

Ryszard Michalak\*

University of Zielona Góra, Zielona Góra, Poland

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7996-5432>

## The Methodist Church in Poland in reality of liquidation policy. Operation “Moda” (1949-1955)

### Introduction

The state’s religious policy is most often understood as a set of conceptual, programme and executive actions undertaken by a homogeneous entity of an administrative authority or a complex subject of power towards entities representing and creating religious life (religious associations and people). In the conditions of the People’s Republic of Poland, this second type of religious issues management was definitely – hybrid and non-normative – and the role of decision-makers was exercised by three structures: party, administration and special services. Due to the significant role of the security service, the operational functions should be included in the classical, above-mentioned activities.

After 1945, religious policy was implemented in a heterogeneous and deconcentrated model in the area of competence of the party and state authorities. It was intentionally and conceptually liquidating, in practice selectively liquidating, and mostly regulatory. The intention and strategic goal of the party-state authorities was the annihilation of all religious organizations and the total disappearance of religious life. Selective liquidation policy consisted of consistent repressive actions against two religious communities (Greek Catholics and Jehovah’s Witnesses) in the years 1945-1989 and four others in the years of Stalinism, i.e. 1945 (48) -1956 (Adventists, Evangelical Protestants, Polish Catholics and Methodists). Most religious associations were covered by the regulative policy throughout the times of the People’s Republic of Poland – including those located on the “background” of interests (among others, Muslims, Old Believers, Mormons, and Irvingians). After 1956, the next four ones, previously intended for liquidation, joined this group. It was not until the end of the eighties that the erosion of the political system brought about the state of affiliation (positive cooperation) in relations between state authorities and most of the non-Roman Catholic communities. The main measure leading to the achievement of the objectives of religious policy was the staffing

---

\* Correspondence address: Instytut Politologii, Uniwersytet Zielonogórski, Al. Wojska Polskiego 69, 65-762 Zielona Góra, Polska, e-mail: [ryszardmichalak@interia.pl](mailto:ryszardmichalak@interia.pl).

of managerial positions in religious associations, and the primary purpose of religious organizations became their propaganda commitment of a state character (in the international and national spheres) and anti-Roman Catholic attitude.

Two factors were prevailing on the liquidation character of the denominational policy towards the Methodist Church: 1) the activity of Methodists in Masuria, which was assessed as “harmful activities” because it was competitive against the activities of the Evangelical-Augsburg Church (in which the authorities placed high hopes for effective repolonization of the native population); 2) strong relationships of the Methodist Church in Poland with the Methodist Church in the United States of America, or more broadly in the West (Canada, Great Britain, Sweden). While the Methodist-Lutheran competition in Masuria has already been explored and described<sup>1</sup>, the American (Western) motif requires approximation. It lies at the very source of this Protestant denomination. The genesis of Methodism is connected with the teaching and other forms of Anglican clergyman John Wesley who in the 1830s made “methodical renewal” of the Church of England on the British Isles<sup>2</sup> (so-called “The First British Evangelical Awakening”<sup>3</sup>) and in the second half of the eighteenth century he continued the work, along with Charles Wesley, George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards, in the newly formed United States (the so-called “American First Great Awakening”). In America, the Methodist religious movement evolved into the regular Methodist Episcopal Church (1784)<sup>4</sup>. In 1881, all of then existing methodological communities began cooperation in an international organization called the World Methodist Council.

The first Poles, who were in contact with Methodism, were emigrants to the United States of America and Great Britain. Missionary activity among the inhabitants of the Prussian partition (from 1871, German partition) – Germans and Poles – was developed by the German Methodists. They established the first Methodist centres in the second half of the nineteenth century<sup>5</sup>. The centres of their activity were initially Grudziądz and

<sup>1</sup> See: R. Michalak, *Rywalizacja Kościołów ewangelicko-augsburskiego i metodystycznego na Mazurach po II wojnie światowej*, “Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie” 2001, No. 4, pp. 621-639, and presented literature there.

<sup>2</sup> About the genesis and the first stage of development of Methodism, see: D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London 1989; J. Kent, *Wesley and the Wesleyans*, Cambridge 2002; J.M. Turner, *John Wesley: The Evangelical Revival and the Rise of Methodism in England*, Epworth 2003; M. Lelievre, *Jan Wesley. Jego życie i dzieło*, Warszawa 2006. See also: W. Benedyktowicz, *Bracia z Epworth*, Warszawa 1971.

<sup>3</sup> T.J. Zieliński, *Geneza i istota Aliansu Ewangelicznego*, “Myśl Ewangeliczna” 1990, No. 5-6, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> See: R.D. Linder, *Dwadzieścia wieków chrześcijaństwa – cz. 4*, “Myśl Ewangeliczna” 1990, No. 3-4, p. 25; M. Pomarański, *Współczesny amerykański fundamentalizm protestancki*, Lublin 2013.

<sup>5</sup> Extensively about the origins of the Methodist Church on Polish soil and in Poland see: E. Puślecki, *Powracająca fala. Działalność Południowego Episkopalnego Kościoła Metodystycznego w Polsce w latach 1920-1924. Studium historyczno-teologiczne*, Warszawa 2001, chapters III-V. See also: E. Puślecki, *Kościół Ewangelicko-Methodystyczny*, [in:] *W drodze za Chrystusem. Kościoły chrześcijańskie w Polsce mówią o sobie*, edit. H. Trandy, M. Patalona, Kraków 2009, pp. 75-104.

Chodzież<sup>6</sup>, followed by Gdańsk and Wrocław<sup>7</sup>. In independent Poland, the activities of the American Methodist mission began in 1920. The decision was made by bishop William B. Beauchamp, president of the Mission Council (based in Brussels) of the Southern Episcopal Methodist Church in the United States of America. Major Leslie G. White stood at the head of "The Methodist Mission of America Committee for Poland" and was accompanied by Margaret Quale, Dr. Sloane and pastor G. W. Twynham<sup>8</sup>. Despite the unfriendly denomination policy of Polish state against the Methodism (consistent refusal of legalization, administrative harassment, liquidation of orphanages, indifference of the authorities to the attacks against the clerics and the faithful, arrests and imprisonments of pastors<sup>9</sup>), the Southern Episcopal Methodist Church in the United States of America organized in the Second Polish Republic congregations in several large cities: Warszawa, Łódź, Katowice, Lvov, Vilnius, and also in smaller towns, among others in Klarysewo and Odolanów. In 1925, the Methodist Church in Poland had 2,500 congregation members and supporters, served by 15 clergymen and preachers<sup>10</sup>. It was humbling for the Methodists that following a hostile religious policy conducted by the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Enlightenment<sup>11</sup>, as well as hostile activities undertaken in the Roman Catholic environment, it was necessary to operate under the company name (Polish-American Joint Stock Company "Southern Trade") and association (Society for Education and Culture of Supporters of Methodism)<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> See: W. Gastpary, *Protestantyzm w Polsce w dobie dwóch wojen światowych, część I: 1914-1939*, Warszawa 1978, p. 271.

<sup>7</sup> See: K. Wolnica, *Kościół Ewangelicko-Methodystyczny w RP w latach 1989-2006*, [in:] *Nierzymskokatolickie Kościoły chrześcijańskie we współczesnej Polsce*, edit. Z.J. Winnicki, T. Dębowski, Toruń 2007, p. 75.

<sup>8</sup> In 1921, the group was joined by pastor Hiram K. King, pastor Martin Price, B.W. Welsh, F.C. Woodard, Thomas J. Gamble. The following joined in the next years: pastor Edmund Chambers, pastor Gaither P. Warfield, Dr. Rasmusen, Dr. Hart, and also Poles born in the States such as Józef Szczepkowski. From August 24 to 27, 1922, the First Conference of the Mission of Poland and the Gdańsk of the South of the Episcopal Methodist Church in Warszawa with the participation of 61 people took place in Warsaw. It was chaired by Bishop Beauchamp and secretary of the Mission Council, E.H. Rowlings. Two church districts were established during this debate: Gdańsk-Pomerania and Warszawa. Later, two more were created: Poznań-Śląsk and Wilno. See: E. Chambers, *Z dziejów ruchu metodystycznego w Polsce*, Warszawa 1948, p. 11; W. Winniczek, *Kościół Metodystyczny w Polsce w latach 1920-1939*, Chylice 1962 [manuscript of master's thesis in the collection of the ChAT Library in Warszawa], pp. 7-8; J. Borowiak, *Kościół Ewangelicko-Methodystyczny w Polsce*, Warszawa 1999, pp. 28-29.

<sup>9</sup> See: E. Puślecki, *Powracająca fala...*; J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-45. The content of the "Memorial" which the Methodist Church in Poland sent to the state authorities is meaningful in this context: "[...] we, the Poles – Methodists, feel beyond the limits of our civic powers. We feel handicapped in our own homeland, we feel ourselves being spent on the people of evil will, on the prey of reactionary and fanatical elements, often even on the lower level of official factors [...]" quoted after: *Ibidem*, p. 45.

<sup>10</sup> W. Gastpary, *op. cit.*, s. 271.

<sup>11</sup> See: P.A. Leszczyński, *Centralna administracja wyznaniowa II RP. Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego*, Warszawa 2006.

<sup>12</sup> See: S. Grelewski, *Wyznania protestanckie i sekty religijne w Polsce współczesnej*, Lublin 1937, p. 580; E. Chambers, *op. cit.*, p. 19; 27-28; J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

From 1926, bishop Urban V. Darlington took care of the Polish Methodists. He made the priority issue of the preparation of the staff composed of Polish activists, pastors and preachers. During this period, the representatives of the Church in relations with representatives of state authorities were Poles (Władysław Dropiewski, Kazimierz Ihnatowicz, Michał Kośmiderski). In 1934, Bishop Arthur J. Moore became the head of the Methodist Church in Poland, and the first Pole, a former Roman Catholic priest, Fr. Konstanty Najder (1899-1993) was among the county superintendents and the Executive Committee<sup>13</sup>. One of the leading figures of Polish Methodism in the 1930s was Fr. Józef Naumiuk (1900-1965) who as a parish priest of the reformed Old Catholic parish in Warszawa submitted the accession to the Methodist Church in 1932<sup>14</sup>.

In the period of decline of the Second Polish Republic, the Methodist Church in Poland consisted of 18 congregations, 49 employees (pastors, preachers, deacons, helpers), 18 of whom were American citizens<sup>15</sup>. The decisive participation of the Americans in the creation of the Church in Poland, as well as their great influence on its functioning, were postponed after the outbreak of World War II by the way of perceiving Methodists and the religious policy of the occupation authorities, and after its ending by the communist authorities' religious policy.

After the outbreak of the war and the collapse of Polish defense in September 1939, the Germans interned Fr. Edmund Chambers, father superintendent Gaither Warfield and deacon Ruth Lawrence. The position of the superior of the Church as the supreme superintendent<sup>16</sup> was taken over by Najder. In the areas of both German and Soviet occupation, the Methodists lost the right to conduct their religious activities in their current shape. In the latter case, it meant the banning and liquidation of Methodism. On the other hand, the Third Reich respected the legal status (obtained in 1930) of the Episcopal Methodist Church in Germany (*Bischöfliche Methodistische Kirche*) and as a result, in 1939, Germans and Poles from areas incorporated into the Reich were allowed to join this religious association. The clergy of these congregations, who wanted to preserve their Polish character (including the Polish language of the liturgy), decided to work in a conspiracy (e.g. the case of the congregation in Poznań)<sup>17</sup>. From May 1, 1941, the Polish Methodist Church obtained a license to operate in the General Government,

<sup>13</sup> See: P. Szczudłowski, *Powojenne dzieje wspólnoty metodystycznej w Gdańsku*, [in:] *Nierzymskokatolickie Kościoły i grupy wyznaniowe w Gdańsku*, edit. W. Pałubicki, H. Cyrzan, Gdańsk-Koszalin 1998, p. 135.

<sup>14</sup> See: J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, p. 35, 45.

<sup>15</sup> See: *Ibidem*, pp. 49-50. According to Fr. Józef Naumiuk "at the outbreak of World War II, Polish Methodism consisted of 13 parishes and about 2 thousand members", *Archiwum Akt Nowych* [Central Archives of Modern Records, later AAN], *Urząd do Spraw Wyznań* [Office for Religious Affairs, later UdSW], sign. III 4a/35/53, c. 1-4.

<sup>16</sup> In the tradition and practice of Polish Methodism, the supreme superintendent represented the Church outside, managed the work of the Executive Committee, and also supervised the implementation of resolutions of the General Conference without supervision over it itself.

<sup>17</sup> See: G. Pełczyński, *Ugrupowania ewangelikalne na Ziemiach Polskich*, "Zwierciadło Etnologiczne. Rocznik Katedry Etnologii i Antropologii Kulturowej Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego" 2013, No. 2, p. 111.

subject to its independence from any foreign authority<sup>18</sup>. After the outbreak of the German-Soviet war and the inclusion of the district of Galicia in the General Government, it was possible to reactivate the Methodist congregation in Lvov<sup>19</sup>. The main centres of Methodism were the Higher Bible School in Warszawa – the only Polish college<sup>20</sup> legally operating in the General Government – and the capital's congregation on 12 Mokotowska Street. The importance of this second place exceeded the confession dimension. Informal ecumenical meetings were held there since 1940, in which Lutherans, reformed, evangelical Christians, Mariavites and National Catholics took part alongside the hosts. In March 1944, the Polish Confession, an ecumenical confession of faith, was signed in the Mokotowska chapel. It should be added that the legal recognition of the Methodist Church served not only Methodists, because the Pentecostalists and even Anti-Trinitarian Bible scholars took up their activities in the methodical formula (preserving denominational autonomy)<sup>21</sup>.

At the end of the war, the Executive Committee of the Methodist Church was formed in Warszawa. Its chairman was superintendent Najder, secretary – priest Michał Kośmiderski, and members – Fr. Józef Szczepkowski and Fr. Jan Kalinowski<sup>22</sup>. According to Serafin Kiryłowicz, one of the most important state policy makers in the field of religious policy towards non-Roman Catholic congregations, the actual leadership of the Church was “in the hands of delegates of the American headquarters”, i.e. Fr. Edmund Chambers<sup>23</sup> (Canadian citizen) and Fr. Werner Theodor Wickstrom<sup>24</sup> (citizen of Sweden and the United States of America). The latter actually took over the leadership of the Church on February 1, 1948.

The priority task that the authorities of the Church set for themselves at the time was to obtain legal recognition by the state. After quickly achieving this goal in October 1945, they began to think about the directions of missionary work. This issue was devoted to the twofold numbered XXIV-XXV Annual Church Conference, which was held in Katowice from November 9 to November 11, 1945. And although it was held in

<sup>18</sup> See: J. Sziling, *Kościół chrześcijański w polityce niemieckich władz okupacyjnych w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie (1939-1945)*, Toruń 1988, pp. 115-116.

<sup>19</sup> See: J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-55.

<sup>20</sup> See: *Ibidem*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>21</sup> See: H.R. Tomaszewski, *Wyznania typu ewangeliczno-baptystycznego wchodzące w skład Zjednoczonego Kościoła Ewangelicznego w latach 1945-1956*, Warszawa 1991, p. 42. The theme of methodical help for other denominations was repeatedly mentioned in the documentation of the Ministry of Public Security (MBP), see: Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej [Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance, later AIPN], sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 476, “Extract from the WUBP report in Gdańsk for November 51”; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 590, “Extract from the protocol of interrogation of the suspect [Stefan Osadca from the Christian Church of the Evangelical Faith]”, December 21, 1950.

<sup>22</sup> See: AAN, Ministerstwo Administracji Publicznej [Ministry of Public Administration, later MAP], sign. 1062, c. 9, “Consistory of the Methodist Church” [n. d.].

<sup>23</sup> See: Z. Kamiński, *W 40. rocznicę zgonu*, “Pielgrzym Polski” 2003, No. 4(762), pp. 9-10.

<sup>24</sup> See: AAN, UdSW, sign. III 2a/34/54, k. 105, Note (Serafin Kiryłowicz): “Methodist Church in P.R.L.”, October 1, 2013.

the south of Poland, the attention of the participants was concentrated in the west, and even more in the north of the country. All because the shifting of the Polish state borders to the west, as well as the inclusion of the southern part of East Prussia in its territory, opened new possibilities for the development of Methodism. Those of the Methodists who decided to leave the Eastern Borderlands and settle in the Western Lands, created in the first place – from scratch or after German devotees – congregations: in Międzyrzecz (then Poznań province, later Gorzów)<sup>25</sup>, Wołów (then Wrocław province), Koszalin, Wrocław, Szczecin, Gliwice, Bytom<sup>26</sup>, and Żary (then Wrocław province, later ZielonaGóra)<sup>27</sup>.

However, the greatest opportunities for the Methodist activity occurred in Masuria, where the Evangelical Church of the Old Prussian Union<sup>28</sup> ceased to function, and so in March 1945 Jan Szezech and Edward Małłek – native activists of the Small Group Movement<sup>29</sup> asked the authorities of the Methodist Church, asking for help in organizing church life from scratch. The request was formulated earlier to the authorities of the Evangelical-Augsburg Church<sup>30</sup>, but the Methodists, due to the pietist traditions (and still practiced, close to the Small Group members, pietist devotion) and the important role of lay people in the Church initially grew stronger than the Augsburg Evangelicals, acceptance of Masurians. Methodists also offered Masurians much greater logistic support (personnel and material), which also facilitated the process of installing their own influence<sup>31</sup>. Because the Evangelical-Augsburg Church did not resign from taking up work in Masuria, over time the Methodists and Lutherans entered – as has already been

<sup>25</sup> See: A. Chabasińska, *Zarys historii parafii ewangelicko-metodystycznej w Międzyrzeczu od roku 1945*, "Nadwarciański Rocznik Historyczno-Archiwalny" 2009, No. 16, pp. 245-253.

<sup>26</sup> See: J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-2.

<sup>27</sup> See: R. Michalak, *Polityka wyznaniowa władz partyjno-państwowych w powiecie żarskim w latach stalinizmu*, "Studia Zachodnie" 2000, No. V, pp. 97-123.

<sup>28</sup> None of the very few of its priests among others F. Rządtki, P. Czekay and P. Schwede attempted to rebuild this church, see: K. Urban, *Luteranie i metodyści na Mazurach 1945-1957. Wybór materiałów*, Kraków 2000, p. 18; A. Sakson, *Działalność kościołów i wyznań protestanckich na Mazurach*, "Euhemer. Przegląd Religioznawczy" 1987, No. 1, p. 98; *Okręg Mazurski w raportach Jakuba Prawina. Wybór dokumentów. 1945 rok*, prepared to print by T. Baryła, Olsztyn 1996, p. 153. About Fr. Fryderyk Rządtki's work (including 1945) see: E. Kruk, *Superintendent Rządtki*, "Kwartalnik Społeczno-Kulturalny Mysł Protestancka" 2000, No. 1. See also: R. Michalak, *Kościół metodystyczny na Warmii i Mazurach w latach stalinizmu*, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie" 2000, No. 2, pp. 245-254; K. Bielawny, *Kościół metodystyczny na Mazurach po II wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Polski protestantyzm w czasach nazizmu i komunizmu*, edit. J. Kłaczko, Toruń 2009, pp. 476-502.

<sup>29</sup> About the Small Group movement and its pietist identity in Masuria see: E. Sukertowa-Biedrawina, *Karty z dziejów Mazur*, Olsztyn 1961; M. Kulęgowski, *Gromadkarze*, "Znad Pisy" 1995, No. 2; G. Jasiński, *U źródeł gromadkarstwa: o grupie "świętych" na Mazurach*, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie" 1996, No. 3; G. Jasiński, *Kościół ewangelicki na Mazurach w XIX wieku (1817-1914)*, Olsztyn 2003, pp. 309-350.

<sup>30</sup> According to the memories of priest Edward Małłek, Bishop of the Evangelical-Augsburg Church, Fr. Jan Szeruda refused this help, and he agreed to give it to Fr. superintendent Konstanty Najder, see: E. Małłek, *Gdzie jest moja ojczyzna? Wspomnienia*, Hamburg 1989, pp. 279-80 [manuscript belonging to the author].

<sup>31</sup> See: R. Michalak, *Kościół protestancki wobec kwestii repolonizacji ludności rodzimej Warmii i Mazur w latach 1945-1956*, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie" 1999, No. 3, pp. 361-379; Z. Karczewski, *Kościół i konfesje w Prusach Wschodnich. Doznania byłego pastora metodystów na Mazurach*, "Pielgrzym Polski" No. 768, pp. 12-19.

mentioned – the path of conflicts. The dynamic development of Methodism in Masuria was interrupted in the fifties, and the Methodist Church itself was included in the list of church entities covered by the liquidation policy.

In 1945, the Methodist Church had almost 2,000 believers. As a result of the intensive missionary and evangelizing activity in the next three years, it recorded the greatest growth of the followers of all Protestant churches in Poland. Data collected by the Voivodship Office in Olsztyn showed that in 1948 the Methodist Church, until then only having a slight influence in Warmia and Masuria<sup>32</sup>, acquired in a short time in the Olsztyn Voivodship as many as 6108 members, of which 5612 people lived in the district of Ostróda<sup>33</sup>.

Noticeable, though not so impressive, was the growth of the congregation also in other parts of Poland. The church was divided into four districts: Central-South, Silesian, Pomerania-Wielkopolski and Masurian. In 1950 or 1951, the Central-South District was decided to separate – the Southern and Central Districts were created<sup>34</sup>. In no way did this change the fact that one Masurian District had more than twice as many believers than the others. According to incomplete data (the number of all parishes was not taken into account), in the early 1950s in the Masurian Methodist congregations there were 9,766 members<sup>35</sup>, while all the others numbered 4,443 believers<sup>36</sup>.

At the beginning of the 1950s, the number of the faithful (members of the congregations) was therefore just over 14,200 people. According to the statistics from the beginning of 1952, the number was even higher and amounted, according to various sources, to 16,177<sup>37</sup> or 16,468 faithful<sup>38</sup>. The missionary and pastoral work was directed by clergymen and secular preachers, who usually earned their living by working in another profession. Most of those who lived in the out-of-town province were engaged in agriculture, craft or industrial work<sup>39</sup>. It was a kind of reference to the ideal and style of

<sup>32</sup> Strong Methodist clusters were located in the northern part of East Prussia (after the Second World War within the USSR). The Methodist teaching reached the inhabitants of the southern part of East Prussia (Masuria) at the end of the nineteenth century, enjoying recognition in the communities of the Small Group movement (including in Ostróda and Olsztyn). Formally, however, until 1945 there was not a single Methodist parish there, see: E. Puślecki, *Działalność Kościoła Metodystycznego w PRL na Mazurach w latach 1945-1985*, Olsztyn 1985, p. 1 [manuscript belonging to the author].

<sup>33</sup> See: Archiwum Państwowe w Olsztynie [State Archive in Olsztyn, later APO], Urząd Wojewódzki, sign. 391/303, c. 201, "Religious statistics in the Olsztyn Voivodship on December 31, 1948".

<sup>34</sup> The next change, consisting in the formation of a new structure of the District, was made by the LXIII General Conference of the Church on October 4-7, 1984. Three districts were created: 1) Pomerania, Wielkopolska and Mazowsze, 2) Masuria and Powiśle, 3) Silesia and Małopolska, see: E. Puślecki, *Działalność Kościoła Metodystycznego...*, p. 4.; J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>35</sup> AAN, UdSW, sign. 131/300, c. 5-6.

<sup>36</sup> AAN, UdSW, sign. 131/300, c. 2-4.

<sup>37</sup> See: AAN, UdSW, sign. 131/11, c. nmb.

<sup>38</sup> See: K. Urban, *Mniejszości religijne w Polsce 1945-1991 (Zarys statystyczny)*, Kraków 1994, No. 15, p. 44.

<sup>39</sup> AIPN, sign. Rz 055/59 vol. 3, c. 68, "List of Methodist congregations in the Rzeszów Voivodship" [characteristics of pastors: Bruno Raszkiewicz, Andrzej Kustodowicz, Mikołaj Duchniak and activists in Przemysł, Brylińce, Brzeżawa, Duńkowiczki near Jarosław and Sanok; n.d.].

preaching in the era of the first American awakening. Around the success of evangelization, the conviction of unusual times, as if Wesleyan, pervaded them. Christianity, however, knows in its history the repetition of not only successes. The time of persecution came in the 1950s. The state authorities implemented repressive and liquidation measures against the Methodism and its structures. This circumstance, the emigration of the Methodist Masurians to the German states (which was closely related to the anti-Methodist activities of the authorities) and the struggle of factions within the Methodist Church<sup>40</sup>, were factors that influenced the decrease in the number of the faithful, statistically for the first time in late 1952<sup>41</sup>.

\* \* \*

Before the Methodist Church was covered by the repressive policy with the purpose of liquidation, it was a kind of beneficiary of the so-called "People's democracy" (1945-1948). This transitional and pre-Stalinist stage was characterized by the relative (and *de facto* apparent) kindness of party-state decision-makers towards the general phenomena of religious life.

As already mentioned, the most important task that the authorities of the Methodist Church set for themselves after the end of World War II was to obtain legal recognition by the Polish state. The Methodists decided on the original tactics, namely they expressed their ambitions in arrogant and ultimate form. In a letter to the minister of public administration dated August 24, 1945, at the very beginning of its introduction, high-ranking fellow members from the United States (Roosevelt, Truman – allegedly Methodists), from Great Britain (the Labour Party leadership – Lansbury and Carter) were referred to and from China (Chiang Kai-Shek – a secular Methodist preacher), to finally make a categorical demand:

We expect to quickly settle our rights [i.e. legal recognition – R.M.], because we do not want to reach for the support of our brothers in America and Great Britain, and in particular our brother – President Truman – although we fear [that], if this state lasts longer, they will learn about our wrongs<sup>42</sup>.

In the geopolitical situation changed in the following years and in connection with the escalating tension of the Cold War, the Methodist Church in Poland withdrew from the links with the Methodists in the West. Immediately after the war, such tactics brought the expected results. Soon after this declaration, the Polish state granted "full denomi-

<sup>40</sup> See: R. Michalak, *Polityka wyznaniowa państwa polskiego wobec mniejszości religijnych (1945-1989)*, Zielona Góra 2014.

<sup>41</sup> It is 13,438, after: AAN, UdSW, sign. III 4a/11/153, c. 24; sign. III 2a/34/54, c. 108.

<sup>42</sup> AAN, MAP, sign. 1062, c. 20, a letter from the Polish Methodist Church in Poland to the Minister of Public Administration, Warszawa August 24, 1945. In fact, President Harry Truman was not a Methodist but a Baptist. Truman's confessional identity (belonging to the Northern Baptist Convention) was reported to the authorities by the Baptist preacher in Łódź, and from 1950 a Methodist pastor, Kazimierz Najmałowski, see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 336.



national rights"<sup>43</sup> to the Methodist Church in Poland. It was the first non-Roman Catholic church to have obtained such a significant legal position in Poland.

The legislative path consisted of the Ministry of Public Administration (MAP) re-script (September 5, 1945), the decree of the Council of Ministers (October 16, 1945), the opinion of the Religious and National Committee of the State National Council (formulated between December 29, 1945 and January 3, 1946), delivering an opinion on behalf of the Committee in the Council by MP Mieczysław Rogalski (January 3, 1946) and approval of the decree by the State National Council (January 3, 1946). In practice, the decree of October 16 was in force from the date of its announcement in the "Dziennik Ustaw" (Journal of Laws), which took place on October 29, 1945<sup>44</sup>. The decree consisted of seven articles. Article 1 emphasized the "equality" of the Methodist Church towards other religions, as well as the "full freedom" of religion and religious worship. Article 2 defined the "self-reliance" and "independence" of the Church from any foreign and international structures. The internal affairs of the Church were to constitute its "own statute", which was to be approved – in accordance with Article 3 – by the Council of Ministers. The prestigious and, at the same time, practical significance was given to Article 4, because in addition to emphasizing the legal subjectivity of the entire Methodist Church, such a personality was given to individual parishes. They could on this basis "acquire movable and immovable property, dispose of or encumber it and manage it". Article 5 said about the privilege of keeping civil status books by the Methodist clergy. Articles 6 and 7 set out the entities responsible for implementing the decree (Minister of Public Administration and Minister of Justice) and the date of its entry into force. Signatures under the decree were submitted by the president of the State National Council Bolesław Bierut, the vice president of the Council of Ministers Władysław Gomułka, the minister of public administration Władysław Kiernik and the minister of justice, Henryk Świątkowski. This laconic document for the next forty years set the basis for the activities of the Methodist Church in Poland. In 1949, the MAP approved the Statute<sup>45</sup> referred to in Article 3.

The reason for the submissiveness of the state authorities, expressed by the issuance of the decree and the promotion of the Methodists, despite the claims of the Church authorities, could have been prosaic. Well, it must be assumed that at least for some of the officials the material help that the American Methodists had promised for Poland did not seem to be an illusion. In the Department of Religious Affairs of the MAP there

<sup>43</sup> See: J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-72.

<sup>44</sup> See: Journal of Laws (Dz. U.) October 16, 1945, No. 46, pos. 259. See the comments in: J. Dziobek-Romański, *Uznawanie związków religijnych w Polsce (1944-1989) narzędziem dyskryminacyjnej polityki władz*, Lublin 2004, p. 221.

<sup>45</sup> See: J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, p. 73. Attempts to change the Statute were made in the Methodist Church in 1954-1954 around internal factional struggles (which will be further on). The new, referred to above, Statute was approved by UdSW in 1969.

were specialists<sup>46</sup> who remembered the real and substantial support of the American Methodist mission for Polish society in the 1920s. Also MP Mieczysław Rogalski, a pre-war MFA employee and diplomat, who successfully applied in the State National Council for adoption of the decree, knew about it. Of course, he was reminded of the importance of those activities by Fr. superintendent Najder. The repetition of the help scenario with the American Methodists in the leading role suited the communists. They were able to write their concessions to the Methodists in a pragmatic opportunism scheme<sup>47</sup>, and thereby ignore the fact of the privileged, nolens volens, legal status of the Methodist Church in the General Government. This last circumstance was reprimanded to the Methodists only in the fifties. Thus, the Methodist Church obtained very quickly the status of a public-legal religious association, and in three years Poland was assisted by the American Methodists. It was estimated at 100 million zlotys per year. For this reason, President Bolesław Bierut awarded in June 1947 to Paula Neff Garber, bishop of the Diocese of Geneva of the United Methodist Church, the Commander's Cross with the Star of the Order of Polonia Restituta<sup>48</sup>. The broadcast of its service by the Polish Radio during the XXVII Annual Conference on July 4, 1948 was also a distinction for the Church<sup>49</sup>.

Around the activity of part of the Methodist clericalists in Masuria, as well as along with the intensification of the Cold War, the state authorities were more interested in the Church, which was founded and which was led by the citizens of the "imperialist world" states. The security police wrote in its reports about Fr. Wickstrom – inter alia on the basis of talks with his secretary, Fr. Witold Benedyktowicz, whom they then considered their informer pseudonym "A"<sup>50</sup> – that "there are some reservations about his attitude to democracy, because he searches for people with a high intellectual level to cooperate with him"<sup>51</sup>. In another "note", it was noted that Wickstrom had extensive contacts among Western diplomats residing in Poland<sup>52</sup>. In turn, the secretary of the Executive Committee, Fr. Edward Chambers was burdened by an informer pseudonym

<sup>46</sup> The first Director of the Department of Religious Affairs of the MAP was MA/Dr. Jarosław Demiańczuk-Jurkiewicz. In the group of his closest collaborators there were pre-war specialists in religious matters (lawyers, religious scholars) – Dr. Kazimierz Fromm (first Deputy Director, lawyer), Leonard Kędra-Hodorski (second Deputy Director, lawyer), Dr. Tadeusz Wolfenburg (before 1939 counselor of the Ministry of Religious Denominations and Public Education, lawyer), Dr. Teodor Swinarski (after the war known mainly from studies in the field of social insurance, lawyer), and pre-war theologian and religious scholar Serafin Kiryłowicz – future long-time Head of the Department of Non-Roman Catholic Confessions of UdSW. About the post-war administration for religious affairs see: R. Michalak, *Polityka wyznaniowa państwa polskiego...*

<sup>47</sup> See: M. Karwat, *O pojęciu kompromisu*, [in:] *Interpretacje polityki. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana prof. Mariuszowi Gulczyńskiemu w 80. rocznicę urodzin*, edit. R. Bäcker et al., Toruń 2010.

<sup>48</sup> See: J. Borowiak, *op. cit.*, p. 66.

<sup>49</sup> The next broadcast did not take place until January 21, 1982; see: *ibidem*, p. 85.

<sup>50</sup> A summary of information from Section 5 of Division V of the WUBP in Krakow leads to such conclusions, see: AIPN, sign. Kr 039/1 vol. 1, c. 136, 139, 143.

<sup>51</sup> AIPN, sign. Kr 039/1 vol. 1, c. 139, "Characteristics of the object of the sect" for the period June 1-30, 1948; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 517.

<sup>52</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 58, Rychter, "Methodist Church" [n. d.].

"Paweł"<sup>53</sup>. According to him, Chambers was "a staunch opponent of the present reality, he can pretend to be a democrat, but in confidential talks he always emphasizes that only in the creation of the United States of Europe, all religions can count on religious freedom, because in the communist regime they are doomed"<sup>54</sup>. As he claimed Chambers also used to say that "wanting to have American help, you have to have a head on the back and some courage. [...] Polish intelligence has not grown up to be able to properly control the activities of Americans in Poland"<sup>55</sup>. There were also ominous reports of agents about "secret", "evening" meetings with American citizens at the main office of the Methodist Church in Poland<sup>56</sup>. The arguments of the Fr. superintendent were in vain. He argued that

the opinion and will of several thousand Methodists in America affects seeking friendly ways of understanding and solving problems between the two great states [USSR and United States – R.M.] [...] the attitude of our fellow believers in America is peaceful and democratic. A similar attitude is also characteristic of the Methodist Church in Poland<sup>57</sup>.

The article published on July 15, 1948 in the Methodist letter "The Churchman", which was translated and submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Wickstrom, was supposed to be the proof of such a state of affairs. In the key passage, it was stated that

the Methodists want peace [...] they run the risk of being imprisoned in the [American] prison and paying a fine of 10,000. dollars, [...] The World Peace Commission at the Methodist Church sent a telegram to President Truman, in which the Methodists demand diplomatic talks to settle American-Russian problems<sup>58</sup>.

The Polish state authorities did not accept such explanations. At the beginning of 1949, the superintendents Wickstrom and Chambers left Poland. Shortly thereafter, the Gdańsk pastor Thomas J. Gamble, a British citizen, left for Canada. He was questioned mainly because he lived in the Swedish consulate in Gdynia<sup>59</sup>. The situation ur-

<sup>53</sup> The content of the documents of the Krakow WUBP shows that they regarded Jan Kulak, the leading spiritual Union of Seventh-Day Adventist Congregations, as the informant pseudonym "Paweł"; see: AIPN, sign. Kr 039/1 vol. 1, c. 239 and AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 682; Krzysztof Srokowski, the Head of Section V, Division V, WUBP in Krakow, Zygmunt Jędryś, senior clerk, "Characteristics of the object of the sect. Report for the period 1-31.49" – information from the source with the pseudonym "Paweł".

<sup>54</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>56</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 134, "Agent report" source "Max", June 20, 1947.

<sup>57</sup> AAN, MAP, sign. 1062, c. 105-106, letter from the chief superintendent of the Methodist Church in the Republic of Poland Werner T. Wickstrom to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Warszawa, August 19, 1948.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>59</sup> See: P. Szczudłowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 138-140; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 118, note of the Head of Section V of Division V of the Ministry of Public Music Józef Michalski [n. d.]; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 183, "Agent report" of source "Jodła", July 11, 1951; The situation of Fr. Gamble was additionally complicated by the discovery by the WUBP in Gdańsk that his closest collaborator, preacher Jan Wojnowski, cooperated with the Quaker Mission in the illegal transfer of religious literature to the USSR (see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 471, Lt.-Col. Jurkowski, the Head of the WUBP in Gdańsk to the Head of the Division V Department I of MBP, Gdańsk, May 12, 1949).

gently required – in the absence of Geneva representatives of the world's Methodism – to appoint new church authorities with Fr. superintendent Józef Naumiuk at the head<sup>60</sup>. His responsibility for the Church, in turn, forced the radical and public separation of the Polish Methodists from the connections with ecclesiastical structures in the West. The Statement of the Executive Committee of the Methodist Church of March 4, 1949 was meaningful:

The anti-peace propaganda of the imperialists of the West [...] grew in strength. [...] Recently, it has come to our attention that certain few American Methodists have succumbed to this propaganda and have even gone so far as to provide services to anti-peace activators. [...] we Polish Methodists condemn the errors of these co-religionists, regardless of their offices and church dignities, and declare that we do not want to communicate with them. [...] we Polish Methodists will be persevering in the position of peace and brotherhood of peoples and loyalty and cooperation with our state, which along with other Slavic states stands guardian of peace<sup>61</sup>.

“Okólnik” of the new church leadership informed about the changes that took place in the Church: “In recent days, foreign church workers have left Poland and those who remained resigned from their positions. [...] The moment came when we Poles [...] had to take over leadership and responsibility for the overall work of the Church in Poland”<sup>62</sup>. In the following moves, Naumiuk was looking for a way to be financially self-sufficient<sup>63</sup> and to cut the Church completely from material support of Western confessional centers<sup>64</sup>.

The international context of the departure of Wickstrom, Chambers and Gamble from Poland reveals the telegram of the counsel of the Polish embassy in Washington, Edward Bartol, who informed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the MAP Department on the conversation in February 1949 with G.E. Hopkins, deputy secretary of the Department Foreign Missions of the Methodist Church. In Bartol's opinion:

<sup>60</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 152, “Ag[ent] Report” of the source “Powaga”, Olsztyn, July 15, 1949; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 443, “Agent Report” of the source “Piec”, Łódź, April 8, 1949.

<sup>61</sup> AAN, MAP, sign. 1062 k. 108, “Statement of the Executive Committee of the Methodist Church in Poland”, Warszawa, March 4, 1949.

<sup>62</sup> AAN, MAP, sign. 1062, c. 109-110, “Okólnik” of the Executive Committee of the Methodist Church in Poland No. 1, Warszawa, March 4, 1949; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 530; “Okólnik” of the Executive Committee of the Methodist Church in Poland No. 1, Warszawa, March 4, 1949.

<sup>63</sup> It was connected with the necessity of raising the church contribution paid by the members of the Church. This situation brought many controversies revealed during the parish meetings. In the Kraków congregation, for example, a postulate appeared that “instead of increasing contributions to the Central Fund, it would be preferable to increase the remuneration for the cleaner and the gatekeeper of the Congregation”, AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, k. 366-367, “Report on the completion of the III and IV quarter conference”, Kraków, April 13, 1951.

<sup>64</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 184-185, note by Zygmunt Konicki from Section III of Division V of the UBP for the capital city of Warszawa based on source information about pseudonym “Godos”, December 12, 1951; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 186, “Agent report” of source “Jacek”, December 20, 1951. According to the MBP informer of pseudonym “Orzeł”, member of the Methodist Finance Committee, material help flowed to Polish Methodists from: the USA, Sweden, England, Norway, Denmark and Switzerland; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 407-408, “Ag[ent] report” of source “Orzeł”, June 26, 1951.

Hopkins's point is to show the Polish government how difficult it is in America for the Methodist Church towards its own fellow-believers as a result of the pastors' process in Bulgaria<sup>65</sup> [...] Hopkins points out that the formal accusation of Bulgarian pastors, and especially the Superintendent Ivanov, exchanges his contacts with the Geneva bishop Paul N. Garber. This matter is directly related to Poland. Bishop Garber is the head of the Methodist Church throughout Eastern and Central Europe. In this capacity he is leading even presently Polish Methodists. Recognizing the relations of the national Methodists with Bishop Garber as reprehensible by the Bulgarian court may put the Polish Methodists under the auspices of the bishop in a difficult situation. Mr. Hopkins stressed that bishop Garber after visiting the countries of Eastern Europe, and, among others, Poland, publicly stated in America about religious freedoms in these countries. He was strongly fought against and called the communist<sup>66</sup>.

Shortly after getting rid of clerical foreigners from Poland, on the basis of the "Bulgarian affair"<sup>67</sup>, in May 1949<sup>68</sup>, the Ministry of Public Security (MBP) set up an object-oriented subject case codenamed "Moda". Its goal was to dissect<sup>69</sup> the Methodist people in Poland more diligently than ever, due to their possible espionage activity. This development was carried out by some provincial Public Security Offices (UBPs) also as part of activities which covered all non-Catholic churches or under other codenames – which also depended on the Section leading the case. For example, in the Białystok Voivodship under the codenames "Apostołowie", "Pomorzanie" and "Beduini"<sup>70</sup>. Provincial Public Security Office (WUBP) in Gdańsk was described by the codename "Słoń"<sup>71</sup> and the WUBP in Krakow – the code name "Poszukiwacz"<sup>72</sup>. In turn, the WUBP in Kato-

<sup>65</sup> On February 25, 1949, the trial of fifteen Protestant clergymen began in Bulgaria. They were accused of collaborating with the Anglo-American intelligence service. Among the defendants there were: Baptists, Pentecostals, Congregationalists, Christians and Methodists; see: H. R. Tomaszewski, *Wyznania...*, pp. 82-84.

<sup>66</sup> AAN, MAP, sign. 1062, c. 119, telegram to the counsel of the Polish embassy in Washington inż. Edward Bartol to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Warszawa, Washington, February 21, 1949.

<sup>67</sup> This connection is confirmed by adding information from the Bulgarian process to correspondence between MBP and voivodship UBP; see AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 48-57.

<sup>68</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 444, letter from the Deputy Head of Department V to the Head of Department I of the WUBP in Łódź, Łódź, April 23, 1949.

<sup>69</sup> The justification for the establishment of a nationwide object case was the results of a point of study carried out in the years 1947-1949, see for instance: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608 / J, c. 111, letter from the Head of Division V of Department V of MBP to the Head of Department V of MBP in Łódź, Warszawa, September 25, 1947; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608 / J, c. 15, letter from the Head of Division V of Department V of MBP to the Head of Department V of MBP in Wrocław, Warszawa, February 23, 1949.

<sup>70</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 409, letter from the Head of Division I of the WUBP to the Head of Division V Department I of the MBP, Białystok, August 18, 1949; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 354, Second Lieutenant Załuski, the Head of Section V, Division V of the WUBP in Białystok "Characteristics of the object Apostołowie", Białystok 3.07.1949; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 356-357, Second Lieutenant Koziół head of Section III, Faculty 5 of the WUBP in Białystok "Characteristics of the object Methodist Church codename Pomorzanie", Białystok, October 1, 1950.

<sup>71</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 479.

<sup>72</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 687-688, "Report on the initiation of an object-oriented case codename Poszukiwacz", Kraków, March 22, 1950.

wice gathered materials for the object matter with the unambiguous codename “Methodists”, which was used interchangeably to the code name “Moda”<sup>73</sup>.

On December 6, 1949, specific expectations and directives of the ministry were formulated for provincial UBPs.

Conducting further development of a given object officers should: 1. Put special emphasis on the active investigation of individual members suspected of intelligence activities, and thus maintaining contact with foreign countries, with representatives of the Headquarters, with foreigners, with a blurred political past, etc. / The whole Church will be under surveillance of the Division V. 2. From this environment, select candidates and prepare for recruitment. 3. Draw attention to and include in the plan for the elaboration of the executive members of the Sect, and employed in various branches of the national economy, because these people can be used by foreign intelligence. After confirming this fact, it is necessary to consult with the relevant Divisions of your Office to coordinate further surveillance<sup>74</sup>.

In the instructions that were directed to the structures of the county security offices, a rich set of arguments justifying the necessity to surveil the Methodist was included.

Methodist Sect [was] connected with abroad, with the USA, where it receives all funds and propaganda materials, and all instructions regarding its activities. [...] The Methodist sect brings together many people who are hostile to current reality and production cooperatives in the countryside, which makes it difficult for others to rebuild People’s Poland and continue their march to socialism. Besides, they have the chance to deal with espionage<sup>75</sup>.

Yet another motive accompanying the anti-Methodist action was the assumption of state authorities that the Methodist Church “was always the domain of influences of international freemasonry [and] therefore its influences undoubtedly existed also in Poland, especially at this time when this church was strongly associated with centers of foreign, Anglo-Saxon disposition”<sup>76</sup>.

Admittedly, the Methodists themselves had provided material evidence that the issue of their ties with the West was not only an American founding and leadership factor, but also public liking towards the United States of America. The category of “Anglo-Saxon views” appeared in the characteristics of the Methodist clergy drafted by security officers<sup>77</sup>. In the materials exchange between the Ministry of Public Education and the UBP, the photo from the Annual Church Conference on July 7, 1946 in Katowice, where

<sup>73</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 568-569, the Head of Division III of Department V WUBP in Katowice “Characteristics of the Methodist object for the period 1.1.51-1.4.51.”, Katowice, May 2, 1951.

<sup>74</sup> AIPN, sygn. BU 0419/254, k. 31-32, letter from the Head of Division I WUBP in Kielce to PUBP in Busko Zdrój, Kielce 28.12.1949.

<sup>75</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 31-32, letter from the Head of the Section I WUBP in Kielce to the PUBP in Busko Zdrój, Kielce, December 28, 1949.

<sup>76</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609 / J, c. 233-237, Bolesławski, “Christian Confessions in Poland in 1945-52 from the point of view of some penetration into their environment of faithful influences of occult freemasonry” [n. d].

<sup>77</sup> For instance: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609 / J, c. 86, letter from the Head of the PUBP in Piotrków to the Head of Division V of the WUBP in Łódź, Piotrków, August 25, 1949.

the participants of this meeting pose with the great American national flag in the background, was very often included. Visits of lesser-known foreign preachers such as Francis Patrick, a British citizen who visited the church in Jelenia Góra in May 1950, did not help the Polish Methodists<sup>78</sup>. This visit resulted not only in the interrogation of the deaconess Helena Jasikówna by the local UB and the Social and Political Section, but also in the increased surveillance of the Lower Silesian congregations.

As part of the "Moda" object case, the activities of the Ministry of Security officers concerned all clergymen<sup>79</sup>, secular preachers<sup>80</sup>, deacons<sup>81</sup>, church administration employees<sup>82</sup>, editors of the "Pielgrzym Polski"<sup>83</sup>, students of the Theological Seminary<sup>84</sup>, members of the Academic Youth Union of Methodists<sup>85</sup>, and the most active congrega-

<sup>78</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610 / J, c. 613, deacon's letter of Helena Jasikówna to the regional superintendent, Fr. Jan Kalinowski – a record of correspondence intercepted by the Ministry of Public Security, Jelenia Góra, August 1, 1950.

<sup>79</sup> Regarding their current activities and the smallest details of their past; see for instance: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 425-426, Second Lieutenant. Dyszkiewicz, warrant officer Pietruszewski Section V, Division V of the WUBP in Łódź "Methodist Church – Characteristics", Łódź [n. d.]. The information about relatives of these people was also very important for MBP. For example, a charge that is incriminating Henryk Zalewski was that his brother was a high officer in the United Kingdom army; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 451-457, Capt. Gajewski, the Head of Department I of WUBP in Łódź to the Head of Division V of Department I of the MBP "Report on the course of development of the object codename Zrzeszenie", Łódź, October 26, 1949.

<sup>80</sup> For instance: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 83, "Characteristics of Wincenty Adamski, Deputy Pastor in Koszalin" – of the source "Rej", October 18, 1951.

<sup>81</sup> For instance: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 87, "Report of the deaconess Helena Jasikówna at the Annual Missionary Conference of the Women's Association at the Methodist Church" – record of correspondence between Helena Jasikówna and Wanda Biczemska intercepted by the Ministry of Public Affairs, September 1, 1949; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 85, "Characteristics of the deaconess Wanda Piotrowska" – information of the source "Rej", October 18, 1951.

<sup>82</sup> In particular, the surveillance concerned administrative employees of the secretariat of the Methodist Church in Warszawa; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 18, "Agent Report" from the source "Nowator" about Adam Zabłotny, September 16, 1952.

<sup>83</sup> For instance: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 105, "Agent Report" from the source "Stańczyk" about Czesław Lechicki, Kraków, April 23, 1951; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 106, "Agent Report" from the source "Powaga" about Czesław Lechicki, Kraków, June 11, 1951; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 107-108, "Agent Report" from the source "Graba" about Czesław Lechicki, Kraków, October 18, 1951.

<sup>84</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 34, report on the intelligence interview ("Sojusznik" and "Czarny") on the subject of Aleksandra Dolej, a student of the Methodist Theological Seminary, January 21, 1948; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 38, "Agent report" of the source "Mietek" on the subject of Aleksandra Dolej, student of the Methodist Theological Seminary, October 9, 1948; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 86-87, "Students of the Methodist Seminary in Klarysewo near Warszawa" – information of the source "Rej", October 18, 1951; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 51, "Characteristics of students of the Methodist Theological Seminary 1952/1953"; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 52-54, "Characteristics of students of the Methodist Theological Seminary September 30, 1953"; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 57-58, "Agent Report" from the source "Nowator" No. 3/53, Warszawa, October 7, 1953. As part of the "Wywrotowcy" case, the IV MBP Division conducted in 1953 operational activities against three students of Methodists, suspected of "conducting organized revisionist activity in Masuria"; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 321-322, "Report about the Methodist Church for August [19]53".

<sup>85</sup> This issue concerned practically only the students of the University of Łódź and was conducted by the WUBP in Łódź as part of the development of the object-oriented Methodist congregation, codename "Zrzeszenie". According to MBP materials, an informer about pseudonym "Dan" was the President of the

tion members<sup>86</sup>. Technically, security work in this area was based on agents<sup>87</sup> (inside<sup>88</sup> or outside<sup>89</sup> of the church), correspondence control<sup>90</sup> and telephone tapping<sup>91</sup>. With a low level of substantive preparation in terms of the very essence and character of Methodism, MBP had to use the professional support of the Department of Religious Affairs of the MAP, and from 1950, Office for the Religious Affairs (UdSW). Naturally, the functional and most influential people in this environment were first screened. The most important premise for continuing a single case was the person's previous relationship with American citizens (or from other Western countries) and the presumption of continuing such acquaintances. Such determinants of security actions arose around the investigation of Fr. Józef Szczepkowski.

Although the Methodist leaders who were citizens of Western countries left Poland, there was still a Pole born in New York in the country. What's more, in the years 1947-1949 on behalf of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń, he was on research in the United States of America. It was necessary to determine at all costs whether it was actually research and whether after returning to Poland and at the Nicolaus Copernicus University, Szczepkowski dealt only with English philology. The peak of operation-

---

Academic Methodist Youth Union; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 447-449, Cpt. Gajewski, the Head of Division I of WUBP in Łódź to the Head of Division V of Department I of the MBP, "Report on the course of development of the object codename *Zrzeszenie*", Łódź, August 1, 1949.

<sup>86</sup> An example is the working out of Antoni Wróbel, a member of the Przemyśl congregation, based on a typewriter found in his home; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609 / J, c. 397, extract from the WUBP report in Rzeszów for the month of July 1952.

<sup>87</sup> In practice, only the establishment of a nationwide object matter forced the recruitment action to acquire an agent in the Methodist Church. At the time of announcing the object case, the codename "Moda", WUBP in Lublin had only one informer, which was supposed to obtain information about clerics (Bazyli Koziej and Witold Sobolew) traveling from Chełm to Zamość, which in practice was unfeasible; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 389-391, Lt.-Col. A. Jastrzębski, the Head of the WUBP in Lublin to the MBP Division I Department V, "Report on the initiation of object surveillance of Moda", Lublin, December 24, 1949. After two months, the report already reported the work of two informers; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 393, "Extract from the monthly report of WUBP Lublin for the period from 26.1.-25.2.50".

<sup>88</sup> The most valuable collaborators of MBP in the study of clergy were other clergy. In assessing the value of the reports of the agency working out the pastor Henryk Zalewski, the greatest merit in this field was put forward by the informer pseudonym "Jebi". Under this pseudonym WUBP in Łódź, the pastor of the church in Piotrków Trybunalski, Fr. Jerzy Biczemski was registered; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 465-468, Capt. Gajewski, the Head of Division I of WUBP in Łódź to the Head of Division V of Department I of the MBP "Report on the course of development of the object crypt. *Zrzeszenie*", Łódź, March 28, 1950.

<sup>89</sup> The case of Władysław Kołodziej, which MBP treated as its informer pseudonym "Henryk", was unusual. Well, shortly after recruitment, he left the Methodist Church and gave information about this religious relationship as a member of the United Church of Christ and the editor of the community's letter under the name "Jedność". His information was treated as intra-environmental; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 450, "Extract from the report No. 9 WUBP from 25.8 to 20.9.49".

<sup>90</sup> See numerous entries (including translations from foreign languages) of correspondence in: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J and AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J. Of particular importance was the capture of these letters, whose senders or addressees were people on the list entitled "Outstanding Methodists in the USA". Forty names appeared on it; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 217-219, "Outstanding Methodists in the USA" [n. d.].

<sup>91</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1612/J – the entire folder concerns eavesdropping on telephone conversations.



al activities was in the years 1953-1954. Although the study concerned an "activist of the Methodist Church", due to his work at the Nicolaus Copernicus University, the surveillance included also scientific and didactic employees from the vicinity of Szczepkowski. It was assumed that if not in the Church and not in the Seminary of the seminary, the possible "American contacts" could be among the University lecturers. It also worked the other way. Major Liberman, head of Division IV of the Department XI of the MBP, ordered the search for a collaborator among the Toruń academic staff<sup>92</sup>. He wanted someone who would contribute to the breakthrough and to "break" a person to whom nothing significant had yet been found.

Hope for this breakthrough came when on January 23, 1953, always calm, Fr. Szczepkowski got into a fight with Fr. Lubecki. The first was at that time an important figure of the "committeers" faction, the second – the leader of the pro-communist faction of "democrat pastors" in the Methodist Church. As established by the Research and Judiciary Committee of the Methodist Church, Fr. Szczepkowski accused Fr. Lubecki, that he was a "snooper", "viper" and "destroyer". Thus, the clear political background of the event was revealed, which the Commission was obligated to report to UdSW and MBP<sup>93</sup>. The consequence of the case was Szczepkowski's loss of the post of rector of the Seminary in Klarysewo. The church commission decided that Lubecki provoked Szczepkowski to use offensive words. The case also went to court proceedings. Under the decision of the District Court in Piaseczno and the Provincial Court in Warszawa, Fr. Szczepkowski was found guilty of beating the plaintiff and sentenced to a monthly arrest and 500 zlotys fine<sup>94</sup>. Roman Darczewski, on behalf of UdSW, also forbade Szczepkowski (for an indefinite period of time) to fulfill his spiritual function<sup>95</sup>. In these circumstances, Szczepkowski concentrated solely on his work at the Department of Angelology at the Nicolaus Copernicus University, and at that time the WUBP in Bydgoszcz and the County Public Security Office (PUBP) in Toruń were to undertake ground-breaking activities.

Their result did not satisfy Liberman. Already the first operational activities brought little enthusiastic conclusions. It turned out that Szczepkowski at UMK maintained only official relations. He was among the staff considered a valued professional, he was liked by students, but he was so distanced from his surroundings that it was difficult to penetrate into his circle of friends effectively. As if he was expecting activities of security forces here as well. Because no compromising materials WUBP had won, the whole matter became devoid of purpose<sup>96</sup>.

<sup>92</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 401, Major A. Liberman, the Head of Division IV of Department XI of the MBP to the Head of Department XI of the WUBP in Bydgoszcz, Warszawa, October 15, 1953.

<sup>93</sup> At the request of the MBP, the course of the case and the opinion about Lubecki and Szczepkowski had to be expressed in writing by the superintendent Naumiuk; see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1614/J, c. 256-258.

<sup>94</sup> AAN, UdSW, sign. III 4a/5/53, c. 1-20, "Case of Józef Szczepkowski – Marian Lubecki".

<sup>95</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 290.

<sup>96</sup> AIPN, sign. B 069/242 vol. 6, c. 397, the Head of UBP on the city and County of Toruń, "Data from an interview about Józef Szczepkowski", Toruń, December 3, 1953.

In the face of the international background of charges and doubts, even the smallest Methodist congregations were subject to investigation. This was exemplified by church units in Kielce, Chmielnik and BuskoZdrój. Operation “Moda” was conducted against them based on the work of recruited informants (“Jawor”, “Janek”, “Obrączka”, “Jotka”, “Cement”, “Znachor”, “Myśliwy”<sup>97</sup>), through which WUBP in Kielce acquired knowledge about all forms of Methodist activity, including the Sunday content of sermons delivered by Feliks Waluszewski, Józef Długosz, Julian Miśków, Józef Harzyński<sup>98</sup>, and later other pastors and preachers.

The first conclusions appeared in February 1950. They maintained the existence of potential threats, however, without their visible manifestations: “The Methodist Board and active members are hostile to the current system, democratic parties and production cooperatives in the countryside, thus they can engage in espionage activities because they often travel through the villages to promote their faith”<sup>99</sup>. In 1951, combining the activities of Kielce Methodist with issues concerning fellow believers in other parts of the country based on the knowledge between them appeared. In the “characteristics” of the situation in the congregation in Chmielnik for the first quarter of that year, WUBP in Kielce combined the knowledge of Harzyński, not even a member of the Methodist Church, what with a supporter of Methodism. The case concerned a certain Piotr Łotocki (or Łoteczki), a lawyer who was detained by the Zielona Góra WUBP and suspected of “cooperating with the Germans” after “being in the vicinity of Zielona Góra and attacking UB officers”. Because the patron was familiar with the Kielce congregations and was to be in close contact with Harzyński, in the opinion of Henryk Kasows-

<sup>97</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 5, Włodzimierz Teter – the Head of the Section III of the Division V of the WUB in Kielce, note: “Following the line of the Methodist sect” [1949]; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 651, Włodzimierz Teter – the Head of Section III of the Division V of the WUB in Kielce, “Annex to the quarterly report for the period from 1.7 to 1.10.1950”, Kielce, October 7, 1950; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 9, Source “Jotka” – “Agent Report” [n. d.]; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 58, Source “Cement” – “Agent report” [n. d.]; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 60-61, Lieutenant T. Ciosek, the Head of the PUBP in Busko Zdrój to the Head of Department V of the WUBP in Kielce, “Special Report on the Methodist denomination sect”, Busko Zdrój, February 27, 1951; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 62, letter of the WUBP in Kielce to the Head of the Division III of the Department V of the MBP, Kielce, March 8, 1951; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 67, “Plan of operational ventures [Section III of Division V of the WUBP in Kielce] following the Methodist Church line for the month of April 1952”, Kielce, March 29, 1952. In 1952, “Janek” was excluded from the group of informers, who confessed to pastor Harzyński for cooperation with the UB; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 68-69, “Report [Section III of Division V of the WUBP in Kielce]”, Kielce, April 18, 1952. In June 1954, an unsuccessful attempt was made to re-integrate “Janek” into the network of informants; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 74-75, W. Płaza referent, Section IV, Division XI of the WUBP in Kielce, “Plan to go to Busko regarding the agency working on the line of the Methodist church”, Kielce, June 17, 1954; AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 76-77, W. Płaza referent, Section IV, Division XI of the WUBP in Kielce, “Report on the activities carried out in the area of Buskers”, Kielce, June 18, 1954.

<sup>98</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 28, “List of Methodist Churches in the province Kielce”, Kielce, December 1, 1949.

<sup>99</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 660-662, the Head of Department I of the WUBP in Kielce to the Head of Division V of Department I of the MBP, Kielce, February 22, 1950.

ki, "directing the object", there arose "suspicion that Harzyński and other people could be on foreign intelligence services"<sup>100</sup>.

Suspicion increased when, based on reports from the sources of "Cement", it turned out that the influence of Methodists were greater than expected, and living evidence was to be "dormant" Methodist (surname Wałek), who was an important secretary of the Municipal National Council in Chmielnik. In addition, a mysterious figure arrived from the West: "a certain Borowiec who lives and stays at all the congregation members"<sup>101</sup>. In January 1952, WUBP received detailed, personal lists of Methodists in Chmielnik, containing, among other things, information about the workplace of each of these people<sup>102</sup>. Because apart from Harzyński and the shoemaker Jan Czerwiński, the remaining people were farmers or remained "with their husband" and "with their parents", the concept of a specialized spying or subversive network lost its rational basis. Surveillance conducted by the UB and administratively hostile course against the Methodists had an impact on the decrease in the number of the faithful in the Kielce Voivodship. In this way, the Cold War international policy brought its echo to a small Methodist community in the Polish province. "Cement" reported at the end of 1954 that there were so few people in the congregation in Chmielnik that public worship services were stopped for home meetings. The policy of the authorities also forced the faithful to be fully submissive, which was manifested by the fact that all Methodists took part in the elections to national councils<sup>103</sup>.

One of the smallest church units in Poland included in the "Moda" object case was a Methodist institution in Inowrocław which was subordinate to the congregation in Bydgoszcz. At the time of its official formation in 1946, it counted 20 members "from the working class". They gathered for services only twice a month in the private apartment of the tailor Mieczysław Klonowski, who fulfilled the function of a secular preacher. They compensated the low frequency of services for themselves by visiting the Inowrocław church of the Union of the Churches of Christ and this circumstance strengthened the unfavorable perception of the community by the authorities. Campbell-Christians<sup>104</sup>, like other evangelical Protestants, had been described around the "Bulgarian case" as a particularly "dangerous element". Stanisław Bąk, a senior clerk of the Section I of the PUBP in Inowrocław, emphasized in July 1949 that parcels with clothing, food and religious writings from the United States of America were coming to the institution. In his

<sup>100</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 63, Henryk Kasowski "Characteristics of the person along the line of the Methodist sect for the period January, February and March 1951", Kielce, April 5, 1951.

<sup>101</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 64, Source "Cement" – "Agent report", June 25, 1951.

<sup>102</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 66, "Name list of Methodist followers in Chmielnik, county Busko", January, 9, 1952.

<sup>103</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 0419/254, c. 81, Source "Cement" – "Agent report", Kielce, December 17, 1954.

<sup>104</sup> For the members of the institution in Inowrocław, the difference between the Methodist and Campbell-Christians was only a matter of the age of baptism. As mentioned above, Campbell-Christians baptized only conscious and adult people.

opinion, the literature could contain “political elements” and therefore it was necessary to assume that “this sect could become the base of foreign intelligence”<sup>105</sup>. During the next three years, all Inowrocław Methodists were thoroughly surveilled<sup>106</sup>. There were five names in the “List of persons passing through agent data”<sup>107</sup>, and up to ten (nearly 1/3!) members of the institution were listed on the list of people who were an “uncertain element”<sup>108</sup>. Klonowski was subjected to a special surveillance, especially when it turned out that before the war, “despite being persecuted as a sectarian, his political attitude to the Sanacja government was favorable”<sup>109</sup>. The first recognition of his contacts brought about the finding that they concerned only religious issues<sup>110</sup>. The operational activities undertaken in the following years did not change the findings in this respect. Disappointing for the PUBP officers, and from 1954 the County Office for Public Security (PUdSBP), there was also the fact that they could not demonstrate counterintelligence successes – despite the efforts of informer pseudonym “Żelazny” – also concerning other Methodists<sup>111</sup>. The spies in Inowrocław could not be located until September 30, 1955, when these activities were abandoned<sup>112</sup>. They were also not in Bydgoszcz<sup>113</sup> and nearby Grudziądz<sup>114</sup>, and the assumed “ties with America” of pastors Aleksander Piekarski, Włodzimierz Timofiejew, Michał Jamny and Stanisław Słotwiński, consisted in practice – what was determined by agents (“Gorczyca”, “Wiara”, “Zosia”, “Stefan” and “Zbigniew”) before and as part of the “Moda” operational case – only on the distri-

<sup>105</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 1, “Decision on introducing an object case into a religious sect Methodists in Inowrocław”, Inowrocław, July 15, 1949.

<sup>106</sup> The personal list of members of the institution in Inowrocław, which had to be provided by the pastor of Bydgoszcz, Fr. Michał Jamny, already contained 35 names; AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 6, “List of members of the Methodist Church in Inowrocław”, Bydgoszcz, February 2, 1952.

<sup>107</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 11, “List of persons [members of the Methodist institution in Inowrocław] passing through the agency data” [n. d.].

<sup>108</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 12, “List of persons [members of the Methodist institution in Inowrocław] presenting an uncertain element” [n. d.].

<sup>109</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 15-16, PUBP in Inowrocław to the Head of Division I of the WUBP in Bydgoszcz, “Report on the initiation of object-oriented development”, Inowrocław, July 15, 1949.

<sup>110</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 17-18, PUBP in Inowrocław to the Head of the Division I of the WUBP in Bydgoszcz, “Report No. 1 on the course of object surveillance”, Inowrocław, February 24, 1950.

<sup>111</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 22, PUBP in Inowrocław to the Head of the Division I of the WUBP in Bydgoszcz, “Characteristics of the object Methodists for the period from 30.9.1951 to 31.12.1951”, Inowrocław, January 10, 1952; AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 19, PUBP in Inowrocław to the Head of the Division I of the WUBP in Bydgoszcz, “Characteristics of the object Methodists for the period from 1 4.1952 to 30.5.1952”, Inowrocław, July 17, 1952.

<sup>112</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/1163, c. 143, PUdSBP in Inowrocław “Report on the transfer of materials to the Department X of the WudSBP in Bydgoszcz”, Inowrocław, September 30, 1955.

<sup>113</sup> Surveillance of the church in Bydgoszcz proves that MBP monitored the phenomenon of the inflow of converts to the Methodist Church; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 44-45, letter from J. Gibski, the Head of Division IV of the WUBP in Bydgoszcz to the Head of Division IV of the Department XII of the MBP with attached characteristics of Zdzisław Malicki, Bydgoszcz, December 4, 1953.

<sup>114</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 293-296, WUBP in Bydgoszcz to MBP “Report on the initiation of object surveillance”, Bydgoszcz, June 10, 1949; AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 244, “Analysis of the situation on the object of the Methodist Church”, Bydgoszcz, November 29, 1950.

bution of American gifts among the faithful just after the war<sup>115</sup>. In 1955, the UB officers were more interested in the content of the sermons<sup>116</sup>, but they were also not able to make any procedural allegations against anybody.

Similar results of the "Moda" operation could be noticed in other parts of Poland. Across the country, as intensely as<sup>117</sup> in Kielce or Bydgoszcz, potential spies were sought<sup>118</sup>, or – as in the Rzeszów region – sympathizers of Ukrainian nationalism<sup>119</sup>. None of the well-surveilled clerics and members of the congregations were, however, qualified to be brought to such allegations<sup>120</sup>. In Masuria, where, among others, informers pseudonym. "Orzeł", "Streik" and "Irena" operating in the environment of the Methodist Church obtained information about the influence of "West German revisionism"<sup>121</sup>, the effectiveness of investigations was also unsatisfactory. Although findings of the agents allowed for periodic and individual arrests<sup>122</sup> or supported conclusions of the Presidium of the National Voivodship Council (PWRN) in Olsztyn to the UdSW to dismiss some of the Methodist clerics from this region<sup>123</sup>, but they did not ultimately serve as procedural arguments. However, the message from Katowice to the MBP must have sounded surprising. Well, the local WUBP, after quite a detailed agent's reconnaissance ("Maj",

<sup>115</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 319, "Agent report" – source "Gorczyca", Bydgoszcz, November 17, 1948; AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 323, "Agent report" – source "Wiara", Bydgoszcz, December 11, 1948; AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 320, "Agent report" – source "Zosia", Bydgoszcz, January 12, 1949; AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 297-300, WUBP in Bydgoszcz to the Head of Division V of the Department I of the MBP "Report No. 1 on the course of object development", Bydgoszcz, August 20, 1949; AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 301-305, WUBP in Bydgoszcz to the Head of Division V of the Department I of the MBP "Report No. 2 on the course of object development", Bydgoszcz, January 23, 1950.

<sup>116</sup> AIPN, sign. By 069/242 vol. 6, c. 339, "Agent report" – source "Piotrowski", Bydgoszcz, January 15, 1955.

<sup>117</sup> In the Rzeszów Voivodship, Methodists were surveilled in addition to the stability of religious beliefs, and in the case of converts – the possibility of returning to the Roman Catholic Church; AIPN, sign. Rz 055/59 vol. 3, c. 70-75, table "List of members of the Methodist Church in Przemyśl County" [n. d.].

<sup>118</sup> Around this search arose at the provincial level "List of persons maintaining contacts with Methodist Church activists abroad or in the country", for instance: AIPN, sign. Rz 055/59 vol. 3, c. 97-98, elaboration: Jan Pasternak, senior clerk of Section IV of the Division XI of the WUBP in Rzeszów, Rzeszów, October 20, 1953.

<sup>119</sup> AIPN, sign. Rz 055/59 t. 3, c. 100, Jan Pasternak, senior clerk of the section IV of the Division XI of the WUBP in Rzeszów, "List of the agent and informational network on the line of the Methodist Church", Rzeszów, September 14, 1954. Information about agents pseudonym "Mars", "Czereśnia", "Wil" and "Wacław".

<sup>120</sup> Instead, lists of the "enemy element" were created. 16 names were found in the Rzeszów Voivodship; AIPN, sign. Rz 055/59 vol. 3, c. 109.

<sup>121</sup> See: *Metody pracy operacyjnej aparatu bezpieczeństwa wobec Kościołów i związków wyznaniowych 1945-1989*, edit. A. Dziurok, Warszawa 2004, doc. 31, pp. 172-5; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1608/J, c. 49, "Agent report" of source "Irena" No. 3/53, Warszawa, January 8, 1954.

<sup>122</sup> Among the Methodist clergymen, the following were arrested: Gustaw Libuda, preacher of the Methodist institution in the village of Zofy, Elck County (see: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 402, second lieutenant Koziół, the Head of Section III, Division V of the WUBP in Białystok to the Head of the Division III Department V of the MBP, "Special Report", Białystok, October 3, 1950), and also pastor Aleksander Sulikowski (zob. AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 184-185, note by Zygmunt Konicki from Section III of Division V of the UBP on the capital city of Warszawa based on information from the source pseudonym "Eagle", December 12, 1951).

<sup>123</sup> As shown by the investigation of Fr. Edward Małka, they were not always effective; see: E. Małek, *Gdzie jest moja Ojczyzna?...*, pp. 389-399; AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 182, "Agent report" source "Orzeł", August 13, 1951.

“Kwiecień”, “Konstanty”), informed the ministry that “a large part of Methodists in Upper Silesia is organized in The Polish United Workers’ Party (PZPR) and are its quite active members”<sup>124</sup>. In the light of subsequent reports, the Methodist environment in this region was considered exemplary. In 1952, for example, they expressed enthusiasm for the content of the draft new constitution, positively contrasting with the “Sanacja constitution”<sup>125</sup>. Probably only to blur this too good impression in the personal characteristics of Kalinowski it was written that “he masks his real face very much”<sup>126</sup>.

It should also be noted that the activities of officers and agents in the framework of “Moda” operation often caused a specific domino effect, because in each case, side issues appeared<sup>127</sup>, and around them the need to expand the agential network. Such were, for example, the circumstances of selecting candidates for recruitment with pseudonyms “Wtyczka” and “Zachwiany”, who were to help to reveal the “pro-American element” in the Methodist Church<sup>128</sup>. There were also unforeseen situations that revived the previously closed cases. When it seemed that pastor from Zamość, Włodzimierz Sobolew, would be excluded from further investigation, the MBP received a letter from the head of one of the districts of the Military Information Administration informing them that the clergyman was in contact with his military coreligionists from the local garrison<sup>129</sup>. In such circumstances, an even more intense surveillance of his person was resumed, in the course of which it turned out that “the relation of the mentioned to the present reality [is] positive [however] is indifferent to the production cooperative”<sup>130</sup>. At the same time, clerics were required to explicitly support all the assumptions of the six-year plan. Further findings of the PUBP in Zamość sounded even more sensational and ominous

<sup>124</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610 / J, c. 574-579, J. Milka, the Head of Section V, Division I of the WUBP in Katowice to the Head of Division V of Department I, Katowice, January 16, 1950.

<sup>125</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 580, “Note” based on information from the source “Konstanty”, January 1952.

<sup>126</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 602-603, L. Piłkuła, the Head of Department XI of the WUBP in Stalinogród “Characteristics of Jan Kalinowski”, Stalinogród, March 10, 1953.

<sup>127</sup> For example, around the investigation into possible relations with Americans, Fr. Jan Łęcki – the pastor of a small branch in Krasnystaw – it was established that a bigger problem is one of the serial Methodists. The special report of the Lublin WUBP stated: “The symptoms of hostile activity include spreading hostile anti-democratic and anti-Soviet propaganda by the Methodist faith teacher Janczewski Janusz, who informs <Klimczuk>, criticizes the Soviet Union, claiming that Soviet Russia murdered Polish officers in 1939. Then he said that the Russian army was going to Czechoslovakia in hiding in railway wagons. He says that one should expect a war. [...] In connection with the above [...] it was decided to set up a record-keeping case for the abovementioned case”, AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 384, captain Jan Leluch the Head and Edward Popławski the clerk of the Division V of WUB in Lublin, “Characteristics of the Methodist object”, Lublin, March 30, 1949.

<sup>128</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 321-322, “Report after the line of the Methodist Church for August [19]53”. See: *Metody...*, doc. 34, pp. 186-187.

<sup>129</sup> AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1609/J, c. 396, a letter from the Head of the Information of the Polish Army (District 9) to the Director of Department V of the MBP, March 25, 1952.

<sup>130</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 327, letter from Lieutenant J. Nowak, the Head of the PUBP in Zamość, to the Head of Division V of the WUBP in Lublin, Zamość, August 14, 1952.

for Sobolew. It turned out that in the past he was confessing Trotskyist views<sup>131</sup>, which in the authorities' interpretation was identical to the questioning of the Marxist-Leninist interpretation of communism. The main goal of the study in terms of possible cooperation with American intelligence was not achieved.

\* \* \*

MBP actions towards the Methodists as part of an action codenamed "Moda" were part of the liquidation course of religious policy, but they were not as drastic as the actions taken by the security services against the Evangelical-Baptist churches<sup>132</sup>. Deep repressive action also began to be uncomfortable for the authorities, due to the legal, recognized status of the Methodist Church and – which paradoxically – the material support from the West, which was used not only by Polish Methodists, but also by the Polish state. Reasons for mass arrests, nor for personal lawsuits were ultimately not provided by individual investigations. Operation "Moda" was practically given up in 1955, when the Department VI of the Committee for Public Security (KdSBP) took over supervision of matters related to Methodism. However, its effect on Methodism was long felt. Documentation drafted in 1955 by UdSW<sup>133</sup> also takes into account the consequences of the state authorities' attack on the Methodist clergy, namely the withdrawal of permission for pastoral work for some of the clergy (Zygmunt Karczewski, Antoni Liszkiewicz, Józef Harzyński, Jan Rudź, Jan Waszk (Waschk) and Włodzimierz Timofiejew)<sup>134</sup>. The decrease in the number of Methodists in Masuria was at the same time a fiasco of the nationalist policy of the PRL, since among the emigrants there were also Masurian indigenous people (Lutherans and Methodists), declaring directly after the war quite often belonging to the Polish nation. With the progressive decrease in the number of believers in Masuria, there was also a risk of destabilization in relation to the material state of the Church.

The surveillance of the Methodist Church was continued after 1956 by the Division V of the Department III of the Ministry of the Interior, and from 1962 by the Department IV of the Ministry of the Interior within the subject matter of the "Metody"<sup>135</sup>.

<sup>131</sup> See: AIPN, sign. BU 01283/1610/J, c. 328, Andrzej Paź – PUBP officer in Zamość, "Memo", Zamość, October 20, 1952.

<sup>132</sup> See: H.R. Tomaszewski, *Wyznania...*; H.R. Tomaszewski, *Zjednoczony Kościół Ewangeliczny 1947-1987*, Warszawa 2009; R. Michalak, *Kościół protestancki i władze...*; R. Michalak, *Polityka wyznaniowa państwa polskiego...*; J. Mironczuk, *Polityka państwa wobec Zjednoczonego Kościoła Ewangelicznego w Polsce (1947-1989)*, Warszawa 2006.

<sup>133</sup> AAN, UdSW, sign. 131/300, c. 114-115.

<sup>134</sup> It should be added that three people (Marian Lubecki, Aleksander Piekarski, Stanisław Słotwiński) were not included on this list due to their clerical status taken away by the then Executive Committee of the Methodist Church in connection with the ongoing struggle of church factions.

<sup>135</sup> See: *Plany pracy Departamentu IV MSW na lata 1972-1979*, choice and elaboration by M. Biełaszkó, A. Piekarska, P. Tomasik, C. Wilanowski, Warszawa 2007.

## Bibliography

- Bebbington D.W., *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s*, London 1989.
- Benedyktowicz W., *Bracia z Epworth*, Warszawa 1971.
- Bielawny K., *Kościół Ewangelicko-Augsburski na Warmii i Mazurach po II wojnie światowej w spojrzeniu historyczno-ekumenicznym*, Olsztyn 2008.
- Bielawny K., *Kościół metodystyczny na Mazurach po II wojnie światowej*, [in:] *Polski protestantyzm w czasach nazizmu i komunizmu*, edit. J. Kłaczek, Toruń 2009.
- Borowiak J., *Kościół Ewangelicko-Methodystyczny w Polsce*, Warszawa 1999.
- Chabasińska A., *Zarys historii parafii ewangelicko-metodystycznej w Międzyzrzeczu od roku 1945*, "Nadwarciański Rocznik Historyczno-Archiwalny" 2009, No. 16, pp. 245-253.
- Chambers E., *Z dziejów ruchu metodystycznego w Polsce*, Warszawa 1948.
- Dziobek-Romański J., *Uznawanie związków religijnych w Polsce (1944-1989) narzędziem dyskryminacyjnej polityki władz*, Lublin 2004.
- Gastpary W., *Protestantyzm w Polsce w dobie dwóch wojen światowych, część I: 1914-1939*, Warszawa 1978.
- Grelewski S., *Wyznania protestanckie i sekty religijne w Polsce współczesnej*, Lublin 1937.
- Jasiński G., *Kościół ewangelicki na Mazurach w XIX wieku (1817-1914)*, Olsztyn 2003.
- Jasiński G., *U źródeł gromadkarstwa: o grupie "świętych" na Mazurach*, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie" 1996, No. 3, pp. 369-378.
- Karczewski Z., *Kościół i konfesje w Prusach Wschodnich. Doznania byłego pastora metodystów na Mazurach*, "Pielgrzym Polski", No. 768, pp. 12-18.
- Karwat M., *O pojęciu kompromisu*, [in:] *Interpretacje polityki. Księga pamiątkowa dedykowana prof. Mariuszowi Gulczyńskiemu w 80. rocznicę urodzin*, edit. R. Bäcker et al., Toruń 2010.
- Kent J., *Wesley and the Wesleyans*, Cambridge 2002.
- Kruk E., *Superintendent Rządki*, "Kwartalnik Społeczno-Kulturalny Myśl Protestancka" 2000, No. 1.
- Kulęgowski M., *Gromadkarze*, "Znad Pisy" 1995, No. 2, pp. 10-15.
- Lelievre M., *Jan Wesley. Jego życie i dzieło*, Warszawa 2006.
- Leszczyński P.A., *Centralna administracja wyznaniowa II RP. Ministerstwo Wyznań Religijnych i Oświecenia Publicznego*, Warszawa 2006.
- Linder R.D., *Dwadzieścia wieków chrześcijaństwa – cz. 4*, "Myśl Ewangeliczna" 1990, No. 3-4.
- Małłek E., *Gdzie jest moja ojczyzna? Wspomnienia*, Hamburg 1989 [manuscript belonging to the author; excerpts in: "Kartki Mazurskie" 2011, No. 1(89)].
- Metody pracy operacyjnej aparatu bezpieczeństwa wobec Kościołów i związków wyznaniowych 1945-1989*, edit. A. Dziurok, Warszawa 2004.
- Michalak R., *Kościół protestancki i władze partyjno-państwowe w Polsce (1945-1956)*, Warszawa 2002.
- Michalak R., *Kościół protestancki wobec kwestii repolonizacji ludności rodzimej Warmii i Mazur w latach 1945-1956*, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie" 1999, No. 3, pp. 361-379.
- Michalak R., *Kościół metodystyczny na Warmii i Mazurach w latach stalinizmu*, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie" 2000, No. 2, pp. 245-254.
- Michalak R., *Polityka wyznaniowa państwa polskiego wobec mniejszości religijnych w latach 1945-1989*, Zielona Góra 2014.
- Michalak R., *Polityka wyznaniowa władz partyjno-państwowych w powiecie żarskim w latach stalinizmu*, "Studia Zachodnie" 2000, No. V, pp. 97-123.
- Michalak R., *Rywalizacja Kościołów ewangelicko-augsburskiego i metodystycznego na Mazurach po II wojnie światowej*, "Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie" 2001, No. 4, pp. 621-639.
- Okręg Mazurski w raportach Jakuba Prawina. Wybór dokumentów. 1945 rok*, prepared for printing by T. Baryła, Olsztyn 1996.



- Pełczyński G., *Ugrupowania ewangelikalne na Ziemiach Polskich*, "Zwierciadło Etnologiczne. Rocznik Katedry Etnologii i Antropologii Kulturowej Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego", No. 2, 2013, pp. 101-122.
- Plany pracy Departamentu IV MSW na lata 1972-1979*, choice and elaboration M. Biełaszko, A. Piekarska, P. Tomasik, C. Wilanowski, Warszawa 2007.
- Pomarański M., *Współczesny amerykański fundamentalizm protestancki*, Lublin 2013.
- Puślecki E., *Działalność Kościoła Metodystycznego w PRL na Mazurach w latach 1945-1985*, Olsztyn 1985 [manuscript belonging to the author].
- Puślecki E., *Kościół Ewangelicko-Methodystyczny*, [in:] *W drodze za Chrystusem. Kościoły chrześcijańskie w Polsce mówią o sobie*, edit. H. Trandy, M. Patalona, Kraków 2009, pp. 75-104.
- Puślecki E., *Powracająca fala. Działalność Południowego Episkopalnego Kościoła Metodystycznego w Polsce w latach 1920-1924. Studium historyczno-teologiczne*, Warszawa 2001.
- Sakson A., *Działalność kościołów i wyznań protestanckich na Mazurach*, "Euhemer. Przegląd Religioznawczy" 1987, No. 1.
- Sukertowa-Biedrawina E., *Karty z dziejów Mazur*, Olsztyn 1961.
- Szczudłowski P., *Powojenne dzieje wspólnoty metodystycznej w Gdańsku*, [in:] *Nierzymskokatolickie Kościoły i grupy wyznaniowe w Gdańsku*, edit. W. Pałubicki, H. Cyrzan, Gdańsk-Koszalin 1998.
- Sziling J., *Kościół chrześcijański w polityce niemieckich władz okupacyjnych w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie (1939-1945)*, Toruń 1988.
- Tomaszewski H.R., *Wyznania typu ewangelicko-baptystycznego wchodzące w skład Zjednoczonego Kościoła Ewangelicznego w latach 1945-1956*, Warszawa 1991.
- Tomaszewski H.R., *Zjednoczony Kościół Ewangeliczny 1947-1987*, Warszawa 2009.
- Turner J.M., *John Wesley: The Evangelical Revival and the Rise of Methodism in England*, Epworth 2003.
- Urban K., *Luteranie i metodyści na Mazurach 1945-1957. Wybór materiałów*, Kraków 2000.
- Urban K., *Mniejszości religijne w Polsce 1945-1991 (Zarys statystyczny)*, Kraków 1994.
- Winniczek W., *Kościół Metodystyczny w Polsce w latach 1920-1939*, Chylice 1962 [manuscript of master's thesis in the collection of the ChAT Library in Warszawa, sign. 15826].
- Wolnica K., *Kościół Ewangelicko-Methodystyczny w RP w latach 1989-2006*, [in:] *Nierzymskokatolickie Kościoły chrześcijańskie we współczesnej Polsce*, edit. Z.J. Winnicki, T. Dębowski, Toruń 2007.
- Zieliński T.J., *Geneza i istota Aliansu Ewangelicznego*, "Myśl Ewangeliczna" 1990, No. 5-6.

### Journals and newspapers

"Pielgrzym Polski" 1945-1950, 1958-1989

### Normative acts

Journal of Laws (from 1945, No. 46 from 1946, No. 54, from 1971, No. 16)

### Archival materials

- Archiwum Akt Nowych [Archives of Modern Records]: Ministerstwo Administracji Publicznej, Ministerstwo Ziem Odzyskanych, Komitet Centralny Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej, Urząd do Spraw Wyznań.
- Archiwum Państwowe w Olsztynie [State Archive in Olsztyn]: Wojewódzki Komitet Polskiej Zjednoczonej Partii Robotniczej, Urząd Wojewódzki w Olsztynie, Prezydium Wojewódzkiej Rady Narodowej w Olsztynie.
- Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej: Ministerstwo Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, Komitet do Spraw Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych.

**Abstract:** The aim of the article is to analyze the determinants and other conditions of the religious policy of the Polish state towards the Methodist Church in the Stalinist period. The author took into account conceptual, programmatic, executive and operational activities undertaken by a complex subject of power, formed by three structures: party, administrative and special services. In his opinion, the liquidation direction of religious policy towards the Methodist Church was determined primarily by two factors: 1) the activity of Methodists in Masuria, which was assessed as “harmful activities” because they were competitive to the activity of the Evangelical-Augsburg Church (in which the authorities placed great hopes for effective repolonization of the native population), 2) strong links between the Methodist Church in Poland and the Methodist Church in the West (United States of America, Canada, Great Britain, Sweden). The liquidation activities have been depicted primarily on the basis of solutions included in the action of special services under the codename “Moda”. The author also explains the reasons for the final resignation from the liquidation policy towards Polish Methodism and the inclusion of the Methodist Church in the direction of the rationing policy.

**Keywords:** religious policy, liquidation policy, regulatory policy, special services, Methodism, Methodist Church

Article submitted: 22.01.2018, article accepted: 24.06.2018.