




Rise of the communist left to power and political transformation (1942-1947)

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The situation before the war

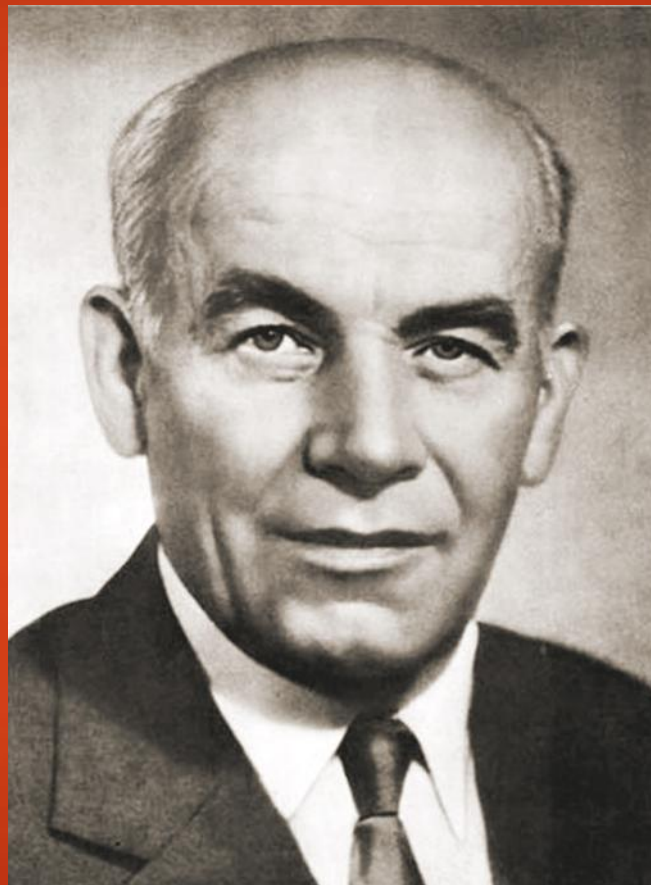
- ▶ The communist movement in Poland was very weak. In 1918, the Communist Workers' Party of Poland (**KPRP**) was established, which was renamed the Communist Party of Poland (**KPP**) in 1925. In the late 1930s, its management was liquidated in Moscow on Stalin's orders. In fact, it was a Soviet agent.

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- ▶ At the end of the war in 1939, the communist movement in Poland practically did not exist. Only a few organizations lacked public support (e.g. Hammer and Sickle). After Germany attacked the Soviet Union, Stalin decided to slowly create dependent party structures in Central Europe. At the end of **1941**, it was **dropped by parachutes**, the so-called **The Initiative Group which created the foundations of the future party**.

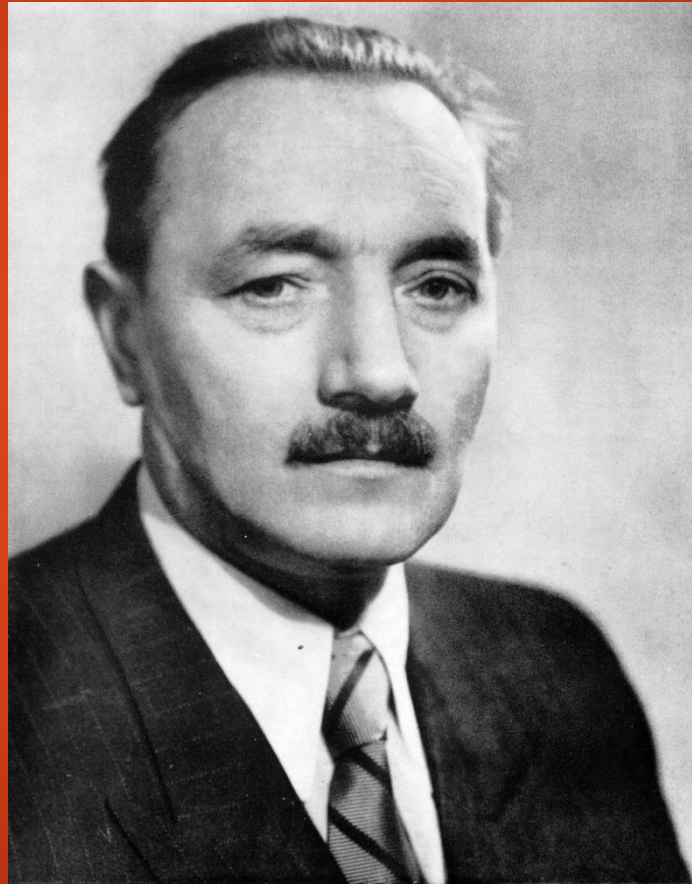
Dramatis personae



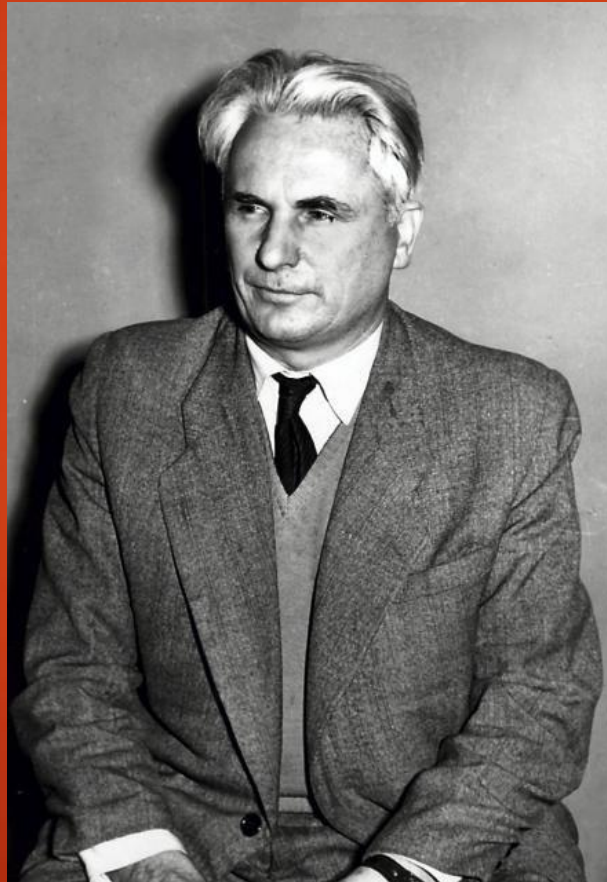
Władysław Gomułka



Bolesław Bierut



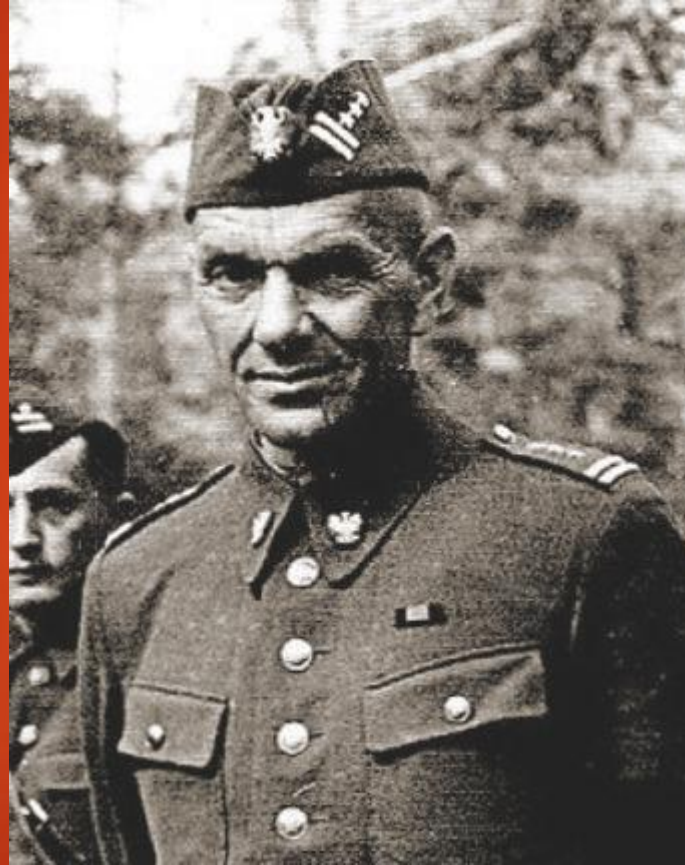
Edward Osóbka-Morawski



Wanda Wasilewska



Zygmunt Berling



Stanisław Mikołajczyk



1942 creation of the Polish Workers' Party (PPR)

- ▶ On January 5, **1942**, the Polish Workers' Party (**PPR**) was established. The name was intentional because, in addition to communists, it could also attract supporters of the moderate left. Their leaders changed frequently. However, **they were always completely dependent on Stalin.**

45 rocznica powstania Polskiej Partii Robotniczej



1944 – Establishment of the National National Council (KRN)

- ▶ On New Year's Eve 1943/1944, the **KRN** was established. It was a kind of underground parliament created by the communists and intended to create the appearance of a legal representation of the Polish nation under occupation. It included parties such as: PPR (communists), RPPS (socialists), SL (peasants).

In the middle of the USSR

- ▶ At approximately the same time, Stalin established his structures in **1943**, the Union of Polish Patriots (**ZPP**) was established, and in **1944**, the Central Office of the Polish Communists (**CBKP**) was established as a "foreign representative organization of the PPR in the territories of the USSR". **ZPP contributed to the creation of the Polish Army in the USSR**, completely dependent on Stalin. Let us remember that **after the evacuation of Anders' Army** from the USSR, there was no Polish armed formation there.

I Polish Infantry Division named after Tadeusz Kościuszko

- ▶ Already in **the spring of 1943, the first Polish armed formation was established**. In the following years, another Corps and Armies were established. The Second World War ended with two Polish armies arriving from the USSR (the 1st Polish Army and the 2nd Polish Army), numbering **almost half a million soldiers**, which, together with the Red Army, **captured Berlin**.

Conference in Tehran XI-XII 1943

- ▶ During its deliberations, the issue of the Polish government or borders has not yet been finally resolved. However, it became clear that **Stalin would not easily let go of his future Polish sphere of influence**, nor would he give up the territories he had occupied in September 1939. The **Polish western borders**, which were to be expanded at the expense of defeated Germany, **became an open issue**.



1944 - Polish Committee of National Liberation (PKWN)

- ▶ There was already a party (PPR), a quasi-parliament (KRN), a government still had to be formed. On **July 22, 1944**, the PKWN was established, the basis for the future government. In theory, he preached very democratic and socially accepted ideas, but in fact he was Stalin's puppet and a substitute for the communist government. Its name was changed in a few months to the **Provisional Government**, and on June 22, 1945, the Provisional Government of National Unity (TRJN) was established on its basis.

PKWN



Conference in Yalta II 1945

- ▶ More details emerged at Yalta - it was decided that TRJN was to be established and Poland was to obtain a significant expansion of its territory in the West and North of the country. Taking into account the fact that almost all of Poland had already been occupied by the Red Army, the country's dependence on the Soviet Union was becoming a fact.



Provisional Government of National Unity (TRJN)

- ▶ **Representatives of the Polish government in London were invited to TRJN.** Most refused, but some succumbed to temptation. The most important politician who came from Great Britain and took part in the creation of the new government was the peasant department **Stanisław Mikołajczyk** from **PSL**. TRJN was quickly recognized by the leading Western world powers (**USA, UK, France**).

Conference in Potsdam VII-VIII 1945

- ▶ Ultimately, he sanctioned the **border** on the **Oder and Lusatian Neisse** and the granting of the southern part of Eastern Prussia to Poland. However, it left a "window" in the form of future free elections in Poland, which were to decide the future of the country, and a declaration of a peace conference to confirm post-war borders in Europe, which never took place...

The period of the civil war...?

- ▶ In the years **1944-1947**, the communist authorities in Poland were strengthened. The independence underground, counting on the help of Western powers, obviously did not agree to Poland's dependence on the USSR. Therefore, at the end of the war and in the first post-war years, there were a number of armed uprisings, attacks, and minor battles, all of which were signs of a civil war. Soldiers who recognized the London government were called **Cursed Soldiers** or **Unbroken Soldiers**.



The first reforms of the communists

- ▶ The **PKWN** and the later Polish government, together with the National Council, introduced a number of reforms aimed at winning over society and making the country similar to the USSR. **Agrarian reform and nationalization of industry were introduced.** Free schools and universities were opened throughout the country. The country began to remove the rubble of the war and rebuild it on a grand scale.

Propaganda

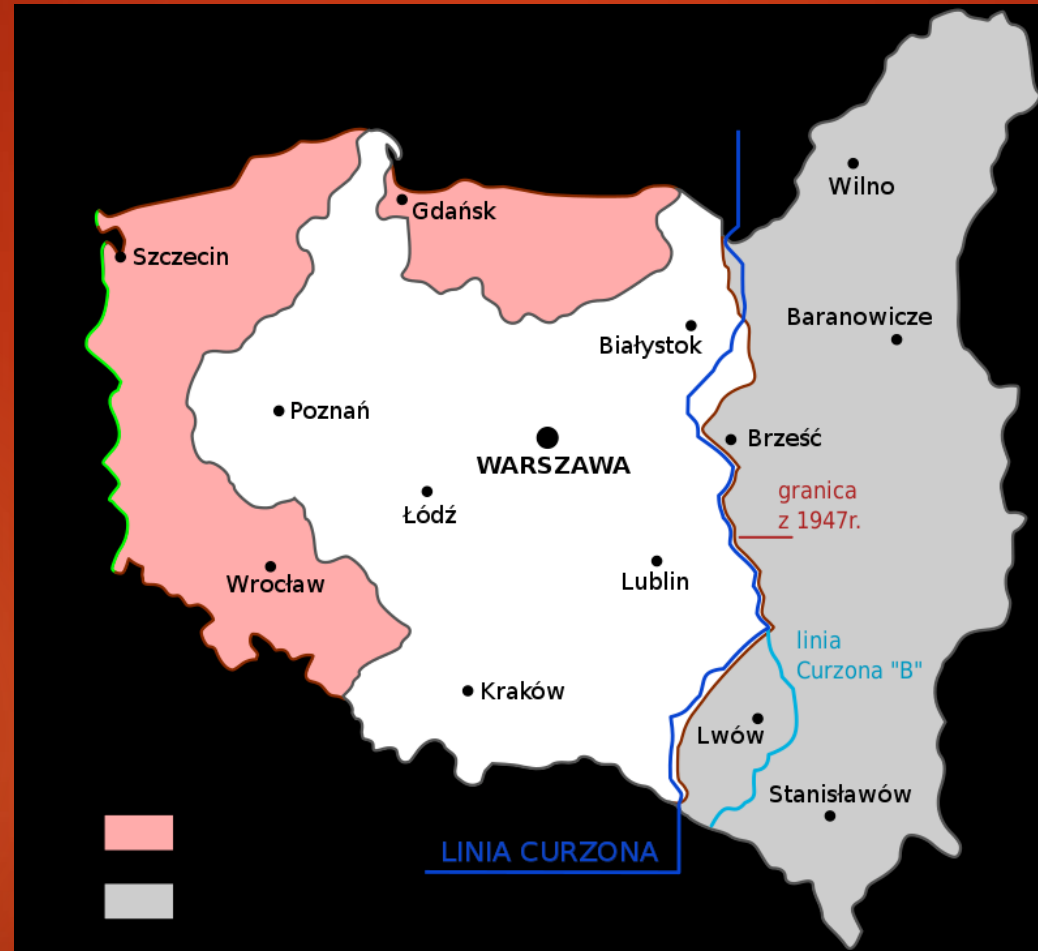








Regained Territories



The Myth of Piast's Poland



Referendum 1946

- ▶ 3 times yes.
- ▶ Forgeries.
- ▶ Gradual liquidation of the opposition.

Elections to the Legislative Sejm 1947

- ▶ Forged.
- ▶ Final separation from PSL, which formally received only 10% of the votes.
- ▶ Mikołajczyk's escape to the West.

Victory of the communist left

- ▶ Although it was still necessary to introduce more reforms, unite the communist movement in the country and finally eliminate the Cursed Soldiers, by **1947 it became clear that a fundamental transformation of the political system had already taken place**. The communists won rigged elections and continued their extensive propaganda campaign. **The Cold War became a fact and Poland, together with Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania, took sides in the conflict, namely the Soviet Union**. In the same year, Kominform was also created, i.e. organizations intended to control the communist parties of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, and to some extent also Yugoslavia, France and Italy. Only then did the "Iron Curtain" finally fall over Central and Eastern Europe, dividing the world into two camps.

Thank you

