

Oryginalna praca badawcza

TOMASZ BUTKIEWICZ

WARSZAWA

ORCID: 0000-0001-5830-9412

FORMER NAZIS IN THE NEW STRUCTURES OF THE WEST GERMAN INTELLIGENCE SERVICE AND THEIR INFLUENCE IN POLAND (SELECTED ASPECTS)

Key words: Federal Intelligence Service, intelligence, the Nazis, Poland, PRL, UB

Słowa kluczowe: Zachodniemiecka Federalna Służba Wywiadowcza, wywiad, naziści, Polska, PRL, UB

The end of World War II and the defeat of Adolf Hitler (1889-1945) led to the establishment of a post-war order and the division of Europe¹. Germany's territory and Berlin itself were divided into four sectors: American, English, French and Russian, in each of which denazification was carried out. In the new order, the countries of central Europe, including Poland, came under the influence of Moscow, while those of Western Europe came under the influence of Washington². In this geopolitical set-up,

¹ *Encyklopedia wojskowa: Dowódcy i ich armie, historia wojen i bitew, technika wojskowa*, Vol. 1 [A-M], A. Krupa (ed.), Warszawa 2007, p. 20. The geopolitical division of Europe initiated at Tehran, Yalta and established by the decision of the three victorious powers at Potsdam sealed the partition of Nazi Germany.

² M. Domagała, *Powstanie krajów niemieckich w zachodnich strefach okupacyjnych po II wojnie światowej*, „Gdańskie Studia Prawnicze” 2014, 31, pp. 231-259; H. Laufer, *Der Föderalismus der Bundesrepublik Deutschland*, Stuttgart-Berlin-Köln-Mainz 1974, p. 17; J. Sułek, *Geneza Republiki Federalnej Niemiec*, Poznań 1977, p. 152. This division resulted in the creation of four sectors, the largest of which fell to the USSR. In the regional structures, England received Schleswig Holstein, the USA Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, France Lower Saxony and the Saar and Ruhr regions. The USSR – alongside the states of Central and Eastern Europe – received

two systems were confronted: capitalist and communist. And although Russia and America had previously been allies in the fight against Nazism, a mutually growing hostility had already been outlined since 1945. The escalating East-West conflict justified the use of intelligence in order to surveil a potential enemy. On both sides, attempts were made to intercept former agents of the Third Reich. The Soviets interned in special places of confinement former members of: the Foreign Armies East department (*Fremde Heere Ost*³, hereinafter: FHO), High Command of the Wehrmacht (*Oberkommando des Heeres*⁴, hereinafter: OKH), Protective Troops (Schutzstaffeln, hereinafter SS), the Security Service for the Reichsführers SS (Sicherheitsdienst des Reichsführers SS, hereinafter SD), the Wehrmacht Armed Services and the Secret State Police (Geheime Staatspolizei, hereinafter Gestapo), concentration camp personnel – as an instrument to fight America. According to order No. 00315, issued by the head of the Soviet Intelligence Directorate of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (Народный комиссариат внутренних дел, hereinafter: NKVD), namely Lavrenty Beria (1899-1953), they were transported deep into the USSR. The measures taken by the NKVD largely led to the former Nazi dignitaries moving to the side of West Germany⁵.

In this way, former intelligence collaborators from the FHO, which was a part of the OKH General Staff, underwent denazification in the US sector⁶. They counted on the Americans to make use of their knowledge and information on the pre-1945 USSR. One of the many turned out to be Reinhard Gehlen (1902-1979), who was an important informant for the Russians and the Americans. Therefore, when Joseph Stalin (1878-1961) even set a 1 million USD reward for his head, Dwight Eisenhower (1890-1969) proudly announced that the former Nazi general was his biggest trophy from the war against Hitler⁷. The US Chief of Staff and the Commander in Chief and advisor to the President Eisenhower, William D. Leahy (1875-1959), and the Chief of Army Intelligence, General

Mecklenburg, Vorpommern, Brandenburg, Saxony and Thuringia. Berlin was similarly divided, with the eastern part becoming the capital of the German Democratic Republic (hereinafter GDR).

³ D. Thomas, *Foreign Armies East and German Military Intelligence in Russia 1941-45*, „Journal of Contemporary History“ 1987, 22 (2), pp. 261-301. The Foreign Armies Department had already begun its activities during the First World War, and although it was officially disbanded under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles – it continued to operate. It survived until the Nazi takeover and was incorporated into the Wehrmacht in 1938.

⁴ Z. Jankiewicz, *Powstanie i upadek Luftwaffe*, Poznań 1972, pp. 11-18. The Wehrmacht High Command as the supreme command of the armed forces of the Third Reich was established by decree of 4 February 1938.

⁵ *Befehl des Volkskommissars für Inneres Nr. 00315*, „Zur teilweisen Abänderung des Befehls des NKWD der UdSSR Nr. 0016 vom 11. Januar 1945“ vom 18. April 1945, [in:] *Einleitung. Sowjetische Lagerpolitik in Deutschland*, R. Possekel (ed.), Berlin 1998, pp. 15-110.

⁶ M. Pahl, *Fremde Heere Ost. Hitlers militärische Feindaufklärung*, Berlin 2012, pp. 133-137, 315-318, 424.

⁷ Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej (hereinafter: AIPN), 1585/3858, Nacjonalizm w pracy tajnych służ i policji NRF, „Biuletyn Informacyjny Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych” 1977, pp. 22-26.

George V. Strong (1880-1946), showed particular interest in this person. Thus, Gehlen and his closest FHO colleagues were transported to the USA in August 1945⁸.

Establishing cooperation with Gehlen brought the expected results – the first intelligence cell was established in West Germany⁹. Gehlen himself became its head in 1946, reporting directly to the Strategic Service Unit (hereinafter SSU). The cell was placed in the American zone, in Oberursel and later in Pullach near Munich¹⁰. For fear of possible deconspiracy by the Soviets, it was registered as a business entity: *Südeten – Deutsche Industrie Verwertung GmbH*. From 1949 on, it came completely under the control of the Central Intelligence Agency (hereinafter CIA). What is more, in the following years it expanded (branches and subdivisions were established) and was deployed in the French and English sectors. All branches were camouflaged as business entities, such as, a manufacture of ceramic products in Karlsruhe (Ernst Meissner und Co – Ceramika), and in Darmstadt as the private company Schencker GmbH. Those entities were also deployed in the American sector on the outskirts of Berlin. The headquarters was camouflaged as the West Berliner Filiale für Frauenaufklärung der Hauptvertretung (West Berlin Branch for the Enlightenment and Representation of Women). Agents there monitored those living in Berlin and dealt with the recruitment of volunteers¹¹. Since the entire structure of branches and subdivisions was directly subordinate to Gehlen, in intelligence circles it was given the name Gehlen Organisation (*Organistion Gehlen*)¹².

The troops were staffed by trusted, reliable and proven people who were personally selected by Gehlen. These were former soldiers of the SS, SD, Wehrmacht and Gestapo¹³. Hence, during the term of Chancellor Konrad Adenauer (1876-1967), many

⁸ Ibidem, 11243/77/1, Struktura i organizacja BND, pp. 15-25; T. Kopyś, *Początki wywiadu zachodniemieckiego oraz jego aktywność w Polsce w latach pięćdziesiątych i sześćdziesiątych XX w.*, „Aparat Represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944-1989” 2011, 1 (8-9), pp. 153-175.

⁹ R. Gehlen, *Der Dienst. Erinnerungen 1942-1971*, Mainz 1971, p. 186; H. Zolling, H. Höhne, *Pullach intern. General Gehlen und die Geschichte des Bundesnachrichtendienstes*, Hamburg 1971, p. 168. It should also be added that before Gehlen took over responsibility for West German intelligence, the so-called Organisation 114 (Organisation 114) was established in Karlsruhe in mid-1946. It was later renamed the General Government Land (Generalverwaltung Land, hereinafter GVL). Its first manager was Alfred Bentzinger (1912-1967) – during the Second World War head of the Defence Abwehr (Ausland Abwehr) and the Secret Field Police (Geheime Feldpolizei, hereinafter GFP).

¹⁰ J.H. Critchfield, *Auftrag Pullach. Die Organisation Gehlen 1948-1956*, Hamburg 2005, p. 47; H. Zolling, H. Höhne, *Pullach od środka. Historia Federalnej Służby Wywiadowczej*, Warszawa 1971, pp. 99-95; idem, *Pullach intern...*, p. 109.

¹¹ T. Kopyś, *Początki wywiadu...*, pp. 154-155.

¹² P. Reichel, *Vergangenheitsbewältigung in Deutschland. Die Auseinandersetzung mit der NSD-Diktatur in Politik und Justiz*, München 2001, pp. 107-124.

¹³ H. Bastian, *Elite für Volk und Führer? Die Allgemeine SS und ihre Mitglieder 1925-1945*, München 2012, p. 41. This organisation was created during the Weimar Republic as Adolf Hitler's bodyguards. See: K. Grünberg, *SS Guardia Hitlera*, Warszawa 1994, pp. 28-29; S. Aronson, *Reinhard Heydrich*

of them (and in particular fierce opponents of Stalin's Russia) came under the protection of the West German state and the Americans. A large proportion of them were cleared of their criminal past in the post-war denazification process¹⁴. This was possible when the spectre of war with the USSR arose. The Americans sought allies and volunteers among the former Nazis to fight communism¹⁵. When looking at the Gehlen Organisation, attention must be paid to its collaborators. Although the full list of them cannot be presented here, the most important ones can be introduced. Recalling their names reveals a kind of curiosity about the post-war order, especially when one comes to the conclusion that the fight against communism and the USSR (perceived as hostile to the Americans) proved to be a lifesaver for Nazi criminals. The first of these is former Nazi official Willy Litzenberg (1900-1964) a long-time SS and Gestapo police officer, who from July 1944 was a member of the Special Commission for the Suppression and Persecution of Persons Involved in the Preparation of the Assassination of Hitler of 20 July that year (Gestapo special commission for the persecution of resistance networks after 20 July)¹⁶. After the war, he was cleared of the charges of committing crimes against the German people. In line with American anti-communist policy from 1945 to 1964, he was one of the important collaborators in the Gehlen Organisation¹⁷.

und die Frühgeschichte von Gestapo und SD, Stuttgart 1971, p. 55. The security service and intelligence service of the SS were created in 1931 by Heinrich Himmler (1900-1945) and Reinhard Heydrich (1904-1942); E.J. Osmańczyk, *Encyklopedia ONZ i stosunków międzynarodowych*, Warszawa 1982, p. 570. These units were created in 1935 to replace the Reichswehr. See: H.-Ch. Harten, *Die weltanschauliche Schulung der Polizei im Nationalsozialismus*, Paderborn 2018, p. 49; B. Wołoszański, *Encyklopedia II wojny światowej. Front*, Warszawa 1997, p. 234. The structures of this organisation were created in 1933 to ruthlessly combat resistance to National Socialist rule.

¹⁴ N. Frei, *Das Problem der NS-Vergangenheit in der Ära Adenauer*, [in:] *Freundliche Feinde? Die Alliierten und die Demokratiegründung in Deutschland*, H. Oberreuter (ed.), München 1996, pp. 181-193; Ch. Ulrich, „*Ich fühl mich nicht als Mörder!*“. *Die Integration von NS-Tätern in die Nachkriegsgesellschaft*, Darmstadt 2011, p. 48-70; *Entnazifizierung. Politische Säuberung und Rehabilitierung in den vier Besatzungszonen 1945-1949*, C. Vollnhals (ed.), München 1991, p. 251. It should be added here that in the western sector at the beginning of 1947 there were interned 25 984 former members of the SS, whom the Americans found useful. They then found refuge under the umbrella of Adenauer and his close associates. Here the Chancellor's words should be quoted: *Don't throw away dirty water if there is no clean water! (Man schüttet kein dreckiges Wasser aus, wenn man kein reines hat!)*.

¹⁵ *Forging an Intelligence Partnership: CIA and Origins of the BND, 1945-1949. A Documentary History*, Vol. 2, K.C. Ruffner (ed.), 2006, pp. 9-10, www.cryptomuseum.com/intel/bnd/files/CIA_BND_1949_2_1.pdf (access: 12.04.2024).

¹⁶ H. Rothfels, *Die Deutsche Opposition gegen Hitler*, Hamburg 1960, pp. 76-79.

¹⁷ G. Sälter, *Ein „vorzügliche Beamter“*. *Willy Litzenbergs Weg von der Gestapo-Sonderkommission 20. Juli zum BND*, [in:] *Die SS nach 1945. Entschuldungsnarrative, populäre Mythen, europäische Erinnerungsdiskurse*, J.E. Schulte, M. Wildt (eds), Göttingen 2018, p. 183.

Another Nazi official of the Third Reich who significantly influenced Gehlen's structure was Hans Globke (1898-1973). He was known to Americans for his authoritative and anti-Semitic section to the Nuremberg Laws. In it, he demonstrated the supreme importance of the Aryan race by discrediting Jews to the margins of society¹⁸. Although he was accused of genocide after the war, the Americans and Adenauer did not see him as an enemy, but as a builder of West Germany. Globke had served as secretary and adviser in the chancellor's office since 1947. He knew the former Nazis' circles excellently and knew whom to help. And even though their past was a burden, the decisions enabled them to make their way to the Chancellor's desk, where, after prior assessment, their papers were accepted and signed¹⁹. Globke thus created an umbrella of protection, and through his patronage many Nazi dignitaries were positively vetted by the Americans²⁰. Two other war criminals who found refuge in South America after 1945 under false names should also be mentioned here. The first is Klaus Barbie (1913-1991) and the second Walter Rauff (1906-1984). Barbie was the police and Gestapo commander in Amsterdam from 1940 – Bureau B4, Section IV (Jewish affairs). He was then transferred to Lyon in 1942, where, as head of the SD and Gestapo, he was responsible for the deportation of 7,500 Jews and the torture and murder of members of the French Resistance. After the war, he and his family fled to Argentina and then to Bolivia. Between 1945 and 1955, under a false name, he collaborated with British and American intelligence and later found employment with the Gehlen Organisation²¹.

Rauff was responsible for the murder of 100,000 Jews in death cars (*Gaswagen*) during World War II²². After the surrender of Germany, he was taken prisoner in the US, from which he managed to escape. He went into hiding in Germany and after 1948 made his way to Syria, where he became a military adviser to the State of Israel.

¹⁸ M. Brechtken, *Nürnberger Gesetze, Nachgeschichte und Historiografie. Der Fall Globke*, [in:] *Die Nürnberger Gesetze – 80 Jahre danach. Vorgeschichte, Entstehung, Auswirkung*, M. Brechtken, H.C. Jasch, Ch. Kretzmüller, N. Weise (eds), Göttingen 2017, pp. 249-266.

¹⁹ N. Frei, *Vergangenheitspolitik. Die Anfänge der Bundespolitik und die NS-Vergangenheit*, München 2012, p. 79.

²⁰ K. Gotto, *Der Staatssekretär der Adenauers. Persönlichkeit und politisches Wirken Hans Globkes*, Stuttgart 1980, p. 186; J. Bevers, *Der Man hinter Adenauer. Hans Globkes Aufstieg vom NS-Juristen zur grauen Eminenz der Bonner Republik*, Berlin 2009, p. 132.

²¹ P. Hammerschmidt, „Die Tatsache allein, daß V-43 118 SS-Hauptsturmführer war, schließt nicht aus, ihn als Quelle zu verwenden“. *Der Bundesnachrichtendienst und sein Agent Klaus Barbie*, „Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft“ 2011, 59 (4), pp. 333-334.

²² *Nationalsozialistische Massentötungen durch Giftgas. Eine Dokumentation*, E. Kogon, H. Langbein, A. Rückerl (eds), Frankfurt a.M. 1986, p. 83. Gaswagen – death cars in which Jews were gassed with exhaust fumes under the tarpaulin. This made it possible to exterminate by passing transports to the death camps. On Heydrich's orders, the Nazi chemist Walter Heeß (1901-1945) was responsible for building the first models. The first gassing attempt was carried out at the Sachsenhausen extermination camp.

Wanted on an arrest warrant, he emigrated to South America in 1949. He first settled in Ecuador and then from 1958, in Chile. He hid there until his death and was never punished for his actions. Gehlen offered him cooperation within West German intelligence, where he worked as a recruited agent from 1958 to 1962²³.

Another recruit of the Gehlen Organisation was Max Hagemann (1883-1968), from 1930 to 1945 head of the criminal police in Berlin Charlottenburg and member of the SS. Positively vetted, he continued to work in the criminal police after 1945. As did Paul Dickopf (1910-1973), a police chief and SS member who had worked with German intelligence since 1940 as an expert on eastern operations. Globke's opinion allowed him to take up a job at the West German Interior Ministry. There he was recruited by Gehlen and trained as an agent of the Organisation²⁴. These controversial personnel decisions did not bother the Americans and were always explained by the constant threat from the USSR. This was how the blockade of Berlin between 1948 and 1949 and the successful attempt by the Soviets to detonate the atomic bomb in 1949 (code-named *Joe-1*) were salvation from punishment for many Nazis.

A key aspect in Gehlen's selection of people was that they could be used in the ruthless fight against communism. In particular, reliance was placed on a select few who had operated in occupied Poland and the USSR before 1945. In line with this approach, after initial verification and selection, the first to be engaged in Pullach were 34 former SS soldiers and 17 from the SD police²⁵. And although everyone was thoroughly vetted, there were also negative cases. There were the double-acting agents, such as Heinz Felfe (1918-2011) and Johannes Clemens (1902-1976). Their past in SS and SD structures was also of interest to the KGB, which used blackmail in such cases. Faced with accusations of genocide committed in the USSR and the prospect of

²³ *Archiv-Bundesnachrichtendienst*, No. 22973/7; B.V. Hechelhammer, *Nachrichtendienstliche Begriffsbestimmungender „Organisation Gehlens“ und des frühen Bundesnachrichtendienstes*, [in:] *Mitteilungen der Forschungs- und Arbeitsgruppe „Geschichte des BND*, Vol. 2, B.V. Hechelhammer (ed.), Berlin 2012, p. 46, www.bnd.bund.de/SharedDocs/Downloads/DE/nr-4-nachrichtendienstliche-begriffsbestimmungen.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=5 (access: 12.04.2024); R. Breitman, N.J.W. Goda, P. Brown, *The Gestapo*, [in:] *U.S. Intelligence and the Nazis*, R. Breitman et al. (eds), Cambridge 2005, pp. 137-172; M. Cüppers, *Immer davongekommen. Wie sich Walther Rauff erfolgreich seinen Richtern entzog*, [in:] *Die Gestapo nach 1945. Karrieren, Konflikte, Konstruktionen*, K.M. Mallmann, A. Angrick (eds), Darmstadt 2009, pp. 71-89.

²⁴ I. Baumann, H. Reinke, A. Stephan, P. Wagner, *Schatten der Vergangenheit. Das BKA und seine Gründungsgeneration der in frühen Bundesrepublik*, Köln 2011, p. 89.

²⁵ *Archiv-Bundesnachrichtendienst*, Nr. 1533, s. 89; H. Zolling, H. Höhne, *Pullach intern...*, p. 168; H. Felfe, *Im Dienst des Gegners. 10 Jahre Moskaus Mann im BDN*, Hamburg 1986, p. 146; B.V. Hechelhammer, *Der lange Schatten der Vergangenheit. Über den Umgang mit SS-Personal in der „Organisation Gehlen“ und im Bundesnachrichtendienst*, [in:] *Die SS nach 1945...*, p. 163-164. These were people ideologically raised and shaped during the Third Reich. After losing the war, they continued to harbor hatred towards communist Russia, especially the Jews rescued there.

being brought to justice, they decided to cooperate²⁶. In this respect, Gehlen's men were constantly subject to surveillance, a method designed to safeguard against infiltration by the enemy. As during the Third Reich, the agents selected were required to be absolutely dedicated to their service. Reliance was granted to proven, 'tough' comrades-in-arms, battle-hardened and trusted ones. At the beginning of the 1950s, of Gehlen's 1102 active agents operating abroad, 10% were former members of the SS, SD and Gestapo²⁷.

From the second half of the 1940s, Gehlen's Organisation extended its reach to the eastern countries. For the former FHO, Poland was not a foreign country because during the Second World War it had invigilated its resistance and the Home Army (Armia Krajowa, hereinafter: AK). As a result, in its post-war intelligence activities the Germans had an excellent information base to observe the army and the economy of the People's Republic of Poland. The involvement of former SS members, SD policemen, Gestapo officers, Wehrmacht soldiers and German natives – who had served in Poland during the war – was not accidental²⁸. A considerable number of the mentioned staunch Nazis and fierce opponents of communism from the period of the Third Reich were still living in Pomerania, the former territories of East Prussia and Silesia. In addition to this, Gehlen's Organisation was also locating Germans who were well versed in the area and had excellent knowledge of Polish and German in Poland. There were also cases of them claiming to be former resistance and AK soldiers, who after 1945 spied for the government in London²⁹.

²⁶ B.V. Hechelhammer, *Der Schatten...*, p. 166; M.E. Reese, *General Reinhard Gehlen. The CIA Connection*, Virginia 1990, p. 153.

²⁷ B.V. Hechelhammer, *Nachrichtendienstliche...*, p. 37.

²⁸ A. Pełłoński, *Współpraca Policji Państwowej z policjami innych państw w okresie międzywojennym*, [in:] *225 lat policji w Polsce. Geneza i ewolucja policji*, Vol. 1, P. Majer, M. Seroka (eds), Olsztyn 2017, p. 19; idem, *Policja państwowa w systemie organów bezpieczeństwa Drugiej Rzeczypospolitej*, Szczytno 1991, p. 15; M. Przegiętka, *Kontakty polskich i niemieckich władz bezpieczeństwa w drugiej połowie lat trzydziestych XX wieku (Kwestia zagrożenia komunistycznego)*, „Kwartalnik Historyczny” 2019, 126 (4), pp. 689-690. Contacts with the agent network on Polish territory dated back to before the outbreak of the Second World War. After Poland and Germany signed the declaration of non-aggression (26 January 1934), there was symmetry between the institutions responsible for state security. On the Polish side it was the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and on the German side it was the SD and the Gestapo. The cooperation between the two intelligence services was directed at obtaining information on the communist movement and its contacts with the USSR.

²⁹ Bundesarchiv-Militärarchiv in Fryburg, H3/1509, *Militärische und nachrichtendienstliche Kräfte im Gesamtrahmen der Polnischen Widerstandsbewegung*, typescript on an overview of the situation in Poland and the activities of the Polish underground; AIPN cr. 0179/708, Vol. 1, Informacja o wywiadzie zachodnioniemieckim (Wydawnictwo MBP), Warszawa 1954, p. 22; J. Rydel, *General Reinhard Gehlen i jego raport o polskim podziemiu*, „Studia Środkowoeuropejskie i Bałkanistyczne” 2021, 30, pp. 54-64.

From the personal statistics of the counter-espionage of the People's Republic of Poland, we learn that at the beginning of 1952 in Central Pomerania alone there were still: 16500 German natives, 24775 citizens claiming German nationality, and 500 re-emigrants from the Third Reich³⁰. Quite a number of them had previously belonged to the SS, Gestapo and SD police.

Table 1

Reconnaissance of German police stations in the light of WUBP data
for Central Pomerania in February 1952

Police station	District	Number of disclosed functionaries and agents
The Gestapo	Bytów	6 (add 1 agent and 1 translator)
	Człuchów	4
	Koszalin	25
	Słupsk	7 operational staff
		3 technical staff
	Wałcz	3 (plus 9 alleged agents with no fixed allocation)
	Including the facility in Tuczno	1 (add 1 agent)
Orpo (Order Police)	Bytów	12
	Słupsk	11
	Drawsko Pomorskie (facility in Kalisz Pomorski)	4
Cripo (Criminal Police)	Białogard	2 (add 1 resident and 3 informants)
	Słupsk	6
Gendarmerie	Białogard	62

Source: AIPN Sz., ref. 00102/75, Vol. 3, Raport nr 1 o przebiegu rozpracowania obiektowego, 24 II 1952, pp. 97-99

This confirmed speculation that the recruitment, training and installation of Gehlen's agents in Poland was largely based on the selection of former Nazis. Selected candidates underwent specialised courses, learned to transmit information in the Morse alphabet and, with the help of chemical agents, to use a secret pen. They collected information and material on the military and economic situation in Poland. They observed rail transports, the stationing and march of Soviet and Polish troops along with

³⁰ A. Słabig, *Kontrywiad Polski Ludowej a problem niemiecki w świetle danych z województwa koszalińskiego z lat pięćdziesiątych XX w.*, „Słupskie Studia Historyczne” 2001, 17, p. 282.

their deployment in border units. After thorough preparation and on the basis of false documents: registration cards, identity cards, military books, they were installed in Poland. Designated persons, so-called contact boxes, introduced them to the field – for reconnaissance. These contacts were also used to provide funds and instruction on surveillance facilities³¹. In addition, intelligence also showed great interest in the movement of troops of the People's Army of Poland (*Ludowe Wojsko Polskie*, hereinafter: LWP) and the Red Army between Poland and the GDR. Two categories of informants were created for these purposes. The first focused on collecting information on the capacity of military depots in the border areas, together with data on the crossing of the Polish border with the GDR, while the second concentrated on individual military facilities to which military transports were arriving³². In this way, Poland – as the largest country in the alliance with the USSR – became the bulwark of West German intelligence.

For intelligence cooperation, Gehlen's people were keen to use German migrants moving as part of family reunification, especially since some 200,000 people left Poland for this purpose in the late 1940s and early 1950s. These figures come from statistics kept by the Security Office (hereinafter UB)³³. It was under these circumstances that the Gehlen Organisation recruited Gerhard Geronia to work with them. He was a native Silesian from the Opole region who had travelled to Germany to visit his mother. Many of the young autochthons who came from Poland first underwent a personal check. They were asked questions about their work and political activities in the People's Republic of Poland. The interviewers were particularly interested in those who had previously done military service there. Questions concerned the equipment of the Polish army and the stationing of Soviet troops in the border areas. Erwin Kunert, who communicated excellently in both Polish and German, was also recruited in a similar way. As a representative of a German machinery manufacturing company in Świdnica, Silesia, he was given the task of observing Soviet troop movements there³⁴. Another important agent recruited by Gehlen's men was a Pole nicknamed 'Tadek', who had travelled to the GDR for three months to visit his mother. Intelligence interest focused on his previous service with the LWP in the Szczecin District. Gehlen's organisation commissioned him to collect information on the Szczecin garrison, including: personal details of officers, military equipment and frequent visits by Ministry of National Defense personnel.

Another West German agent turned out to be Hans Czechovitz (born as Hans Anschutz in Katowice in 1920), a member of the Hitlerjugend (hereinafter: HJ) and

³¹ AIPN, 00102/75, Vol. 1, Wyciąg z zarządzenia nr 9/52 dyrektora Departamentu I MBP, 25 VI 1952, p. 41.

³² Ibidem, 1585/4210, Zagadnienia pracy operacyjnej (1965), p. 8; ibidem, 0179/1365, Działalność wywiadu NRF przeciwko Polsce, Warszawa 1966, pp. 4-6.

³³ Ibidem, 0179/1626, Wywiad NRF, Warszawa 1961, pp. 10-11.

³⁴ Ibidem, p. 46.

a soldier of the Wehrmacht. After the end of hostilities, he settled in Gliwice. In 1951, he made his way to West Berlin, where Gehlen's people and the CIA took an interest in him. After extensive training, he was installed on the border between the People's Republic of Poland and the GDR. There he set up an active intelligence network whose task was to transfer new agents to the East. Joachim Schaack (born as Rosoha Werner in 1930 in Dębowy Las near Olsztyn), a member of the paramilitary organisation Mazurian Liberation Forces since 1959, also became a German agent. In 1952, he illegally entered West Berlin, where he received intelligence training. His group was active in the former East Prussia. Gehlen's informant in Poland was also Heinz Landvoigt (born as Heinz Sternberg in Opole in 1923). As an opponent of the border on the Oder and Lusatian Neisse and a fierce enemy of communism, he joined Gehlen's Organisation. Gerard Gehlhard (alias Erwin Dąbrowski, b. 1923 in Tczew) also turned out to be a spy for German intelligence. In September 1939, he and his parents signed the National List (Volksliste) and he was a member of the HJ. He joined the Third Reich Navy (Kriegsmarine), and after being taken prisoner by the British, he acknowledged his Polishness and served in the Anders Army until the end of the war. He returned to Poland in 1946, from where he attempted to travel to West Germany. In 1953, he illegally crossed the border, where he was recruited by Western intelligence. After training, he was transferred to Szczecin – he was given the task of gathering information on Polish and Soviet troops on the border. Yet another agent installed in the intelligence network in Poland was Jerzy Krauze, a German born in Białystok. He and his family signed the National List, and from 1941 he served in the Wehrmacht³⁵. Another collaborator of the German intelligence organisation was Adolf Machura (alias Albert Mohr or Artur Machnik, born in 1933 in Stradunia in the Opole region), a former member of the HJ, employed after the war as a manual worker in river shipping on the Oder. In 1952, he got into the GDR and ended up in Düßen near Munich, where he was recruited by Gehlen's intelligence service. After training, he was transferred back to Poland – he was responsible for providing reports on the condition of the Polish coast, including the military deployment of land forces and the navy between Ustka and Łeba³⁶.

In addition to the individuals recruited in Poland by the Gehlen Organisation, intelligence networks were also established. The Germans managed to engage agents who formed information blocks through family connections and private contacts. These included Zdzisław Bartmański (born in 1909). He created a group controlling the area around Kraków and Upper Silesia. His wife Zuzanna Bartmańska, Henryk Gaworek,

³⁵ Ibidem, 01521/2172, Działalność berlińskiego ośrodka wywiadu organizacji Gehlena przeciwko Polsce, pp. 28-30; J. Tadra, *Aparat represji w Polsce Ludowej 1944-1989*, Warszawa 1989, pp. 15-20; T. Kopyś, *Początki wywiadu...*, pp. 157-160, 168.

³⁶ AIPN, 01521/2172, Działalność berlińskiego ośrodka wywiadu..., p. 90-95; ibidem, 00102/75, Vol. 3, Zarządzenie dyrektora Departamentu I MBP, No. 37/51, 23 VII 1951, p. 61; A. Słabig, *Kontrwywiad Polski...*, pp. 262-263.

Józef Gałuszka, Alojzy Skorupa and Tadeusz Sikorski belonged to this group. Another agent in Gehlen's service was Walter Brachaczek, (born 1928), a native Silesian former member of the HJ. After the war he made his way to West Germany, where he received extensive training in 1949. Installed in Poland, he was active between 1950 and 1952 in Katowice, where an intelligence network was established with his participation. In the first period it had five informers, who recruited more. In the course of its activities, its numbers increased to 15 members. Also Jan Hołowaty (alias Adamek, born in 1931) was recruited in 1952 by his school friend Gisela Halbroth. He was involved in collecting information on the Polish military. His activities led to the development of an information structure. In time, he created an intelligence group that included only German autochthons, such as Helmut Kiper or Werner Mielich. The network installed in this way operated in the years 1952-1954 in the western part of Poland – in Pomerania and Silesia. Another agent was Wincenty Orliński (alias Szwengler), former AK soldier. He fought in the Warsaw Uprising and after its surrender was sent to a prisoner of war camp near Hamburg. After the end of hostilities, he remained in West Germany. It was him who Gehlen's men took an interest in. Recruited and trained, he was taken back to Poland. There he created an intelligence network operating in western Poland, in the Łódź, Poznań and Mazovia provinces. Konrad Wrück (born as Henryk Suchanowicz in Tczew in 1927) was also a West German agent. After the German army entered Poland in 1939, he signed the National List. As a former member of the HJ, he served in the Wehrmacht and was taken prisoner by the Soviets, where he claimed to be a Kashubian Pole. After the war, he returned to his homeland and then made his way to the GDR in 1953, from where he ended up in West Berlin. There he was trained by Gehlen's intelligence service and provided with Polish ID. After receiving a new identity, he was transferred to Poland, where he was tasked with setting up an agent network³⁷.

Among the members of West German intelligence, there were also some double agents who operated on the Polish territory. The German and Russian agent was Józef Honeiser, who being recruited by the Soviets was registered in the KGB files under the pseudonym 'Seriža'. Honeiser created an intelligence network operating in Silesia for both sides. He recruited mainly German autochthons into his group: Herbert Kremser, Paul Grundke and Heinrich W. Hoffman. He passed on the information he received from them to his superiors in the KGB and the Gehlen Organisation. In 1956, he made his way to the GDR and accepted the citizenship of that country³⁸.

The reports prepared by the agents were sent to the headquarters in Berlin and Munich, then to the branches deployed in West Germany. The establishment of the individual agents relieved the headquarters of the burden and led to a better possibility of observing the eastern neighbour. The head offices in Berlin and Munich ceded part

³⁷ AIPN, 01243/77/2, *Materiały dotyczące organizacji wywiadowczej Gehlena...*, Vol. 2, pp. 23-28, 89.

³⁸ *Ibidem*.

of their competences to the branches which then reported to them. Consequently, a few sectors were created, namely Bremen, Hamburg, Kiel, Karlsruhe, Frankfurt a.M., Munich, Berlin, Bad Reichenhall. All were given their respective tasks and specific scopes for acquiring information in the external territory. Thus, Bremen, Hamburg, and Cologne sections were responsible for the eastern Baltic Basin: Karlsruhe for GDR surveillance, Frankfurt for Czechoslovakia, and Munich and Berlin for Poland, the GDR and the USSR. Bad Reichenhall supervised Hungary and Romania, whereas in Austria, intelligence was responsible for the South East and the Balkans³⁹.

Poland was not indifferent to the activities of the Gehlen Organisation, which resulted in installing special cell, called the Shield⁴⁰, as well as introduction of double agents by the intelligence of the People's Republic of Poland in defence of its own interests. Young people were selected for cooperation, who, for agreeing to go to West Germany, decided to cooperate with the intelligence of communist Poland. For example, the recruited informant who was installed in Gehlen's circle was Henryk Poborc. With the approval of the UB, he went to the Marienfelde Displaced Persons Camp in West Berlin. His activities were aimed at deconfusing individual agents and deactivating intelligence networks⁴¹. The same happened in other cases – we will see this in the example of the counter-intelligence network installed in Central Pomerania.

In the process, some agents managed to be intercepted and brought to the Polish justice system. For example, the aforementioned J. Krauze was worked out in 1946, then arrested and in 1951 expelled from Poland. Also J. Schaak, whose group was worked on and then smashed by the Security Office in 1951, hid from the law enforcement authorities to organised crime. On the other hand, Z. Bartmański was sentenced to death for illegally staying in Poland, organising a criminal group and causing damage to the Polish state. However, the execution of the sentence was overruled and changed to 12 years' imprisonment. A similar fate befell G. Gehlhard, who in 1953 was caught and arrested by the Security Office while crossing the border on the Oder.

³⁹ Ibidem, 01299/378, *West German spy services* (trans. from Russian), pp. 20-25, 33-36; ibidem, 0179/1626, *Wywiad NRF...*, pp. 7-8; ibidem, 011243/77/1, *Struktura i organizacja BND*, pp. 60-70; F. Bielak, *Wywiad RFN. Modelowy przykład organizacji i działania wywiadów (1945-1980)*, Warszawa 1982, p. 75.

⁴⁰ AIPN, 00102/75, Vol. 1, Raport o wszczęciu rozpracowania obiektowego, 10 XI 1952, pp. 11-12. See: P. Pleskot, „*Tarcza partii i narodu*”. *Kontrwywiad Polski Ludowej w latach 1945-1956*; T. Kopyś, *Początki wywiadu...*, p. 156. A counter-intelligence section was created in the provincial offices of public security (WUBP): Section I Division 15, which invigilated German influences and their structures on Polish territory. From March-April 1955, counter-espionage was centralised in the structures of Polish counter-espionage subordinate to Division III of Department II. Subsequently, it was extended to individual voivodeships and their public security offices, Section III, Department II 6. The classification of this activity was registered under the name of operational cells of West German agents. All of them were subordinate to the Ministry of the Interior and by extension to the local Civic Militia Headquarters.

⁴¹ AIPN, 01252/24, *Sprawozdanie roczne z działalności kontrwywiadu NRF*, pp. 4-5.

More fortunate, however, was K. Wrück, whom the militia sought unsuccessfully throughout the country. According to counterintelligence information, he probably escaped from Poland in 1953 and, with the help of foreign intelligence agents, made his way to West Germany⁴².

Table 2

Agent network of the security apparatus installed in Central Pomerania
by RO-2 "Column" from November 1952

Operational unit	Informants	Residents	Agents	Housing
Section I of Division I of the WUBP	9	1	–	4
PUBP Złotów	10	–	–	–
PUBP Słupsk	7	1	1	–
Miastko	9	1	–	–
Bytów	6	1	–	–
Wałcz	5	–	–	–
Szczecinek	4	–	–	–
Koszalin	3	–	–	–
Sławno	3	–	–	–
Drawsko	1	–	1	–
Białogard	1	–	–	–
Człuchów	3	–	–	–
Kołobrzeg	1	–	–	–
Overall	62	4	2	4

Source: AIPN, 00102/75, Vol. 1, Raport o wszczęciu rozpracowania..., pp. 11-12

Polish counterintelligence and the UB recognized and highly rated the Gehlen Organisation, owing to the fact that the CIA had been supporting it in the first place. Such ratings were undoubtedly influenced by the perceived effectiveness in action, and the creation of intelligence networks for the surveillance of the communist state. In the process of reinforcement of the West-East diplomatic relations from 1 April 1956 Gehlen's organisation came directly under the influence of the German Chancellor's Office. Decisions were then taken whereby Gehlen and his people became part of a new structure called the Federal Intelligence Service (Bundesnachricht Dienst, hereinafter BND). The name transformation did not affect the internal and external activities of the entity. Gehlen's organisation continued to have a significant impact on intelligence activity in Poland. Former Wehrmacht colonels were appointed as Gehlen's new deputies:

⁴² Ibidem, 01521/2172, Działalność berlińskiego ośrodka wywiadu..., pp. 90-95.

Hans Heinrich Worgitzky and Horst Wendland⁴³. In 1968, Gehlen left the BND and was succeeded by a former and close colleague of his – Gen. Gerhard Wessel⁴⁴. Its activities were even more directed towards the East, as from 1961 the border separated not only part of Germany but also the entire West by a wall. The growing Cold War conflict exacerbated negative attitudes on both sides. Especially as many former Nazis, enemies of Poland and its executioners, were still at large. Finally, it can be concluded that the Gehlen Organisation and its successor, the BND, were not only the bulwark of German intelligence in Poland, but also became a shelter and repository for Nazi criminals. This Cold War period became a chance for them to escape punishment and in many cases saved their lives.

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⁴³ T. Kopyś, *Początki wywiadu...*, s. 163-165.

⁴⁴ AIPN, 1585/3856, *Nacjonalizm w pracy tajnych służ i policji NRF*, „Biuletyn Informacyjny Ministerstwa Spraw Wewnętrznych” 1968, pp. 7-8, T. Kopyś, *Początki wywiadu...*, p. 167. Wessel took over responsibility for military intelligence (Militärische Abschirmdienst) at the German Ministry of Defence in Bonn from 1955 to 1962. As an outstanding intelligence officer, he also contributed to the establishment of the post-1963 NRF military representation at NATO headquarters in Washington.

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Summary

Former Nazis in the New Structures of the West German Intelligence Service and Their Influence in Poland (Selected Aspects)

During the communist period, counterintelligence and the UB excelled with the Federal Intelligence Service – BND, which was transformed from an earlier cell called the Gehlen Organisation. From its inception, it was controlled by the CIA, which enabled it to operate effectively by creating intelligence networks for the surveillance of the communist state. In West-East diplomatic relations, the BND came directly under the influence of the German Chancellor's Office. Decisions were then taken whereby people from the BND became part of the new intelligence structure. The name transformation did not affect the internal and external activities of the entity. The BND, like the former Gehlen Organisation,

continued to have a significant impact on intelligence activity in Poland. Its head continued to be Gehlen, and his new deputies were recent Wehrmacht colonels: Hans Heinrich Worgitzky and Horst Wendland. But in 1968, Gehlen left the BND, and Gen Gerhard Wessel – a close associate of his – was chosen as his successor. His activities were primarily focused on the East, as a new border had already been established since 1961, with a wall not only separating part of West Germany including Berlin, but also the entire West. From this point onwards, the Cold War period and the mutually escalating conflict is characterised. At that time, many former Nazis, opponents and previous executioners of Poland found their refuge in the BND. It can therefore be concluded that the newly established BND structures not only became the bulwark of German intelligence in Poland, but also turned out to be a shelter and repository for Nazi criminals. The Cold War period was a chance for them to escape punishment, thus saving their lives.