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THE MAIN ASPECTS OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE CITIZENS' MILITIA AND THE SECURITY SERVICE IN THE SEVENTIES AND EIGHTIES OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

GŁÓWNE ASPEKTY WSPÓŁPRACY MILICJI OBYWATELSKIEJ ZE SŁUŻBĄ BEZPIECZEŃSTWA W LATACH SIEDEMDZIESIĄTYCH I OSIEMDZIESIĄTYCH XX WIEKU

Abstract: The article concerns the poorly described issue of cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service in the 1970s and 1980s, especially the main aspects of this cooperation. Based on an analysis of archival materials, the author tries to answer the question of the extent to which the goals, methods and competences of the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service were similar and how they intertwined. Based on the sources, it is possible to trace the similarities and differences in the operation of both services. Using the example of departmental studies and operational matters, examples of cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service are shown in terms of information exchange, protection of the economy and combating political opposition. Their areas of interest often overlapped, especially in matters of an economic nature, and the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service often dealt with the same issues. Despite the fact that the importance of cooperation was repeatedly emphasized in internal documents, the analysis determined that it did not have real priority significance.

Zarys treści: Artykuł dotyczy słabo opisanego zagadnienia współpracy pomiędzy Milicją Obywatelską a Służbą Bezpieczeństwa w latach siedemdziesiątych i osiemdziesiątych XX wieku, a zwłaszcza tego, jakie były główne aspekty tej współpracy. Autor na bazie analizy materiałów archiwalnych próbuje odpowiedzieć na pytania, jak dalece cele, metody i kompetencje MO i SB były podobne oraz jak się przenikały. Na podstawie źródeł można prześledzić podobieństwa i różnice w działaniu obu służb. Na przykładzie resortowych opracowań oraz spraw operacyjnych pokazana została współpraca między MO a SB w zakresie wymiany informacji, ochrony gospodarki i zwalczania opozycji politycznej. Obszary zainteresowań tych służb często się przenikały, zwłaszcza w sprawach o charakterze gospodarczym, a MO i SB nierzadko zajmowały się tymi samymi zagadnieniami. Pomimo tego, że w wewnętrznych dokumentach niejednokrotnie podkreślano wagę współpracy, to w wyniku przeprowadzonej analizy ustalono, że nie miała ona w rzeczywistości priorytetowego znaczenia.

Keywords: Citizens' Militia, Security Service, intelligence work, secret collaborator, co-operation of law enforcement and secret services.

Słowa kluczowe: Milicja Obywatelska, Służba Bezpieczeństwa, praca operacyjna, tajny współpracownik, współpraca organów ścigania i służb specjalnych.

The history of the Citizens' Militia is not as popular as the history of the Security Service, which is evident even from a cursory comparison of the number of publications on the subject. In popular understanding the Citizens' Militia was indeed a formation protecting the communist system in Poland, but – which is understandable for many reasons – the attention of both most researchers and public opinion is focused on the SB.¹ It is worth noting that due to their exceptional brutality, the Motorized Reserves of the Citizens' Militia, as well as the grim realities of martial law, are still vivid in the memory of Poles. At the same time, in a simple, collective perspective, the insidious “UB” and “SB” were always much more dangerous than the “stupid militiamen” who were the butt of widely spread jokes.

¹ Piotr Majer and Tomasz Pączek, among others, have written about the history of the Citizens' Militia. In 2018, a valuable publication was published entitled *Brudne wspólnoty. Przestępczość zorganizowana w PRL w latach siedemdziesiątych i osiemdziesiątych XX wieku*, edited by Karol Nawrocki and Daniel Wicenty.

When it comes to what exactly the MO and SB dealt with, it is natural to automatically distinguish between fighting common crime and fighting political opponents. It is clear that the “category” of many cases was obvious: criminal cases were the domain of the MO, whilst political matters were handled by the SB. However, this clear picture becomes more complicated if we take into account some areas of activity of both services, and especially their cooperation (often called collaboration) in the field of mutual exchange of information, fighting the Catholic Church or protecting the economy of the Polish People's Republic.

What were the main aspects of cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service in the Polish People's Republic, taking into account their operational tasks, work methods, organizational structure and mutual relations, especially in the context of combating criminality and political opposition? Is it possible to precisely define the boundaries separating the interests of the Citizens' Militia from those of the Security Service?

The aim of this article is to analyse the cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service, with particular emphasis on the differences and similarities in their operational work, approach to secret collaborators and common tasks related to the protection of the security order. An important question in the context of preserved archival materials is to what extent the cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service was really a priority, and to what extent it was ignored by officers? This is an area where the ideological declarations of the “fraternal services” had to diverge to some extent from practice.

The following hypotheses are put forward in this article: the goals and methods of work of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service were convergent, especially in the area of combating economic crime, and the cooperation between the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Security Service, despite declarations of its significant importance, was not treated as a priority by officers in practice.

The subject study was created based on archival materials collected in the archive resources of the Institute of National Remembrance. During the research, internal publications of the ministry, diploma theses of officers and selected operational cases conducted by officers of the Voivodship Office of Internal Affairs in Szczecin were used.

Under the Act on the IPN-KŚZpNP, the Citizens' Militia constituted a state security body until 14 December 1954 (liquidation of the Ministry of Public

Security and “separation” of the Citizens’ Militia from the security apparatus), and therefore, archival materials concerning the Citizens’ Militia created after that time should be kept in the Main Police Archive. At the same time, pursuant to Article 25 of the aforementioned act, all broadly understood documentation of the prison authorities belongs to the archival resources of the IPN.² This may be surprising because the Prison Service (apart from the repressive nature of both services) carried out different tasks than the Citizens’ Militia and also had an impact on the lives of a much smaller number of citizens.

The topic of cooperation between the MO and the SB is present in historiography mainly in the context of demonstrations, strikes or securing mass events. After 1989, however, former police officers wanted to distance themselves from their colleagues from the SB and start a new chapter under the banner of the Police, although just a moment earlier they had been part of the “MSW empire” or a joint “company.”³ The new political climate has completely erased the years of propaganda-proclaimed “brotherhood” of both formations.

Before this happened, however, there was no shortage of reflection on the differences and similarities, mutual relations and dependencies. Departmental publications are a rich source of information on the cooperation of the MO and SB. They can be divided into three groups: book studies (textbooks), scientific or professional articles and diploma theses of officers (written based on operational materials). Specialized books and articles (most often written by departmental scientists or more capable officers) are usually of a higher standard than the latter mentioned theses.

A distinctive work is the small-volume publication by Colonel Aleksander Rozwadowski, a veteran of the security apparatus (he served in the MO from 1945) and later an associate professor at the Academy of Internal Affairs⁴, which was published in 1982. The specificity of personal sources of information and methods and forms in the operational work of the Militia Service, the similarities and differences in the operational activities of the MO and SB and

² Act of 18 December 1998 on the Institute of National Remembrance – Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation, Dz.U. (Journal of Laws) 2023, item 102.

³ See A. Nyzio, *Rakowiecka w remoncie. Transformacja polityki bezpieczeństwa wewnętrznego Polski w latach 1989–1993*, Wydawnictwo Księgarnia Akademicka, Kraków 2021.

⁴ Biuletyn Informacji Publicznej Instytutu Pamięi Narodowej – Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu, Dane osoby z katalogu funkcjonariuszy aparatu bezpieczeństwa: Aleksander Rozwadowski, <https://katalog.bip.ipn.gov.pl/informacje/81804>, (accessed 24.07.2025).

the outline of the lecture, as the title suggests, focuses, among other things, on the similarities and differences in the work of both services.⁵ Rozwadowski emphasizes that both the MO and SB conducted operational work through specific forces, using specific means and methods and within specific forms. Within the Militia, operational activities are primarily handled by employees of the criminal division, the division for combating economic crime (d/w PG) and some prevention officers (district and constables). If necessary, the militia used the same operational and technical divisions as the SB: "B", "C", "T" and "W".

The issue of working with personal sources of information is similar, although the author draws attention to the fact that secret collaborators of the MO were recruited more often on the basis of incriminating materials. He also notes that when recruiting (according to the police instructions) it was best to use material interests, because candidates often came from a parasitic and criminal element, where the only value was money. This is in contrast to the fact that the SB very often recruited secret collaborators on the basis of "volunteering and joint civic responsibility" who, if we are to believe the questionnaires filled out by the officers, most often expressed a positive attitude towards the SB and did not ask for money at all. Rozwadowski also notes that many candidates for militia collaborators were recruited on the basis of incriminating materials (because they committed common crimes and misdemeanours), and the SB usually did not have such possibilities because it recruited people from a higher ethical and intellectual level. Just like the SB, the MO could not recruit members of the PZPR as liaison officers, but additionally the police were not allowed to recruit people holding managerial positions in state authorities and administration or in political organizations (which the SB often did because higher-ranking people usually knew and could do more). Apart from that, Rozwadowski sums up that there were no significant differences between the SB and the MO when it came to maintaining documentation, contacts and working with secret collaborators. Both services also used the specialist knowledge of their consultants in very similar ways.

There was a certain difference in the subject of interest: the militia dealt with criminal activity and social pathologies (drug addiction, alcoholism and

⁵ Archiwum Instytutu Pamięci Narodowej w Warszawie (hereafter AIPN w Warszawie), Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska MSW im. Feliksa Dzierżyńskiego w Legionowie, ref. no. 003263/172, A. Rozwadowski, Specyfika osobowych źródeł informacji oraz metod i form w pracy operacyjnej Służby Milicji (Podobieństwa i różnice w działalności operacyjnej MO i SB – zarys wykładu), Akademia Spraw Wewnętrznych, Warszawa 1982.

parasitism⁶). The SB, on the other hand, dealt with political matters, opposition circles, espionage, diversion and sabotage. Rozwadowski writes, however, that both services jointly dealt with the protection of the national economy. In the initial phase of an operational case in this area, it was often difficult to find out the nature and extent of the crime. Hence the need for mutual information (...) transfer of operational materials and even secret collaborators (...).⁷ This was to be the norm among operational and investigative officers and officers of the PG and divisions IV, V and (from 1985) VI of the SB.

It is interesting to compare the looser forms of cooperation, i.e. operational contacts of the Security Service and persons trusted by the Citizens' Militia. Theoretically, all police officers could work with trusted persons and in practice they were most often district police officers and constables. Police officers were only supposed to have lists of trusted persons, while SB officers were required to keep files of operational contacts, similar to the case of secret collaborators.⁸ The level of control in the Security Service was much higher because superiors controlled files and costs incurred. Therefore, much less was required of the MO in terms of maintaining documentation. Both services used official contacts (KS) in virtually the same way.

Leaving aside certain differences discussed in detail in the conduct of operational work, Rozwadowski concludes that the operational investigations of the MO and SB differed from each other in principle only in the subject of their activities, although in combating economic crime there may be a "far-reaching convergence." By passing on information to each other: "(...) they serve the same purpose, which is to maintain law and order and security in our country."⁹

The socio-political situation in Poland in the first half of the 1970s was much more favourable for the communist authorities than it would be a decade later. However, cooperation between the services and unwavering defence of the threatened "law and order" were similarly assumed. After the tragic events of December 1970, it was decided to better prepare the security apparatus for the future, and especially for potential strikes, officially called "work stoppages." The MO and SB were to modernise and operate more

⁶ The most common form of parasitism was the avoidance of work.

⁷ AIPN w Warszawie, Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska MSW im. Feliksa Dzierżyńskiego w Legionowie, ref. no. 003263/172, A. Rozwadowski, *Specyfika osobowych...*, op. cit., p. 12.

⁸ Ibidem, p. 19.

⁹ Ibidem, p. 41.

professionally, which was also expressed by the development of new binding operational work instructions for the SB from 1 February 1970 and for the MO from 5 July 1974.

On 6 May 1971, a conference of the senior management of the MO and SB was held under the chairmanship of the Minister of Internal Affairs, Franciszek Szlachcic, the summary of which was issued by the Department of Training and Professional Development of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.¹⁰ In his speech Szlachcic referred to the MO and SB, pointing out that the ministry must develop regulations and action plans in the event of “serious disturbances”, assuming that the SB will be responsible for the security of “closed rooms”, and on the streets and in “open spaces” the MO will play the leading role, with the provincial commander being responsible for the preparation and course of the activities. The MO and SB were to support each other in suppressing unrest. The minister sharply criticized in particular the “laziness and mess” in the SB, insufficient operational work, excessive concentration on writing reports and taking photographs (which were at a low level anyway), and, perhaps surprisingly, the desire to expand the agency. He said: “You have to recruit very carefully. Even if you had 10 secret collaborators, you still would not prevent potential conflicts.”¹¹ This is especially interesting if we take into account the completely different perspective on this issue in the 1980s, i.e. the massive expansion of the network of secret collaborators.¹² In his opinion, the compact units of the MO were insufficiently trained and equipped. However, Szlachcic had no objections to the attitude of the “rank and file” officers of the MO and SB, recalling, for example, a meeting with a policeman with a shattered skull who expressed his willingness to continue serving. However, he believed that the leadership of the services was insufficiently prepared, that it was necessary to maintain “close contact” with the army and under no circumstances to claim that it was the army that was shooting and the militia that “was not shooting.” He argued that if the

¹⁰ AIPN w Warszawie, Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych (hereafter MSW), ref. no. 01522/254, Organizacja działań sił SB i MO w sytuacjach szczególnych (materiały z kursokonferencji), Departament Szkolenia i Doskonalenia Zawodowego MSW, Warszawa 1971.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 12.

¹² In 1988, the number of secret collaborators reached a record 98,000, and many SB officers simultaneously ran several to a dozen or so collaborations. See e.g. T. Ruzikowski, *Wstęp*, in: idem (ed.), *Instrukcje pracy operacyjnej aparatu bezpieczeństwa (1945–1989)*, IPN, Warszawa 2004, p. 15.

situation required it, the MO should use weapons as often as required, without at the same time jeopardizing the image of the army, which was very important to the authorities.

An interesting perspective on the relations between the MO and the Security Service is provided by a probably never-published study written after 1981 by an officer from Kielce named Steć, who was assisted in editing and collecting materials by the deputy commander of the Provincial Police Headquarters in Kielce, Colonel Kazimierz Sawin.¹³ Apart from a number of regulations and directives concerning the cooperation of the services, which the author cites and points out, he talked to many employees and during the survey some of them were unable to provide any regulations concerning the cooperation of both services.¹⁴ Given such a low level of knowledge of the issue, the writer felt it was necessary to remind people of this obligation.

Of note is the order 011/74 of the Commander-in-Chief of the Citizens' Militia of 10 August 1974, which obliged the militiamen, among other things, to take greater interest in foreigners. As we read: "(...) Citizens' Militia officers were obliged, among other things – to take an interest in such issues that fall within the scope of competences and duties of the Security Service (...)." ¹⁵ Police officers were to keep the Security Service informed via their superiors about all events involving foreigners, especially if they were related to a threat to the country's defence and economy. Moreover, the order no. 072/76 of the Minister of Internal Affairs of 30 December 1976, which set out the activities for the years 1976-1980, obliged the Security Service to further tighten cooperation within the Security Service, and even to conduct offensive preventive actions in all sectors of the national economy.¹⁶ Great emphasis was placed on district police officers collecting as much information as possible and counteracting political crimes together with officers from the Security Service. This is understandable as district police officers should know their "district" and its inhabitants. Officers on duty at the MO were also to be an important link in communication with the Security Service. Surprisingly, similar obligations were imposed on the Road Traffic

¹³ AIPN w Warszawie, Wyższa Szkoła Oficerska MSW im. Feliksa Dzierżyńskiego w Legionowie, ref. no. 657/1832, Zasady i praktyczna realizacja współdziałania Służby Bezpieczeństwa i Milicji Obywatelskiej w jednostkach terenowych na przykładzie KW MO Kielce, pp. 64–105.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 67.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p. 74.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p. 74.

Units of the MO, which were also supposed to combat hostile political, sabotage and economic activities, most often by immediately reporting. However, police officers were not very keen to provide information as they quite often passed on information with a delay or did not notify the SB at all.

In general, the Citizens' Militia, together with the Security Service, was to combat the dissemination of hostile materials such as leaflets, posters or inscriptions on walls, pursue distributors and authors of anonymous letters, secure traces and evidence of political crimes, and after detecting the perpetrator or the prohibited act, the criminal service of the militia was obliged to agree with the Security Service unit on a possible transfer of the case, although this could also take place at the request of the Security Service itself.¹⁷ Additional duties, a superior role and the "prominence" of the SB could of course interfere with many police officers, which does not change the fact that even constables were supposed to provide the SB with useful information. As the author noted, there were more police officers, and the scope of interests of foreign secret services was very wide. The MO units were too poorly used for counter-intelligence security and their involvement in cooperation with the SB was "small."¹⁸ The fact that the Kielce Road Traffic Department provided only 51 reports of diplomatic service cars passing by during a specific period is telling, when the Security Service recorded as many as 1,172.

In view of this situation, in 1979 the management of the Provincial Police Headquarters in Kielce developed extensive plans to improve cooperation. The Security Service was to include cooperation with the Police in its work plans, the Police Service was to receive new tasks in the field of detecting illegal religious buildings, and the Police and Security Service officers were to "comprehensively use personal sources of information for the benefit of both services."¹⁹ These plans were put into action in 1980, thanks to which the MO and SB began to inform each other about threats much more often, which the author describes in detail and with a division into specific departments. For example, in the context of the activities of Department IV of the SB, police officers "immediately passed on" information about the speeches of priests, visits of bishops, attitudes of priests or the purchase of land and buildings.²⁰ Thanks to the MO, harmful initiatives of the clergy were "silenced", operational matters were conducted more

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 82.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p. 89.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p. 92.

²⁰ Ibidem, p. 98.

effectively and the construction of new chapels was thwarted. Although this is not the main topic of this article, the described examples show that the MO often helped the SB very much.²¹

The aforementioned diploma theses of officers also provide a more “local” perspective on the issue of cooperation between services. Works by Jan Murawski²² (1975) and Zbigniew Mróz²³ (1989) were written based on operational materials and end with similar conclusions. The police should have a better understanding of the issues related to the work and tasks of the Security Service, both services should coordinate their work with secret collaborators and sharing information should be a common practice. According to Murawski, the MO should not treat tasks performed for the SB as “additional activities”, but as “regular tasks performed in the course of everyday duties.” Mróz expressed a more conciliatory opinion, raising the need to maintain an “atmosphere of camaraderie, cordiality and mutual respect between officers of both services.” As can be seen from the example of many sources, the cooperation between the MO and the SB did not always proceed smoothly and we can assume that police officers in particular could have been dissatisfied with the fact that they often had to perform tasks assigned by the SB.

Jan Murawski, writing about the issue of protection of the economy, emphasized, among other things, that the MO “takes over operational protection of non-key objects of the national economy that remain outside the interest of the SB (...). The Militia provides information to Division III from objects of the national economy in the scope of conflict situations occurring among crews, established facts of hostile inscriptions, leaflets, theft of duplicators, typewriters and other equipment that could be used for hostile activities.”²⁴ Interestingly, the author noted in the final conclusions that the Security Service should inform

²¹ See AIPN w Warszawie, MSW, Departament IV, ref. no. 01522/450, Niektóre elementy organizacji współdziałania Służby Bezpieczeństwa i Milicji w zakresie zapobiegania zagrożeniom lub naruszeniom porządku i bezpieczeństwa publicznego, wywołowanego działalnością hierarchii i kleru, 1970.

²² AIPN w Warszawie, Akademia Spraw Wewnętrznych (hereafter ASW), ref. no. 1510/3485, Operacyjna ochrona obiektów przemysłowych w aspekcie współdziałania SB i MO na przykładzie woj. warszawskiego, ASW, Warszawa 1975.

²³ AIPN w Warszawie, MSW, ref. no. 03204/5, Potencjalne możliwości współdziałania i współpracy MO i SB w zapobieganiu i zwalczaniu przestępczości pospolitej i politycznej na przykładzie RUSW w Gostyniu, Ośrodek Doskonalenia Kadr Kierowniczych MSW, Łódź 1989.

²⁴ AIPN w Warszawie, ASW, ref. no. 1510/3485, Operacyjna ochrona obiektów..., op. cit., p. 78.

the MO about whether the information provided was useful and how it was used. The supervisor of Murawski's work, who was considered to be of a high standard, was Eugeniusz Cilecki, a prominent theoretician of economic protection, who ten years later would write a manual sent to SB units throughout the country, "Operational Protection of the National Economy of the Polish People's Republic."²⁵ In the context of the scope of cooperation between Department V of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Militia, Cilecki wrote in the mid-1980s: "(...) with the MO service – revealing scandalous economic crime, economic damage, facts of violating secrets, criminal activities of foreigners and hostile opposition groups in the country."²⁶

According to the operational instructions, the Security Service had the right to involvement in the affairs of the Citizens' Militia, and the cooperation of both services was discussed in the fifth paragraph of this document. The primary role of the Security Service in practice could be reduced to mainly informing the Citizens' Militia (resulting in initiating cases), and less often to precisely enforcing specific actions of the militia or carrying out joint actions. This can be seen well in the example of some operational cases of an economic nature.

In 1986, Department VI of the Provincial Office of Internal Affairs in Szczecin initiated an operational verification case codenamed "Spadek."²⁷ As noted by the SB officer, in the course of operational activities it was established that in the District Horticultural and Beekeeping Cooperative in Szczecin in the first half of 1986 losses amounting to at least 7 million złoty were incurred. The socio-economic situation in the enterprise was difficult and was assumed to be systematically deteriorating. It turned out that the list of negligence and deliberate, harmful actions was long, among other things, the cooperative's board was supposed to have colluded with the producers-members of the same cooperative to push prices that were too high, and the staff did not enter evidence of income and expenses in the reports. It was considered that the blame for this state of affairs was mainly borne by the president and the previous board. Inspired by the SB, the Supervisory Board dismissed the president and a new board adopted a programme to improve the cooperative's finances,

²⁵ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 652/22, Operacyjna ochrona gospodarki narodowej PRL, Warszawa 1985.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 41.

²⁷ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 0011/1872, Sprawa operacyjnego sprawdzenia o kryptonimie „Spadek”, 1986–1988.

which was implemented in cooperation with the Bank Gospodarki Żywnościowej, which conducted the inspection. A number of further inspections were also carried out, which in turn revealed further irregularities. The SB inspector who concluded the “Spadek” case passed the information to the police’s Department for Combating Economic Crimes. In response, the police initiated its own operational investigation case codenamed “Octownia”, which it conducted until 1988.²⁸

It is difficult to estimate how many operational cases the MO and SB initiated thanks to the mutual exchange of information without conducting extensive archival research. It could have been a noticeable percentage, as could be the cases that were “duplicated”, i.e. initiated almost simultaneously by both services, especially since their areas of interest often overlapped.

For example, from the operational case codenamed “Płonia”²⁹, concerning the poisoning of water in Kołbacz near Szczecin, we learn that first, on 3 January 1986, the militia initiated preparatory proceedings, after which they notified the Security Service, which opened its own case only on 22 January 1986.

Regardless of individual cases, various details or local “specificity”, it should be recognized that there were areas where cooperation between the MO and SB was natural and had a continuous character. It was also quite paradoxical: at the same time “necessary” and neglected. Its course was influenced by the regulations that were issued, the orders issued and, above all, the changing realities of the Polish People’s Republic, and consequently, the needs of the security apparatus.

However, in relation to the research problem – and bearing in mind the paramount role of the Security Service³⁰ – it can be stated that the key aspects were the exchange of information, control of foreigners and joint protection of facilities. Operational activities were conducted similarly by both services, and especially in relation to issues of an economic nature, the methods of operation and goals were often almost identical. At the same time, the sources

²⁸ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 0012/391, vol. 10, Sprawa rozpracowania operacyjnego o kryptonimie „Octownia”, 1987–1988.

²⁹ AIPN w Szczecinie, MSW, ref. no. 0011/1658, Sprawa operacyjnego rozpracowania o kryptonimie „Płonia”, 1986.

³⁰ Resulting from, among others, order no. 006/70 (operational instruction) and the aforementioned order no. 011/74 of the Commander-in-Chief of the Citizens’ Militia of 10 August 1974.

clearly show that this fundamental (at least declarative) cooperation in practice left much to be desired and it is difficult to consider it a priority for either side.

It would be a far-reaching simplification to say that it is easy to distinguish between what interested the MO and the SB. Too often, competences overlapped, especially when it came to the broadly understood "protection of the economy." It can be argued, however, that since the SB played a formally confirmed superior role towards the "auxiliary" MO, "SB" matters were generally more important than "militia" matters. However, the examples from operational matters show that both services could also "share" interesting issues or objects, especially since there were many more militia members.

Based on the analysis of archival materials, the research hypotheses were verified to a large extent. The goals and methods of work of the MO and SB, especially in the economic area, were generally similar, which is confirmed by, among other things, the fact that cases were opened on the same issues and the previously cited publication by Aleksander Rozwadowski, who writes in this context about "joint protection" and "far-reaching convergence." The hypothesis that despite declarations, cooperation between the two services was not (with possible exceptions) treated as a priority was also confirmed by the sources.

Unsurprisingly, officers focused more on carrying out their own, basic tasks and cooperation between the services was usually irregular and ad hoc in nature (as shown by the examples concerning the exchange of information).

To sum up, the goals and operational methods of the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service were similar, although these services differed in their approach to secret collaborators (differences in documentation management, differences in motivations and the ethical and intellectual level of the secret police), they operated in a similar way in combating economic crime, while "serious" cases with an undoubted political or counter-intelligence dimension were definitely the domain of the Security Service, such as the dismantling of the Catholic Church.

The question of the scale of deeper cooperation and mutual trust or even intimacy of relations between the services remains open. The preserved ideological and propaganda materials created an almost ideal image of harmonious cooperation in the face of enemy actions³¹, while departmental administrative, operational or scientific documents often contradict this image. Issues such as mutual

³¹ See AIPN w Warszawie, ASW, ref. no. 2499/310, Funkcjonariusze SB i MO w propagandzie ośrodków dywersji i grup opozycji w Polsce, ASW, Warszawa 1988.

exchange of information and training of both services, counter-intelligence security, surveillance of the Catholic Church or joint “protection of the national economy” deserve extended, in-depth research.

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Summary

The article concerns the rarely described cooperation between the Citizens' Militia and the Security Service in the seventies and eighties of the twentieth century. Both MO and SB were tasked with protecting the Polish communist state. Based on archival sources, one can look into the similarities and differences in how both services operated, as well as show the areas where their interests often overlapped. By the example of internal studies and cases, the cooperation between MO and SB is shown, regarding the exchange of information, protection of economy and fighting the opposition.