

The Polish service of Radio Tirana

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Radio Tirana International no longer broadcast in Polish. Today the foreign language output is restricted to Turkish, Serbian, Greek, German, Italian, French and there are seven half hour livestream on the internet in English on a daily basis.[\[i\]](#)

It was different back then when you could tune into Radio Tirana broadcasting in Polish in the 1960s and 1970s.

The Polish section of Radio Tirana began broadcasting in September 1966 and in 1967 had daily broadcast of three half-hour programs. Later their number increased to four a day, and from July 1968 eight programs in Polish for four hours a day on short and medium waves, when the Polish BBC section averaged just over three hours a day.

Monitored by the Polish Ministry of Interior in 1968, their analysis noted Radio Tirana broadcast 197 programs in Polish focused on 265 topics on socialist countries and 74 on different capitalist countries. By 1973, the radio broadcast 248 programs, of which only 43 concerned capitalist countries. Radio Tirana broadcasts were an interesting curiosity; the output of the Tirana-based service also served an anti-revisionist Polish domestic agenda rather than a simply international propagation of the viewpoint of Albanian authorities.

Virtually all broadcasts were readings of texts bristling with rhetorical language of the anti-revisionist movement and a vital source of information for supporters and opponents alike. Broadcasts of the Polish section of Radio Tirana, similar to KPP leaflets and pamphlets, focused on criticizing Polish party and government policy

and accused Gomułka and later Gierek for the desire to restore capitalism. It is worth noting that problems and subjects raised on the airwaves by Radio Tirana were often picked up by Radio Free Europe, which also widely informed listeners about the activities of Mijal and the repression of authorities in Warsaw against the Polish Maoists.

Overall, the illegal [oppositional Communist Party of Poland](#), headed by former CC member Mijal, concludes Margaret K. Gnoinska, was a nuisance for the leadership of the ruling Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) domestically, and had a certain effect on international politics complicating reformist First Secretary Gomułka's delicate diplomacy with both Beijing and Moscow.[\[ii\]](#)

Mijal had become the Polish embodiment of anti-revisionism within the international communist movement; he defended Stalin and his legacy and joined those communists who rejected a pro-Soviet orientation, thereby aligning himself with China and Albania. Maoist thought did resonate to some degree with the younger generation of Polish communists who also saw it as a means of challenging the Kremlin's control of Eastern Europe.[\[iii\]](#)

The authorities' propaganda attempts to discredit the KPP centre on Mijal himself: "Only the sympathizers of communism in the Chinese edition, such as publishers of the La Voix du Peuple communist Belgian communist authority, treated the Mijalists with full seriousness".
[\[iv\]](#)

In April 1967, the Polish service of Radio Tirana broadcast the KPP's "*To fight in defense of socialism against the revisionist agent of imperialism.*" Broadcasts often coincided with the physical distribution of pamphlets reported by radio Tirana, e.g. "*KPP is fighting and calling for battle!*" or "*I lost the compass of Marxism, or Polish*



paths to socialism." The latter was so extensively promoted that in May 1968 it was read daily for 10 consecutive days. The co-ordination of the propaganda offensive between Albania and the communist resistance inside Poland was seen as part of the internationalist struggle against modern revisionism by the Albanians and others.

Polish journalist Micheal Przeperski noted the importance given to current political comments and the anti-Semitic prejudices in the KPP commentary in his article on the "*Albanian adventure of comrade Mijal*" [\[v\]](#)

" On the events at the University of Warsaw of March 8, 1968, Tirana said: "Students' speeches in Warsaw cannot be detached from the general political situation in the country, which is difficult, nor can they be called hooligan, because these accidents are deeply social (...) not the youth, and the party is responsible for this tragic spectacle. " At first glance, it might seem that the KPP supported the victimized students. Nothing could be more wrong, because it was further stated: "Who are the students defending? Student manifestations (...) are organized from the outside in order to maintain the largest group of Jewish nationalists and their supporters in leadership. "

This was all the more surprising because a few months earlier, in October 1967, Radio Tirana talked about the agent's role of "Zionist elements exercising power in Poland together with Gomułka." Thus, the Jews were simultaneously with Gomułka and against Gomułka, and always against vital national interests. This confusing rhetoric brought the KPP closer to the anti-Semitic faction of the so-called partisans within the PZPR. The latter, however, have never allowed themselves to openly question Gomułka's leadership.

And this was the comment on the entry of Warsaw Pact troops into Czechoslovakia in August 1968: "An armed assault carried out at night on CSR bears barbaric fascist aggression." But this time, in no way meant any support for the ideals of the Prague Spring, whose leaders were described as "Dubček's counterrevolutionary clique."

Programs presenting letters from listeners from the country were important for every medium broadcasting from abroad, highlighted because they presented evidence that the station was listened to in the country. On the other hand, letters signed by "communists and honest Polish workers", using exactly the same phraseology as the editors from Tirana, raised considerable suspicion. It should be noted that not all letters from readers were written by the editors. If a letter containing a lot of details that made them credible, from "a certain comrade from Lodz", read in December 1967, described the story of Zygmunt Kępa, "a pensioner and old revolutionary", sentenced to three years in prison for distributing KPP brochures and appeals. The author pointed out not only a positive hero, but also villains. Judgment was issued by

judge Halina Michalak and jury members Jan Minister and Leon Kamiński, and the prosecutor was prosecutor Kazimierz Masłowski, with whom he cooperated with SB provocateur Władysław Karbowski.

Supporters of the KPP had indeed sent critical opinions to Albania about the situation in Poland. An example of operational elaboration may be used as an example codenamed "Radio", founded in January 1976 by the SB in Sieradz.

The state response promoted by an anonymous letter addressed to Tirana and sent from Łódź became the reason initiating multi-track surveillance reaching hundreds of people. The letter's writer described himself as a member of the CPP and "critically ascribed the People's Republic of Poland" authorities for wanting to introduce capitalism in the country "using fascists methods of operation. "

The Ministry of Interior staff suspected that the sender of the letter could have been someone inhabiting the Sieradz province, and began a complicated operation to detect it. In its course to determine and identify the alleged KPP supporter, they designated 317 people who could be potential writers of the letter, They searched about 2,000 applications and complaints in terms of analysis of the convergence of the nature of the letter, and for the same purpose reviewed about 22,000 applications for permission to use a radio and television set. Despite SB officers' efforts they were unable to identify the author of letter. [\[vi\]](#)

Kazimierz Mijal, secretary general of the KPP, in February 1966, illegal left the Polish People's Republic, with an Albanian diplomatic passport in the name of Servet Mehmetka. In exile in Tirana, Mijal was in contact with Poland. He controlled the underground KPP, published the paper "Czerwony Sztandar" that was smuggled back into Poland and most accounts state, he began to run the Polish program of Radio Tirana. However Robert Mazurek, talking with Kazimierz Mijal in May 1998, asked:

- Albanians were very interested in Poland at the time, and founded the Polish section of Radio Tirana.

- *They used my materials there sometimes. When I lived there, I gave them an interview once, but I had nothing to do with them.*

An incredulous reply from Kazimierz Mijal when his name became synonymous with the broadcaster.

A harsh but not unfair judgement was that in practice Mijal did not manage to garner support among the workers in Poland and thus did not further Beijing's ambitions of

fomenting a radical revolution in the Soviet bloc. His efforts were eventually silenced by the Polish security services on instructions from the party.^[vii]

In Poland, the state had more success in neutralising the banned KPP whose organized groups were active in Warsaw, Wrocław, Łódź, Katowice, Pabianice and Żyrardów . The state managed to introduce agents into the KPP. Several active members were arrested and sentenced to several years in prison. By the mid-1970s as a result of State security operations under the code name "Znak", the KPP was shattered and its activists forced to cease operations.^[viii] Although reports appeared announcing its dissolution in 1972, Mijal continued to issue pronouncements and commentaries in its name as did Radio Tirana.

ENDNOTES

[i] <http://rti.rtsh.al/chi-siamo/>

[ii] Margaret K. Gnoinska (2017): Promoting the 'China Way' of communism in Poland and beyond during the Sino-Soviet Split: the case of Kazimierz Mijal, *Cold War History*, DOI: 10.1080/14682745.2017.1362394

[iii] See: [Which East is Red? - Andrew Smith](#)

[iv] See: "We Present Kazimierz Mijal" published by FBIS, *East Europe Report* February 2nd 1985 JPRS-EPS-85-017

[v] Taken from Michael Przepererski "Albanian adventure of comrade Mijal" *Polityka* , October 2nd 2012

[vi] Taken from Przemysław Gasztold ,Maoism on the Vistula? Activities of the Communist Party Of Kazimierz Mijal , *memory and justice* 2 (32) 2018

[vii] . Gnoinska (2017)

[viii] Jakub Kryst: A hard - headed adventurer , " [Focus Historia](#) " , No. 3 (38) from 2010