

Organization of education in communist Poland after 1944

Dr. Ludwik Szuba

Kolegium Jagiellońskie - Toruńska Szkoła Wyższa, ludwik-szuba@poczta.wp.pl

Abstract

The aim of the article is to present the first days and first months of the operation of the communist operational group sent by Stalin to Poland to take over education. The task they were given was extremely difficult, because the majority of Polish teachers - despite assurances that nothing would change in the school curricula - were distrustful of the new authorities. The communist government imposed by the Soviet Union did not have its own program. That is why it initially used pre-war regulations. However, such action also served to disguise, in the first period, the real intentions of the communists. However, the remnants of the pre-war order were quickly removed and the new school order brought from Russia was introduced. This meant subjecting Polish education to communist solutions.

Keywords: PKWN; education; teachers; KRN; Ministry of Education; PPR; ZNP

1. Organization of educational administration after World War II

On July 28, 1944, members of the Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN), established by Stalin, traveled from Moscow to Chełm near Lublin. From the very beginning, there were difficulties in organizing educational work, because the first teachers' conference organized by the "Ministry of Education", despite great propaganda efforts, was met with a boycott of teachers (Szuba, 2002, p. 87).

Only five teachers came to the meeting - former inspector Jan Jachcik, president of the powiat branch of the Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego (ZNP) Roman Fermata, director of the pedagogical high school Franciszek Wojnar and teachers Jan Łukaszewski and Jan Wasilewski. The assembled activists justified the boycott by the fact that "the London government" had already prepared a network of school administration and teacher records. On the initiative of the deputy head of the ministry, B. Biedowicz, the participants of the meeting adopted a resolution "on behalf of the teachers" with a request to the representatives of the ministry that the authorities issue an appropriate order of "*official obedience of teachers to the constitutional government and that teachers would join the reconstruction of education and start work without delay. but they should not be forced to do political work by the PKWN*" (Skrzeszewski, 1972, p. 12).

The first education inspectorate for the powiat and city was established in Chełm on July 29, 1944, composed of Jan Jachcik - inspector, Roman Fermata, Florian Wojciechowski and Jan

Niziński (Skrzeszewski, p.12).¹⁹ A delegation for secondary education was also organized, consisting of: delegate - Franciszek Wojnar and lecturers Jan Łukaszewski and Jan Wasilewski (Skrzeszewski, p.12).

In the period from August to October 1944, work was carried out on the organization of education boards in Lublin, Białystok, Rzeszów and Mińsk Mazowiecki. As the front moved westward, more educational institutions were established. Operational groups organized by the ministry, supported by officers of security offices and the military, created a new school administration, making, among others, registering teachers and securing buildings against looting.

Failures related to the credibility of the ministry of education forced the communists to change their tactics. It was decided to issue an appeal to teachers (August 1, 1944), which was to ease the distrust and disappointment in the new government. According to the established line, the appeal did not announce any changes in the educational system. Teachers were assured of political pluralism, teachers' merits in secret teaching were emphasized and called to work in schools. Only symptoms of fascist activity were to be exterminated (KC PZPR, 1944). It should be added that from the very beginning the communist authorities intended to introduce quick and thorough changes in education. The distrust of the community and the simple lack of an educational program forced the communist Polish Workers Party (PPR) to act in masking. Thus, semi-officially, it was implied that the country would be governed by the March Constitution of 1921 and school ordinances published until 1939. Meanwhile, already in November 1944, work began to amend the school system and curricula, which were accelerated after the creation of the Ministry of Education. Teaching teams consisting mainly of PPR members under the leadership of Ż. Kormanowa and the supervision of the Central Committee of the PPR dealt with the new organizational structure of education, program changes and the pace of implementation of the education reform (Grzesia, 1986. p. 410).

The Ministry of Education was established on the basis of the Act of the Krajowa Rada Narodowa (KRN) of December 31, 1944 on the transformation of PKWN into the Provisional Government on the basis of the Ministry of Education (Dziennik Ustaw (Dz. U.) 1944 r. No 1, pos. 1). The organization of the ministry was based on the statute of 1936, but the scope of activities was limited to the following matters: education of all types and levels, except for schools subject to other ministries, pre-school and extra-school education, adult education and culture, libraries and book care, archives, care for science and cooperation with other ministries in the scope entrusted to them by separate acts.²⁰

In the initial period, in terms of the organization of school authorities and the reconstruction of education, the ministry and curatorial offices were based on pre-war regulations, thus recognizing the traditions and legal continuity of the pre-occupation period: the Act of June 9, 1920 on the provisional system of school authorities (Dz. U RP No 50, pos. 304), the Act of February 21, 1930 on the independence of school authorities from political authorities (Dz. U RP No 17, pos. 124), the ordinance of the Minister of November 22, 1924 on the Board of School

¹⁹ J. Niziński was shot while on duty a day later, on June 30, 1944 by an unknown perpetrator. "... The bullet fell through the open window." AAN, St. Skrzeszewski, *Spuścizna...*, p. 12.

²⁰ In 1949, vocational education was excluded from the ministry of education, and it returned to the ministry in 1955. AAN, Ministerstwo Oświaty w Warszawie 1944-1945-1966. Wstęp do inwentarza, sygn. 283.

Districts (Dz. U RP No 19, pos. 191), the ordinance of the President of the Republic of Poland of July 4, 1933 on the organization of regional school authorities (Dz. U RP No 50, pos. 289), the Act for March 11, 1932 on the education system (dz. U RP No 38, pos. 389 and on related laws, ordinances and orders (Dz. U RP No 38, pos. 389).

The assurances issued by school boards that the old regulations would function in education - they were aimed at reassuring parents and teachers, and they also gave hope that the school would not differ in any way from the school from before the war. Thus, the board of trustees went to work armed with the old regulations, while the Ministry of Education received time to develop new ordinances and instructions. However, the first schools were created spontaneously.²¹ Without waiting for the authorities' orders, teachers kept enrolling in schools, renovating classrooms, collecting teaching aids and textbooks. Nobody asked when and what salary he would receive. Teachers came to school, often poorly dressed and hungry, and it was thanks to them that after the front had passed in many schools on September 1, 1944, the new school year began (Kuroczko, Warszawa 1962, pp. 197-198).

In September 1944, the Department of Education presented the directors of educational institutions with new guidelines for the organization of public elementary schools in the 1944/45 school year. The guidelines were the first unofficial attempt to circumvent the school system law of March 11, 1932. The ministry recommended gradual, cautious and gradual mitigation of the defective effects of the pre-war system, and also suggested far-reaching changes to the school system (Wytyczne organizacji publicznych szkół powszechnych w roku szkolnym 1944/1945, Lublin 1944, p. 8).

It should be added, however, that the "people's power" was dealt with brutally with the administration of the Polish Underground State structures, which appeared in the liberated territories. Mass arrests and deportations of patriots deep into the USSR began.²² Pre-war inspectors and teachers, most often associated with the underground, for fear of arrest (which at that time took place on a mass scale) did not report to work (Szuba, 2002, p. 89). It is worth mentioning here the memorial of the ZNP from the Opole Region to the Minister of Education S. Skrzyszewski, taken over by the Ministry of Public Security in September 1945. *"taking teachers who are going to school to do physical work. It is not uncommon for Soviet soldiers to take school pupils to work, which suffers from a catastrophic decline in attendance. Rape of teachers and*

²¹ It is worth recalling that in November 1944, 4,655 elementary schools were already active, with over 640,000 students enrolled in them. students, and 12,816 teachers started work. 130 secondary schools were also opened, with 30,000 students. students and 1,455 teachers worked. 600 girls and boys studied in 133 vocational schools and 17 teacher training establishments. War losses in education were estimated at 60% of the pre-war value, and as a result of the war about 16,000 teachers were killed, 7,621 schools were destroyed, including 6,842 primary schools, 263 secondary schools, 249 vocational schools, 80 teacher training establishments and 17 universities. Libraries suffered the most losses, as only 5% of school libraries survived. A. Świecki, *Oświata i szkolnictwo w XXX leciu PRL*, Warszawa 1962, p. 53.

²² The fact that teachers were deported to the USSR is evidenced by letter of the Board of the ZNP District in Białystok of August 3, 1945 addressed to the Ministry of Justice. We read in it: "The Board of the ZNP District in Białystok is asking for speeding up or causing the consideration of cases and for the release of those arrested, and for the return of teachers deported to Russia. [...] With the current lack of teachers in existing and organizing schools, the presence of such a number of teachers in prisons in Russia is a great loss for Polish education and the whole society". WAP w Białymstoku, A WRZZ, Protokoły, wytyczne z 1945 r., sygn. I „A”.

schoolchildren does not affect the well-being of teachers and youth and undermines trust in the Polish school. The Soviet military authorities do not react to the complaints and do not try to improve the state of security, and the Civic Militia, recruited from unqualified elements, is generally unfavorable to teachers and does not understand the mission that teachers have to fulfill and does not live up to the task " (IPN BU 01338/4. MBP. Dep. I. Materiały różne do września 1954, k. nlb.).

After the creation of the Ministry of Education, the management team remained unchanged. St. Skrzyszewski, Undersecretary of State B. Biedowicz, and the directors of departments were: General - E. Kuroczko, General Education - B. Biedowicz, Vocational Education - St. Łukaszewicz, Higher Education Henryk Rabe and Ż. Kormanova, who was reappointed director of the Department of School Reform.²³

The changes in the political system provoked the need to gradually adapt the organization of school authorities and schools to the new political situation. As a result, the organization of the board of trustees was based on the draft statute issued on December 10, 1945, which stipulated, inter alia, that the curator of the school district was an organ of state administration in the field of education and public education in the area subordinate to him, he exercised management and supervision over all education and upbringing establishments, with the exception of academic and higher education institutions, and over all adult education and culture establishments to the extent entrusted to him by laws and regulations, he was the head of school authorities and offices of state and public schools and educational establishments, unless they were clearly removed from his authority. In performing the tasks, the Probation Officer was directly subordinate to the Minister of Education and was responsible to him.

School inspectors were the second school instance. The number of school inspectors corresponded to the number of poviats. School inspectors in all districts (counties) were assigned 1-2 school sub-inspectors and 1 sub-inspector or adult education and culture instructor. In place of the former school self-government bodies, voivodeship, poviat and commune education commissions were established as advisory agencies of national councils.²⁴ Representatives of school authorities (probation officer, school inspectors) ex officio headmasters - school heads and teachers as elected delegates sat on education committees.

²³ In the years 1945-66, despite the multiple reorganization of the ministry, there were departments: General, General Education, Vocational Education, Science and Higher Schools, Education and Adult Culture, School System Reform and Child Care. In 1966, the powers of the Ministry of Education were extended, merging them with the Ministry of Higher Education. K. Trzebiatowski, *Organizacja szkolnictwa w Polsce Ludowej*, Warszawa 1972. p. 345.

²⁴ Act of 23 February 1939 on the merger of school self-government with local government (Dz. U. No. 16, pos. 93) and circular of the Minister of Education of 11 August 1945. Act on local bodies of uniform state authority of March 20, 1950 (Dz. U. No. 14, item 130, as amended), it abolished, inter alia, organizational separateness of both the Board of Trustees and school inspectors as bodies of local state administration - the Board of Trustees became Education Departments at the Presidiums of Provincial National Councils, and the Education Inspectorates - Education Departments at the Presidiums of Poviat (City) National Councils. Educational institutions were subordinated to National Councils, but due to the numerous and detailed number of centrally determined economic indicators, the scope of independent activity of the Councils was small. Thus, the takeover of competences by the national councils was rather administrative in nature, as the Education Departments mainly implemented the orders of the Ministry of Education.

One of the most important tasks of the new school authorities was the "liquidation of the remnants of the Sanacja ideology in schools". Activities began with the cancellation of all pre-war student organizations, mainly Catholic - the Marian Sodality and the Eucharistic Crusade. Organizations controlled by security offices were introduced to the school premises: the Youth Fighting Union, the TUR Youth Organization, ZMW "Wici", the Polish Red Cross, the Army-controlled League of Air and Gas Defense, and the Polish Scouting Association, which still cultivates its scouting traditions. The goals and tasks imposed on youth organizations were to shape the worldview of young people corresponding to the authorities and to train them in their socio-political activities. Education was also dealt with by a "party commission" established by the Central Committee under the leadership of Marian Spychalski, and then Jerzy Albrecht and Władysław Bieńkowski. "Important" matters were discussed at the meetings of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the PPR, while the activities of the ministry were "observed" by Jakub Berman, Roman Zambrowski and Bolesław Bierut personally (AAN, St. Skrzyszewski, Spuścizna, p. 24).

From the beginning of the school year, the PPR tried to give school upbringing the right direction in line with the party's line. This was achieved through confidential guidelines and instructions from the central committee of the PPR, transmitted by voivodeship and poviat committees - addressed to school superintendents and schools. The communists realized that the most difficult educational task would be to convince the youth and most teachers associated with the Secret Teachers' Organization to the new system. And it wasn't easy at all. Patriotic youth, yesterday's scouts of the Gray Ranks, soldiers of the Home Army and NSZ, bound by a military oath, did not want to accept the regime imposed by Stalin. For this reason, immediately after the front had passed, post-Home Army underground organizations resumed their activity, as communists' promises of a prosperous life turned out to be an empty phrase. In a special report of the Department of War Censorship of June 1945 to the deputy prime minister of the Provisional Government of the Republic of Poland, W. Gomułka, we read: *„Our War Censorship Departments inform us about the constant increase in the amount of correspondence in which the economic situation of the country is discussed. In hundreds of letters, citizens write about the difficult supply situation, hunger, high prices, lack of cash, trade disorganization, speculation, unemployment and poverty. The War Censorship Department in Katowice, in the first 10 days of work, recorded a total of 14,899-1020 letters with messages about hunger. Branches of Łódzki, Warszawski, Kielecki - we are alerted by reports that the letters contain mass issues of high prices, speculation, trade disorganization and inhibition of trade in goods. Also in May this year. Complaints constituted the most massive phenomenon in letters, eg in Kielce within 10 days, 961 statements about hunger, high prices and epidemics were recorded out of 54,763 letters. In Bydgoszcz, out of 47,736 letters, 270 statements about hunger were recorded, and in the second decade, out of 3,242 letters, 154 statements about hunger were recorded. However, in the Katowice branch as many as 1030 complaints about provisions within 10 days ”* (MBP, IPN BU 1572/3378, p. 82).

2. New School Order

The new school year 1945/46 became a period of extremely intensive work for the school authorities. The reluctance of ZNP activists to cooperate with the Ministry of Education became a troublesome dilemma. So the communists decided to quarrel and break up the union leadership, offering activists high positions on the one hand, and on the other, they presented their demands, inter alia introducing teachers related to PPR or employees of the Ministry of Education to the management of the union. The efforts, or rather the pressure and threats of the Ministry ended as planned by the party authorities (Book of Protocols of the ZG PNA 1945 – 1946, 1945). Eight representatives of the Polish Workers' Party were introduced to the union authorities, which constituted 50% of the number of members of the Main Board (APB, KW PPR, Sekretariat, sygn. 10/V/45/3, k. nlb.).

The devastated Association of Teachers of Secondary and Higher Schools self-disbanded, and the lonely Association of Vocational School Teachers joined the ZNP on May 4, 1945. With the inclusion of the Main Board of the ZNP in the Trade Union Headquarters, the independence of the union ended. The union, strengthened by the communists, set to work. During the ZNP regional congresses controlled by security offices, activists appointed by ... provincial committees of the PPR were introduced to the authorities (Szuba, *Polityka oświatowa*, p.94).

Intensive work on the development of a new educational system began, on which the School Reform Department of the Ministry of Education was working, under the supervision of the "party team" of the Ministry of Education (who consulted all decisions directly with Edward Ochab, the head of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the PPR). The Central Committee of the PPR also joined the promotion of the reform, which on 13-14 May 1945 convened the National Meeting of Party Teachers - Members of the PPR, during which the "activist" got acquainted with and approved all theses of rebuilding education (AAN, PZPR, Uchwała Krajowej Narady Nauczycieli Członków PPR, 13 – 14 V 1945 r., sygn. 295/IX-19, k. nlb.). The aftermath of the conference was a circular of the Central Committee of the PPR, addressed to all provincial, district and municipal committees of the PPR, in which the "people's government" expressed concern about the *"glaring disproportion between the ownership of the party in the working-class and peasant masses and the number of members in the teaching environment."* *"Communist workers should organize themselves in teachers' cells, and also start recruiting colleagues to the party. The Central Committee of the PPR decided to appoint instructors in all provincial committees for education, with "the task of maintaining close contact with comrades working in board of trustees, school inspectorates and district boards of the ZNP".*

Inspired by the PPR, on June 18-22, 1945, the National Educational Congress in Łódź was held, convened by the Ministry of Education. The theme of the Congress was dominated by the school reform project. The papers presented by the management of the ministry met with criticism by trade union activists who were few in the audience. The program changes aroused the most controversy. The ideological assumptions of the new programs assumed the education of a new human being in a new ideological and moral face. Although the authors of the reform (including Żanna Kormanowa) denied during the congress the accusations about introducing elements of communist education to the curricula, the facts, and especially the introduction of a new subject with a clearly ideological and political tinge to school (Science about Poland and the modern

world) and changes in the curriculum in history, in which communism was praised, the introduction of the Russian language as a compulsory subject, changes in the Polish language (introducing Soviet writers to school books) and biology (politicizing Darwin's theory) - confirmed the concerns of ZNP activists (Ogólnopolski Zjazd Oświatowy w Łodzi, Warszawa 1945, s. 80). The position of the union was presented by the vice president of ZG, Kazimierz Maj, who expressed his disapproval of the organization of similar conventions by the school administration. He also criticized the reform proposal proposed by the authorities. Unfortunately, Maja's speech did not matter much, especially since the more radical opposition was not allowed to vote. "*We, however, will not deviate from our position*" said Żanna Kormanowa, director of the Department of the Ministry of Education, summing up the congress.

In July 1945, the Provisional Government of National Unity was established. Czesław Wycech (president of the Main Board of the ZNP), who was one of the few trade unionists among the supporters of cooperation with the people's government, received the portfolio of the minister of education. Unfortunately, not much has changed in the Ministry, as over 40 senior officials of the PPR members remained in key positions, including I deputy - Deputy Minister Władysław Bieńkowski, director of the general department of Eustachy Kuroczko, who was responsible for the personnel department deciding on filling positions in the ministry and all subordinate authorities and offices. In Department IV - Science and Systemic and Program Universities, as well as the selection of professors and auxiliary scientific forces, and in the strategic Department VI - Education Reforms, Żanna Kormanowa continued (Szuba, *Polityka Oświatowa*, p. 106).

In the fall of 1945, the expansion of communists in education slowed down somewhat, thanks to the Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe (PSL) - a legally operating opposition party that was part of the Provisional Government of National Unity. As the leading authorities of the Party was the Minister of Education Czesław Wycech - a man who played a significant role in organizing secret education during the occupation - the leading activists of the ZG ZNP joined the PSL, followed by numerous teachers. At the end of November 1945, the Congress of the Polish Teachers' Union was held in Bytom. Over 700 teachers and 200 invited guests attended the congress, including the President of the National Council of Nords B. Bierut, who during his speech demanded that the teachers clearly support the people's government, because - as he said - "*working people*" will not let the reins of power fall from their hands" (Pacult, 1983, p.83). Despite warnings and threats, the delegates pointed out the poverty and social handicap of teachers, demanded that their colleagues arrested by security offices, fair consideration of cases by Polish courts, amnesty for political prisoners and political independence of the union.

The convention in Bytom was stigmatized by the educational section of the Propaganda Department of the Central Committee of the PPR and the press subordinated to communists, which accused the trade unions of thoughtlessness, selfishness and the worst political habits, while the communist deputy minister Władysław Bieńkowski regarded the union as a reaction, and the teachers as bastards - reactionaries. As the Bytom congress did not meet the expectations of the PPR, the party authorities decided to organize another teachers' congress, which was to cover up the final declarations inconvenient for the authorities. In the meantime, the communists won the elections (with the help of provincial committees of the PPR supported by the security offices), so the communists won the elections, so there were no problems with choosing the right delegates. Thus, the next Pedagogical Congress of the ZNP, which took place in mid-February 1946 in Łódź,

took place as expected by the organizers. The resolution adopted at the end of the congress was consistent with the educational model of the PPR and called on the Ministry to replace the prewar act with a new school act as soon as possible.

3. Preparations to take over education by the communists

The years 1946-47 became the period of full mobilization of power. Communists sent by Stalin as "representatives of the people" wondered how to gain acceptance and legitimacy of the society. They were aware of the lack of support, and the democratically conducted elections to the Sejm would bring them a disastrous defeat. Unable to postpone elections to the Sejm, they proposed to the public a referendum, which was to become a litmus test, a survey of support for the authorities, and also allowed to postpone elections for which the authorities were not yet prepared. Three questions were prepared (about new western borders, and about land reform and nationalization), and they were designed so that at least two should be answered positively. As could be expected - despite the unprecedented propaganda campaigns, arrests, etc. - only 27% of voters supported the communists. Despite the fact that the defeat of the "representatives of the nation" was all too visible, the communists decided to falsify the results of the referendum. The official results presented to the public resulted in a propaganda defeat for Mikołajczyk's camp, but made the authorities aware that the PSL's influence was significant and that the election date had to be postponed.

Changes in education were prepared in the shadow of the referendum in the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party. On March 22, 1946, a meeting of the Executive of the National Education Section was organized, followed by a meeting of the teachers' activists of the Polish Workers' Party and the Polish Socialist Party. During the meetings, activists protested the attempts to stop the school reform that had begun (AAN, KC PZPR. Protokół z narady aktywu oświatowego PPR i PPS, sygn. 295/XVII-1, k. 446).

In May 1946, an order signed by Czesław Wycech on the organization of the 1946/47 school year was published in the Official Journal of the Ministry of Education. The instruction provided for the further stage of the expansion of education and the implementation of the school reform. Educational authorities put emphasis on "launching schools that have not been restored, starting schools in the lands recovered as they settle, increasing the organization of schools preparing the implementation of an 8-year primary school and preparing schools for the purposes of eliminating the consequences of the war". The ordinance introduced the principle of uniformity of primary education in the scope of seven classes. As part of eliminating the effects of the war, the Ministry provided for the organization of special shortened curricula: one-year and two-year - for children aged 9-10 and 11-12, with whom the program of at least two classes had to be completed and then included in higher classes. For 13-14-year-old children, education had to be organized in such a way as to give them the opportunity to master the full course of elementary school by the age of 16. General education at the secondary level in the school year 1946/47 was carried out in a three-year junior high school, including grades I, II and III on the basis of a 7-year primary school. The organization of various forms of education in lower secondary schools was allowed, e.g. in two-year lower secondary schools intended for youth delayed in age, for working

youth, two-year lower secondary schools with a shortened teaching sequence as a foundation for pedagogical secondary schools or vocational schools of the secondary school level or three-year full secondary schools for youth with age delay (Dz. Urz. Min. Ośw. NO 5/1946, pos. 138).

It should be mentioned that the Official Journal of the Ministry of Education lists all applicable provisions on school curricula, as well as time schedules and curriculum materials for mainstream schools and general education first grades, as well as curricular changes. In grade VIII, a new subject was introduced - "Science about Poland and the modern world", which, according to the proclaimed assumptions, was to "integrate knowledge, strengthen patriotism and attachment to the progress and tradition of the Polish nation, and expand knowledge about Poland's ties with Slavic and democratic states." The implementation of this subject (the main goal of which was the indoctrination of youth) was forced by the director of the Department for Reform at the Ministry of Education, Żanna Kormanova, associated with the PPR.

In June 1946, the "educational section" of the Propaganda Department at the Central Committee of the PPR was elevated to the rank of the Education and Training Department at the Central Committee. The scope of the Department's activity was very wide, as it became an opinion-forming body planning the party's policy "along the lines of education and school". The department supervised the implementation of the resolutions of the party authorities regarding education, and decided on the staffing of all educational institutions and youth organizations. Faculty staff guarded the political line of all comrades who had something to do with education and education, and stimulated the activities of party teachers related to the politicization of all teachers in the spirit of people's democracy (AAN, KC PPR, Protokół z zebrania Egzekutywy Sekcji Oświatowej przy KC PPR - 1 VI 1946, mf. no 2453/1, k. nlb.).

On January 19, 1947, the first post-war parliamentary elections took place. On the basis of the official results, over 80% of voters cast on the "Democratic Bloc" and 10.3% on the PSL. Of course, no one believed the results, because the frauds of the "Democratic Bloc" were all too public (the United States and the United Kingdom submitted protest notes on this matter). In a situation of high victory, the communists did not need to maintain the fiction, ie the "Provisional Government of National Unity" with the participation of PSL, and proceeded to attack. With the help of the NKVD, KBW, UB, MO and ORMO troops, the authorities began a general crackdown against the armed underground. The activities of the secret police on the "educational front" were supported by a special disciplinary commission appointed by the government, which in January 1947 began verifying the teaching staff in secondary schools and universities. The school party organizations and the Polish Youth Union turned out to be very helpful in the ideological assessment of the staff. Removal of teachers associated with the Secret Teachers' Organization and the independence underground has become the order of the day. A denunciation of a party activist was enough for the group dismissal of teachers from work (AAN, Min. Ośw. Gabinet Ministra, sygn. 585, k. nlb.).

The actions of clearing schools of elements alien to the class, with "back views" often had the nature of personal reckoning, which had a negative impact on the work of schools. Quick and ruthless actions to remove teachers - specialists meant that in their place people were employed on the basis of "mediocre but faithful". The shortage of qualified teachers was to be met by the six-month teaching courses organized by the authorities, intended for graduates of general and vocational secondary schools, as well as introductory (also six-month) pedagogical courses

admitting candidates with a lower secondary school certificate, or even without this certificate (B. Potyrała, *Szkoła podstawowa w Polsce w latach 1944-1984*. Warszawa 1987, p. 198.).

Throughout 1947, intensive preparatory work for the "offensive on the educational front" was carried out. Competences and positions were distributed - the whole was commanded by the Educational Department of the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party, and in the field - educational departments of Voivodship Committees. Detailed program tasks have been established. The department took over the responsibility for the entire educational policy in the state to give a planned and uniform direction, to issue specific decisions and instructions in the field (AAN, KC PPR, Sekretariat. *Szczegółowe założenia programowe Wydziału Oświaty KC PPR*, sygn. 137/47, k. nlb.). The first stage of taking over education by the communists was coming to an end.

When assessing the years 1944-1947, it should be stated that the greatest success of teachers and educational activists at that time was the opening of schools and educational institutions. The success of the PPR, however, was the breakdown of the educational system inherited from the Second Polish Republic, and this during the transfer of the Ministry of Education (for the time when the communist power in Poland strengthened) into the hands of the PSL (See more: L. Szuba, *Polityka oświatowa państwa...* p.130).

References

- Akta Ogólnopolskiego Zjazdu Oświatowego w Łodzi
Dziennik Ustaw Rzeczypospolitej Polskiej
Dziennik Urzędowy Ministerstwa Oświaty
Gabinet Ministra Stanisław Skrzeszewski, *Spuścizna, prace własne, Wspomnienia i relacje*
Górski Grzegorz, *Political Foundations of the Communist Poland 1944-1945, Con-frontation and Cooperation, 1000 years of Polish, German, Russian Relations, Vol. 1, De Gruyter Publications on – line, 2014*
Górski Grzegorz, *Wokół genezy PRL*, Lublin 2004
Kuroczko Eustachy, *Na trudnej drodze nauczyciela. Autobiografia, Rozprawy, Artykuły, Przemówienia, Wspomnienia o E. Kuroczko, materiały zebrał komitet redakcyjny*. Warszawa 1962.
Księga Protokołów Zarządu Głównego Związku Nauczycielstwa Polskiego 1945-1946.
Ogólnopolski Zjazd Oświatowy w Łodzi, Warszawa 1945.
Pacuł Ryszard, *Szkolnictwo podstawowe na Śląsku Opolskim*, Opole 1983.
Polskie Siły Zbrojne w II wojnie światowej, t. II, Armia Krajowa, Londyn 1962.
Potyrała Bolesław, *Szkoła podstawowa w Polsce w latach 1944-1984*. Warszawa 1987
Sprawozdania Kuratorium Okręgu Szkolnego w Bydgoszczy.
Szuba Ludwik, *Polityka oświatowa państwa polskiego w latach 1945-1956*, Lublin 2002.
Świecki Andrzej, *Oświata i szkolnictwo w XXX leciu PRL*, Warszawa 1962.
Trzebiatowski Klemens, *Organizacja szkolnictwa w Polsce Ludowej*, Warszawa 1972.
Wytyczne organizacji publicznych szkół powszechnych w roku szkolnym 1944/1945, Lublin 1944

Zespół akt KC PPR

Zespół akt KC PZPR

Zespół akt PZPR

Zespół akt Ministra Oświaty,

Zespół akt KW PZPR

Zespół akt PWRN

Zespół akt WRZZ, Protokoły, wytyczne.

Zespół Akt Ministerstwa Bezpieczeństwa Publicznego, Wydział Cenzury Wojennej

Zarządzenia Prezydium Wojewódzkiej Rady Narodowej w Bydgoszczy

Związek Nauczycielstwa Polskiego, Zarys dziejów 1905 – 1985, pod. red. B. Grzesia, Warszawa 1986.