

# Institute of National Remembrance

<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/7129,1-March-celebrations-at-the-quotLquot-lot-the-opening-of-the-IPNs-exhibitions-de.html>

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1 March celebrations at the "Ł" lot – the opening of the IPN's exhibitions devoted to Cpt. Witold Pilecki and Lt.Col. Łukasz Ciepliński.

The Social Organizational Committee of the National Accursed Soldiers Remembrance Day and the Institute of National Remembrance organized commemorative celebrations at the "Ł" lot of the Powązki Military Cemetery in Warsaw, combined with the opening of two biographical exhibits by the IPN's President, Jarosław Szarek. The event was broadcast on IPNTv, the Institute's YouTube channel.















In the years 1948-1956, the "Ł" lot the was a place where officers of

the communist security services secretly buried their victims, Polish heroes, brutally murdered with a Katyn-style shot to the back of the head. The Accursed Soldiers Mausoleum erected on the site holds the remains of dozens of these patriots, but thousands of others are yet to be discovered. The latter group is represented today by Cpt. Witold Pilecki, the “Auschwitz volunteer”, and Lt.Col. Łukasz Ciepliński, head of the 4th Main Board of the Freedom and Independence Association (WiN). It is these two officers that the IPN devoted its biographical exhibits to; the open-air installations will be opened as part of the celebrations on the Accursed Soldiers Remembrance Day, but will remain open and available to the public until November. The exhibits, examples of the new series of basic expositions, have been prepared by the IPN’s Office of National Education, which chose this compact, yet comprehensive, form to commemorate the people who were crucial for Polish history.

The event was attended by the state authorities with Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki, and President of the Institute of National Remembrance, Jarosław Szarek. Referring to the Accursed Soldiers, the Institute's head said,

These people had a place for God, place for Poland, in their hearts – values that gave them strength to preserve the Polish spirit. That spirit, which proved unbreakable, was years later recreated by John Paul II and the generation of “Solidarity”.

His deputy, Krzysztof Szwagrzyk, whose Office of Search and Identification is the main force behind locating the nameless graves of the Accursed Soldiers and giving them proper burial, added,

So frequently we have heard that finally, the accursed soldiers are returning in the glory they deserve. The term "accursed soldiers" has found its way into history textbooks. Nevertheless, we must ask where they are today. Do we honour them the way we should? Are they in our hearts, on our minds? Does the Republic of Poland do everything to celebrate her heroes? If this is so, why do we keep hearing a barrage of shameful words about these people from various directions and the media? The question "Where are the accursed soldiers today?" can be answered with: they are coming back, but are not here yet. We need to help them return. Let us do that by finding their remains in the death pits. Let's help clean their uniforms of dried blood, of the dirt from countless battlefields, of the filth from the security services cells. They did their duty to their country years ago. Let's do ours today, let's do our duty towards them.

The participants laid wreaths at the the Accursed Soldiers Mausoleum, where the remains of those of them who fell victim to communist terror have been put to rest.

Pandemic restrictions put a limit on the number of participants, but courtesy of the Polish state TV broadcaster, which provided audio and video signals to the media free of charge, everyone interested in the event had access to live feed, including on the IPN's YouTube channel:



Jarosław Szarek,  
D.Sc. laying  
flowers at the  
former NKVD  
prison located in  
Strzelecka Street.  
Photo: Sławek  
Kasper, IPN



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