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**WITOLD ZYGMUNT KULERSKI ACTIVITIES –
SECRETARY STANISŁAW MIKOŁAJCZYK’S –
AFTER WORLD WAR II**

Abstract:

Witold Zygmunt Kulerski was one of the closest associates of the Prime Minister of Polish government in exile Stanisław Mikołajczyk. During World War II he was one of the closest collaborators of Stanisław Mikołajczyk- Office of the Vice-President of the National Council of the Republic of Poland, Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister of the Polish government in exile.

Kulerski’s commission devoted much attention to the affairs of Germany. This issue has been leading in international affairs, it is no wonder that Congress PSL lot of space devoted to it. Speaker stressed that the People’s Movement during its period of organizational and ideological took the view that the main “(...) the objective must be to secure Polish and Slavic world securing the aggressive spirit of the German”.

Kulerski’s commission expressed concern due to the lack of activity of the Polish government to sign agreements and treaties of trade and economic with other countries than the Soviet Union. The committee members in their speeches stressed that in many areas of trade and international agreements are being overtaken by other countries and are overlooked in transactions due to insufficient activity of the Polish Government.

Key words:

Witold Zygmunt Kulerski, Stanisław Mikołajczyk, National Council of the Republic of Poland, Polish government in exile, Kulerski’s commission

Witold Zygmunt Kulerski's publication of the Polish People's Party Congress in 1946

Witold Zygmunt Kulerski live from 1911-1997. His parents are mother Leontyna Kulerski (nee Trawińska) and Wiktor Kulerski. Witold's father, was the founder and publisher of Polish (a Catholic face) "Gazeta Grudziącka" peoples magazine, clamng for the emancipation of the peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie, which plays a major role in the struggle for the preservation of Polish culture and Catholicism.

Witold Zygmunt Kulerski was one of the closest associates of the Prime Minister of Polish government in exile Stanisław Mikołajczyk. He met Mikołajczyk's before the war, when he worked in the Peoples Party and he and his wife managed Wiktor Kulerski's Publishing House and edited "Gazeta Grudziącka". During World War II he was one of the closest collaborators of Stanisław Mikołajczyk- Office of the Vice-President of the National Council of the Republic of Poland, Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister of the Polish government in exile. Even after the war was one of the closest associates of Stanisław Mikołajczyk, and after his escape in 1947, he was arrested and convicted in 1951, sentenced to 12 years imprisonment. This was the highest penalty of Polish Peoples Party litigants.

After World War II he returned to London at the turn of 1945/1946. On 9 January 1946 Witold Kulerski reported about his visit in England [No. 179: 501]. He had to be expected for the composition of the Supreme Council of the PSL, when he returned to Polish before the Party Congress, which took place in Warsaw on January 19-21, 1946. During the meeting the highest committee, Witold Kulerski, he had experience in the General Council of the Peoples Party and the composition of the National Council in exile dealt with important issues, because related to foreign policy. He spoke at the Congress as chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. His Commission (Kulerski said that it was a sub-committee) [Congress: 167] presented its findings in three parts. The first part contained general principles of foreign policy. In the second part put forward a number detailed demands, and the third- internal for the party, has entered into certain suggestions or requests to the authorities primates PSL.

In the first part of the committee chaired Kulerski put the issue of the United Nations, which is in London for the second time deliberated on further foundations, enabling „(...) full, democratic cooperation of all peace-loving nations to peace and security of the nation was possible in the nearest future” [Kongres: 167]. Kulerski's commission called on the United Nations held in London with greeting and saying that the PSL is always to work together to ensure peace and security in the world, attaches “(...) deeply committed to the

ongoing deliberations” [Kongres: 167]. On the basis of this part Kulerski's speech, Congress PSL passed a resolution. Congress said it that one of the main aspirations of the Polish people in consolidating peace. Congress expressed confidence that the peace-loving nations will lead to the creation and consolidation of the organization [Kongres: 171-172; „Gazeta Ludowa” 1946, No. 25].

Another issue mentioned by the Kulerski's Commission was to expand and deepen cooperation between the Polish nation and the nation of the Soviet Union. Also in this case the PSL Congress passed a resolution, which opt for the Polish-Soviet alliance.

The rest of the speech Kulerski insisted that Congress “(...) at the same time draws attention to the issue of the closest, most sincere and immediate economic, social and political cooperation with other countries, above all France, Great Britain and the United States (...), has had shared experiences in the past and for which we must strive to deepen and broaden our cooperation” [Kongres: 168]. Also these issues are reflected in the resolutions of the Congress [Kongres: 172; “Gazeta Ludowa” 1946, No. 25]

In the next part, the Commission, referring to the tradition of the PSL, asked the with warm words of the Slav nations, in order to “(...) lead to the strongest possible unification of the Slavic elements in order to create real, lasting and strong dam in the east (...)” [Kongres: 168] In this case, on the basis of the Kulerski's paper, Congress passed another resolution. [Kongres: 172; “Gazeta Ludowa” 1946, No 25].

With reference to previous congresses and meeting of the peoples movement, foreign committee drew with the words, “(...) to express the deep, sincere and heartfelt hope that despite various difficulties, obstacles, faults, misunderstandings that have hurt us, and - on the other hand - despite all the things that us supposed to share, the Czech Republic, Slovak and Polish nations – we hope will find a common ground on which they will be able to communicate and find a way to resolve all conflicts in the atmosphere of friendship, and will become one of the links in this all-Slavic agreement, which has always been, is and will be continue to our endeavor, (...) One of the best opportunities for securing peace in our part of Europe, , and which can contribute in a very prominent to secure peace in the whole of Europe, and eventually the whole world” [Kongres: 168]. This part of Kulerski's speech was also accepted by the Congress in a resolution [Kongres: 172-173, “Gazeta Ludowa“ 1946].

Kulerski's commission devoted much attention to the affairs of Germany. This issue has been leading in international affairs, it is no wonder that Congress PSL lot of space devoted to it. Speaker stressed that the People's Movement during its period of organizational and ideological took the view that the main “(...) the objective must be to secure Polish and Slavic world securing the aggressive

spirit of the German” [*Kongres*: 169]. Kulerski believed that Germany is the eternal enemy of Polish, with the Pole can not find a common language and will never be able to trust. Similarly, however, a negative attitude towards Germany is not enough and you need to determine what the Germans have done. The Commission found that the economic, political and military Germans must disarm. This statement Congress passed with applauded [*Kongres*: 169]. The Commission also concluded that the then existing solution to the question of the eastern German borders on the Nysa Łużycka and Odra Rivers to Świnoujście and Szczecin was unsatisfactory. It is necessary that the actual disarmament of Germany, “ (...) the deprivation of any base, also in the west, towards which we strive to ensure that in the future the central German authorities confined themselves to the west on the Rhine” [*Kongres*: 169]. The Commission stressed that during the last war Germany have raised their standard of living at the expense of their neighbors through economic exploitation and economic penetration of these countries. Therefore advocates the fact that „(...) Germany should be destroyed and driven to ultimate economic ruin” [*Kongres*: 169]. Kulerski’s Commission aim was to create a economic balance in Europe abolish inequalities that existed before the war [*Kongres*: 169-170]. Kulerski stressed that it is necessary to re-educate the German people. He also spoke on the Serbs and Sorbs, our Slavic brothers, “(...) who for centuries resisted effectively when it comes to the national spirit” [*Kongres*: 170]. Kulerski on behalf of the committee called for the internationalization of their business. This part of his speech was reflected in extensive resolution passed by the Congress [*Kongres*: 173, “*Gazeta Ludowa*” 1946].

Both in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and in embassies and consulates, there were few representatives of the PSL. Also, the influence on the PSL on the current foreign policy of the Polish state was assessed as unsatisfactory [*Kongres*: 170]. Congress, after hearing the Kulerski’s report adopted a relevant resolution [*Kongres*: 174, “*Gazeta Ludowa* “ 1946, No. 25].

Kulerski as a second issue in specific cases raised the question of the need to counter rumors about the economic and trade relations between the Polish and Soviet Union. . The Commission appealed to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for Information and Propaganda to provide the public with reliable and regular reports on trade contracts and economic agreements done with the USSR, adding that both ministries should conduct a campaign to demonstrate mutual advantages originating from such contracts [*Kongres*: 171]. In this part of the speech was recorded huge applause. Because many of the officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers of the Red Army was not sufficiently informed by the committee about the great contribution of Polish efforts in the field cooperation of Polish-Soviet, commission also recommended here, the concept of appropriate measures and efforts by the Polish

Witold Zygmunt Kulerski activities – secretary Stanisław Mikołajczyk's – after World War II
authorities [*Kongres*: 171]. In this case, a resolution was passed. [*Kongres*: 174;
„*Gazeta Ludowa*” 1946, No. 25]

Kulerski's commission expressed concern due to the lack of activity of the Polish government to sign agreements and treaties of trade and economic with other countries than the Soviet Union. The committee members in their speeches stressed that in many areas of trade and international agreements are being overtaken by other countries and are overlooked in transactions due to insufficient activity of the Polish Government [*Kongres*: 171]. Congress on this case also adopted a resolution proposed by Kulerski. [*Kongres*: 174; „*Gazeta Ludowa*” 1946, No. 25].

The final issue raised by Mikołajczyk was a demand to the authorities of the party, which would deal with matters connected to foreign policy. Its objective should be to elaborate reports on issues lying in the interest of the Party. Kulerski proposed another resolution on this question [*Kongres*: 174].

During the Congress, Witold Zygmunt Kulerski was elected a member of the Supreme Council of the PSL. [„*Gazeta Ludowa*” 1946, No. 25]¹, which was convened for the first time on 21 January 1946². At its first meeting, Witold Zygmunt Kulerski was elected the secretary of the Executive Committee of the Council [Turkowski: 25].

In addition to the activities of the party Kulerski was a member of the Board Peoples Cooperative Publishing³ [Stepień: 297], set up on 8 May 1946 [Bartoszewski: 74]⁴, where he was in charge of the technical division and, in the last few months before his detention (after Stanisław Mikołajczyk had fled Poland), performed duties of the President of the Board. In July 1947, Kulerski talked to the secretary of “*Gazeta Ludowa*” and complained of a lack of funds. “He said that employees of the cooperative arrange it still strikes due to non-payment of the sums due for work. Kulerski also said that due to lack of funds will be reduced volume “*Gazeta Ludowa*” to 4 pages. He worried that can not write a lot of articles about the Warsaw and Uprising, whose anniversary is coming” [No 91. 1947: 285]. Since Kulerski led Peoples Cooperative Publishing effort “*Gazeta Ludowa*” dropped to 40,000 copies, which Kulerski explained as the result of “(...) intentionally distribution disorganization, by the Krzeczowski and Banach before their departure from the PSL” [No 93. 1947: 295].

¹ The given list alphabetically Kulerski was placed at position No. 57 as Victor of Grudziądz, which obviously was a mistake, because it was about Witold Sigmund, the son of Victor.

² Slightly below on the list, at number 59, Fryderyk Leyk (spelt Lejk) from Szczytno appeared (Fryderyk Leyk left the PSL on 19 November 1946).

³ Among the founders of the cooperative were Stanisław Mikołajczyk, Stanisław Bańczyk, Stanisław Wójcik and Tadeusz Rek. R. Turkowski, *ibidem*, p. 61. The first Board consisted of Kazimierz Banach (president), Jan dec, Stefan Korboński, Jan Szydłuk and Witold Kulerski.

⁴ The question of establishing a publishing cooperative was already discussed on 3 April 1946 during a meeting of the Council of the PSL.

On 26-27 May 1946 Kulerski attended a meeting of the Supreme Council of the PSL, which was to decide on the position of the PSL in the referendum [Turkowski: 137-143], scheduled for 30 June 1946 year. The public in the referendum had to answer three questions: 1) Are you in favor of abolishing the Senate?; 2) Do you want the future Constitution to reinforce the economic system introduced by the agrarian reform and nationalization of the principal branches of the national economy while protecting the statutory rights of private enterprises?; 3) Do you want further consolidation of the state borders on the Baltic Sea, the Odra River and the Łużycka Nysa River? Witold Kulerski did not support the position of S. Mikołajczyk, who opted to vote “1 x no” and “2 x yes”, along with a few others people thought that a referendum should call for a vote “2 x no” and “1 x so “. As noted by Romuald Turkowski, Kulerski in support of the position described himself as a supporter of realism. In his opinion, the PSL joining the Government of National Unity has shown good will, << but partner revealed a tendency to break and destroy “all contracts and obligations”, which led the country to economic ruin, deepened point>> [Turkowski: 139]. The speaker took the independence of the PSL, so this meant that the party can not be inducements, because if it will not, it may lose, but when it will, it has to lose. Kulerski believed that society does not accept the Democratic Bloc, unless the PSL won the majority. Voting “3 x yes” in his view would undermine the PSL. He believed that the first question was ill-worded and therefore proposed a vote of “no”, for the same reason the second question should be answered with a no, but the only possible answer to the last question was yes [Turkowski: 139]. Kulerski’s opinion shared many local activists.

In June 1946, Witold Kulerski participated in the training of the PSL in Warsaw, where he presented a report on the foreign policy of the PSL. [Swacha: 102-103]⁵.

As a representative of the PSL, Kulerski was a candidate from the Gdynia constituency in the general election (In January 19, 1947), [No 189. 1947: 548]. In the biography of Witold Kulerski reproduced in a set of documents titled *Stanisław Mikołajczyk in the documents of the security apparatus*. Kulerski was a member of the Constitutional Parliament in 1947-1948, but this is a false information [*Spis posłów*: 41; *Skorowidz do sprawozdań*: 82; *Komunikaty*: 531-532]. While the candidate is not won a mandate. Failed to get their mandate in rigged elections in 1947.

⁵ Swacha gave wrong name - instead of Witold wrote Victor Kulerski.

A visit to Copenhagen and a mission in London

In September 1946 Stanisław Mikołajczyk in the company of 14 people spent about three weeks in Copenhagen at the FAO Conference. Kulerski was a secretary and translator of the Polish delegation, and after the conference, at the end of September 1946 he moved to London in order to settle their personal affairs- elimination of housing and bringing their stuff [No 214 1948: 639].

In October 1946 Witold Kulerski returned to Polish [No 222 1950: 672]. In March 1948, Maria Hulewiczowa was interviewed and said that she was not informed about whether Kulerski before leaving any command received [No 201. 1948: 536]. However, during the hearing of October 2, 1948 Hulewiczowa testified that Kulerski was ordered by Mikołajczyk to conduct a conversation with General Stanisław Tatar alias “Tabor” to request the general to send him funds for the election campaign of the PSL in Poland. According to Mrs. Hulewiczowa, a former secretary of Stanisław Mikołajczyk, Tatar discussed the request with Kulerski and sent about 20 000 dollars via the British Embassy [No 214 1948: 639].

During the hearing on 17 May Kulerski confirmed that participated in Copenhagen the FAO Conference as a secretary and translator of the Polish delegation [No 221 1950: 667]. After the conference, Mikołajczyk recommend Kulerski, who was leaving for London (where he stayed for four weeks), to contact General Tatar and ask him to sent the dollars he had left there to Poland in order to finance the election campaign and organization of the PSL. Kulerski had to ask Tatar how much money and at what time send to Polish. Mikołajczyk wanted to keep this matter secret from the Polish government. Kulerski was supposed to go to the British Ministry for Foreign Affairs and contact the head of the Section for Poland, Mr. Robert Hankey, who would be an intermediary in the transfer of money via diplomatic post. In addition, the head of the PSL instructed his secretary to intervene in the British Foreign Office, in the event that the Tatar complained of their inability to continue to reside in England. Mikołajczyk had informed Tatar that his name was mentioned in one of the processes in Poland and that he had this in mind when considering a possible return to the Polish. In addition, the head of the PSL instructed his secretary to intervene in the British Foreign Office, in the event that the Tatar complained of their inability to continue to reside in England. Mikołajczyk had informed Tatar that his name was mentioned in one of the processes in Poland and that he had this in mind when considering a possible return to the Polish. Kulerski also had to describe the situation in Poland from the point of view of the leader of the PSL. In Copenhagen, after the departure of the Polish delegation to the country by sea Kulerski went to London, where he stayed at Mrs. Mikołajczyk’s flat. A few days after arriving in London

Witold contacted Stephanie Lieberman, widow of Herman Lieberman - leader of the Polish Socialist Party, who then worked at the Polish embassy. They arranged to meeting. During the meeting (which took place in her apartment), came Tatar general. With the envoy discussed the matter sent to the Polish money necessary for the PSL campaign. Tatar said that it will provide no more than 400-500 dollars. Kulerski asked him to give the money to Ms. Lieberman, who would see to its transfer to Poland. Tabor said that as part of the funding is in Belgium, France and Italy [No 234, 1950: 714]⁶, Kulerski has to help him with the download of the British Isles. He asked Kulerski to obtain a guarantee from the British authorities that Tatar's emissaries would not be searched on their way back to England. Tatar going to gather in London means that it may need to Mikołajczyk. A few days later Kulerski went to the Hankey- head of the Department for Polish affairs in the British Foreign Office and asked on behalf of Mikołajczyk for assistance in the transfer of England to Polish dollars per share for the election PSL. Hankey agreed to provide help, but requested his permission to leave in the strictest confidence, even from General Tatar. Kulerski agreed that the person mediating between Tatar and Hankey will be Mrs. Lieberman. Kulerski also settled down the question of transferring money from the continent to England using Tatar's and Hankey's people. Also in this matter Mrs. Liebermann was to be an intermediary. General Tatar prepared a list of the names of those people and Kulerski submitted it at the meeting with Hankey. For several days before Kulerski returning to the country, Tatar provided him with 40 \$ 000 packaged with four cans. Kulerski packed it in the paper, put the address of Mikołajczyk and gave them Hankey, who sent the packet through the diplomatic channel to the British Embassy in Poland. The Messenger of Mikołajczyk all matters entrusted to him filled and returned to the country [No 234. 1950: 710, 713]⁷. Later, during his interrogation, Kulerski explained that the money had been collected from the British Embassy by Siudak, who then handed it over to Kulerski and he finally gave it to Mikołajczyk [No 223 1950: 675; No 238 1951: 727]. Envoy of the President at that hearing indicated that he does not know whether Mikołajczyk received a further consignment of Tatar. When asked about the source of the funds, Kulerski said that during his visit to the USA in 1944, Mikołajczyk received money from President Roosevelt to fight the PSL with Germany, and some came from the Polish American community. This sum, according to the General Tatar was \$ 500,000 invested in England and on the Continent [No 221 1950: 667-669]. During the interrogation on 19 May 1950, Paweł Siudak denied Kulerski's words, who claimed that Siudak had collected the parcel from the British Embassy and gave it to Kulerski [No 222 1950: 672].

⁶ When asked about these issues Tatar testified that larger sums of money were in France and Sweden.

⁷ Tatar himself and his people claimed that Kulerski had done nothing to help them stay in England.

Stanisław Mikołajczyk’s translator

Being an assistant to Stanisław Mikołajczyk, Kulerski was also helpful as a translator.

In the period before the elections, the leader of the PSL gave interviews every other day, or even every day. The Secretary General of the PSL provided Mikołajczyk with a daily news report on matters connected with the election [No 207 1948: 611].

After the departure of the government (1 February 1947) Mikołajczyk met with U.S. Ambassador Bliss Lane and Deputy USA Ambassador Gerald Keith. They were talking strictly confidential. In the spring of 1947 in the apartment Mikołajczyk was a strictly confidential conversation between Keith and Mikołajczyk in the presence of Kulerskiego [No 202 1948: 594-595].

Interviews which Mikołajczyk gave to foreign journalists were often attended by members of the editorial board of “Gazeta Ludowa” including Zygmunt Augustyński, Witold Giełżyński, Andrzej Leśniewski, Józef Zarański and Witold Kulerski (as a translator) as well as representatives of the authorities of the PSL [No 205. 1948: 601]. Kulerski was present at the conference for foreign journalists. Paul Stasiuk confirmed this in his testimony [No 217 1948: 652]. Siudak confirmed Kulerski’s very good knowledge of English, German and French.

In Poland Kulerski once attended a Mikołajczyk’s conference with Harold Stassen. Witold was the Mikołajczyk’s translator, and the meeting took place on the way back from Moscow. Stassen asked Mikołajczyk about how to evaluate the development of political relations in Poland and the situation of the PSL. According to his secretary, Mikołajczyk was to state that the PPR continued to acquire more power by gaining control over other parties. The process of nationalization of industry was almost completed but it went a bit too far, that is it covered too many branches of industry and often even small workshops were nationalized. According to the president of the PSL, agricultural production was improving, although the improvement was slow due to the shortage of livestock, fertilizers or facilities, but there are predictions according to which Poland in the near future should become self-sufficient in terms of food. For a time, foreign aid is essential. Regarding the agrarian reform, Mikołajczyk claimed that it was carried out too hastily, as a result of which many new farms lacked facilities or machines. Mikołajczyk complained also for the situation of PSL. Reported that many activists are arrested, often in cooperation with unfair charges of illegal organizations. The PSL was often refused permission to hold meetings and in many cases their meetings were broken up by gangs affiliated to the communist parties. The president of the PSL also complained about

confiscations of newspaper articles in “Gazeta Ludowa” and other newsletters of the party. Representatives of the PSL can only speak from the rostrum of Parliament [No 221 1948: 630]. Stassen in turn informed Mikołajczyk that during the meeting with Stalin he had an impression that the leader of the USSR was a great politician, who had a realistic view of the situation and had no intention to start another war. The talks focused on the issue of Polish-German border. Here Mikołajczyk said that „(...) all the Poles that line support and that is very concerned shall take all the negative statements Anglo-Saxons (...)” [No 211 1948: 630]. He answered Stassen’s question about the chances for the PSL, Mikołajczyk had to answer that, although the situation will be able to communicate with the political parties of the communist bloc, and of the struggle will pass [No 211 1948: 630].

Kulerski also participated in the Mikołajczyk’s conference with the American ambassador Bliss Lane. His participation in the meeting was limited only to be present at the formal adoption, then Mikołajczyk spoke without witnesses. Other contacts with foreigners Kulerski not maintained, except for talks with UNRRA in Poland, where he wanted to apply for a position but as there were no vacancies that meeting was fruitless. He has been also the PSL’s press conference, during which he was a translator.

Zygmunt Witold Kulerski was one of the closest associates of Stanislaw Mikołajczyk - President immigration People’s Party and the post-war Polish People’s Party, Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister of the Polish government and the Office of the Vice-President of the National Council in exile. Zygmunt Witold Kulerski was one of the closest associates of Stanislaw Mikołajczyk - President immigration People’s Party and the post-war Polish Peasant Party, Deputy Prime Minister and Prime Minister of the Polish government and the Office of the Vice-President of the National Council in exile. He was not only useful to him as his personal secretary and translator, but also during the war years (since 1942) as a member of the National Council of the Republic of Poland. After the war he returned to London and became involved in political activities PSL. He attend as a translator for their leader. Failed attempt to get their mandate in fraudulent elections in 1947. After escaping from the Polish Mikołajczyk was arrested and together with a group of close associates of Mikołajczyk tried and convicted. He was given the highest sentence of 12 years of imprisonment. This article describes his public life until was arrested although the description is based on documents produced during the inquiry.

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