

Institute of National Remembrance

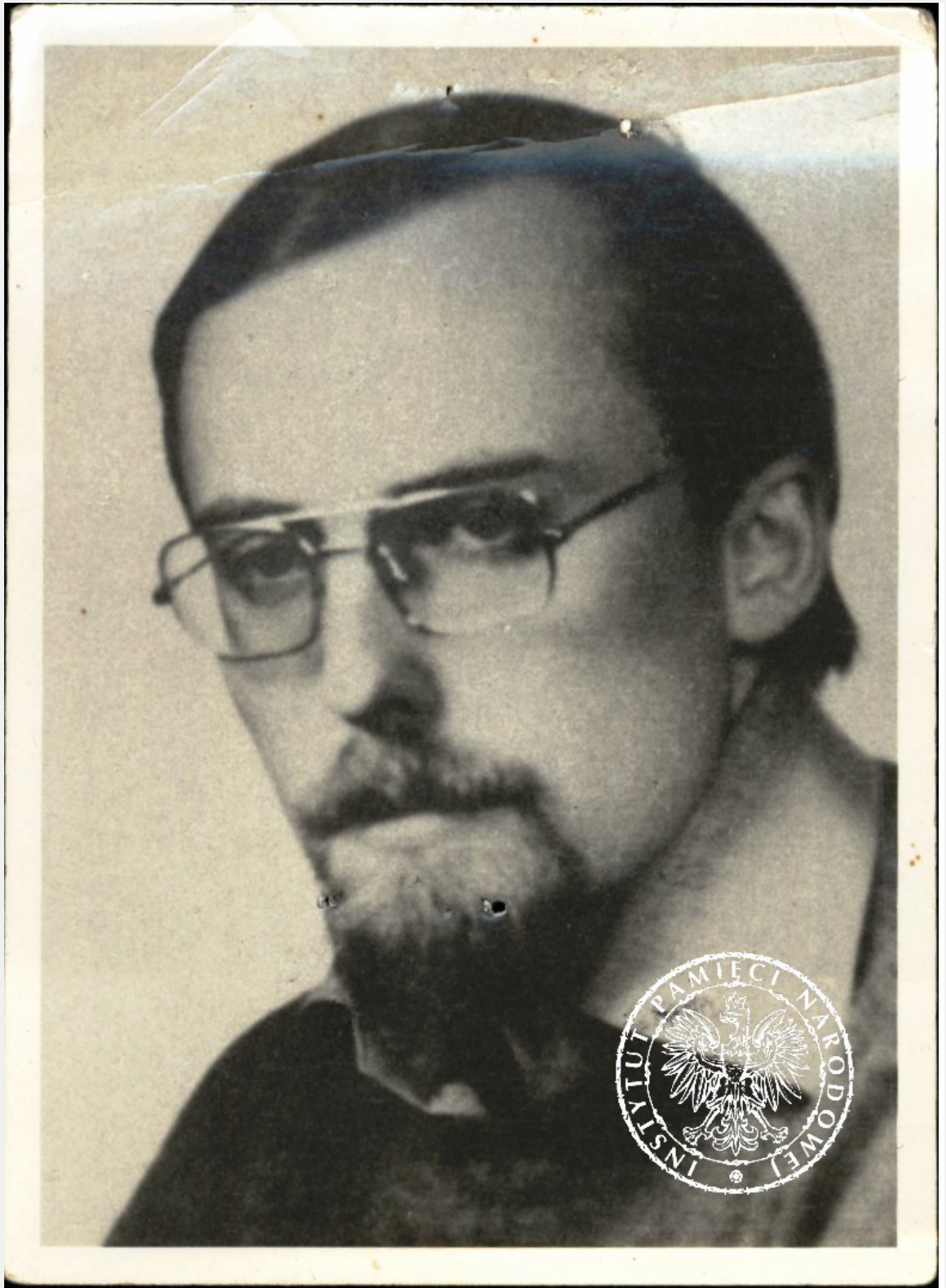
<https://ipn.gov.pl/en/news/9269,18th-anniversary-of-the-death-of-Colonel-Ryszard-Kuklinski.html>

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18th anniversary of the death of Colonel Ryszard Kukliński









On 11 February 2004, Colonel Ryszard Kukliński, called "the first Polish officer in NATO", died in the USA. During the Cold War he was cooperating with the CIA under the nickname "Jack Strong". He is famous for handing over to the Americans a significant amount of documents relating to the Polish People's Republic, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact.

He was born on 30 June 1930 in Warsaw. In 1946, he joined the Polish Workers' Party, and a year later he started to attend the Officers' School of Infantry in Wrocław. He graduated in 1950 with the rank of ensign.

In the following years, he regularly trained and was promoted. In 1964

he graduated from the Academy of the General Staff. In the years 1967—1968 he served in the International Commission for Supervision and Control in Vietnam. After returning to Poland, he participated in the preparation of the plans for the Warsaw Pact troops invasion into Czechoslovakia. In 1972 he was promoted to the rank of colonel.

As an officer of the Directorate of the First General Staff, he learned many secrets of the Polish People's Army and the Warsaw Pact, including plans for an aggressive war against the West. In the early 1980s, he also participated in the preparations for the introduction of the Martial Law in the People's Republic of Poland.

For a long time he was considered a trusted man of Wojciech Jaruzelski, Czesław Kiszczak and the "Soviet comrades".

Meanwhile, in 1972, he started cooperation with the US intelligence service. Within ten years, he supplied the CIA with more than 35,000 pages of classified documents relating to the People's Republic of Poland, the USSR and the Warsaw Pact. The disclosure of Soviet plans for aggression against Central Europe helped NATO countries to prepare an adequate response and possibly saved the world from the outbreak of World War III.

Threatened with exposure and arrest, in November 1981 Kuklinski, together with his wife and two sons, was evacuated from Poland by the CIA. In 1984, the Court of the Warsaw Military District sentenced him to death *in absentia*. In the first half of the 1990s, both sons of the colonel died in unclear circumstances.

In 1995, the Military Chamber of the Supreme Court quashed the sentence against Kukliński. The investigation of his case was discontinued in 1997.

Ryszard Kukliński died at the age of 73 in a hospital in Tampa, Florida. On 19 June 2004, the colonel's ashes were deposited at the Powązki Military Cemetery in Warsaw.

Kukliński was the first foreigner to be honored with the CIA Distinguished Intelligence Medal. On 2 September 2006, the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej Duda, posthumously appointed Ryszard Kukliński to the rank of Brigadier General.

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