Register of the Poland Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa Departament III collection

Finding aid prepared by Zbigniew L. Stanczyk
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URL: http://www.hoover.org/library-and-archives
Title: Poland Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa Departament III collection
Date (inclusive): 1925-1989
Collection Number: 92053
Contributing Institution: Hoover Institution Library and Archives
Language of Material: Polish
Physical Description: 33 manuscript boxes (13.2 Linear Feet)
Abstract: Underground pamphlets, leaflets, flyers, bulletins, photographs, video tapes, and miscellany, collected by Polish internal security police. Includes some reports and bulletins issued by Polish security police.
Creator: Poland. Szuzba Bezpieczenstwa. Departament III.

Access
The collection is open for research; materials must be requested at least two business days in advance of intended use.

Publication Rights
For copyright status, please contact the Hoover Institution Library & Archives.

Acquisition Information
Materials were acquired by the Hoover Institution Library & Archives in 1992.

Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Poland Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa Departament III collection, [Box no., Folder no. or title], Hoover Institution Library & Archives.

Alternative Form Available
Also available on microfilm (36 reels).

Scope and Content Note
The Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa, Poland's security police, was created by the communist authorities in 1944 to deal with the anti-German and later also anti-Soviet underground operating in those parts of the country that had been "liberated" by the Red Army. It was known under different names but between the years 1956-1990, it operated under the name of Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa (better known as SB). It was established in the Ministry of the Interior (Ministerstwo Spraw Wewntrznych) and remained the most loyal supporter of the Polish United Workers Party. For decades, besides strengthening the position of the communist authorities, it directed its efforts against any signs of social opposition, relying on a network of secret agents and collaborators who were responsible for numerous provocations.

The events of March 1968 (reflected in this collection) led the SB to operate on a larger scale than before, as the communists cleaned the party ranks of internal opponents. It also took more and more repressive measures against workers' revolts in 1970, 1976, and 1980-1981, when it radicalized its attitude toward the church and free labor unions. The SB fought against them unscrupulously, but unlike what happened in other East European communist countries, it accomplished less, as the magnitude of those movements made control impossible. In fact, it became more desperate, as exemplified by the murder of the priest Jerzy Popieluszko.

Most of this collection consists of the publications issued by the underground and political opposition of the late 1970s and 1980s, which, not surprisingly, the SB monitored with particular interest. There are also materials analyzing opposition views on such issues as the economy, the attitude toward communist initiatives, as well as domestic and foreign politics. Additionally, there are documents that shed light on the circumstances that led to the Round Table Talks between the communists and the opposition, initiated as they were by the head of the secret services, General Kiszczak.

The history of the SB in its formative years is described in the bulletins and monographs issued by the Ministry of the Interior, albeit in a distorted fashion - a perfect example of manipulation of the facts relating to the origins of communist control in Eastern Europe. The extreme brutality, for example, with which the population was treated in the 1940s and early 1950s, especially because of the involvement of the NKVD, had to be justified.

The records of the Sluzba Bezpieczenstwa do not contain personal files or correspondence. They consist of either duplicate copies of typescripts or mimeographs intended for internal distribution to various SB departments and local branches, or opposition underground publications that have since been in public circulation.

The collection was acquired by the Hoover Institution in the early 1990s, and supplements other collections in the Archives, particularly those of Solidarity activists and the collection entitled "Polish Independent Publications, 1976-1990."

Subjects and Indexing Terms
Labor movement -- Poland
Video tapes
Internal security -- Poland
Labor unions -- Poland
Subversive activities -- Poland
Anti-communist movements -- Poland
NSZZ "Solidarność" (Labor organization)

SUBJECT FILE 1939-1989

Scope and Contents note
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mimeographed materials, pamphlets, typescripts, arranged alphabetically by subject

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