

Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/digital-resources/articles/7961,Aleksander-Lados.html>

20.05.2024, 03:44

30.03.2021

Aleksander Ładoś



Aleksander Ładoś (December 27, 1891 – December 29, 1963) was a Polish politician and diplomat, who headed the Legation of Poland to Switzerland in the years 1940–1945. Ładoś was the leader of the so-called Bernese Group, a secret group of Polish diplomats and Jewish organizations who helped save several hundred Jews from the Holocaust by providing them with illegal Latin American, mostly Paraguayan passports.

For several years, the Institute of National Remembrance has been restoring the memory of Polish diplomats from Switzerland who saved Jews during World War II. In May and June 2018, upon the request of the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Bern, the IPN's Office of Search and Identification carried out a search for the grave of Consul

Konstanty Rokicki, a member of the Bernese Group at the Friedental cemetery in Lucerne.

In 2016 the IPN worked on a documentary entitled "Passports to Paraguay" depicting the participation of Polish diplomacy in saving Jews from the Holocaust. The premiere of the film directed by Robert Kaczmarek took place in January 2019.

The members of the so-called "Ładoś Group" or "Bernese Group", operating during the war in the Polish Embassy in Bern, Switzerland, saved the lives of Jews by issuing forged passports for them. Polish diplomats and activists of Jewish organizations obtained passports from Latin American countries, which were then sent to Jews in occupied Europe. These were mainly passports from Paraguay, El Salvador, Honduras, Bolivia, Peru and Haiti, which prevented their holders in ghettos from deportation to German extermination camps. Instead, their owners were sent to internment camps, where some of them lived to see the end of the war.

The members of the group were involved in the production of illegal passports from as early as 1941 and continued their activities virtually until the end of the Holocaust.

The "Ładoś Group" consisted of: Aleksander Ładoś, the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to Bern, his Deputy Stefan Ryniewicz, Consul Konstanty Rokicki, as well as the Attache of the Embassy, Juliusz Kuehl. Their partners were two Jewish organizations - the RELICO Committee headed by Abraham Silberschein and the Swiss branch of Aguda Yisroel led by Chaim Eiss.

"Polmission. Passports' Secrets", a continuation of "Passports to

Paraguay", co-produced by the Institute of National Remembrance, Telewizja Polska and the Polish Film Institute, presents one of the largest, yet most mysterious actions aimed at saving Jews during World War II. The film is directed by Jacek Papis, and presents the further fate of those who managed to survive thanks to the efforts of Polish diplomacy and Polish intelligence, cooperating with Jewish organizations. Jacek Papis's film presents conversations with the survivors and their family members. The film further includes commentaries and opinions presented by historians trying to solve some of the mysteries connected with the passports.

On 24 March, as part of this year's celebrations of the National Day of Remembrance of Poles Rescuing Jews under German occupation, a plaque commemorating the Ładoś Group (also referred to as the Bernese Group) was unveiled in Będzin.

More information on:

[A plaque commemorating the Ładoś Group in Będzin.](#)

[The 'Ładoś List'](#)

["Passports to Paraguay"](#)

["Polmission. Passports' Secrets"](#)

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