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## THE REACTION OF THE UNDERGROUND PRESS TO THE DISPLACEMENT OF POLISH CHILDREN FROM THE ZAMOŚĆ REGION TO SIEDLCE IN 1943\*

**Summary.** During World War II, the Germans committed many crimes against Poles, whom they forcibly displaced from the Zamość region. After the Poles had been driven out of their homes, they were placed in transit camps, which included the German transit camp in Zamość (UWZ-Lager Zamosc). In the Zamość camp, the Germans conducted racial tests and separated children from their mothers. After a few days or several weeks, children who were “racially worthless” (and therefore unfit for Germanization) were transported under severe freezing conditions in crowded cattle carriages, without water or food. The Germans sent six “death transports” from Zamość to a town in the eastern part of the Warsaw district. One of these transports carrying children and old people displaced from the Zamość region reached the train station in Siedlce. Many of the children were in disastrous health. The inhabitants of Siedlce and the surrounding area rushed to help, organizing a quick action to save the lives and health of the children.

The mass murder of Polish children from the Zamość region caused terror, widespread indignation, and protest of the Polish population in the occupied Polish territory. On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1943, a silent demonstration took place in Siedlce during a mass funeral for displaced persons, both children and adults, who died during the transport and right after the transport had arrived in the city. These events were reflected in the pages of underground magazines.

**Keywords:** transit camp in Zamość, UWZ-Lager Zamość, Underground Press, Displacement of Polish Children, Siedlce, World War II, Germans, Children of Zamojszczyzna, extermination

The displacement of the Polish population in the Zamość region, initiated by the Germans in the fall of 1941, was associated with the expulsion of the Poles from their homes and their placement in a transit camp in Zamość (UWZ-Lager

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Zamosc).<sup>1</sup> At first the displacement was conducted as a dry run, but after November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1942 the displacement was conducted on a grand scale. The farms of the displaced Poles were occupied by German settlers. These events found a voice in the pages of underground magazines.<sup>2</sup> The fate of children (and old people) deported in the “death transports” to the eastern part of the Warsaw district did not go unnoticed. One of six such transports left Zamość on January 30<sup>th</sup>, 1943, and reached the Siedlce railway station the next day. This transport included prisoners – mainly children and the elderly – of the German transit camp in Zamość. Some of the children were accompanied by their mothers, grandparents, or older relatives who were left with their children during the racial selection to which all Poles forcibly displaced from the Zamość region were subjected to. In the camp, the population was subjected to racial selection and, based on the Nordic race pattern (fair hair, blue eyes, appropriate facial contours, etc.), were assigned to one of four groups. Children were classified on the basis of their conformance to German racial criteria and Nordic characteristics, including blue eyes and blond hair. Group I was composed of Poles of German extraction. Group II was made up of persons deemed suitable for Germanization. Group III consisted of persons destined for forced labour in the Third Reich. Group IV, the final group, was composed of persons destined for KL Auschwitz II – Birkenau, as well as children younger than 14 years of age and adults older than 60. In order to keep the segregated groups apart, each was assigned its own barracks. Children younger than 15 years of age were placed in the worst barracks, known as the “horse barracks.” These

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<sup>1</sup> The displacement and settlement action carried out in the Zamość region is the most tragic episode of the criminal activity of the German occupier, unprecedented in all of occupied Europe (except for the Final Solution of the Jewish and Roma questions). The displacement action covered approximately 110 000 Poles in the Zamość region, including about 30 000–35 000 children (about 10 000 lost or died). The deportations lasted until mid-August 1943 (with breaks). In the first months of the Poles’ displacement, they were placed in a transit camp in Zamość (UWZ-Lager Zamosc). Cz. MADAJCZYK, *Polityka okupanta wobec narodu polskiego w okresie II wojny światowej*, [in:] *Problemy wojny i okupacji 1939–1944*, eds. W. GÓRA and J. GOŁĘBIOWSKI, Warszawa 1969, p. 60; Z. TOKARZ, *Dzieci w obozach hitlerowskich na ziemiach polskich w latach 1939–1945*, [in:] *Zbrodnie i sprawy. Ludobójstwo hitlerowskie przed sądem ludzkości i historii*, ed. C. PILICHOWSKI, Warszawa 1980, p. 574; J. MARKIEWICZ, *Chłopi Zamojszczyzny wobec polityki okupanta*, [in:] *Chłopi w obronie Zamojszczyzny*, eds. J. GMITRUK and Z. MAŃKOWSKI, Warszawa 1985, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Vide: J. WOŁOSZYN, *Reakcja prasy konspiracyjnej na wydarzenia w Zamojskiem z lat 1942–1943*, “Pamięć i Sprawiedliwość” 2002, No. 2, pp. 95–120.

children were left to the care of the elderly, who were often not competent and in need of care themselves.<sup>3</sup>

Prisoners were also segregated in the transit camp in Zamość according to their suitability for forced labour in the Reich. Children (up to 14 years of age) whose parents were deported to the Reich for forced labour and children deemed “racially worthless,” and therefore unfit for Germanization, suffered especially. They were forcibly separated from their parents.<sup>4</sup> The Germans did not even pay attention to newborns or breastfed infants.<sup>5</sup> Children were placed in the worst of the so-called “horse barracks” and deprived of the most basic survival equipment/supplies (stoves, beds, mattresses, dishes and cutlery, etc.). The children were crammed into wooden bunks, but there was not room for all of the children on the bunks. Some had to linger on the floor, often in mud and water. One of the former prisoners remembered a picture of such a barrack: “I saw a long corridor in front of me, on both sides there were the so-called halls. I was brought to the first room by the door, there were bunk beds made of planks, and there were many children sitting and laying on them. I was shown a place by the wall at the bottom. I looked around this room, the planks making up the wall were tight, and there was some kind of sealant in the cracks. I looked more closely and there were live bedbugs.”<sup>6</sup> There was no free access to drinking water in the camp, nor water in which to bathe or wash, for example, one’s underwear. The displaced persons were kept in the same clothes all the time (day and night). This meant that vermin (lice, bedbugs, etc.) multiplied in great numbers. For this reason, infectious diseases spread in the camp and decimated the prisoners.

In these inhumane conditions, the death rate in the camp was enormous, especially among the youngest prisoners. The children suffered mainly from lung diseases (e.g. due to drafts in barracks, leaks in the roofs and walls) and infectious

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<sup>3</sup> Archives of the Institute of National Remembrance (hereinafter: A IPNW), Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, file No. 162/663, folio 61–62, Telex No. 197 663 dated 31 X 1942, Ewakuacja Polaków z Dystryktu Lubelskiego (Zamość) dla zrobienia miejsca dla osiedlenia Volksdeutschow.

<sup>4</sup> J. MARSZAŁEK, *Hitlerowskie więzienia i obozy w Zamościu*, Zamość 1980, p. 7.

<sup>5</sup> A IPNW, file No. BU 2535/45, part 1, folio 122, *Protokół przesłuchania świadka Feliksy W.*, Zamość 13 VII 1946.

<sup>6</sup> A. BOCZKOWSKI, *Niepublikowane wspomnienia z lat okupacji niemieckiej – pacyfikacji Zamojszczyzny*, [https://tpg-grabowiec.pl/articles.php?article\\_id=49](https://tpg-grabowiec.pl/articles.php?article_id=49) (access: 3 XII 2020).

diseases (e.g. cholera, typhoid fever, typhus). In December 1942, a measles epidemic broke out.<sup>7</sup> It is worth emphasizing that there was no medical care in the camp, even during the period of mass evictions and overcrowding of the barracks. The doctor recruited from among the displaced persons could not provide help to those in need due to a lack of even basic medicine.<sup>8</sup> Children died of starvation in the camp. Daily food rations per person consisted of a portion of bread (140 grams) and black, bitter black coffee (for breakfast and dinner), as well as turnip soup (once a day), described by former prisoners as “spit-soup” or “quasi-soup.” The children commonly had diarrhoea and anaemia. They also had abdominal swelling – the children swelled from hunger and died. In such inhumane conditions, prisoners had to wait weeks for the formation of transports and removal from the camp to their final destination. However, not all lived to see the opening of the camp gate and deportation.

The first transports with children were sent by the Germans from the transit camp in Zamość in December 1942. There were three transports with children and elderly persons, totalling 2 213 people.<sup>9</sup> These people were transported to the Garwolin powiat (eastern part of the Warsaw district) and left at the mercy of the local community. In this district, in the eastern counties, the Germans intended to create so-called pension villages (“Rentendörfer”), to deport children, old people, the sick or disabled, and those incapable of work from the transit camp in Zamość.<sup>10</sup> At the beginning of December 1942, the SS and police commander in Warsaw appointed Siedlce (for 350 families) and Łosice (to accommodate 150 families), among other cities and towns. However, the project to create “Rentendörfer” was not implemented.<sup>11</sup> Wherever the “death transports”

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<sup>7</sup> J.M., *Nie wierzyliśmy we własne szczęście...*, [in:] *Nie było kiedy płakać. Losy rodzin polskich wysiedlonych z Zamojszczyzny 1942–1943*, introduction and ed. B. KOZACZYŃSKA, Siedlce 2014, p. 95; T. MADEJ, *Wspomnienia “Dziecka Zamojszczyzny”*, [in:] H. KAJTEL, *Hitlerowski obóz przesiedleńczy w Zamościu UWZ Lager Zamość*, Biłgoraj 2003, p. 93.

<sup>8</sup> A IPNW, file No. BU 2535/45, part 1, folio 153, Pismo Władysława D. do Sądu Okręgowego w Zamościu, (31 July 1946).

<sup>9</sup> Central Archives of Modern Records in Warsaw, Rada Główna Opiekuńcza. Biuro Centrali w Krakowie 1940–1945), file No. 777, folio 10; *ibidem*, file No. 687, folio 220.

<sup>10</sup> A IPNW, Główna Komisja Badania Zbrodni Hitlerowskich w Polsce, file No. 162/663, folio 93 – Order I. 10 Wyszalenie ludności polskiej z terenu osiedleńczego “Z”.

<sup>11</sup> Objections against the creation of pension villages in this area were raised by the occupation authorities of the Warsaw district. Dr. F. Seemann, the starost of the Siedlce powiat, even sent a report on this matter to the governor, L. Fischer, describing the creation of pension villages as an “inhuman

with displaced people from the Zamość region reached their destination, the local population rushed to their aid, taking them under their roof.

The stay in the transit camp in Zamość left an indelible mark on the health and life of the displaced Poles, especially children. When the transport reached the railway station in Siedlce (January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1943), it was directed to a sidetrack on orders from the Germans. There were 998 people in the transport, mainly children (86 children under age 4; 236 children ages 4–10) and the elderly.<sup>12</sup> Half-frozen and poorly dressed, displaced persons started to come out of the wagons, asking in panic if they would “go back to the camp.”<sup>13</sup> After unloading the carriages, the Germans ordered a record of the newcomers to be made, and that they be placed in Jewish apartments in the city. The Jewish population had been forced to leave by the Germans several months earlier, as a result of deportation for extermination to the death camp in Treblinka (the Jewish ghetto in the city had been liquidated in August 1942). These flats were completely unusable. They were in poor structural condition and did not have the necessary basic equipment. There was also a shortage of food and clothes for the new arrivals. Some of the displaced persons had only scraps of clothing and many children were dressed inadequately for the winter. In this situation, it was necessary to organize help as soon as possible and provide the displaced with the most necessary things. The Polish Welfare Committee in Siedlce, being the coordinator of the aid action, immediately initiated a fundraiser “for the victims of the Zamość region.”<sup>14</sup> In mid-February 1943, the underground “Biuletyn Informacyjny” reported on the unfavourable attitude of the German authorities towards this action.<sup>15</sup>

In the pages of underground magazines, in particular “Agencja Informacyjna »Więś«”, “Głos Pracy”, and “Biuletyn Informacyjny”, a lot of space was devoted to the reaction of the inhabitants of Siedlce to the news that transport with children from the Zamość region had reached the city. The warm and fraternal acceptance of these children by the local people to their homes was emphasized. The inhabitants of Siedlce reacted immediately to the orphaned fate of

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undertaking”. B. KOZACZYŃSKA, *Losy dzieci z Zamojszczyzny wysiedlonych do powiatu siedleckiego w latach 1943–1945*, Siedlce 2006, p. 41.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 60.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 49.

<sup>14</sup> *Dzieci z Zamojszczyzny w Siedlcach*, “Biuletyn Informacyjny” 1943, No. 66, p. 6.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibidem*.

the children. These children made up the majority in the transport. Their health was catastrophic as a result of several weeks' stay in inhumane conditions in a transit camp in Zamość. We read the following about the aid operation for orphans from the Zamość region:

The news about children from the Zamość region spread like wildfire across the city. (...) The society reacted spontaneously to the sight of the national disaster. (...) Hundreds of Polish mothers reacted keenly to the misfortune of little ones. (...) Healthier children were immediately dispersed to private homes, several dozen seriously ill, with frostbitten legs and hands, were sent to the hospital. No one was lacking among those willing to come to the aid of the unfortunate, because even the caretaker, even a hard-working labourer, took the discarded chick from the family nest. What we saw was a touching image, proof of national solidarity in a time of misfortune. Indeed, my heart rejoiced at the sight of those Polish mothers who willingly assumed the additional duty of care and upbringing of these unfortunate orphans.<sup>16</sup>

The inhabitants of Siedlce, who were rushing with food for the newcomers, were informed about the general sacrifice. Among others, horse-drawn carriages from Siedlce joined the action by transporting food.<sup>17</sup> The situation of children in Siedlce was noted in the "Information Bulletin": "Poor orphans have finally found a roof over their heads and the tender, good hearts of the Siedlce society!"<sup>18</sup>

It is worth noting that the reaction of the inhabitants of Siedlce after the arrival of the transport to this city with the displaced persons from the Zamość region was compared to the attitude of the population of Warsaw in early January 1943. For example, it was written that the children were snapped up in the same haste as Warsaw had done.<sup>19</sup> Indeed, the upheaval of Polish society in Warsaw was impressive. For several days in January 1943, the displaced children were searched for, mainly at Warsaw stations and railway stops (even duty hours were organized). It was a reaction to the appearance in Warsaw of rumours about children from the Zamość region, frozen and unattended, seen

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<sup>16</sup> *U grobu ofiar barbarzyństwa niemieckiego. Żałobny reportaż z Podlasia*, "Głos Pracy" 1943, No. 8, p. 1.

<sup>17</sup> *Dodatkowe wiadomości o wysiedlonych z Zamojszczyzny w Siedlcach*, "Agencja Informacyjna »Więś«" 1943, No. 4, p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> *Dzieci z Zamojszczyzny w Siedlcach*, "Biuletyn Informacyjny" 1943, No. 66, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> *Manifestacja w Siedlcach*, "Głos Polski" 1943, No. 3, p. 5.

in the occupied capital, in sealed freight cars. These children were to be taken by the Germans in an unknown direction (to be exterminated or Germanized).<sup>20</sup> In Warsaw, the situation really began to boil. Local RGO units received over 40 000 applications from people who wanted to take care of children and even adopt them.<sup>21</sup> The inhabitants of Warsaw played a great role in the action of saving Polish children from the Zamość region, but this is a separate page in the history of the occupied Polish capital.<sup>22</sup>

The underground press also wrote about a public demonstration in Siedlce during the mass funeral of displaced persons from the Zamość region, organized on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1943. On that day, people gathered in crowds in front of the church of Saint Stanislaus, waiting for the funeral ceremony of displaced persons who had died in transport and just after arrival in Siedlce. When unloading the wagons, it turned out that nine people had not survived the hardships of transport, and 14 more died in the following hours. The funeral of the displaced persons took place on February 3, 1943, with the participation of several thousand people, mainly inhabitants of Siedlce and its vicinity. As reported by the underground "Głos Pracy":

With the ringing of bells and the participation of thousands in the crowd, they set out for a solemn service. 22 coffins were buried in the local cemetery. At the sight of this terrible procession of death, a mournful sob shook the crowd. The tears of national mourning ran down the faces of young and old. (...) But this huge crowd of people walking in a funeral procession and standing over a common, fraternal grave, it was really the Polish nation in miniature, a nation aware that it had grown out of one tree stump, had one blood in its veins, and that on that day misfortune comes out of the underground again full of its national consciousness and pride. 22 coffins were taken by the Podlasie region. The tomb sheltering 22 victims of Nazi barbarity will be forever a symbol of national heroism, a monument to the cruel and shameful Nazi occupation in our land.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> L. LANDAU, *Kronika lat wojny i okupacji*, Warszawa 1962, vol. 2, pp. 91, 93–94; A. BARAŃSKI, *Gorące serce Warszawy*, "Zamojski Kwartalnik Kulturalny" 2012, No. 4, pp. 33–37.

<sup>21</sup> J. JASIŃSKI, *Z dziejów polskiej spółdzielczości spozycowców podczas II wojny światowej*, Warszawa 1965, p. 219.

<sup>22</sup> *Vide*: B. KOZACZYŃSKA, *Spoleczeństwo Warszawy na ratunek dzieciom wysiedlonym z Zamojszczyzny do dystryktu warszawskiego w latach 1942–1943*, [in:] *Bezpieczeństwo i edukacja dla bezpieczeństwa w zmieniającej się przestrzeni społecznej i kulturowej*, ed. R. ROSA, Siedlce 2012, pp. 289–302.

<sup>23</sup> *U grobu ofiar...*, p. 408. The number of buried people was incorrectly stated.

Information about the demonstration funeral was also published in the "Information Bulletin": "The collective funeral of the unfortunate took place on February 2 with the massive participation of several thousand people in Siedlce."<sup>24</sup> In one of the issues of the "Information Bulletin" there is a photograph showing the corpses of the children who died during their transport to Siedlce.<sup>25</sup>

Echoes of the silent demonstration that took place in Siedlce on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1943 continued for weeks. On March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1943, the underground "Samoobrona" [magazine] noted:

On February 3 this year, Siedlce witnessed a powerful demonstration that took place in connection with the mass funeral of people who died in the transport of displaced persons from the Zamość region. The funeral was attended by over 5000 people, so that the procession stretched for 1 km and, with the ringing of bells, stretched through the entire city, to the cemetery at ul. Cmentarna. (...) Among the crowd there were Gestapo men in plain clothes, who stopped people from taking photos of the procession. In the days that followed, people were still looking for funeral photos at local photo shops.<sup>26</sup>

In turn, one of the issues of the underground "Głos Pracy" contains extensive information about the fate of adult displaced persons deported to Siedlce. Some of them stayed in the transit camp in Zamość for six weeks, others for as much as nine weeks. One of the farmers (a farmer on 20 morga of land – morgon is a unit of land measurement), when asked about the reasons for his displacement to the camp, stated that there had been an attempt to persuade him to sign the so-called Volksliste (German nationality list), which he refused. Besides, he paid taxes and gave away the entire assigned contingent to the Germans, and yet he was expelled from his home and his land confiscated. At that time, the farmer did not know the real reasons for the displacement and ill-treatment of tens of thousands of inhabitants in the Zamość region. At the end of November 1942, the Germans began an attempt to implement the General Plan for the East ("Generalplan Ost"), a long-term plan for German settlement in the East.

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<sup>24</sup> *Niedola wysiedleńców*, "Biuletyn Informacyjny" 1943, No. 6, p. 7. The date of the funeral was incorrectly given.

<sup>25</sup> "Biuletyn Informacyjny" 1943, No. 8, p. 8.

<sup>26</sup> "Samoobrona" 1943, No. 3, p. 5.



It was connected with the displacement of people from the Zamość region and the settlement of German colonists in this area.<sup>27</sup>

The aforementioned interlocutor, cited by the author of the above-mentioned article, also pointed to the terrible conditions in which he stayed in the camp in Zamość: "It was terrible in the "camp". Dirt, hunger, lice, neither lie down nor sit down. For 14 people, they gave 2 kg of bread per day and once a day a watery soup (*lura*). If not for the help "from behind the barbed wire fence", none of us would have survived."<sup>28</sup> At the end, the interlocutor stated: "Here [in Siedlce] we feel like in paradise."<sup>29</sup>

The attitude of the society of Siedlce and the Siedlce powiat, as well as Garwolin and others,<sup>30</sup> to which transports with displaced children from the Zamość region arrived in the late fall and winter of 1942/1943, was defined as exemplary, and the generosity and helpfulness of the population were recognized as being common in the activities in the aid section (donating food, clothing, admitting children to foster families, etc.).<sup>31</sup>

The information provided in the underground magazines was not always in agreement with reality. As I wrote earlier, there were mistakes in the date of the funeral and the number of dead displaced persons from Zamość. There were also inaccuracies regarding the transport travel time and the fate of the displaced after their arrival in Siedlce.<sup>32</sup> In one of the issues of the "Information

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<sup>27</sup> CZ. MADAJCZYK, *Generalna Gubernia w planach hitlerowskich. Studia*, Warszawa 1961, pp. 109, 115–117.

<sup>28</sup> *U grobu ofiar...*, pp. 407–408.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 408.

<sup>30</sup> A little earlier, the underground journals wrote about transports with displaced persons from the first phase of displacement in the Zamość region, sent in December 1942 from the transit camp in Zamość to the Garwolin powiat. Most of these transports were of children. For example, their situation was reported at the end of January 1943: "There is a mass outbreak of measles among the children, they have a cold, and the mortality rate is high among the youngest. (...) The displaced are without money and food, and the children are very badly dressed. Healthier old men and some mothers are begging in nearby villages", *Wysiedleni z Zamojskiego w Garwolińskim*, "Agencja Informacyjna »Więś«" 1943, No. 1, p. 4.

<sup>31</sup> *Niedola wysiedleńców*, "Biuletyn Informacyjny" 1943, No. 6, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> It was incorrectly stated that the transport took three days. The date of the funeral was also incorrect and wrongly stated about the number of people who died in Siedlce during transport and just after their arrival. *Ibidem*.

Agency »Wieść« it was incorrectly stated that the displaced persons from the transport (including children) had ended up in Siedlce “behind the wires” and the Gestapo in Siedlce did not allow the children to be taken by local families at first; and the population was forced to give them food through a barbed wire fence. Later in the article there was incorrect information about the intervention of the mayor and the County Welfare Council,<sup>33</sup> as a result of which the Germans agreed that the Poles would take the children to their homes.<sup>34</sup> It is completely incomprehensible that the third issue of the “Information Bulletin”, dated January 21<sup>st</sup>, 1943, contained false information about the deportation of children and old people to the Siedlce and Sokołów powiats.<sup>35</sup> The Germans never sent a transport with displaced persons from the Zamość region to the Sokołów powiat (although they had planned to); the first transport to the Siedlce powiat (whose ultimate destination was Siedlce) arrived on January 31<sup>st</sup>, 1943, and another arrived in the town of Mordy in the Siedlce powiat on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1943.<sup>36</sup>

When writing about the aid operation for children displaced from the Zamość region, it was emphasized that wherever transports with these children appeared, the population immediately began to spontaneously rescue them. The sacrificial help given to thousands of children displaced from the Zamość region, as was noted on the pages of the underground papers, could not provide a sense of a well-fulfilled duty in the situation, as much more difficult tasks were to be expected in the future. The necessity of full readiness and mobilization of Poles for possible action was indicated.<sup>37</sup>

It is noteworthy that the issue of the deportation of Polish children from the Zamość region was also widely echoed both during the German occupation (also in the émigré Press)<sup>38</sup> and after the end of World War II.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>33</sup> It was the Polish Welfare Committee in Siedlce (Polish: Polski Komitet Opiekuńczy w Siedlcach).

<sup>34</sup> *Dodatkowe wiadomości...*, p. 6.

<sup>35</sup> *Los dzieci z Zamojszczyzny*, “Biuletyn Informacyjny” 1943, No. 3, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> B. KOZACZYŃSKA, *Losy dzieci z Zamojszczyzny...*, pp. 48, 145.

<sup>37</sup> *O byt polskości, Polaków i Polski*, “Państwo Polskie” 1943, No. 6, p. 4.

<sup>38</sup> For example: M. BRZESKA, *Polska – żywymi oczami. Życie ulicy*, “Polska Walcząca – Żołnierz Polski na Obczyźnie”, 1944, Ann. 6, No. 7, p. 3; EADEM, *Polska – żywymi oczami. Dziecko i matka*, “Polska Walcząca – Żołnierz Polski na Obczyźnie” 1944, Ann. 6, No. 10, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> For example: *Sprawa skradzionych dzieci polskich*, “Głos Pomorza” 1946, Ann. 2, No. 35, p. 2; *Zbrodnie, jakich świat nie widział*, “Nowiny Opolskie” 1946, Ann. 30, No. 10, p. 3; Z. TRZCIŃSKA KAMIŃSKA, *Dzieci Zamojszczyzny (walka o dziecko)*, “Dziś i Jutro” 1946, No. 6, pp. 4–5.

The ordeal that happened to Polish children displaced from the Zamość region found an immediate response in the pages of underground magazines. The public was immediately informed about their tragic fate. Attention was paid primarily to the disastrous health of the displaced persons, especially the children who had been forcibly separated from their parents in the transit camp in Zamość. Their hopeless situation was connected with a several-week stay in this camp. A separate place was occupied by the attitude of the Siedlce populace towards the fate of defenceless children and saving their lives and health. The local population gathered in crowds during the mass funeral in silence, and calmly expressed opposition to the extermination of the Polish population in the Zamość region, in particular the helpless and innocent children.

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