

# A Cold War Casualty in Jerusalem, 1948: The Assassination of Witold Hulanicki

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On Friday, February 27, 1948, an anonymous phone tip alerted the Mandatory Palestine Police in Jerusalem to the fact that two prominent Polish expatriates who had been abducted the day before had been executed by Lehi ("Freedom Fighters for Israel," known as the "Stern Gang"). The caller said the two had been tried and convicted of spying on Jewish forces in order to help the Arab irregulars in the rapidly escalating struggle for the city; later versions of the charges against them also included collaboration with British intelligence. Witold Hulanicki, 58, an official of the British Mandatory government, and Stefan Arnold, 50, a journalist, were found shot to death in the abandoned Arab neighborhood of Sheikh Badr, with their hands tied behind their backs.<sup>1</sup>

Similar killings had become routine since Jewish–Arab tensions erupted into large-scale violence following the UN General Assembly's resolution on November 29, 1947 to partition Palestine into Jewish and Arab states. The Jews accepted the plan; the Arabs rejected it and launched a violent campaign to thwart its implementation that focused—at that stage—on the country's transport routes and cities with a mixed population of Jews and Arabs. Suspicions and accusations of treachery and espionage were rife; the Mandatory regime and its police force were winding down, and lawlessness was on the rise—particularly in Jerusalem, which, under the plan, was to belong to neither state but to be internationalized. The large but divided, and now dwindling, Polish expatriate community in Palestine, most of which had arrived after Poland fell to the Germans and Soviets at the outset of World War II, was so frequently targeted that most of the cases in which Poles were killed were never reported and were soon forgotten.

But the Hulanicki-Arnold case stood out even at the time, because Hulanicki was such an improbable target for Lehi. As Polish consul-general in Palestine—and much of the Middle East—in 1936–39, he had become a friend and benefactor of the group's legendary founder, Avraham Stern (better known by his underground

code name “Ya’ir”). Stern was then an up-and-coming activist in the Irgun (Etzel or IZL), the paramilitary arm of the Revisionist Zionist movement. Hulanicki provided him with warm letters of introduction to the Warsaw authorities. The consul’s instrumental role in securing Polish military training and massive arms supplies for Etzel, as well as acquiescence in recruitment of underground members in Poland and their illegal immigration to Palestine, has been documented extensively.<sup>2</sup> How, then, did Hulanicki become a victim of his own protégés? Emmanuel Meltzer wrote in 1991: “This entire affair still appears to be wrapped in mystery and calls for more elucidation.” Another historian’s observation shortly afterward that “virtually nothing has been published on this very intriguing postscript to the history of Polish–Jewish relations” remains valid today, at least as far as any in-depth study is concerned.<sup>5</sup>

Our inquiry into this affair has led us through the forensic intricacies of a “cold case” detective story and the assembly of a compelling picture of a still-unresolved human tragedy. Its personal impact was brought home to us by an emotional correspondence with the eldest of Hulanicki’s three daughters, Barbara Hulanicki Fitz-Simon, who witnessed her father’s abduction as a twelve-year-old. In her autobiography, she was understandably resentful and often misinformed about the broader context of the Palestine conflict. She wrote, for example, that Etzel had targeted her father as he was “a major threat to Irgun’s plan for total extinction of the Palestinian Arabs,” which both misidentifies the killers and misrepresents the Irgun’s policy. But there is no reason to doubt her account of what she actually saw, which is corroborated by available records and provides valuable clues.<sup>4</sup>

When we contacted Hulanicki Fitz-Simon last year, it was the first time any Israeli had approached the family to try and set the record straight, much less make amends—even though within a few years of the event, Lehi veterans and others began to proclaim Hulanicki’s innocence, and their own remorse, or even outrage, at his assassination. A 1956 biography of Stern judged that Hulanicki’s “murder...was a most bizarre act of ingratitude.”<sup>5</sup> Another Lehi stalwart called it “a senseless and inexplicable murder... a false, bloody, sickening trick of wanton history.”<sup>6</sup> A detailed chronology of Lehi’s operations, edited by its top ideologue, omitted the incident entirely.<sup>7</sup> No one ever admitted (or boasted of) taking part in the abduction, tribunal, or execution. Ultimately, Hulanicki was exonerated of any guilt in a remarkable apology by Lehi’s operational commander at the time, Nathan Yalin-Mor:

When the report reached me belatedly, due to the isolation [of Jerusalem], I could no longer do anything about it. I could only bite my lips in sorrow that this was the fate of a man who made an important contribution to promoting the Hebrew fight

for liberation; a friend of Ya'ir. ... I am certain that it was a false accusation which was brought against Hulanicki [sic] and his colleague, and their death is one of the tragedies that are strewn on the path of an underground—any underground.<sup>8</sup>

However, the excuses that Yalin-Mor offered for having let this tragedy happen hardly stand up to scrutiny:

It appears that a siege creates a hotbed for vagaries of fear... When some of the thousands of shells that rained down on Hebrew Jerusalem struck vital targets, this was not accounted for by coincidence or by the fact that the shooters, British or [Arab] Legionnaires, had but shortly earlier freely walked the streets of Jerusalem and possessed good maps. The besieged soul sought another explanation, and found it in the form of spies, who supposedly roved the Hebrew neighborhoods and transmitted their information to the enemy through sophisticated communications channels.

This was widely accepted at face value, and even cited in an often-quoted study as proof that “local initiatives in assassination did happen and ... Lehi’s center was not aware of, or controlled, all the cases.”<sup>9</sup> But although charges of betrayal and espionage were indeed flying thick and fast at the time, Yalin-Mor’s explanation that the siege of Jerusalem cut him off from subordinates there is not plausible, to say the least.

By February 1948, a convoy system was used in order to travel to and from the city. Although there was a shortage of seats on the armored buses, places were made available to Lehi members when needed. Even a month later, when Lehi executed a Jerusalem woman on similar charges, one of its members was able to escort her child to relatives in Tel Aviv and return the next day.<sup>10</sup> Telephone communications were only cut off in April; newspapers in Tel Aviv and New York received word of the Hulanicki/Arnold assassination in time to publish their reports no later than the Jerusalem-based *Palestine Post*.<sup>11</sup> In fact, Lehi’s own organ, the Tel Aviv-based afternoon paper *Mivraq*, scooped them all by headlining a few hours after the bodies were discovered: “Two Polish Leaders Executed in Jerusalem.”<sup>12</sup> Moreover, heavy artillery bombardment of Jewish Jerusalem did not begin for another two months.<sup>13</sup> In any event, there are now strong indications that the “contract” on Hulanicki had been issued well before major hostilities broke out on November 30, 1947.

Even less credible is Yalin-Mor’s assertion that “the name Hulanicki [sic] meant nothing to any of the Lehi personnel who handled this case.” By 1948, Hulanicki had gained an almost hallowed place in Lehi’s pantheon, as well as a respected reputation within the mainstream *Yishuv* leadership.

While still representing Poland, Hulanicki's reports put its interests and his instructions above any personal sentiment. His profuse public praise for the Zionist enterprise might be discounted as *ex officio* pretense.<sup>14</sup> Even at the height of prewar Polish cooperation with the Irgun and the mainstream Yishuv's paramilitary arm, the Haganah,<sup>15</sup> he did not grant every Jewish request.<sup>16</sup> Poland's support for Zionism in general, and for Stern's audacious "40,000 plan" to raise a Jewish army in Poland for an invasion of Palestine, was primarily due to their perceived confluence with Polish objectives. The Polish government made no secret of its belief that there were too many Jews in the country, and that a solution to that problem would have to be found through emigration. Hulanicki explored other Middle Eastern destinations as well, and also made sure to develop relations with Arab governments and members of Arab society. But the Palestine option offered the benefit of Jewish backing for what proved to be wildly unrealistic aspirations in Warsaw: Some thought that Poland might take over the mandate from Britain, or even establish a Polish colony.<sup>17</sup>

Still, the consul was definitely impressed by the charismatic Stern, whom he described in dispatches as "an exceptional young man," as well as a useful contact.<sup>18</sup> Given Hulanicki's assistance to the Irgun's underground activity, it is small wonder that Revisionist leader Benjamin Akzin, who in 1938 attempted to establish a dialogue with the Mandate authorities and was assisted by Hulanicki in contacting several officials, nonetheless found that "the Pole was not particularly liked by the British."<sup>19</sup> In any case, cold calculation could hardly explain Hulanicki's continued attachment to Stern after the consul was summarily dismissed by the newly established Polish government-in-exile, headed by General Władysław Sikorski, and was employed by the British authorities in a series of civil service capacities.

Yalin-Mor confirms that "Ya'ir kept up his friendship with Hulanicki [sic] even after the fall of Poland," when Stern led his splinter group out of the Irgun in protest at the latter's truce with Britain for the duration of the struggle against Nazism. One of Stern's associates claims that Hulanicki offered the Lehi leader shelter in the final, desperate phase of his persecution by the British. Two such sources assert that at Stern's hasty and heavily guarded funeral, a few hours after he was shot by British detectives in February 1942, "the only wreath that was laid on Ya'ir's grave came from him [Hulanicki] and his wife."<sup>20</sup> One of these writers attributes an even more extraordinary disclosure to Hulanicki himself: "Years later," he "felt the need to speak about their relationship... his [Stern's] personality and greatness. When the British police, at his request, showed him a photo of Ya'ir's body, he responded: 'These may be bullet holes, but I clearly see the sign of the cross on his chest.'"<sup>21</sup>

Even if these stories are apocryphal, they illustrate how Hulanicki's affinity with Stern had by 1948 become canonized in Lehi lore, leading to the extolment of the Pole's own personality as "noble," "wonderful," and "magnanimous."<sup>22</sup> It thus appears highly unlikely that even newly recruited "Sternists" could have been unaware of his venerated image, much less old-timers such as Yehoshu'a Zetler, who had taken command of Lehi in Jerusalem a few weeks before the assassination.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, *Mivraq's* immediate report on the assassination accurately noted Hulanicki's prewar tenure as consul-general, so that even Lehi members who had heard about him only as "the consul" could have made no mistake.

Furthermore, testimonies from non-Lehi sources indicate that Hulanicki's overall sympathy for Zionism persisted even after he had no vested interest in it. In his first job for the British, as postal censor, he took personal risk to warn a former Polish-Jewish leader that his letter to colleagues abroad could not be passed as written, and the sender might be liable for a long jail sentence. Hulanicki then helped to rephrase the letter and sent it without informing his superiors.<sup>24</sup> He chose to reside in Jewish Tel Aviv, and later in the Jewish Rehavia neighborhood of Jerusalem. According to the acting mayor of the Jewish sector in 1948, Daniel Auster, the family became "integrated into Jerusalem society"—a characterization that also appeared in press obituaries. Having been appointed assistant custodian of enemy (that is, mainly Axis powers) property in late August 1947,<sup>25</sup> he was, at the time of his death, in "very advanced" negotiations with Auster, who was also an official of the Jewish National Fund (JNF), for the sale of this property in Jerusalem. Indeed, after the abduction, Mrs. Hulanicki turned for help not to the British authorities but through Auster to the Haganah and the Jewish establishment, as high up as military governor Bernard (Dov) Joseph, who all attempted urgently but unsuccessfully to locate her husband.<sup>26</sup> Moreover, a few weeks after his death, the Bezalel Art Museum disclosed that "the late M. Hulanicki" had donated a collection of antique weapons.<sup>27</sup>

Still, the targeting of real or alleged Polish informers had become so widespread that at first glance, this case might be attributed to mere human error. In the past, the Haganah, as well as the Irgun and Lehi, had contended with antisemitic tendencies in the Polish army-in-exile commanded by General Władysław Anders.<sup>28</sup> When that force was stationed in Palestine from 1942, both servicemen of Anders' Army and its civilian camp-followers (including "criminals") were widely held to be collaborating with British intelligence and Arab irregular forces against the Jewish community. This was attributed particularly to members of the *Dwójka* [Polish military intelligence], which "continued its existence" in Palestine. The Haganah's intelligence arm ShaY [Hebrew acronym for *sherut yediot*, or information service] indeed "took punitive actions against [Polish] informers and provocateurs who were exposed and their guilt proven." But in December 1947,

when escalation toward full-scale war began, ShaY still had “hundreds of reports” accusing these Poles of collaboration with Arab forces both in Palestine and in neighboring countries. These included “Polish sabotage experts, among them the directors of Dom Polski [a Polish Catholic institution maintained by the sisters of St. Elizabeth—editor] in Jerusalem, teaching Arabs how to use bombs.”<sup>29</sup> Jewish charges to this effect were based on some hard evidence, such as identification of bodies found among Arab casualties, or orders in Polish heard during attacks on Jewish positions.<sup>30</sup>

A few examples from the weeks preceding the Hulanicki-Arnold incident can illustrate how “open season” had begun against suspect Poles. The Haganah claimed that unlike the “dissident” groups, it punished these suspects only after due process.<sup>31</sup> But on January 9, 1948, its men in Jerusalem executed a Polish amputee who later turned out to be merely a thief rather than an instructor of Arab irregulars, as suspected. An internal Haganah report admitted that “clearly the evidence against him was insufficient for a verdict,” and he was shot only as a precaution, since he had not been blindfolded under interrogation.<sup>32</sup> On January 14, in Tel Aviv, the Irgun was “credited” for killing “as a spy” a Hebrew-speaking straggler from Anders’ Army who had made a living as a shoe-shine boy and dishwasher, then enlisted in the Jewish forces but crossed into Arab Jaffa.<sup>33</sup> On December 19, 1947, six Lehi members including its intelligence chief in Jerusalem were arrested while attempting to abduct the editor of the locally published *Gazeta Polska*, whom “multiple sources” had denounced as a “professional informer.”<sup>34</sup>

But Hulanicki did not fit this profile, and not only because he had not come with Anders’ Army (more later about Arnold). Indeed, he could, and did, show his abductors, to no avail, material proof of his association with Ya’ir: a silver-bound Bible that Stern had personally dedicated to him—evidently just one of the gifts that, according to Yalin-Mor, Stern used to send Hulanicki even after his tenure as consul ended. This prime exhibit remained in the Hulanicki family’s possession, but according to his daughter Barbara, it was “collected” years later in London from her younger sister Beatrice, in circumstances that we are still trying to clarify.

Lehi routinely engaged in robbery and extortion. It is therefore all the more remarkable that the abductors, though they ransacked the Hulanicki residence for documents and photographs, either overlooked a large sum in gold or even—as Mrs. Hulanicki told Auster—refused to accept it as ransom. Also, Lehi usually announced the trial and execution of traitors or spies in its handbills, with a confession signed by the victim. Nothing of the sort is recorded in this instance; Lehi’s newspaper *Mivraq* reported that the two Polish “leaders” were “interrogated and their guilt proved,” but mentioned no confession. The Haganah officer then in

charge of relations with Lehi has claimed explicitly that Hulanicki was condemned “without any evidence at all, and even with no ‘confession’ in his handwriting.”<sup>35</sup>

Indeed, *Mivraq*, while providing no source for its immediate, exclusive knowledge of the “trial,” went on to deflect responsibility. The report does not mention Lehi, and states: “Reportedly, it was the Haganah that interrogated and executed the two Poles.” This falsehood was not retracted in the following days, and it was only two weeks later that another Lehi statement referred to Hulanicki as its own victim, in what appears as an effort to justify his killing. Hours after the Jewish Agency headquarters in Jerusalem was blown up by an Arab chauffeur employed by the US consulate on March 11, 1948, Lehi’s radio station again accused the Haganah—this time, of laxity in issuing *laissez-passeurs*. “Hulanicki, the Polish spy and agent of British intelligence who was executed by our fighters... also had an entry pass for the Agency building... as well as a ‘Kosher certificate’ from the Arab Higher Committee.”<sup>36</sup> But such documents were essential to Hulanicki in carrying out his legitimate duties, including the aforementioned negotiations with the JNF (which was based in the Agency building), as well as in his functions representing various voluntary bodies of the Polish community.<sup>37</sup>

Therefore, most of Yalin-Mor’s account hardly holds water, but one passage is particularly telling:

Possibly there were persons who were interested in getting rid of officials who knew in great detail about various transactions, and it was they who saw to planting in the Lehi intelligence service suspicions that these two were engaged in espionage against the Hebrew community. They also made sure to provide evidence backing up these suspicions.

Lehi’s leader pled, then, that it had been manipulated into killing Hulanicki. But by whom and to hide what transactions? There were, of course, Hulanicki’s ongoing talks with the JNF. After his death, it was mentioned to his credit that he had already “greatly assisted ... in the transfer of land owned by Germans in the country to Jewish hands.”<sup>38</sup> But Lehi had no apparent interest in scuttling this activity or retaliating for it—much less did the Yishuv leadership. Who, then, might have planted evidence against Hulanicki?

Some contemporary media reports of the incident noted marginally that “both [victims] ... were known as distinct anti-Communists,” as the Revisionist paper *Ha-Mashqif* put it. Was this aspect knowingly downplayed? Nine years after the assassination, Zbigniew Jakubski, an ex-Polish serviceman in Palestine, asserted explicitly in the Paris-based émigré journal *Kultura*: “I know... that Hulanicki was



murdered by Jewish-Communist militants, in revenge for his intransigent anti-Communist activity.”<sup>39</sup>

The “polemic” about Hulanicki erupted in *Kultura* after an oblique reference to his prewar service in a memoir by a former colleague in the diplomatic corps, which did not even mention the assassination.<sup>40</sup> But the controversy then developed into a vivid illustration of the complexity of the situation in which Hulanicki found himself once stranded in Palestine. It also demonstrates the delicate balance he had to strike in the rapidly changing power struggle between London, Moscow, and their rival Polish clients—as well as its interplay with Zionist factions and Middle East geopolitics.

Since 1945, Palestine, and its now diminishing Polish-expatriate community, had become a cockpit for the struggle between the new, Soviet-installed Provisional Government of National Unity (PGNU) in Warsaw and its London-based, Western-supported rivals. The Poles in Palestine were by no means all of the nationalist mold that blamed the Jews for the Soviet subjugation of their homeland. In 1941–42, when Anders’ Army was assembled in the USSR under an uneasy agreement with the government-in-exile in London and its British patrons, Anders’ command made every effort to exclude both Soviet sympathizers and Jews. The manpower was drawn from Polish servicemen in Soviet prisoner camps; their officer corps, of which the lion’s share had been wiped out by the Soviets in the Katyn massacre, was augmented with counterparts who had fled west.

Nonetheless, the Soviets did not miss this opportunity to plant their agents. Dozens of Polish Communists and Comintern operatives were sent to Anders’ recruiting camps, and some made it with that army to the Middle East. In that way, the NKVD was able to keep up close surveillance of anti-Soviet and antisemitic activity, especially among the officer corps.<sup>41</sup> There was a sufficient number of pro-Soviet Poles in Palestine to form an active chapter of the Moscow-backed “Union of Polish Patriots.” This was so, even after hundreds were jailed in the Anders’ Army’s own prisons, sometimes under criminal charges, which—the Soviet reports claimed—were as false as the “reactionary” officers’ corruption was real.

In the carve-up of postwar Europe, Britain was constrained (or, as many of its Polish allies felt, perfidiously agreed) to accept Soviet influence in Poland and to recognize the PGNU in return for a never-kept promise of free elections. Meanwhile, this Polish government provided some of the first indications that the “Slavic bloc” was swinging from virulent anti-Zionism to support of the UN Partition Plan and a Jewish state—greatly enhancing Warsaw’s popularity, and Moscow’s, among Jews in Palestine. Hulanicki became an odd man out, in an



increasingly untenable position. He was both an anti-Soviet advocate of Polish independence—yet estranged from the “London” government—and sympathetic to Zionism.

Some of the new powers-that-be in Poland had actually been in Palestine. Ha-Shomer ha-Tza’ir leader Meir Ya’ari recalled, “I remember the intimate cooperation that we fostered during the World War II years with Polish Socialists who were in the country as refugees or visitors. A year after Poland’s liberation, I was invited to visit there, and... I understood that the comradesly assistance we extended to many of Socialist Poland’s founders in their time of need... was not squandered.”<sup>42</sup> This continuity, and the platform it provided for covert Polish and Soviet action, is illustrated by the figure of Romuald Gadomski, a prominent prewar Polish Communist who was one of the Comintern agents who had infiltrated Anders’ Army and with it, Palestine—where he was jailed.<sup>43</sup> When Britain withdrew accreditation from Hulanicki’s old “London” consulate, Gadomski became the Warsaw government’s first representative in Tel Aviv. In August 1946, after handing over his post to a full-fledged consul-general, Rafał Łoć, Gadomski resumed his career as a notoriously ruthless officer of the Polish security apparatus. He was also one of the founders of the Polish-Palestinian Friendship Association.<sup>44</sup>

A temporary Polish consul-general was also dispatched to Jerusalem with a large staff; in March 1947 the post was permanently occupied by an eminent historian, Olgierd Górka.<sup>45</sup> Górka had been a member of the Polish government-in-exile in London and, as a fighter against antisemitism, its liaison to the Jewish and Zionist organizations there.<sup>46</sup> But now, as one of the exiled leaders who returned home to Poland and joined the PGNU (as head of its office for Jewish affairs), it soon became clear whom he represented. To ensure his new loyalty, a minder was sent in the person of a powerful deputy, Marek Thee. With Moscow and its satellites now firmly supporting Jewish statehood, Górka’s orientation only enhanced his standing in Palestine, and he was immediately recognized by the Yishuv leadership, as well as—albeit grudgingly—by the British authorities.<sup>47</sup> They duly handed over to him all Polish property in Jerusalem, including the school in Ein Karem that Barbara Hulanicki had attended. Her father bought all the textbooks remaining there, for fear that they would be destroyed or censored by the new Polish regime.<sup>48</sup>

As the USSR still had no official representation in Palestine, the new Polish consulates acted as the Soviets’ surrogates in intelligence as well as diplomacy.<sup>49</sup> By February 1947, CID reports identified an attaché at the consulate, Ephraim Sztynch, “the head of Polish Intelligence in Palestine”—and this, of course, no longer referred to the Dwójka.<sup>50</sup> Except for Górka, all the above were Jewish.

To replace the “London” consulate, the British operated a “Government Commission on Polish Affairs,” which financed an advisory office and other activities. The International Refugee Organization (IRO) provided support for those Poles who refused repatriation after Warsaw had ordered, in May 1946, “a general compulsory registration of Polish citizens in Palestine,” and sent a special repatriation commission for that purpose headed by a colonel “of the Polish Security Corps, head of Polish Intelligence in Cairo.”<sup>51</sup> By January 1948, all of the British relief efforts were being wound down, IRO allowances were stopped, and the remaining “London Poles” who were not as fortunate as Hulanicki to have gained some status in Britain, were faced with a choice between DP camps in Germany or local “absorption.” Thus, mercenary and pragmatic motives were added to ideological preference for the Arab cause.

The initial subject of the controversy in *Kultura* was the reason for Hulanicki’s not enlisting in the exiled Polish Army—or his exclusion from it—as a result of old scores from prewar Poland. This led to a vicious and telling attack on Hulanicki from the former Dwójka chief in Palestine and later the entire Middle East, Władysław Michniewicz. This is almost certainly the officer named by the Haganah as the leading collaborator with the Arab side in 1947–48, who posed as a journalist and was circulating calls for Polish veterans to enlist in a “Polish–Arab army to fight against the Jews and Russia.”<sup>52</sup>

Michniewicz’s writing is blatantly antisemitic (he jokes that the only difference between Polish and Jewish militants is “the shape of their noses”). Still, he was the only participant in the *Kultura* polemic who opined that the Sternists “knew what they were doing” when they killed Hulanicki, since the latter betrayed the Jews just as he had betrayed Poland. Oddly for an intelligence officer who must have known better, he claimed that Lehi “had nothing to do with the Communists.”

But Lehi’s openly proclaimed pro-Soviet stance in the final years of the British mandate is—and was at the time—a matter of record (as is the subsequent leftward migration in Israeli politics by part of its membership and 1948 leadership, especially Yalin-Mor). In his definitive study of Lehi ideology during this period, Joseph Heller summarized its orientation:

If the Jewish kingdom of Stern’s aspirations could not be established with the help of the Axis powers (to whom he originally appealed), then it was necessary to turn to the Soviet Union. The important point was to accelerate Britain’s expulsion from Eretz Israel...by forging alliances with victorious powers. Thus began the Sternists’ process of “leftism.” ... the Sternists believed that...they could win the sympathy of the working class and attract the support of the Soviet Union...by the pronouncement of anti-imperialist slogans.”<sup>53</sup>

However, in Lehi's strident competition with Ha-Shomer ha-Tza'ir (which then merged into Mapam), and, to a markedly lesser degree, with the Palestine Communist Party, the Sternists stressed their voluntary and calculated alliance with the USSR, as opposed to the others' alleged subservience.<sup>54</sup> Heller (and other Israeli researchers) did not suggest that Lehi was actually infiltrated, financed, or directly operated by the Soviets.

This was estimated at the time not only by the British, but also by US intelligence. British assessments from late 1947 describe Lehi as "Russian-inspired"; "while constantly denying the reports that they are controlled financially from Moscow, [they] have not ceased to advocate a pro-Russian policy."<sup>55</sup> On the eve of the General Assembly vote on the Partition Plan, a CIA report warned that its adoption would damage US interests and enhance Soviet penetration. The USSR, it warned, was assisting illegal immigration through Romania to Palestine. "There is some evidence that European agents of IZL and the Stern Gang have been trained and are assisted by the USSR... recent reports confirm the fact that the Stern Gang has connections with the USSR, which is furnishing it with money."<sup>56</sup>

These claims were confirmed in post-Soviet Russian publications. For example, in his memoirs, former NKVD General Pavel Sudoplatov named two high-ranking agents that he had planted in 1946 in the "Zionist underground" in Palestine. He referred specifically to Lehi, in which the Soviets also reactivated an agent who had infiltrated the Irgun before the war. Their task was "to establish an illegal agent network which might be used for combat and sabotage operations against the British." A third agent was stationed in Romania to screen candidates for illegal immigration—as the CIA claimed at the time.<sup>57</sup>

So were Lehi's terrorists merely "useful idiots" coincidentally promoting Soviet interests, or were they directly and knowingly tasked from "the Center" in Moscow? This might be tested by identifying specific Lehi operations that *prima facie* served Soviet interests more than Zionist goals. Here was precisely such a case: Lehi ostensibly had every reason not to harm Hulanicki—while, as we increasingly discovered, he was a prime target for the Soviets or their proxies.

The polemic in the émigré press subsided after Michniewicz's blast—only to resume twenty-five years later, when Yalin-Mor's memoir was published in French. At that time, another Paris-based Polish émigré journal responded with an analysis including a summary of the exchange in *Kultura*.<sup>58</sup> It was then that Jan Szuldrzyński came forward with an astonishing disclosure about Hulanicki, "whose memory I keep with respect and affection":<sup>59</sup>

During the last war I was in charge of the press centre of the Polish Army in the Middle East, with headquarters in Jerusalem. The centre's activities comprised also radio broadcasts... to the Polish underground in Poland. This centre existed until the end of 1947, when the British notified us they could not guarantee the safety of our staff. ... Our Jewish friends repeatedly warned ... that our anti-Soviet activity would not be tolerated by the Jewish communist-linked movement and that we would be exposing ourselves to great personal risk.... Our centre had to close down and in November 1947 I left Jerusalem for Quassasin in Egypt.

About two or three months before my departure... Witold Hulanicki came to my office... He wanted to entrust me with a request... in case something adverse happened to him—which possibility he seriously envisaged.... People were saying that he was a member of British intelligence. He was afraid that in case of his sudden death... this opinion would come to be shared also by his family and close friends.

He went on to say that he was not and had never been involved with British Intelligence, as this would have been incompatible with the service of the Polish state... However, recently he had entered into co-operation with the anti-communist American secret service... As a Pole who had decided to remain in Palestine... who knew the problems and felt that he could be useful in the future development of Israel under the aegis of the United Nations—he believed that such cooperation with the secret anti-Soviet American Intelligence was in line with Polish interests... He was aware of the great practical risks. Soviet influence was growing and the militant Jewish organizations had accepted Soviets as the main ally. ...

He asked me that in the case of his death, I should convey [this]. "It is important to me that my family and friends know the truth."

Szułdrzyński's description of the circumstances is corroborated by the published record.<sup>60</sup> There was a British-operated broadcasting service to Eastern Europe in Jerusalem, which was discontinued in the spring of 1946.<sup>61</sup> The bombshell in his disclosure is that by 1948, a US agency was taking over such operations. This is some of the earliest evidence of covert US activity in Palestine—not merely in the local conflict but in the global Cold War context. Hulanicki's involvement made him a distinct target for Soviet counteraction, whereas his plan to remain in the country and "be useful in the future development of Israel" appears to bear out Szułdrzyński's characterization of him as "a friend of the Jews."

A word is due here about Stefan Arnold, who, unlike Hulanicki, apparently arrived in Palestine with Anders' Army but about whom little else is known. Szułdrzyński

wrote that he knew him “superficially as a journalist attached to the Information Section at the Polish Consulate General.” Elsewhere he is described as bureau chief of the official Polish press agency, which appears to indicate at least a brief attempt to work with the Warsaw government. But significantly, *The New York Times*’ Jerusalem correspondent, in reporting the double murder, mentioned that Arnold “left the Polish Telegraph Agency a year ago because he was an anti-Communist. Since then he had worked as a freelance writer.”<sup>62</sup> A Haganah report from April 1947 states that Arnold—though still described as “a Warsaw man”—had set up an “Eastern Press Agency” in partnership with “a Yugoslav Jew named Ofner.”<sup>63</sup>

Dr. Franciscus (“Franjo”) Ofner would have been an unlikely accomplice in anti-Jewish spying—but eminently suitable for anti-Soviet activity. A pre-war Betar leader in Novi Sad (Yugoslavia), during World War II, he had served as the “Balkan Press Officer” of the US Office of War Information (OWI) in Istanbul, from where he set up a Zionist Revisionist intelligence and rescue network for Jews in Europe.<sup>64</sup> By 1948 he was a reputable correspondent in Jerusalem for major US papers. His reports, strongly supportive of the Zionist cause but critical of its left wing, including Lehi, also featured claims that verged on propaganda about Soviet arms supplies to the Arabs and plans for direct military intervention.<sup>65</sup> They were soon being cited in a US journal by a former OWI colleague of Ofner’s as evidence of “Communist tactics in Palestine.”<sup>66</sup> The Haganah suspected Arnold and Ofner not of collaboration with Arab forces, but rather of informing the CID and the Polish military on “various journalists... and their attitude toward Soviet Russia.” So the common denominator between Arnold and Hulanicki—who may have been acquainted, but were not connected in any report before their assassination—was mainly a covert US connection and anti-Soviet activity.<sup>67</sup>

In any case, beyond mere spying, propaganda, and commercial interests, the frequent violence of the struggle within Poland as the first battleground of the Cold War was mirrored in Palestine well before the Hulanicki/Arnold incident. As early as October 1945, a Jewish Agency official told Gadomski that there was “verified evidence whereby Polish reactionary circles in the Middle East were taking part in the organization, training, and political incitement” of Arabs in special camps, and served notice that “it had been decided ... they would become targets for physical elimination by the Jewish organizations.”<sup>68</sup> In January 1946, Gadomski was reinforced with another veteran Polish-Jewish Communist, NKVD agent and Armia Ludowa partisan hero, Gershon Gutman or Frumkin, aka Col. Gustaw (“Bolek”) Alef-Bolkowiak. The British CID, powerless to stop him, reported that Alef exhorted his “local friends” to “fight the London Poles in this country by all possible means.” The new Polish consular authorities, he explained, would need the locals’ help—and handed them a list of “a number of Poles living in Palestine

who are... 'absolutely dangerous.'"<sup>69</sup> In late April 1947, "various agents" reportedly supplied the Polish consulate in Jerusalem "with the names of Poles who are suspected of being British agents."<sup>70</sup> In April 1948, the Soviets still listed "dregs of Anders' [Army]" among the "traitors and quislings from around the world" who "take part in the struggle on the Arab side" by assisting attacks on the Jews.<sup>71</sup>

There was anti-Communist violence too: In October 1947, Górka and his wife narrowly escaped an "exceptionally strong bomb" that destroyed the consulate building. The *Palestine Post* reported that "the attack is believed to have been made by Arab terrorists following the recent Polish statement at the United Nations session on Palestine."<sup>72</sup> Targeting Górka's anti-Soviet predecessor Hulanicki thus looks almost like retaliation. Later, British intelligence attributed similar bombings directly to Soviet agents, in connection with developments in Palestine: in April it reported that "two time bombs which came originally from Russians in Damascus were placed in the gardens of [Arab Legion Commander] Glubb Pasha and the Transjordan Prime Minister in Amman."<sup>73</sup>

As Szuldrzyński dates his talk with Hulanicki to September or October 1947, his testimony disposes of Yalin-Mor's plea of ignorance due to the siege of Jerusalem. Hulanicki's fear for his life was apparently based on actual threats. A month before the actual assassination, a "London" Polish bulletin charged: "The Hebrew press frequently speaks of 'Anders' officers' training the Arab gangs. This activity is led by the Communist or Communist-associated press, which is trying to convince the public that the Polish émigré community is Fascist and serves British and American interests." This bulletin blamed "Communist propaganda (Polish, Arab and Jewish) that aspires to eliminate those Poles who have not recognized the Warsaw government" and warned that "Jewish security forces sentenced two Poles to death on charges of spying for the Arabs or the British Police."<sup>74</sup> Were these Hulanicki and Arnold? That is, was the "tribunal" actually held, and their death sentences passed, long before their abduction?

The bulletin went on: "Other Poles were warned by the Jews that their lives are in danger." Barbara Hulanicki relates that a week or two before his murder, her father received "the third anonymous letter... saying that he was going to be killed." This might conceivably have been done by Lehi on its own; likewise, a Polish-speaking "giant of a man" that she remembers among the abductors might have been one of the group's many members of Polish origin. But the night before his abduction, Hulanicki received a "surprise" visit from his godson, Heniek Herold, the son of his closest friends—that is, a Christian Pole, hardly a Lehi operative. He "wanted to see the flat. He was very jumpy and nervous, and left soon afterwards. It was after he left that my father gave me ... the fountain pen he always used, a very strange thing for him to have done," Barbara wrote. "I think he knew it was his last night."<sup>75</sup>

The Associated Press initially quoted both “Police sources” and “Jewish sources” as saying that Hulanicki and Arnold were executed “by the Stern Gang on suspicion of collaborating with Arabs.”<sup>76</sup> This made news worldwide, but interest abated before most of the press could get wind of confidential assessments that detected Communist fingerprints. The French consul in Jerusalem reported explicitly that the assassination was carried out by Lehi on Soviet instructions.<sup>77</sup> He was probably echoing better-informed British views, as within a few days it was noted in the *Economist*:

The Stern Gang gave their allegiance to Russia only last December, but they are showing themselves loyal agents. In the past fortnight they have kidnapped and murdered two Poles, both well known in Palestine, where their connections were predominantly Jewish. The two victims certainly did not, like some other Polish exiles, give help to the Arabs; but one of them distinguished himself by anti-Soviet activities; the other by having many British friends.<sup>78</sup>

This was promptly quoted by *Mivraq* under the proud—and spurious—heading: “*Economist*: Lehi’s pro-Soviet orientation caused the [pro-Zionist] shift in Russia’s position.”<sup>79</sup> The fact that Lehi’s organ not only did not correct or deny the Soviet instigation of the Hulanicki-Arnold assassination and the victims’ innocence from the Jewish viewpoint, but even presented it as an accomplishment, is as close as we are likely to come to a smoking gun in this affair.

In any case, with respect to the Warsaw government’s (and Moscow’s) interests among the Poles in Palestine, the assassination had an immediate and desired effect. Haganah intelligence confirmed that “among the white Poles in Jerusalem, the impression was created as though Hulanicki and Arnold were killed because of their anti-Soviet stand. They are all convinced that these two had no links at all with the Arabs... The Poles now view Lehi as a Soviet organization.”<sup>80</sup> According to this Haganah report, “The fear that has seized them [the Poles] has caused a real flight to the Arab areas” of Jerusalem. This is indeed what Hulanicki’s widow Wiktoria [Victoria] and her three daughters did. But soon an “Arab” came to their friends’ house, in which they had found refuge, and asked to use the phone. He was overheard by Barbara speaking about them in Yiddish (which she had picked up from Jewish friends). The many Jews among the “Warsaw” operatives were likelier to use Yiddish than Lehi members. The frightened Hulanickis moved again, to the YMCA.

One of the many inaccuracies in contemporary media reports was that Hulanicki, Arnold, and their families were all about to leave Palestine on the day after they were abducted. Arnold apparently was going on one of the last “Polish transports” to a transit camp in Cyprus—his IRO allowance had dried up—but it is unclear



whether he had a family at all. Hulanicki, as he told Szuldrzyński, intended to stay in Palestine at least till May and had high hopes for a future there, though he had, indeed, completed preparations to move his family out of danger. After the assassination, his wife and daughters were given priority on a flight to Britain (instead of their originally planned sea passage), and never returned to Jerusalem. Barbara wrote: "Israelis have proudly told me I should go and see Jerusalem as it is now... [but] the graveyard for transit Poles is there no more. I just don't feel like seeing fancy buildings standing on my father's grave."<sup>81</sup> On this count, at least, we have been able to reassure her: the graves of Witold Hulanicki and Stefan Arnold are intact and well kept in the Polish section of the Roman Catholic cemetery on Mt. Zion, where a collective memorial service is held annually by the embassy of post-Communist Poland.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> This summary and subsequent references to contemporary media accounts are based on items in *The Palestine Post*, *Davar*, *Haaretz*, and *Ha-Mashqif*, February 29, 1948, and *The New York Times*, February 28 and 29, 1948.
- <sup>2</sup> Emmanuel Meltzer, "Reports of the Polish Consul-General in Jerusalem" [Hebrew], *Ha-Tziyoniut* 16 (1991), 257–273; Laurence Weinbaum, *A Marriage of Convenience: The New Zionist Organization and the Polish Government, 1956–1959* (Boulder, 1993), pp. 8, 113–114, 128–129, 135, 139, 177, 179, 193; Zeev Ivianski, *Lechi (Fighters for Freedom of Israel): The Formative Years* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 2003), Vol. 1, pp. 249–252.
- <sup>3</sup> Meltzer, op. cit., p. 262, note 21; Weinbaum, op. cit., p. 234–235, note 22.
- <sup>4</sup> Barbara Hulanicki, *From A to Biba* (London, 1983). Statements of Ms. Hulanicki that are not referenced to this book are based on her personal communications with the authors.
- <sup>5</sup> Ya'akov Weinshall, *The Blood on the Doorstep* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1956), p. 85. Hulanicki is referred to as "the consul."
- <sup>6</sup> Aryeh Kotzer, *Red Carpet: My Path with Ya'ir* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1977), p. 250.
- <sup>7</sup> Ya'akov Banai (Yisrael Eldad, ed.), *Nameless Soldiers: The Book of Lehi Operations* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1958).
- <sup>8</sup> Nathan Yalin-Mor, *Fighters for the Freedom of Israel: People, Ideas, Deeds* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1974), p. 473. Yalin-Mor misidentifies Hulanicki as "Jan Hulanicki," a former Polish "vice-consul." Precisely the same errors appear in the brief and strongly critical mention of the incident in the Haganah's official history, which was published two years earlier—suggesting that Yalin-Mor wrote in response. See Yehuda Slutzky, "From Struggle to War," part 3 of *The History of the Haganah* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1972), Vol. 2, p. 1546.
- <sup>9</sup> Nachman Ben-Yehuda, *Political Assassinations by Jews: A Rhetorical Device for Justice* (New

York, 1993), pp. 257–259, 404.

- <sup>10</sup> Nurit Gertz, *On His Own Authority: Four Chapters in the Life of Amos Kenan* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 2008), pp. 144–145.
- <sup>11</sup> Harry Levin, *Jerusalem Embattled: A Diary of the City Under Siege, March 25th, 1948 to July 18th, 1948* (London, 1950), p. 98 (entry for April 26). *The New York Times* was actually able to publish the first report, filed by its Jerusalem bureau chief, less than twenty-four hours after the bodies were discovered, on February 28—which was a Saturday, the Jewish Sabbath. Consequently, the Jewish press in Palestine reported it only the next day.
- <sup>12</sup> *Mivraq*, February 27, 1948.
- <sup>13</sup> Gilad Haskin, *Ethical-Moral Considerations in the Use of Force and Their Application in Practice from the Start of Zionist Settlement in Palestine to the Establishment of the State, 1882–1948* [Hebrew], PhD dissertation, Haifa University, 2005, p. 445. Lehi's *Mivraq* reported the week after the assassination (March 3, 1948), "Ten British Cannons Trained on Rehavia," but quoted the officer in charge as only threatening to open fire if the Jews "don't behave." Levin (op. cit. pp. 96–97) dates the first heavy shelling by the British in Jerusalem to April 25; continuous bombardment by the Arab Legion and Egyptian Army began in mid-May (pp. 172–184).
- <sup>14</sup> "Polish Consul-General Lauds Jewish Effort," *The Palestine Post*, November 16, 1937, quoting an interview Hulanicki granted to a Yiddish newspaper in Warsaw.
- <sup>15</sup> Hulanicki's report of a meeting with Ben-Gurion in December 1938 and Ben-Gurion's own diary entry indicate that previously chilly relations due to Polish support for the Revisionists were improved, military aid for the Haganah was discussed, and in Ben-Gurion's words "this time we were both pleased with each other," Meltzer, *Ha-Tziyonut*, op. cit. pp. 267–269; David Ben-Gurion, *Memoirs*, Vol. 5 [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1982), pp. 410–411.
- <sup>16</sup> He did not, for example, comply when the celebrated Polish–Jewish educator Janusz Korczak "begged" to send squirrels from Poland to enhance the children's farm at Kibbutz Ein Harod. Betty Jean Lifton, *The King of Children: The Life and Death of Janusz Korczak* (Chicago, 2006), p. 248.
- <sup>17</sup> Eli Tzur, "Dangerous Relations: Ze'ev Jabotinsky and the Polish Foreign Ministry," in Avi Bar'eli and Pinhas Ginosar (eds.), *A Man in the Storm: Essays and Studies on Ze'ev Jabotinsky* [Hebrew] (Beersheba, 2004), pp. 399–400, <http://web.bgu.ac.il/NR/rdonlyres/A2233916-CEE6-49A1-AE46-029C492420B8/88242/zeev5c.pdf>.
- <sup>18</sup> Weinbaum, op. cit., p. 135.
- <sup>19</sup> Benjamin Akzin, *From Riga to Jerusalem: A Memoir* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1989), p. 292.
- <sup>20</sup> Kotzer, op. cit.; Weinshall, op. cit., pp. 85–86. Weinshall states that the wreath was sent by Hulanicki and a group of Polish officers who had known Ya'ir in Warsaw. "In those days, it was a bold thing to do." Only Stern's mother and brother were permitted to attend; the latter's description, as given to another Stern biographer, makes no mention of any flowers. See Ada Amichal-Yevin, *In Purple: The Life of Yair-Abraham Stern* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1986), p. 292.

<sup>21</sup> Weinshall, op. cit.

<sup>22</sup> Amichal-Yevin (op. cit, pp. 123–124) describes their relationship as “conspiratorial” and also names Stern’s wife, Roni, as a frequent visitor and courier to the Hulanicki residence. Weinshall adds that Hulanicki introduced Ya’ir into his family circle, saying, “I love this man. I simply love him.”

<sup>23</sup> Banai, op. cit., pp. 632–633.

<sup>24</sup> Anshel Reiss, *In the Tempests of These Times* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1982), p. 228. Postal censorship was abolished at the end of World War II (“No Palestine Censorship,” *The New York Times*, October 1, 1945) and Hulanicki was transferred to a position in the Palestine government’s Department of Heavy Industry.

<sup>25</sup> “In the Government Officialdom,” [Hebrew] *Davar*, August 31, 1947.

<sup>26</sup> Auster, interviewed in Haviv Kna’an, *When the British Departed* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1958), p. 97. (Auster misdates the assassination to April 1948.)

<sup>27</sup> “Youth Hour at the Museum,” *The Palestine Post*, April 7, 1948. Barbara Hulanicki confirmed that her father had donated a collection of decorative swords and similar items that he had received as gifts from Arab notables, since these could not be shipped with the family’s belongings.

<sup>28</sup> Slutzky, op. cit., Vol. 1, p. 616.

<sup>29</sup> Efrayim Dekel (Krasner), *Exploits of ShaY: From the Dossier of a Commander in the Haganah Intelligence Service* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 1953), p. 259.

<sup>30</sup> For example, in Haifa “together with the Arab gang members, the dead included a German Nazi and a Polish serviceman of Anders’ Army, who served as instructors and commanders with the Arab gangs.” “Retaliation Operations of the Haganah in Haifa,” *Davar*, January 18, 1948. During “an attempt to storm Jewish positions...on the Tel Aviv-Jaffa border...the defenders reported that they heard commands shouted in Polish.” “Haganah Stalls Arab Attack,” *The Palestine Post*, March 23, 1948. Slutzky, op. cit., Vol 2, p. 1373 describes mercenary snipers “who were hired from among the remnants of Anders’ Army” firing from Jaffa into Tel Aviv.

<sup>31</sup> Dekel, op. cit., p. 251. The Haganah’s official history condemns the methods used by the Lehi against “spies”: “The Jewish public could not accept such methods of ‘investigation’ and ‘trial.’” Slutzky, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 1546.

<sup>32</sup> “The Arrest and Liquidation of Stefan Grabowski,” January 13, 1948. Haganah History Archive, IDF and Defense Establishment Archive, Tel Aviv (henceforth HA), ShaY files, 8/general/78, p. 12. The authors wish to thank Dorit Harman of HA for her kind assistance. For a similar case related by a Haganah member involved, see Shraga Peled, *One of the Rank and File* [Hebrew] (Holon, 2008), p. 54.

<sup>33</sup> The victim was identified as Jan Markowicz, “Spy Killed,” *The Palestine Post*; “Polish Christian Found Killed in Tel Aviv,” *Davar*, both January 14, 1948.

<sup>34</sup> Chaim Ben-Israel: *Lehi, IDF and Thereafter* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv, 2003), pp. 90–101. Ben-Israel commanded the botched operation against the Polish expatriate editor, who is named as Luxenburg in a *Haaretz* item reproduced on p. 101.

<sup>35</sup> Meir Pa’il and Pinhas Yurman, *The Test of the Zionist Movement* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv,

- 2003), p. 303. Pa'il was the Haganah officer in charge of relations with Etzel and Lehi in Jerusalem.
- <sup>36</sup> "We Accuse" [Hebrew], *Lohamey Herut Israel: Fighters for the Freedom of Israel, Collected Works*, 2nd edition, Vol. II (Tel Aviv, 1982), pp. 963–964. The execution of "traitor and informer" Vera Dukasova on March 27 was announced in a poster that reproduced her handwritten confession in Czech, which stated that she had been recruited for British Intelligence in 1940 in Istanbul, under the supervision of a "Mr. Withold," but this name's similarity to Hulanicki's might be a coincidence. "Why Was the Spy Put to Death?" *ibid.*, pp. 981–982.
- <sup>37</sup> He is described as representing the Polish Red Cross. See Edwin Samuel, *A Lifetime in Jerusalem* (Jerusalem, 1970), p. 189. As chief censor, Samuel was Hulanicki's superior. Barbara Hulanicki describes her father as heading the Polish and then the International YMCA in Palestine, and even—possibly based on misinterpretation of Szuldrzyński's statement quoted below—as mediating between Jews and Arabs for the United Nations (Hulanicki, *op. cit.*, p. 26).
- <sup>38</sup> Meltzer, *Ha-Tziyonut*, p. 262 note 21, apparently based on a report about the assassination in *Ha-Tzofeh*, February 29, 1948.
- <sup>39</sup> Zbigniew Jakubski (Los Angeles), "Letter to the Editor" [Polish] *Kultura*, 119 (1957), 152.
- <sup>40</sup> Michal Sokolnicki, "On Issues of the Times" [Polish], *Kultura*, 111–112 (1957), 136–137, note 2.
- <sup>41</sup> Numerous Soviet documents reproduced in N.S. Lebedeva, *Anders' Army in Documents from Soviet Archives*, <http://www.memo.ru/HISTORY/Polacy/LEB.htm>; *Russian Archive: The Great Patriotic War* (Moscow, 1994) Vol. 14, "Russia and Poland," Ch. 1, "Unrealized Possibilities of Military Alliance: The Army of W. Anders on Soviet Soil, 1941–1942," [http://militera.lib.ru/docs/da/terra\\_poland/01.html](http://militera.lib.ru/docs/da/terra_poland/01.html).
- <sup>42</sup> Interviewed in Kna'an, *op. cit.*, p. 42.
- <sup>43</sup> "Information from Head of NKVD First Directorate to Central Committee on Activity of Polish Army Representatives in Middle East," June 26, 1944, in *Russian Archive*.
- <sup>44</sup> Krzysztof Szwagrzyk (ed.), *The Security Apparatus in Poland: Leading Cadres* Vol. 1 [Polish] (Warsaw, 2005), pp. 62, 67, 80–82; Marci Shore, *Caviar and Ashes: A Warsaw Generation's Life and Death in Marxism, 1918–1968* (New Haven, 2006), pp. 149, 198–199, 220, 260–263; "Unrealized Possibilities," *ibid.*; Internal bulletins of Ha-Shomer ha-Tza'ir [Polish], December 8, 1946 and March 21, 1947, <http://ebuw.uw.edu.pl/dlibra/plain-content?id=7591> and 7844.
- <sup>45</sup> "Polscy ambasadorzy," [http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polscy\\_ambasadorzy#Izrael](http://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Polscy_ambasadorzy#Izrael); "Polish Consuls," *The Palestine Post*, July 15, 1946; "Polish Consul-General Named for Palestine," *op. cit.*, March 18, 1947.
- <sup>46</sup> "Out-Heroding Herod," *The Palestine Post*, December 17, 1942.
- <sup>47</sup> "Polish Liberation Day in Jerusalem," *The Palestine Post*, July 23, 1947; Meeting with Va'ad Le'umi President Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, reported in "Social and Personal," *ibid.*, October 16, 1947.

- <sup>48</sup> Hulanicki, op. cit., p. 24; "Inventory of property to be delivered under the agreement... between His Majesty's Government and the Polish Government," Executive Officer, Government Commission for Polish Affairs to Polish Consul-General (Górka), February 4, 1948. Israel State Archive (henceforth ISA), file M-120/65. The authors thank Ms. Helena Vilensky for her kind assistance.
- <sup>49</sup> A CID report lists the Polish Communists, even while interned during the war and all the more so afterward, as engaged in espionage and as Soviet agents providing links between Russia and the Palestine Communists via the Polish consulates. "Polish-Soviet Relations," November 16, 1946, HA CID file 490/47. In the absence of Soviet diplomats, Loc and Górka, along with their Czechoslovak and Yugoslav counterparts, were the guests of honor at a rally to mark the thirtieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution. "Greetings to Russia," *The Palestine Post*, November 9, 1947.
- <sup>50</sup> "Polish Intelligence Activity in Palestine," report from February 14, 1947, HA CID file 495/47. Lieutenant Szytych was officially an attaché at the Polish Consulate in Tel Aviv;
- <sup>51</sup> Report to "Chief Secretary," November 1946, HA CID file 490/47. Ibid.; "Registration of Polish Citizens," *The Palestine Post*, May 20, 1946.
- <sup>52</sup> Władysław Michniewicz (Buenos Aires), "More in the Matter of Hulanicki" [Polish] *Kultura* 129–130 (1958), pp. 189–194. "Captain M...cz, head of the Polish Second Department in the Middle East, chief spy in Palestine. ... Poses as representing a Polish newspaper appearing in Buffalo, USA." ShaY report, December 31, 1947, reproduced in Dekel, *Alilot ShaY*, p. 256. The original document (HA ShaY files, 8/general/79 p.14) spells out the name otherwise but the middle letters are crossed out, apparently indicating an error; Dekel gives all the other names in full.
- <sup>53</sup> Joseph Heller, *The Stern Gang: Ideology, Politics, and Terror, 1940–1949* (London, 1995), pp. vii–viii.
- <sup>54</sup> "We willingly enter into this debate [with the Communists]—in any case, much more than into 'debate' with such a newspaper as [Ha-Shomer ha-Tza'ir organ] *Mishmar* ... There are many differences between us and the authors of *Kol Ha'am* [the Communist newspaper] ... but ... we can now stand close to the PCP, [whose] position is completely opposed to that of *Mishmar* and *Davar*, who call for war on the 'dissidents' and... maliciously and deliberately are distracting the workers and youth from the main [anti-British] front. ... When we wrote about a pro-Soviet orientation, it was long before Gromyko's speech [at the UN, endorsing partition]... We were the first to point to Soviet Russia as a natural ally of the Hebrew people in its war of liberation. PCP does not start out from the interests of the Hebrew people to arrive at a confluence of interests with Soviet Russia, but on the contrary: it always started out from Moscow toward the Jews, [in] blind dependence on the Soviets." "A Response to Esther Wilenska," Lehi leaflet, Elul 6707 (August/September 1947), *Lohamey Herut Israel*, pp. 705–713. Lehi ideologue Yisrael Scheib (later Eldad) even envisaged a Lehi-Communist coalition government after the Soviet army would take over Palestine. Journalist and Lehi activist Baruch Nadel, quoted in Kati Marton, *A Death in Jerusalem* (New York, 1996), p. 261.
- <sup>55</sup> British Intelligence reports, November 11, 1947 to April 7, 1948. HA ShaY file 8/

general/78, pp. 9, 121, 184.

- <sup>56</sup> Central Intelligence Agency, "The Consequences of the Partition of Palestine," (ORE 55), 28 November 1947, pp. 14–15. CIA FOIA Reading Room, [www.foia.cia.gov](http://www.foia.cia.gov).
- <sup>57</sup> (Lt.-Gen. NKVD) Pavel A. Sudoplatov, Special Operations: *The Lubyanka and the Kremlin, 1950–1950* [Russian] (Moscow, 1998), pp. 470–472.
- <sup>58</sup> Władysław Żeleński, "The Witold Hulanicki Affair" [Polish], *Zeszyty Historyczne* No. 60 (1982), 228–232.
- <sup>59</sup> Letter from Szuldrzyński to Barbara Fitz-Simon, April 30, 1983. Szuldrzyński was by then a professor in London. Before the war, he was a judge in Poznań; Soviet reports name him as one of the anti-Soviet officers in Anders' Army ("Information," *Russian Archive*). His letter to *Zeszyty Historyczne* appeared in 63 (1983); the following is based on the English translation he prepared for the Hulanickis.
- <sup>60</sup> The Polish HQ's transfer to Qassassin was completed in the first days of 1948. *The Palestine Post*, January 12, 1948.
- <sup>61</sup> D.R. Elston, *No Alternative: Israel Observed* (London, 1960), pp. 15–16, 28–29. Elston directed the station.
- <sup>62</sup> "British Set Stage for Palestine Exit," *The New York Times*, February 29, 1948.
- <sup>63</sup> "Collaborating with the CID," unsigned report, April 13, 1947. HA ShaY files, 8/general/79.
- <sup>64</sup> Tuvia Friling, "Istanbul 1942–45: The Kollek-Avriel Network and the Networks of Berman and Ofner" [Hebrew], *Israel* 6 (Fall, 1995), pp. 128–141. English version in David Bankier (ed.), *Secret Intelligence and the Holocaust* (New York, 2006), pp. 105–156.
- <sup>65</sup> For example, a claim that "the Jews' arms come partly from America. The Arabs have English, German and Russian arms," particularly "balalaika mortars" of which the Arabs in Palestine "have a few hundred." "What are the sources of Arab Arms?" *Davar*, March 30, 1948, quoting a report by Ofner in the *Christian Science Monitor* (apparently "Palestine Smuggling Tilt: Arabs Match Jewish Arms," January 17, 1948.) "Balalaika" was the nickname of a Soviet sub-machinegun, and we have found no other reference to Soviet mortars or other weapons used by Arab forces, though the Haganah—which received vital, Soviet-approved arms shipments from Czechoslovakia—blocked at least one Czechoslovak shipment that was sold to Syria.
- <sup>66</sup> Title of the lead article by Martin Ebon in *Middle East Journal* III:1 (July, 1948), 255–269; 265, note 17 cites a CSM dispatch by Ofner, April 21, 1948, p. 8, claiming that "plans for a Communist-led international pro-Zionist brigade, first mentioned in February 1948 [and which Ebon associates with Lehi and the Communist Party], were blocked by non-Communists, notably leading members of Mapai." This assertion, too, remains uncorroborated, though both Lehi and Communist leaders spoke at the time of their expectations that the Soviet army would soon take over Palestine; the Polish Consul Górka did later suggest a joint Soviet–Polish intervention. A British intelligence report on March 5, 1948 mentioned Arab suspicions of "Jewish demands regarding arms supplies and the organization of an international army." HA ShaY file 8/general/78



p. 41.

<sup>67</sup> Barbara Hulanicki maintains that Arnold was unfamiliar to her mother and herself, and certainly not a frequent visitor.

<sup>68</sup> ISA and *Poland* Directorate of State Archives, *Documents on Israeli-Polish Relations, 1945–1967* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 2009), no. 7 pp. 12–14. The Agency representative was Yitzhaq Kleinbaum, brother of Haganah Chief of Staff and later Communist leader Moshe Sneh. Kleinbaum played an instrumental role in communications between Moscow and the Zionist leadership.

<sup>69</sup> “Colonel G. Alef,” CID report from January 17, 1946, HA CID file 484/47.

<sup>70</sup> “Reorganization of Polish Consulates in Palestine,” April 25, 1947, HA CID, file 495/47.

<sup>71</sup> Memo from A. Semyoshkin (attaché at the Middle East Department, Soviet Foreign Ministry), “The Situation in Palestine after the UN Partition Resolution,” April 13, 1948. *Soviet-Israeli Relations: A Document Collection* [Russian] (Moscow, 2000), Vol. I part 1, 1941–May 1949, p. 295.

<sup>72</sup> “Polish Consulate Building Bombed,” *The Palestine Post*, October 13, 1947. On the last day of the British mandate, Górká was pinned down for four hours by Arab fire until rescued by the Haganah. See Arthur Koestler, *Promise and Fulfilment: Palestine 1917–1949* (London, 1949), pp. 235, 238.

<sup>73</sup> British “Fortnightly Intelligence Newsletter #65 to April 7, 1948,” HA ShaY file 8/general/78, p. 14.

<sup>74</sup> Dekel, op. cit., pp. 258–259.

<sup>75</sup> Hulanicki, op. cit., pp. 9, 26. A “quartermaster” named Robert Herold had been among the employees of the “Chief Polish Advisor,” that is the former “London” consulate, who were dismissed by the British when the office was “terminated” as of January 31, 1948. Documents in ISA file M-5765/9.

<sup>76</sup> *Daily Sun* (Lewiston, Maine), February 27, 1948. For other versions transmitted by AP the same day see *Milwaukee Journal* and Salt Lake City’s *Deseret News*.

<sup>77</sup> Rene Neuville to Quai d’Orsay, March 1 and 2, 1948, pp. 165 and 172–173 in papers of Georges Bidault, French National Archive. Cited in Meir Zamir, “‘Bid’ for Altalena: France’s Covert Action in the 1948 War in Palestine,” *Middle Eastern Studies* 46:1 (January, 2010), 12–13. Zamir notes that the French may have accepted British claims in this matter, and that they were very concerned over Lehi relations with the French Communist Party.

<sup>78</sup> “Sermon for the Stern Gang,” *The Economist*, March 6, 1948, p. 370. Lehi’s pro-Soviet shift actually dated back at least to mid-1946. The authors wish to thank the staff of the National Library, Jerusalem, for their kind assistance in locating this and other sources.

<sup>79</sup> “What of the Morning” (press review) [Hebrew], *Mivraq*, March 7, 1948.

<sup>80</sup> “Response to the Murder of the Two Poles,” March 4, 1948, HA ShaY files, 8/general/79.

<sup>81</sup> Hulanicki, op. cit., p. 26.