

Institute of National Remembrance

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The IPN pays homage to the leaders of the Polish Underground State

The President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Dr Jarosław Szarek laid flowers beneath the plaques honouring the sixteen leaders of the Polish Underground State, abducted in 1945 by the authorities of the USSR





On the 75th anniversary of the abduction of 16 leaders of the Polish Underground State, the President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Dr Jarosław Szarek, paid tribute to them by laying flowers at the monument in front of the villa in Pruszków, from where they were abducted to the USSR.

On 27 March 1945, the Soviet political police - the NKVD - arrested 16 leaders of the Polish Underground State, who had come to Pruszków at the invitation of Soviet commanders. They were supposed to discuss the implementation of the Yalta Conference resolutions. The NKVD arrested, among others, the Government Delegate for Poland and the Deputy Prime Minister Jan Stanisław Jankowski, the last Commander-in-Chief of the Home Army, General Leopold Okulicki, and the Chairman of the Council of National Unity, Kazimierz Pużak.

After the Nazi German occupation, the kidnapping of Polish leaders was one of the elements of the new enslavement of Poland by another totalitarian regime - this time the Soviet regime. It left no doubt that Stalin was not planning to honour the Yalta arrangements, such as free elections in Poland. In parallel, the new authorities had already launched an extensive

campaign of repression, brutally suppressing all manifestations of social independence. Members of the Polish authorities (considered legitimate by Western countries) were transported to Moscow and, in June 1945, prosecuted during a show trial. People who had led the Polish Underground State - which was part of the anti-Hitler coalition - were accused of collaborating with the Germans, even though they had fought against them in the war. According to other charges, they had allegedly fought against the USSR; in fact, they had not, as the Soviet Union had been a member of the coalition of countries allied against the Third Reich.

The longest sentences were received by: Leopold Okulicki (10 years in prison), Jan Stanisław Jankowski (8 years) and his deputies: Adam Bień, Stanisław Jasiukowicz and Antoni Pajdak (5 years each). General Leopold Okulicki, Jan Stanisław Jankowski and Stanisław Jasiukowicz did not live to see the end of their sentences. After his return to Poland, Kazimierz Pużak was arrested again and tortured to death in a communist prison.

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