

Institute of National Remembrance

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The Funeral of Polish soldiers in Eišiškės in Lithuania – 7 September 2019

The funeral ceremony of four Home Army soldiers who were buried in nameless graves in the years 1944–45 took place on September 7, in Eišiškės (Lithuania). Their remains were found in the autumn of 2018 by the team of the Western Borderland Department of the IPN Search and Identification Office. The ceremony is part of the wide-ranging activities of the Institute of National Remembrance aimed at finding and commemorating Polish heroes.



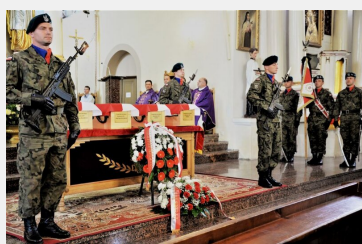
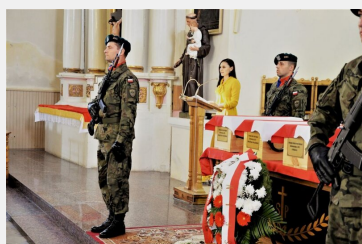
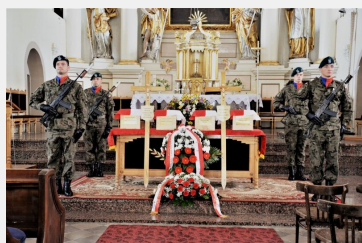


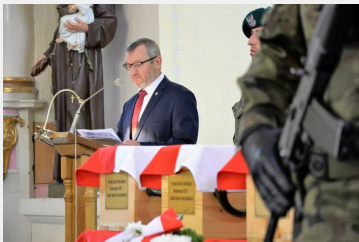






The ceremony was attended by members of the Polish Parliament, representatives of the Sejm of the Republic of Lithuania, local government organizations, representatives of the IPN, the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage and the Office for War Veterans and Victims of Oppression, the Embassy of the Republic of Poland in Vilnius, scouts, the clergy, the local community and the authorities of Soleczniki.





At the cemetery in Eišiškės where, as in previous years, Polish soldiers were buried in the military quarters, the representatives of state and local government addressed the gathered guests.

- 80 years ago, in the first days of September, was when the first crosses for the fallen soldiers of the Home Army appeared. It is not only this symbolism that connects us today. We share common history and common values: God, Honor and the Homeland, common ancestors and the love of our land. Today, we fulfill our Christian, moral obligation, but we also commit ourselves to preserve this memory, to cultivate this memory and to pass it on to future generations - stated Beata Pietkiewicz, Deputy Mayor of the Soleczniki region.

Małgorzata Gosiewska, Deputy Speaker of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland also addressed the participants of the ceremony.

- (...) we are standing by the graves, which were never to be. Buried without prayer, without a salute, the nameless heroes fighting for our freedom - Home Army soldiers. They gave their homeland the most precious gift of all - their lives. They died at the hands of the Soviets, and their names were to be condemned to oblivion (...) - she said.

In a letter read out by Grzegorz Poznański, the Deputy Ambassador of the Republic of Poland in Lithuania, Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki included the following words:

Polish soldiers were ruthlessly hunted down by the communists and then sentenced to death or imprisonment for many years. Even the memory of those soldiers was subject to censorship and a conspiracy

of silence. That is why it has not been possible to restore the identity of all of the victims to this day, so that they can rest in consecrated ground, and be buried with due honors, under their own name and surname (...). Burying them with honors is not only our Christian and patriotic duty. Above all, it is the expression of our deepest conviction that the Polish state cannot and will not spare any effort to restore all heroes a proper place in the national pantheon. "Here lies a Polish soldier who died for his homeland" - may these words always constitute the highest dimension of our memory - Prime Minister Morawiecki appealed.

Prof. prof. Krzysztof Szwaagrzyk, Deputy President of the Institute of National Remembrance and the Director of the Office of Search and Identification, which conducted search activities in Lithuania said:

"Today, when we have buried our Polish heroes - emphasizing the great sacrifice - the sacrifice of their lives - for independent Poland - we can safely say that the cross which stands over their graves will forever remember who lies beneath it. Let us all remember! - emphasized Prof. Szwaagrzyk.

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