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"We Present Kazimierz Mijal"

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EROL Note:

In late autumn 1984, having returned illegally to Poland, Mijal was arrested by the Polish authorities. There was media coverage of his activities distributing leaflets critical of the regime. A selection of these reports were translated and published by the US Government's Foreign Broadcast Information Service that monitors overseas media and broadcasts.

Reproduced are two articles that appeared after the arrest of the 74 year old activist.

Articles:

- "We Present Kazimierz Mijal"
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- Marian Turski: "Kazimierz Mijal—Godfather of Dogmatism [Excerpts]"
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POLAND

CAPTURE OF 'OLD STALINIST' STIMULATES POLITICAL DEBATE

Mijal's Political Career

Warsaw TU I TERAZ in Polish No 48, 28 Nov 84 p 4

[Article by R-W: "We Present Kazimierz Mijal"]

[Text] Kazimierz Mijal was born in 1910 in the village of Wilkow, Warsaw Voivodship. Before the war he was a bank clerk and a trade union activist--a member of the Warsaw Branch and of the Board of the Union of Bank and Savings Employees, and a member of the Supervisory Board of the Federation of White Collar Unions.

During the Nazi occupation, Mijal was initially a member of the communist group Proletariusz, which was a clandestine organization of communists and radical peasant activists founded in Warsaw in July 1941 (the group also included T. Duracz, A. Fiderkiewicz, W. Kowalski, J. Rydygier and S. Ziaja). In January 1942 he and the rest of the group joined the freshly founded Polish Workers Party [PPR]. He worked in the agricultural department and co-edited TRYBUNA CHLOPSKA. In his clandestine activity he used the noms de guerre Artur, Kaminski and Wrzos. He was one of the organizers of the attack on the Municipal Savings Bank carried out by the People's Guard [GL] on 30 November 1942. As an employee of this bank, Mijal prepared the plan of the action, which brought the PPR 1,052,433 zloty. The whole action lasted 23 minutes, no shots were fired and no one was killed. Mijal was the only one of the bank employees who had to pretend resistance during the attack. He was bruised by Boleslaw Kowalski, alias Zygmunt, which freed him from suspicion of conspiracy. He was gradually promoted in the party. After the leadership of the Cracow PPR branch had been broken up, he became secretary of that branch. Later on, he was secretary of the Warsaw Committee. He participated in the founding meeting of the National People's Council [KRN] on the eve of the New Year 1944. He was elected to the Presidium as secretary and treasurer.

After the liberation, he was the government's plenipotentiary in the city and voivodship of Lodz--he organized new administrative authorities there. He was president of the city of Lodz and chairman of the Town People's Council. In 1947 he was appointed head of the Civilian Chancellery of President Boleslaw Bierut and of the Council of State Chancellery. After the structure of local authorities had been reformed and the Municipal Affairs Ministry had been established in 1950, he was appointed minister of municipal affairs. In the years 1952-1956 he was the presiding minister of the Office of the Council of Ministers. In the years 1956-1957 he was again minister of municipal affairs.

From 1945, Mijal was the alternate member of the PPR Central Committee. During the merger Congress and the 2d PZPR Congress he was elected Central Committee member. He was deputy of the National People's Council, the Legislative Sejm (1947-1952) and the 1st Sejm (1952-1956).

He had two brochures published in Poland: "The Process of Shaping People's Democracy in Poland (Historical Background)"--a transcript of lectures he delivered at the PZPR Central Committee in 1950, published in Warsaw in 1950-- and "Problems of Municipal Economy," published in Warsaw in 1950.

In his political views, Mijal was drawn to extremes. As one of his opponents said, "Mijal was so zealous he always spoke better than the Politburo." At the 3d Central Committee Plenum in 1949, which was devoted to "the party's tasks in the struggle for revolutionary vigilance in the light of the present situation," but in fact was aimed against Gomulka, Mijal attacked Gomulka the most fiercely of all. He insinuated that Gomulka, alias Wieslaw, had been responsible for the arrest of Pawel FINDER and Malgorzata Fornalska by the gestapo. Years later, Gomulka reminisced: "Nothing hurt me more than that biting suspicion. I wanted to react immediately and said to Comrade Bierut: 'I can't stand it.' During the recess, Comrade Bierut called Comrade Mijal and told him: 'Go and take your words back.'" And Mijal took the speech back.

In the years 1956-1957, Mijal was one of the most active supporters of the so-called Natolin orientation. He was the most involved of all in personal struggles and spoke the most sonorously for the squaring of old accounts and against democratization, which allegedly endangered the dictatorship of the proletariat. He opposed the re-interpretation of the causes and significance of the June 1956 events in Poznan during the 7th PZPR Central Committee Plenum in July 1956. "Despite the economic reasons and the different problems which we could and should have resolved, the Poznan events may only be described as a counter-revolutionary action against the socialist authorities," he said. According to him, "the Black Thursday" was not a manifestation of dissatisfaction with the living standards and the methods of government, but an action prepared by the armed underground and its imperialistic sponsors. He criticized Minc and Zambrowski's agricultural policy for ignoring the social situation--the peasants' resistance of collectivization. Some months later, he also criticized Gomulka's agricultural policy for yielding to capitalist trends in the countryside and permitting the dissolution of farm cooperatives.

At the 7th Central Committee Plenum in October 1956 everyone spoke for democratization. But some participants stressed the need for the final overcoming of the consequences of past policies and looked for new ways of socialist development, while others chiefly warned that the enemies could exploit the process of democratization for their own ends. Kazimierz Mijal belonged to the latter group. Although he gave verbal support for the October changes, only a few months later, at the 9th Plenum in May 1957, he severely criticized the new leadership's political line.

According to him, the party had departed from the principle of internationalism, had made concessions for the middle class and had been yielding to the enemy (which was to be manifested in dismissing workers from managerial posts). But the brunt of his attack was directed at agricultural policy. "After the

8th Plenum, the policy of restricting and eliminating capitalist elements from the countryside was practically abandoned," he said. "A shift has been made towards small-scale capitalism in farm production, with all the economic and political consequences which this may involve in the future. The oversimplified explanation that cooperatives broke down only because they had been organized in violation of the volunteer principle does not withstand criticism." Mijal claimed that Polish policies failed to comply with the universal traits of socialist construction. Wladyslaw Gomulka sharply reacted to Mijal's speech. "At that plenum," he said, "there were two reports--one presented by myself on behalf of the Politburo and one by Comrade Mijal. Comrade Mijal's speech represented a different political platform, a different political line."

Gomulka devoted the whole of his summing-up address to a crushing criticism of Mijal's views. He explained the real sense of internationalism and rejected the accusation of his breaking of its principles. "If anybody in this room is attacking us for lack of internationalism, if anybody tries to tell us we are national communists, he is not an internationalist but a flunkey," Gomulka said. He pointed out a number of times that Mijal was practicing demagogical criticism, that he proposed no definite, better measures, for instance with regard to agricultural policy.

"Tell me," he called, "what else can we do. There is nothing in this criticism which would tell us how to resolve our problems more effectively. There is only general instruction that we should work "in accordance with the principles of Marxism-Leninism. And this isn't any answer..." Analyzing Mijal's views, Gomulka emphasized their dogmatic character. "It is not true that a view on something should be approved by activists. The point is different; it is necessary that the working class approve of such a view. If it is accepted by the working class, a view which appears to us as sectarian and dogmatic will cease to be sectarian and dogmatic. It isn't so that suddenly sectarianism and dogmatism appeared to us. Sectarianism happens when a small group of people is unable to convey their views and their mentality to the working class and the masses.

Such a group remains alone with its views ... and considers everybody who refuses to accept them as enemies or deserters finding themselves under the enemy's influences." Advising Mijal to present his views to factory workers Gomulka said, "Regrettably, we realized too late that the attitude of the nation must be taken into account. One cannot act against the nation, against a major section of the working class."

Following Gomulka's address, Mijal expressed self-criticism but it soon turned out that his views remained unchanged. On several occasions, particularly after a Moscow meeting of party representatives from the socialist countries held in November 1957, he repeated the same objections to the PZPR policy. Gradually, he was leaving the political scene. He went back to the banking business and became the president of Bank Inwestycyjny.

In the 1960's, when first the Albanian party and next the Chinese were ever more strongly criticizing the development of the international working class movement, Mijal began to look for a new political opportunity. He became a fervent supporter of the anti-Soviet Chinese and Albanian policy. He maintained contacts with those countries' embassies and enjoyed their support. He organized an illegal armchair organization called "The Communist Party of Poland" and appointed himself its general secretary.

On 24 February 1966, the Polish Press Agency issued the following communique, "Last week slanderous, antistate materials were distributed all over the country. It has been found out that this wasn't the first such case and that this time, like before, the texts were printed in Albania. It has also been discovered recently that the Albanian Embassy has gone to the lengths of supplying to Polish citizen Kazimierz Mijal a passport issued to an Albanian citizen who visited Poland from 1 to 15 February. Using this passport, Kazimierz Mijal illegally left Poland."

Radio Tirana offered new opportunities to him. The huge radio station, constructed by the Chinese, broadcast programs in many languages including Polish. The Polish programs were authored by Mijal. Radio Tirana interpreted everything that was happening in Poland as revisionism and deviation from Marxism-Leninism. The only correct Marxism-Leninism was that propounded by Kazimierz Mijal's Communist Party of Poland. Mijal kept writing more and new appeals and versions of his program.

An appeal of 12 April 1981, contained, among other things, an astonishing proposal for resolving the agrarian problem in Poland: "We will create real state farms with an area of 10,000 hectares and 5,000 inhabitants. There will be no private gardens, only colorful blocks of flats, two rooms each. They will have central heating and an oven in each kitchen. There will be two elegant restaurants on the farm with mirrors, carpets, and dance halls; a self-service bar, a cafe, cultural club and a shell of a small church (contributions from the faithful later will be spent on its competition).

The central square will have a fountain in the middle where lights will play at night. There will be benches there and a few trees, a hotel for unmarried people, a machinery and servicing shop, a self-sufficient butcher shop, service shops, dry cleaners, a mangle, barbers, shoemakers, etc. Only flour will be supplied to the shops, but no other products. There will be trucks, one or two tourist buses and one car for the farm's director. The surplus of crops will be sold in the nearest town. The farm will also have a clinic and a ten-grade school. Farmers will not specialize in any particular crops or animals."

On 17 November 1984, after Mijal's arrest, the press published the following communique: "Kazimierz Mijal returned to Poland using a false passport and with the help of a small group of supporters involved himself in illegal activity. When arresting him, the militia uncovered a considerable number of printed materials and manuscripts intended for future publication."

Mijal's Split With Party

Warsaw POLITYKA in Polish No 49, 1 Dec 84 p 14

[Article by Marian Turski: "Kazimierz Mijal--Godfather of Dogmatism"]

[Excerpts] It seems that Kazimierz Mijal's name has not appeared in the Polish press for about 18 years, since he left Poland with an Albanian passport issued in the name of Mehmetko Servet. But the voice and the views of this man have continued to reach those who listened to Radio Tirana or Radio Peking. It became evident that some people have listened to these programs when "reports" broadcast on them and published in CZERWONY SZTANDAR, which was smuggled into Poland, were repeated in domestic underground publications and leaflets circulated before the 9th PZPR Congress. These "reports" (mainly doctored biographies and calumnies) were issued before the elections of top party authorities, and were intended to discredit those whom the authors of the leaflets said were "liberals," "revisionists," "aliens to the working class and the nation," and "backers of the clergy."

Let us examine Kazimierz Mijal's career. [for the excerpted fragment, see article on Mijal in TU I TERAZ - PNB of 1-3 December - editor's note]

After the 8th PZPR Central Committee Plenum in October 1956, at which Wladyslaw Gomulka was reinstated to the position of PZPR First Secretary, Kazimierz Mijal, found himself outside the main power circuit.

Historians of various orientations unanimously include Mijal in the so-called Natolin group. We are not going to describe or analyze here the origins of the two political orientations which existed in the party leadership at that time. We will just quote the following opinion expressed by Wladyslaw Gomulka during the National Party Activists Conference in Warsaw on 4 November 1956: "Before the 8th Plenum the political differences in the party leadership, i.e., in the Politburo and the Central Committee, boiled down to two fundamental issues--how to approach the issue of Poland's sovereignty and how to interpret the proposed democratization of public life in the socialist system."

In the post-October period, Kazimierz Mijal and those who shared his views alleged that the party leadership was surrendering to "revisionists," "petty bourgeoisie," "renegades," and "the middle class." They increasingly often used the adjectives "Jewish" and "Zionist." They were getting ready to found a party with new leadership, a "left-wing" and "revolutionary" party, which would demand "the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat" in Poland.

The first manifesto published by this group, in 1963, was entitled "To Victory Through Struggle. Passivity and Silence Spell Defeat." According to the group's program, entitled "Struggle for Socialism Under the Banners of Marxism-Leninism," the PZPR leadership had fallen under the control of revisionists, and had "departed from Marxist-Leninist ideology and was intent on restoring capitalism in Poland."

If the information printed in CZERWONY SZTANDAR is precise, in early December 1985, a group of people sharing similar views founded an illegal Communist Party of Poland [KPP]; Kazimierz Mijal became its secretary general.

A year and a half earlier, Wladyslaw Gomulka commented on the operations of this group publicly, though before a limited audience. "A political problem has emerged, so we have to make some things clear," he told the party activists of the Huta Warszawa Steelworks. According to Gomulka, this extreme leftist group was inspired from Albania and China; but "our domestic dogmatists are hiding behind that slander, too." The following is an in extenso quote pertaining to this meeting from "Pages From Wladyslaw Gomulka's Biography" (J. Michasiewicz, W. Namiotkiewicz, article in ZYCIE LITERACKIE No 48/1705):

"May 7, 1964. Gomulka meets party activists of the Huta Warszawa steelworks and delivers a lengthy speech in the production hall of the steelworks. The meeting has been organized in connection with the fact that some workers have been distributing "appeals" and other illegal materials issued by the sectarian and dogmatist Kazimierz Mijal group which calls itself the Communist Party of Poland. Gomulka's speech concerns primarily the ideological content of these attacks against the general political line of the PZPR. At the start, Gomulka quotes the full text of the slanderous 'appeal of the Communist Party of Poland,' which begins with the words: 'Polish workers! You are dumb and stupefied. You have allowed the reactionaries to break you up and push you back to the lowest position in the nation...' The authors of the appeal describe the situation in Poland and claim that power is in the hands of 'functionaries of the degenerated party together with kulaks, Jews, crooks, bureaucrats and priests.' They also warn the working class against a conspiracy of 'the Jewish group, the Zionist bourgeoisie, who, before the war, camouflaged themselves as Polish communists'; The appeal then states that 'Polish workers are the worst paid in the world and their situation has been deteriorating since the notorious Gomulko October.'

The appeal calls for overthrowing the regime of the 'venial Gomulka, who has been selling off our country bit by bit to the Jewish bourgeoisie.' Gomulko also acquaints the audience with other slanderous materials prepared by the so-called KPP. He presents documents testifying to the intentions and designs of the Mijal group. He describes the members of this group, indicating that they are not only implacable and crude dogmatists, but also simply trouble-makers. Some of Mijal's followers were active in the communist movement in the inter-war period, but the movement broke down as a result of repressive measures and started to collaborate with the state police. Gomulka analyzes the ideological content of these materials and answers the accusations contained in them."

During that meeting, Gomulka spoke with great passion and in great pain: "... 'Silence spells defeat.' But who's forcing them to keep silent? Let them speak! But they don't want to speak. They prefer to distribute slanderous materials..." He said the following about Mijal: "He is the director of the Investment Bank; in the past, he was a member of the Central Committee, he was in the government. We dismissed him, but we didn't victimize him. You want to be a director? All right, get down to work. You may be a dogmatist at heart, but you can work as a bank manager. We didn't victimize him, although we could have done so.

"Is that how a party member should behave? Why didn't he turn up at a meeting of his party branch to raise that problem? Simply because he knows very well that he wouldn't receive any support in the party branch; he would be rejected and condemned by everyone for putting the matter in this way--there's so much nonsense, falsehood and trickery in it. He became engrossed in lying. He would have had to say: 'I've told a lie.' I could quote hundreds of his lies right here. His statements teem with lies..."

Replying to the charge that the post-October agricultural policy distorted the socioeconomic system, Gomulka said that at least 90 percent of farm produce was procured by the state and that the state controlled the development of agriculture. "We have all the instruments necessary to guide the development of the countryside and to prevent the emergence of capitalism. The allegation that we are building socialism standing on one foot is dogmatist rubbish," he said.

Since the leftists considered the workers' councils founded after October 1956 to be "instruments for calming down and cheating the working class, modelled on fascist organizations," Gomulka said:

"Workers' self-management has been an object of attacks. I suppose you know perfectly well what the importance of workers' self-management is. I can't speak about it at length now, but it's a form of workers' democracy. To what extent you'll be the masters depends on how you workers avail yourselves of these rights, of these institutional rights that our party has created and granted to the working class. If you can't avail yourselves of these rights, you won't be much of a master. But we're fighting so that you may feel masters of your factories as much as possible."

Another important detail. Gomulka quoted some of the group's internal instructions. The document recommended that representatives of various former orientations in the party should be set at odds and that subversive letters slandering prominent state and party leaders should be circulated. It also recommended the propagation of unrealistic demands in the sphere of housing construction and wages..." Until now we could just smile at this, but now the matter has assumed a new dimension, as that allegedly wronged dogmatist is involved in it," Gomulka said.

The recommendation that state and party leaders should be slandered was systematically carried out at the next stage.

The next stage is connected with Kazimierz Mijal's stay in Albania and China and the inspiration he received there. Let us recall that the early 1960's were a time of open controversy between the Soviet leadership on the one hand and the Albanian leadership and the Mao group on the other. The most important controversial issues were the judgment of Stalin, pronounced by the 20th CPSU Congress, the problem of coexistence of different sociopolitical systems, and the avoidance of a world war, i.e., a nuclear conflict. During the 8th Plenum in 1956, Mijal said: "Our enemies and obscurants have been deliberately exploiting the legitimate process of democratization as a hypocritical guise for anti-Soviet propaganda." However, in the late 1960's CZERWONY SZTANDAR reverberated with the theme of "Soviet socialist-imperialism" and "the counterrevolutionary character of the Soviet leadership." The group's new language was in stark contrast with that it once used. CZERWONY SZTANDAR No 1/1970 wrote about "the Moscow renegades of communism," who had "brought about a political and formal disruption of the whole international revolutionary movement." The new political options of the author (authors?) of these words are evident when he writes that "Moscow has become the center of contemporary revisionism and counterrevolution. The focal point of the world revolution has shifted from Europe to Asia and now the People's Republic of China has become the center of the international proletarian revolutionary and national liberation movement."

The word "now" referred to the great proletarian cultural revolution in China. In another issue (4/1970), the paper said that "after Stalin's death (my emphasis), the Soviet Army ceased to be a military organization executing the political tasks of the revolution."

In the second half of 1978 Mijal moved to the People's Republic of China to take up permanent residence there (he did not side with Albania in the Albanian-Chinese dispute, although he earlier wrote that Albania has the most progressive political system in Europe). He had, however, visited the Far East repeatedly before he moved there for good. The most important of these visits was occasioned by the celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the People's Republic of China (October 1969). Mao Zedong and Lin Biao "received the delegation (of the Communist Party of Poland) at the Tienanmen dais in the evening of 1 October and had a photograph taken of them all." (XINHUA News Agency) During another visit, in January 1975, Mijal was received by one of Mao's "gang of four," Yao Wenyuan, and the Peking papers printed excerpts of a telegram congratulating the Chinese leadership on the new Constitution, which had been extended "on behalf of the Polish working class, all working people of Polish People's Republic and the Communist Party of Poland."

But let us go back to Polish affairs. Reading Czerwony Sztandar, one gains the impression that all evil in Poland started from October 1956 or from Stalin's death or, to be precise, from the conference of party activists in November 1954, which denounced the mistakes and distortions which had occurred in the recent past. The list of all quotes on this matter would be the size of a book, so let us just select some quotes for illustration.

"In June 12 years ago, there was rioting in Poznan, and less than 4 months later came the Polish counterrevolutionary October. Poznan was the dress rehearsal for the October counterrevolution." (CZERWONY SZTANDAR No 2/1968).

"The Communist Party of Poland was born of the revolutionary resistance of the working class and the communists' struggle against the renegades of communism against Zambrowski's and Gomulka's ideas. The origin of the Communist Party of Poland should be traced to the first days of the struggle carried on by communists against contemporary revisionists in the defense of the purity of the doctrine of Marxism-Leninism proletarian internationalism and the dictatorship of the proletariat in Poland. Polish communists have never endorsed the counterrevolutionary coup d'etat of 1956.

So what should be done to avert the most important danger of revisionism? First of all, we should condemn and reject the resolutions of the 20th CPSU Congress and, secondly, condemn and reject the resolutions of the Polish October." (No 4/1968)

"Gomulka and Zambrowski are the leaders of one and the same gang of Polish and Jewish nationalists. Not only Poland, but also the world, knows that Gomulka came to power owing to a political alliance with Zambrowski. In Warsaw's Saski Square District Polish and Jewish nationalities shook hands like brothers and decided to follow the path to capitalism together. For many years these Siamese twins lived in great agreement and friendship and supported each other." (No 1/1968)

Here are some opinions on the socioeconomic system in Poland:

"A major step towards capitalism was taken under the guise of socialism and a planned economy. But then it became impossible to follow the same path any longer. Neither was it possible to remain in the same place, so the decision was made to discard some socialist cliches and take a more determined course towards capitalism. The policy of 'selective development' shows a clear departure from a planned economy and the beginning of the road of development based on the laws of the capitalist economy." (2/1969) The same issue of the paper presents the following statements occasioned by an appraisal of the paper CHLOPSKA DROGA: "Here is the shamelessly praised Gomulka's agricultural policy, a policy of open support for kulaks. CHLOPSKA DROGA, a paper of the PZPR Central Committee, is now an official advocate of capitalist agricultural development. CHLOPSKA DROGA appeals to the worker aristocracy to ally with rich peasants, against the proletariat of towns and the countryside. CHLOPSKA DROGA has betrayed farm cooperatives and has become an organ of the peasant bourgeoisie."

CZERWONY SZTANDAR wrote the following about the Catholic Church:

"The Church in Poland is an undisguised agency of the Vatican; it carries out its tasks in the service of American imperialism to the letter and is--similar to Israel--at the disposal of the big capital." (No 1/1968)

On top of all that, every issue of this paper contains personal insinuations and slander. I suppose we should not repeat them here, for in this way we would give mass circulation to what reached a limited and peculiar group of readers. Incidentally, CZERWONY SZTANDAR has repeatedly called POLITYKA (which it also cites as its source) "a revisionist paper" and "an organ of revisionists."

Naturally, CZERWONY SZTANDAR also presents some accurate critical opinions concerning the state of the economy, the situation of the working class, and mistakes and disparities occurring in Poland. Incidentally, the paper draws many of these observations from the legal press. But c'est le ton qui fait la chanson; in this case it is a tone of demagogy, a tone described by Gomulka, a tone of increasing mania, obsession, and bestial hatred.

The type-written leaflets of the 1980's attack first of all the present party and state leadership and flatter Solidarity. There are also certain indications that in the years 1980-1982 Kazimierz Mijal expected that in the difficult internal situation of those years the PZPR would ask him for cooperation and assistance, that it would call him to their rescue. A friend of Mijal's, a member of the 1950's party leadership, was to mediate. In this way, "the revolutionary Communist Party of Poland" was to find a place for itself within the PZPR."

As you know, neither Solidarity nor the PZPR accepted this offer.

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