

October 25, 1956

**Maj. Witold Osinski, Reports on the Events of 19-23
October 1956**

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Summary:

Reports recounting Osinski's experiences with infighting between the Polish Ministry of Defense (MND), and the Stalinist Internal Security Corps (ISC). The reports also take place during the Polish October (Gomulka' Thaw). Normal font indicates that the text appears in both instances of the document. Italics indicates that the text appears only in the original, handwritten version of the document. Bold font indicates that the text appears only in the final, typed version for Gomulka.

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Warsaw

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TO
FIRST SECRETARY PUWP CC
Comrade G O M U L K A - Wieslaw

SPECIAL INFORMATION *[Duty Report]*

re: events of 19-23 October 1956 *[situation in Internal Security Corps]*

I. On 17-18 October of this year *[For about three days]* my subordinate local officers *[operational employees serving]* at the Informacja Department with [ISC] HQ, and units of the ISC Warsaw Garrison, signalled me that [ISC] Command is executing a regrouping of small units, which indicates that preparations are being made for *[military]* action.

Immediately upon receiving this *[intelligence]* kind of news for the first time, on the evening of 17 October, I called the ISC Chief of Staff, Col. KONINSKI, to request that I be appraised of the situation. Col. KONINSKI was caught unawares by this telephone call and asked me: *[“]how did I get to know about this[?”]* I told him that it was reported to me by *[my]* Informacja officers at HQ and at ISC units in Warsaw. Col. KONINSKI provided me with a general assessment *[of the situation]* during the discussion; namely that *[“]orders had been given to strengthen our vigilance, because rallies are planned at Warsaw schools and colleges, and we [ISC] must be prepared for provocations, should the occasion arise, from hooligan elements and the like.[”]* He pointed out that *[“]from the ISC 1st Brigade in Góra Kalwaria an infantry company was brought in to strengthen units of the [Warsaw ISC] Garrison,[”]* which I reported to the Deputy Chief of Informacja, Col. Radzienczak, among others, during our personal meeting before the afternoon of 19 October.

II. On 19 October, at about 10:00 in the morning, I was summoned to meet with CID Deputy Chief, Col. RADZIENCZAK, and asked: *[“]what have you heard at your end[?”]* Since I did not know in fact what was to come *[of the ISC actions]*, I reported widely, on the restructuring of our *[counter-espionage]* work as a result of staffing changes (decrease of cadres attached to Informacja organs at ISC by over 50%), with respect to organization, personnel, as well as operations. I also presented our intentions for the fourth quarter. Next, in assessing the political situation *[inside the ISC]* (intimately connected to the operational activities of our [ISC] troops), I recalled discussing the strengthening of vigilance *[by the ISC]* and, to further questions, I put forward the explanation outlined above in point I.

Next, Col. RADZIENCZAK asked me: "[w]hat does the situation in ISC Command look like and who is to become the Corps Commander after Gen. MUS departs for school in Moscow?["]

I explained that there is a fierce struggle for the commander's chair, between ISC Deputy Commander Col. PUTE CZNY, and ISC Chief of Staff, Col. KONINSKI, which is known to all senior officers at ISC HQ. It appears that a very sharp and noticeably vulgar encounter between them took place at a special evening on the day a Soviet officer, the former ISC Chief of the [Combat] Training Department, Col. [Dymitr] WARIONCZYK, was departing in connection with his return in August [1956] to the USSR. In the course of a mutually humiliating personal exchange, Col. PUTE CZNY stated that he would do everything so that a Jew could not become ISC Commander and that he would not let it happen. There were many senior officers at this evening party, including Col. [Stanisław] WOLANSKI [Chief Commandant of the Citizen's Militia until September 1956] and Col. [Roman] GARBOWSKI [MIA department head]. Their views were divided, and if I am correct, Col. GARBOWSKI decided to support Col. KONINSKI and Col. WOLANSKI [supported] Col. PUTE CZNY (I must admit it is not out of the question that it was the other way around because I no longer remember exactly [Osinski was correct the first time-L.G.]). The particulars were obtained from Maj. Stanisław GODLESIA (he is at the Committee for Public Security School in Warsaw), who was told by Col. WARIONCZYK on the day of his departure to the USSR. Next, I added that a number of senior officers at ISC Command are strongly compromised since involving themselves in serious corruption at the expense of the state treasury. They bought all the old "Citroen" automobiles removed from service and changed old engines for new ones or completely rebuilt the automobiles at ISC workshops. Among others, Col. PUTE CZNY became involved in this crime (this fact is universally known even among the other ranks), of which we informed comrade minister Wicha, through the inspectors. At present, the [Military] Prosecutor's Office is investigating. Junior officers are being suspended from official duties, so Col. PUTE CZNY, when he found out an investigation began into this affair, gave up his acquired and rebuilt automobile. As a result, he continues in his current position. In the end, I emphasized, considering such a compromising situation, it is difficult for me to state firmly if I see an appropriate person in our ISC for the position of Commander, after Gen. MUS leaves for school in Moscow.

Finally, in my talk with Col. RADZIENCZAK, I came to the conclusion that he was interested in two issues: 1) What are ISC troops doing (their operational intention)[?]; 2) What kind of attitudes are prevalent in the ISC Command[?]

As I was leaving, I received instructions to intensify surveillance and to report promptly all new occurrences, particularly important events [at ISC], since the situation in the country is very tense during the debates at the 8th Plenum of the PUWP CC. Col. RADZIENCZAK also instructed me to investigate personally the increased alert on the part of ISC troops guarding 7 aircraft at Okęcie military airport (I personally knew

nothing about this).

In the afternoon, in connection with a telephone recommendation from Col. Radzienczak, I called Gen. Mus. When Col. Koninski took the telephone, I asked which [ISC] troops will be called to Warsaw, to find out what kind of formations are moving in this direction, because this problem interests the CID leadership. Col. Koninski declared that, ["with the exception of the infantry company from Góra Kalwaria, no other troops are being called in [to Warsaw], although at the present, as a matter of fact, Gen. Komar is with the ISC Commander, and together the three of them are making a thorough study of an adequate plan.["]

III. That same day, Saturday 19 October, at 14:30 hrs., the only CID briefing for Directorate and Department Chiefs from the Warsaw region was held, at which the CID Chief, Col. BAKOWSKI, informed us very generally about the progress of the 8th Plenum of the PUWP CC: comrades GOMULKA, [Zenon] KLISZKO, [Ignacy] LOGA-SOWINSKI, AND SPYCHALSKI co-opted to the CC; a delegation from the CPSU Presidium arrived for the plenum; [and] he listed the changes proposed for the composition of the Politburo.

[Bakowski] then indicated that ["a certain restlessness is growing in the country, as well as tendencies for rallies and manifestations, primarily by students.["] After naming a few cities, he pointed out, for example, that ["in Cracow students came out with slogans against the Ministry of National Defense and Marshal ROKOSSOWSKI.["] Moreover, clearly declaring that this was his personal belief, he added that ["the hatred towards Marshal ROKOSSOWSKI probably draws its source from the distortions present in the CID organs during Marshal ROKOSSOWSKI'S tenure.["] In characterizing the political situation in Warsaw, he declared that ["at enterprises, including universities and polytechnics, rallies are taking place and resolutions are passed to the 8th Plenum. This includes, among others (passed by students), a call to the military around Warsaw["] (which I understood as a call for solidarity). Moving on to assignments, Col. BAKOWSKI advised: ["readiness to intensify operational work (increase the number of contacts), because the enemy can take advantage of such a tense situation. Signal all gossip, new information, and outlooks so that our party leaders can prepare instructions for the proper political stand against the enemy, as well as the rumors that are being spread.["] At the end, he added: "you must consider the gravity of the moment". (The briefing ended after about 20 minutes at 14:50 hrs.)

It must be pointed out, with special emphasis and exactly as I wrote in point III, that this was the one and only [high level counter-espionage] briefing during these difficult days. And it was to prepare the military counter-espionage organs for rational and fully conscious action, in a complicated situation, to ward off political and operational structures that are readying themselves to spill blood.

IV. At 17:30 hrs., on 19 October, a briefing was organized for HQ officers at the ISC Garrison, which included the IA Commander, Gen. Komar, and the Chief of the Military

Directorate at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Col. Garbowski. In fact, the actual briefing began at 18:00 hrs. because, shortly before it was to begin, [ISC] Command decided to go to the Central Committee. During the briefing, Gen. Komar stated in a nervous voice:

"some elements are trying to negate the continuing democratization process in the country, and they find a hearing and support among some military officers. For example, a group of officers reported to I Nr S-u [We have not been able to determine who this signifies—eds.] and protested against Jews taking control of the CC. There is a rally taking place right now at the [Warsaw] Polytechnic, which can create further problems, hence it is our duty to react and to confront such events quickly and appropriately. If students and workers decide to take to the streets under the banner of the CC, and in political support of the CC, we will not react, but if anybody attempts to protest against the CC, and with anti-Soviet slogans, we will fight. Our ISC troops have their own traditions and more than once have spilled their blood fighting for people's power. Without doubt, today, irrespective of who raises his hand [against us], we will defend this government and our CC as befits communists.["]

Judging from the words spoken by Gen. Komar, it was reasonable to conclude that he decided to place the ISC Warsaw Garrison on a state of high alert (the above speech lasted about 3-5 minutes).

The next speaker was ISC Chief of Political Affairs, Col. Putechny, who said in a supplement [to Komar] that ["]they had [all] been to see comrade First Secretary Ochab, who guaranteed them that, regardless of various rumors, it cannot and will not come to a conflict between MND and IA troops.["]

Insofar as the briefing given by Gen. Komar is concerned, its aim was to mobilize and to boost the morale of officers at [ISC] Headquarters. It was also an order to [ISC] officers that, in line with military discipline and sacrifice, they must submit themselves without exception to the authority of ISC Command.

The briefing by Col. Putechny can be characterized as having a calming effect and, in some respects, contradicted the essence of Gen. Komar's speech. This in turn created doubts among some officers at [ISC] HQ, and all officers from the [ISC] political apparatus, concerning the legitimacy of activities prepared by the IA Commander and the ISC Commander.

Just when everybody was leaving the briefing room, the Deputy Commander, Col. Putechny, approached me and asked me to contact him in 30-50 minutes.

At around 19:00 hrs., I reported to Col. Putechny at his office, where a heated discussion was in progress during a briefing for his political officers. The officers demanded an explanation of the political situation and wanted a clarification of the contradictions in the speeches given by

him and Gen. Komar at the briefing. They simply argued that they would not leave the office for their units until they were informed why [ISC] HQ is monitoring every move made by all troops in the Warsaw area (and if I am not mistaken in the whole country), and why do incoming [ISC] orders have a clear anti-MND predisposition. And [they added] that Col. Puteczny is hiding something from them by assuaging the situation, when arguing that it will not come down to any battles [between ISC and MND troops].

Eventually, when they left his office, after repeated requests (and without any clarification of the situation), Col. Puteczny, very upset and visibly furious, spoke to me in the following manner:

"Comrade Osinski, help me. Those (here he used vulgar words to describe Col. Koninski, Gen. Mus, and Gen. Komar)...are preparing to fight MND troops and for the past three days have been organizing a plan to do so. But, since I was sick, I knew nothing about it. Concerning the briefing of senior ISC HQ officers at 18:00 hrs., Komar was planning to say something completely different from what he actually said. However, I would not allow it and I telephoned comrade Ochab (we are on a first name basis) from Mus' office so that he [Ochab] would see me and also them. With this, I put in place a fait accompli. Comrade Ochab talked to us for 10 minutes and urged us to maintain peace because there is no talk and there cannot be any talk of battles between MND and ISC troops. That address by Komar was not exactly in line with Comrade Ochab's directions and that is why, as you saw, I had to make my own clarifying comments. I believed that my address should show a different spirit and that it should have a more calming effect. Until now, everybody counted me in the "Natolin" group, with whom I had in fact sympathized, but lately I have changed my position and became a definite centrist. In order to manifest this, I went with them to see, in fact, comrade Ochab, and not to another member of the Politburo. They, the IA and ISC Commanders, are very resourceful and are even able to get comrade Wicha to side with their cause. As a result of such a complicated situation, I demanded from Mus and Koninski that they go to see Gen. Bordzilowski and explain the situation, as well as to check the orders issued, to see if he [Bordzilowski] knows about the concentration of MND troops around the Warsaw area. They strongly opposed my suggestion and did not go, although they apparently sent Lt. Col. Helfer, ISC Commander of Artillery and Armour.["]

In spite of my questions, Col. Puteczny would not share other information. Just before I was about to leave, he [Puteczny] reluctantly said to me (he looked into my eyes to decide if he could trust me or not):

"Comrade Osinski, I ask that you do everything in your power to stop what those sons-of-a- ... are planning to do. Concerning what I have just told you, tell only the CID Chief, Col. Bakowski, and keep me informed about specific events taking place among various [ISC] units."

It is important to add here that Col. Puteczny personally tried to contact Col. Bakowski on the government telephone, but he was unable to do so.

After I left Col. Puteczny, at about 21:00 hrs., I went to visit the [ISC] Commander, and later the ISC Chief of Staff, but I was unable to reach them. Consequently, I went to the ISC Operations Department, where I learned from the Chief of that department, Lt. Col. [Kazimierz] Rawski, that ISC Command had formulated a plan to defend our [ISC] bases and to guard government installations, as well as the CC, in case of an eventual military coup. During conversations with officers at HQ, I concluded that they were indeed convinced that such a coup was being prepared by someone, and that if any riots were to break out they were determined to carry out extreme orders from the ISC Commander.

I witnessed Col. Rawski receiving reports from officers on air patrol over Warsaw and the surrounding area, which reinforced my belief that these officers received orders not only to monitor different civilian groups, but also the movement of all military forces.⁸⁵

Furthermore, I learned that to strengthen the local [ISC] garrisons, extra reinforcements were sent to Warsaw: an infantry company from Góra Kalwaria, a tank company (probably from Łódź), [and] a motorcycle company from Łódź (with a strength of 30 machines). The ISC First Brigade in Góra Kalwaria was also ordered to go on high alert and it was considered to be a part of the ISC Warsaw Garrison reserve.

V. After collecting the information in point IV, at about 22:00 hrs., on the recommendation of Col. Puteczny, I tried to establish direct contact with my superior, Col. Bakowski, but he was unavailable.

After evaluating the information about the increasing political discord within the ISC Command, and the preparation of troops for military action as a real consequence, I went without delay to the CID and relayed this information to the following persons: CID Deputy Chiefs, Col. Radzieniczak [and] Col. [Michał] Goleniewski, and the Chief of the Second Directorate of CID, Lt. Col. [Jerzy] Sateja.⁸⁶ I also informed them that I do not know what to do, and that I do not know the exact circumstances of the current political

⁸⁵ Mus also mentioned in his memoirs that the ISC had access to small aircraft, probably for reconnaissance use, to monitor Soviet and Polish Army troop movements.

⁸⁶ The CID Second Directorate (including the Second Section Osinski directed at the ISC) was responsible for investigating cases of spying, sabotage, and gathering economic intelligence. It also investigated illegal organizations and their activities inside the Polish military. As such, it had the right to employ agents and informers. From 1953, this Directorate subsumed the work of the Third Directorate, which had been responsible for all CID agents and informants inside Poland's military establishment, as well as for reporting on the willingness of Poland's military to carry out the orders and directives of the minister of defense and the CID Chief. See Pałski, *Dokumenty do Dziejów PRL*.

situation. My subordinate officers are confronting me to demand an explanation, and a similar political disorientation exists among officers of the ISC Political Directorate. At this time, I was asked the following questions: ["]what is the "Natolin group" and what do I know about it?["] I answered that recently I have heard unofficial conversations on the subject from mostly unauthoritative sources [to the effect] that there is a split in the CC, one of the groups bears that name, and it includes [PUWP Politburo member] Zenon Nowak, Klosiewicz [Chairman of the Central Council of Trade Unions] and Witaszewski. But what kind of group it is, what is its program, what are its goals, and what is its program proper, that I do not know at all.

Consequently, I was told to contact ISC Command, to remain in touch with the situation in the field, as well as the undertakings employed by Command, and to make close and continuous contact with Col. Putechny, to inform him about the general mood in Corps, but demand in return clarification about the political situation. I was also told to report general, most interesting, and new incidents directly to the CID. This briefing was a shock for me because I expected to be informed at least partially about the situation. However, it became clear to me that I was not seen as the person responsible for supervising counter-espionage work in the ISC (I was substituting the [Department] Chief at the time), but in fact I was treated as a [mere] informer. To this day, I cannot believe that the CID leadership, including Col. Bakowski, who takes part in the proceedings of the CC, could not tell me anything more so that I could take a stand in this matter.

With these "instructions" I went to my officers, who with obvious disbelief heard me tell them that, with the exception of my orders to collect and channel information on the political situation, I am not in any position to advise them further. I also mentioned that in the case of a complicated situation, if the need arose to use ISC troops, we will act according to our political consciousness and class instincts.

While at [ISC] HQ [*Under these circumstances*], I tried to contact the ISC Commander or the Chief of Staff, but I was unable to reach them, despite the fact that I had made an appointment with Col. Koninski through the duty officer. I was informed later by the duty officer that Col. Koninski was aware of the appointment and was present at [ISC] HQ, but he did not ask to see me.

On 19 October, at 23:00 hrs., the ISC Commander ordered a high alert for the remaining Corps troops throughout the country to protect all buildings that house the PUWP, the Provincial Bureaus for Public Security, People's Town Councils, etc. Another order is being prepared to defend these buildings, just in case there is some kind of confrontation in the streets.

The evening passed peacefully, except that the next day, [20 October] at 7:00 in the morning, ISC Command received information from the field about the appearance of a dozen or so Soviet vehicles in the Wola district [of Warsaw]. As a result, a briefing for [ISC] unit commanders was organized. They were told to prepare their troops and notified of passwords ("Tecza" and "500") in case orders were issued to take up battle positions (in line with the plan

prepared two days ago to defend [ISC] headquarters). After some time passed, it became clear that a Soviet communications battalion had stopped before passing through Warsaw. The [ISC] troops were then ordered to return to normal duties.

On 19 October, at 23:00 hrs., the commander of a radio company, from the ISC Independent Communications Battalion, told Informacja officers (Lt. Kupisa and Lt. Zycha) he had heard [from someone] at the ISC [Warsaw] Garrison Political Department that ["Premier Cyrankiewicz told the Soviet delegation, after they arrived, that there was no need for them to have come from Moscow, because their interventions in Polish internal affairs have come to an end.["]

Moreover, he [commander of the radio company] was told, among other things, that comrade Rokossowski was thrown out of the Politburo. And he informed the soldiers of his company about this.⁸⁷

I had a feeling that [ISC] Command was avoiding contact with me and, in my following reports, I said this to the CID leadership. In response, Col. Radzieniczak ordered me to avoid contact with them, but that instead I position myself to keep an eye on [ISC] Command and to report everything to CID. I was also supposed to remain in close contact with the Chief of the Political Directorate at ISC, Col. Putechny. Since it was already late in the evening, there was no need to contact Col. Putechny and, in any case, on 20 October, the situation largely calmed down and the [ISC] high alert was cancelled.

Between 20-21 October, upon hearing radio communiques and reading press reports, and from conversations with comrade acquaintances in town, I became familiar with the situation and I was deeply resentful of the stand taken by Col. Putechny and the CID leadership, particularly Col. Bakowski. I believe that these comrades cannot be ignorant of the political situation and should take a stand worthy of communists. However, in my personal opinion, they were, and without doubt remain, in support of reactionary forces decelerating the democratization process, and as such, they completely failed to fulfill the confidence given to them.

A similar attitude towards Col. Bakowski is shared by all Informacja officers at the Warsaw Garrison.

⁸⁷ At this stage, Osinski ends his report on the situation in the ISC, CID and the ISC Political Directorate, between 17-20 October. Throughout Poland at this time, following the debates at the 8th Plenum, all other party organizations, including those in the Polish Army, began to discuss the consequences of the leadership changes that had taken place in the CC. The CID elite, the party members, held a mini-plenum *cum* rally to voice their support for Gomulka and the 8th Plenum. With the aid and guidance of the propaganda organs of the central party apparatus, under the leadership of the "Young Secretaries," especially Jerzy Morawski Wladyslaw Matwin, and the Warsaw party committee, the CID openly criticized the leadership of the CID during the October events. One of the most notorious security institutions of the Stalin years had finally joined the "Polish October."

With regard to the attitude towards Col. Puteczny, all officers of the ISC Political Directorate hate him as a result of his stand during the recent events, and they are planning to put forward a resolution to the [Polish Army] Chief Political Directorate to have Col. Puteczny dismissed from the position he holds. The situation in the Corps is unhealthy because of the fact that differences of political opinion, between Gen. Komar, Gen. Mus, and Col. Koninski on the one side, and Col. Puteczny on the other side, universally known within the ISC, completely impaired the authority of that last one.

For example, I received a report from the city of Kielce that the soldiers of the 7th ISC Regiment are widely debating exactly who to follow: the ISC Commander, Brigadier General Mus, or the Chief of ISC Political Affairs, Colonel Puteczny. This information was given to our Informacja officer by the Commander of the 1st Infantry Battalion [7th Regiment], Maj. [Adam] Danielewicz.

VI In the wake of the activization of PUWP members in the CID, a rally was organized for officers, non-commissioned officers, [civilian] military counter-espionage workers, and their families, on 22 October at 14:00 hrs. Representatives from the [Warsaw] Committee of the PUWP, and correspondents from [the party daily] *Trybuna Ludu* [People's Tribune], and [the official press organ of the Polish Army] *Zolnierz Wolnosci* [Soldier of Freedom], were also invited.⁸⁸

In my whole life, I have never been to such a stormy rally! The participation by comrades reminded me of well known historical events and of the films on the October Revolution. Words cannot explain what happened. All comrades warmly supported, without hesitation, and joined in solidarity with the comrade [First] Secretary's entire speech at the 8th Plenum. But, in all their own speeches [at the CID rally], they also recalled with bitter disappointment that during those difficult days, the [CID] leaders, especially Col. Bakowski, did not take a stand worthy of communists, and did not inform us of the political situation, despite the fact that they [CID leaders] regularly visited the CC Plenum.

Expressions of resentment were voiced [at the rally] because Col. Bakowski was not together with us, and it was demanded that his presence be expedited immediately. After Col. Bakowski arrived, he was aggressively ordered again to explain why he isolated all the organs of military counter-espionage, the most sensitive apparatus of the Armed Forces and people's power, from the ongoing struggle for the renewal fermenting in the nation. It

⁸⁸ The euphoria outlined by Osinski below was universal to all party meetings at the time. The Polish party had united all factions, the majority wanted to dislodge the minority, but they too had been part of the configuration that brought Gomulka to power. The purge was highly selective and minimal in its consequences. Most of those purged as a result of these mini-plenum's eventually returned to positions of great responsibility within the party apparatus.

was also pointed out that Col. Bakowski isolated himself from party work for the past year, because he no longer attends meetings of the Primary Party Organization [at CID HQ], of which he is a member. It was also observed that he was indifferent towards the initiatives to organize the rally. And a further demand was made of him to explain the "Natolin" group.

Col. Bakowski, regularly called upon to take the floor, stood to speak in the discussion. However, except for his declaration of solidarity with the resolutions of the 8th Plenum, he noted that in spite of what is said [about him] in the city, he is not and has never been a "Natolinist," and called for calmer, more factual speeches. Moreover, he did not reply to any questions put to him, claiming that he was unaware of the situation. This infuriated the comrades still further, even among the calmer factual speakers. There were more stormy and, frankly, tactless speeches [against the CID leaders].

The authority of the CID leadership at this rally, but especially the authority of Col. Bakowski, turned to ashes.

It became clear from what the [CID] comrades were saying [at the rally] that the orders to call in [Polish Army] troops to the outskirts of Warsaw were given by Generals Witaszewski and Bordzilowski. It was also pointed out that there were clear orders [from military commanders] not to inform Informacja officers about this (according to objective assessments), and that some employees of the Public Security Bureau in the field simply chased away Informacja officers with the comment: "what, you came here to spy on what we're doing." It [therefore] appears that we [CID officers] were left in the middle of the barricade since the organs of Public Security did not trust us because we were with MND, and [the same with] the [CID] commanders because we were not included with the organs of Public Security.⁸⁹ Next, the speech by Col. Bakowski was criticized during the discussion, where he was characterized "as a slap in the face" to all those at the gathering. It was demanded that the situation at the 8th Plenum, and presently, be clarified completely and in detail.

Col. Bakowski was also criticized by *Trybuna Ludu* and *Zolnierz Wolnosci* correspondents for separating the Informacja organs from the battle for renewal. They [journalists] pointed out that, for professional reasons, they were informed about the situation in the leadership of our party, but Col. Bakowski, due to his official position and in light of the fact that he took part in the plenum debates, knows the political situation better than they do. Although they could put us in the picture, they will not do this because highly placed persons, like Col. Bakowski, are sitting in the hall. And they have no

⁸⁹ It would appear that no one trusted CID agents, not even their own leadership, because no one could be sure who among them was working with the Rokossowski-Bordzilowski-Witaszewski group. The network of agents operated by CID within the military establishment was therefore put at the disposal of all the party leaders. The ISC watched MND and Soviet troops, while the CID watched ISC HQ.

right to deny him that privilege.

The rally began at 14:00 hrs, in the CID hall and lasted until 21:30 hrs., except that at about 19:00 hrs., the CID leadership suggested that we disperse because important mandatory duties await us. However, voices from the hall spoke against this, suggesting that if the leadership can decide to have such difficult days as Friday and Saturday [18 and 19 October] pass without us, then today nothing will fall apart. Also, there were relentless calls for Col. Bakowski to tell us the whole truth. Finally, during the last part of the rally, pinned to the wall, Col. Bakowski spoke again and declared that he ["is not in any position to inform us about the 8th Plenum, despite being at the sittings, because he has not as yet received the stenographic report and, as we all know, memory can be deceiving and he would not want to distort such extremely important information."] About the 8th Plenum, he said, pretty much word for word, that he ["heard about some kind of "Natolin" group that included: Witaszewski, Klosiewicz, Zenon Nowak,"] though he ["is not in any position to say if Marshal Rokossowski belonged to this group since [Rokossowski] did not speak at the 8th Plenum, but instead gave some kind of clarification."] ⁹⁰

In my own speech [at the rally], like other managers of the Informacja organs, I stressed that whatever confidence we once shared in the CID leadership was now seriously shaken. Immediately after I presented to them [CID leaders] very important information this past Friday, 18 October at 22:00 hrs., to the effect that unknown reactionary forces are organizing counter-revolution, they strongly suggested that I spy on the [ISC] Command, without explaining the political situation and without providing any kind of direction.

I proposed a motion, which I asked to be included in our protocol and resolution, to recommend that the PUWP CC begins an investigation into the leadership of the Chief Directorate of Military Counter-Espionage during those difficult days. If it is found that they [CID leaders] were in fact not in any position to discuss the situation, and unable to share with us political advice, this should be announced, and our former confidence in them can be reestablished.

Unfortunately, my motion was not included in the resolution. Therefore, I would like to request that the protocol of the rally be analyzed closely because it will shed more light on this matter. The protocol is in the hands of CID Primary Party Organization Secretary, comrade [Capt. Stanislaw] Duda. ⁹¹

I would like to add that on 23 October, during my conversation with Col.

⁹⁰ The Rokossowski issue had not yet been resolved. For details see below.

⁹¹ Duda was also the Investigating Officer at the ISC Military Prosecutor's Command of the ISC Warsaw Garrison.

Radzieniczak, I was told that Col. Putechny, after talking with me on 19 October, visited the CID in the evening, on his own initiative, and talked with the leadership.

I see it as my duty to present the above information to the new party authorities, in order to make a contribution towards the process of renewal in our political life.

Deputy Chief Informacja Department ISC

Deputy Chief Second Section Informacja Department ISC

[Signature]

Witold OSINSKI, Maj.

20 October 1956

Warsaw, 25 October 1956

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Soviet-Polish Relations and the Rokossowski Issue, 20-30 October 1956

On 20 October, *Trybuna Ludu* published a short communique concerning the Soviet-Polish talks. Insofar as the Polish side was concerned, the two delegations had come to a tentative agreement. The Poles also acknowledged:

It was agreed that a delegation of the PUWP CC Politburo would go to Moscow in the nearest future to discuss with the Presidium of the CPSU CC problems of further strengthening the political and economic cooperation between the Polish People's Republic [PPR] and the Soviet Union, and of further consolidating the fraternal friendship and coexistence of the PUWP and the CPSU.

More important, the 8th Plenum would be allowed to hold its elections without the participation of the Soviet leadership. Rokossowski's fate as a Politburo member would be decided by the PUWP CC, although there was no indication made that he would not continue as defense minister.

After the Soviets returned to Moscow, the CPSU Presidium met to assess their options. The 20 October meeting was attended by Bulganin, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Mikoyan, Molotov, Pervukhin, Saburov, Suslov, Khrushchev, Brezhnev, Zhukov, Shepilov, Furtseva, Pospelov and Serov. We do not have a detailed account of what was discussed, but from the published "Malin notes" of that sitting, we can make a number of deductions.⁹² According to the information

⁹² The "Malin notes" for 1956 have been translated into Hungarian and reprinted in Vyacheslav Sereda and