basis of the materials from the AIPN Lu, File 326/201.

[62] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 4, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Adama Sobonia [Typescript of interrogation of suspect Adam Soboń], 12 October 1953, p. 149.

[63] AIPN Lu, 011/867, Akta śledcze przeciwko Adamowi Soboniowi [Investigation Files against Adam Soboń].

[64] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Wacława Cieśli [Typescript of interrogation of witness Wacław Cieśla], 6 September 1952, p. 24.

As far as the reconstruction of those horrible events is concerned, the most important of course are Soboń's testimonies. He testified on 12 January 1953 that "Placek," Sprawka "Czarny" and "Jacek" came to his store located by the train station and demanded ten loafs of bread and five kilos of kielbasa, because they were about to go to Lublin to bring over a partisan unit. Indeed, on the same day thirty armed men in plain clothes arrived by train. For security considerations they got on the train at the station in Zemborzyce. Two weeks later a member of the group came to Soboń's store asking for information about "Placek," who disappeared after he had collected the money for weapons. The same day Władysław Strzemieszny ("Zuch," "Wołodia") came to the store and Soboń told him what he had found out. Later, Sprawka came to the store with two women and ordered them to be escorted to the place where the unit was staying. There Soboń saw bunkers and armed men. The next day on the way to Lublin to get the stock the storekeeper noticed two gendarmes escorting those women and a man from the camp. At Jan Szczur's place appeared Cybulski's group of 6–7 men arrived from Zakrzówek and a group from an outpost in Wilkołaz under command of "Jakub" (surname not mentioned). There was also Jan Wtykło. It turned out that the action was aimed at the forest bunkers. "Placek" supposedly ordered Soboń and Szymański to keep guard at the edge of the forest, in front of the house, sixty meters from the bunkers and "make sure that nobody would go out." He gave the password to the guard and was allowed to pass. A moment later Soboń heard shots and explosions. Sprawka and "Jacek" set the straw on fire and threw it into the bunkers. After the murder "Placek" allegedly explained that the liquidation order came from Warsaw because the Jews had been disarming smaller units, including the one of a certain "Kiełbasa." Soboń swore that he had seen a document with the words "Republic of Poland." Then he said what happened a few days after the murder: "[when] we went to that place the bunkers had already been covered up and we went home." Later that day he gave a different testimony – the group from an outpost in Wilkołaz, Kiełbasa and the document with the "sentence" disappeared. Cybulski appeared in his testimony only at the moment when the corpses were being buried.[65]

There is no doubt as to Soboń's active participation in the events described. Some elements of his version should be written off as fiction, particularly his claim that all of a sudden he had been chosen to keep guard (why did it have to be him?). The files of August decree trials clearly show that such a line of defense was common for most defendants charged with crimes against the Jews. The information on the top-down orders to "liquidate" the Jewish group sounds equally implausible. But such information met the expectations of the investigating of-

[65] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Adama Sobonia [Typescript of Adam Soboń's interrogation], 12 January 1953, pp. 35–38; AIPN Lu, 326/201, Protokół przesłuchania Adama Sobonia [Typescript of Adam Soboń's interrogation], 12 January 1953, pp. 22–24. In both cases the interrogation was conducted by Zbigniew Kowalski.

ficers, who took keen interest in the NSZ commanders' involvement in ordinary crimes. Investigating officer Zbigniew Kowalski did not display any major ardor with respect to this case, which might be surprising considering Soboń's accusations against Cybulski. Anyhow, Cybulski had been distancing himself from his acquaintance with Soboń from the very beginning.[66] And Soboń could be sure of the other witnesses and defendants' discretion, for accusing him of being one of the perpetrators would have been tantamount to confession of one's guilt. Ławryszczuk was the only one who consistently accused Soboń. He even claimed that Soboń had been tried for the theft committed during that murder. He also said that he knew from the talkative members of the group about the practice of escorting the Jews out of the ghettos in Bełżyce, Trawniki and other ghettos and murdering them afterwards. He even claimed that he had witnessed Soboń's participation in two murders of Jews hiding near Zakrzówek. The activities against the Jews were to stem from the ideology of the "National Party mafia." It should be added that Ławryszczuk was the defendant who condemned the organization the most ardently. He also gave testimony that incriminated his companions and he even showed some remorse. According to the information provided by an informer from his cell, it disgusted Cybulski even though he had sometimes given similar testimonies. Coming back to Ławryszczuk's testimony regarding the storeowner, in his opinion Soboń ("Wiśnia") stood out among the unit members due to his extreme greed.[67] He said that the loot coming from the murders of the Jews was taken over by the organization and that it constituted the so-called detachment treasury. Some of the loot was handed over to the command and it was supervised by Sprawka. After the unit had been taken over by the NSZ in spring 1943 the money went to that organization. It was quite a handsome sum in foreign currency and gold (including gold teeth and fillings) obtained during the Kraśnik forest murder. I will return to the issue of the settlements and division of loot. In that testimony Ławryszczuk made accusations against Wtykło too, who was to acquaint him with the details of the murder – the men first shot through the exit holes and when they ran out of ammunition they threw straw brought by Sprawka into the holes to smoke out the Jews. Then the Jews received fatal machine gun blows. According to Ławryszczuk, one or two guns broke on the victims' heads.[68]

Soboń was accused of participation in the Kraśnik forest murder of the Jews on the basis of the testimonies of Cybulski, Ławryszczuk and Cieśla and under article 1, section 1 of the August decree. The first hearing took place in July 1953. Soboń

[66] According to Cybulski, the man whose pseudonym was "Wiśnia" was Aleksander Ziemba from Kiełczewice.

[67] AIPN Lu, 011/167, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 13 February 1953, pp. 56–59.

[68] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 13 February 1953, supplement, pp. 60v–61.

consistently denied everything and pleaded not guilty. He also claimed that all the testimonies had been entirely forced during the investigation by violence and blackmail. He said that he had not played any part in the organization (he consistently called it the ZWZ). He confessed to his participation in the burial of the corpses ordered by "Placek." As the witnesses changed their testimonies, the case was sent back for completion.[69] On 3 December 1953, a month after the Borów trial, the Province Court in Lublin acquitted Soboń and released him on the same day. Moszko Adler from the Lublin TSKŻ, whom I have already mentioned, appeared during the trial but was unable to connect the witness with the Kraśnik forest massacre.[70] According to the files, Soboń was sure of his impunity. Yet his triumph proved premature as Jan Szelubski came onto the stage. Soboń was arrested and put on trial again on the basis of Szelubski's testimonies. Szelubski indentified him during the hearing and then told in detail about his contacts with the group of Poles near Leśniczówka and its tragic end. Compared to the testimonies mentioned earlier this one offers new details: it was Soboń who supposedly met Glajcher in Lublin and initiated the transport of the Lipowa Street escapees to Leśniczówka. Beside him and Sprawka, Szelubski also mentioned a meeting with a certain "lieutenant." The Jews were to hand in big sums of money in gold and foreign currency to these three men. Soboń denied everything until the end but his line of defense fell into ruin. The court with Judge J. Janczarek presiding deemed his testimonies entirely false and sentenced him to seven years' imprisonment and four years of public rights' deprivation.[71]

Let us go back to 1952. The activities of the Kraśnik and Lublin Public Security Department regarding the Borów case were conducted on a wide scale. Former NOW and NSZ member Kazimierz Pidek (pseudonyms "Gruby" and "Konar") provided interesting information on the persons and events of our interest. Before the war Pidek was a policeman – the Urzędów police station head. After the Germans' arrival he continued his service but fearing arrest at some point he went into hiding in his hometown of Kiełczewice Górne and in the surrounding area. In 1944 he was the director of Department II (intelligence) of the

[69] AIPN Lu, 326/201, Protokół rozprawy głównej [Typescript of the main hearing], 20 July 1953, pp. 70–82v.

[70] Ibidem, Wyrok [Sentence], 3 December 1953, pp. 133–135. The sentence is worth quoting: "Even if we assume that the accused was guarding the crime scene, it should be said that the court proceedings did not prove that the accused knew at that time why he was guarding the place or that he at least knew what was about to happen there. Consequently, no data confirm his intention to commit the act he is accused of." Conclusion: "the court proceedings did not provide sufficient evidence to establish Soboń's fault and consequently the court had to pass such a sentence."

[71] Ibidem, Protokół rozprawy głównej, przerwanej [Typescript of the main hearing, interrupted], 26 October 1954, pp. 202–210; ibidem, Wyrok [Sentence], 14 January 1955, pp. 252–255. The Supreme Court upheld the sentence. Soboń was released from prison on parole in January 1956.

NSZ Kraśnik district headquarters.[72] In January 1947, after he had come out, he was arrested and successively persuaded to cooperate as TW (Secret Collaborator) "Wilk". And the accusations were not connected only with his activity during the occupation and after the war – the members of the former Communist Party of Poland (*Komunistyczna Partia Polski*, KPP) accused him of being an ardent communist prosecutor. His name came up in the context of the testimonies of Cybulski and of other defendants and, after his exclusion from the agents' network, he was arrested in Krasnystaw on 28 June 1952 where he lived. His case was conducted concurrently with that of Cybulski and his companions. Pidek was also accused of searching for Jews hiding in the area and participating in their murder. Later on, there were attempts to accuse him of participation in the Kraśnik murder too.[73] Let us concentrate on the thread of the Lipowa Street escapees' murder in his files. In his testimonies Pidek was unwilling to reveal the details connected with the beginning of his activity in the National Military Organization. But his testimonies given five years earlier came in handy here. We learn from them that he actively participated in the efforts to create local NOW structures. He came into contact with the organization in November 1941 by the agency of his acquaintance Soboń, who introduced him to pre-war aviation officer "Prawdzic" – NOW district commander. Pidek immediately took an oath in the presence of his superior and Soboń and assumed the pseudonym of "Gruby." He received and distributed issues of *Walka* – the SN press organ. Not long after the arrest of "Prawdzic" he became a subordinate of "Tyrała," who ordered him to create local NOW-AN structures and recruit volunteers to a forest detachment. Pidek organized four posts and found a man with a light machine gun – Władysław Sprawka "Czarny" – in Kiełczewice Górne. In May 1942 "Tyrała" ("Placek") allegedly incorporated Sprawka into a fifteen-man strong detachment. The testimonies feature talk in detail about what happened with the unit later but we cannot be sure if the dates are exact. Pidek claimed that "[b]efore the 1942 harvest the Germans took the unit of 'Tyrała' by surprise, arrested 'Tyrała' and dispersed the unit." Pidek supposedly had not been involved with any organizations until September 1943 when he was accepted into the NSZ.[74] And so here we get to know more about Soboń and Sprawka's status. Pidek must have known the latter very well since they came from the same village. Sprawka does not appear in the testimonies given in 1952, which should not be

[72] All the information comes from the following files: AIPN Lu, 003/2450, Akta śledcze Kazimierza Pidka [Kazimierz Pidek's Investigation Files], 28 June 1952–8 April 1953 and APL, Akta karne Sądu Wojewódzkiego [Provincial Court Penal Files], 301/53.

[73] AIPN Lu, 003/2450, Raport o przejęciu sprawy do prowadzenia [Report of the taking over of the case to be investigated], 4 July 1952, p. 48, ibidem, Akt oskarżenia przeciwko Kazimierzowi Pidkowi [Kazimierz Pidek's Indictment], no date, pp. 170–178.

[74] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Kazimierza Pidka [Typescript of interrogation of suspect Kazimierz Pidek], 30 January 1947, pp. 17– 17v.

particularly surprising.[75] But there is another important piece of information: the meetings with commanding officer "Prawdzic" were held in Leśniczówka at Soboń's store.[76] During the second hearing before the Lublin court in January 1954 (the sentence of the first instance was overridden by the Supreme Court) Pidek claimed that he had arguments with "Tyrała" about the treatment of the Jews but to no avail, and that he had tried to convince him that murdering them was a crime prosecuted under the penal code. The charge of his complicity in the murder of the POWs from Lipowa Street was dropped.[77]

The aforementioned Stanisław Kucharski "Krzemień," who replaced "Tyrała"-"Placek" as the Kraśnik NOW-AN structures' commander, had a lot to say about the activity of the unit of the executive. He was arrested on 3 July 1952 on suspicion of giving orders to murder Jews and GL members. Already at the starting point the materials incriminating the district NOW-AN commanding officer of spring and summer 1943, who then became the commanding officer of the NSZ Kraśnik district and who was a Lublin power plant engineer at the moment of his arrest, were deemed to be of little value.[78] But from our point of view his testimonies on the Kraśnik branch of the NOW-AN executive are of tremendous cognitional value just like other materials from his files. According to Kucharski's statement of January 1945 included in the files, he was accepted into the organization by Paweł Szaruda "Placek."[79] Kucharski is perhaps the only witness to mention the district NOW commander' surname in their testimony! He also said that after his arrest "Jacek" became the commander of the 30-people unit. By order of the AN district commander, "Jacek" was incorporated into the unit of Andrzej Kuczborski "Wojciech." Kuczborski died and was replaced first by "Jacek" and then by Ławryszczuk. Kucharski testified that those people were

[75] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Kazimierza Pidka [Typescript of interrogation of suspect Kazimierz Pidek], 27 August 1952, p. 85.

[76] APL, Akta karne Sądu Wojewódzkiego [Penal Files of the Provincial Court], 301/53, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Pidka [Typescript of interrogation of suspect Kazimierz Pidek], 26 August 1952, p. 30.

[77] Ibidem, Protokół rozprawy głównej [Typescript of the main hearing], 19 January 1954, p. 198v. He was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment on 22 June 1953. He was sentenced to four years' imprisonment and was deprived of his public rights for three years on 10 May 1954; released on 12 August 1955.

[78] AIPN Lu, 011/971, file 1, Akta Stanisława Kucharskiego, Raport do dyrektora Departamentu Śledczego MBP o przyjęciu sprawy do prowadzenia [Stanisław Kucharski's Files, MBP Investigation Department Director's Report on the taking over of the case to be investigated], 8 July 1952, pp. 10–11.

[79] Ibidem, Odpis protokołu przesłuchania Stanisława Kucharskiego [Certified Copy of Stanisław Kucharski's interrogation], 11 January 1945, p. 35. (It was the typescript of Kucharski's interrogation conducted after his first arrest on 10 January 1945). In 1953 he claimed that he was accepted into the AN by "Prawdzic," who was arrested at the end of 1942 (ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Stanisława Kucharskiego [Typescript of Stanisław Kucharski's interrogation], 3 February 1953, p. 62).

probably guilty of the murder of the Jews in the Kraśnik forest. Yet that was second-hand information.[80] He did not know the immediate details of the course and circumstances of the murder. It is unclear what his function in the NOW-AN at the end of 1942 was – probably he was the organizational department head.

The records of his subordinates' testimonies provide some interesting details. Józef Jagielski "Niebieski," the commanding officer of the NSZ post in nearby Wilkołaz, said that in summer 1943 he witnessed Kucharski requesting Ławryszczuk to account for the money in gold taken from the murdered Jews. The latter declared that he had already paid substantial sums of money to the district treasury to his predecessor. Kucharski did not believe it and threatened that he would notify the region command. Holz, a local NSZ member, allegedly told Jagielski in secret that Ławryszczuk had gathered a fortune taken from the murdered Jews.[81] A surviving document from the files of the Borów investigation confirms Jagielski's testimony. The officer that inspected the local NSZ structures wrote in his report about the order given to Major Michał Kłosowki "Rola" (deputy NSZ district commander and former NOW-AN commander). "[U]ntil the 13th day of this month [October 1943 – D.L.], a thorough report on the finances of the former NOW in the District [is to be] submitted to the district commanding officer as it has been assumed that the organization should square up with the NSZ financially after its incorporation into the NSZ." The Lublin District commandant Zygmunt Broniewski "Bogucki" reported to him that "'Krzemień,' [Kucharski] Janów district, had 50,000 zlotys in dollars and gold, about which he had reported to him in person, and which he had not handed over, he had not accounted for 18,000 in bonds." He then ordered Kłosowski to conduct until 21 October "an investigation regarding 'Zagłoba's' [Ławryszczuk's] executive and the burglary of 3 estates in the Lublin and Janów districts 3 days ago whose owners were ordered by Zagłoba to each pay 35,000 for protection." And when it was determined that "Mr. Rola [Kosowski] closely cooperated with Krzemień [Kucharski] and [as in the original – D.L.] bandit Zagłoba [Ławryszczuk]" he ordered the NSZ Lublin district commander "to conduct an investigation and immediately take the strictest possible measures to discontinue the ordinary banditry camouflaged with ideology."[82] In the light of that document we could doubt

[80] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Stanisława Kucharskiego [Typescript of Stanisław Kucharski's interrogation], no date, pp. 19–20.

[81] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Józefa Jagielskiego [Typescript of Józef Jagielski's interrogation], 23 December 1952, pp. 29–31.

[82] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 1, Wyciąg z odpisu raportu inspektora dowódcy NSZ, Lublin, podpisał "Strzała" (prawdopodobnie Stanisław Żochowski) [Extract from the certified copy of a report of NSZ Commander Inspector, Lublin, signed by "Strzała" (probably Stanisław Żochowski)], 11 October 1943, p. 167. The certified copy of the document is in various archive units discussed in this text and in the NSZ documentation in the State Archive in Lublin (APL, NSZ, 35/1074/0/1/4, p. 3). Interrogated by the investigating officers, Major "Rola" did not recognize the document he was given (AIPN Lu, 06/655, Protokół przesłuchania Stanisława

Ławryszczuk's truthfulness regarding Soboń's extreme greed. In the context of Jagielski's sensations the sum appearing in the report quoted obviously cannot be regarded as substantial. I will discuss Ławryszczuk's excesses during that period – particularly their "Jewish" context – at the end of this text.

The described case could have been the main reason for Kucharski's removal from the position of the Kraśnik NSZ commander. He was replaced by Kazimierz Koźma "Baca." Kucharski himself claimed that he transferred to the Peasants' Battalions (*Bataliony Chłopskie*, BCh) because of the conflict with Zub-Zdanowicz "Ząb." His alleged split with the NSZ (which actually did not take place) was to have been partly caused by anti-Semitism: "The aversion to Jews visible in the underground press fuelled the Nazi propaganda, and [the anti-Semitism] transferred onto the more vast areas of ordinary citizens not only did not help but actually worsened the suffering of the haunted Jewish nation, which I thought uncivil and inhumane."[83] Still, Kucharski was accused of ordering the murders of the Jews.[84] On 13 May 1953 the Provincial Court in Lublin sentenced him to 15 years' imprisonment. The same court acquitted him on 22 November 1954.

Kucharski's files include other important information on the murder near the village of Rudki. In October 1950 Secret Collaborator "Smuga" told his officer what he found out from Zakrzówek inhabitant Józef Stefanek about the location of the bunkers where the Jews had been murdered. Allegedly they were located in the coppice on the right side of the road from Rudki to Zakrzówek, near late Michalak's property. One more important piece of information: after the murder Stefanek was to sever his relations with the nationalists and join the AK.[85] Interestingly, during one of the interrogations Cybulski testified that he had been at Jan Stefanek's when the Kraśnik forest murder took place. The investigating officers did not see any connection there. Some time later "Smuga" sent in a report on the murder of "Israeli citizens" near the village of Rudki in which he mentioned a few surnames of the possible perpetrators (Marian Jaśkowiak, Witek Jaśkowiak, Heniek Dulęba, late Mieczysław Skokuj, Kamiński from Majorat, Roman Kawecki, Mieczysław Zyń and Stanisław Kucharski). He was instructed to obtain more information from Stefanek and other members

Michałowicza [Michała Kłosowskiego] [Typescript of Stanisław Michałowicz's (Michał Kłosowski's) interrogation], 6 March 1953, p. 127).

[83] AIPN Lu, 06/655, Oświadczenie własne Stanisława Kucharskiego [Stanisław Kucharski's Statement], no date, pp. 57–57v. The statement is true in the light of the NSZ propaganda. For instance, in one of the NSZ periodicals we can find the following passage. "The partisan combat […] provides an opportunity to deal in advance at least in the field with all undesirable elements pretending to be involved in pro-independence activity against the Germans, such as Soviet, Ukrainian, revolutionary (communists, Jews) and bandit (self-proclaimed robbery bands, etc.) elements." "Partyzantka," *Naród i Wojsko* 8, [12] September 1943.

[84] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 8, Akt oskarżenia przeciwko Stanisławowi Kucharskiemu [Indictment against Stanisław Kucharski], 19 February 1953, pp. 298–301.

[85] AIPN Lu, 011/971, file 1, Doniesienie "Smugi" ["Smuga's" Report], 11 October 1950, p. 123.

of the organization.[86] In another denunciation he accused Cieśla.[87] Either Stefanek was not interrogated or I did not find his testimonies. Roman Kawecki (Kiełczewice Dolne NSZ post commander mentioned in the denunciation) was arrested in 1949 in connection with a grim murder of the Jews in the settlement of Rechta but he was released from prison.[88]

It is time to sum up. Marek Jan Chodakiewicz's attempt to overcome the stereotype of blaming the NSZ with the murders on Jews was not so much a fiasco as it was conducted using a wrong example, regardless of whether that choice was conscious or not. Despite certain discrepancies and imprecision of the materials discussed, there is no doubt as to the organizational affiliations of the persons who murdered the escapees from the Lipowa Street camp in Lublin. The Provincial Court in Lublin which passed the sentence in the Borów murder case was right to claim that the crime was committed by the NOW-AN district executive unit, which became part of the Kraśnik NSZ in spring 1943 (its composition changed in the meantime). The structure associated the opponents of the NOW's merger with the AK. Major Michał Kłosowski "Rola," who had been the NOW deputy commander, became the structure's commander on 25 November 1942. As I have mentioned after the creation of the NSZ he was appointed the Lublin district deputy commander.[89] Chodakiewicz's suppositions in *Zeszyty Historyczne WiN-u* that socialist activist Bronisław Baranowski "Czarny" was involved in the murder do not stand up to criticism. Already Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz pointed out that "Czarny" was a common pseudonym among underground activists.[90] Yet that argument was ridiculed. Chodakiewicz's supporter Leszek Żebrowski made the following accusations. "Can Professor Dunin-Wąsowicz point to another person from the then underground in that area who would meet these criteria?"[91] On the basis of the materials I analyze we can easily determine "Czarny's" identity as well as other perpetrators' surnames or at least pseudonyms. None of them had anything to do with the socialists. Yet they all were somehow associated with the nationalist underground near Kraśnik and Zakrzówek. Nothing suggests that the testimonies regarding that matter were forced according to a pre-prepared scenario. It should be stressed once again that the murders of the Jews were a secondary thread of the Borów investigation.

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[86] Ibidem, file 2, Doniesienie "Smugi" ["Smuga's" Report], 31 January 1951, p. 45.

[87] Ibidem, Doniesienie "Smugi" ["Smuga's" Report], 10 February 1951, p. 48.

[88] See: Dariusz Libionka, Paweł P. Reszka, "Święto zmarłych w Rechcie," *Karta* 46 (2005): 122–136.

[89] Marcin Zaborski, "Okręg Lubelski Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych," in *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. Materiały z sesji naukowej poświęconej historii NSZ, Warsaw, 25 October 1992*, ed. Piotr Szucki, consultation Leszek Żebrowski (Warsaw: Związek Żołnierzy Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych, 1994), 191.

[90] Dunin-Wąsowicz, "Odpowiedź," 235.

[91] Żebrowski, "'Odpowiedź' prof. K. Dunin-Wąsowicza," 282.

According to the testimonies given during the investigation, Kraśnik NOW-AN commander Paweł Szaruda played the main role. He is mentioned as the Janów district commander in the order of 1 April 1943 signed by Kłosowski.[92] Szaruda was arrested (date and cause unknown) and put in the Lublin Castle prison. According to a surviving entry, he was in the prison hospital, from which he was discharged on 25 August 1943. The entry also informs us that he was born on 25 January 1918 and registered in Kraśnik.[93] His future remains unknown. That person should arouse the interest of a scholar interested in the nationalist underground.[94] Among the prisoners detained at the Castle at that time there was also Stanisław Sprawka, but he does not seem to be the person we are looking for,[95] especially since Pidek, who knew Sprawka best, said that his name was Władysław. But we know the exact date and the circumstances of Władysław Sprawka's death. During one of the first interrogations Soboń said that Sprawka had died in a skirmish with the Germans near Wilkołaz on 23 May 1943.[96] The commander of the Unit, Kuczborski, also died then.

Contrary to what a few defendants (Ławryszczuk in particular) claim in their testimonies, the suggestions that the crime was committed by order of the organization's Lublin or even Warsaw authorities should be approached with great caution, particularly as that thread had been eagerly taken up, or even initiated, by the Lublin WUBP functionaries and the public prosecutor's office. Major Kłosowski was arrested on 27 May 1952 (he lived in Słupsk then) and

[92] APL, NSZ, 35/1074/0/1/4, Armia Narodowa, Komenda Okręgu Lublin, Rozkaz nr 1 [Home Army, Lublin District Command, Order No. 1], 1 April 1943, p. 1.

[93] Archiwum Państwowego Muzeum na Majdanku [State Museum at Majdanek Archive], Kartoteka więźniów Zamku Lubelskiego, Księga szpitala ZG PCK [Lublin Castle Prisoner's List, Polish Red Cross Hospital Register], No. 6179. Szaruda's name is neither on the list of the deceased at the Castle nor in the Majdanek camp documentation.

[94] The first – and so far the basic – text on the Lublin NSZ does not mention the surname in the characteristics of the district executive unit (Zaborski, *Okręg Lubelski NSZ*, 224). Chodakiewicz is wrong in saying that his name was Jacek Tański and that he was executed at Pawiak. See: *Between Nazis and Soviets*, 417. The list of Pawiak prisoners includes neither Tański nor Szaruda.

[95] Date of birth 15 May 1887. Sprawka and Szaruda do not appear in the book on the Castle prison (*Hitlerowskie więzienie na Zamku w Lublinie 1939–1944*, ed. Zygmunt Mańkowski [Lublin: Wydawnictwo Lubelskie, 1988]); they are not on the list of those deported to Auschwitz (see: *Księga pamięci. Transporty Polaków do KL Auschwitz z Lublina i innych miejscowości Lubelszczyzny*, vol. 1–3, ed. Franciszek Piper and Irena Strzelecka (Oświęcim: Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, 2009).

[96] AIPN Lu, 326/201, Protokół przesłuchania Adama Sobonia [Typescript of Adam Soboń's interrogation], 10 January 1953, pp. 18–19. The Catholic Action (*Akcja Katolicka*) prospectus published by the Wilkołaz parish entitled *Wspólna Droga* incorrectly informed that Władysław Sprawka from Kiełczewice (a member of Cybulski's unit) died on 27 May 1943. After three months his body was transferred to the cemetery in Kiełczewice. A monument devoted to the NSZ soldiers was erected in 2004 in Zalesie at the site of the skirmish (http://www.wspolnadroga.ovh.org/artykul.php?numer=7%282004%29&numer2=6, retrieved 5 September 2011).

charged with murder of PPR activists, GL soldiers and hiding Jews.[97] He consistently pled not guilty. During the hearing he claimed that all evidence against him had been fabricated and that the key witness was entirely unreliable as he had been removed from the NSZ.[98] On 28 May 1953 the Provincial Court in Lublin sentenced Kłosowki (who used the fake surname of Michałowicz) to death. The Supreme Court then changed the sentence to life imprisonment. In October 1957 the same court acquitted him due to the fact that the testimonies incriminating him had been forced from the witnesses using physical coercion.[99] During and after the hearing Kłosowski (Michałowicz) insisted that he knew nothing about the murders of the Jews, that he had neither conducted inspections nor given any orders. He insisted that his role in the NOW and NSZ structures was purely symbolic: "I don't know [anybody by the] pseudonym of 'Placek.' I have never heard about the murders committed by the NOW. I don't know what units were stationed in the Kraśnik [district] at that time." In June 1953 he sent a retrial request to the Supreme Court. In the request's conclusion he completely denied his participation in the murders of the Jews. "[A] church-going Catholic, I would never commit such a serious crime so as to give orders to murder them." He also said that no materials in the NOW and NSZ archives taken over by the State Security Department confirmed any of the indictment charges.[100] Indeed,

[97] According to the testimony of Ławryszczuk, who allegedly met Kłosowski in Leśniczówka, Kłosowski ordered the murder of the Jews as German collaborators. He ordered Strzemieszny's unit to liquidate two or three Jews hiding at a widow's by the forest near Kiełczewice, who supposedly had been released from Kraśnik to spy on the organizations (AIPN Lu, 06/655, file 1–2, Materiały Stanisława Michałowicza, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Stanisław Michałowicz's Materials, Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 23 May 1952, p. 15). Before the investigation was closed this version of events was expanded by a thread of Michałowicz's collaboration with the Gestapo, the orders to murder Soviet partisans and his connection with the murder in Borów. Ławryszczuk claimed that "Placek" submitted to him a report on the liquidation of the Jews in the Kraśnik forest (Archiwum Sądu Okręgowego w Lublinie [District Court in Lublin Archive] (later: ASOL), 203/57, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 27 February 1953, pp. 24–26).

[98] Not going into the details of the indictment, Marcin Zaborski was the first to write about that trial of Kłosowski: Marcin Zaborski, *Mjr Michał Kłosowski (ps. "Jan", "Rola", "Ziemowit"), komendant Okręgu Lubelskiego Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych. Zarys życiorysu* (Lublin: Związek Żołnierzy Narodowych Sił Zbrojnych, 1993), 15–18. The author does not mention the surname of Michałowicz's accuser.

[99] As a result of an amnesty in May 1956 the sentence was shortened to twelve years' imprisonment. Ławryszczuk's statement that all his testimonies had been forced during the investigation, and that he had been terrorized, beaten and tortured, contributed to the later pardon (ASOL, 203/57, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], Wronki, 20 February 1957, p. 182).

[100] Ibidem, Protokół rozprawy głównej [Typescript of the main hearing], 8 May 1953, p. 68–69; ibidem, List Stanisława Michałowicza do Sądu Najwyższego w Warszawie [Stanisław Michałowicz's Letter to the Supreme Court in Warsaw], 2 June 1953, pp. 103–106.

due to the lack of the NOW-AN documentation it should be assumed that the whole "operation" was prepared and carried out by the Kraśnik structures. But it is easy to question the claim about the commander's ignorance of those structures. For in the above-mentioned order Kłosowski not only mentioned "Placek" but he also wrote, "during the inspection I noticed in most of the District and almost without exceptions very high military and ideological values among the officers and privates subordinate to me. I think it is an honor to command such expert units during the preparations for the ultimate battle with the enemy." It is difficult to believe that the words referred to the units and posts under his command but with the exception of the Kraśnik district executive, especially that according to his own testimonies, he knew the Kraśnik structures the best. Not knowing about the evidence against him, he argued that he had not known how the NOW and NSZ headquarters in the Lublin and Kraśnik districts were organized. He did not mention anybody from the first one. From the Kraśnik headquarters he could "remember the pseudonyms of 'Paweł' also called 'Placek,' 'Chrabąszcz' and 'Wojtaszek.' […] As far as I can remember the men were successive NSZ district commanders." Then it gets more and more interesting. "There was also an armed unit at the commander's disposal by the Janów headquarters. That unit's members lived at home and the commander called them when he needed them. There were also forest NSZ units, but initially there was only one under command of 'Wojciech' [Kuczborski]." "I ordered for the members of the so-called district executive to be incorporated" into that very unit and consequently the executive ceased to function.[101] It is highly probable that Kłosowski knew Szaruda in person because according to Kucharski's testimonies, around the time when the Lipowa Street camp escapees were murdered he lived with his family in the village of Szastarka near Kraśnik and Zakrzówek.[102] It should be stressed that from the beginning Kłosowski (Michałowicz) claimed that he had lived in Lublin where he had worked as a trader, while his wife had lived in the village of Bystrzyca (and only since the end of 1943), also located near the places where the events of our interest took place. Be that as it may, he felt no moral or political responsibility for his subordinates' crimes and excesses. Whether the courtroom was an appropriate place for any acts of expiation is another thing. Unlike most people who appeared in the case, before the war Kłosowski was

[101] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Stanisława Michałowicza [Typescript of Stanisław Michałowicz's interrogation], 24 August 1952, pp. 20–21.

[102] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Stanisława Kucharskiego [Typescript of Stanisław Kucharski's interrogation], 2 March 1953, pp. 27–28. That fact was confirmed during the hearing (ibidem, Protokół rozprawy głównej [Typescript of the main hearing], 8 May 1953, p. 72). Ławryszczuk, who was much less reliable, said the same thing in his testimony. He even said that he had often been with "Placek" in Szastarka (ibidem, p. 76). During the hearing Kucharski withdrew his testimony against Kłosowski in which he stated that Kłosowski gave orders to liquidate the Jews including the group in the Kraśnik forest. "He had a negative attitude toward the Jews, but he did not give orders to liquidate them" (ibidem, p. 72).

closely connected with the nationalist camp, which influenced his military career – in 1928 he was transferred to the reserve. In 1921 he married the widow of his friend, anti-Semitic writer Teodor Jeske-Choiński.

Since the two main suspects – "Jacek" (surname unknown) and "Zuch" (Władysław Strzemieszny) – died[103] it is difficult to say if it was planned from the very beginning to lure the POWs into a trap or if the plan to murder them was born when it occurred that the promises made to the Jews could not be kept. It is difficult to believe that the Kraśnik NOW-AN wanted to remove from the camp Jews willing to engage in military activity. The nationalists were not the only ones to consider the Jews escaping from the ghettos and camps a serious danger to the local population's safety. It was quite common to accuse them of spreading ordinary banditry as no effort was made to understand their position. It seems that the liquidation of the bunkers was conducted by summarily mobilized members of the organization, some of whom might have been unaware of the action's true purpose. The scenes described by Soboń, with the exception of his role, are surely not far from the truth. It is difficult to imagine that they would risk a skirmish with former Polish Army soldiers who, making matters worse, had at least a few weapons, even in the situation where they would be totally taken by surprise. The forces of the NOW-AN district executive seem surely inadequate, especially as it was to be their first "military action" for they had conducted no operations against the Germans. In this context it is difficult to believe that they would not use the services of experienced policeman Cybulski and his people. The prospect of considerable loot seems to be the main motive of the murder, which might mean that there were some efforts to limit the number of beneficiaries. This is why it sounds totally irrational that Cybulski would be invited to participate in the looting of the bunkers to share the profits with those who did not take a risk to obtain them. The participation of Cybulski and his people in the looting of the bunkers – to which he himself confessed – is a strong premise as to their active participation in the murder. Even though Soboń accused Cybulski during the initial interrogations, the investigating officers concentrated on other threads of the investigation, not only on the Borów murder but also on the activity of the Catholic priests, in a propaganda effort to link it with the "NSZ fascists" (I omit that investigation thread altogether). The reports on the trial printed in *Sztandar Ludu* mentioned "the murder of about 50

[103] Chodakiewicz states that the latter commanded the detachment from October 1942 until March 1943 (see: *Between Nazis and Soviets*, 429). The memo written by a Kraśnik PUBP functionary features the following vague passage. "'Wołodia' [Strzemieszny], a member of the reconnaissance executive of 'Ząb's' [Zub-Zdanowicz's] special detachment, lived in a detached house near the Leśniczówka station, while the surname of the [previous] detachment commander was Władysław Strzemieszny, about 45 years old, tall, slim, blond, joined the WP [Polish Army (*Wojsko Polskie*)] and was seen in Lublin as a sergeant. His father was killed by the Germans in 1942" (AIPN Lu, 013/79, Komunikat z wywiadu [Report from the Intelligence], 20 June 1952, no pagination).

soldiers of Jewish nationality who had escaped from the Nazi camps and were hiding in the Kraśnik forests" only once – on the first day of the trial on the occasion of presentation of the content of the indictment. Contrary to Cybulski's claims, the escapees probably had significant financial means, and Soboń and Sprawka, who traveled from Kraśnik and Lublin, must have known about that. Besides, Szelubski also said in his testimony that the POWs had some resources. From the point of view of the perpetrators the victims' clothes, especially the shoes, were also valuable. It is neither the first nor the only instance when the victims' bodies were literally stripped naked.

There must have been at least about a dozen participants. Many of them died before the investigation began. The participation of the Wilkołaz NOW post members, mentioned in one of Soboń's initial testimonies, remains a mystery. I have already mentioned that oddly enough the investigation files do not include any testimony of Jan Wtykło, who was undoubtedly present at the crime scene together with Soboń, Cybulski and Wacław Cieśla. Other materials regarding him collected by the Lublin WUBP do not include any of his testimonies either.[104] Besides, it is surprising that Wtykło got the most lenient sentence from the defendants.[105] But on the one hand, his role was undoubtedly the least significant. On the other hand, according to the court files, unlike Ławryszczuk and Wybranowski and partly Cybulski, he did not confess to any of the acts he was accused of. Similarly, neither then nor later did the court take any interest in the person of Wacław Cieśla, who appeared in the investigation files.[106] Yet he appeared as a witness during all hearings of Soboń.

Even more mysterious is the approach toward "Marynarz," who appears in many testimonies. His real name was Leon Bartkiewicz (born in 1911) and his pseudonym (Sailor) was connected with his service in the navy or in the merchant marine. It is difficult to say which one it was on the basis of the memos written by MO and UB functionaries after their conversations with the local population. But it is of little significance for us. Bartkiewicz spent the occupation mostly in the village of Majdan Sobieszczański near Leśniczówka. After the dissolution of the NOW-AN executive he allegedly spent two months in the unit of "Step" after which he returned with Soboń "Wiśnia" to their place of residence.[107] After the "liberation" he was hiding in that area while maintaining contact with the local anticommunist partisan units. He left the area about a year later. He did not attempt to come out. Bartkiewicz began to appear at the interrogation

[104] AIPN Lu, 011/189, Teczka Jana Wtykły, s. Ludwika [Files of Jan Wtykło Son of Ludwik].

[105] Cybulski was sentenced to death, Ławryszczuk was sentenced to life imprisonment, Wybranowski got fifteen years' imprisonment and Wtykło got twelve years' imprisonment, while Stańczak, who had not been connected with the case, was sentenced to six years. Later on the sentences were shortened.

[106] At least this is what we can read in the materials available in the Lublin IPN (AIPN Lu, 020/389, Wacław Cieśla i inni [Files of Wacław Cieśla and others]).

[107] All the documents quoted come from file 013/79 in the AIPN Lu.

of the arrested members of the NSZ in 1952 and it was easy to determine that he lived in Świder near Warsaw. Various information on him had been collected. A Majdan Sobieszczański inhabitant said that in 1942 Bartkiewicz "contacted the POWs, who had served in the Polish Army and were of Jewish origin and were in the camp on Lipowa Street in Lublin, so that they could escape to the partisan units and then he liquidated (shot) them." But that was second-hand information.[108] During the investigation he was accused mostly by Ławryszczuk, who said that Bartkiewicz had been a messenger between Strzemieszny's unit and the district command. He also described the course of the events differently than other defendants:

> [Strzemieszny, "Placek" and Bartkiewicz] tried to estimate their [the Jews'] financial/cash resources under the pretext of creating a unit out of them. Apparently the Jews found out about their insidious plans, because most women left the bunkers, while the men and a small number of women stayed. Wołodia's [Strzemieszny's] group felt that the loot was slipping out […] of their hands, so a decision was made to murder them and take the loot. One winter night the executive including Bartkiewicz murdered the people I mentioned using grenades thrown at the bunkers and firearms. They finished off the remaining victims with the machine gun butts because they had run out of ammunition. After the murder they took all of their possessions. Sprawka pseudonym "Czarny" took the banknotes and foreign currency for safekeeping, while pseudonym "Marynarz" [Bartkiewicz] took the golden objects, teeth and fillings for safekeeping. I give such a detail that during the murder when the persons were being finished off Sprawka's machine gun's butt broke off. […]
>
> I know directly from "Marynarz" [Bartkiewicz] that "Zagłoba" [Ławryszczuk] said that he had a contact password to the ghetto in Bełżyce and Trawniki from where people of Jewish nationality were kidnapped and tortured by the Executive. I know one fact, namely that a woman of Jewish nationality […] was kidnapped in that way from one of the ghettos, [the one] who moved in for a short period of time with Bartkiewicz's family during 1942–1943.

He killed her in a nearby forest.[109] Yet no effort was made to verify those testimonies.

In June 1951 the Lublin PUBP for the first time requested a thorough interview about Bartkiewicz. It transpired that he had been employed in the State Works in Warsaw as an electrician and that he had not been involved in any

[108] AIPN Lu, 013/79, Meldunek oficjalny [Official Report], 12 August 1949, p. 19. On the basis of Piotr Mendykowski's statement, who supposedly heard that story from Stanisław Woźniak.

[109] Ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 18 September 1953, pp. 65–68.

underground activity.[110] We cannot be sure why no interest whatsoever was taken in Bartkiewicz during the investigation and the Borów trial. It could have partly stemmed from the fact that he had not participated in the events that the investigation focused on. Only in October 1955 did the Lublin PUBP inform its counterpart in Włochy about the "vital materials" regarding his person. The case was directed to the Otwock PUBP and was soon followed by Bartkiewicz's files. They were sent back with an annotation that "now they have little operational value."[111] Consequently, the files ended up in the archive and yet another opportunity to fully reconstruct the murder on Lipowa Street escapees was wasted. The disregard for Bartkiewicz's activity as a member of the district executive contrasts with the ardor displayed e.g. with regard to Major Kłosowski (Michałowicz) "Rola."

Other murders conducted with Bartkiewicz's participation also remained unsolved. Already in 1947 one of the reports mentioned an accusation regarding the murders committed in his place of residence. An informer wrote: "He killed 12 people including children of Jewish nationality from the Sobieszczany municipality and he brought [some Jews?] to his area from a different place and shot them, he took gold, sewing machines and other items from them."[112] This information introduces us to the wider context of the murders committed against the Jews by members of the NSZ and the NOW-AN executive unit – murders which were mentioned in the testimonies given during the Borów investigation and in other materials collected during the investigation.

* * *

The post-war testimonies echo some of those events. In a conversation with his former commanding officer Leonard Zub-Zdanowicz at the end of the 1970s Kazimierz Wybranowski "Kret" said that a Jew was shot in Janiszów in summer 1943 under the pretext of his being a German informer. The NSZ members conducted a manhunt after the Kraśnik Gestapo had allegedly released a dozen Jews to carry out surveillance of the underground organizations. Besides, the communists also allegedly liquidated such agents. Wybranowski made a sarcastic comment on the "purge" conducted by Grzegorz Korczyński to rid his unit of Jews.[113]

[110] Ibidem, Pismo do PUBP w Mińsku Mazowieckim [Letter to the PUBP in Mińsk Mazowiecki], 15 June 1951, p. 40; ibidem, Odpowiedź szefa PUBP we Włochach [Reply of the Włochy PUBP Head], 15 November 1951, p. 42.

[111] Ibidem, Korespondencja PUBP w Lublinie, Włochach, Otwocku [Correspondence of the Lublin, Włochy, Otwock PUBPs], pp. 47–50.

[112] Ibidem, Doniesienie "Wiśni" ["Wiśnia's" Report], 11 June 1947, p. 33.

[113] I do not have space here to discuss this case, to which quite a lot of publications have been devoted.

> He murdered all the Jews in the bunkers who were hiding there. He killed all of them off with grenades. Later on he was put on trial for that and if he had been an NSZ member he would have been sentenced to death but since he was an AL member he got only ten years under article 1.1 for cooperation with the Germans. Cos murdering a Jew was [prosecuted under] the article: collaboration with the Germans! So stupid.[114]

Note the frankness and irritation. The reason behind Lieutenant "Kret" anti-Semitism was to have been the Jews' alleged anti-Polish attitude toward soldiers, something he had personally experienced in September 1939. Wounded at Kutno, he was evacuated to Chełm Lubelski seized by the Soviets. "Since then I have been at daggers drawn with the Jews," he told Zub-Zdanowicz. Be that as it may, between 23 and 27 July 1943 the NSZ members allegedly "liquidated" six Jewish "agents." Indispensable Chodakiewicz did not say whether the accusations were groundless or not and used the following maxim to comment on that: "different things happen during war." He writes about "suspiciousness bordering on paranoia" and about the underground's ruthlessness toward the agents.[115]

This time too we should refer to the documentation from the Archive of the Lublin Branch of IPN. Indeed, during the investigation there appeared a thread of a brutal murder of a man hiding in Janiszów. The accused were Wybranowski and Ławryszczuk. In one of his testimonies, Wybranowski described that action. A group of fifteen men under the command of Zub-Zdanowicz went by three wagons to Janiszów and surrounded the farm. Wybranowski stayed outside.

> I saw "Zagłoba" [Ławryszczuk] and "Ząb" [Zub-Zdanowicz] talking to an elderly woman. After some time: "Zagłoba" went out of that room and returned after a while demanding light. He got a kerosene lamp and went out. Soon afterwards I heard a scream in the attic and after a while "Zagłoba" stormed into the room screaming at the woman. A shot was fired. "Zagłoba" and "Ataman" [Zbigniew Ławryszczuk, Ryszard's brother] took something outdoors and "Zagłoba" took a piece of wood and took a swing and hit twice the thing they had carried out.

Then they conducted a search and took out a bundle. Wybranowski who in the meantime had gone out into the yard, saw a corpse of a man with a bashed in skull. Zub-Zdanowicz allegedly said, "we killed a Jew but why and what for I don't know."[116] We can see that the explanation of that case's context known from Wybranowski's post-war testimony was made up many years after the events. Zub-Zdanowicz seemed not to remember the event at all, but he was curious where the information about the victim's being an agent had come from.

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[114] The recording was published as "Rozmowa Kazimierza Poray-Wybranowskiego ('Kret') z Leonardem Zub-Zdanowiczem ('Ząb')," *Szczerbiec* (Lublin) 11 (June 2002): 71–120.

[115] Chodakiewicz, *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. "Ząb"*, 114.

[116] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 6, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Wybranowskiego [Typescript of Kazimierz Wybranowski's interrogation], 24 May 1952, p. 178.

Wybranowski explained that they must have found out about it from the AK. The name of the Polish woman who kept the man and then gave testimony during the trial was Michalina Gajewska.

The indictment listed not only the incident in Janiszów but also other killings of Jews: the murder of four people from the Ankel family in February 1943 in the settlement of Zakrzówek on Spryszakowa's farm, the murder of seven members of the Erlich family on Józef Małka's farm in Bystrzyca, the murder of six people from the Brenner family in Adamczyk's and Widowski's buildings in the settlement of Majorat, the murder of a woman in Rudnik and finally the participation in the murder of three people hiding in the forests near Urzędów in summer 1943.[117] Let us examine the body of evidence. The first mentions of killings of the Jewish escapees conducted with the participation of the NSZ members appeared already before the beginning of the investigation. A local informed the Security Office that he had accidentally learnt in 1944 about a murder of a mother with two children committed in the settlement of Majorat. Wacław Toporowski, who provided them with hiding, was the alleged perpetrator. Even though people knew about the incident, no investigation was conducted in fear of Cybulski, who had his seat, among others, at Toporowski's and two other farmers in that settlement.[118] Zakrzówek inhabitant Bronisław Sumera testified in December 1951 that a few "kikes" were murdered in the Rudki quarry – supposedly Cybulski escorted them from NSZ member Paweł Kołtun's. According to another witness Ławryszczak murdered five Jews hiding in the village of Nikodemów in the Zakrzew municipality. Supposedly, a certain Łapiński also fired at the Jews. According to Sumera, Ławryszczuk killed some Jews travelling to Józefów by wagons. A local organist provided information supposedly coming from Icek Erlich – the victims' relative whom he met in Chełm in 1945.[119]

The eyewitnesses' testimonies were more valuable as evidence. Bystrzyca inhabitant Józef Małek, whom I have already mentioned, testified that not long after the deportation of the Jews from Zakrzówek four men, two "tiny" children and two women came to him. He knew them all from before the war. They hid in the barn. After a month a dozen unknown men came at night. They threatened to shoot him unless he showed them the hideout. They found the Jews and shot them. They went out with the murdered Jews' clothes and possessions and ordered him to bury the bodies and keep the incident a secret. The farm owner took the naked bodies to a field and left them there. The police found and buried them. A few days later he found out "from the locals" that the murder had been committed by "Znicz's band." It was that witness's second interrogation. Before

[117] Ibidem, t. 6, Akt oskarżenia [Indictment], 1953, pp. 71–74.

[118] Ibidem, file 1, Doniesienie obywatelskie, podpisał Malinowski, [A Citizen's Denunciation, Signed by Malinowski], 21 September 1949, p. 218.

[119] Ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Kazimierza Paciona [Typescript of interrogation of witness Kazimierz Pacion], 12 March 1952, p. 60.

that he had claimed that he was so scared that he did not provide hiding to any Jews.[120] A few months later Rudnik inhabitant Maria Janiak told investigating officer Kowalski the details of the murder she had heard from her relative while the two women were traveling to Kraśnik by wagon. The informer based her story on the account of Cybulski's acquaintance present at the crime scene. "The Jews were allowed to bid their farewell before they were killed, and they hugged each other so tightly that it was impossible to separate them from one another."[121] For the purposes of the investigation an exhumation in Józef Zięba's field was conducted. Six bodies of adults and a body of a twelve-year-old were discovered. The victims were killed using firearms. The perpetrators must have missed the nineteen golden five-ruble coins, two ten-rubel coins and a ladies' watch (sent to the Kraśnik branch MBP as a deposit) that were found on the victims.[122]

Anna Adamczyk from the Majorat settlement talked about being physically assaulted by three unknown men who claimed that they were from "the Polish Army." After the incident she showed them where four Jewesses aged 15–20 were hiding in the barn. One of the men escorted the three women to the apartment and shot them one by one. "You've been hiding [the Jewesses] so you have corpses in the apartment," she heard at the end. Then the perpetrators robbed her place. She notified the police and denied being acquainted with the victims. Her husband, who was not at home that unlucky day, buried the corpses. One of the Jewesses, Henia Brenner, kept hiding in the barn. She survived the war and now lives in Łódź. In her testimony Anna Adamczyk did not identify the perpetrators and claimed that the incident had taken place in spring 1944, but most probably she was mistaken saying that.[123] This time too an exhumation was conducted after the war. A Majorat inhabitant confirmed the murder of three women and a man from the Brenner family.[124] Called to the crime scene, a fire fighter from Zakrzówek testified, "The Adamczyks' house got riddled with bullets, while Adamczyk's wife was lying in bed after those men had beaten her up." He added that the locals attributed the murder to Cybulski.[125] Perhaps they had grounds for that since a teacher from Zakrzówek went to the Security Office in

[120] Ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Józefa Małka [Typescript of interrogation of witness Józef Małek], 12 February 1952, pp. 80–81. Unfortunately, the first testimony is not included in the case files.

[121] Ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Marii Janiak [Typescript of interrogation of witness Maria Janiak], 6 October 1952, p. 163v.

[122] Ibidem, file 3, Protokół oględzin lekarskich [Medical Examination Report], 3 September 1952, pp. 104–104v, 107.

[123] Ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Anny Adamczyk [Typescript of interrogation of witness Anna Adamczyk], 27 February 1952, pp. 94v–95.

[124] Ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Stefana Dudziaka [Typescript of interrogation of witness Stefan Dudziak], 9 May 1952, p. 124v.

[125] Ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Kazimierza Mendrali [Typescript of interrogation of witness Kazimierz Mendrala], 18 February 1952, p. 87.

Szczecin to inform the authorities about Cybulski's activity, after he had recognized him on the street. He testified, e.g., that Cybulski had murdered the Jews in the Majorat settlement (allegedly a dozen Jews were killed there with axes).[126]

What did the accused say? During the first testimonies in December 1951 Leon Cybulski claimed that soon after the murder of the Jews near Rudki, he accidentally (of course) came across the following group on the way to Zakrzówek: Bartkiewicz, Strzemieszny, Sprawka, Ławryszczuk and Wtykło. The men were going to perform "a certain task" in the Zakrzówek settlement. He joined them. They murdered three or four Jews with axes on a farm, but he could not remember its owner's surname. Even though the account lacked details there is no doubt that it was an eyewitness testimony. "I was present and I saw the above-mentioned men kill them." Three days later he presented a different version. This time he said that "Placek" was also in the above-mentioned group of men. Yet in that version of events Ławryszczuk played the most important role and allegedly it was he who invited Cybulski to join the escapade. Cybulski stayed a hundred meters away from the farm buildings and he heard some shouting. Later, on the way to Wilkołaz, he learnt from Strzemieszny that the men had killed "one Jew each." The motive of the murder was not discussed. He provided yet different details to investigating officer Kowalski. This time instead of "Placek" and Strzemieszny there was a totally unknown man – Krawczyk "Wilczur." He also claimed that Ławryszczuk and Sprawka "ordered" him to go with them as an NOW member. But in the Zakrzówek settlement he was ordered to wait, keeping a proper distance from the farm. This time it was Sprawka who reported on the course of the action.[127] It was the only "liquidation" of Jews he confessed to. He also said that Aleksander Skibiński "Chrabąszcz" was the person who on behalf of the NOW took care of the matters concerning the Jews in hiding. Skibiński tried to convince the peasants to show the Germans where the Jews were hiding or to liquidate the Jews themselves as "enemies of the Polish nation." Allegedly he also brought orders from the NOW district command.[128]

Ławryszczuk also accused Skibiński.[129] He testified that Skibiński, "Zuch" and others killed a few women of Jewish nationality at a teacher's place somewhere near Kiełczewice. He did not know the details, because at that time he was lying ill in bed. In turn in May 1943 at a briefing the command ordered the executive detachment to liquidate "the Jews sent by the Germans to spy and report back".

[126] Ibidem, file 2, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Wiktora Gano [Typescript of interrogation of witness Wiktor Gano], probably the end of August 1949, p. 123.

[127] Ibidem, file 5, Protokoły przesłuchań Ławryszczuka [Ławryszczuk's interrogation Typescript], 12 and 15 December 1951, pp. 5, 17.

[128] Ibidem, file 5, Protokół przesłuchania Leona Cybulskiego [Typescript of interrogation of witness Leon Cybulski], 22 February 1952, p. 60.

[129] Skibiński was a cavalry sergeant of the 24th Kraśnik Lancers Regiment (APL, Penal Files of the Province Court, 301/53, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Pidka [Typescript of Kazimierz Pidek's interrogation], 30 June 1952, p. 24).

The Jews were "in a cottage near the forest next to Bystrzyca." The unit arrived in the house of a widow where the Jews were staying and killed two or three of them (including a woman) on the spot. An executive command representative from Warsaw and Wtykło murdered the Jews with axes. Ławryszczuk did not see the killing because as he testified he "had gone outside at that time". But Cybulski was allegedly present.[130] The testimony given later in the presence of investigating officer Stefan Jaworski included more details. The "liquidation action" was to be preceded by an interrogation conducted by Pidek (whom we know) with the participation of Cybulski. It was determined that there were some Jews in the house located off the beaten track between Kiełczewice and Zakrzówek. The execution detachment was notified about the decision to liquidate them. Strzemieszny took Ławryszczuk with him. There was also Cybulski and "a Warsaw executive member," whose surname remains unknown. Ławryszczuk tried to calm Mrs. Adamczyk down, saying that she and her child were safe. He did not see the murder itself because he went outside the house. The Jews were killed with axes so that the GL unit stationed nearby would not find out about it. But he does not know who suggested such a method. Nor does he know who committed the murder. Yet two or three perpetrators must have been Kiełczewice post members. He did not mention Wtykło, who was said to have been a direct perpetrator. In this testimony the incident is dated February/March 1943.[131] Wybranowski did not have much to say about it. But he provided a different detail: Ławryszczuk brought a "young and pretty" Jewess from beyond the Vistula River. After a few weeks of sleeping with her he took her to the forest, where he shot and robbed her. In turn Cybulski and his unit allegedly killed and robbed some Jews at the end of September 1943 but we do not know any details. Later on, he said that he had seen Ławryszczuk wearing a few rings, including two women's ones. But he said that he had not seen the woman.[132]

It would follow from the court proceedings that the murders had a political and anti-Semitic character. But it seems that other motivations too were involved. A shrewd observer, an engineer from Poznań Adam Ulrich domiciled in Zakrzówek wrote that the deportation of the Jews from Zakrzówek and the surrounding villages in mid-October 1942 awakened sheer greed on the part of some local Poles. "Scheherazade's stories about treasures – goods – buried and hidden by the Jews are multiplying. […] Almost every day one hears that

[130] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 6, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 10 May 1952, p. 13.

[131] Ibidem, file 5, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 5 September 1952, pp. 61–62.

[132] Ibidem, file 6, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Wybranowskiego, przesłuchiwał Stanisław Kwiatkowski [Typescript of Kazimierz Wybranowski's interrogation, interrogated by Stanisław Kwiatkowski], 31 March 1952, p. 133v; ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Wybranowskiego, przesłuchiwał Kowalski [Typescript of Kazimierz Wybranowski's interrogation, interrogated by Kowalski], 9 June 1952, p. 184.

a dead Jew has been found nearby. Sometimes the corpses lie for a few days before somebody buries them." Spring 1943 brought the intensification of the activity of competing partisan units and groups of bandits, some of which looked for Jews hiding on farms. Ulrich did not analyze the reasons for those manhunts. But he noted that the Herszon family of eight that had died of axe blows was found in June 1943.[133] The charge of murdering that family (the Gersons) in Bystrzyca also appeared in one of the notes written during the Kraśnik PUBP investigation,[134] but the case was not further investigated. Judging from what I have presented, it is clear that the situation was not unusual. Even though the testimony does not include the organization's name, nationalists too could have been motivated by greed.

The witnesses mention other incidents in their testimonies given during the investigation. A Rudnik inhabitant testified that Wtykło had assaulted his acquaintance and requested him to show him a Jewess hideout. Then Wtykło raped and killed the woman. The farm owner left the corpse in his neighbor's field. But the acquaintance was already dead and the testifier was unable to provide more details. Yet his neighbor was able to say that the victim's name was Rojza from Zakrzówek.[135] In turn, according to a communist interrogated in February 1947, Pidek, whom we already know, took in a Jew in the Wilkołaz municipality. The testifier learnt that from an Obroki settlement inhabitant. Then Pidek allegedly shot and robbed the Jew on the way to Kiełczewice.[136] Three years later the Security Office became interested in the case and interrogated a few witnesses, who denied everything quite flatly. Arrested in connection with the case, Pidek did not plead guilty of the act he was accused of. He even claimed that he had been hiding with the Jews before the Germans.[137] The case was reinvestigated in 1953. It occurred that all this information was second-hand and that it had little value as evidence. Pidek presented a few witnesses who confirmed that he kept to himself what he knew about the Jews hiding in the area. And he asserted that he had been helpful and sympathetic toward the escapees.[138]

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[133] AŻIH, 301/2845, Relacja Adama Ulricha [Adam Ulrich's Testimony], pp. 19–20.

[134] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 1, Notatka urzędowa. Informacje w sprawie "Znicza" [Official Memo. Information on the Case of "Znicz"], 4 January 1951, p. 147.

[135] Ibidem, file 5, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Jana Pietraszka [Typescript of interrogation of witness Jan Pietraszek], 17 September 1952, p. 156v; ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Marcina Gruszeckiego [Typescript of interrogation of witness Marcin Gruszecki], 18 September 1952, p. 157v.

[136] AIPN Lu, 003/2450, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Feliksy Wyganowskiej [Typescript of interrogation of witness Feliksa Wyganowska], 6 February 1947, p. 27.

[137] Ibidem, Przesłuchania świadków z 1950 r. [Typescript of witnesses' interrogations of 1950], pp. 104–109; ibidem, Protokół przesłuchania świadka Feliksa Noska [Typescript of interrogation of witness Feliks Nosek], 17 February 1953, pp. 79–79v.

[138] APL, Akta karne Sądu Wojewódzkiego [Provincial Court Penal Files], 301/53, Protokół rozprawy głównej [Typescript of the main hearing], 19 January 1954, p. 198v. The other thing is that none of the Jews in hiding survived the war.

The incident in the Urzędów Forest was different. A local forester allegedly informed Zub-Zdanowicz, who was staying in the village of Terpentyna, about a "Ukrainian gang" (as in the original text) staying in the forest. The unit was divided into three groups (commanded by Wybranowski "Kret," Jan Wódz "Lampart" and Figuro-Podhorski "Step") and was to comb the area. There was an exchange of fire. The NSZ members saw a few huts and a dead child. They took out a few bullets and a Nagan type revolver from the dugout. Wybranowski shot a young woman in the dark. He stressed that he did not allow for the corpse to be robbed. Later during the discussion on the action it occurred that the patrol had killed a Jew and that "many Jewish people escaped the patrols." Ławryszczuk and Zub-Zdanowicz allegedly laughed at Wybranowski's doubts: he would not have killed the woman if he had known. The forester took the things from the dugouts.[139] "Knoll" also mentioned the incident and Wybranowski's scruples about killing the pretty woman.[140] Ławryszczuk's testimony confirms that such an action did take place. Allegedly, he shot at the escaping Jews from a light machine gun, but he did not remember the number of the victims ("we were standing on the side while the innocent people were being slaughtered;" the action took a few hours including the robbery). But he testified that Wybranowski allegedly told him that he had shot the young woman fully consciously.[141] Chodakiewicz tried to prove that the court attributed an action conducted by the AK to the NSZ,[142] but in the light of the testimonies of three participants of the events the claim does not stand criticism.

The NSZ counterintelligence materials, though meager, throw some light on the organization's attitude toward the hiding Jews in the Kraśnik district. They are interesting especially because they mention the persons we know perfectly well. On 30 November 1943 Kazimierz Pidek, the then deputy of Department II of the NSZ district command, wrote a memo on a complaint lodged with him by an inhabitant of the Dębina village in the Piotrowice municipality. The peasant complained that in mid-November Wtykło came to him and, "accusing me of some connections with the Jews he ordered me to pay 20,000 zlotys contribution, which was to be prepared by 15 November [for collection]." But on the night of 10 to 11 November an armed group of men came and robbed his farm. The intelligence confirmed that Ławryszczak was behind that incident. It was also determined that at the same time Ławryszczak went with his people to the village of Pawłów in the Piotrowice municipality, where he took 4,000 zlotys in

[139] AIPN Lu, 011/188, file 6, Protokół przesłuchania Kazimierza Wybranowskiego [Typescript of Kazimierz Wybranowski's interrogation], 24 May 1952, pp. 176–177.

[140] Ibidem, file 8, Protokół przesłuchania Stanisława Skowrońskiego [Typescript of Stanisław Skowroński's interrogation], 14 June 1952, p. 4.

[141] Ibidem, file 6, Protokół przesłuchania Ryszarda Ławryszczuka [Typescript of Ryszard Ławryszczuk's interrogation], 6 September 1952, p. 60; ibidem, 12 May 1952, p. 17.

[142] Chodakiewicz, *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. "Ząb"*, 116, 351.

cash from the farmer Ryszard Mierzwa. Mierzwa forced another person to pay the sum "as a contribution for hiding Jews" and was ready to deposit the money with the NSZ. Pidek asked the district commander to check if Ławryszczuk deposited the money, and if some of it was missing he suggested for Ławryszczuk to be called to penal responsibility "for embezzlement." In the next document he complained that he unsuccessfully pressured Ławryszczuk to discipline Wtykło and defend the blackmailed farmer from Dębina, an organization member. He even tried to convince Ławryszczuk to liquidate Wtykło "as a bandit." However, Ławryszczuk not only forewarned his subordinate but also robbed the victim.[143] It turned out that Ławryszczuk had not paid in any of the money he requisitioned. Consequently, he was expelled from the NSZ and he joined the AK, where he became the commander of "a small detachment of various scumbags expelled from the NSZ."[144] According to the already quoted testimonies of Major Kłosowski (Michałowicz), the district command expelled Ławryszczuk from the NSZ. Kłosowski did not, however, mention the nature of the accusations against Ławryszczuk. Be that as it may, the materials Pidek produced in 1944 that complete the report I have quoted on Ławryszczuk's attacks and extortions on local farms during that period lay bare the everyday practice of the major protagonists of the story described here. It is interesting that the local NSZ structures' members often robbed the persons that provided hiding to the Jews and that they turned a blind eye on the instances of blackmail (*szmalcownictwo*) on the part of their superiors as long as the instances fit the framework of "underground activity." Such activities became a crime only when the perpetrators "forgot" to pay the stolen money in the district treasury.[145]

What I have written in the article is not the last word in this matter. There are many inconsistencies and questions even regarding the most thoroughly investigated murder near Rudki. It is also unclear whether NSZ members participated in all of the murders mentioned in the indictment (let alone those mentioned in the testimonies and incriminating letters). It should be stressed, however, that none of those grim incidents, perhaps with the exception of the manhunt in the Urzędów Forests, can be interpreted in the category of "fighting banditry"

[143] APL, 1074/15, Akta karne w sprawie Ryszarda Ławryszczuka "Zagłoby" o rabunek [Penal Files of the Case of Ryszard Ławryszczuk "Zagłoba" regarding theft], b.d., pp. 18–22. The discussed files include documents regarding five court proceedings. Curiously enough, this investigation was not mentioned in the fundamental article on the Lublin NSZ (Zaborski, "Okręg Lubelski NSZ," pp. 217–218).

[144] Ibidem, Notatka urzędowa parafowana przez "Konara" [Official Memo Initialed by "Konar"], 10 April 1944, p. 22.

[145] "Rola's" orders clearly specified that those "who are guilty of assault, robbery or armed extortion against the Polish population shall be subject to exclusion from the NSZ and to death penalty after a District Court-Martial summary sentence." Order of 19 June 1944, quoted after: *Narodowe Siły Zbrojne. Dokumenty, struktury, personalia*, file 2: *NSZ–AK*, selection, edition and introduction by Leszek Żebrowski (Warsaw: Burchard Edition, 1996), 73–74.

dangerous to the Polish population. To deepen the analysis of those incidents it is necessary to find the missing testimonies given during the investigations I discussed and the documents regarding the persons appearing in those testimonies.

But the most important thing seems to be that the attempts undertaken after 1989 to negate the participation of the NSZ members in the killings of hiding Jews do not stand comparison with the source materials. It is high time to systematically analyze the matter using all types of sources including post-war investigation and trial files.[146] The testimony of a member of the NSZ post in the Kiełczewice Dolne settlement (from where the group of murders of the Lipowa Street escapees set off) throws some light on the treatment of the Jews hiding in the area.

> I don't recall the exact date […] during the registration where they announced that the population would not hide the Jews or provide any help to them, at that time Władysław Meskuła […] said that some Jews were in the forest in a barracks. And so after the registration I went [there] with Pawelec, Tadeusz Mulak, Łyzinkiewicz, Klimek's wife Stanisława Olga, Jan Wróbel, Kazimierz Osiewicz with his son Jan, Władysław Krawczyk, Leon and Jan Rękaz, Józef Kapica, Stanisław Bańka, Stefan Tomasiak, Paulina Rękaz and others, mostly from the NSZ. After our arrival in the forest we captured the Jews, 4 Jewesses and a Jew, and we escorted them to the Kiełczewice Settlement. I went with Kapica and I ordered Wojciech Mydlak and Jan Kowalczyk to drive their wagons there. After the arrival of the wagons we put the Jews on the wagons and took them to Piotrowice to the municipality office. The blue police took over the Jews. I, Tadeusz Pawelec, Jan Wróbel, Stefan Szczur, Stanisław Wójcik and Józef Kapica watched the Jews. After the Jews had been handed over to the German gendarmes he asked if there were any more and where we had caught those. So we said that they had been captured in the forest. I don't know what happened to the Jews.[147]

Translated by *Anna Brzostowska*

[146] In the Security Office characteristics of the Lublin NSZ members we can find various passages about their participation in the persecution of the Jews – murders and participation in manhunts (AIPN Lu, 08/262, file 1, Lista osób podejrzanych, na których należy zwrócić szczegółową uwagę [A List of suspects who should be especially closely examined], no date, pp. 19–24). Each passage should be subjected to an in-depth.

[147] AIPN Lu, 01/434, Protokół przesłuchania podejrzanego Mieczysława Figlarskiego [Typescript of the interrogation of suspect Mieczysław Figlarski], 21 January 1951, p. 190v.

Abstract
The text attempts to reconstruct the circumstances of the death of a few dozen escapees – Polish Army soldiers in September 1939 of Jewish origin – from the camp in Lipowa Street in Lublin at the end of 1942. The case has been the subject of heated discussion among historians, who, informed by political considerations, have blamed different Polish underground groups. The present reconstruction is based mostly on materials of post-war investigations and trials of the persons connected with the nationalist underground in the Kraśnik district. Even though those trials were partly political (hence, the sources required particular criticism), it was possible to establish that the perpetrators were from a detachment of the National Military Organization-National Army (*Narodowa Organizacja Wojskowa-Armia Narodowa*, NOW-AN) set up near Kraśnik, which was then incorporated into the National Armed Forces (*Narodowe Siły Zbrojne*, NSZ). The author also takes up the issue of the general attitude of the NSZ in that area toward hiding Jews.

Key words
NSZ, killings of Jews, labor camp in Lipowa Street in Lublin