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THE ATTITUDE OF POLES TOWARDS COMMUNAL POLICE. SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE STATE OF CIVIL SOCIETY IN POLAND

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ABSTRACT

The concept of self-government system in Poland assumes an important role for municipalities, which is the basic territorial unit of community of residents. It is the area where, with the help of democratically elected authorities, the basic needs of local communities shall be fulfilled.

One of these needs, and at the same time, the own task of municipality, is to ensure public order and security of citizens. According to legislation, the proper measure supposed to be the communal police (municipal police in municipalities), which is a local uniformed formation, providing administrative-ordinal tasks.

The first units of the communal police were formed in Poland in 1991. For all these years, however, they did not become a common service in the country. The communal police function just in one-fourth of municipalities and generally focus the heaviest negative emotions and social opinion of all the uniformed services. The author of the study, indicating causes of this situation, comments their underestimated by citizens role in shaping public order and security of local societies, juxtaposing it with the state of civic consciousness.

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INTRODUCTION

On the website of the Minister of Family, Labour and Social Policy a special webpage devoted to civil society can be found¹. According to its authors, civil society in Poland includes two areas: civic group activity or the activity of non-governmental organizations, local communities and local, informal groups and social movements, and civic awareness.

The second area is particularly important for shaping citizenship, for identification with own country, its organization and obligations (e.g. paying taxes), with its own homeland, taking responsibility for her fate, conscious participation in all the events that have an impact on her, especially in the elections, making social activity, engage in activities of public benefit, prosocial actions at regional and local level.

Does the Polish society have reached such a level of consciousness? Certainly not. This is particularly evident in the voter turnout, which is frighteningly low, and also in relation to their own state, its organs and legal order.

This is due, inter alia, of social passivity. The Poles are still reluctant to break off from their private affairs, only a few are engaged in social activities. There are many excuses for inactive attitude: we do not want, we do not have time, or maybe we do not know how to participate actively in public life. Reasons for lack of commitment comes from prioritising primarily own and family life which is coherent with the expressed by three-fourths of “the non-volunteers group” belief that “in the event of problems I can count only on myself and my loved ones”. This is increased by mutual distrust (still the highest in the European Union). We lack citizenship honesty, and therefore we are less and less attentive to the common good².

Poles have also a very low place amongst European societies in the level of trust to each other or to public institutions. Poles still strongly distrust institutions of executive, legislative and judicature, and the main cause of this situation is inefficiency of the Polish Government and the common opinion about its dishonesty and corruption. In this situation it is difficult to expect that the Poles showed sympathy for public administration, in

¹ Społeczeństwo obywatelskie, <http://www.mpips.gov.pl/spoleczenstwo-obywatelskie/>, accessed 17.12.2015.

² M. Sakowska, *Patriotyzm a Ojczyzna i ojcowizna*, [in:] *Patriotyzm fundamentem bezpieczeństwa narodowego RP w XXI wieku*, K. Gąsiorek, W. S. Moczulski (eds.), Wyd. Stowarzyszenie Ruch Wspólnot Obronnych, Warszawa 2011, p. 26–27.

particular these of repressive nature, which certainly include the municipal police, uniformed formations, which deal with i.a. the fight against offences that make every day.

1. THE CIVIL SOCIETY

The development of civil society is the arduous and prolonged process. Of key importance are various factors, including characteristics and nature of the nation or community, historical experience of the country and its statehood, geopolitical location, etc. Public security is commonly desired. Is the result of various factors and circumstances. Is the result of the efforts of authorities and civil society, aware of their roles and responsibilities. Is a condition and is a litmus test for social activity and consequently the authorities of the state authorities.

James Quinn Wilson, a prominent American expert on criminal policy, invited to Poland by "Ius et Lex" Foundation³, at the beginning of September 2006, gave a lecture at the University of Warsaw, on the issues dedicated to this problem⁴. Probably he disappointed both those who wanted to hear from him a clear support for the right of fuelling projects for stricter law and the opponents of such policy. He stated that the very important is the quality of police and criminal justice work, but even more important are the social factors. To local communities, churches, civic associations, and above all the family have the greatest impact on the attitudes and behaviour of people. These institutions, as well as the middle class with its system of value and virtues, influenced, according to Wilson, the drop of a crime. In turn, the recurring economic crises and wars of the 20th century have weakened these social structures which affected the increase in the number of offences committed.

The problem of small-scale crime is a long-lasting problem and probably will remain so. In fact, we can hardly expect it to disappear in a sit-

³ „Ius et Lex” Foundation was founded in 2000 as the initiative of the former President of the Foundation and Editor-in-chief of the “Ius et Lex” magazine dr. Janusz Kochanowski, the former Ombudsman, who died in the crash of the presidential plane in Smolensk, 10 April 2010. The aim of the Foundation is to assist and promote scientific and educational initiatives relating to the Polish law, action in favour of the implementation of the rule of law, development and the Europeanisation of the Polish legal system; <http://www.iusetlex.pl/?id=14>, accessed 30.06.2013.

⁴ Salon24. Niezależne forum publicystów, *Patologie społeczne i przestępczość pospolita*, 19.07.2010, <http://matuzalem.salon24.pl/209506,patologie-spooleczne-i-przestepczosc-pospolita>, accessed 30.06.2013.

uation of human nature being as it is. Among people there are always members keen on someone else's property, who want to get rich quickly and easily, those who want to satisfy their needs in a way unfair to another man, although these harm does not have to be an aim in itself. These issues can be considered only in terms of their limitations, neutralization, effective law enforcement. These are the most important goals.

It is hard to imagine, though in the Polish society is probably easier, to achieve these goals exclusively by state activities. Both the public security services, especially those of a police nature, and the current law system are not capable of sustained reduction of this problem. The key in this matter are civic activities of society, the level of responsibility, prosocial awareness, relationship to the rule of law, to the fate of another human being, the degree of sensitivity, openness and empathy.

Civil society is formed by the citizens – persons aware of their rights and obligations, with sense of community interests, goals, and finally being able to take action together to achieve goals⁵. Professor Andrzej Zoll added that civil society should focus on activities for the common good⁶.

The awareness to create personal security, to obey the law, to respond to criminal behavior, and even earlier for signs of pathology and demoralisation, on the need for cooperation with national institutions, local self-governments etc., active and proneighbourhood behavior in the workplace and residence are the most important elements in shaping the local security.

Such an attitude of every one of us, or at least most of us, in conjunction with the flexible principality of law enforcement authorities, their professionalism, consequence, not to be burdened with a rigid following the law rather than a sense of logic, relevance to the size of the fault, the degree of importance, and so providing the judgments, which with envy we observe in Anglo-Saxon countries, an established democracy with a system of Common law, that could greatly help in reducing the incidence of crime.

In the Polish reality of closed society, distrusting, contesting any authorities, even elected by them, not respecting of the legal order, "separat-

⁵ G. Piechota, *Wpływ komunikacji politycznej na budowanie społeczeństwa obywatelskiego w demokracji lokalnej (na przykładzie miasta Katowice)*, Katowice, May 2007; doctoral desirtation written under the supervision of Professor Jacek Wódz at University of Silesia in Katowice, <http://www.sbc.org.pl/Content/4448/doktorat.pdf>, accessed 02.07.2013.

⁶ M. Wiczyński, *Spoleczeństwo obywatelskie w Polsce - czy ma przyszłość?*, 20 October 2006, http://www.polityka.org.pl/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=503&Itemid=48, accessed 02.07.2013.

ing” from neighbors by high fences, not tempering in “not your case”, even though there were violence, pedophilia, abuse, cruelty, etc., as long as it will not touch him / her directly, building coalitions and creating behaviors to create the desired state and local security process is very difficult.

An expressive analysis in this regard was presented by Maciej Wiczyński, who stated that the diversity of organizations, in which Poles are active, is very big, but active is, however, no more than about 5,5% of the population⁷.

Relatively at most we engage in work for the benefit of education and higher education, trade unions and parish communities and religious movements. About the same time we devote our free time in sports organizations, allotments, breeders, fishermen and hunters, as well as charitable organizations. Next, due to the degree of commitment, our activities concentrate in the youth, tourist and salvage organisations. At the head of the second ten of organisations, in which relatively many people are acting, are artistic, ecological and women associations.

Unfortunately, according to M. Wiczyński, on the attention deserves a little involvement in the work for local self-government – not only provincial and district, but also communal, residential area and subdivisions. The same marginal phenomenon is active participation in political parties or political associations.

The discretization the concept of social work, deprivation of organizational and managerial skills needed in social activities – these are the reasons for this state. Also we can indicate a lack of activity based on such factors as: the low level of civic awareness, a lack of a sense of the impact on the country and own neighborhood, lack of faith in the effectiveness of civil action additionally reinforced by a negative social opinion on the Polish political scene, the deepening crisis political elites, incompetent governance. Among the macrostructural factors unfavorable for active citizenship, we can mention the lack of developed the “new middle class” in Poland, which in old democracies (vide: J. Q. Wilson) are a social and financial facilities for non-governmental organisations.

These theses, which are the result of my many years of practice, observation and tests are difficult to accept by supporters and defenders of so-called traditional Polish values and way of thinking⁸. Hearing some

⁷ Ibidem.

⁸ Defenders of these values are usually representatives of conservative political groups; see K. Ogiolda, *Jarostaw Gowin. Nasze państwo jest bezduszne*, 10 February 2013, <http://>

of their statements I ask myself a question, do they see the same thing as me. Cannot they see a difference in ordinary everyday behavior of people on the street, in a shop, on the bus, tram, in the place of residence, in a public place for example in England, Sweden, the Netherlands and Poland? Is not smiling to each other rather than an inert passing-by on the pavement worse than “traditional Polish values”? Whether responding to greeting customers entering the shop, the waiting room at the doctor, pharmacy, etc. is as inappropriate as an interest in a person who collapsed on the street, and is not an alcoholic? Or maybe taking the example of the people who have achieved success in life, is worse than imprecations, jealousy, envy and unselfish belief that come to the only as a result of criminal activities? Whether to draw the attention of the boss, that a member of staff knowingly harms order team is an action in the interest of this team, or dirty denunciatory? Or how to treat the reporting of criminal actions of a neighbor who abuses his family, or is a bully who are under his care of animals?

As long as the Polish society do not take on respect for its own State, for the established legal order, for the necessary behavior in public space and do not understand that is responsible for it, since the public efforts to actively shape social order, limiting the sources of pathology will not be satisfactory.

In the period 2000–2006, I had the opportunity to direct the creation of the Coalition for security in two local communities, in the districts of Słupsk and Wejherowo, Pomerania. The attitude of local and regional authorities and other institutions operating in the public sector was generally positive. They were keen on a variety of initiatives in this regard, they also participated in their organization, processes, etc. Social response, however, was different. The smaller the community, the better for the cause, the higher, the worse. Police officers, among them particularly district police officers, in their daily proactive activities had to break through the barrier of mistrust, silence, indifference, and often and disapproval. Any initiative to improve the security situation in a particular location targeted to potential stakeholders need to come out from the Police, the opposite way has been true is very rare. A few residents of the housing estate arriving with some concern to the Police expected above

www.nto.pl/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20130210/REPORTAZ01/130209530, accessed 02.07.2013.

all her hand in solving the problem. They did not come with their's own proposal. The idea of joint action in the dawn of the Police outpost, and not always met with enthusiasm.

My experience and observations confirm general ascertainments of James Wilson. Civil society building is a long and difficult process.

Ralf Dahrendorf in his research on the development of democratic societies, long before the transformation of the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, has appointed a specific time frame for creation of particular democratic structures:⁹

- 6 months – building of democratic institutions: free elections, the establishment of government, judiciary,
- 6 years –market mechanisms creation: achieving a balance of supply and demand,
- 60 years – building a civil society: citizens performing their activity in different ways.

Dahrendorf's views are shared by French political thinker and democrat, Alexis de Tocoqueville, who claims that free elections and free market is not be enough for creation and development of a democratic society. In his opinion, the most important factor in this process is the ability of self-organization and emancipation and the use of social energy for activities for the common good¹⁰.

Dahrendorf's predictions that the emergence of a solid social foundations of democracy, embodied in a vibrant civil society, is a matter of decades rather than years, tends to be confirmed by the situation in our country.

In Poland this process certainly is far from the end. The need for shaping civil society, especially in the local communities, is in my opinion the prerequisite for effective solving of various problems of public service. For such problems, we can certainly include a common crime or the process of security shaping at all. Mature, conscious and well organised neighbor communities, cooperating with law enforcement authorities, with communal police, security companies, local self-government authorities, would be able to substantially affect the sources and effects of crime, other examples of social pathology, irregularities or deficiencies in the function-

⁹ Comp. Ł. Scheffs, *Współczesne społeczeństwo obywatelskie*, 24 June 2009, <http://www.politeja.pl/2009/06/wspolczesne-spolczenstwo-obywatelskie/>, accessed 02.07.2013.

¹⁰ K. Pisa, *Alexander de Tocqueville*, Oficyna Historii XIX i XX wieku, Warszawa 1996, p. 37.

ing of the community. These issues require time and patience, but at the same time, openness to good examples, which are not lacking, especially after the entry into the European structures. These issues require time and patience, but at the same time, openness to good examples, which are not lacking, especially after the entry into the European structures.

2. COMMUNAL POLICE

Communal police (in municipalities – municipal police) are self-governmental formations, taking care of public order in local (communal) community, hence their action in this respect should generally bring them more supporters than opponents. This rises the question, however, whether any action?

Are communal police, which operate as a kind of “police sub-units”, focused on the fight against criminal and vandalistic behavior and those harder to criticize. Unfortunately, the more “visible”, however, are those actions that focus on selected road offences, that submit to the communal financial interest over the actual state of public order. Differences in the way of communal police functioning are surely the result of their founding body concept, in this case vision in the field of public policy development, its expectations, its relations with the institutions cooperating with the local community and the degree of counting with her opinion.

The profile of activity and the efficiency of the communal police depends on founding bodies and municipality authorities, in particular, the Executive Authority (Village Head, Mayor, President of the City). Indeed, it is hard to imagine a situation that the Commandant of particular unit acts autonomously, according to their own idea, which is not conducive to his direct principal. Such situation can be observed when the principal changes (after local elections), but then either the current Commandant adjusts the communal police’s operations to the concept of a new head, or is replaced by another, with a new understanding. In practice, a third variant can be observed, when new Mayor liquidates the Communal Police, because it is personally opposed to its functioning and put that view in his electoral program¹¹.

It is hard to categorically state whether these relationships and influence that the municipal police do not have “good press” in Poland. The

¹¹ The last municipal elections in November 2014 provided some of such examples. Changing the Commandant of the Municipal Police in Słupsk, after Robert Biedron’s

fact is, however, that this formation, important for realization of one of the most important tasks of municipalities, i.e. ensure public order and security of the citizens, from the very beginning of its operation calls the negative emotions of local societies¹².

Why is this so? Is it only because all the services of a police nature, of repressive nature, are seen negatively by Poles? The Police, however, reaches more than 70% of the public trust and it is hard-to-find an opinion, even among her staunchest opponents, that the Police is unnecessary¹³. Maybe so, the municipalities' authorities do not know how to shape the profile of action of their police, to gain inhabitants' sympathy. It is hard to say the contrary, though, and it is hard to defend this thesis. How much effort should in fact be put in such organizing the municipal police that they have gained the favor of the local community. Is it even possible?

Act on municipal police defines its task, indicates the powers, privileges, but by no means hampers its capacity for innovation, a custom action in the public interest. Do polite, helpful and smiling communal (municipal) policemen are not able to convince public opinion to themselves? Is this theirs' attitude becoming anything, when sheet of fine tickets is drawn, to punish the offender of improperly parked vehicle or uncleaned sidewalk in front of a private residence, or drinking alcohol "under a cloud", or another offence which, in the opinion of the guilty, is trivial and pity? Certainly the guards interventions in such cases do not bring sympathy to them, because these are unpleasant for the citizens, in their opinion, relate to minor offenses for which they should be, at most, instructed, rather than punished.

Municipal police, like the Volunteer Fire Service (VFS), are closest to the problems of their local communities, work within the commune, on the best known area for the residents where they live, work, learn, in

election on the President of the City, or liquidation of the Municipal Police in Czerny by new Mayor; see A. Radomski, *Komendant straży miejskiej odchodzi*, 14 March 2015, <http://www.gp24.pl/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20150314/SLUPSK/150319814>, accessed 31.03.2015; *Straż Miejska w Czerny do likwidacji. Radni poparli pomysł pani burmistrz*, 23 December 2014, <http://www.tvn24.pl/pomorze,42/straz-miejska-w-czerny-do-likwidacji-radni-poparli-pomysl-pani-burmistrz,500924.html>, accessed 31.03.2015.

¹² Ustawa z dnia 8 marca 1990 r. o samorządzie gminnym, Dz.U.2013, poz.594; art.7 ust.1 pkt 14.

¹³ $\frac{3}{4}$ Polaków ma zaufanie do Policji; 22 January 2015, <https://www.msw.gov.pl/pl/aktualnosci/12834,Polakow-ma-zaufanie-do-Policji.html>, accessed 26.03.2015.

the immediate vicinity. The communal policemen, especially those from small communities, small towns and villages, are known since childhood often better than police officers, whose place of residence often does not correspond to the area of service (many commanders makes so intentionally, claiming that the officer is free of environment pressure, friends, colleagues, family, etc.).

Officers of the fire brigades in general, including volunteers, are commonly respected, achieving a record levels of social trust¹⁴, more than 90%, and service in VFS units is an honor, multigenerational tradition and an interesting life's adventure, which the service in communal police does not provide. Why? What determines the negative relation to the municipal police?

The mass media provide a variety of arguments on this issue.

Gazeta.pl lists the nine essential reasons:¹⁵

1. Treatment of speed cameras as a source of money.
2. Towing cars without leaving information.
3. Putting the locks on the wheels.
4. "Gaining money" being more important than security.
5. Giving fines for little relevant offenses.
6. Incompetence.
7. Unclear responsibilities' division.
8. Failure to fulfill the essential purpose: they are not helpful to the residents.
9. Bribery.

The use of speed cameras is the most common and the strongest charge at all municipal police. Critics have focused mainly on the financial aspect of this issue, highlighting the bad intentions of the police – oriented mostly on incomes to municipal budget. Soon the problem will cease to be valid¹⁶. Earlier, especially in the first decade of the municipal police activi-

¹⁴ See i.e. *W Polsce największym zaufaniem cieszą się strażacy*, 29 April 2014, <http://www.centrumrekrutacyjne.pl/p/w-polsce-najwiekszym-zaufaniem-ciesza-sie-strazacy,420.html>, accessed 26.03.2015.

¹⁵ *Za co nie lubimy straży miejskiej [9 powodów]*, 27 September 2013, http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/1,114871,14654001,Za_co_nie_lubimy_strazy_miejskiej__9_powodow_.html, accessed 14.03.2015.

¹⁶ From 1 January 2016, speed cameras will be taken over by the Inspection of Road Transport, and income from fines will be assigned to the State budget. Sejm enacted a novel on Road traffic law denying the community police the ability to control the speed with the help of all speed cameras: stationary, portable and those installed on certain

ties (in the 1990s) such charges considered putting the locks on wheels of vehicles parking in a prohibited place.

Marcin Darda from “Dziennik Łódzki” confirms these observations:¹⁷

(...) The fact is, that we do not like the municipal policemen, because they chase old women with parsley, looting drivers by speed cameras not to increase the security level but just because they need to patch the budget. Besides, they oppress for parking in the wrong place, though they also do it, and theirs' cars are not being locked. You open a beer in the park and quietly drink, not interfering anyone, you look around with fear of depraving the youth, but instead of them you can be suddenly caught by a couple in a checkered caps, that throws an immortal “your ID please”. And no matter that they may be helpful elsewhere at this time. Your beer is their gain in the statistics and cash in the budget (...)

At the same time, this author, in their defense, explains the source of this negative attitude as the aversion to “patrolmen” and the need for human abreact:

(...) The municipal police should be looked at from the point of view of social psychology. Well, our greater respect for the Police came from the fact that the municipal police took from them a dog poop on the lawns and other misdemeanors, becoming these ‘kerbs’, hated in the times of Civic Militia [the name of the Police in the communism era – redaction]. Today to be a municipal police officer is a very important social role, to focus the citizens' disapproval. The specific for present times is that people gets mad without clear reason, and it is then good to tell some bad sentences to a municipal police officer, even in thought, or by a beer, barbecuing with friends, or on Internet forums. Whom you are going to tell off, when the municipal police is liquidated? They are just good at that, better even than ticket inspectors. “We don't like the municipal police officers” is a fundamentally false opinion. The truth is that we love to dislike them.

Similar comments are made by Aldona Minorczyk-Cichy, in the article in “Dziennik Zachodni”, in which she reflects on the antipathy and gen-

crossroads; vide: *Straż miejska bez fotoradarów. Sejm pozbawia gminy dochodu*, 24 July 2015, <http://serwisy.gazetaprawna.pl/samorzad/artykuly/885054,straz-miejska-bez-fotoradarow-sejm-pozbawia-gminy-dochodu.html>, accessed 17.12.2015.

¹⁷ M. Darda, *Nie lubicie Straży Miejskiej? A skąd... Kochacie jej nie lubić*, 12 August 2013, <http://blogi.dzienniklodzki.pl/standardy/2013/08/12/nie-lubicie-strazy-miejskiej-a-skad-kochacie-jej-nie-lubic/>, accessed 14.03.2015.

eral tendency to liquidate the municipal police, which is illustrated by the examples from Żory, Szczyrk, Trzebinia and Chrzanów¹⁸.

(...) We do not like the municipal police officers, because they associate us with a clear repression: putting locks on the wheels and chasing drivers exceeding the speed with speed cameras. However, they are also useful helping drivers to start a car in the winter when the battery fails. And they discipline for cleaning the grounds and dog owners for cleaning dog excrements (...).

Journalists can, therefore, see their usefulness and useful function. This is important because they significantly affect public opinion, which is often subjective and superficial. In the case of evaluation of the municipal guards, it happens too often¹⁹. As it is difficult to overestimate the role of Voluntary Fire Service for the state rescue and fire extinguishing system, it is so easy not to appreciate the importance of the communal police and their participation in the development of security and public order, assistance in the daily duties of the Police, border guards, military police and other similar services and inspections²⁰.

Counting nearly 10 000 officers, the communal (municipal) police, acting in almost six hundreds of Polish municipalities (¼ of total number) is a very important element of the public security system of our country²¹.

¹⁸ A. Minorczyk-Cichy, *Policjant budzi zaufanie. Za co nie lubimy straży miejskiej?*, 06 June 2013, <http://www.dziennikzachodni.pl/artykul/912693,policjant-budzi-zaufanie-za-co-nie-lubimy-strazy-miejskiej,id,t.html>, accessed 17.03.2015.

¹⁹ See L. Kudła, *Wizerunek instytucji. Relacje pomiędzy obywatelami a Strażą Miejską Kalisza*, [in:] *Przemiany i perspektywy Straży Miejskich i Gminnych w ochronie porządku i bezpieczeństwa publicznego. Materiały konferencyjne*, K. Rajchel (ed.), Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Informatyki, Zarządzania i Administracji w Warszawie, Warszawa 20–21 IX 2007, p. 103–114.

²⁰ The author devoted to these issues other publications: C. Tatarczuk, *Rola ochotniczych straży pożarnych w strukturze zarządzania kryzysowego w powiecie wejherowskim*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo i ochrona ludności oraz infrastruktury krytycznej wybrzeża i miast regionu nadmorskiego*, A. Ostrokólski (ed.), Wydawnictwo Akademii Marynarki Wojennej w Gdyni, Gdynia–Słupsk 2010; see also: C. Tatarczuk, *Współpraca Straży Gminnej (Miejskiej) z Policją na podstawie wybranych jednostek województwa pomorskiego w 2006 r.*, [in:] *Przemiany i perspektywy Straży Miejskich...*, p. 296–306; see also: C. Guźniczak, I. Malinowska, *Współpraca policji i straży gminnych/miejskich*, A. Letkiewicz (ed.), Wydawnictwo Wyższej Szkoły Policji w Szczytnie, Szczytno 2012.

²¹ At the end of 2013 active were 593 communal polices (476 municipal and 117 village), grouping 9 643 officers; See *Informacja statystyczna o działalności straży gminnych (mie-*

A natural, the nearest in competence to the one hundred thousands of the Police officers, supporting them by officers and equipment in a variety of preventive activities, especially in the patrolling service and protection of mass events. The ratio of the municipal police officers to the Police officers is therefore 1:10. This proportion, however, takes on another dimension when we compare it to the ratio of members of Voluntary Fire Service to the number of State Fire Service officers, which is 1:0,04²².

It is hard to imagine a professional action of firefighters without the support of volunteers who support the most events requiring rescue operations and firefighting. Completely opposite views are on the Police actions, which requires a mobility and effectiveness regardless of its presence in a particular location. From supporting municipal police officers the same is not expected. This sad ascertainment, unauthorized and unjust, deny the idea of founding self-governmental uniformed services, to be a direct, and moreover given the powers, mean of municipal authorities to carry out the important task which is the public policy which is an important component of the security of its inhabitants. The thesis that the municipal police are an essential element of the system of public security is still valid and still gives up a fend off.

3. ENDING

The attitude of the Poles to all authorities, including that associated with coercion, repression, punishment has been negative for years. Trusting such institutions more or less does not automatically mean the sympathy. The courts punish the harshest, but although we do not love them, we at least respect them. The judge in our concept is an elite occupation. Municipal guards are at the bottom of human cases, dealing with things – in our meaning – trivial, unimportant, even useless.

jskich) w 2013 r. Departament Porządku Publicznego MSW, Warszawa 2014, http://www.krksmg.pl/File/Raport_straze.pdf, accessed 30.03.2015, see also I. Biedrzycka, *Bezpieczeństwo społeczeństwa lokalnego jako priorytet działania straży miejskiej*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo społeczności lokalnej*, A. Lewkowicz, T. Majer (eds.), Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, Olsztyn 2012, p. 152.

²² At the end of 2013 there were nearly 30 500 State Fire Service officers; see *Biuletyn Informacyjny Państwowej Straży Pożarnej za rok 2013*, http://www.straz.gov.pl/data/other/b_psp2013.pdf, accessed 20.04.2015. Voluntary Fire Service have about 680 000 members; see *OSP w liczbach*, http://www.zosprp.pl/files/news/430/OSP_wliczbach.pdf, accessed 20.04.2015.

It is the common opinion, unfortunately. What is worse, just think many village heads, mayors or presidents of the cities, treating the municipal police reluctantly or temporarily, leading to disbanding them. These prejudices are naturally the result of universal social antipathy as an attitude of Poles towards the municipal police officers and this reluctance is surely the result of inadequate civic awareness, which still restricts the ability to objectively perceive their role and importance in the system of public security of the State.

Relying on the Dahrendorf's thesis, we may have hope that with time, this will change.

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