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beating. After falling seriously ill, the victim was hospitalized only to be abruptly taken out of the infirmary and thrown into a tiny, freezing cell with a low-ceiling filled with excrement. Ostromecki soon confessed and was sentenced to death. His sentence was later commuted to life in prison.[97]

For participating in the underground scouting movement of the AK, Marian Barcikowski was imprisoned by the Nazis in Pińczów in 1944. Two years later he was arrested by the UB and NKVD and incarcerated in the same jail along with some friends. "The interrogation methods we were subjected to were more refined than those of the Gestapo. The 'arguments' used during the interrogation sessions included: the leg of a chair, a hard rubber truncheon, the rifle butt of a sub-machine gun, being kicked all over our bodies, and being beaten by fist. Each time we were tortured until we lost consciousness." [98]

Between 1946 and 1948 UB man Józef S. of Rzeszów tortured at least 20 insurgents of the AK-WiN and NOW -NZW. Beating and kicking his victims was the norm as was food and sleep deprivation. Józef S. further delighted in stripping his prisoners naked and exposing them to extreme winter conditions in an unheated solitary cell.[99] On May 8, 1947, Cavalry Captain Witold Pilecki was seized by the UB. Pilecki fought the Nazis in 1939 and joined the underground afterwards. In 1941 he volunteered to be arrested and sent to Auschwitz, so he could report to his superiors about the camp. Eventually, Pilecki escaped from the camp and fought the Germans as a Home Army officer. Taken prisoner, he survived a POW camp and joined the Free Polish Forces in the West. Dispatched back to Poland, he was promptly arrested and charged with espionage. The UB men not only tore off his fingernails but also beat him, starved him, and held him in solitary confinement. Following six months of brutal interrogation, on November 4, 1947, Pilecki confessed to being a "Gestapo agent" and a "spy for [General] Anders." He was shot soon after.[100]

In July 1947 the secret police arrested a prominent Nationalist politician, Adam Doboszyński. His only "crime" was that he returned from the West hoping to persuade the insurgents to cease their armed struggle. Instead, the Communists accused him of being an American and British spy and, of course, "collaborating with the Hitlerites," an absurd charge in the light of Doboszyński's anti-German ideology, exemplary anti-Nazi combat record, and the fact that between 1940 and 1945 he served with distinction in the Polish Armed Forces in France and England.[101] Before he was shot for his "crimes," the politician informed the court about his ordeal with the secret police:

The moment came when the interrogating authorities presented the charge of my [alleged] collaboration with the German intelligence service... I resisted for a long time and I did not want to confess to something that is not true... I continued to struggle. Then they applied physical pressure against me.... I was beaten and tortured for four days and nights non-stop... After four days and nights, seeing that at best the torment will ruin my health, and therefore even an acquittal would be worthless, I decided to confess to deeds that I had never committed and to withdraw my confession at the first opportune moment, i.e. during the first public trial.... The investigation lasted two more years. I had to continue incriminating myself because they threatened that the torture would start again. [102]

Second Lieutenant Michał Biebrzyński ("Sep") of the NZW Łomża surrendered to the Communists during the amnesty in April 1947. He was arrested on September 5, 1947, tortured, tried, and sentenced to death, but later had his sentence commuted to life. Biebrzyński recalls his ordeal at the Security Office in Łomża

One night sometime in October or November the doors to my cell opened... "Get out," they told me. They did not take me upstairs anymore but to an empty room downstairs. There were whips, sticks, chains, and handcuffs hanging on the wall.

There were two wooden support beams [kozły] standing there, and a long log. They tied my hands. They pulled up a chair and made me sit on it. They placed my knees between my legs and inserted the log under my knees. There were four thugs.

"Up!" They shouted. They lifted me up and I immediately turned upside down. Then they rested each end of the log on the support beams. And I was dangling down on it. It started to hurt me so much that I asked them to kill me:

"Shoot me, gentlemen, do not murder me this way." After a while I heard a noise and next thing I felt was that they were shoving a funnel into my nose. And they were pouring something into it. Well, I was convinced I was drowning. Water kept streaming out of my ears and everywhere. They were yelling but I could not hear exactly. I only heard: "Confess, confess, you bandit!" Then they kicked me a few times and threw me down on the floor. I was untied, dragged on the floor, and propped up against the wall. The rest of the water flew out of me and they asked me:

"OK, are you going to confess?" That's how it's going to be all day long. "You are to denounce everyone. Where is the county commander? Where is the district commander? Where is your contact place? Where are your hiding places? Tell us everything!" I did not tell them anything however because I knew that after I surrendered all contact spots and contact people were changed.

Because I did not tell them anything, they fell on me. They beat me almost unconscious right away. Even before I answered, they beat me, and then beat me some more. When I came to, regained some of my strength, they lifted me up and one of them said: "Get out," and again, holding me under my arms, they dragged me to my cell. [103]

In November 1947 in Cracow, the UB captured Captain Franciszek Błazej, the propaganda head of the WiN. "He was beaten for so long that his body started to rot and gangrene set in." The victim broke down and confessed.[104]

A Catholic priest recalled his ordeal with the UB, following a ten-day long torture session:

At one point... I still reflexively comprehended the situation because, crying like a child, I stressed that my mother had taught me to do right and brought me up to be an honest man. Finally, however, I broke down and testified that I was indeed a spy. I confessed to such nonsense that my confession reflects best that I was not of a right mind.[105]

Secret police Captain Roman Laszkiewicz, dubbed the "white executioner of the Mokotów jail" (biały kat Mokotowa) by his prisoners, handled the case of Andrzej Leśniewski, who was an opposition PSL journalist and a former AK officer. Leśniewski was framed in a scheme involving a non-existent underground group, contrived in a classical secret police provocation in October 1947. Laszkiewicz interrogated Leśniewski and his father Wiktor. The son was beaten and kicked as well as forced to do hundreds of sit-ups and to stand naked at attention in sub-zero temperature. The father was interrogated non-stop for 100 hours. "The torturers broke his fingers and beat him with a baton and a steel rod." Also, the AK-NOW officer and nationalist politician, Leon Mirecki, was beaten with sticks and wires and forced to stand naked at attention in a freezing cell without any windows by UB Lieutenant Colonel Józef Światło.[106]

In Warsaw, in August 1947, the UB arrested Jan Radożycki of the AK and the SN, who had been active in Sanok. Radożycki was questioned by two security men: they began to beat me on my back, face, and hit my head against the wall, while swearing at me horribly. Finally, I was made to sit on the leg of an upturned stool in such a manner that it jammed against my hind bone, which caused me great pain. After a short while, I fainted and fell on the floor. They poured cold water over me and sat me down once again on that leg. As before, I fell to the floor.... I decided to confess to belonging to the SN [but refused to name names]... Therefore they started to beat me all over the place.... and to stomp on my

toes with jackboots. They also forced me to do sit-ups. Finally, they locked me up in the so-called nest [dziupla]. That was a small chest where one could not move for lack of space... I spent about 24 hours there which brought me to the edge of my sanity. I prayed, I thought about various things, but I was about to break down... The following day... they beat me again everywhere; they stood me at attention with my hands up until I fainted. They forced me to do sit-ups and, finally, they put me on the stool leg which, as before, caused me to faint and fall to the ground.[107]

Arrested in the fall of 1947, after he had surrendered during an amnesty, Major Zbigniew Kulesza ("Młot"), a leading NZW commander from Northern Mazovia, underwent mostly psychological torture. Marathon interrogation sessions and sleep deprivation were the norm. He was tortured physically only three times, including once almost fatally, which landed him in a prison hospital. However, to break down his resistance, the UB simultaneously interrogated and tortured his wife, Barbara, in an adjacent room. Kulesza was sentenced to life for "espionage." [108]

The secret police caught insurgent Major Hieronim Dekutowski ("Zapora") in the fall of 1947. Dekutowski had been in the field since 1939. He fought with the Free Polish Forces in the West and was parachuted as a commando into Nazi-occupied Poland in 1943. From 1944, he began fighting the Communists. Upon his capture by the UB, Dekutowski was tortured horribly and sentenced to death at a sham trial on November 15, 1948. The act of judicial murder was carried out half a year later. According to an account, on the evening of March 7, 1949, the red executioners came to the cell in the Mokotów prison to get Major 'Zapora,' Hieronim Dekutowski, who was a commando [cichociemny] and a bearer of [Poland's most coveted] Virtuti Militari cross. He was thirty years, five months, and eleven days old. He looked like an old man: grey hair, missing teeth that had been knocked out of his mouth [by the interrogators], broken nose, hands, and ribs. His fingernails had been torn off [during torture]. 'We shall never surrender!' he yelled sending his last message to his fellow prisoners. According to documents, the sentence was carried out by shooting.[109]

Between January 1947 and December 1949 in Wieluń, UB officer Tadeusz R. tortured at least six persons connected to the insurgent Conspiratorial Polish Army (KWP), including Stefan Kaczmarek, Franciszek Gąsior, Józef Musiał, and Antoni Teodorczyk. The prisoners were beaten with "a fist, a stick, a steel rod and other tools all over their bodies. Some of them were placed in a cellar, which was filled with water. Others were tied up and had water poured down their nostrils and throat until they fainted." [110] Father (Lieutenant Colonel) Józef Zator-Przytocki fought as a military chaplain in 1939. Later, he joined the independentist underground under the Soviet occupation in Stanisławów. He fled the NKVD in 1940 to the Nazi-occupied part of Poland, where he continued his clandestine activities in the Home Army in the Kraków area. After the return of the Soviets to Poland in 1945, Father Zator-Przytocki escaped to Gdańsk. He was arrested by the UB on September 5, 1948. Tortured horribly (including beating and isolation in a cell where the temperature was below the freezing point), he refused to break down. His faith guided him: "I'm a soldier of the Catholic Church. I must always and everywhere maintain an inner balance. I cannot give in to pessimism. I must endure everything with calm." He survived his imprisonment albeit with greatly damaged health.[111]

Home Army soldier Waclaw Gluth-Nowowiejski joined an informal university student group called "Keep Smiling" in Warsaw. He discontinued armed struggle out of deference to his mother: Waclaw was the only surviving of four siblings, three of his brothers having been killed during the war. Further, he sustained a serious wound in his forearm during the Warsaw Uprising of 1944. Gluth-Nowowiejski nonetheless maintained a loose contact with his comrades in the anti-Communist insurgency, caching weapons for Wojciech

Kostkiewicz of the WiN "Orlik" unit in May 1948. Soon after, the UB captured Kostkiewicz and tortured him into revealing fifteen persons who had assisted him. Gluth-Nowowiejski was seized in November 1948. The secret police falsely assumed that "Keep Smiling" was a Western spy group. The UB men forced Wiesław to do sit-ups, kicked him, and beat him. When Gluth-Nowowiejski was unable to stand the torture anymore, he would shield his head with his wounded forearm. A blow to the wound invariably assured an immediate loss of consciousness. He was sentenced to eight years in a show trial.[112]

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Footnotes

[73] Jan Ordyński, "Finał procesu stalinowskiego oficera," Rzeczpospolita, 4 April 2002; Mikołaj Wójcik, "Był świadom swojej brutalności," Nasz Dziennik, 4 April 2002; Jan Ordyński, "Dobra opinia od Różańskiego," Rzeczpospolita, 5 March 2002; Jan Ordyński, "Był jeden Szymański," Rzeczpospolita, 22 January 2002; Jan Ordyński, "Sąd Najwyższy nie zmienił wyroku," Rzeczpospolita, 5 December 2001; AKA, "Zmarł Adam Humer," Rzeczpospolita, 13 November 2001; Tadeusz M. Płużański, "Najnowsza historia humerowców," posted at <http://www.upr.org.pl/mazowsze/serwis/arch/publ.html>; "Już nie wyjaśni," Nasz Dziennik, 14 November 2001; J.O., "Awans za zabijanie," Rzeczpospolita, 13 October 2001; Agata Łukasiewicz, "Zła sława oprawcy," Rzeczpospolita, 21 August 2001; Jan Ordyński, "Dręczył więźniów X pawilonu," Rzeczpospolita, 24 April 2001; Krajewski, Żołnierze wyklęci, 221; Barbara Otwinowska and Teresa Drzał, eds., *Zawołać po imieniu: Księga kobiet – więźniów politycznych, 1944-1958*, vol. 1 (Nadarzyn: Vipart, 1999), 1: 111-113. [UP]

[74] Krajewski and Łabuszewski, „Łupaszka”, „Młot”, „Huzar”, 250. [UP]

[75] J.O. [Jan Ordyński], "Fałszowali dowody i katowali," Rzeczpospolita, 5 August 2003. [UP]

[76] See Krajewski and Łabuszewski, „Łupaszka”, „Młot”, „Huzar”, 253. [UP]

[77] See "Meldunek sytuacyjny," [no date, February 1946], in *Zbrodnie NKWD-UB*, ed. by Henryk Pająk (Lublin: n.p. [Retro], 1991), 242-44. [UP]

[78] Michał Stankiewicz, "Poszukiwani oprawcy i ofiary," Rzeczpospolita, 25 March 2004. [UP]

[79] A play on words: "Dać mu popalić," i.e. "kick the crap out of him." [UP]

[80] Piotr Kosobudzki, *Przez druty, kraty i kajdany: Wspomnienia partyzanta NSZ* (Wrocław: Wydawnictwo "Nortom," 1997), 249-50. Kosobudzki was sentenced to two years in jail but escaped after 13 months.

While being transported to another jail, he broke the window with his head and jumped out from a moving train. He hid until 1950. *Ibid.*, 251, 259, 296. [UP]

[81] Sawicka was released shortly after but she was re-arrested on June 7, 1949. Again, she refused to confess and was let go. Meanwhile, the UB arrested her husband, who edited and disseminated an underground newsheet. He was subjected to torture and later sentenced to five years of forced labor in a coal mine. He served three years but upon his release he was denied employment as an "enemy of the people." A dispatch by the Communist civilian authorities concerning her arrest misidentified Halina Sawicka-Komorowska as "Jadwiga Komorowska." See UWB, WSP, do MAP, DP, 5 June 1945, APB, UWB, file 496, 103; Postanowienie, 2 September 1993, Sąd Wojewódzki w Łomży, file II Ko 250/93 (a copy in my collection); Halina Sawicka, interview by Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, Łomża, 19 July 2001. [UP]

[82] In December 1945, Morawski led a successful rescue operation, freeing 14 insurgents from a militia outpost in Chorzele, and he participated in most operations of Lt. Nowowiejski's unit. Captured by the UB and tortured, he withstood torture initially but when his tormentors threatened to kill him, Morawski feigned willingness to collaborate. He was therefore transferred to a prison ward of the local hospital to recuperate. However, Morawski secretly

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