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Ryszard STEFANIK*, Arkadiusz WŁODARCZYK**

‘YOUTH PARTY HELPERS’. ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITY OF THE ACADEMIC UNION OF POLISH YOUTH AND THE UNION OF POLISH YOUTH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN WARSAW IN THE YEARS 1948–1956¹

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„Młodzieżowi pomocnicy partii”. Działalność i organizacja Związku Akademickiej Młodzieży Polskiej i Związku Młodzieży Polskiej w Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego w Warszawie w latach 1948–1956

Streszczenie

Artykuł przedstawia struktury organizacyjne i składy osobowe zarządów młodzieżowych organizacji polityczno-społecznych utworzonych na terenie Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego (AWF) im. gen. broni Karola Świerczewskiego (obecnie im. Józefa Piłsudskiego) w Warszawie: Związku Akademickiej Młodzieży Polskiej (1948–1950) i Związku Młodzieży Polskiej (1948–1956). W stopniu uzależnionym od zachowanej podstawy źródłowej została ukazana organizacja i działalność wymienionych organizacji oraz zakres zadań nakładanych na studentów AWF przez instancje partyjne, zarówno w sferze aktywności sportowej, czynów społecznych, jak i szkoleń ideologicznych.

* <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8079-9171>; PhD, University of Szczecin, Department of Physical Education and Health (WKFiZ US), intern at Józef Piłsudski University of Physical Education in Warsaw, e-mail: ryszard.stefanik@usz.edu.pl (corresponding author)

** <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2263-2474>; PhD, Józef Piłsudski University of Physical Education (AWF) in Warsaw.

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Związek Akademicki Młodzieży Polskiej przy AWF w Warszawie powstał w październiku 1948 r. i działał do października 1950, kiedy to na jego bazie utworzono Związek Młodzieży Polskiej. Kierownictwo obu organizacji, realizując wytyczne partyjnego kierownictwa, mobilizowało młodzież akademicką do udziału w imprezach masowych, akcjach politycznych i pracach społecznych, dążąc do wychowania w duchu socjalistycznych „wartości” i podporządkowania władzy państwowej.

Związek Akademicki Młodzieży Polskiej, a następnie Związek Młodzieży Polskiej był organizacją powszechną wśród studentów warszawskiej AWF. Wynikało to zarówno z potrzeby dostosowania się do realiów politycznej rzeczywistości, wdrażanych przez partyjne kierownictwo uczelni, ale także z korzyści i przywilejów dla jego członków. Dla zaangażowanych studentów ułatwiał i przyspieszał ścieżkę kariery zawodowej na macierzystej uczelni lub w urzędach związanych z kulturą fizyczną.

Słowa kluczowe: AWF Warszawa, historia, kultura fizyczna, organizacje młodzieżowe w Polsce w latach 1948–1956.

Abstract

The article presents the organizational structures and personal composition of the boards of youth political and social organizations established at the University of Physical Education (AWF) named after General Karol Świerczewski (currently named after Józef Piłsudski) in Warsaw: the Academic Union of Polish Youth (1948–1950) and the Union of Polish Youth (1948–1956). To the extent dependent on the preserved source base, the organization and activity of the above organizations and the scope of tasks imposed on AWF students by party bodies, both in the sphere of sports activity, social activities, and ideological training, have been presented. The Academic Union of Polish Youth at the AWF in Warsaw was established in October 1948 and operated until October 1950, when the Union of Polish Youth was established on its basis. The management of both organizations, implementing the guidelines of the party leadership, mobilized the academic youth to participate in mass events, political actions and social work, striving to educate in the spirit of socialist “values” and subordination to state authority. The Academic Union of Polish Youth, and later the Union of Polish Youth, was a common organization among students of the Warsaw AWF. This resulted both from the need to adapt to the realities of political reality, implemented by the party leadership of the university, but also from the benefits and privileges for its members. For committed students, membership facilitated and accelerated the path of a professional career at their alma mater or in offices related to physical culture.

Keywords: AWF Warsaw, history, physical culture, youth organizations in Poland in 1948-1956

Introduction

It is necessary to draw the widest possible mass of young people into the organization, because only here can they acquire organizational habits. If someone has not become convinced of our system within three years, then he will not become convinced later, and such a person cannot work positively for society.

Major Edward Barszcz, guardian of the Academic Union of Polish Youth on behalf of the AWF management²

As the communists took power, they sought to take control of individual youth groups. In order to achieve their own goals, they established an organiza-

² Minutes of the extended meeting of the ZU ZAMP Plenum at the AWF on 6 May 1949, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, p. 2.

tion dependent on the Polish Workers' Party: the Union of Struggle of the Young (ZWM), and in 1945: the Academic Union of Struggle of the Young 'Życie'. After the falsified results of the people's referendum in June 1946, and then the Legislative Sejm in January 1947, the communists accelerated the process of fully taking power and eliminating autonomous institutions in Poland. It was decided to 'integrate' the youth movement, preparing the ground for the action of unifying existing organizations. With the help of activists cooperating with the authorities, the resistance of activists who were negatively disposed towards the concept of 'uniformity' in the youth movement was overcome.³ At the same time, the ground was prepared for the implementation of the task of politicizing sport, which was to become one of the tools for indoctrinating youth and imposing ideological values on the entire society.⁴

The official merger of the pro-government Union of Struggle of the Young (ZWM), the Union of Democratic Youth (ZMD), the Youth Organization of the Workers' University Society (OMTUR) and the Union of Rural Youth (ZMW) of the Republic of Poland 'Wici' took place at the Youth Unity Congress in Wrocław on 20-21 July 1948. A few days earlier (17-18 July), the Academic Union of Polish Youth (ZAMP) was established. Its aim was to replace the Academic Union of Struggle of the Young (AZWM) 'Życie' and take control of the student environment, eliminating the influence of popular organizations: 'Bratniak', ZMD, ZMW RP 'Wici' and the Union of Independent Socialist Youth. As a result of two days of directed debates (20-21 July), the Union of Polish Youth (ZMP) was established, adopting the Ideological Declaration and the Statute of the ZMP prepared by the Central Committee of the Polish Workers' Party (KC PPR). The ideological assumptions of the new organization, the goals of its activities were strictly defined by the communist authorities and included in the ZMP Statute and the Ideological and Programmatic Declaration. The organization itself was to become a tool for indoctrinating the youth and mobilizing them to build a socialist state. Specific tasks were set for the members of the ZAMP and the ZMP: training in the spirit of Marxist philosophy, creating preparatory courses and assistance in recruitment for young workers, smallholders and medium-sized farmers along with appropriate financial support (scholarships), popularization of social, cultural and educational work, supervision over the introduction of the so-called scientific discipline, assistance in combating illiteracy, in tracking down the 'class enemy' and support for the process of collectivization of the countryside through contacts with rural youth in the action of connecting the city with

³ M. Wierzbicki, *The Union of Polish Youth and its members. A study of the history of the Stalinist youth organization*, Publishing house Trio, Instytut Studiów Politycznych PAN, Warszawa 2006, p. 25.

⁴ P. Godlewski, *Sport w Polsce na tle politycznej rzeczywistości lat 1944–1956*, Publishing house AWF in Poznań, Poznań 2006, p. 37.

the countryside. For better implementation and increased efficiency, competition in science and social work was promoted and the academic community was mobilized to join the ranks of the ZAMP (as the youth base of the PPR, then the Polish United Workers' Party – PZPR).⁵

In the first period after the establishment of the ZAMP, organizational activities were undertaken. Ten departments were established in the Main Board: Organizational Department, Social Work Department, Financial and Administrative Department, Ideological Education Department, Publishing Department, Propaganda and Press Department, Social Conditions Department, Scientific Circles Department, Science and Activism Department, and the Office of the Main Board. The establishment of district boards was also supervised (chairmen, heads of the Organizational Department, Organizational and Student Department, Ideological Education Department, and Cultural and Propaganda Department).⁶ Secondly, the implementation of tasks set by the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party began. Thus, the issue of "entering the people" and organizing specific assistance for villages "in line" with the ZAMP was discussed at the meeting of the Presidium of the Main Board of the ZAMP on 1 February 1949.⁷ In turn, at the meeting on 9 March 1949, the recruitment for the first year of studies (1948/49) and the guidelines of the Ministry of Education for the current recruitment (1949/50) were analyzed. It was assumed that 'youth of working class, small and middle peasant class' should be accepted even with minimal positive exam grades. The 'youth of working intelligentsia' associated with communists "ideologically", i.e. cooperating with the ZMP was placed second. At the end, the possibility of accepting the most talented youth 'from other classes' was granted, in a number not exceeding 15% of all places at a given faculty. Candidates also had to submit documents confirming social origin and performance of social work.⁸ The entire recruitment process was to favor the classes recognized by the communists as the future social base, "The qualification system must have a class character, ensuring that assistance is provided primarily to young people of working-class and peasant origin."⁹

⁵ Archive of New Records (AAN) in Warsaw, Academic Union of Polish Youth. Main Board, file no. 422/1, Plenary meetings of the Main Board of the Academic Union of Polish Youth, 1948–1950, pp. 62–63; M. Wierzbicki, *The Union of Polish Youth...*, pp. 30–31.

⁶ AAN in Warsaw, Academic Union of Polish Youth. Main Board, file no. 422/2, Meetings of the Academic Union of Polish Youth, 1948–1950, pp. 1–6.

⁷ AAN in Warsaw, Academic Union of Polish Youth. Main Board, file no. 422/3, Meetings of the Academic Union of Polish Youth, 1 January – 18 May 1949, p. 28.

⁸ AAN in Warsaw, Academic Union of Polish Youth. Main Board, file no. 422/3, Meetings of the Academic Union of Polish Youth, 1 January – 18 May 1949, pp. 71–72.

⁹ AAN in Warsaw, Federation of Polish Student Organizations. Scientific Council, file no. 1/10, Principles of the scholarship system. Activities of scholarship committees at universities, 1948–1950, p. 25.

Since the ZMP was to be the 'transmission belt' of the party's message to youth circles, its centralized structures (from the ZMP Main Board to the district boards) included representatives of the PZPR (after the absorption of the Polish Socialist Party by the PPR), who controlled the implementation of the guidelines that were being sent. Additionally, a youth team was created at each level of party organization (the Central Youth Team operated at the Central Committee of the PZPR) to supervise the work of party teams via the ZMP authorities (from the ZMP Main Board to the district boards). Thus, the Party Team operated at the ZMP Main Board (ZG), and it was headed by a representative of the Central Youth Team. In this way, a centralized hierarchical structure was created, influencing the 'bottoms' of the party and individual youth circles.¹⁰

During the session of the ZMP Supreme Council (31 July – 2 August 1950), a resolution was passed to liquidate the ZAMP, which was to be incorporated into the Union of Polish Youth in the autumn of 1950.¹¹ The last VI Plenum of the ZAMP Main Board took place on 18 October 1950. It adopted a resolution of the ZAMP Main Board on the liquidation of the ZAMP autonomy, which was also adopted 'unanimously'.¹²

After the ZAMP was liquidated in August 1950, its tasks were taken over by the ZMP (Department of Student Youth), whose structure at universities matched the organization of education. The basic unit was a group (headed by a secretary) corresponding to a group of students in a given year (a practice or laboratory group). A separate group was created for young employees, usually university graduates. Several groups formed a group of a given year or an entire faculty. If there were few students (less than 100 people), a ZMP university group was created. All work was managed by the University Board (ZU), possibly also by the operating faculty boards. The University Board itself had its own internal structure. It consisted of an organizational department, agitation and propaganda department, and science department.¹³

For example, in the academic year 1952/53 and 1953/54, the structure of the ZMP at the AWF Warsaw included five circles. In the first year there were two circles (No. I and No. II), in the second year – one circle, one circle in the third year and one circle (Circle No. V), including assistants and representatives of the administration.¹⁴

¹⁰ M. Wierzbicki, *Union of Polish Youth...*, pp. 142 – 144.

¹¹ M. Wierzbicki, *Union of Polish Youth...*, p. 40.

¹² AAN in Warsaw, Academic Union of Polish Youth. Main Board, file no. 422/1, Plenary meetings of the Main Board of the Academic Union of Polish Youth, 1948-1950, p. 104.

¹³ AAN in Warsaw, Union of Polish Youth. Main Board, file no. 451/VIII-1, Department of Student Youth. Instructions, 1950-1952, pp. 31-32; M. Wierzbicki, *Union of Polish Youth ...*, pp. 282 – 283.

¹⁴ State Archives in Warsaw (APW), Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-4, Minutes of the

To date, there is a lack of reliable studies on the activities of the ZAMP and the ZMP on the premises of the AWF in Warsaw. This was primarily due to the destruction of archival materials of youth organizations, but also to the need to avoid presenting the university in a bad light, which ultimately ruined the possibility of fully settling accounts with the past of the Stalinist era. Unfortunately, the gaps were not filled by documents collected in the Archives of New Records in Warsaw (collections: Union of Academic Polish Youth. Main Board in Warsaw; Union of Polish Youth. Main Board). A few documents concerning the ZAMP survived, secured by Henryk Laskiewicz, a party activist and chairman of the Polish Students' Association in the years 1951-1954. Selective information was obtained from the minutes of the Academic Committee of the PZPR AWF collected in the State Archives in Warsaw (Milanówek Branch). When the AWF Memorial Book was published in 1960, the history of the aforementioned organizations was significantly reduced, citing only the names of the ZMP chairmen in the years 1950-1954. The Memorial Book of the Academy of Physical Education published in 2010 completely omits the activities of the ZAMP and the ZMP. It should be added here that among the youth and party activists there were many later distinguished employees of physical education universities (not only the Warsaw AWF), often holding managerial positions.

For these reasons, it is difficult today to fully explain to what extent the ZAMP and the ZMP at the Warsaw university carried out the tasks imposed on them by the central party bodies. We must also remember that even in these existing reports, data was falsified to fit the expectations of the authorities. Since they were official documents, information that was unfavourable to a given environment was avoided, adapting the content to the propaganda canon. Thus, the description of the events presented through the prism of ZMP reporting was more of an ideological "ritual" than a faithful representation of the university reality, both at the Warsaw University of Physical Education and at other universities.

One of the aims of the work was to recreate the organizational structure of the ZAMP and the ZMP at the AWF Warsaw, their personal compositions and the mutual dependence (relationships) between youth activists, usually party members, and the university executive of the Primary Party Organization. It was also important to present the activities of youth organizations, both those attributed to all academic environments, as well as those resulting from the specificity of physical education universities (including the popularization of sports among the local community).

meetings of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, p. 46.

Research methods and problems

The Basic Party Organization of the University of Physical Education in Warsaw controlled academic youth through the ZAMP, and later the ZMP and a group of students – members of the PZPR. Learning their organizational structure makes it easier to understand the level of supervision and to trace the careers of ZAMP/ZMP activists at the Warsaw university.

The historical method was used to write this paper, consisting in searching for and then selecting and critically analyzing archival sources and available literature relating to the issues under consideration. The induction, deduction and comparative methods were also used.

Research results and discussion

The first youth organization established on the premises of the AWF after World War II (autumn 1946) was the Academic Union of Youth Struggle ‘Życie’ (AZWM), which was within the sphere of influence of the Polish Workers’ Party. Its chairman was Teodor Tarnowski, and then Bronisław Wyczyński. In February 1948, a circle of the Union of Independent Socialist Youth (ZNMS) was organized, supported by the Polish Socialist Party (PPS), with chairman Zbigniew Kmiec. In addition to the aforementioned socio-political organizations, the Bratnia Pomoc Studentów (Brotherly Help of Students) operated from autumn 1947, referring to the pre-war traditions of student self-help organizations (first chairman Benedykt Karowski, then Mirosław Jodłowski). In 1950, the Association of Polish Students was established on the premises of the AWF (first chairman Zbigniew Szteyn, then Henryk Laskiewicz).¹⁵

With the new academic year of 1948/49, the Academic Board of the ZAMP at the AWF began its activity under the supervision of Major Edward Barszcz – ZAMP supervisor on behalf of the AWF management, and at the same time deputy director of the AWF for socio-political affairs. The presidium consisted of: the chairman and four heads of departments (in 1950, the presidium consisted of 9 people). The organizational structure of the ZAMP included four departments: the Organizational Department (including the Social Work Team, the Information and Reporting Department, the Economic and Financial Department), the Ideological Training Department (the Speakers’ Section, from December 1948 as the Educational Commission), the Cultural and Propaganda Department (the Cultural and Entertainment Department: the Decoration Section, the

¹⁵ H. Laskiewicz, *Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego w najnowszych dziejach Żoliborza*, [in:] Zahorska J. (ed.), *Żolibórz. Wczoraj Dziś Jutro*, Książka i Wiedza, Warszawa 1970, p. 298.

Clubroom Section, the Event Section, the Dance Section, the Cinema and Theater Section, the Costume Section, the Press Section) and the General Student Organizations Department (the Science Department, the Social Conditions Department). At the meeting on 5 October 1948, members of the boards of the individual circles were elected (1st women's year, 1st men's year, 2nd women's year, 2nd men's year and 3rd men's year) as well as managers of: the Cultural and Propaganda Department (Kazimierz Chabura), the Cultural and Entertainment Department (Jerzy Starzyk, from 14 November 1948 – manager of the Recreation Department) and the Speakers' Team (Wiesława Szuch). The board of the ZAMP circle consisted of: chairman, vice-chairman and secretary (also as treasurer of the circle). Nothing is known about the election of the chairman of the university board. It probably took place earlier at a meeting of the POP executive. From the very beginning, the party body exercised full supervision over the organization and decided on candidates for prominent positions. It was similar in the case of other organizations. When, for example, on 21 November 1948, at a meeting of the ZU ZAMP, a new composition of the board of Bratnia Pomoc was established, with president Ignacy Dąbrowski (the ZAMP, a member of the Polish United Workers' Party since 1949), Major E. Barszcz, who supervised the "proper" selection of representatives of this body, took part in the meeting. All newly elected members of the board of Bratnia Pomoc also represented the ZAMP. The aforementioned Major E. Barszcz took part in every meeting of the ZU ZAMP, usually organized once a month, and in meetings of individual circles.

In addition to the board presidium (Table 1), the main assets of the ZAMP were the management of ZAMP circles and managers of individual departments of the organization, including Halina Bigosińska – head of the Financial and Economic Section (from November 21, 1948 to January 16, 1949, then Zofia Banasik), Władysława Kościńska (head of the Secretariat until November 14, 1948, then head of the Cultural and Entertainment Department, from January 16, 1949 – head of the Cultural and Propaganda Department) and Teresa Deręgowska (head of the Secretariat from November 14, 1948).¹⁶

On February 28, 1950, at the Plenum of the ZU ZAMP, new members of the University Board were elected and its organizational structure was changed. Ryszard Śledziecki was appointed chairman of the ZU ZAMP, replacing Tymoteusz Gowsz, who had previously been elected First Secretary of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. Czesław Jodkiewicz remained in the position of the head of the Organizational Department (Financial Department – Tadeusz Breguła, Reporting Department – Maria Kabzińska, secretariat – Maria Kutzner, instructor – Wiktoria Sieja). Marian Siliniewicz became the head of the

¹⁶ Minutes of the meetings of the Presidium of the ZU ZAMP at the AWF, 1948-1950, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file numer.

Training and Education Department (Cultural and Education Department – Maria Róg, Training Department – Teodor Tarnowski), Erazm Wasilewski became the head of the Science and Organization of Studies Department (Studies Organization Department – Stanisław Marek and Henryk Laskiewicz), Andrzej Mazur became the head of the Human Resources Department (Registration Department – Józef Dempniak, Social Work Department – Aleksander Barański).¹⁷

Table 1. The members of the ZU ZAMP presidiums at the AWF in Warsaw (1948–1950)

Date	Chairman	Vice-President	Members
November 21, 1948	Bronisław Wyczyński	Jan Starościński - Head of the Organizational Department	Kazimierz Chabura – Head of the Cultural and Propaganda Department (until 16 January 1949, then Władysława Kościńska) Jan Mirowski – Head of the Asset Department Zbigniew Kmiec – Head of the Department of General Student Organizations Edward Szmidt – Head of the Ideological Training Department
March 2, 1949	Ignacy Dąbrowski	Jan Starościński - Head of the Organizational Department	Władysława Kościńska – Head of the Cultural and Propaganda Department Zbigniew Kmiec – Head of the Department of General Student Organizations Edward Szmidt – Head of the Ideological Training Department
December 1949	Ignacy Dąbrowski	Jan Starościński - Head of the Organizational Department	Teresa Deręgowska – Head of the Cultural and Propaganda Department Zbigniew Kmiec – Head of the Department of General Student Organizations Edward Szmidt – Head of the Ideological Training Department
January-February 1950	Tymoteusz Gówsz	Czesław Jodkiewicz – Head of the Organizational Department	Marian Siliniewicz – Head of the Cultural and Propaganda Department Andrzej Cegliński – Head of the Ideological Training Department Aleksander Barański – Head of the Social Work Department
February 28, 1950	Ryszard Śledziecki	Czesław Jodkiewicz – Head of the Organizational Department	Marian Siliniewicz – Head of the Training and Education Department Eugeniusz Walczak – Head of the Department of General Student Organizations Erazm Wasilewski – Faculty of Science and Organization of Studies Andrzej Mazur – Human Resources Department

¹⁷ Minutes of the Plenum of the ZU ZAMP, newly elected at the university conference, held on February 28, 1950, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file numer, k. 1-2.

Table 1. The members of the ZU ZAMP presidiums at the AWF in Warsaw... (cont.)

Date	Chairman	Vice-President	Members
May 15, 1950	Ryszard Śledziecki	Czesław Jodkiewicz – Head of the Organizational Department	Aleksander Barański Józef Dempniak Maria Kutzner Marian Siliniewicz Erazm Wasilewski Andrzej Mazur Eugeniusz Walczak

Source: Minutes of the meetings of the Presidium and Plenum of the ZU ZAMP at the AWF, 1948–1950, collections of the WKFiZ US, no reference number; APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the PZPR. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the meetings of the POP PZPR and sessions of the executive and meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950.

In the light of preserved sources, it is known that between March and May 1950, i.e. basically until the liquidation of the ZAMP, the close and active body of the ZAMP, i.e. the Presidium of the ZU ZMP, included: Ryszard Śledziecki, Czesław Jodkiewicz, Józef Dempniak, Aleksander Barański, Maria Kutzner, Andrzej Mazur, Marian Siliniewicz and Eugeniusz Walczak (Photo 1).¹⁸

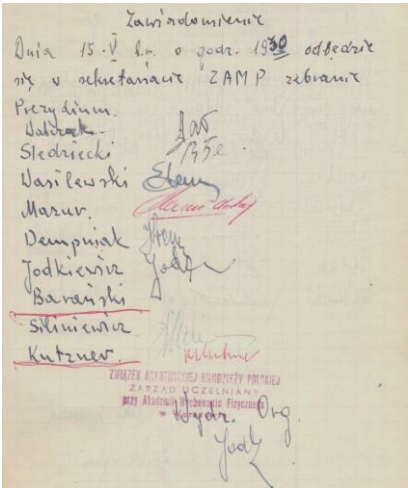


Photo 1. Notice of the meeting of the ZAMP Presidium, 15 May 1950.

Source: Journal of the Organizational Department of ZU ZAMP/ZMP AWF, 1950-1951, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, no page number.

¹⁸ The ZU ZAMP Plenum between March and May 1950 included: Ryszard Śledziecki, Czesław Jodkiewicz, Józef Dempniak, Aleksander Barański, Bolesław Białecki, Tadeusz Breguła, Maria Kabzińska, Maria Kutzner, Henryk Laskiewicz, Majerowicz, Andrzej Mazur, Maria Róg, Wiktoria Sieja, Marian Siliniewicz, Tarnowski and Eugeniusz Walczak. Work log of the Organizational Department ZU ZAMP/ZMP AWF, 1950-1951, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, no page number.

At the AWF Warsaw, the PZPR party organization tried from the very beginning to supervise the activities of the Union of Academic Polish Youth (which brought together young people studying at the AWF) and the ZMP (which brought together young people from among the AWF employees up to the age of 25). At the POP meetings, the members were officially tasked with cooperating and providing assistance to the ZAMP and ZMP on the university premises, with particular emphasis on overseeing the 'important ideological direction'.¹⁹ And so, when ZAMP was preparing a ceremony to celebrate the 32nd Anniversary of the Great October Revolution, scheduled for November 5, 1949, at a POP meeting on November 3, 1949, members of the PZPR were mobilized to participate in the celebrations.²⁰ In addition to organizing various propaganda events, the ZAMP and the ZMP were also involved in preparing wall notice boards (e.g. on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of J. Stalin's birth).²¹ Of course, all the activities, including persuading students to join the ranks of the Polish United Workers' Party, were mainly the responsibility of student party activists (the organizer of the party student group in 1950/51: Jakub Szpringer).²² They also constituted the majority in the composition of the Academic Board of the ZAMP AWF. As of March 31, 1950, out of 317 students, 258 male and female students belonged to the ZAMP, including 32 members and candidates of the PZPR.²³ The majority of people came from families of the so-called working intelligentsia, followed by working-class backgrounds (Table 2).

The important tasks of the ZAMP management included monitoring the views of its own representatives. This was achieved, among other things, by collecting members' biographies. Each candidate had to present themselves personally at the meeting of the circle. For example, on 23 November 1949, at the meeting of ZAMP Circle No. 1 (1st year of women), Maria Kutzner presented her

¹⁹ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, as well as meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, pp. 10, 157.

²⁰ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, as well as meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, p. 14.

²¹ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, as well as meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, p. 161.

²² APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-2 1951, p. 1.

²³ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, as well as meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, pp. 163, 196.

social background (working intelligentsia) and membership in the Polish Scouting Association before the war. However, she emphasised that this lasted only a few weeks, after which she withdrew from the organisation. Bożena Czerny asked, "Was the withdrawal from the ZHP caused by deeper issues, i. e. related to the ideological face of the old, pre-war scouting?" M. Kutzner replied that "these were only local reasons". Nevertheless, the new candidate was unanimously accepted into the circle.²⁴ The ZAMP Board, and later the ZMP Board, also issued opinions on students submitting various applications to the university management, including, for example, those seeking permission to go to study in the Soviet Union (Photos 2 and 3).

Table 2. Social composition of AWF students, March 31, 1950

Origin status as of today	Worker origin	Rural origin	Working intelligentsia	Other origin	Total
March 31, 1950	128	35	138	16	317

Source: APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. Academy of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-1, Minutes of POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, as well as meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949-1950, p. 196.

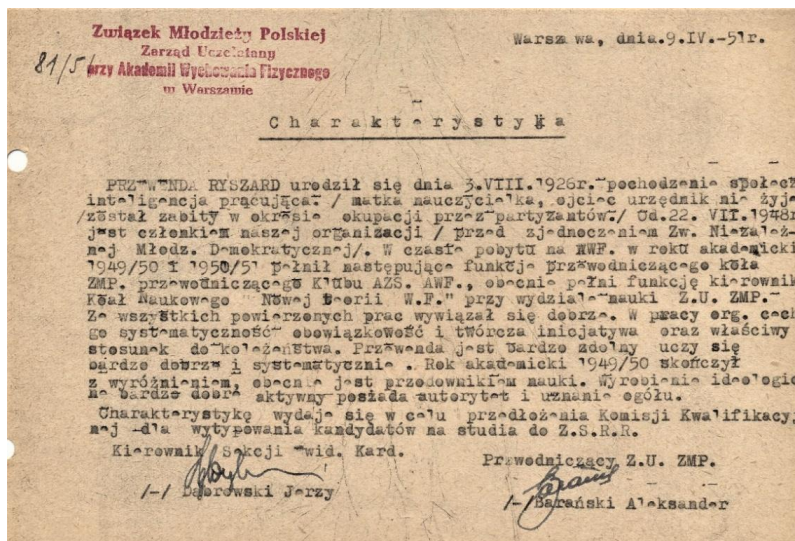


Photo 2. Characteristics of Ryszard Przewęda (with incorrectly spelled surname) made by the Board of the ZMP University at the AWF, April 9, 1951

Source: Collection of the WKFiZ US, no reference number.

²⁴ Minutes of the meetings of ZAMP Circle No. 1, 1st women's year, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, pp. 13-14.

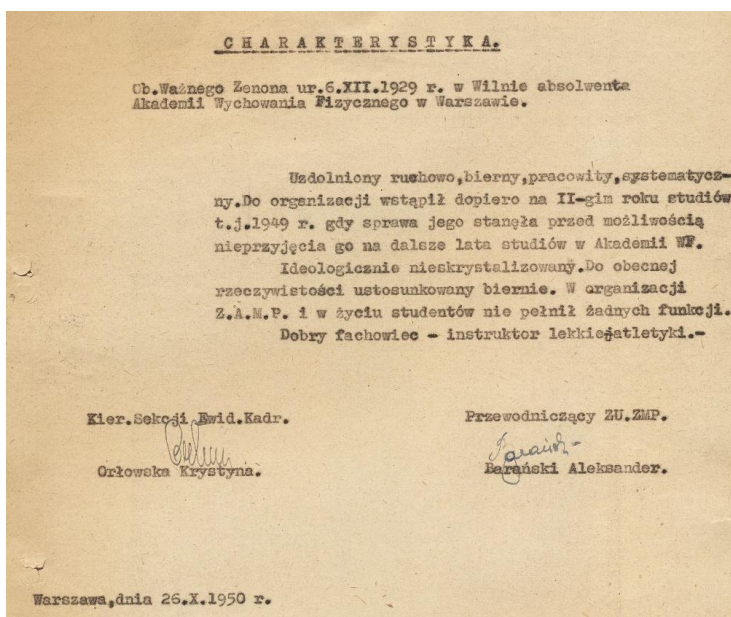


Photo 3. Characteristics of Zenon Ważny made by the ZU ZMP at AWF, 26 October 1950
Source: Collection of the WKFiZ US, no reference number.

At meetings of individual groups, members were usually held accountable for fulfilling their obligations. The stigmatized shortcomings clearly indicated lack of full dedication to the implementation of party plans. In June 1950, after exerting strong pressure on the director of the Academy of Physical Education, Stanisław Górny, the youth activists began a campaign to hold students accountable for hindering and inhibiting 'creative work at the university, being hostile to the system of the People's Republic of Poland, or failing to fulfill their obligations'.²⁵ During the meeting on June 15, 1950, with the participation of Aleksander Gutowski (Director of the Human Resources Department of the GKKF), the previously appointed committee (head of the first year Wilhelm Filipowicz, students: Aleksander Barański, Alfred Monkiewicz, Karol Gutkowski and Lucjan Graczyk) presented motions to expel several students from the university, voted on by the POP activists.²⁶ The next meeting of the ZU ZAMP activists, at which the decision was made to expel from the AWF students who were "class-alien", hostile towards the socialist reality, the party and the ZAMP, was held on September 29, 1950.²⁷ Until the end of the Stalinist period, the youth organization

²⁵ Minutes of the meeting of the POP activists at the AWF, a group of students and teaching staff, 16/06/1950, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file reference, pp. 1.

²⁶ Ibid., pp. 1-2.

²⁷ A. Barański, Extract from the minutes of the meeting of the ZU ZAMP assets dated 29 September 1950, collection of WKFiZ US, no file number, pp. 1-2.

exerted strong pressure on the academic community, introducing an atmosphere of fear and distrust, even towards its closest colleagues (Photo 4).

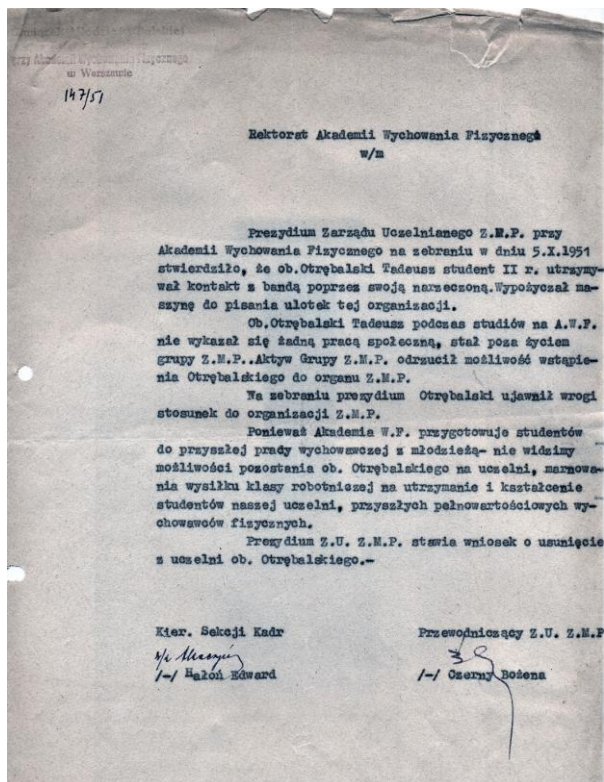


Photo 4. Letter from the Board of the University of the Polish Youth Union to the Rector of the Academy of Physical Education regarding the removal of Tadeusz Otrębski from studies.

Source: Collection of the WKFiZ US, no reference number.

Among the ZAMP activists and young members or candidates for the PZPR membership, in the AWF there were people who wanted to implement the revolutionary slogans of the representatives of the Main Board of the ZAMP. At the forum of the central youth body, during discussions at the very first meetings, among other things, the need for “changes in academic staff at universities” was put forward, so that “assistant and academic staff with a progressive approach to science” would emerge from the ZAMP members. It was postulated that the Ministry of Education should ensure the policy of taking care of staff, removing inappropriate assistants and replacing them with candidates indicated from the ZAMP.²⁸ At the Warsaw university, there were some bizarre situations. Students

²⁸ AAN in Warsaw, Academic Union of Polish Youth. Main Board, file no. 422/1, Plenary meetings of the ZAMP Main Board, 1948-1950, p. 10; APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of

– members of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party, criticizing the university management, summoned the director of the University of Physical Education, Stanisław Górny, to a meeting, holding him accountable for his actions. They also tried to influence the personnel policy, including the dismissal of selected academic teachers.²⁹

The main task imposed on ZAMP members was to participate in the celebration of national holidays. In addition to political and propaganda celebrations (Photo 5), other events were also organized, including St. Nicholas' Day, St. Andrew's Day, dance evenings, not to mention sports competitions for attendees.³⁰ From the beginning of the academic year 1949/50, the ZAMP took over all areas of academic life, previously reserved for the student government and *Bratnia Pomoc*. In the case of the Warsaw university, however, this did not happen on material terms. Students at the AWF Warsaw took advantage of many amenities, including in particular free board and lodging. At the same time, however, they had to completely submit to the rules prevailing at the university, including a kind of military "drill". After the introduction of study discipline, the students were required to attend all classes. From 1 March 1950, in accordance with the rector's order, a student who missed a lecture without justification lost the right to all benefits.

In accordance with the guidelines from the party headquarters (PZPR Central Committee), ZAMP members were mobilized to participate in planned mass trainings, press releases (reading press releases and discussion), celebrations, and actions, especially political and social ones. The greatest emphasis was put on indoctrinating academic youth. Thus, the most important part of the ZAMP circle members' meeting was the reading of a political report, followed by a discussion with the participation of the circle members, with a summary by Major E. Barszcz or the current representative of the ZAMP presidium at the AWF. Of course, there was no possibility of choosing the subject. The reports were given to previously selected persons from the individual groups by the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR AWF). (Table 3).

the PZPR. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, and meetings of Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, p. 196.

²⁹ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, as well as meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, pp. 23, 155, 216.

³⁰ Minutes of the meetings of the Presidium of the ZU ZAMP at the AWF, 1948–1950, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number.



Photo 5. Students of the AWF Warsaw at the May 1st parade, early 1950s
Source: Collection of the Archives of the Józef Piłsudski AWF in Warsaw.

Table 3. List of political topics of papers read at the meetings of ZAMP circles at the AWF Warsaw in the academic year 1948/49

Lp.	Date	Titles of the paper
1.	October 1948	The world in the fight for peace.
2.	November 1948	The role of the economy and class struggle in the development of society.
3.	November 1948	The sources of capitalist exploitation.
4.	December 1948	The USSR as a socialist state.
5.	January 1949	Achievements of the Unification Congress.
6.	January 1949	Socialist industry and agriculture in the USSR.
7.	February 1949	Imperialism as the highest stage of the development of capitalism.
8.	February 1949	6-year plan.
9.	February 1949	Day of Solidarity with colonial youth.
10.	March 1949	Patriotism and internationalism.
11.	April 1949	Labor race on the AWF premises.
12.	April/May 1949	Thirty years of fighting for peace and democracy.
13.	May 1949	Prospects for the development of the Polish countryside.

Source: Minutes of the ZAMP circles and the ZAMP University Board at the AWF, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number.

In addition to participating in ideological training, students were encouraged to participate in various practical activities. The first action imposed on AWF students, supervised by the ZAMP, from November 1948 was community service. It was carried out in student Social Work Teams that took part in the "fight" against illiteracy, helping ZMP circles from the Bielany area and executing cleaning works.³¹ From the new calendar year it was known as a competitive event which all ZAMP members were to take part in.³² It officially began on April 10, 1949 and lasted until the end of the academic year. It encompassed academic results in theoretical and practical subjects, social work and discipline.³³ In addition, great emphasis was also put on the saving campaign (campaign "O").³⁴

The rules of the work race were developed for students. For individual achievements and contribution to work, an appropriate number of points were awarded, based on which each student was evaluated at the end. For three hours of community service, a student received one point. This included: organizational help, participation in meetings, participation in sports competitions, physical work, preparation for reports, physical work outside the AWF premises (unpaid). Each participant received a notebook in which they wrote down the actions taken and the number of hours worked. The entries had to be confirmed by the heads of the clubs or instructors. In the case of competition in science, the results were determined on the basis of grades in the grade booklet. Thus, for a very good grade 15 points were awarded, for a good grade 10 points, for a satisfactory grade 5 points, and for an unsatisfactory grade -15 points. In terms of discipline, the student's attendance at classes was assessed. For unexcused absence from a lecture, 2 points were deducted. (-2 points), for unexcused absence from a meeting -3 points, for unexcused lateness -1 point. For a reprimand issued by the AWF director, 20 points were taken away (-20 points), and the one issued by the year head resulted in -10 points. By the end of the academic year, each student had to complete 30 hours of community service.³⁵ At the meetings of the ZAMP circles, where the regulations of the work race were presented, Major E. Barszcz was present. At the end of each meeting, he spoke, justifying in propaganda rhetoric the need for hard work for the good of the university

³¹ Minutes No. 4 of the meeting of circle No. 3 of the ZAMP at the AWF in Warsaw, November 16, 1948, pp. 1-2, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number.

³² As of 10 March 1949, out of 225 students at the AWF in Warsaw, 161 were members of the ZAMP. Minutes of the extended meeting of the ZU ZAMP Plenum at the AWF in Warsaw, collection of WKFiZ US, no file number, p. 1.

³³ Minutes of the meeting of the Plenum of the Association of Polish Ambassadors to the Academy of Physical Education of April 4, 1949, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, p. 1.

³⁴ Minutes No. 9 of the meeting of the ZAMP circle No. 5 at AWF, collection of WKFiZ US, no. 1, p. 2.

³⁵ Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the ZAMP circle no. 2 at the AWF in Warsaw, 8 April 1949, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number 1-2.

and the future of the socialist state. At the same time, he warned (according to the person taking the minutes of the meeting),

The work race will raise our discipline, which is currently low, for example, lateness and missing lectures must be abolished. It will increase progress in science and practice. If the competition is successful, and it must be successful, because resistance will be broken, then our work will go smoothly.³⁶

As part of the competition campaign, the following were created: scientific self-help teams (ZSN), preparing for exams and colloquiums, of which there were 21 groups in March 1950 (258 students) and 18 groups of ideological self-education teams in March 1950 (287 students). From March 28, 1950, long-term competition between students was introduced, both in social work and in science. ZAMP members were particularly active in social work. It included care for the circles of the People's Sports Teams (LZS), Sunday Universities, ZMP circles, community centers of the Society of Friends of Children (TPD) and assistance in the campaign against illiteracy.³⁷

After the liquidation of the ZAMP, but after the academic year had already begun, on 29 October 1950, the ZMP AWF board was elected, headed by the tried and tested party activist and student Aleksander Barański. The organizational structure of the ZMP included the organizational department (information and reporting section, financial and economic section, personnel and records section, instructors section), science department (scientific circles section, teaching efficiency section), agitation and propaganda department (cultural and educational section, external work section, mass propaganda section, ideological training section).³⁸ From the available archival materials, it is known that Bożena Czerny became the Head of the Organizational Department, Katarzyna Orłowska the Head of the Records and Personnel Section, Andrzej Cegliński the Head of the Information and Reporting Section, Tadeusz Breguła the Head of the Financial and Economic Section, Jerzy Dąbrowski the Head of the Instructors Group, Mieczysław Krajewski the Head of the Agitation and Propaganda Department, Maria Kutzner the Head of the Ideological Training Section, Lucjan Graczyk the Head of the Mass Propaganda Section, Zofia Łazowska the Head of the Cultural and Educational Section, Maciej Łuczak the Head of the External Work Section, Erazm Wasilewski the Head of the Science Department,

³⁶ Minutes of the extraordinary meeting of the ZAMP circle no. 2 at the AWF in Warsaw, 8 April 1949, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number 2.

³⁷ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and executive sessions, as well as meetings of the Branch Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, p. 197.

³⁸ Work plan of the ZU ZMP at the AWF in Warsaw, 19 December 1950, collection of the WKFiZ US, pp. 1-6.

(later Ryszard Śledziecki), Stanisław Marek the Head of the Teaching Efficiency Section, Ryszard Śledziecki the Head of the Scientific Circles and Assistants, Bogusława Lewczak the Head of the Library.³⁹ The campaign of educating the youth in the spirit of submission to state authority was of course continued, in accordance with the ZMP "decatalogue":

A ZMP member loves the People's Republic of Poland, serves it and is ready to sacrifice everything for its independence and development. [...] does everything to strengthen people's democracy and the unity of the working people of the cities and villages (ZMP Law, Photo 6).

In the academic year 1950/51, with the increase in the number of young people studying, but also with the benefits of belonging to the ZMP, the ranks of the organization in question grew. As of March 31, 1951, it counted 319 members (out of a total of 362 students), including 113 women.⁴⁰ Among them, most people came from families of working intelligentsia and working-class environments (Table 4).

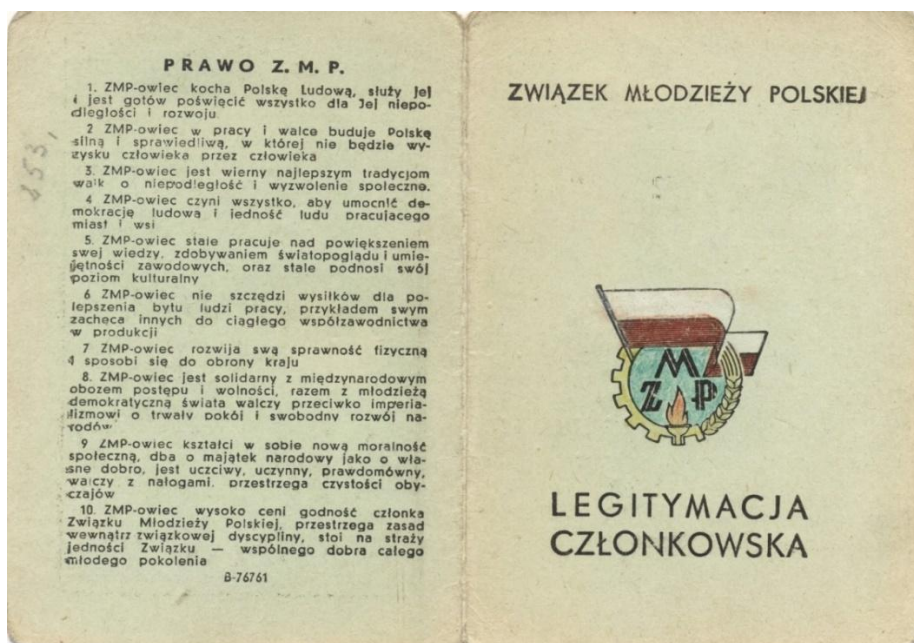


Photo 6. Cover of the ZMP membership card

Source: Collections of the WKFiZ US, no reference number.

³⁹ Letter from the ZMP activist at AWF to the POP AWF Executive, 9 October 1950, collection of WKFiZ US, no reference number, k. 1.

⁴⁰ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-2, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and meetings of the POP PZPR and meetings of OOP No. 1 and No. 2, 1951, p. 41.

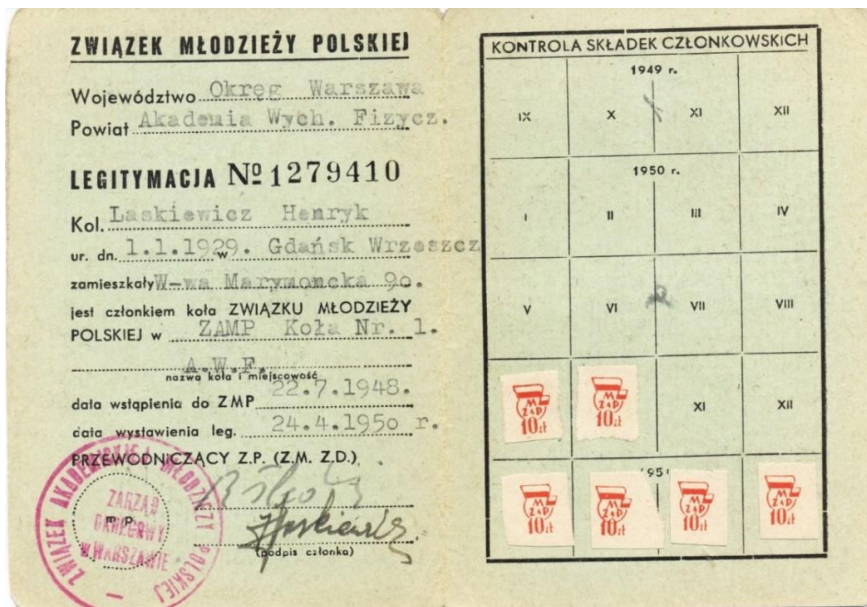


Photo 7. Page 1 and 2 of the ZMP membership card of Henryk Laskiewicz, a student of the Academy of Physical Education in Warsaw in the years 1949-1952
Source: Collection of the WKFiZ US, no file reference.

Table 4. Social composition of ZMP AWF members, March 31, 1951

Status as of today	Worker origin	Rural origin	Working intelligentsia	Other origin	Total
March 31, 1951	132	39	133	15	319

Source: APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-2, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and POP PZPR meetings and OOP meetings no. 1 and no. 2, 1951, p. 41.

The main burden of organizational work rested on the PZPR members who maintained constant contact with the POP executive and held managerial positions in the ZMP University Board. In the academic year 1950/51, this group consisted of 13 people. It included: Aleksander Barański, Mieczysław Bilski, Bożena Czerny, Józef Dempniak, Teresa Deręgowska, Mieczysław Krajewski, Zygmunt Kuraś, Henryk Laskiewicz, Andrzej Mazur, Jakub Szpringer (organizer of the audience group), Jerzy Dąbrowski, Jan Tobolczyk and Erazm Wasilewski.⁴¹ The

⁴¹ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-2, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and meetings of the POP PZPR and meetings of the OOP No. 1 and No. 2, 1951, pp. 1-108.

group was complemented by active members of the ZMP, including Czesław Jodkiewicz, Tadeusz Breguła, Andrzej Cegliński, Tymoteusz Gowsz, Maria Kabzińska, Maria Kutzner, Mieczysław Krajewski, Ryszard Przewęda, Marian Siliniewicz, Wiktoria Sieja, Zbigniew Szteyn, Ryszard Śledziecki, Eugeniusz Walczak⁴².

From among the party activists, the members of the KU PZPR AWF were appointed by the strict ZMP body. This means that the elections of the University Board of this organization were strictly controlled by the POP executive. In June 1951, Bożena Czerny replaced Aleksander Barański as the chairman of the ZU ZMP, who was finishing his studies at that time (Table 5). In December 1951, the KU PZPR made a decision to make personnel changes in the ZMP board. The party's "Mother Commission" analyzed possible candidates, selecting appropriate people for the board, i.e. paying attention to, among other things, their worldview, social background, of course preferring workers' or peasants' background.⁴³

Table 5. Personnel management of the ZU ZMP at the AWF Warsaw (1950–1956)

Duration of office	Chairman	Head of the Organizational Department
October 1950 – June 1951	Aleksander Barański	Bożena Czerny
June 1951 – December 1952	Bożena Czerny	Tadeusz Podlewski
December 1952 – September 1953	Jerzy Borowski	Bożena Czerny
October 1953 – September 1955	Jerzy Skorowski	No data available
October 1955 – October 1956	Henryk Karoń	No data available

Source: APW, Milanówek Branch, University of Physical Education Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and the POP PZPR meetings and OOP meetings no. 1 and no. 2, 1951, p. 179; reference number 219/I-3, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and the POP PZPR AWF meetings and minutes of electoral meetings of the OOP PZPR no. 1 and 2, 1952, pp. 63, 72; reference number 219/I-4, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee PZPR and general meetings of the POP and electoral meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, pp. 46, 134, 204; reference number 219/I-5, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and the POP PZPR general meetings and the OOP no. 1 and 2 PZPR AWF election meetings, 1954, p. 110; reference number 219/I-7, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee of the PZPR AWF and general meetings of the POP PZPR AWF. Minutes of the reporting and election meeting of the POP PZPR of the University of Physical Education, 1956-1958; W. Gniewkowski, *Chronicle*, [in]: *University of Physical Education named after Lieutenant General Karol Świerczewski in the years 1929-1959. Commemorative Book*, Warszawa 1960, 134.

⁴² Work journal of the Organizational Department of ZU ZAMP/ZMP AWF, 1950-1951, collection of the WKFiZ US, no call number, no page number.

⁴³ APW, Milanówek Branch, University of Physical Education, file reference number 219/I-2, Minutes of the University Committee meetings and POP PZPR meetings and OOP meetings no. 1 and no. 2, 1951, p. 179.

In December 1952, the party executive decided to change the “leader” of the youth organization and to give the chairmanship to the student Jerzy Borowski. It was decided that Bożena Czerny, a graduate employed at the Academy of Physical Education (assistant) might not have appropriate contact with the audience. However, she remained in the position of the head of the Organizational Department. On September 25, 1953, at a POP meeting, a new candidate for the chairmanship of the ZU ZMP was nominated. Among the members of the executive, Jerzy Skorowski, a third-year student, gained recognition.⁴⁴ Of course, all activists, as well as the entire youth organization, were controlled by appointed representatives of the POP executive (Table 6). In addition to members of the PZPR KU, supervision over the ZMP was entrusted to representatives of the executive of the 1st Department of the Party Organization (academic teachers). It is known that in the academic year 1952/53 such supervision was exercised by M. Stefanowicz.⁴⁵

Table 6. Party activists from the KU PZPR AWF supervising the ZMP and youth affairs in the years 1950–1956

Period	Name and surname	Function in the KU PZPR	Scope of duties
March 1950 – May 1952	Aleksander Barański (student)	2 nd Secretary of the KU PZPR	Supervision over the activities of youth organizations
May 1952 – December 1953	Maria Kwiatkowska (administrative worker)	2 nd Secretary of the KU PZPR	Educational Director
	Jerzy Dąbrowski (student)	Member of the KU PZPR	Supervision over the ZMP
December 1953 – December 1954	Maria Kwiatkowska	Member of the KU PZPR	Educational matters
	Edmund Kosman (rector)	Member of the KU PZPR	Supervision over the ZMP (from April 1953)
December 1954 – December 1955	Andrzej Wohl (Deputy Professor)	Member KU PZPR	Supervision over the ZMP
	Józef Braciszewicz (student)	Member KU ZMP	Supervision of youth organizations and the party group of third-year students
December 1955 – November 1956	Andrzej Wohl (Deputy Professor)	Member KU PZPR	Supervision over the ZMP

Source: APW, Milanówek Branch, University of Physical Education, reference number 219/I-1, Minutes of the POP PZPR meetings and meetings of the Executive and meetings of the Branch

⁴⁴ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-4, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, p. 134.

⁴⁵ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-4, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, p. 316.

Party Organization No. 1 and 2 of the University of Physical Education, 1949–1950, p. 171; reference number 219/I-2, Minutes of the University Committee meetings and POP PZPR meetings and the OOP meetings no. 1 and no. 2, 1951, pp. 64, 89; reference number 219/I-3, Minutes of the University Committee meetings and the POP PZPR AWF meetings and minutes of election meetings of the OOP PZPR no. 1 and 2, 1952, p. 80; reference number No. 219/I-4, Minutes of meetings of the University Committee of the PZPR and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, p. 184; reference number 219/I-5, Minutes of meetings of the University Committee and general meetings of the POP PZPR and election meetings of the OOP no. 1 and 2 of the PZPR AWF, 1954, pp. 228, 230; reference number 219/I-7, Minutes of meetings of the University Committee of the PZPR AWF and general meetings of the POP PZPR AWF. Minutes of the reporting and election meeting of the POP PZPR University of Physical Education, 1956–1958, p. 59.

The current work of the youth organization was supported, apart from the members of the Polish United Workers' Party, by activists from the Polish Youth Union. In light of preserved sources, it is known that on March 27, 1953 (academic year 1952/53), this group included representatives of the University Board – chairman: Jerzy Borowski, senior organizational instructor Jerzy Skorowski, senior agitation and propaganda instructor Jerzy Jaworski, reporting instructor Teresa Pasterz, scientific circles representative Maria Malinowska, head of the secretariat Joanna Rzempoluch, member Zbigniew Bajorek, radio station instructor Janusz Podoski and member Kobrzyński. The activity was strengthened by representatives of the boards of circles of three age groups (chairman, organizational instructor, agitation and propaganda instructor) and group organizers (15 people).⁴⁶ In the next academic year (1953/54) the ZMP activists – members of the University Board were: chairman Jerzy Skorowski, senior organizational instructor Henryk Karoń, senior agitation and propaganda instructor Jerzy Jaworski, training instructors Maria Sieńkowska and Napoleon Wolański, radio station instructor Barbara Zur, TPPR (the Polish–Soviet Friendship Society) and press instructor Janusz Kawka, reporting instructor Teresa Krogulec, and the head of the secretariat Magdalena Kwiatkowska. This group was supported by representatives of the boards of the circles (No. I–IV), i.e. chairmen and members (in the number from three to five).⁴⁷

At the meeting on 22 October 1954, a new Board of the ZMP University was formed. Jerzy Skorowski remained the chairman, and in addition to the chairman, ten other people joined the body (Photo 8). All the members were also assigned specific duties. Thus, Ireneusz Pisarski was responsible for group no. 1, Janusz Nowakowski for group no. 2, Janusz Borowiecki for group no. 3, Barbara Targowska for group no. 4. Henryk Karoń was responsible for cultural and educational work, Jerzy Kasproicz for the press, Jadwiga Kowalska for reporting, Stanisław Szczesny for the ZU newspaper, and Jerzy Pacholski held the position of chairman of the Polish Students' Association at the AWF.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Assets of the ZMP, 27 March 1953, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, sheet 1.

⁴⁷ List of the ZMP assets, 1953/54, collection of WKFiZ US, no file number, sheet 1.

⁴⁸ ZU ZMP at the AWF in Warsaw, Information for the period from 20 October 1954 to 5 November 1954, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, pp. 1–5.

Stowarzyszenie ZU ZMP

Związek Młodzieży Polskiej
Zarząd Uczeń
przy Akademii Wychowania Fizycznego
w Warszawie

nr	Imię i nazwisko	Wiek	położenie	data zapisu	przebiegiem post
1.	Skorowski Jerzy	24	intelig-proc. nau.	1949	PZPR
2.	Targowska Barbara	23	- " -	1949	- " -
3.	Pisarski Ireneusz	19	- " -	1952	PZPR - kandydat
4.	Borowiński Janusz	20	- " -	30.1.1949	-
5.	Wospiński Jerzy	19	- " -	1949	-
6.	Stankiewicz Dorota	20	- " -	15.12.1949	PZPR - kandydat
7.	Szczepan Stanisław	21	robotnic	1949	-
8.	Komarski Józef	18	- " -	1.1.1950	-
9.	Karol Henryk	21	- " -	30.1.1950	PZPR - kandydat
10.	Pacholski Jerzy	20	intelig-proc.	1950	- " - " -
11.	Nowosielski Janusz	22	- " - nau.	1950	-

Photo 8. Composition of the ZU ZMP AWF, X 1954

Source: Collection of the WKFiZ US, no file reference.

Due to the sports nature of the university, from the very beginning, great emphasis was placed on participation in the Action connecting the city with the countryside, in this case it was about helping to popularize sports activities among rural youth. The first organizational activities were undertaken in 1949. At that time, the ZU ZAMP focused mainly on the village of Małocice, destroyed during the war. It postulated a collection of clothes, money, organization of a profit-making event, medical assistance, food for children, a village community center, sports activation of youth and cost-saving activities (reducing the number of purchased magazines, giving up one trip to the theater). The funds saved in this way were to be allocated to help the residents of the village.⁴⁹ From the beginning of 1950, the ZU ZAMP began to implement systematic contacts with the youth of villages near Warsaw. Undoubtedly, the Resolution of the Presidium of the Main Board of the Union of Polish Youth of 31 January 1950 on the work of the ZMP in the field of physical culture was of great importance. In addition to the need to popularise physical education and sport, the resolution imposed the obligation to strengthen the ideological side of physical culture and to prepare staff of young people, devoted to the authorities, recruited from working-class and rural environments, for work in sports circles and People's Sports Teams.⁵⁰ Students of the Academy of Physical Education (members of the

⁴⁹ Minutes of the extended meeting of the ZU ZAMP Plenum at the AWF of 17 May 1949, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, p. 1.

⁵⁰ M. Ponczek, *Sport i kultura fizyczna w założeniach programowych Związku Młodzieży Polskiej (zarys problematyki)*, "Łódzkie Zeszyty Historyczne" 1985, z. 2 (6), p. 78.

Association of Polish Ambassadors), mainly first-year students, helped to create the People's Sports Teams, brought sports equipment, and organized training sessions, games and competitions (Photo 9).⁵¹ The campaign was continued the following year by the university ZMP. 35 students took part in the activities, and were "assigned to serve" four communes. The managers of the individual teams were ZMP activists (the village of Leśna Wola included).⁵²

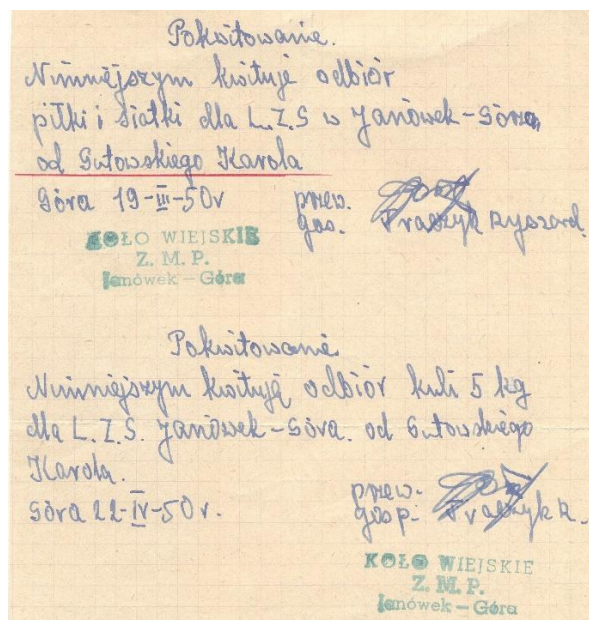


Photo 9. Receipt for equipment brought to the LZS Janówek Góra by a student of AWF Warsaw
Source: Collection of WKFiZ US, no file reference.

In addition to exercises and sports games, students of the Warsaw University of Physical Education had to follow the guidelines for presenting ideological reports. There is more information on this subject in the archival materials of the Main Board of the ZMP, which contain instructions specifying the forms of political, cultural and educational work in the ZMP and LZS circles. Thus, in addition to sports activities, youth activists were to deliver previously made available reports (25-30 minutes), lectures on sports topics and conduct "talks" related to the presented problems (twice a month, before sports activities). Here, it was also possible to work in the after-school club, in this case preparing wall notice

⁵¹ See more on this topic in R. Stefanik, *Akademia Wychowania Fizycznego w Warszawie w "Akcji łączności fabryk (miasta) z wsią" w latach 1949-1954*, "Sport i Turystyka. Środkowoeuropejskie Czasopismo Naukowe" 2020, no 4, pp. 45-59.

⁵² APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-2 1951, p. 169.

boards on sports topics, for example, presenting the profiles of Soviet and Polish athletes or the achievements of one's own LZS circle. The duty of activists (sports instructors) was also to prepare rural youth for participation in mass events, including National Runs and meeting the standards for the badges Fit for Work and Defense (SPO) and Be Fit for Work and Defense (BSPO).⁵³

Other cultural and propaganda actions (apart from social work, care for the LZS, ZMP and SKS circles, mass gatherings and events on the premises of the AWF) carried out outside the university between 1 January 1950 and 28 February 1951 included: ceremonial events/ gatherings organised in villages during the harvesting works, artistic events at the Culture Centre in Żoliborz, in Zielona Góra (Polish-Soviet Friendship Month), a performance at the State Agricultural Farm in Czerwieńsk, artistic performances at the Municipal Transport Company (including the occasion of the 71st birthday of J. Stalin), a ceremonial event on the occasion of the 33rd anniversary of the establishment of the Red Army for two schools in Żoliborz, and an artistic performance at the school of the Society of Friends of Children (TPD) in Żoliborz.⁵⁴

Since 1952, due to the poor results of ideological work in the opinion of the university party body, attempts were made to appropriately influence youth activity. According to instructions from the KU PZPR, the ZMP presidium issued a resolution regarding "the work of agitators on the territory of the ZMP". The most active members of the organization and all those belonging to the PZPR were selected. Their tasks included monitoring the teaching results, conducting ideological training, press readership, securing and monitoring the socialist discipline of teaching and mobilizing for cultural and educational activities. Additionally, in order to improve cooperation between the ZMP and the teaching staff, a ZMP unit was created in individual groups, consisting of four members (the group secretary, the starost, the person responsible for science and the science leader). The University Committee of the PZPR also decided to invite the chairman of the ZMP agitator group to the executive meeting.⁵⁵

During the Stalinist era, the primary way for young people to demonstrate their political awareness and commitment was by participating in mass events and state (political) holidays, which had become a standard part of the party's "rituals." For example, on March 17, 1952, employees and students of the University of Physical Education took part in a mass rally to celebrate the 60th birth-

⁵³ AAN in Warsaw, ZMP. ZG, file no. 451/IX-1, School Youth Department. Instructions, 1950-1953, p. 53.

⁵⁴ Report of the ZU ZMP at the AWF for the period 1 January 1950-28 February 1951, collection of the WKFiZ US, no file number, pp. 1-3.

⁵⁵ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-3, Minutes of the University Committee meetings and POP PZPR AWF meetings and minutes of election meetings of the OOP PZPR no. 1 and 2, 1952, p. 15.

day of B. Bierut. The participants made a number of commitments, which was already a mandatory ritual at that time. In the case of students, individual ZMP groups (male and female) outdid each other in planning social activities. For example, the 1st female group of the ZMP Circle No. 1 committed to working 200 man-hours on arranging sports grounds for the spring and summer seasons and to organizing a ceremony to celebrate the 60th birthday of B. Bierut in the workers' hotel at 31 Krasińskiego St. In turn, the 10th group of the ZMP Circle No. 3 decided to prepare a handball pitch.⁵⁶

The POP university executive also tried to mobilize the academic youth to participate in the Young Builders of the People's Republic of Poland Rally in 1952. Students practiced for sports shows at the summer camp in Giżycko. Just before the academic year 1952/53, the youth from the AWF, as members of a brigade in the State Agricultural Farm (PGR) (16 people), took part in the Harvest Action. They also took part in organized "evenings", whose program included songs and dances with local youth.⁵⁷ After the academic year began, preparations were made for an event as part of the pre-election campaign for the residents of Żoliborz (a meeting with candidates for the MP), participation in the May 1st parade and ceremony, and demonstrations at the parade on July 22nd. The autumn of 1953 was a time of further commitments undertaken during the ceremonial event on the occasion of the anniversary of the October Revolution and the Autumn Marches. The discipline of studies was controlled by threatening to remove "ideological" individuals from the ranks of the ZMP.⁵⁸ The social structure of AWF students was also carefully analysed, assessing the efforts made to make studies available to the "working and peasant class" (Table 7).

The tasks of the ZU ZMP included influencing the improvement of academic results, intensifying educational and "mass-political" work among students. The POP executive also profiled the activity of the youth organization. In the autumn of 1953, the KU PZPR approved the ZMP work plan for the academic year 1953/54.⁵⁹ Despite

⁵⁶ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-3, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and meetings of the POP PZPR AWF and minutes of election meetings of the OOP PZPR no. 1 and 2, 1952, pp. 35-36.

⁵⁷ PW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-4, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, p. 260.

⁵⁸ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-4, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, pp. 204-205.

⁵⁹ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-4, Minutes of the meetings of the University

the steps taken and control by the party authorities, it was not possible to achieve satisfactory results in the “educational” work. According to archival sources, complaints about students’ lack of sufficient ideological awareness and engagement date back to 1953. At the executive meetings, compromising situations involving certain ZMP activists were discovered, including their ridicule by academic youth. Their incompetence, evasion of imposed duties and social work were pointed out. The ZMP activists themselves were said to have been lenient toward those who did not participate in political and educational work, and they did not protest when the organization’s mistakes were exaggerated.⁶⁰

Table 7. Membership of the AWF Warsaw students in mass organizations and the Polish United Workers’ Party, as of March 25, 1953

Year	Number of students	PZPR	ZMP	ZSP	AZS
I	201	6	160	167	71
II	184	7	153	174	148
III	130	20	119	125	88
Total	515	33	432	466	307

Source: APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-4, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, p. 249.

Despite frequent debates on the POP executive forum, the situation did not improve. At the meeting of the KU PZPR on May 5, 1954, it was reported that the ZMP did not enjoy authority at the AWF. Discrepancies between theory and practice in educational work were pointed out and there was talk of lack of enthusiasm for working among young people. Students’ opinions were also quoted. They complained about lack of opportunities to take their own initiatives.⁶¹

The ever-worsening atmosphere around the ZMP prompted the POP executive to conduct a thorough analysis of the problem at the beginning of 1955. The meeting of the PZPR KU on 12 and 15 January 1955 was devoted to educational

Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party and general meetings of the POP and election meetings of the OOP 1 and 2, 1953, p. 134.

⁶⁰ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-5, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and general meetings of the POP PZPR and election meetings of OOP No. 1 and 2 PZPR AWF, 1954, pp. 207-208.

⁶¹ APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-5, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and general meetings of the POP PZPR and election meetings of the OOP No. 1 and 2 PZPR AWF, 1954, p. 110.

matters and the assessment of the ZMP's activities. In addition to the postulate of deputy professor Andrzej Wohl to seek "ZMP's work methods" and to give the youth "maximum initiative and freedom", Edmund Kosman suggested gathering a larger number of youth party activists in the ZMP collective.⁶² We also have a note by Henryk Laskiewicz (a member of the POP executive in the academic year 1954/55) from a discussion at the party forum on March 12, 1955. However, there is no description of whether it was a meeting of the KU PZPR or perhaps the 1st OOP (most likely the University Committee). H. Laskiewicz noted, "Report of work in the ZMP. Lack of critical approach to new tasks. Lack of perspective at work."⁶³

Conclusion

The ZAMP/ZMP organizations at the Warsaw university strictly implemented the guidelines of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party addressed to academic circles. Support for the development of physical culture among working-class and rural youth was also provided for physical education schools. Students fulfilled the tasks imposed on them at the cost of enormous social work, which in many cases brought tangible benefits, both to the students themselves and to local communities. Youth activists also joined the party ranks, engaging in political work and ideological training. They could count on the chance to remain at the university, be employed as junior assistants and undertake a master's thesis. The rest, in accordance with the work distribution order, were sent to selected offices, institutions and schools in various regions of the country.

Intense propaganda, uncompromising study discipline and the constant search for the "class enemy" aroused an atmosphere of fear and destroyed interpersonal bonds. In October 1956, due to the spreading wave of criticism of political reality in society, but also among party members, students of the University of Physical Education announced a hunger strike and a rally in the fencing hall. Among other things, they postulated granting the school full academic rights, abolishing study discipline, payrises for assistants and liquidating the ZMP. On the same day, at night, student representatives of the Strike Committee (living in a dormitory on the premises of the University of Physical Education) were summoned to Dean Edmund Kosman (member of the POP executive). The

⁶² APW, Milanówek Branch, Warsaw Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party. University of Physical Education in Warsaw, file no. 219/I-6, Minutes of the meetings of the University Committee and general meetings of the POP PZPR AWF and minutes of the Executive and general meetings of the OOP no. 1 and 2 PZPR AWF, 1955, p. 14.

⁶³ H. Laskiewicz, *Party Work Notebook*, collection of WKFiZ US, no signature, no page number.

meeting was also attended by a representative of the Main Committee of Physical Culture Aleksander Gutowski and the First Secretary of the Academic Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party of the University of Physical Education Andrzej Wohl. To the students' surprise, the strike demands were accepted ad hoc. They were asked to stop the strike and calmly wait for a decision at a "higher level". And indeed, most of the demands were met the following year. With the establishment of the Strike Committee, the University Board and the boards of the individual ZMP circles at the Warsaw AWF ceased to operate.⁶⁴ In December 1956, the highest authorities decided to liquidate the ZMP, which was officially announced on January 11, 1957 at the plenum of the ZMP Main Board. In place of the dissolved organization, the Union of Rural Youth was established (February 1957) and the Union of Socialist Youth (April 1957).⁶⁵

This was the end of the political and social organization whose aim was to completely subordinate Polish youth to the party in power. Due to the fatigue of academic circles with intrusive ideological indoctrination, it was difficult to encourage young people to subordinate themselves to another organizational creation. The communists had to admit the failure of the implemented youth policy. Despite significant organizational outlays and ideological pressure on academic youth, the achieved effects were far from the intended ones. The ideological faces of AWF students were usually superficial and often simply feigned.

At the meeting of the POP executive with the executive of the District Committee of the Polish United Workers' Party (6 people) on 16 March 1957, among other things, the establishment of a youth organization was discussed. However, it was still difficult at that time to persuade the academic youth of the AWF to get involved in the activities of another political machine. It was not until the spring of 1958, with the significant support of the KU PZPR, that a 7-person group of the Union of Socialist Youth was established, which, however, did not demonstrate any wider activity until June 1958. And so another period of progressive indoctrination and politicization of academic circles at the Warsaw AWF began.

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⁶⁴ I. Pisarski, *Październik 1956 na AWF*, "Absolwenci. Kwartalnik Stowarzyszenia Absolwentów AWF Warszawa" 2016, nr 1 (17), pp. 22–25.

⁶⁵ A. L. Sowa, *Historia Polityczna Polski, 1944–1991*, Literary Publishing House, Kraków 2011, p. 258.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Ryszard Stefanik: Conceptualization, Funding Acquisition, Investigation, Methodology, Project Administration, Resources, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing – Original Draft Preparation, Writing – Review & Editing;

Arkadiusz Włodarczyk: Investigation, Methodology, Validation, Visualization, Writing – Review & Editing

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