

Rzeczpospolita

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‘CIA tortured in Poland?’ *

Officers of the American intelligence service are supposed to have mistreated the prisoner in Szymany, *inter alia* using an electric drill.

The sensational information concerning tortures in the secret CIA prisons in Poland was announced by the Associated Press yesterday. The Agency based on the information given by the former CIA officers and the review by the CIA's inspector general.

On the 5th of December 2002 the American plane Gulfstream N63MU landed at the Szymany airport, next to Szczytno. According to the AP, Saudi Abd al Rahim al Nashiri, who is suspected of taking part in the attack against the USS ship “Cole” was transported to Poland that day. It is said that in the secret prison he was interrogated by two American officers, Albert and Mike (AP did not publish their surnames). Both refused to comment on the case.

Albert, American with Egyptian origins, worked for FBI. Mike was his superior. Both of them, according to the AP, tortured Al Nashiri, placing a working power drill alternately with a gun next to his head. Following the tortures that presumably lasted for a month, the prisoner was taken from Poland. Currently, Mike is retired and Albert works for CIA as a private consultant.

How the others were harassed

CIA neither denied nor confirmed the AP information. However, it coincides with fragments of the review by the CIA's inspector general, that were revealed by the mass media. According to those information, during the interrogation of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, architect of the WTC attacks and Abu Zubaydah from Al-Kaida, different techniques involving the use of the electric drill and the gun were applied by CIA. What we know by now – American newspapers also wrote about it - is that both of them were kept in Poland in 2003.

In the light of the information provided by the AP, it is possible now to state that Khalid Sheikh and Abu Zubaydah were tortured in our country – says Adam Bodnar, from the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights. According to the documents – *inter alia* a book of aircraft movements in Szymany which was disclosed by *Rzeczpospolita* in 2009, CIA secret prisons were organised at the territory of the Polish intelligence school in Stare Kiejkuty from November 2002 to September 2003.

Only speculations

Since 2008 the Warsaw Appeal Prosecutor's Office has been conducting the investigation in this case. As the mass media recently informed, investigators want to charge the former President of Poland, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, the former Prime Minister, Leszek Miller and the former head of the Polish intelligence, Zbigniew Siemiątkowski for the participation in

war crimes before the Tribunal of State. All of them claim that there were no secret CIA prisons in Poland – All I can say is that we did not know about such facts - Kwaśniewski commented on the AP news.

- Information disclosed by the AP is nothing more than the media information. I cannot imagine that the Polish authorities could have at least had knowledge on such events – says Janusz Krason (SLD), the head of the parliamentary special commission. Sławomir Rybicki (PO), the other member of the commission, comments in a similar way. “The information was disclosed by a reliable agency, however, there is no other evidence that proves this news”.

Antoni Macierewicz (PiS), the former head of the Military Counterintelligence Service, comments differently – This issue shall be explained. Only the ruling group of SLD politicians have the entire knowledge on the state of facts

Also the Polish Prime Minister, Donald Tusk, commented on the news very carefully. You will not talk me into discussing the latest news. The case is examined by the Prosecutor’s Office. Because of the *raison d'etat* I must remain discreet.

Fantasy of the CIA officer

According to Sławomir Petelicki, the former intelligence officer, the information about the secret CIA prisons in Poland were disclosed by the former American intelligence officer. – I heard about the idea made up by the CIA officer. It was meant to reveal the information concerning the secret CIA prisons in Poland and Romania, in order to divert terrorists’ attention from the objects in the USA. Everything indicates that this plan was implemented – claims general Petelicki. – Besides, highlighting this telegram is a way to divert the attention from the more serious problems, such as the catastrophe in Smoleńsk.

Gen. Marek Dukaczewski, the former head of the Polish Military Information Service (WSI) says that gen. Petelicki’s version is groundless. – Intelligence services have a wide range of operational methods, including media games. Nowadays, Americans have a problem with the leakage of 9 thousand secret documents to the Wikileaks. Their disclosure can be very harmful for the US administration and the leakage of the information concerning the secret prisons may be a trial to distract the public attention – says general Dukaczewski. He adds that as long as the employees of the prosecutor’s office does not acquaint themselves with all of the source- documents, every information about the secret CIA prisons in Poland will be described as nothing else than the speculation.

The opinion

Ben Wizner, the lawyer in the American Civil Liberties Union:

There is undeniable and overwhelming evidence that not only CIA planes with people suspected of terrorism landed in Poland but also CIA conducted secret centres where the prisoners were kept and interrogated. CIA managed to prevent the official disclosure of the documents proving the localization of those prisons. However, we had a lot of reliable reports prepared by the journalists who very convincingly proved that such centres existed in Poland. Abd al Rahim al Nashiri’s case is not the first proof. I would urge the Polish and American government to finally admit the truth and to call the responsible people to account. Polish prosecutors should try to question CIA agents. However, according to the practice, CIA refuses to. It is also a scandalous fact that the person who was involved in one of the darkest

episodes of the secret centres program still works, either directly or indirectly, for the American government.

* The translation is prepared by the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights and has not been authorized by the "Rzeczpospolita" daily newspaper