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THE PRESS OF THE POLISH SOCIALIST PARTY – FREEDOM,
EQUALITY, INDEPENDENCE
AND THE JEWS DURING WORLD WAR II

The Polish Socialist Party – Freedom, Equality, Independence (*Polska Partia Socjalistyczna – Wolność, Równość, Niepodległość*: PPS-WRN) was one of the four most important political groups of the Polish Underground State. During World War II it supported, albeit not unconditionally, the government-in-exile of the Republic of Poland.¹ Like the other Underground parties, it sought to win new supporters and strengthen its position on the underground political scene. Both in official documents

¹ *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna – Wolność, Równość, Niepodległość* (the Polish Socialist Party – Freedom, Equality, Independence, PPS-WRN) is the name used in Polish historiography for the most important (but not the only) current in the socialist Underground, representing the continuation of the pre-war PPS. Throughout the war its leadership included the party's pre-war leaders: Tomasz Arciszewski, Chairman of the PPS *Centralny Komitet Wykonawczy* (Central Executive Committee, *CKW PPS*) from 1931; Kazimierz Pużak, Secretary General of the PPS from 1921; and Zygmunt Zaremba, a pre-war member of the CKW PPS. For reasons of secrecy, the party used the name WRN until May 1944, then the party leadership decided to return to the traditional name of PPS. To make the issue clearer and to differentiate this party from other currents in the socialist Underground, Polish historiography usually uses the name PPS-WRN for the whole occupation period. For reference, Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz's research concerns all the currents of Polish socialist Underground (see K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny 1939–1945*, Warsaw 1993).

and in its underground press. The party presented its worldview of the social issues of key importance for Polish society to this end. One of those matters, the most tragic, was its attitude towards the Jewish population in the occupied territory of the Second Polish Republic. The criminal policy of the Third Reich, resulting in the mass murder of the overwhelming majority of Polish Jews, gave this issue particular significance.

This article attempts to analyse the way in which the PPS-WRN² socialists referred in their publications to the Jewish population, how they reacted to the legal regulations imposed by the Germans which affected the life of this minority of almost 3.5 million,³ how they described the Holocaust as it unfolded before their very eyes, and how, using their very limited propaganda possibilities, they tried to influence the Polish public in general to counteract the occupiers' policy.

Status of Research and Source Basis

The issue of the attitude of the PPS-WRN's press towards the Jewish population during the World War II is significant because no one has yet attempted such a comprehensive approach, as Paweł Szapiro has postulated.⁴ However, there

² During the war, the following names were also used: *Ruch Mas Pracujących Miast i Wsi* (Movement of Working Masses of Towns and Villages) and *Ruch Mas Pracujących Polski* (Movement of Working Masses of Poland, hereinafter RMPP), see: *ibidem*, p. 36. However, both names were only used in official documents, and on a daily basis the acronym WRN was used (see M. Żuczkowski, 'Pierwsze miesiące konspiracyjnej działalności Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej Wolność-Równość-Niepodległość', in *Polska pod okupacją 1939–1945* 2015, no. 1, p. 203).

³ It is estimated that at the outbreak of World War II, 3,474,000 Polish citizens of Jewish nationality lived in the Second Polish Republic. This constituted approximately 10% of all citizens of the Second Polish Republic (W. Bartoszewski, Z. Lewinówna, *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej. Polacy z pomocą Żydom 1939–1945*, Cracow 2013, p. 5).

⁴ P. Szapiro, 'Prasa konspiracyjna jako źródło do dziejów stosunków polsko-żydowskich w latach II wojny światowej – uwagi, pytania, propozycje badawcze', *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce* 1988, no. 3/4, p. 199. The closest analysis to the one postulated by Paweł Szapiro was presented by Bohdan Chrzanowski, who used two titles from the PPS-WRN press in his article written from the geographical (not a chronological) perspective: *WRN* and *Gwardia Ludowa* (both papers will be described further in detail). See B. Chrzanowski, 'Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej w świetle polskich wydawnictw konspiracyjnych', *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce* 1985, no. 1/2, pp. 85–103. The volume *Żegota. Ukryta pomoc* contains an extensive chapter focused on an analysis of the attitude of the underground press in Cracow towards the extermination of Jews on the example of, among others, *Wolność* (Freedom) published by the Cracow socialists (a different publication from the *Wolność* referred to in this text). See K. Kocik, 'Krakowska prasa konspiracyjna wobec zagłady

are many publications on this subject. Pride of place should be given to those by Krzysztof Dunin-Wąsowicz, which describe the attitude of all the currents in the socialist movement towards the fight against and genocide of the Jewish population.⁵ There are also monographs and scholarly articles concerning Polish–Jewish relations during the World War II more broadly understood, containing information about the attitude of the PPS-WRN and its publications, written by Władysław Bartoszewski,⁶ Bohdan Chrzanowski,⁷ Klaus-Peter Friedrich,⁸

Żydów na przykładzie “Wolności” i “Dziennika polskiego” in *Żegota. Ukryta pomoc*, ed. B. Heksel, K. Kocik, Cracow 2017, pp. 31–108. A number of published scholarly texts analyse either the general attitude of the Polish underground press towards the Jewish population and its extermination (see below), or the opinions concerning this matter in particular press titles (see, among others, J.D. Zimmerman, ‘The Polish Underground Press and the Jews. The Holocaust in the Pages of the Home Army’s *Biuletyn Informacyjny*, 1940–1943’ in *Warsaw. The Jewish Metropolis. Essays in Honor of the 75th Birthday of Professor Antony Polonsky*, ed. G. Dynner, F. Guesnet, Boston 2015, pp. 437–466).

⁵ K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, ‘Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec walki i zagłady warszawskiego getta’, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce* 1973, no. 2/3 (86/87), pp. 137–145; *idem*, ‘Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec problemów getta warszawskiego’, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce* 1978, no. 3/4 (107/108), pp. 17–26; *idem*, ‘Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec walki i zagłady Żydów w czasie okupacji niemieckiej w Polsce’ in *Polskie podziemie polityczne wobec zagłady Żydów w czasie okupacji niemieckiej*, ed. I. Borowicz, Warsaw 1988, pp. 11–21; *idem*, ‘Socjaliści polscy wobec walki i zagłady Żydów’, *Dzieje Najnowsze* 1993, no. 1, pp. 41–59; *idem*, ‘Socjaliści polscy wobec walki i zagłady Żydów’ in *Spółczesność polskie wobec martyrologii i walki Żydów w latach II wojny światowej*, ed. K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, Warsaw 1996, pp. 75–94. All the articles mentioned above had a similar source basis, and the last two are in large parts equivalent (it is also possible to find in them extracts ‘borrowed’ from the 1973 article). In Dunin-Wąsowicz’s monograph *Polski ruch socjalistyczny 1939–1945*, concerning the war-time socialist movement, a separate chapter discusses the issue of the socialists’ attitude towards the problem of this text (entitled identically to the two aforementioned articles: ‘Socjaliści polscy wobec walki i zagłady Żydów’ [The Polish Socialists towards fight and extermination of the Jews]). Extensive extracts also mirror the abovementioned articles by the same author.

⁶ W. Bartoszewski, *O Żegocie relacja poufna sprzed pół wieku*, ed. M. Zając, Warsaw 2013 (the text contains a significant amount of information concerning the involvement of socialists in aiding Jewish population); *idem*, ‘Polska podziemna a walka getta warszawskiego’, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego w Polsce* 1973, no. 2/3, pp. 45–66; W. Bartoszewski, Z. Lewinówna, *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej...* The latter publication includes the accounts of many persons involved in the socialist Underground such as Stefan Sendłak, Tadeusz Seweryn, Irena Sendlerowa, Stanisław Dobrowolski, Paweł Lisiewicz, Lucjan Dobroszycki, Tadeusz Koral, Zygmunt Rytel, and also documents confirming the socialists’ commitment to saving the Jewish population.

⁷ B. Chrzanowski, *Eksterminacja...*

⁸ K.-P. Friedrich, ‘The Nazi Murder of the Jews in Polish Eyes. Views in the Underground Press, 1942–1945’, *Polin. Studies in Polish Jewry* 2010, no. 22, pp. 389–413.

Andrzej Friszke,⁹ Jerzy Jarowiecki,¹⁰ Dariusz Libionka,¹¹ Agnieszka Michałowska,¹² Aleksandra Namysło,¹³ Teresa Prekerowa,¹⁴ Dorota Siepracka,¹⁵ Paweł Szapiro,¹⁶ Marcin Urynowicz,¹⁷ Joshua Zimmerman¹⁸ and Andrzej Żbikowski.¹⁹

The most important source in discussing the issue examined in this text is the PPS-WRN underground press,²⁰ almost all of which is preserved in Polish

⁹ A. Friszke, *Adam Ciołkosz: portret polskiego socjalisty*, Warsaw 2011; *idem*, 'Publicystyka Polski Podziemnej wobec zagłady Żydów 1939–1944' in *Polska – Polacy – Mniejszości narodowe*, ed. E. Grzeskowiak-Łuczyc, Wrocław–Warsaw–Cracow 1992, pp. 193–213 (a shortened version of this article was published as *idem*, 'Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów 1939–1944', *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* 2000, no. 4 (196), pp. 496–503).

¹⁰ J. Jarowiecki, 'Problematyka żydowska w polskiej prasie konspiracyjnej w latach 1939–1945' in *Bibliologia, literatura, kultura. Księga pamiątkowa ofiarowana Profesorowi Wacławowi Szelińskiemu*, ed. M. Kopka, M. Zięba, Cracow 1999, pp. 243–266.

¹¹ D. Libionka, "'Kwestia żydowska' i problemy własnościowe w ujęciu wydawnictw konspiracyjnych ugrupowań nacjonalistycznych' in *Klucze i kasa. O mieniu żydowskim w Polsce pod okupacją niemiecką i we wczesnych latach powojennych 1939–1950*, ed. J. Grabowski, D. Libionka, Warsaw 2014, pp. 181–253; *idem*, 'Polskie piśmiennictwo na temat zorganizowanej i indywidualnej pomocy Żydom', *Zagłada Żydów. Studia i materiały* 2008, no. 4, pp. 17–80; *idem*, 'ZWZ-AK i Delegatura Rządu RP wobec eksterminacji Żydów polskich' in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski, Warsaw 2006, pp. 15–209.

¹² A. Michałowska, 'Postawy wobec Holocaustu Żydów w polskiej prasie konspiracyjnej. Analiza wybranych czasopism', *Kultura i Społeczeństwo* 1990, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 53–64.

¹³ A. Namysło, 'Postawy mieszkańców rejencji katowickiej wobec ludności żydowskiej' in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski, Warsaw 2006, pp. 723–826.

¹⁴ T. Prekerowa, *Konspiracyjna Rada Pomocy Żydom w Warszawie 1942–1945*, Warsaw 1982.

¹⁵ D. Siepracka, 'Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w Łodzi podczas okupacji niemieckiej' in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski, Warsaw 2006, pp. 691–762.

¹⁶ P. Szapiro, *Prasa...*; *idem*, 'Problem pomocy dla walczącego getta w publicystyce Polski Podziemnej' in *Holocaust z perspektywy półwiecza: pięćdziesiąta rocznica Powstania w Getcie Warszawskim*, ed. D. Grinberg, P. Szapiro, Warsaw 1993, pp. 289–322; *idem*, *Wojna żydowsko-niemiecka. Polska prasa konspiracyjna 1943–1944 o Powstaniu w Getcie Warszawskim*, London 1992. The latter publication is a selection of underground press articles concerning the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. It includes some of the texts used in this paper from the underground press from the PPS-WRN about the Ghetto Uprising.

¹⁷ M. Urynowicz, 'Zorganizowana i indywidualna pomoc Polaków dla ludności żydowskiej eksterminowanej przez okupanta niemieckiego w okresie drugiej wojny światowej' in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski, Warsaw 2006, pp. 209–364; *idem*, 'Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w Warszawie w okresie okupacji hitlerowskiej' in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski, Warsaw 2006, pp. 537–689.

¹⁸ J.D. Zimmerman, *The Polish Underground and the Jews, 1939–1945*, New York 2015.

¹⁹ A. Żbikowski, 'Antysemityzm, szmalcownictwo, współpraca z Niemcami a stosunki polsko-żydowskie pod okupacją niemiecką' in *Polacy i Żydzi pod okupacją niemiecką 1939–1945. Studia i materiały*, ed. A. Żbikowski, Warsaw 2006, pp. 429–535.

²⁰ These are kept in the Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw, the National Library and the University of Warsaw Library.

national archives and libraries. The additional resource consists of the few existing documents of confirmed PPS-WRN provenance, most of which have already been published in a volume edited by Olena Błatonowa, Lidia Ciołkoszowa and Wanda Czapska-Jordan,²¹ and a part of which was published by Władysław Bartoszewski and Zofia Lewinówna.²² The author found only a few previously unknown documents in national and foreign archives.²³

The Central Press of the PPS-WRN

Zygmunt Zaremba, codename 'Marcin', was the head of the publication and propaganda division on behalf of the Central Executive Committee (CKW) of the PPS-WRN throughout the occupation. He also had an overwhelming influence on the political profile of the party publishers.²⁴ He was assisted in the work of the Press Department by Stanisław Niemyski, codename 'Stasiek', who was responsible for up-to-date information from Poland and abroad and for communication with the PPS-WRN local units, and Józef Wadias, codename 'Ziutek', who was responsible for communication between the editors of particular journals, the publishing section, and financial matters.²⁵ Like the leadership of PPS-WRN, the Press Department operated in Warsaw during the whole occupation period, publishing the party's most important titles and distributing them to its local structures.²⁶

²¹ "My tu żyjemy jak w obozie warownym." *Listy PPS-WRN Warszawa-Londyn 1940-1945*, ed. O. Błatonowa, L. Ciołkoszowa, W. Czapska-Jordan, London 1992. This is an edition of the correspondence between the PPS-WRN's national leadership and the *Komitet Zagraniczny PPS* (Foreign Committee PPS, KZ PPS), the latter based first in Paris and then in London. It mainly contains correspondence between Zygmunt Zaremba on behalf of the CKW PPS-WRN and Adam Ciołkosz from the KZ PPS. The volume also includes many documents and announcements from the PPS-WRN.

²² W. Bartoszewski, Z. Lewinówna, *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej...*

²³ In this regard, the research in the collection of Adam Ciołkosz, a person of trust in the national leadership of the PPS-WRN in London, kept in the resources of the *Studium Polskiej Podziemnej* (Polish Underground Movement Study Trust, hereinafter SPP) in London (formally belonging to the Polish Institute and Sikorski Museum, hereinafter IPMS) was particularly disappointing. In this collection, a dozen or so files on Polish-Jewish affairs from 1939-1945 are preserved, the overwhelming majority of which, however, relate to actions taken by Ciołkosz in London (see A. Friszke, *Adam Ciołkosz...*).

²⁴ K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny 1939-1945...*, pp. 38, 185.

²⁵ A. Czystowski, 'Warszawskie wydawnictwa PPS-WRN 1939-1944', *Z Pola Walki* 1974, no. 1, pp. 262-263; K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny 1939-1945...*, p. 185.

²⁶ For more on the WRN's press distribution, see A. Czystowski, *Warszawskie wydawnictwa...*, pp. 249-252.

To get as complete a picture as possible of the attitude of the PPS-WRN's press towards the Jewish question during the war, this article analyses the content of five press titles, which, after Stanisława Lewandowska, should be described as central journals.²⁷ The most important one, of informative and political nature, was the WRN, published from November 1939 to September 1944.²⁸ Up to 230 issues of the magazine were published,²⁹ and the total circulation, according to Andrzej Czystowski, reached around 1,200,000 copies. The aforementioned 'Marcin' was the editor-in-chief of the magazine and the author of many articles published therein. The second PPS-WRN magazine with an informational and political profile was *Wieś i Miasto* (Country and City), which was published very irregularly. It was addressed to the PPS-WRN's rural organisation and the members of the *Stronnictwo Ludowe* (People's Party, SL), who were perceived as a natural ally of the socialist movement. In total, there were approximately 30 issues of this magazine, which reached a total circulation of about 54,000.³⁰

Wolność, published from January 1940 to July 1944, was another political magazine. In total, 29 issues were published with a circulation of 78,000 copies.³¹ However, there is a certain confusion about this magazine: in 1940–1941 it was the press organ of the independent socialist group *Wolność*,³² and the acronym WRN only appeared above the title after the publication of issue 13/14 on

²⁷ S. Lewandowska, *Prasa okupowanej Warszawy 1939–1945*, Warsaw 1992, p. 75. Lewandowska names 5 press titles that were organs of the PPS-WRN as central; for an unknown reason she omitted *Gwardia Ludowa* (People's Guard), a newspaper targeted at the WRN's military units, themselves known as *Gwardia Ludowa* (GL WRN). The central newspapers included *Materiały i Dokumenty Ruchu Mas Pracujących Polski* (Materials and Documents of the Polish Working Masses Movement), a periodical containing either reprints from other socialist press titles (including those in exile) or texts on various aspects of the party's programme, but which did not generally discuss current events. For this reason, *Gwardia Ludowa* is included in this article while *Materiały i Dokumenty Ruchu Mas Pracujących Polski* is omitted.

²⁸ Initially, the magazine was published under the title *Informator*. At the end of October 1939, the letters WRN appeared next to the title. From the beginning of 1940, this became the new title of the magazine. On 18 June 1944, the magazine was published under the new title of *Robotnik* (see A. Czystowski, *Warszawskie wydawnictwa...*, pp. 252–255).

²⁹ During the Warsaw Rising, *Robotnik* was published almost daily (from 1 August to 4 September 1944, 62 issues with a total circulation of about 200,000 copies); in the earlier period, the frequency of its releases varied, ranging from one to two weeks.

³⁰ A. Czystowski, *Warszawskie wydawnictwa...*, p. 257.

³¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 256–257.

³² Initially active in Vilnius, then in Warsaw (see J. Mulak, *Polska lewica socjalistyczna 1939–1944*, Warsaw 1990, pp. 188–209).

7 September 1941.³³ The shift of allegiance was a result of the actions taken by Zbigniew Mitzner, codename 'Rafał', who arbitrarily subordinated the magazine *Wolność* to the PPS-WRN.³⁴ Nevertheless, it should be stressed that, even at the earlier stage, the relations between the journal's editorial team and the party's Press Department headed by Zaremba were quite close, as evidenced by the fact that the magazine was printed in the PPS-WRN printing house and part of its circulation was distributed through the party's distribution network.³⁵ As it is not known how much influence Zaremba had on the content of *Wolność* before the issue of 7 September 1941, this article will only focus on issues published after that date.

The PPS-WRN also published two journals targeted at the party's military and militia structures. The first was the periodical *Gwardia Ludowa* (People's Guard), intended for the party's military units, the People's Guard of the WRN (later *Organizacja Wojskowa Powstańczego Pogotowia Socjalistów*, the Military Organisation of the Socialist Insurgent Emergency Service). The magazine was published on an irregular basis from January 1940 to June 1944; according to Andrzej Czystowski, 22 issues were published, with a total circulation of about 95,000 copies.³⁶ The second title was *Robotnik w Walce* (Fighting Worker), intended for members of factory committees and units of the PPS-WRN's Militia. From January 1943 to July 1944, 20 issues of the magazine were published with a total circulation of about 100,000 copies.³⁷ Both magazines included articles on military training, and were also intended to shape the civic attitude of soldiers and militiamen; articles concerning the Jewish issue appear there in this context.

Due to the specificity of both the underground press and the matter researched, the author has decided not to verify the information published in the PPS-WRN periodicals on the fate of the Jewish population, for several reasons. First, as mentioned above, the party's central press was published in Warsaw, which meant there was a considerable delay

³³ The PPS-WRN vignette appeared in issue 15, October 1941.

³⁴ This should be regarded as a kind of rebellion by Mitzner against the leadership of *Wolność*; Mitzner had already been closely connected with Zaremba in the pre-war period (see J. Mulak, *Polska lewica socjalistyczna...*, pp. 194, 204–207).

³⁵ A. Czystowski, *Warszawskie wydawnictwa...*, p. 257.

³⁶ *Ibidem*.

³⁷ *Ibidem*, pp. 257–258; K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny 1939–1945...*, p. 186.

in all the information from the field reaching the editorial office, and this information was often fragmentary in nature and subjected to distortion. Secondly, both the content and shape of the articles published were strongly influenced by the need for secrecy. It was often difficult, and sometimes even impossible, to verify the information published in the underground press concerning the fate of the Jewish population. Another reason is that the purpose of this study is to analyse how the PPS-WRN referred to the Jewish population, and not how precise was the information available to them. Finally, it should be stated that the available literature on the Jewish population in the Polish lands is extensive³⁸, and should allow the interested reader to verify such information.

The PPS and the Jewish Question until the Outbreak of World War II³⁹

Since its establishment in 1892, the PPS assumed a position that one of the main principles on which the reborn Poland would be based is “the total equality of nationalities constituting the Republic of Poland” and “the equality of all citizens of the country without distinction of gender, race, nationality or religion.”⁴⁰ The PPS socialists remained loyal to this principle after Poland regained its independence. Until the mid-1930s, this meant in practice that they treated the matter of all national minorities in the Second Republic of Poland in the same way – demanding respect for minorities’ rights, and in return expecting loyalty to the Polish state.⁴¹ In 1935, as Anna Landau-Czajka noted, the PPS, which had not previously acknowledged the existence of the so-called Jewish question, stated that there was a problem of anti-Semitism that should be decisively

³⁸ D. Libionka has written on the state of research: *Zagłada Żydów w Generalnym Gubernatorstwie*, Lublin 2017. The basic literature on the subject is also listed there.

³⁹ In this article, the matter of the socialists’ attitude towards the ‘Jewish question’ prior to 1939 is only outlined as a foreground introducing the reader to the essential part of the text. This matter has already been researched in several publications (see E. Koko, *W nadziei na zgodę. Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec kwestii narodowościowej w Polsce (1918–1939)*, Gdańsk 1995; M. Śliwa, ‘Kwestia żydowska w polskiej myśli socjalistycznej’ in *Żydzi w Małopolsce. Studia z dziejów osadnictwa i życia społecznego*, ed. F. Kiryk, Przemysł 1991, pp. 273–288 (reprint: M. Śliwa, *Obcy czy swoi: z dziejów poglądów na kwestię żydowską w Polsce w XIX i XX wieku*, Cracow 1997, pp. 66–83); *idem, Polska myśl socjalistyczna (1918–1948)*, Wrocław–Warsaw–Cracow–Gdańsk–Łódź 1988; P. Wróbel, ‘Od wojny do współpracy: Powszechny Żydowski Związek Robotniczy “Bund” i Polska Partia Socjalistyczna 1897–1939’ in *BUND 100 lat historii 1897–1997*, ed. F. Tych, J. Hensel, Warsaw 2000, pp. 117–143; J.D. Zimmerman, *Poles, Jews, and the Politics of Nationality*, Madison 2004).

⁴⁰ See points 2 and 4, part A, of the PPS’s so-called ‘Paris’ Programme from 1892; see ‘Szkiec programu Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej’ in *Polskie programy socjalistyczne 1878–1918*, ed. F. Tych, Warsaw 1975, p. 253.

⁴¹ D. Libionka, *ZWZ-AK...*, p. 17; J.D. Zimmerman, *The Polish Underground and the Jews...*, p. 31.

opposed.⁴² Zygmunt Zaremba wrote at this time that “socialism fights against anti-Semitism as one of the obstacles put in its way.”⁴³ The background for this position was found in the Resolutions of the 24th Congress of the Polish Socialist Party of 1937:

“Anti-Semitism has become a powerful means of disarming the working and people’s masses in their struggle to rebuild the social system. To make them fight each other and throw Polish and Jewish workers into a fratricidal fight – this is the aim of anti-Semitic instigators [...] The Congress calls on the Polish working class to continue to fight all forms of anti-Semitism ruthlessly, to be vigilant, and oppose the fascist-antisemitic provocations and incitement if necessary.”⁴⁴

However, this unequivocal and tough position adopted by the Congress was not shared by all PPS members. The problem of anti-Semitism was also present among socialists, although it was certainly not as prevalent as in other political parties.⁴⁵ The pamphlet by Jan Maurycy Borski, one of the leading party publicists and the deputy editor-in-chief of *Robotnik* at the time, should be considered as an illustration of this approach.⁴⁶ In his “polemic with the Bund”, he postulated mass Jewish emigration as the best answer to the “Jewish question” in Poland, while emphasising that he did not want to expel the Jews from Poland as advocated by the National Democratic press (*Narodowa Demokracja*, National Democracy: a common derivate for the nationalist current).⁴⁷ Zaremba strongly opposed such a stance and explicitly stated that Borski’s deliberations only served Polish and Jewish nationalists in opposing socialism.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, once again it seems

⁴² E. Koko, *W nadziei na zgodę...*, p. 126; A. Landau-Czajka, *W jednym stali domu: koncepcje rozwiązania kwestii żydowskiej w publicystyce polskiej lat 1933–1939*, Warsaw 1998, p. 276; M. Śliwa, *Polska myśl socjalistyczna...*, p. 157; P. Wróbel, *Od wojny do współpracy...*, p. 141.

⁴³ Z. Zaremba, ‘Antysemityzm contra socjalizm’ in *O żydach i antysemityzmie*, Warsaw 1936, p. 8.

⁴⁴ *Uchwały XXIV Kongresu Polskiej Partii Socjalistycznej odbytego w dn. 31-go stycznia, 1-go i 2-go lutego 1937 roku w Radomiu*, n.p., n.d., [1937], p. 8.

⁴⁵ See G. Pickhan, *Pod prąd: Powszechny Żydowski Związek Robotniczy BUND w Polsce w latach 1918–1939*, Warsaw 2017, pp. 349, 356, 360.

⁴⁶ However, he was not a member of the governing bodies of the PPS, the 75-person General Council, or of the Central Executive Committee of the party elected from the Council’s members (G. Pickhan, *Pod prąd...*, p. 363).

⁴⁷ J.M. Borski, *Polemika z Bundem*, Warsaw 1937, pp. 17–18. Śliwa noted that, although Borski clearly stated that he was arguing with the leader of the Bund, Victor Almer, he was actually criticising the PPS’s national program in his booklet (M. Śliwa, *Kwestia żydowska...*, p. 81).

⁴⁸ Z. Zaremba, ‘Różnice czy błędy’, *Światło* 1937, no. 4/5, pp. 18–22. The controversy is described in more detail in G. Pickhan, *Pod prąd...*, pp. 361–364.

reasonable to agree with Landau-Czajka that Borski's views were acceptable to some PPS members precisely because his pamphlet had been printed by the *Robotnik* printing house.⁴⁹

Regarding the attitude of the PPS towards the Jewish question in the interwar period, it should be noted that there were many activists of Jewish origin within its ranks, more so than in any political party of the Second Republic of Poland (except perhaps for the *Komunistyczna Partia Polski*, Communist Party of Poland, KPP).⁵⁰ They often held important and responsible functions in the party structures. The more prominent names are Felix Perl, Herman Diamand and Herman Lieberman, to list but a few.⁵¹ To complete the picture of the PPS's attitude towards the Jewish population in the interwar period, it is important to mention the links between the party and its Jewish counterpart, the *Bund*. Without going into the details of these very complicated and tense relations during most of the interbellum period, it should be noted that the two parties only came together in the face of the growing threat of fascism⁵² and expanding anti-Semitism⁵³ in the second half of the 1930s. The inclusion of the postulate of national and cultural autonomy for the Jewish population into the Radom Programme of the PPS, and the joint participation in the 1 May demonstrations, may be considered as signs of agreement between the parties.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, even in that difficult period, solidarity did not always translate into direct cooperation, as demonstrated by the PPS's refusal to form an alliance in the 1938–1939 city council elections. This was probably caused by the PPS

⁴⁹ A. Landau-Czajka, *W jednym stali domu...*, pp. 256–257.

⁵⁰ As Marcin Kula noted, “many Jews or Poles of Jewish origin belonged to the PPS or KPP, among other things, because these parties essentially oversaw their members’ ethnic affiliation. They were at the same time carriers of the idea of a future in which this matter was not to be a problem at all” (M. Kula, *Narodowe i rewolucyjne*, London–Warsaw 1991, p. 202).

⁵¹ K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec walki i zagłady Żydów...*, p. 137.

⁵² Both the pre-war PPS activists and the wartime PPS-WRN publicists did not distinguish German National Socialism from Italian Fascism, and understood the term ‘fascism’ above all as the political system and doctrine of the German Third Reich, not that of Italy.

⁵³ For more on the relationship between the Bund and PPS in the interwar period see A. Brumberg, *The Bund and the Polish Socialist Party in the late 1930s in The Jews of Poland between two world Wars*, ed. Y. Gutman, E. Mendelsohn, J. Reinharz, Ch. Shmeruk, Hanover 1989, pp. 75–94; E. Koko, *W nadziei na zgodę...*, pp. 96–111; E. Nowogródzki, *Żydowska partia robotnicza BUND w Polsce 1915–1939*, Warsaw 2005, pp. 144–146, 246–247, 249, 253, 266–267; G. Pickhan, *Pod prąd...*, pp. 348–375.

⁵⁴ G. Pickhan, *Pod prąd...*, pp. 363, 365.

leadership's anxiety that its alliance with the Bund would direct votes to those parties that used anti-Jewish slogans.⁵⁵

Considering the relations between the PPS and the Bund, however, it seems that Piotr Wróbel was right when he stated that it had taken both parties several dozen years to understand how many common goals they had, and that they "had come a long way towards Polish-Jewish reconciliation and cooperation between both nations."⁵⁶

Reporting on the Fate of the Jewish Population

The first texts on the Jewish question in the PPS-WRN underground press, which was just being organised, probably appeared in the spring of 1940.⁵⁷ The edition of *Informator* published on 8 March 1940 included an article about Germans inciting anti-Semitic feelings among Poles.⁵⁸ This text came a few days before anti-Jewish riots in Warsaw during Easter, when Jewish shops were plundered and Jews were beaten.⁵⁹ After a few days the pogrom was resisted by Jewish self-defence, organised by the Bund. They were helped by a group of several dozen workers from Wola following a decision by the Warsaw PPS-WRN's leadership.⁶⁰ However,

⁵⁵ E. Koko, *W nadziei na zgodę...*, p. 142; J. Żarnowski, *PPS w latach 1935–1939*, Warsaw 1965, p. 90. The National Democracy camp took advantage of the fact that the PPS maintained contacts with the Jewish minority, accusing it in its propaganda of being a 'Jewish party' and of being controlled by Jews and Communists (P. Wróbel, *Od wojny do współpracy...*, p. 141). Nevertheless, local cooperation was quite frequent, e.g. in Łódź (see D. Siepracka, *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie...*, p. 692). The interwar cooperation between the PPS and the Bund in Tarnów was described in detail by Agnieszka Wiercholska (see A. Wiercholska, 'Relations between the Bund and the Polish Socialist Party from micro-historical perspective: Tarnów in the interwar period', *East European Jewish Affairs* 2013, no. 3, pp. 297–313).

⁵⁶ P. Wróbel, *Od wojny do współpracy...*, p. 143. As Pickhan pointed out, at the end of the thirties the PPS and the Bund were approaching each other "according to the principle of two steps forward, one backwards" (G. Pickhan, *Pod prąd...*, p. 351).

⁵⁷ It should be noted, however, that the PPS-WRN had just finished the initial period of organising the communication and distribution system (*Informator* was published irregularly and in a small number of copies). Having learned from the experiences of the 1905 Revolution and World War I, the PPS-WRN decided to start its publishing activity from organisational work (A. Czystowski, *Warszawskie wydawnictwa...*, p. 249).

⁵⁸ See 'Antysemityzm' [Anti-Semitism], *Informator*, 8 March 1940.

⁵⁹ See T. Szarota, 'Ekscesy antyżydowskie w okupowanej Warszawie', part 1–2, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* 2000, no. 1/2. The article was later published in an unchanged form (as the author clearly indicated) in the book T. Szarota, *U progu zagłady. Zajścia antyżydowskie i pogromy w okupowanej Europie*, Warsaw 2000, pp. 19–82.

⁶⁰ *Idem*, 'Ekscesy...', part 2, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* 2000, nr 2, p. 194. According to Stefan Kобрzyński, about 50 workers took part in the action (*idem*, 'W okupowanej

contrary to the account of Stefan Kобрzyński, a participant in those events, it was not the socialists' involvement that caused the failure of the anti-Jewish pogrom; their intervention only coincided with its end.⁶¹

From the summer of 1940, *WRN* informed its readers about the issue of successive new German regulations affecting the Jewish population, including the ban on entering parks, borrowing and selling books.⁶² In August, an article was published about the mass resettlement of Jews from Cracow, and how their removal from the city was often combined with the looting of property: "the situation of the displaced people is in many cases deeply tragic."⁶³ In the same month, *WRN* quoted an extract of Hans Frank's speech of 15 August 1940, in which he said that "Jews must disappear from all of Europe."⁶⁴ These first statements in the PPS-*WRN*'s press about the German policy towards the Jewish population were of a strictly informative nature, devoid of both reflection on its causes and possible consequences, as well as calls to oppose it.

In mid-October 1940, the first article about the Warsaw Ghetto appeared in *WRN*. In a text with the significant title 'Tragedia miast'⁶⁵ ('The tragedy of the cities'), the German decision to resettle the Jewish population to the ghetto was assessed as an element of the occupiers' actions aimed at facilitating control over the inhabitants, and as another blow to the material and economic basis

Warszawie' in *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna w latach wojny i okupacji 1939–1945. Księga wspomnień*, vol. 1, ed. W. Czarnecki i in., Warsaw 1994, pp. 508–509).

⁶¹ S. Kобрzyński, 'W okupowanej Warszawie...', p. 508; T. Szarota, 'Ekscesy...', part 2, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego* 2000, no. 1, p. 25.

⁶² 'W generałgubernatorstwie' [In the General Governorate], *WRN*, 24–31 July 1940. Information about subsequent anti-Jewish ordinances also appeared in further issues of the magazine, for example, the mandatory tram IDs for Jews ('Nowe objawy terroru' [New Symptoms of Terror], *WRN*, 1–10 November 1940), and the ban on Jews entering public premises and all kinds of eateries in the Litzmannstadt *Regierungsbezirk* (Łódź district) ('Ghetto warszawskie zostało zamknięte' [The Warsaw Ghetto Has Been Closed], *WRN*, 21–30 November 1940).

⁶³ 'Pod okupacją' [Under the Occupation], *WRN*, 7–15 August 1940; 'Pod okupacją' [Under the Occupation], *WRN*, 1–8 August 1940; see also K. Zimmerer, *Kronika zamordowanego świata. Żydzi w Krakowie w czasie okupacji niemieckiej*, Cracow 2017, pp. 72 and *passim*.

⁶⁴ 'Cyniczna mowa Franka' [Frank's cynical speech], *WRN*, 15–22 August 1940.

⁶⁵ 'Tragedia miast' [The tragedy of the cities], *WRN*, 11–20 October 1940. The socialist press of all currents protested against the establishment of the ghetto (K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, 'Socjaliści polscy wobec walki i zagłady Żydów' in *Spółczesność...*, p. 75).

of the lives of the population.⁶⁶ Similarly, a month later, the closure of the Warsaw Ghetto was presented as an attempt to destroy urban life in occupied Poland. It was noted that “approximately 400,000 Warsaw residents, Jews or those of Jewish descent, have been condemned to accelerated – compared to the Polish population – dying.”⁶⁷ In the following months, the very difficult and constantly deteriorating situation of the ghetto,⁶⁸ the German crimes committed against the people locked in it,⁶⁹ and the imposition of the death penalty for leaving without permission were regularly reported.⁷⁰ The tragic fate of the Jewish population in other parts of the occupied Polish lands, such as in Lublin,⁷¹ Siedlce,⁷² Vilnius⁷³ and Ternopil⁷⁴, was also described.

⁶⁶ The shift of the Warsaw Ghetto's borders was described in early November: 'Klęska przesiedleń' [Calamity of the resettlements], *WRN*, 1–10 November 1940. In the same month, a proclamation entitled 'Do Ludu Pracującego Warszawy' [To the Working People of Warsaw] was published, which strongly opposed the Germans' establishment of the ghetto in Warsaw. Its authorship is uncertain. According to Adam Ciołkosz, the leaflet was published by the aforementioned *Wolność* organisation (see *idem*, 'Zagłada Getta Warszawskiego', *Kultura* 1962, no. 3, pp. 82–84). In turn, in the memoirs of Waław Zagórski, a leading activist of *Wolność*, its authorship is attributed to the WRN (see *idem*, *Wolność w niewoli*, London 1971, pp. 137–139). Dariusz Baliszewski and Andrzej Kunert assume the same (see *Prawdziwa historia Polaków: ilustrowane wypisy źródłowe 1939–1945*, vol. 1, ed. D. Baliszewski, A.K. Kunert, Warsaw 1999, p. 288).

⁶⁷ 'Niszczenie Polski' [The destruction of Poland], *WRN*, 10–20 November 1940; 'Ghetto warszawskie zostało zamknięte' [The Warsaw Ghetto has been closed], *WRN*, 21–30 November 1940.

⁶⁸ 'Ghetto warszawskie' [The Warsaw Ghetto], *WRN*, 1–14 February 1941; 'Nowe przesiedlenia' [New resettlements], *WRN*, 21 September – 4 October 1941; 'W generalnym gubernatorstwie' [In the General Governorate], *WRN*, 16–29 November 1941; 'Masakry ludności żydowskiej' [Massacres of the Jewish people], *WRN*, 27 April 1942; 'Tragedia Żydów' [The tragedy of Jews], *WRN*, 11 May 1942. The newspaper *Wies i Miasto* reported on the resettlement of the Jewish people from countryside near Warsaw to the Warsaw Ghetto and the murders of those who could not keep up with the pace of the march (see 'Nowa fala terroru' [New wave of terror], *Wies i Miasto*, April 1942; 'Pod jarzmem głodu i terroru' [Under the yoke of hunger and terror], *Wies i Miasto*, May 1942). In the spring of 1941, the emotional eulogy of Leon Berenson, who died in the ghetto, was published in *WRN* (see 'Śmierć Leona Berensona' [Death of Leon Berenson], *WRN*, 20 April – 3 May 1941).

⁶⁹ 'Mordy na żydach' [Murders of the Jews], *WRN*, 21 February – 8 March 1942; 'W Warszawie' [In Warsaw], *WRN*, 22 April 1942.

⁷⁰ 'W generalnym gubernatorstwie' [In the General Governorate], *WRN*, 2–15 November 1941.

⁷¹ 'Wysiedlanie Żydów z Lublina' [Resettlement of Jews from Lublin], *WRN*, 15–29 March 1941.

⁷² 'Siedlce', *WRN*, 1–8 April 1941.

⁷³ Reports were published about the establishment of the Vilnius ghetto and the systematic murder of the people locked in it (see 'Na innych ziemiach wschodnich' [In other Eastern Lands], *WRN*, 2–15 November 1941; 'Na ziemiach wschodnich' [In the Eastern Lands], *WRN*, 16–29 November 1941 [the same information was literally repeated in the next issue]; 'Na Wileńszczyźnie i Kowieńszczyźnie' [In the Vilnius and Kaunas regions], *WRN*, 14–27 December 1941; 'Mordy na żydach' [Murders of the Jews], *WRN*, 21 February – 8 March 1942).

⁷⁴ The Germans reportedly organised a massacre of a part of the Jewish population there “because the size of the planned ghetto turned out to be too small” ('Na ziemiach wschodnich' [In the

In the spring of 1942, the PPS-WRN press began to publish articles reporting on the mass murders of the Jewish population by Germans in almost all the occupied country, including the Lublin region,⁷⁵ the Vilnius region,⁷⁶ the Łódź region,⁷⁷ the eastern territories,⁷⁸ Cracow,⁷⁹ townships near Warsaw⁸⁰, Radom and Kielce,⁸¹ and the western territories.⁸² At the turn of April, the first article was published in *WRN* that both reported on the German crimes and described the particular German cruelty towards the Jews.⁸³ The text published two months later, written in a similar tone, described the eyewitness account on meeting a group of several hundred Jews driven out by the Germans from Tłuszcz to Radzymin; there is a deeply personal commentary: “I’m turning my eyes away, I’m ashamed I have to witness these inhumane scenes.”⁸⁴

Eastern Lands], *WRN*, 16–29 November 1941: the same information was repeated literally in the next issue).

⁷⁵ ‘b.t. [jeśli wobec ogromu bestialstwa]’ [untitled, (when facing the immensity of bestiality)], *WRN*, 24 March – 11 April 1942; ‘Masakry ludności żydowskiej’ [Massacres of the Jewish people], *WRN*, 27 April 1942; ‘Pod jarzmem głodu i terroru’ [Under the yoke of hunger and terror], *Więś i Miasto*, May 1942.

⁷⁶ ‘Z Wileńszczyzny’ [From the Vilnius region], *WRN*, 9–23 March 1942.

⁷⁷ The Jews from Łódź and Koło were reportedly murdered by Germans with toxic gases (‘Tragedia Żydów’ [The tragedy of the Jews], *WRN*, 11 May 1942).

⁷⁸ In Lviv, Brest, Pinsk, Lutsk and Białystok. There was also reports about the mass murders of Jewish people by Germans in Soviet Ukraine in Starokostiantyniv, Zvyahel, Berdychiv, Zhytomyr and Kiev (see ‘Tragedia Żydów’ [The tragedy of the Jews], *WRN*, 11 May 1942; ‘Pod jarzmem głodu i terroru’ [Under the yoke of hunger and terror], *Więś i Miasto*, May 1942).

⁷⁹ ‘Niemczenie Krakowa’ [Germanising Cracow], *WRN*, 22 April 1942; ‘Mordowanie Żydów’ [Murdering the Jews], *Więś i Miasto*, July 1942; ‘Żydzi krakowscy’ [The Cracow Jews], *WRN*, 18 December 1942.

⁸⁰ The following towns were mentioned as places where Jews were murdered: Otwock, Falenica, Świder, Mińsk Mazowiecki and Rembertów (see ‘Nowa fala terroru’ [New wave of terror], *Więś i Miasto*, April 1942; ‘Tragedia Żydów’ [The tragedy of the Jews], *WRN*, 31 August 1942).

⁸¹ ‘W ghetcie warszawskim’ [In the Warsaw Ghetto], *WRN*, 14 September 1942; ‘W Mińsku Mazowieckim’ [In Minsk Mazowiecki], *WRN*, 22 January 1943.

⁸² The following are listed, among others: Pabianice, Brzeziny and the towns in the Warta district (see ‘Zabijanie Żydów’ [Killing the Jews], *WRN*, 12 October 1942).

⁸³ For example, the scene of a Gestapo man shooting a small Jewish boy during a deportation is evocatively described there (see ‘b.t. [jeśli wobec ogromu bestialstwa]’ [untitled, (when facing the immensity of bestiality)], *WRN*, 24 March – 11 April 1942).

⁸⁴ More than half of the *circa* 600 Jews deported were reportedly murdered (‘Jeszcze pomnik bestialstwa’ [Another monument of bestiality], *WRN*, 8 June 1942). Agnieszka Michałowska first noticed this comment of “unprecedented anywhere else” (see *eadem*, *Postawy wobec Holocaustu Żydów w polskiej prasie konspiracyjnej...*, p. 61).

In April 1942, *WRN* reported about the establishment of a camp in Belżec by the Germans and the probable murder of the Jewish population in the Lublin region,⁸⁵ and in the summer about the establishment of death camps in Treblinka and Sobibór.⁸⁶ Information about the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto appeared in early August:

“After Vilnius, Lviv, Lublin and Cracow, the Germans undertook the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto, the largest Jewish centre in Poland [...]. The expulsion to the East of all the Jews from Warsaw was ordered, with the exceptions of those working for the authorities, those employed in German companies, members and employees of the Jewish Council, members of the order police and those working in hospitals and disinfection columns [...]. The deported people were allowed to take 15 kg of luggage, money and jewellery, which was intended, of course, to make them take whatever is left of their belongings. The special trains are used to take away the people, although it was stated that these trains return empty after 4 hours. The experiences of other cities leave no doubt that the deported people will die during the transport or at their destination. Around 6000 people are taken daily. The German, Lithuanian and Ukrainian police took direct control of the ghetto; in the neighbouring districts, there are sounds of constant shootings behind the walls, and all the windows of the houses on the ghetto boundary are shot through.”⁸⁷

The same article expressed the then popular view that in the case of a final German victory, the Polish and other Slavic nations would face the same genocide as the Jewish population.⁸⁸

The next issue of *WRN* included another description of the liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto:

⁸⁵ ‘Masakry ludności żydowskiej’ [Massacres of the Jewish people], *WRN*, 27 April 1942.

⁸⁶ ‘Mordowanie Żydów’ [Murdering the Jews], *Wiść i Miasto*, July 1942; ‘W Treblince i Sobiborze’ [In Treblinka and Sobibór], *WRN*, 31 August 1942.

⁸⁷ The same text also reported the suicide of Adam Czerniakow (see ‘Tragedia Żydów warszawskich’ [Tragedy of the Warsaw Jews], *WRN*, 3 August 1942).

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*; A. Friszke, ‘Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...’ in *Polska...*, p. 202. Klaus-Peter Friedrich considered this view to be evidence of a misunderstanding by the Polish left (among others PPS-*WRN*) and left-wing democrats of the German genocidal policy (see K.-P. Friedrich, *The Nazi Murder of the Jews in Polish Eyes...*, pp. 398–399).

“The procedure, officially called the deportation of Jews to the East, turned, as could have been foreseen, into a wild and unplanned extermination of the Jewish population [...]. The daily quota was initially 6000, then 15,000, and on 9 August, up to 25,000 people were deported. The total number of deported persons is already 150,000 to 200,000, so it reached half of the ghetto inhabitants. [...] The vast majority of those who do not die *en route* are murdered at their destination, it seems, in Sobibór (Włodawa district), and Czerwony Bór (between Małkinia and Zambrów).”⁸⁹

The text also contains an account from a ghetto escapee:

“The manhunt takes place in such a way that entire street sections are surrounded by German, Ukrainian and Jewish police – the latter being driven by the threat of death. Everyone is taken out of their homes, and those in hiding are killed on the spot. The inhabitants of one of the houses that chose passive resistance were beaten to death with truncheons. The captured are led to a gathering point, where sometimes a small number of them – mainly by bribery, and less often by intervention or certificates – are released. The rest are loaded into wagons and deported. [...] During the roundups and searches, there are constant murders, looting and shooting people for fun.”⁹⁰

The next issue of *WRN* reported that 250,000 people had been deported from the Warsaw Ghetto by 20 August, and that thereafter the deportation was temporarily suspended.⁹¹ Two weeks later the paper reported the resumption of the deportation and speculated that at this rate the Warsaw Ghetto would be completely liquidated by September.⁹² In the issue of 28 September 1942, a sort of epitaph for the Warsaw Ghetto was published. The article, entitled ‘A crime that has never happened before’, stated that with the murder of 350,000 people

⁸⁹ ‘Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej’ [Extermination of the Jewish people], *WRN*, 17 August 1942. The liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto and the mass-scale German crimes were also described in ‘Likwidacja Getta Warszawskiego’ [Liquidation of the Warsaw Ghetto], *Więś i Miasto*, August 1942.

⁹⁰ The account by the ghetto escapee published in *WRN* also contains information that Germans deported the whole of Janusz Korczak’s orphanage, including Korczak himself, as he refused to take advantage of the offer of release (see ‘Eksterminacja ludności żydowskiej’ [Extermination of the Jewish people], *WRN*, 17 August 1942).

⁹¹ ‘Tragedja Żydów’ [The tragedy of the Jews], *WRN*, 31 August 1942.

⁹² ‘W ghetcie warszawskim’ [In the Warsaw Ghetto], *WRN*, 14 September 1942.

confined in the Warsaw Ghetto, Hitler had completed the destruction of Jews that had been announced earlier. The remaining 40,000 were left alive only to be used by German industry before their death. In a further part of the article, the organisation and course of mass murders were presented in an emotionless way, assessing the scale of the crime as follows:

“The world has never known a crime of such monstrous size and method. And the world will not swiftly get used to the idea that it has been committed. In the meantime, about one and a half million Jews have already been murdered. There are no words strong enough that would express a human reaction to Hitler’s bestiality. There is no punishment severe enough to be served on those guilty of this crime.”⁹³

The article ends with a call for help for the Jewish population, despite the fact that the Germans had imposed the death penalty for this, as “an honest human treats these threats with contempt, knowing that help in misfortune, the rescue of a fellow human in mortal danger, is a duty stronger than death.”⁹⁴ An article of the same tone was published in a rural PPS-WRN paper, condemning the German crime and calling for “all possible help to be given to those few individuals who have managed to escape from the hands of their torturers and who are looking for a hiding place and a way to preserve their lives.”⁹⁵ Considering the articles quoting above, it is impossible to agree with Agnieszka Michałowska that WRN did not mobilise its readers to take a clearly defined and decisive stance, although it did spread interest and sympathy towards the fate of the Jewish population among them.⁹⁶

⁹³ ‘Zbrodnia jakiej nie było dotąd’ [A crime that has never happened before], *WRN*, 28 September 1942. Similar positions were assumed by the other underground socialist groups (A. Friszke, ‘Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...’ in *Polska...*, p. 202).

⁹⁴ ‘Zbrodnia jakiej nie było dotąd’ [A Crime that has Never Happened Before], *WRN*, 28 September 1942.

⁹⁵ ‘Największa w dziejach zbrodnia’ [The Greatest Crime in History], *Wieś i Miasto*, September 1942.

⁹⁶ A. Michałowska, *Postawy wobec Holocaustu Żydów w polskiej prasie konspiracyjnej...*, p. 60; another statement of the PPS-WRN press on this subject (quoted extensively further) see ‘Bacność na usiłowania wroga!’ [Pay attention to the enemy’s attacks!], *WRN*, 4 June 1943. The author evaluated *Biuletyn Informacyjny* in the same way as *WRN* (see more: J.D. Zimmerman, *The Polish Underground Press and the Jews...*).

In the following months, articles were published, although less frequently, about the successive mass murders of the Jewish population committed by Germans in Cracow,⁹⁷ Majdanek,⁹⁸ Sosnowiec,⁹⁹ the camps in Trawniki and Poniatowa,¹⁰⁰ Lviv,¹⁰¹ and Auschwitz.¹⁰² They also reported the killing of French, Dutch,¹⁰³ Greek,¹⁰⁴ Hungarian,¹⁰⁵ and Czech¹⁰⁶ Jews on Polish soil. It was estimated in July 1943 that nearly 1,100,000 Jews had been sent to Treblinka and Bełżec, almost all of whom were murdered in one year (the period preceding April 1942).¹⁰⁷

The Concept of Retaliation

The concept of retaliation against the Germans as the only method of stopping them from committing mass crimes appeared for the first time in June 1942 in a letter from the national CKW PPS-WRN to the KZ PPS. The author of the letter, probably Zaremba, after presenting the scale of the crimes committed against the Jewish and Polish population to his party comrades, wrote that “without direct retaliation against the Germans [...] there is no hope of stopping the occupying thugs from simply physically murdering us.”¹⁰⁸ Two weeks later, Zaremba published his concept in the underground press; in a front-page article in *WRN*, he stated that no resolutions or declarations of future penalties for the guilty, although important, would stop the German

⁹⁷ ‘W ghetto krakowskim’ [In the Cracow ghetto], *WRN*, 16 April 1943

⁹⁸ The extermination of the last groups of Jews brought from Warsaw to the Majdanek camp was reported (see ‘Obóz na Majdanku’ [Camp in Majdanek], *WRN*, 18 June 1943).

⁹⁹ ‘W Sosnowcu’ [In Sosnowiec], *WRN*, 10 September 1943.

¹⁰⁰ ‘Masowe morderstwa Żydów’ [Mass murders of Jews], *WRN*, 26 November 1943; ‘Terror w kraju’ [Terror in the country], *Więś i Miasto*, November 1943.

¹⁰¹ ‘Mieszkańcy Lwowa’ [Citizens of Lviv], *WRN*, 30 December 1943.

¹⁰² ‘Z Oświęcimia’ [From Auschwitz], *WRN*, 13 August 1943; ‘W Oświęcimiu’ [In Auschwitz], *WRN*, 30 December 1943. The report about the Jewish population being transported from Wola Duchacka appeared in the PPS-WRN press during the Warsaw Rising (see ‘W Małopolsce zachodniej’ [In western Lesser Poland], *Wiadomości Radiowe*, 23 August 1944).

¹⁰³ ‘Obóz w Sobiborze’ [Camp in Sobibór], *WRN*, 16 April 1943.

¹⁰⁴ ‘Z Oświęcimia’ [From Auschwitz], *WRN*, 4 June 1943.

¹⁰⁵ ‘Do Oświęcimia’ [To Auschwitz], *Robotnik*, 18 June 1944; ‘Każń Żydów węgierskich’ [Torment of the Hungarian Jews], *Robotnik*, 25 June 1944.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Żydzi w Theresienstadt’ [Jews in Theresienstadt], *Robotnik w Walce*, 7 May 1944.

¹⁰⁷ ‘W Treblince i Bełżcu’ [In Treblinka and Bełżec], *WRN*, 30 July 1943.

¹⁰⁸ Centralne Kierownictwo WRN do Komitetu Zagranicznego PPS [WRN Central Leadership to the PPS Foreign Committee], 21 June 1942 in *My tu żyjemy...*, p. 161.

crimes. The only way to achieve that, cruel but justified by the actions of the occupier, is to retaliate:

“Only the awareness that every act of lawlessness, murder and rape will be punished immediately, if not personally then on their next of kin in Germany, can stop these sadistic criminals. Therefore, the response to the acts of German terror in the occupied countries should be raids, destroying cities and residential districts which are outside the direct war targets, with a clear emphasis on the fact that this is retaliation for tormenting the population of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Greece or Norway. Only in this way can we stop the crimes of the occupier.”¹⁰⁹

This concept reappeared in the underground press in late 1942.¹¹⁰ It was also raised in the ‘*Apel Centralnego Kierownictwa Ruchu Mas Pracujących w Polsce o zastosowanie wobec Niemców represji odwetowych*’ [Appeal of the Central Leadership of the Working Masses Movement in Poland to apply repressions of retribution against the Germans], addressed to the British Labour Party in early 1943.¹¹¹ As Andrzej Friszke noted, the PPS-WRN socialists were the first to propose the concept of such a counteraction to the German mass crimes.¹¹²

Facing Anti-Semitism

A consequence of the party’s pre-war stance towards anti-Semitism was the abovementioned text published in *Informator* on 8 March 1940. It warned directly against prejudice and hostility towards the Jewish people:

“Not only do many Poles look with indifference upon the animal anti-Semitism practiced by the occupiers against the Jewish citizens of Poland, but also at the attempts to revive the Polish anti-Semitic movement under the care and protection of the Hitlerites. There are professors already working on the ideology of Hitlerism

¹⁰⁹ ‘Odwet’ [Retribution], *WRN*, 6 July 1942.

¹¹⁰ ‘Oto jest wojna totalna’ [This is total war], *WRN*, 18 December 1942.

¹¹¹ ‘Apel Centralnego Kierownictwa Ruchu Mas Pracujących w Polsce o zastosowanie wobec Niemców represji odwetowych’ [Appeal of the Central Leadership of the Working Masses Movement in Poland to Apply Retribution Repressions against Germans], December 1942 in “*My tu żyjemy...*”, pp. 423–424. This appeal was sent to London on 4 January 1943, and received on 13 March 1943 (see SPP, Collection *Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych* [hereinafter MSW], 78, Dispatch from WRN to Jan Kwapiński, 4 January 1943, n.p.).

¹¹² A. Friszke, ‘Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...’ in *Polska...*, p. 212; *idem*, ‘Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...’, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego...*, p. 501.

for Polish use; there are already ‘activists’ dreaming about creating a radical-Hitlerite party. We may add that many similar pre-war anti-Semitic activists have directly registered with the Gestapo, working on its behalf and doing business from the plunder of Jewish property. These occurrences need to be fought ruthlessly. If the occupier manages to widen this gap of human malice, everything healthy in Poland may drown in this dirty wave.”¹¹³

At the very beginning of the occupation, the PPS-WRN socialists already equated all signs of anti-Semitism with cooperation with Germany. Over time, these assessments became even more deeply rooted.

A few months later, a short note was published in *WRN* about a typescript entitled ‘Materiał orientacyjny dla inteligencji’ (Orientation material for the intelligentsia); one of the tasks for the war period listed therein included developing and deepening anti-Semitic approaches. The author of the note assessed that the typescript was intended only to “further demotivate the public mentally towards the occupiers by directing the fight to tracks convenient for the Germans”;¹¹⁴ and the authors of the typescript may be either provocateurs, “or some Polish phantoms from the past prior to September 1939.”¹¹⁵

In November 1940, upon the closing of the Warsaw Ghetto, *WRN* published the following:

“One cannot keep silent about what are fortunately still just a few of the manifestations encountered of spiritual bestialisation and the stupidity and obscurantism of Polish people brought up on the propaganda of anti-Semitism. These manifestations resemble the stupid and vile joy of a slave who was allowed to watch another prisoner being murdered before his own turn comes.”¹¹⁶

Even sharper words were published in March 1941 in an article that could be described as a declaration of a manifesto. This developed the previously mentioned idea that anti-Semitism served the Germans. The text, entitled ‘Nowa Polska w nowej Europie’ (A new Poland in a new Europe) states that the promotion of anti-Semitism by the Germans, their creation of ghettos on occupied Polish soil

¹¹³ ‘Antysemityzm’ [Anti-Semitism], *Informator*, 8 March 1940. This extract has already been reprinted several times before (see A. Żbikowski, *Antysemityzm...*, p. 439).

¹¹⁴ ‘Zaczyna się’ [It is starting], *WRN*, 5–12 September 1940.

¹¹⁵ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁶ ‘Niszczenie Polski’ [The destruction of Poland], *WRN*, 10–20 September 1940.

and their favouring of Russians, Ukrainians and Belarussians to do their dirty work, serves to destroy the idea of tolerance and respect for the diversity of other communities among the Poles which form the basis of a democratic worldview. According to the author of the text, probably Zaremba once again, the Germans understood that if they succeeded, they would “destroy Poland more effectively than by murdering hundreds of thousands of Poles; they would detach Poland from the European community and make this country, if not today, then tomorrow, a convenient area to be completely absorbed.”¹¹⁷ A further part of the article criticised in very strong terms those Poles who were cooperating in destroying the democratic spirit of Poland. The text concludes that if the Germans succeeded in their task, then there could be no place in post-war democratic Europe for such a Poland, and the country would most probably be absorbed by the “eastern sea of Communist totalitarianism.”¹¹⁸

In the context of the abovementioned ideas, which are unambiguous in their assessments of all manifestations of anti-Semitism, it comes as no surprise that Zaremba took a radical stance towards the brochure published by one ‘L. Podolski’¹¹⁹ entitled *Przyszła Polska – państwem narodowym*¹²⁰ (The future Poland – a national state). He was no subtle, although suggestive:

“So that there is no doubt that the power of the ‘national camp’ is shaped according to Hitlerite models, Mr. Podolski has declared the fight against Polish citizens of other nationalities, and, especially in the Jewish case, upholding the ghettos and constant repressions: ‘The Jews will live in complete seclusion’ and will be forced to flee Poland when ‘sufficiently severe conditions will be created for the Jews in post-war Poland’.”¹²¹

Podolski’s brochure was mentioned again a few months later in *Wolność*, where it was subjected to a profound critical analysis and ridiculed, concluding with

¹¹⁷ ‘Nowa Polska w nowej Europie’ [A new Poland in a new Europe], *WRN*, 1–15 March 1941.

¹¹⁸ *Ibidem*.

¹¹⁹ The alias of Karol Stojanowski.

¹²⁰ In his memoirs, Zaremba considered the brochure to be “an expression of indirect solidarity with Hitlerism”. (Z. Zaremba, *Wojna i konspiracja*, Cracow 1991, p. 194; *conf.*: K.-P. Friedrich, *The Nazi Murder of the Jews in Polish Eyes...*, p. 396).

¹²¹ ‘Marzenia polskich faszystów’ [The dreams of Polish Fascists], *WRN*, 20 April – 3 May 1941.

sharp words: “Thought through. Decided. Sorted out. Hitler’s teachings did not go to waste.”¹²²

In the spring of 1941, *WRN* published a condemnation of the anti-Semitic content propagated by the UK-edited magazine *Jestem Polakiem* (I am a Pole): “what [...] was only political stupidity before the war, today becomes the destruction of a uniform anti-German front, and thus a criminal activity.”¹²³ A few months later, a polemic on the position of *Konfederacja Narodu* (the Confederation of the Nation) regarding the appointment of Herman Lieberman, one of the leading PPS activists of Jewish origin in exile, as Minister of Justice in the Polish government-in-exile, stated that the symptoms of German racist propaganda “must be burned out with a hot iron in order to prevent the miasmas of the disease from entering the Poland that needs to be restored.”¹²⁴

The question of anti-Semitism was not brought up in the *WRN* until nearly two years later. The article ‘Baczność na usiłowania wroga!’ (Pay attention to the enemy’s attacks!) stated that the increase in German anti-Semitic propaganda, combined with drawing Polish society’s attention to Soviet crimes, “was aimed at concealing the German crimes and paralysing the moral indignation and contempt for the criminals that has arisen among the Poles, [who have been] forced to watch a crime unprecedented in the history of humanity: the mass murder of Jews and the daily hunt for individuals in hiding and murdering them, regardless of age or gender, wherever they may discover these miserable individuals.”¹²⁵

However, these actions failed. Instead, the mass murders of the Jewish population triggered the provision of Polish aid for them, although as noted, it was very difficult because of the threat of death. The last part of the article once again opposed all expressions of anti-Semitism:

“Recently, it can be noticed that [the Germans] have sent out a larger number of agents, hanging around in different groups of people and making anti-Jewish propaganda speeches and selling anti-Semitic publications. Therefore, we recall

¹²² ‘Żydowski pępek świata’ [The Jewish navel of the world], *Wolność*, no. 15, October 1941.

¹²³ ‘Czy naprawdę “jestem Polakiem”’ [“Am I really a Pole?”], *WRN*, 20 April – 3 May 1941.

¹²⁴ ‘Pokrewieństwa ideowe’ [Ideological kinships], *WRN*, 21 September – 4 October 1941.

¹²⁵ ‘Baczność na usiłowania wroga!’ [Pay attention to the enemy’s attacks!], *WRN*, 4 April 1943.

the duty of all conscious working people to oppose, as strongly as possible, this action of poisoning the souls of the Poles and compromising our good name.”¹²⁶

Next, an extract – slightly distorted, yet preserving the main idea, probably to reinforce the effect – of Prime Minister Sikorski’s speech from the beginning of May 1943 was quoted:

“The greatest crime in human history is being committed. We know you are helping the tormented Jews as well as you can. Thank you, Compatriots, on behalf of myself and the Government. I ask you to give them all the help they need, and at the same time, to eradicate this terrible atrocity.”¹²⁷

The article concluded that the government statement was binding on every Pole:

“Whoever goes against these indications is thus cooperating with the invader. He will be punished, if not now, then inevitably in the near future. By order of the Government Plenipotentiary, those guilty of such actions will be listed and brought to special courts for punishment.”¹²⁸

Such an approach meant that it was no longer enough not to cooperate with Germans in their criminal activities; it was the duty of every Pole to oppose them and help the Jewish people.¹²⁹

The last statement in the PPS-WRN press concerning anti-Semitism was a broader reflection on both its history and the social consequences it brought. It was published in the summer of 1944, as a recollection of the Ghetto Uprising, and – according to the author of the text – of the 40th anniversary of the emergence of the phenomenon which: “was like a mare on the chest of the nation, and later of the Polish state.”¹³⁰ The origins of anti-Semitism were associated by the columnist in *Robotnik w Walce* with the activities of the Tsarist police during the Japanese war in 1904–1905; the Russian authorities initiated anti-Jewish

¹²⁶ *Ibidem*.

¹²⁷ *Ibidem*. Prime Minister Sikorski gave the speech on 4 May, not the 5th, as it was written. For the part of the speech referring to the Jewish question, see *Polacy – Żydzi 1939–1945: wybór źródeł*, ed. W. Bartoszewski, A.K. Kunert, Warsaw 2001, p. 128.

¹²⁸ ‘Baczność na usiłowania wroga!’ [Pay attention to the enemy’s attacks!], *WRN*, 4 April 1943.

¹²⁹ *Conf.*: A. Friszke, ‘Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...’, *Biuletyn Żydowskiego Instytutu Historycznego...*, p. 502.

¹³⁰ ‘Rok po rzezi ghetta’ [A year after the ghetto massacre], *Robotnik w Walce*, 4 June 1944. This article was reprinted in: *Polacy – Żydzi...*, p. 318.

pogroms to channel the growing dissatisfaction of the population in a convenient direction. This, as it was called, the oldest barbaric pseudo-ideology in Europe, was consciously used against everything related to progress and freedom.¹³¹ Unfortunately, as the author of the article stated:¹³²

“a large part of the Polish bourgeoisie and intelligentsia has learnt this strange political *grazhdanka*, in which all letters had the same shape. The anti-Semitic vulture has eaten ‘not hearts, but brains’. The fight against the Jews was used to deny the fight for Polish independence, and the Polish revolution of 1905 and 1906 was poisoned with fratricidal bloodshed. In independent Poland, in the name of the fight against the Jews, agricultural reform was lost and social progress was suppressed. Narutowicz was the victim of anti-Semitic mental poisoning. In the last years before the war, a certain part of the population stared at the Jew in such a way that they did not notice Hitler. History will show to the full extent the terrible harm done to Poland by the poison of anti-Semitism.”

The sad conclusion of the article was that the Jewish question in Poland was no longer a political issue, but a moral one. Had anti-Semitism managed to undermine the “moral sense of the Polish nation”, that would probably be the greatest of the wrongs it caused. Because of that, even traces of this ideology should be fought despite the terror of the German occupier.¹³³

This article, the last in a series concerning anti-Semitism, closed and completed the reflections of the PPS-WRN press on this matter. It left no doubt or ambiguity as to how the socialists evaluated this ‘poison’ and who benefited from it.

The PPS-WRN on the Issue of Blackmailers

The question of *szmalcownicy* (blackmailers) was first addressed by the PPS-WRN press in November 1942. Since the text in *WRN* is not long, it is worth quoting *in extenso*, as it shows the problem itself, assesses it, and indicates the way in which it should have been fought:

“In Poland there are a number of Polish Jews who have managed to escape the claws of the Nazi executioners. They often stray in the most terrible conditions.

¹³¹ ‘Rok po rzezi ghetta’ [A year after the ghetto massacre], *Robotnik w Walce*, 4 June 1944.

¹³² *Ibidem*.

¹³³ *Ibidem*; compare: P.-K. Friedrich, *The Nazi Murder of the Jews in Polish Eyes...*, p. 396.

Polish society surrounds these unhappy people with sincere kindness, giving all possible help. However, there are human scoundrels who, like the Germans, take advantage of these people's misery and often rob them of their last possessions and clothes. Not only does every peasant and worker turn away from these hyenas with disgust, but they must be reminded at every opportunity that they are committing a crime that will not escape punishment. The names of such scoundrels must be recorded.”¹³⁴

It is noteworthy that, at this stage, the author of the article has not yet called for the death penalty for this absolutely condemned activity. The language of the article is also worthy of attention, as it significantly simplified reality and was designed to exert pressure and mobilise the reader to take the attitude desired by the columnist.

In March 1943, *WRN* published a further warning against blackmailers from the Directorate of the Civilian Resistance, stating that incidents of blackmail were being recorded and would be punished with all the strictness of the law as soon as possible during the war, and certainly after it is over.¹³⁵ In June 1943, an article was published in *Więś i Miasto* about a group that was involved in this activity:

“And next to the snitches, another related group of scoundrels has emerged, feeding on the misfortune of people persecuted by the Germans. [...] Especially often, this villainous activity is practiced against Polish citizens of Jewish origin hiding in villages and towns. There some blackguard appears, making this blackmail into a disgraceful business, thus helping in the criminal action of the murder of Jews. And this crime is on a par with denunciation. The Government Delegate for Poland has clearly stated that those guilty of such blackmail will also be punished by death. [...] Just as in the city, conscious peasants have to fight these filthy individuals. Their criminal activities and the evidence [of their

¹³⁴ ‘Ludzkie hieny’ [Human hyenas], *Więś i Miasto*, November 1942.

¹³⁵ ‘Kierownictwo Walki Cywilnej’ [Directorate of the Civilian Resistance], *WRN*, 19 March 1943. For the first time, this warning was first published in the press of the Government Delegation for Poland (see ‘Ostrzeżenie Kierownictwa Walki Cywilnej’ [Warning from the Directorate of the Civilian Resistance], *Rzeczpospolita Polska*, 11 March 1943). The same issue reported on the execution in the USSR of the Bund leaders Henryk Ehrlich and Wiktor Alter (see ‘Rozstrzelanie przywódców Bundu’ [Execution of the Bund’s leaders], *WRN*, 19 March 1943). At the end of May, *WRN* reprinted an article from *Rzeczpospolita Polska* about fighting the blackmailers (see ‘Walki z hienami i szantażystami’ [Fighting the hyenas and blackmailers], *WRN*, 21 May 1943), and reported the death of Szmul Zygielbojm, but it was not stated that his death was suicide (see ‘Szmul Zygielbojm’, *WRN*, 21 May 1943).

deeds] should be identified by organisational means and forwarded to the judicial authorities, which will form an appropriate judgement. Besides, this evidence should be collected and well preserved, so that it can later be handed over to the Polish Government, which will punish the guilty if they are not reached by the hand of justice now.”¹³⁶

At the end of September 1943, *WRN* published the first reports about the implementation of the death sentence “for cooperation with the German occupation authorities, which consisted in handing over Polish citizens of Jewish nationality to these authorities, and for extorting large sums of money from their victims.”¹³⁷ Borys, *vel* Bogusław Jan Pilnik, was shot dead.

When writing about the PPS-*WRN*’s attitude towards the blackmailers, the letter of 5 January 1943 addressed to the Polish Council to Aid Jews (codename *Żegota*), should be mentioned; it states that the rise in cases of exploitation by dishonest Poles of the tragic situation in which the Jews found themselves had made it necessary for the Delegate of the Government of the Republic of Poland to make a public statement to the underground press that “those guilty of the aforementioned acts will be held responsible.”¹³⁸ This letter was used by *Żegota* to support its request to the Government Delegate for Poland to fight blackmailers.¹³⁹

On the Jewish Underground and Armed Resistance

The magazine *WRN* first reported the existence of the Underground of Jewish workers in November 1940. Prior to this publication, many conferences and consultations had been held testifying to the vitality of the movement. Its ideological face was expressed by slogans of fidelity to Poland’s independence, hostility towards both occupiers and the belief that the rebirth of the Republic of Poland would bring social justice and equal rights to the nationalities that were

¹³⁶ ‘Śmierć szpiegom i szubrawcom’ [Death to spies and scoundrels], *Wieś i Miasto*, June 1943.

¹³⁷ ‘Za współpracę z niemieckimi władzami okupacyjnymi’ [For cooperating with the German occupation authorities], *WRN*, 24 September 1943.

¹³⁸ Quote from K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, ‘Socjaliści Polscy wobec walki i zagłady Żydów’, *Dzieje Najnowsze...*, p. 55.

¹³⁹ For more see T. Prekerowa, *Konspiracyjna Rada Pomocy Żydom w Warszawie...*, pp. 277–278.

a part of it.¹⁴⁰ However, this relatively enigmatic report about the existence of an underground organisation of Jewish workers should be regarded as confirmation of existing contacts between the WRN and the Bund.¹⁴¹

The WRN issue of the beginning of February 1943 published a report that the Jewish population remaining in the Warsaw Ghetto were resisting the Germans. The article's author described the change in their attitude with great appreciation, but also evoked the tragedy of the situation:

“A common phenomenon was passive resistance: most of the inhabitants of the blocked-off houses did not leave their flats despite the orders, and the fact that the gendarmes were searching the flats and killed everyone they met; moreover, many among those who had been caught and were being led to the railway station tried to escape, sometimes successfully, most often with fatal results, being killed as they tried to escape. In some cases, the attitude of the Jewish population was even more determined, because the resistance to the German orders manifested itself in the form of armed actions. In numerous houses on Miła, Niska, Muranowska and Zamenhofa streets, people barricaded the gates and flats, and the gendarmes who came were welcomed with grenades and revolver shots. The area of the biggest

¹⁴⁰ ‘Stanowisko robotników żydowskich’ [The attitude of Jewish workers], *WRN*, 1–10 November 1940.

¹⁴¹ It seems that the underground Bund initially had better contacts with the PPS-WRN (Antoni Zdanowski was the intermediary in the first period of contacts between the PPS-WRN and the Bund; see J. Mulak, *Polska lewica socjalistyczna...*, pp. 293, 296), and then with the Organisation of Polish Socialists (K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, ‘Socjaliści polscy wobec walki i zagłady Żydów’ in *Spoleczeństwo...*, p. 78; A. Grabski, P. Grudka, ‘Polscy Socjaliści w Getcie Warszawskim’, *Kwartalnik Historii Żydów* 2013, no. 1, p. 11). Later, it seems, contacts between the PPS-WRN and Bund were quite loose, and some rapprochement between the two organisations took place again in 1943, perhaps as a result of the subordination of the *Socjalistyczna Organizacja Bojowa* (Socialist Combat Organisation, hereinafter SOB), which had many Jewish members in its ranks, to the PPS-WRN. By the end of 1943, these contacts were described as ‘cordial’ in the Bund report sent to London (see SPP, Col. 133, Adam Ciołkosz’s ‘B’ report of the Central Committee of the Bund, sent to the Representative of the Bund in London (for Dr. Emanuel Scherer, a member of the National Council, 15 September 1943, Col. 40); and they remained unchanged, as evidenced by the Bund’s appeal to workers and the Jewish intelligentsia in two different titles printed by the PPS-WRN press during the Warsaw Rising (‘Wezwanie Bundu’ [Call of the Bund], *Wiadomości Radiowe*, 21 August 1944; ‘Wezwanie Bundu’ [Call of the Bund], *Robotnik*, 22 August 1944). These two texts were the only ones (apart from the abovementioned report about the further murders of Jews in Auschwitz) recalling the Jewish population published by the PPS-WRN press during the Warsaw Rising; for more information about the PPS-WRN press during the Rising, see M. Żuczowski, ‘“Znów sztandar Polski powiewa nad Warszawą” – prasa PPS-WRN w czasie Powstania Warszawskiego’ in *Prasa Powstania Warszawskiego*, ed. T. Skoczek, Warsaw 2014, pp. 83–102; H. Murawska, ‘“Warszawianka” powstańcze pismo PPS-WRN’ in *Prasa...*, pp. 103–112.

armed confrontation was on one part of Dzika Street [...]. Here, a group of fighters who had joined the column of the resettled people being led by the gendarmes, attacked at a given signal, opening fire and throwing grenades. A short fight ended with the escape of the gendarmes and the dispersal of those being resettled.”¹⁴²

The author of the article added that, although well-equipped German troops had broken the resistance of a few Jews, the repeated cases of armed resistance in the following days forced the Germans to stop the deportations. According to the author, 20–25 German soldiers of various formations were killed as the result of the fighting, which lasted several days.

At the beginning of March 1943, *WRN* informed its readers that the German crimes against the Jewish population in Lviv had also met with organised resistance.¹⁴³

At the beginning of May, *WRN* published an article about the outbreak of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising:

“The fight begun with the German attempt to apply repression in response to the noncompliance by the employees of some workshops in the ghetto to the order to cease working and to go to the departure point [*Umschlagplatz*]. The Germans tried to break the stubborn attitude of the Jews by sending a squad of SS men on motorcycles to the streets of the Jewish quarter, which started to patrol the area, murdering everyone they met. Soon, however, the SS men were welcomed with hails of bullets and grenades thrown by Jewish combat units entering the action. The German unit suffered losses – dead and wounded – and had to withdraw from the Jewish quarter. After a short time, strong and well-equipped police units entered the Jewish district, several tanks preceding them. However, the fight, several hours long, ended in total defeat for the Germans, and the German troops retreated from the battlefield carrying serious numbers of dead and wounded. Since then until the day we are writing this report, there has been constant fighting in the ghetto.”¹⁴⁴

¹⁴² ‘W ghetto warszawskim stawiono opór zbrojny’ [Armed resistance in the Warsaw ghetto], *WRN*, 5 February 1943.

¹⁴³ ‘We Lwowie’ [In Lviv], *WRN*, 5 March 1943.

¹⁴⁴ ‘Walki w warszawskim ghettu’ [Fights in the Warsaw ghetto], *WRN*, 7 May 1943. The same issue also reported the speech of the Prime Minister Władysław Sikorski, in which he spoke about the struggle of the Warsaw ghetto (W ghettcie warszawskim [In the Warsaw ghetto], *WRN*, 7 May 1943). The attitude of the PPS-*WRN* press towards the ghetto uprising was well appraised by Andrzej Friszke (see *idem*, *Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...* in *Polska...*, p. 205).

Further on, the article describes the German tactics used in fighting the insurgents and the ruthless use of their technological superiority. There were also untrue reports (probably to raise the morale of the readers or for the abovementioned reasons of secrecy) that the Jewish forces possessed a considerable amount of weapons (including machine guns) and ammunition, and also that the command of the fighting was in the hands of a Polish officer.¹⁴⁵

The same issue of *WRN* included an appeal from the Central Leadership of the Working Masses Movement in Poland assessing the sense of the Ghetto Uprising:

“Sentenced to death by Hitler, they decided not to surrender passively to the executioners and the torture and, defending the honour of men and citizens, they started armed resistance against the bloody henchmen. [...] Laborers and employees – Polish citizens of Jewish nationality are the core and soul of the Jewish combat units that raised the protest against the Hitlerite violence. The national flag of Poland flies over their heads during the fights, their deed is one of the links of the uninterrupted chain of resistance acts and battles of the whole of Poland, now in its fourth year. [...] Every victim must become the cement of freedom and social justice binding all citizens of the reborn Republic. We send fraternal greetings and assurance to those laborers and employees of Jewish nationality who, in the face of inevitable death, have decided to die with a weapon in their hands rather than to submit passively to the violence. It will be a part of the legend of fighting Poland, it will become the common heritage of the Polish people, the heritage on which the house of the reborn Republic will be erected.”¹⁴⁶

The analysis of the Ghetto Uprising, unusual for being written from a military point of view, was published in the May issue of *Gwardia Ludowa*. In the article ‘Walka getta warszawskiego’ (The fight of the Warsaw ghetto), the author, using the desperate struggle of the Jewish fighters as a pretext, described the difficulties

¹⁴⁵ P. Szapiro, *Problem...*, p. 304.

¹⁴⁶ ‘Towarzysze i obywatele’ [Comrades and Citizens], *WRN*, 7 May 1943. This appeal has been reprinted many times, *inter alia* in W. Bartoszewski, *Z. Lewinówna, Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej...*, pp. 699–700; *“My tu żyjemy...”*, pp. 430–431; *Polacy – Żydzi...*, p. 225. A shorter but equally solemn epitaph for the insurgents was published a month later. The Jewish victims of the battles were described as follows: “They died choosing a fate more beautiful than that of their brothers who were taken to the Treblinka or Bełżec death factories. They died as people of battle, like people inspired by the spirit of Warsaw, which always has called on the citizens of the capital onto the path of honour and combat” (‘Koniec warszawskiego getta’ [End of the Warsaw ghetto], *WRN*, 4 June 1943).

that a German army, well-equipped but unprepared, and additionally surprised by the outbreak of the Uprising itself, faced during the street fights. Additionally, he depreciated the German victory, stating that the suppression of the Uprising was not a victory for German arms, but for the elements of fire and dynamite; and that beyond the veil of fire and smoke, one can see the nothingness of the legend of the extraordinary combat value of the German army:

“As they fought, the Jews exposed perhaps the most important truth for us about the weakness of the Germans. Therefore, in our future military action across Poland, we will draw experience from the fight of the Warsaw Jews.”¹⁴⁷

There were also some memorial articles dedicated to the Ghetto Uprising on the first anniversary of its outbreak.¹⁴⁸ Writing about the attitude of the PPS-WRN to the fighting in the Warsaw Ghetto, mention must, at least briefly, be made of the help given to the Jewish fighters. The first manifestation of this was the military training for future insurgents which the Socialists conducted in the Ghetto,¹⁴⁹ as well as providing them with a small number of weapons.¹⁵⁰ Later, during the Uprising, the SOB, subordinate to the PPS-WRN, carried out two combat actions at the Ghetto walls, which are referred to in the literature as “solidarity actions”¹⁵¹ – because they could not have changed the situation of the fighting in the ghetto in any way.¹⁵² Finally, the last manifestation of help was the direction

¹⁴⁷ ‘Walka ghetta warszawskiego’ [Fight of the Warsaw ghetto], *Gwardia Ludowa* May 1943.

¹⁴⁸ ‘W rocznicę bitwy o ghetto’ [On the anniversary of the battle for the ghetto], *Robotnik w Walce*, 7 May 1944; ‘Rok po rzezi ghetta’ [A year after the ghetto massacre], *Robotnik w Walce*, 4 June 1944. In the latter article, the anniversary of the Ghetto Uprising was rather a pretext for the broader reflection on anti-Semitism discussed above.

¹⁴⁹ This training on behalf of the PPS-WRN was conducted by Antoni Purlal and Julian Grobelny (K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, ‘Sojaliści polscy wobec walki i zagłady Żydów’ in *Spoleczeństwo...*, p. 82; *idem*, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec walki i zagłady Żydów...*, p. 13; Archives of Jewish Historical Institute [hereinafter JHI Archives], 301/6755, A Survey of the Jewish Historical Institute for Stefan Sendlak, 5 August 1956, p. 4).

¹⁵⁰ K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec walki i zagłady Żydów...*, p. 13–14; D. Libionka, *ZWZ-AK...*, p. 69; A. Namysło, *Postawy mieszkańców reencji katowickiej...*, p. 788 (contains information about the transfer of a small number of weapons by GL WRN soldiers to the ghetto in Będzin); J. Rocki, *Dziewiąta dywersyjna*, Warsaw 1973, p. 41.

¹⁵¹ See K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec walki i zagłady Żydów...*, p. 16; D. Libionka, *ZWZ-AK...*, p. 81; T. Strzembosz, *Akcje zbrojne podziemnej Warszawy 1939–1944*, Warsaw 1983, pp. 289–290. Maciej Weber wrote an account of his participation in one such action (see *idem*, ‘Od “Płomieni” do Socjalistycznej Organizacji Bojowej’ in *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna w latach wojny i okupacji 1939–1945. Księga wspomnień*, vol. 2, ed. W. Czarnecki et al., Warsaw 1995, p. 444).

¹⁵² *Conf.*: The speech by Józef Rybicki, former commander of the Kedyw’s [Kierownictwo Dywersji, Directorate of Diversion] special unit, quoted in D. Libionka, *ZWZ-AK...*, pp. 81–82.

of the Uprising survivors – fighters as well as a few other Jews¹⁵³ – to the SOB and GL WRN partisan units.¹⁵⁴

The letter from the CKW PPS-WRN sent in mid-June to the KZ PPS contains a paragraph with a cool assessment of the situation of the Jewish population, probably as a result of the end of the fighting in the Warsaw Ghetto. The author of the letter, perhaps Zaremba again, estimated that no more than a few hundred thousand Jews remained alive on Polish soil, detained in ghettos and used by Germans for various kinds of physical labour. According to the letter, around 10,000 completely assimilated Poles of Jewish origin were still hiding outside the Ghetto, and, because of the heroic fight inside the Ghetto, respect for the Jewish population within Polish society increased. The author also stressed that neither they nor the Jews understood the indifference that had accompanied the murder of 3 million people “before the eyes of the world.” The conclusion of the letter pointed out that Germans were trying by all means to involve at least a part of the Polish population in the anti-Jewish action – and it was still necessary for the Polish government-in-exile to further emphasise the obligation to help the Jews.¹⁵⁵

At the end of September 1943, WRN informed its readers about the revolt that had broken out on 2 August in Treblinka among the Jewish *Sonderkommando* who burned the bodies of the murdered, and the escape of several hundred people.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ K. Dunin-Wąsowicz, *Polski ruch socjalistyczny wobec walki i zagłady Żydów...*, p. 17; D. Libionka, *ZWZ-AK...*, p. 110; JHI Archives, Accounts, 301/7213, Account of Zygmunt Rytel, 21 February 1967, p. 5–10 (the author of the account was a SOB soldier and supplied the Jews in hiding with money on behalf of the SOB; he also forged false documents for them); JHI Archives, Accounts, 301/6755, A Survey of the Jewish Historical Institute for Stefan Sendlak, 5 August 1956, p. 3; *Archiwum Akt Nowych* (Central Archives of Modern Records, hereinafter AAN), Collection *Relacje dotyczące ruchu robotniczego* (Accounts concerning the workers' movement), R 98, Account of Zygmunt Rytel, 12 December 1966 and 12 January 1967, p. 14.

¹⁵⁴ There are many testimonies confirming the service of people of Jewish origin in partisan units of the socialist Underground (see J. Aleksandrowicz, *Kartki z dziennika doktora Twardego*, Cracow 2017; M. Borwicz, *Spod szubienicy w teren*, Paris 1980; JHI Archives, Accounts, 301/1539, Account of Afreim Krasucki, 18 July 1946, p. 5: the author of this account fought during the Warsaw Rising in the Old Town; JHI Archives, Accounts, 301/1189, Account of Jakub Neiger, 12 November 1945: in 1944, he served for several months as a Pole in the PPS-WRN partisan unit).

¹⁵⁵ ‘CKR WRN do Komitetu Zagranicznego PPS’ [CKR WRN to PPS Foreign Committee], 20 June 1943 in “*My tu żyjemy...*”, pp. 224–225. This fragment was also reprinted in W. Bartoszewski, Z. Lewinówna, *Ten jest z ojczyzny mojej...*, p. 744.

¹⁵⁶ ‘W Treblince’ [In Treblinka], WRN, 24 September 1943.

The 'Programme of People's Poland'

A significant part of the concepts of the CKW PPS-WRN regarding the Jewish population has been described in the previous sections of this text. However, the most important PPS-WRN political document should be treated separately, as it states in its introduction that "its task is to pave the way which will be followed by subsequent special studies, preparing the details of the political and economic structure of future Poland."¹⁵⁷ Published in the summer of 1941, the 'Programme of People's Poland' stressed that all loyal citizens, regardless of religion and nationality, would have equal rights in the reborn Poland, although:

"the reconstruction of the social system will remove the economic foundations of national antagonisms and, particularly in the Jewish cause, will abolish the [un]natural and one-sided concentration of Jews in trade and some liberated professions, and also completely remove parasitic groups of bankers, usurers, etc., recruited mostly from the Jewish population."¹⁵⁸

This sentence with its unequivocally anti-Semitic tones invoked criticism of this programme during the war. This fragment caused the *Organizacja Polskich Socjalistów* (Organisation of Polish Socialists) to describe the entire *Programme of People's Poland* as anti-Semitic.¹⁵⁹ The statement is evaluated identically in contemporary historiography.¹⁶⁰ It is difficult to answer the question of why such a phrase was

¹⁵⁷ 'Program Polski Ludowej' [Programme of People's Poland], Warsaw 1941, p. 2. This document was written by Zygmunt Zaremba together with Stanisław Miłkowski from *Stronnictwo Ludowe* (the People's Party, hereinafter SL) and Teofil Wojeński from *Stronnictwo Demokratyczne* (the Alliance of Democrats, hereinafter SD) (Z. Zaremba, *Wojna i konspiracja...*, p. 232).

¹⁵⁸ 'Program Polski Ludowej...', p. 6. As Andrzej Friszke rightly pointed out: "These phrases sounded odd and strange in the programme of a socialist party and contrasted with other statements by the pre-war PPS and the PPS-WRN during the occupation" (A. Friszke, 'Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...' in *Polska...*, p. 198). This is how the abovementioned phrases must have been received by the members of the KZ PPS, because in the 'Programme of People's Poland' as published there, the extract quoted above was significantly altered: "The reconstruction of the social system will remove the economic foundations of national antagonisms and, particularly in the Jewish cause, will abolish the unnatural and one-sided concentration of Jews in trade, and also completely remove some economic overgrowths" ('Program Polski Ludowej', London 1945, p. 8). This document has been reprinted many times, for example in *My tu żyjemy...*, pp. 407–413 (the quote comes from the document as published in London).

¹⁵⁹ IPMS, Collection *Ministerstwo Spraw Wewnętrznych* (Ministry of Internal Affairs), A. 9 III 2a/5, 'Postawa polityczna społeczeństwa polskiego' (Political attitudes of Polish society), n.d. [1941], p. 26. It should be noted, however, that this document was an element of the then ongoing strife between the PPS-WRN and the *Organizacja Polskich Socjalistów* (Organisation of Polish Socialists).

¹⁶⁰ *Conf.*: D. Libionka, "Kwestia żydowska"..., p. 204; A. Friszke, 'Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...' in *Polska...*, p. 198.

included in the PPS-WRN's most important political document. Perhaps it was a distant and unfortunate echo of the socialists' pre-war reservations concerning the socio-professional structure of the Polish Jews,¹⁶¹ or perhaps it was a result of a compromise between the three authors of the 'Programme of People's Poland'.¹⁶²

Summary

When assessing the attitude of the PPS-WRN press towards the Jewish population during World War II, it should first be noted that it was an important issue for the RMPP, but not the most important.¹⁶³ The relatively small number of articles relating to this issue,¹⁶⁴ and the tone of the texts published in the PPS-WRN press, support this observation. In trying to answer the question about this state of affairs, we should refer to the subsection of this text concerning the PPS's attitude towards the Jewish population in the pre-war period. For the PPS-WRN, just like for the pre-war socialist party, the Jewish problem simply did not exist in itself, as nationality was not the criterion by which they perceived people.¹⁶⁵ For the CKW PPS-WRN, the following matters were of importance: German crimes and retaliation for them, anti-Semitism, blackmail, the Ghetto Uprising, but not the Jewish question as such. This explains why the

¹⁶¹ A. Friszke, 'Publicystyka Polski wobec zagłady Żydów...' in *Polska...*, p. 198.

¹⁶² However, we are not able to verify this hypothesis at this stage of research, although it is supported by other statements made by Zaremba in the underground press on the Jewish question. Unfortunately, he left no clue in his wartime memoirs on this matter, nor did the other two co-authors of the programme. Miłkowski was murdered during the war, and there is no information in Wojeński's literary legacy that would allow for this assumption to be verified in any way.

¹⁶³ These were primarily political issues (the situation both on the underground political scene and the controversies within the Polish government-in-exile), the shape of the future Republic (both political, economic and social), the situation of Polish society and the course of the war itself.

¹⁶⁴ It is particularly striking that this matter is absent from the letters exchanged between the CKW PPS-WRN and the KZ PPS. Of 135 letters published in the volume "*My tu żyjemy...*", only 2 (!) of them mention matters related to the Jewish population.

¹⁶⁵ This seems logical considering that the top leadership of the PPS-WRN was formed by the key activists of the pre-war PPS, with its Secretary General, Kazimierz Pużak, the President of the CKW PPS, Tomasz Arciszewski, and the already mentioned Zaremba at the helm (see M. Żuczkowski, *Pierwsze miesiące konspiracyjnej działalności...*). Nevertheless, as Agnieszka Michałowska has noted, from the beginning of the occupation the underground press (also the PPS-WRN) showed a clear distinctiveness in treating the fate of the Jewish population (A. Michałowska, *Postawy wobec Holocaustu Żydów w polskiej prasie konspiracyjnej...*, p. 54). In the case of the PPS-WRN, however, at this stage of research it is impossible to say whether it was determined by anything else, or only by the fact that the Germans had treated the Jewish population in such an extraordinary manner.

leadership of the RMPP, apart from the above-mentioned anti-Semitic passage contained in the 'Programme of People's Poland', paid so little attention to the Jewish question,¹⁶⁶ even though the organisation and shape of the future Poland was extremely important to them.

I would like to conclude this text with an assessment of what the PPS-WRN press wrote about the particular 'questions' mentioned above. It seems that, as far as the German crimes against the Jewish population are concerned, the socialists' priority was to inform Polish society about the German legislation against the Jewish population, and then to create a chronicle of the Holocaust in the PPS-WRN press.¹⁶⁷ Assuming that the events described were sufficiently drastic in and of themselves, the texts, in the vast majority of cases, were written as emotionless reportage.¹⁶⁸ It is only when assessing the scale of the German crimes that the emotional commitment of the author is visible.¹⁶⁹ The idea of the retaliatory bombing of German cities and civilian sites was a direct consequence of the German crimes.

The inevitable impression is that Zaremba himself had doubts of a moral nature about such a course of action, but he apparently saw no other solution. The attitude of the PPS-WRN press towards the problem of anti-Semitism was a continuation and further development of the party's position from the interwar period. The new element was the actual treatment of anti-Semitism and the cooperation with the Germans, and the attention paid to the moral consequences for the entire nation that anti-Semitism might bring in the future. The assumption formed the basis of the party publicists' attitude

¹⁶⁶ In the periodical *Materiały i Dokumenty do Programu Polski Ludowej* (Materials and Documents Concerning the Programme of People's Poland), which as the name suggests contained studies which were to some degree an extension of the theses of the the PPS-WRN's most important political document (its three published issues discussed the economy, foreign policy and culture respectively), this matter was not addressed at all.

¹⁶⁷ *Conf.*: A. Michałowska, 'Postawy wobec Holocaustu Żydów w polskiej prasie konspiracyjnej...', p. 59; K.-P. Friedrich, *The Nazi Murder of the Jews in Polish Eyes...*, p. 397.

¹⁶⁸ The sympathy of the PPS-WRN towards the Jews was noticed by *Podreferat Spraw Żydowskich w Referacie Spraw Narodowościowych Wydziału Informacji Biura Informacji i Propagandy Komendy Głównej AK* (the Department for Jewish Affairs in the National Issues Sub-Department at the Department of Information of the Bureau of Information and Propaganda of the Home Army Headquarters) (J.D. Zimmerman, *The Polish Underground and the Jews...*, p. 135).

¹⁶⁹ See the extract from the article quoted above: 'Zbrodnia jakiej nie było dotąd' [A crime that has never happened before], *WRN*, 28 September 1942.

towards blackmailers, who were seen as being on a par with the traitors to the national cause, and for whom the same punishment was demanded. The existence of the Jewish Underground, and especially, the outbreak of fighting in the Warsaw Ghetto, was welcomed enthusiastically. However, it should be noted that they were trying to draw conclusions regarding a future Polish nationwide uprising.

In this context, Emanuel Ringelblum's assessment of Polish-Jewish relations during World War II seems to be fair: "The workers' press (*WRN*, *Gwardia Ludowa* and others) is fulfilling its duty as it did before the war. It constantly reports about the persecution of Jews in various cities, discusses the danger of anti-Semitism in special articles, describes in detail the heroic struggle of the Warsaw Ghetto, etc."¹⁷⁰

¹⁷⁰ E. Ringelblum, *Stosunki polsko-żydowskie w czasie II wojny światowej*, Warsaw 1988, p. 140.

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Underground Press

Gwardia Ludowa

Informator

Robotnik

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SUMMARY

The text discusses the attitude of the PPS-WRN underground press (the most important Polish Underground party, whose origins lay in the pre-war Polish Socialist Party) towards the Jewish population during World War II. Several subsections present how the PPS-WRN press reported on the Jewish population's worsening situation, and then about the Holocaust. It also describes Zygmunt Zaremba's concept of retaliation against Germans for their crimes, as well as the attitude of the PPS-WRN underground press towards the issues of anti-Semitism and blackmail, which socialist journalists equated with collaboration with the occupier, and for which they demanded equal punishment. The attitude of the PPS-WRN to the issue of the Jewish Underground and combat was also briefly described, as well as a surprising anti-Semitic passage included in the party's most important political document.

KEYWORDS

Freedom-Equality-Independence (WRN)•Polish Underground State
Jews•underground press•Polish Socialist Party•Holocaust