

POLICE SERVICES IN UPPER SILESIA DURING THE SILESIAN UPRISINGS

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Abstract:

In this article the author illustrates the activity of police services in Upper Silesia between 1918 and 1922. In introduction the author describes international and political position of Upper Silesia. In this period the special Military Inter-Allied Commission of Control was a temporary legislator and administrator of Upper Silesia. The main task of the Commission was to conduct a plebiscite and divide a disputed territory. It also established its internal policy. Moreover, the Commission had its own police services, which were outlined chronologically in this article. Sicherheitspolizei was the first police service, formed in times of the German Reich. Sicherheitspolizei was replaced by combined plebiscite police, which operated until the division of Upper Silesia between Poland and Germany. In the meantime a special police, military police and municipal police operated simultaneously in Upper Silesia. During the analysis of particular police service the author paid a close attention to its organization, assignments, conditions of recruitment and attitude to obligation to maintain neutrality towards the plebiscite. Activity of police services was elaborated against the background of the events of that time, such as the plebiscite, Silesian Uprisings and rivalry between Poland and Germany. The article was mainly based on Polish literature, bilingual archival materials and partially on German literature.

Keywords:

police, Upper Silesia, plebiscite, Sicherheitspolizei, Abstimmungspolizei

INTRODUCTION

Upper Silesia, after the defeat of Germany in the First World War and the rebirth of the Polish state became a subject of interest in international politics. Germany sought to keep this attractive, in terms of economic and industrial profits, area within the

Reich¹, while the Poles desire was to return these lands to the Motherland. Both sides did not cease in its efforts to bring about a favourable outcome for themselves. Upper Silesia case was the reason for disagreement within the winning coalition. The United Kingdom supported Germany, whereas France, seeking to maximize its opponent weakness, supported Poland.

The issue of affiliation of Upper Silesia became the agenda of the Paris Peace Conference, where Poland was represented by Ignacy Paderewski and Roman Dmowski. Eventually, it was decided that the plebiscite² will decide upon the affiliation of Upper Silesia.

1. MILITARY INTER-ALLIED COMMISSION OF CONTROL

In order not only to exercise power in the disputed territory, but also to carry out a vote and in the consequence, the division of Upper Silesia there was the Inter-Allied Commission of Control established, with its headquarters in Opole, which included representatives of France, Britain and Italy³. The Commission had the authority previously assigned to the area of the Reich government, with the exception of legislation and taxes. German Act may be used only after having obtained sanction from the Commission⁴, which seemed to be the healing solution, a manoeuvre used in order to prevent possible abuses of the German legislator.

The Commission was equipped with the quasi-government powers and adequately armed forces⁵. The decisions concerning the appointment of the police to maintain order were left to the Commission, it was stipulated, however, that in case of realization of the appointment it must be the local population recruitment⁶.

The Inter-Allied Commission under the French General Henri Le Rond as chairman took power on 11 February 1920, announcing 'a new era of freedom and justice for Upper Silesia'⁷. The deputies of the chairman were: British representative Colonel Harold Percival and Italian General Andreo de Marinis Stendardo di Ricigliano⁸.

¹ In historiography the often encountered colloquial name of the German state was Weimar Republic. In this article, the author resigned from the use of this phrase, since the official name was "German Reich" (art. 1 of the Constitution dated August 11, 1919).

² Art. 88 of the Treaty of peace between the Allied and associated powers and Germany, signed at Versailles on June 28, 1919. Journal of Laws from 1920 No. 35 item 200.

³ § 2 of the annex to the Art. 88 of the Treaty of peace between the superpowers. According to the annex in the Inter-Allied Commission there should also be the representative of the United States of America which did not take place, because of the refusal of the US Congress to ratify the Treaty by the US Congress.

⁴ § 3 of the annex of the Treaty of peace between the superpowers ...

⁵ J. Musioł, *Sądy polowe w III powstaniu śląskim*, Katowice 1978, p. 15-16.

⁶ § 3 of the annex of the Treaty of peace between the superpowers ...

⁷ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii trzech powstań śląskich 1919-1920-1921*, Wrocław 1973, p. 133.

⁸ J. Przewłocki, *Międzynarodowa Komisja Rządząca i Plebiscytowa na Górnym Śląsku w latach 1920-1922*, Wrocław [i in.] 1970, p. 28.

2. POLICE SERVICE

2.1. State security police (*Sicherheitspolizei*)

However, the changes could not take place overnight. The German armed forces and other paramilitary organizations (*Grenzschutz*) were removed from the area of Upper Silesia, nevertheless to ensure safety and order there was the so-called security police - *Sicherheitspolizei* (Sipo)⁹ allowed. In German literature the term *Sicherheitspolizei* was understood as police actions aimed at protecting the state and society, as well as the protection of persons and property¹⁰. Police system at that time in Germany differed from Polish experience in this field.

The first source of German law defining the tasks of the police was a widespread national law for the Prussian states¹¹. According to the tenth article of the second part of the seventeenth title of the Landrecht the responsibility of the police embraced maintaining peace, security and public order - for this purpose it was authorized to issue regulations. Further paragraphs entitled the police to investigate, punish, arrest and carry out inspections.

The changes were introduced by the Act of March 11, 1850 on the police administration¹² (*Polizei-Verwaltung*). The procedure for the formation and abolition of offices, police rules for issuing regulations and control, method of financing and tasks were then regulated.

However, the police was not created as a separate structure. Offices functioning as part of the general administration exercised police powers. Police in Germany was divided into security police (*Sicherheitspolizei*), administrative police (*Verwaltungspolizei*) and criminal police (*Kriminalpolizei*). On the other hand, due to a single area of activity there were several other police forces distinguished: building, street, road, rail, river, ship, water, port, field, forest, veterinary, school, industrial, press, commercial, mountain, social, passport, for foreigners, sanitary, moral and criminal police¹³.

Changes in the structure and functioning of the police were forced by the end of the First World War. Liquidation of military compounds, riots and rising crime caused by inflation and poverty contributed to the reform of the police. The result of plans created in the Prussian Ministry of the Interior was the establishment of *Sicherheitspolizei* throughout the country in the spring of 1919. Its main tasks included: ensuring the

⁹ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 133.

¹⁰ S. Genzmer, *Polizei: Polizeiverwaltung-Strafpolizei-Sicherheitspolizei-Ordnungspolizei*, Verlag von Julius Springer, Berlin 1905, p. 277.

¹¹ *Powszechnie prawo krajowe dla państw pruskich*, Poznań 1826, p. 327-328.

¹² *Gesetzsammlung 1850* p. 265 No. 3256.

¹³ F. Retzlaff, *Polizei-Handbuch*, Lübeck 1927, p. 90.

safety of people, property and the state order. Duties that were not assumed by Sipo were covered by the Order Police (*Ordnungspolizei*)¹⁴.

Sipo case was an example of inconsistency of the Allies in enforcing the treaty. The consequence of the fifth part, dedicated to the demilitarization of Germany, as well as §3 of the addendum to Art. 88 of Treaty of Versailles was supposed to be the liquidation of military formations. The German government sabotaged the execution of this decree expanding Sipo to the 60 thousand policemen. Surprisingly, the Allies agreed to the proposal of the Reich government which offered Sipo police services in Upper Silesia¹⁵.

Sipo in Upper Silesia was divided into two groups: in Katowice and in Zabrze. The first group was commanded by Colonel Hoffmann, the second by Colonel de le Roi. Sipo was organized on the model of military formation. When it comes to the structure it corresponded with Reichswehr infantry brigade. A gendarme was equipped with: rifle, pistol, saber and 5 hand grenades, whereas the company was armed with 3 light and 2 heavy machine guns and 3 submachine guns. Sipo wore green uniforms. In February of 1920 it had 3465 gendarmes, whereas in August 1920 this number amounted to about 5 thousand policemen. The reign over Sipo was exercised by the Department of the Inter-Allied Commission, led by the French Colonel Caput¹⁶.

It seems that Sipo in Polish historiography rightly earned negative reviews. The organization consisted largely of Germans and therefore had strongly anti-Polish character. As it was put by Kazimierz Popiołek, thanks to Sipo 'German propaganda could develop without any obstacles, seeking by all means – through either spoken and printed word or bribery and violence to impede Polish activities and prepare the ground for a successful outcome of the plebiscite'. French Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau, aware of the state of affairs, stated: 'Conducting a plebiscite while leaving the current administration will be an ordinary crime against Poles'¹⁷.

For a period of subordination to the Inter-Allied Commission Sipo in Upper Silesia received secret instructions from both the Prussian Ministry of the Interior, as well as from the Ministry of Defense of the Reich¹⁸. For instance, in the Directive dated 13 January 1920 *Reichswehrministerium* drew attention to the fact that in the correspondence with the German authorities military nomenclature would not be used, so as not to reveal to the Inter-Allied Committee real military nature of the covered organization¹⁹.

¹⁴ S. Naas, *Die Entstehung des Preußischen Polizeiverwaltungsgesetzes von 1931*, Tübingen 2003, p. 39-40.

¹⁵ W. Ryżewski, *Przyczynki do działalności niemieckich i polskich tajnych organizacji, oraz wojsk alianckich na Górnym Śląsku przed II powstaniem śląskim*, b. m. 1965, p. 11.

¹⁶ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 134.

¹⁷ K. Popiołek, *Historia Śląska od pradziejów do 1945 roku*, Katowice 1979, p. 524.

¹⁸ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 134.

¹⁹ W. Ryżewski, *Przyczynki ...*, p. 6-7.

Jan Ludyga-Laskowski directly called Sipo 'a tool of German terror in Upper Silesia'²⁰ and the judgment does not seem to be exaggerated. The author in the following manner characterized the German formation: 'the Sipo police included the most radical German units. Each member of *Sicherheitspolizei* was at the same time guardian of public safety and spy for the Germans, closely investigating the Polish movements. The bravest German officers were appointed as the commanders of the police. To put it succinctly, the so-called *Sicherheitspolizei* was nothing else but a German sniper elite army, which remained in the plebiscite area under a different name'²¹.

In addition, the author describes the methods used by the Sipo, such as furnishing the house searches during which weapons and ammunition were dropped off, national activists arrested or breaking up Polish rallies, marches, meetings and other oppressions²².

In a similar vein spoke Waław Ryżewski, who compared Sipo to a Trojan horse: 'Formally, the German police troops, in terms of allied power, fulfilled the functions of law enforcement and ensured the peace and security of the inhabitants in the plebiscite area. In practice, however, the German authorities' intention was to transform Sipo in an effective instrument to influence the population. In addition, the Sipo was to provide cover and supply base for the German terrorist militias'²³.

Therefore, the hatred that local people felt for *Sicherheitspolizei* came as no surprise²⁴. The Inter-Allied Commission was aware of it, thus on its command on 4 March 1920 Sipo disarmament was carried out, leaving only the sabers and rifles handguns and one rifle for five police officers²⁵.

Shortly after having taken power by the Commission, on February 20, 1920, The Head of State Józef Piłsudski, pursuant to art. 7 of the Decree of the highest authority and representative authority of the Polish Republic²⁶, appointed Wojciech Korfanty as Poland's Commissar for a Plebiscite in Upper Silesia. Korfanty organized the Polish Plebiscite Commissariat for Upper Silesia, located in hotel 'Lomnitz' in Bytom. The aim of the Commissariat was obviously to achieve a favorable outcome for the Polish plebiscite. An extensive network of local plebiscite committees served this purpose²⁷.

Sipo disarmament was not a satisfactory solution for the Polish population, who demanded its disbanding. Korfanty presented this idea to the Inter-Allied Commission, but in vain. This postulate was raised during the demonstrations on May 2, 1920, as

²⁰ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 29.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 134.

²² *Ibidem*, p. 198.

²³ W. Ryżewski, *Przyczynki ...*, p. 6.

²⁴ J. Przewłocki, *Międzysojusznicza Komisja...*, p. 39.

²⁵ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 134. In the paper issued by the Commission – 'Official Gazette of Upper Silesia' – there is no regulation concerning the disarmament of Sipo. It can be assumed, however, that the publication of such a regulation would cause the resistance of the Germans. Probably the Commission who wanted to avoid such reaction decided to use more confidential method.

²⁶ Journal of Laws from 1918 No. 17 item 41.

²⁷ J. Lewandowski, *Wojciech Korfanty*, Chorzów 2009, p. 71. J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 137.

well as during the 48-hour protest strike on May 10-12, 1920. Unfortunately, these actions have not been successful²⁸.

The Inter-Allied Commission took, the so longed for by the Poles, decision to terminate the Sipo only in August 1920²⁹. The position of the Commission was certainly influenced by the sequence of events, among which the most important was the outbreak of the second silesian uprising.

On the night of 27 on 28 May, 1920 took place a bloody attack on 'Lomnitz' hotel in Bytom, which resulted in the demolition of Polish Plebiscite Commissariat³⁰. Jan Ludyga-Laskowski gives the following description of this attack: 'Roughly from May 15 persistently circulated rumors about the prepared German attack on the 'Lomnitz' hotel. On 27 May, 1920 on the streets of the city of Bytom there could be observed large number of strangers, walking groups and persons armed with heavy sticks. [...] Danger hung in the air. [...] About 8 p.m. the mob stood in front of the hotel. The crowd wanted to break into the building but the door was firmly closed. The Germans began stoning front windows of the building, demolishing at the same time the entrance gate. [...] The doors were broken into with the use of iron and the the procession headed to the entrance gate, throwing hand grenades, at the same time shooting with firearms. In the critical moment the deputy Korfanty was inside the building, whom the Germans - apart from the destruction of the building - wanted to reach to. Only a handful of plebiscite officials - about 15 people - still worked in their offices, while everyone else had gone home. Apart from the above mentioned workers there were six watchmen in the hotel building and, completely at random, 4 commanders of the county Polish Military Organization of the Upper Silesia (POW GSL) along with the main commander Zgrzebniok. The latter, after consultation with Korfanty, took command over the defense of the hotel. [...] After the first exchange of gunfire that caused the withdrawal of the Germans from the hotel courtyard to the street, in the gate there were several German corpses left, as it was later found, officers only. Also in front of the building they were dead bodies. The Germans, furious with failure, burst into the hotel restaurant and wine bar. They demolished everything they could, brought kerosene and petrol and lit it, in the hope that the fire would destroy the main seat of Polish life in Upper Silesia. They did not reckon the heroic defense of the Poles, who extinguished the fire twice. [...] It was 12 o'clock at night. French patrols that have returned from the city, reported the French command of riots that took place in the city. [...] In a short time in Gliwicka and Długa Street there was not a living soul. After having cleaned the main streets of suspicious subjects the French occupied the 'Lomnitz' building [...]. The long-prepared German plan to destroy the 'Lomnitz' hotel was not crowned with success. In addition to material damage, the Poles did not suffer any casualties, while the Germans had seven dead and several wounded³¹.

²⁸ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 202.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 134.

³⁰ J. Gawrych, *Hotel Lomnitz. Z tajemnic szefa wywiadu*, Katowice 1947, p. 123.

³¹ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 141-143.

Korfanty strongly demanded the removal of the Sipo and even obtained from the Commission a promise that they would reform the formation towards a more equal distribution of posts between the Germans and the Poles. Unfortunately, Polish postulates were carried out sluggishly, to what the representatives of the United Kingdom and Italy certainly contributed, accommodating the Germans. The Germans were aware of the talks conducted by Korfanty with General Le Rond, so they did not want to realize the intended appointment of a new police force. The Sipo planned strike, with which the protests of the trade unions and political parties throughout the plebiscite were to be synchronized. A secret order considering this issue was captured by the Polish Intelligence Division of Plebiscite Commissariat in Bytom, which was published on 20 July 1920 in a *'Oberschlesische Grenzzeitung'*³². In this way, the German action was thwarted.

On 17 August 1920 there were an attack on the Polish Plebiscite Committee in Katowice and the murder of doctor Andrzej Mielęcki. It is worth quoting the description of these terrible events, "the crowd of demonstrators of about 5,000 persons incited by the speakers, amid the cries, went in front of the house where the Inter-Allied Commission (Warszawska Street) had its location. Faced with the French equestrian squadron, the mob pulled one of the soldiers down from his horse. The crowd then moved into the Commission office and destroyed the guard booth. Here the mob met with resistance from the French branch official. At that time in Heinzl Street there was an attack on 'Deutsches Haus' Hotel, where the Polish Plebiscite Committee had its headquarters. The attack was heroically repelled. At one point someone threw a hand grenade that exploded in front of the known surgeon – doctor Mielęcki, fatally wounding several people. Someone in the crowd shouted that a hand grenade was tossed from doctor Mielęcki's window. These words were caught by the mob and soon a branch of militants burst into the apartment of doctor Mielęcki. The pillows and pieces of furniture were thrown out of the window, while doctor Mielęcki was beaten until he bled.

Meanwhile, emergency cars came up to drive the wounded to hospital, whereas a separate car took Dr. Mielęcki. When the car carrying doctor Mielęcki was driving away, about 300 demonstrators threw themselves behind it, in the desire to 'finish off' the wounded. The coachman turned into "Sedan" Street but he could not go further because the car was stopped. The mob dragged doctor Mielęcki out of the emergency car. Then the doctor was tossed on the pavement among the filthiest insults. Someone in the crowd knocked his teeth out, crushed his jaw, others pounded him with sticks, poles and boards taken out of the fence. Bloodthirsty crowd was not brought back to repentance with a view of a doctor Mielęcki broken down into pulp. The dying man was dragged to the river banks and thrown into the Rawa river'³³.

In order to ensure safety and order the Inter-Allied Commission announced on 18 August 1920 in the district of Katowice city and Katowice village a state of siege³⁴. The

³² J. Gawrych, *Hotel Lomnitz...*, p. 112-113.

³³ W. Dąbrowski, *Górny Śląsk w walce o zjednoczenie z Polską*, Katowice 1923, p. 32-33.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 33-34.

legal basis was an annex to the art. 88 of the Treaty of peace between the Allied and associated powers and Germany. According to the relevant regulation ensuring public order and security was the task of the military authorities, with the possible appointment of a civil extraordinary commissioner. Several articles were suspended: 114 (personal freedom), 115 (inviolability of the home), 117 (confidentiality of correspondence), 118 (freedom of speech, censorship), 123 (freedom of assembly), 124 (freedom of association) and 153 (ownership, expropriation) of the Constitution of the Reich dated 11 August 1919³⁵. There was death penalty for some offenses introduced if committed with weapons. Also the possibility of establishing courts was provided in time of emergency during state of siege that would be competent to judge crimes included in section 1 (high treason), 4 (hostile acts against friendly countries), 5 (crimes and misdemeanors in the exercise of civil rights), 6 (Resistance against state power), 7 (crimes and misdemeanors against the public order), 8 (crimes and misdemeanors against cash), 10 (false accusation), 17 (injury) and 18 (crimes and misdemeanors against personal liberty) of the second part of the German Criminal Code³⁶. The courts were to use ordinary proceedings of criminal-ordination process³⁷ with time shortened to 24 hours between service of the summons and the main hearing and the lack of appeal. The death sentences were subject to approval by the Inter-Allied Commission³⁸.

2.2. Police in Upper Silesia

The case of appointment of parity Plebiscite Police along with German crimes has become a cause of ongoing on 19-25 August 1920 a second silesian uprising. As pointed out in the literature, the uprising objectives did not reach far³⁹. Among the aims there were aptly mentioned: the suppression at the dawn of actions of German armed organizations, preventing the existence of *Sicherheitspolizei*, its disarmament and accession to the creation of the Civic Guard, which was to be the basis for the future police⁴⁰.

The Allies met the insurgents' demands, thereby legitimizing the Polish victory⁴¹. The Polish Plebiscite Commissariat issued a proclamation liquidating the uprising, which summarized the spurt and emphasized the benefits of the removal of Sipo. Then there was a similar in content, common Polish - German proclamation issued to the people of Upper Silesia⁴².

On August 24, 1920 the Inter-Allied Commission adopted a regulation on the dissolution of *Sicherheitspolizei*. According to this act a person exempt from service, from outside Upper Silesia, who were not hired by the new police, were to be placed at the

³⁵ Reichsgesetzblatt 1919, No. 152 p. 1383.

³⁶ Reichsgesetzblatt 1871, No. 24 p. 127.

³⁷ Reichsgesetzblatt 1877, No. 8 p. 253.

³⁸ Gazeta Urzędowa Górnego Śląska, No. 6 on 28 August 1920

³⁹ T. Jędruszczak, *Powstania śląskie 1919-1920-1921*, Katowice 1981, p. 43-44.

⁴⁰ K. Popiołek, *Historia Śląska...*, p. 532.

⁴¹ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 179.

⁴² W. Dąbrowski, *Górny Śląsk...*, p. 34-37.

disposal of the Reich government. In contrast, real estate, equipment and weapons were to be assigned in the allied authorities⁴³. At the same time there was the Regulation on the organization of police of Upper Silesia issued⁴⁴.

In the literature the emphasis was also put on concretization of the victory in the second silesian uprising as shown by the two plebiscite commissioners, i.e. by Wojciech Korfanty and by Kurt Urbanek, as well as on Polish-German agreement, containing the decision to terminate the appointment of Sipo and creation of Police in Upper Silesia⁴⁵.

As the legal basis for this regulation there was already mentioned addendum to Art. 88 of the Treaty of peace between the Allied and associated powers and Germany given, signed at Versailles on June 28, 1919. According to the Art. 1 of the Regulation, the new formation was to act until the mission of the Inter-Allied Commission was completed in the area of Upper Silesia. The police was entrusted the enforcement of laws concerning public safety and the maintenance of order. Its subordination to the allied authorities was a foregone conclusion. Before taking up the duties all the police officers were obliged to take the oath, whereas the conditions of admission, duties and other organizational issues were to be defined by the Director of the Department of Military Affairs of the Inter-Allied Commission⁴⁶.

The issued by the Inter-Allied Commission 'rules of acceptance, impeaching of the ministry and service of plebiscite police officials'⁴⁷, being a source of domestic law, defined the organization, subordination and other specific issues.

Workers of plebiscite police corps were civilian officials. Admission to the service was preceded by a month preparatory period and would last until the end of the mission of the Inter-Allied Commission in Upper Silesia. Taking over the duties and appointment preceded the submission of the following oath: "I swear that during my service in the Plebiscite Police I will obey my superiors in all that concerns the service to which I was appointed, I will sincerely and loyally serve the Inter-Allied Commission in Upper Silesia and take orders only from the organization or its representatives; I will not participate in any propaganda, either directly or indirectly; I will respect a complete neutrality in deeds and words; I will not support citizens of my nation in any way on the occasion of public demonstrations; during fulfilling my duties, I will use the power entrusted to me only to maintain order and enforce laws"⁴⁸. Resignation from the service was possible during the preparatory period. After that period, the decision to dismiss at the request of the official himself had to be then taken by the corps commander, whereas appeal against this decisions lied within the competence of the director of the Department of Military Affairs of the Inter-Allied Commission, with the monthly wages paid to the

⁴³ Gazeta Urzędowa Górnego Śląska, No. 6 from 28 August 1920

⁴⁴ M. Anusiewicz, *Kronika powstań śląskich 1919-1921*, Warszawa 1980, p. 104.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 37.

⁴⁶ Regulation of the Inter-Allied Plebiscite Commission on the establishment of the Police in Upper Silesia, P. Marszałek, *Prawo Policji Państwowej w II Rzeczypospolitej 1915-1945*, Toruń 2009, p. 261-262.

⁴⁷ Archiwum Państwowe w Katowicach (dalej: APK), *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, sygn. 30, k. 18.

⁴⁸ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 8.

dismissed. Officials who, in the recruitment procedures, made false statements, as well as those who "trespassed against honesty and decency, against official duties, or who defiled the reputation of the corps while on duty or either off duty" were to be released immediately without any compensation. In order to marry there had to be the approval of the corps commander obtained. The corps officials were entitled to a vacation, but "business necessity" had to be taken into consideration and the number of officials on vacation could not exceed 10% of the military branch. In case of requests and complaints the first instance was the commander. If he failed to fulfil his obligations the interested person could turn to the allied officer supervising the branch. The last instance was a corps commander. The time of service equalled eight hours but, if necessary, it would last as long as required by the necessity. The duties of the officials also embraced carrying out the work which, under normal conditions, were not appropriate to their degree. In the event of injury or illness on duty the officials were entitled to salary in a similar height as given before to *Sicherheitspolizei* officers. In the event of the death of the officer or official the same provisions were to be given to the widow and children. The pay was defined on a daily basis, the payment would take place on 1st, 11th and 21st of each month. The basic salary for officials per day was within 11 (for watch-master, Ger. *Vizewachtmeister*) to 15 German marks (sergeant major), whereas for officers it was 2 marks more. The officials were also entitled to salary allowances: for married men - 2 German marks, whereas for each child 1 mark 50 pfennig per day. In addition, there was a cost of living allowance of 8 marks for married officials and 7 marks for bachelors. The board for officials living in barracks was free, while married men, not quartered in the barracks, were entitled to an allowance of 3 marks paid 3 times a month. After having been hired the officials received uniforms and weapons and they were obliged to give it back when they terminated their employment. The state police were obliged to take care of the uniforms and weapons themselves, covering all the costs from the soldier's pay. Officials were to be placed in the barracks, although married soldiers, after obtaining the consent of the commander, could live in the city – in such a case they were entitled to the allowance for rent in the amount of 40 marks for officials to the rank of Sergeant Major and 70 marks for higher degrees⁴⁹.

The candidates to the police could be recruited only among men born at the plebiscite area of Upper Silesia, fluent in Polish and German, not shorter than 160 cm. The place of recruitment was Lubliniec, where the candidates were subjected to medical examination. If they met the basic conditions they were admitted to monthly trial when, within 15 days from the admission day, they had to present a birth certificate, an extract from the register of penalties, the good behaviour certificate issued by the supervisor of the municipality, confirmed by landrat, whereas married recruits - a wedding certificate⁵⁰.

⁴⁹ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 18-20.

⁵⁰ *Ibidem*, k. 6.

The police was to be constituted half by Polish and half by German officers⁵¹. The Germans recruited the policemen released from Sipo who did not return to the Reich, while on the Polish side, the recruitment and supervision was carried out by the Section of Plebiscite Police established at the Department of Internal Policies (subsequently incorporated into the Department of Intelligence) of the Polish Plebiscite Commissariat in Bytom. The section was headed by captain Szymon Białecki⁵².

The Polish party encountered difficulties regarding the staffing of the police officers. Firstly, there were very few Poles serving in the German army who have held officer rank. If this condition was fulfilled, they were the inhabitants of Pomerania and Wielkopolska, making their candidacy useless to the census of being born in Silesia. Secondly, the requirements for candidates for the posts of officers were quite high: a minimum of seven years of military service and the rank of sergeant major (German *oberwachmeister*), platoon sergeant or higher, as well as 'energetic attitude, resonant voice and intelligence'. A further complication was the 14-day deadline for submissions of candidates for police officers⁵³. The difficulties were overcome in such a way that in addition to the actual officers, of which there were only eight, also non-commissioned officers and privates of outstanding experience and intellect also applied, who were presented earlier to the promotion and approved by the Ministry of Military Affairs⁵⁴.

The first recruitment term was on August 28, while the second on 6 September 1920. Medical examinations and formalities connected with the temporary acceptance into service records and with uniforms were conducted in Lubliniec. Police uniforms were 'inherited' by Sipo, only lapels changed from green to blue. New police officers, leaving Lubliniec, were to be mixed up in platoons with Upper Silesians serving earlier in *Sicherheitspolizei* in such a way that the platoon had to have equal number of people of both German and Polish citizenship. Written orders were to be formulated in German and Polish, while spoken orders only in German due to the fact that the language was known to all from the military service⁵⁵. After eight days of admission to preparatory service the officials were sent to the appropriate units (groups, sections, troops), whereby they could not serve in the county where they were born or where their permanent place of residence was. After a month they were sworn and obtained a permanent act of acceptance and identity cards⁵⁶.

The organization of the police formation was dictated by the regulation of the Inter-allied Commission concerning the command and the use of police of Upper Silesia⁵⁷.

⁵¹ J. Musioł, *Sądy polowe...*, p. 15.

⁵² B. Kayzer, *Urzędy policji wykonawczej pod zarządkiem Międzysojuszniczej Komisji Rządzącej i Plebiscytowej na Górnym Śląsku od sierpnia 1920 r. do lipca 1922 r.* [in:] "Śląski Kwartalnik Historyczny Sobótka", No. 2, Wrocław 2002, pp. 156-157.

⁵³ *Ibidem*, p. 157.

⁵⁴ J. Gawrych, *Hotel Lomnitz...*, p. 123-124.

⁵⁵ B. Kayzer, *Urzędy policji...*, p. 156.

⁵⁶ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 6-9.

⁵⁷ Gazeta Urzędowa Górnego Śląska, No. 10 from 3 December 1920.

Art. of August 3 regulation was amended prejudging that the the head of the command hierarchy was the Chief of Police of Upper Silesia. According to the regulation the control over the police possessed the Director of the Department of Internal Affairs and Director of the Department of Justice. As the commander with the seat in Opole there was appointed the French General Georges Bonnet. The police were divided into 3 groups: in Opole (with the British commander - Major Dunn), in Gliwice (with Italian commander - major Renzetti) and in Katowice (with the French commander major Feyler)⁵⁸. Each group was divided into 8 to 10 sotnyas (companies). A sotnya (a company), which included three platoons, numbered from 150 to 180 people and usually embraced one district⁵⁹. The number of policemen grew. While in the first months there was approx. 3 thousand people at the police disposal, in December 1920 this number grew to 5200 policemen⁶⁰.

On October 1920 the trainings began. The courses lasted four weeks and were organized separately for groups in Katowice, Gliwice and Opole. The subject of the training was the organization and tasks of the Police in Upper Silesia, the use of weapons, search, seizure, arrest, carrying out inspections and securing evidence, first aid and police defense tricks. The course ended with an exam before a committee consisting of three police officers - German, Polish and allied officer. The police officers were promoted accordingly to the obtained results⁶¹.

During the operation of Upper Silesia Police there were staffing problems which resulted from the dismissal, as well as the death of officers⁶². For instance, Korfanty asked the Inter-Allied Commission to admit a position of a major in the Police Headquarters in the Polish Upper Silesia to the Polish officer, as it was already done in relation to Germany. The description of the trouble with the lack of officers is part of a letter of Captain Stera, adjutant commander of the Plebiscite Police, sent in January 1921 to the Personnel Department in the Ministry of Military Affairs in Warsaw for the immediate deployment of officers to serve in the Upper Silesians Plebiscite Police⁶³.

The Police Service in the Upper Silesia could have internal character or it concerned the service within the town hall or the railway station. In the framework of an internal service 5 police officers were on duty in front of the police barracks. In turn, the town hall service involved patrolling the streets. Railway service was based on searching through stations and premises adjacent to the rail. Schedule was organized in such

⁵⁸ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, sygn. 30, k. 3. In the German honourable book of police there was the information found that in one of the sotnya of Katowice Group there was almost 75% 'clearly hostile elements'. H. Roden, *Polizei graift ein bilddokumente der Schutzpolizei*, Leipzig 1934, p. 48.

⁵⁹ J. Ludyga-Laskowski, *Zarys historii...*, p. 197.

⁶⁰ B. Kayzer, *Urzędy policji...*, p. 163.

⁶¹ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 9-11.

⁶² T. Koczur, *Powstańcy w Policji Plebiscytowej* [in:] *Pamiętniki powstańców śląskich*, R. Pitera-Ratepi [ed.], Katowice 1957, Vol. 1, p. 157; APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, sygn. 30, k. 21. According to a Polish list by name stored at the police station 22 policemen were killed.

⁶³ *Źródła do dziejów powstań śląskich*, K. Popiołek [ed.], Wrocław et al. 1974, t. 3, p. 19-21.

a way that the service lasted 24 hours, then was a day off and one day of service readiness⁶⁴.

Changes in the subordination of the Police were introduced by a regulation issued by the InterAllied Commission on January 8, 1921⁶⁵. On the basis of this legislation the Director of the Department of Internal Affairs had the right to have any police force at his disposal in the plebiscite area to ensure public order or proper conduct of the vote. Under the authority of the Director analogous powers vested a District Controller within his jurisdiction area.

In order to ensure not only public order but also full readiness during the plebiscite the vote for police officers was scheduled on 14 and 15 March 1921⁶⁶.

Given previous experience with the German Sipo, the appointment of Plebiscite Police was rightly cited as a factor thanks to which plebiscite action could be pursued at all⁶⁷. A similar view on the situation had Polish press, covering the events in Silesia in Warsaw newspapers⁶⁸.

On the night of 2 to 3 May, 1921 the third Silesian uprising broke out. The Plebiscite Police did not behave in the manner required by the oath they had made. Polish policemen joined the insurgents and in some places initiated combat operations. In turn, the German part of Apo fought against insurgents while taking part in disarmament of the Polish police officers⁶⁹.

Along with the reorganization of the police after the uprising the position of Chief of Police in Upper Silesia changed - general Bonnet was replaced by Italian Colonel Pezenti⁷⁰.

The police of Upper Silesia was created as a result of the fiasco of the solution adopted by the Western powers concerning internal policy on the disputed territory, which assumed using an existing body of German state authority - *Sicherheitspolizei*. In this regard it must be stated that the Inter-Allied Plebiscite Commission in the beginning of its operation should have solved the German service and in its place create a mixed German-Polish police. This state seemed to be also postulated by the Treaty of Versailles, although optionally - depending on the decision of the Commission.

Created after the second Silesian uprising the Plebiscite Police played an important role in the history of Upper Silesia. Apart from taking care of public order and safety it had an impact on the functioning of services in Silesia. A considerable number of policemen of Polish origin, after the dissolution of Apo, continued service in the Police of

⁶⁴ T. Koczur, *Powstańcy...*, p. 154 -155.

⁶⁵ *Gazeta Urzędowa Górnośląska*, No. 13 from 18 January 1921.

⁶⁶ B. Kayzer, *Urzędy policji...*, p. 169.

⁶⁷ L. Ręgorowicz, *Wspomnienia śląskie i poznańskie z lat 1919-1934*, Opole 1976, p. 29.

⁶⁸ T. Jędruszczak, *Polityka Polski w sprawie Górnego Śląska 1918-1921*, Warszawa 1958, p. 233.

⁶⁹ B. Kayzer, *Urzędy policji...*, p. 170.

⁷⁰ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 3.

Silesian Region⁷¹, acting as its base personnel. Many former Apo officers held high positions in the police, education and the autonomous authorities of the region. In the Police of Upper Silesia served for instance the President of Katowice Dr. Adam Kocur, Deputy Chief of the Silesian Province Police sub-inspector Józef Jeziorski, Deputy Commander of the Municipal Police sub-inspector Piotr Urbanczyk and Head of the Department and the Main Police Station of Silesian Region Commissioner Wincenty Niedziela⁷².

2.3. Gendarmerie

During the uprising in Upper Silesia the police service in the area was held by the German Apo and the Silesian Gendarmerie, whereas after the cessation of fighting the employment status of Plebiscites Police was leveled and what is more, Municipal Police was established.

Gendarmerie was a police formation, created by decree of the Supreme Authority of the insurgent Upper Silesia. Captain Maksymilian Żyła was appointed as the main Commander of the Gendarmerie. The Gendarmes were recruited from former members of the Plebiscite Police, as well as from soldiers of Polish origin. The formation was equipped with new uniforms, handguns and long rifles, hand grenades, light and heavy machine guns and with means of transport. Gendarmerie was divided into 3 groups: 'East', 'North' and 'South' group. In every county there was a squadron consisting of 300 members. Combat readiness was very well, so at the crucial moment of uprising the two military police brigades were collected, which contributed to the collapse of the German offensive⁷³.

Apart from maintaining order and enforcing the directives of civil authorities and military courts Gendarmerie was an auxiliary body of the drumhead court-martial. Gendarmerie performed basic procedural actions, for instance questioning of witnesses and suspects. The organization also brought the accused to the courts for hearings⁷⁴.

In the bulletin of the General Command of Uprising Army of Upper Silesia from 11 June 1921 we can find the following summary of the Silesian Police: "It is worth emphasizing the activities of gendarmerie on the front line, as well as in the country, as it gained the respect of not only Polish, but also German population"⁷⁵.

2.4. Municipal Police

The legal basis for the establishment of the Municipal Guard was Regulation issued by Inter-Allied Commission dated June 17, 1921⁷⁶. The appointment and dissolution of

⁷¹ Regulation of 17 June 1922 on the organization of the Provincial Police (Silesian Journal of Laws from 1922 No. 1, item 4).

⁷² APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, sygn. 30, k. 90-91.

⁷³ J. Musioł, *Sądy polowe...*, p. 63-64; APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, sygn. 30, k. 15.

⁷⁴ J. Musioł, *Sądy polowe...*, p. 64-65.

⁷⁵ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 15.

⁷⁶ *Gazeta Urzędowa Górnego Śląska*, No. 21 from 25 June 1921.

municipal police was optional and depended on the decision of the Commander of the Police in Upper Silesia, who had to consult the Director of the Department of Internal Affairs.

The task of the municipal guard was to maintain public safety and order within the relevant municipality. In Upper Silesia, all the guards were subject to Supreme Commander of the Police in Upper Silesia, while at the municipal level – to police inspector of sotnya of Upper Silesia. Control over the guards in the plebiscite area had the Directors of Departments of the Interior and the |Deptment of Justice, whereas at a lower level - municipal authority⁷⁷. The guards were financed from the budget of given municipalities.

Authorized to serve in the guard were local inhabitants of lawful age, born in Upper Silesia, who had no criminal record and an unblemished reputation. The formation was supposed to be formed by an equal number of Poles and Germans⁷⁸.

The division of jurisdiction between the Police of Upper Silesia and the Municipal Guards looked in such a way that the police were on duty in the municipalities, while guards in rural communities. This scheme of security forces division remained unchanged until the transfer of Upper Silesia to Poland⁷⁹.

2.5. Special Police

Another police authority in Upper Silesia was established by the Inter-Allied Commission Regulation from 29 November 1920 on Special Police. It replaced functioning so far in Katowice and Zabrze German State Police. The special police was subject to the Supreme Commander of the Police in Upper Silesia but it was also controlled by the Director of the Departments of the Interior and the Department of Justice. The officers of the State Police in Upper Silesia, not born in the area of Upper Silesia, who did not get the proposals of further service, were put at the disposal of the government of the Reich⁸⁰.

The policemen of the Special Police, like their colleagues from Apo, pledged 'total impartiality and absolute neutrality' of the service. Formally, the entire formation were Germans, whereas the official language was German. Weapons and uniforms, as well as means of communication and real estate of Special Police were taken over after their predecessor⁸¹.

The competence of the Special Police was the same as the preceding State Police. Commandant Captain Holfeld began his tenure with a review of not only police man-

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*.

⁷⁸ B. Kayzer, *Urzędy policji...*, p. 171.

⁷⁹ *Ibidem*; APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 3.

⁸⁰ *Gazeta Urzędowa Górnośląska*, No. 10 from 3 December 1920

⁸¹ APK, *Policja Specjalna Górnego Śląska Grupa Katowice*, case No. 1, k. 146.

power but also the proceedings and planned activities. Salary, as well as uniforms or weapons did not change⁸².

The leadership put considerable emphasis on homicide, robbery, arson, burglaries, as well as cases, in which the policemen and other officials, were involved. This fact could be proven by the circular, according to which the case files, before sending it to the prosecutor's office, had to be signed by the commander and countersigned by the criminal inspector⁸³.

The deadline to vote in the plebiscite was appointed for officers on the 13th March 1921. The service was planned in such a way that all entitled persons had the possibility to vote⁸⁴.

On the basis of the preserved documents one can state that the Special Police was a professional and apolitical formation. This was evidenced by extracts from the proceedings, the grant given to the police in the amount of 25% increase in salaries and the commander's activities, who forbade his subordinates to act in favour of any party involved in the plebiscite. It is possible to conclude that the order to stay apolitical was respected, whereas the police management reacted in a firm way in response to any abuse in this area. An example of the latter could be the behavior of sergeant Woitczka, who, as we learn from a denunciation written by sergeant major Roemisch, a large part of his service devoted to political meetings in his room, during which one could hear hostile comments concerning Poland⁸⁵.

CONCLUSION

The Inter-Allied Commission in Regulation from 16 June 1922 abolished the services subordinate to it. In this way the Police of Upper Silesia, the Special Police and Municipal Guards were solved. The abolishment happened the earliest in Katowice, Kluczbork and adjacent counties (on 17 June), the latest in Opole (on 7 July)⁸⁶. All officers received *Liberation* cards, which listed the reason for dismissal with the signature and stamp of the commander of the unit⁸⁷.

The manner of overtaking jurisdiction by the German police in the area allocated to the Germans and the Polish police, in areas connected to the Polish Republic was also regulated. This occurred after the dissolution of the services subordinate to the Inter-Allied Commission and before leaving the Upper Silesia by the Allied troops. The build-

⁸² APK, *Policja Specjalna Górnego Śląska Grupa Katowice*, case No. 1, k. 149-150, 153., B. Kayzer, as head of the Special Police, indicates Krzanka, whose name, however, does not appear in the correspondence preserved in the State Archives in Katowice.

⁸³ APK, *Policja Specjalna Górnego Śląska Grupa Katowice*, case No. 1, k. 164-165.

⁸⁴ APK, *Policja Specjalna Górnego Śląska Grupa Katowice*, case No.1, k. 184.

⁸⁵ APK, *Policja Specjalna Górnego Śląska Grupa Katowice*, case No. 1, k. 161-162, 177, 184.

⁸⁶ *Gazeta Urzędowa Górnego Śląska*, No. 37 from 17 June 1922.

⁸⁷ APK, *Policja Województwa Śląskiego*, case No. 30, k. 8.

ings, materials, files and archives, including the police archives were transferred to the new authorities⁸⁸.

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⁸⁸ Gazeta Urzędowa Górnego Śląska, No. 38 from 18 June 1922.

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