

NOTES ON THE SENATE



**SENATE
OF THE REPUBLIC
OF POLAND**

Marshals of the Senate of the Second Polish Republic

During 17 years of its existence (1922–1939), the Senate of the Second Polish Republic was headed by 5 marshals. They all came from families with a long tradition of struggle for independence, which was characteristic of the generation born after the insurrection of 1863. They were all educated in higher education institutions of the countries that had invaded and occupied Poland – Austro-Hungary, Germany and Russia. They all entered into adulthood at the turn of the 20th century (1880–1914). In 1918, the year Poland regained independence, all five future marshals of the Polish Senate held public offices either at home or abroad, also in patriotic organizations. Before taking up their duties as co-leaders of the parliament in Wiejska Street, they held different public functions in the Second Polish Republic. Throughout their lives they took interest in politics and Polish issues.

CHANCELLERY OF THE SENATE

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WOJCIECH TRAMPCZYŃSKI (1860–1953)

Senate of the first term (1922–1927)

He was born in 1860 to a family of landowners in Dębłowo near Gniezno. He studied law in Berlin and Wrocław. From 1886, he worked as a lawyer in Poznań. He became a well-recognised advocate for Poles' interests in the Prussian partition. As a counselor of the Bank Ziemski (Land Bank) and the director of Hotel Bazar company, he gained a reputation as an active businessman. In 1901, he became a member of the Council of the City of Poznań, in which he later became the president of the council members' group. From 1910 to 1918, he was a deputy to the Prussian Sejm, and from 1912 to 1918, he was a deputy to the German parliament. In 1918, he became a member of the Supreme People's Council and the chief president of the Regency of the Grand Duchy of Poznań. In 1919, he was appointed the Marshal of the Legislative Sejm. Under his presidency, the chamber settled a number of matters important for the newly reborn Polish state, in particular it adopted a constitution known by later generations as the March Constitution. He was the Marshal of the first term Senate (1922–1927), and a deputy to the Sejm in 1928–1935. In 1931, he testified as a witness for the defence in the Brest trial. Four years later, in 1935, he retired from politics. During the occupation period, he was displaced from the Greater Poland and he settled in Warsaw. He cooperated with the Central Welfare Council. He died in 1953 in Poznań. In 1987, his ashes were moved together with the ashes of his wife from the Jeżyce Cemetery to St. Adalbert's Cemetery of the Meritorious in Poznań. One of the committee rooms in the parliamentary complex has borne his name since 1992.



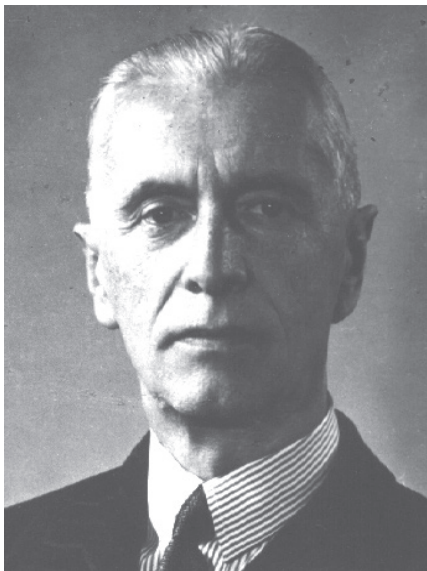


JULIAN JULIUSZ SZYMAŃSKI (1870–1958)

Senate of the second term (1928–1930)

He was born in 1870 in Kielce. He studied medicine at the Kiev University. In 1902, he started specialisations in ophthalmology and laryngology in Vienna and Paris. In 1904, he was mobilised to the Tzar's army and took part in the Russo–Japanese war as a military doctor. He travelled across China to the United States, where he had his diploma recognised and he became a doctor of science. He practised in Chicago, providing services to, among others, Polish emigrants. At that time he was also a secretary, and then a vice-president, of the local Polish Doctors' Society. From 1912 he continued with his scientific work and social work among Poles in Brazil, where he was offered the chair of ophthalmology at the Parana University in Curitiba as he was an exquisite specialist. He published the first handbook on eye diseases in Portuguese.

After Poland became independent, he came back to the country. He was offered the chair of ophthalmology at the Stefan Batory University in Vilnius. In 1928, he was elected to the Senate of the Republic of Poland. In his capacity as the Marshal of the Senate, he provided patronage to the First Congress of Poles Living Abroad (1929). In 1930, he was entrusted with a mission to form a government, but the mission failed. After the term of both parliamentary chambers was prematurely ended, he came back to scientific work in Vilnius and continued his activities for the benefit of Poles scattered around the globe. When the Second World War broke out, he co-organised the Maltese Hospital in Warsaw and became its chief medical doctor. After the war, he emigrated to Brazil once again to lead the life of an academic. In 1957, he came back to Poland, settled in Białystok, and died in 1958. He was buried at the local parish cemetery.



WŁADYSŁAW RACZKIEWICZ (1885–1947)

Senate of the third term (1930–1935)

He was born in 1885 in Kutaisi (Georgia) in the Caucasus region, where his grandfather settled after being exiled for involvement in the January Uprising. He studied at the Law Faculty of the Petersburg University, and then in Dorpat (now known as Tartu), Estonia. He was a member of illegal Polish organisations. He was engaged in forming the Polish army in Russia during the First World War. He was the head of the Chief Polish Military Committee (Naczpol). He took part in the Polish–Soviet War, during which he was involved in the defence of Minsk and in the fights for Vilnius.

His excellent organisational skills and efficiency were much appreciated. In the independent Poland, he was the minister of internal affairs and the head of province four times. He served as the Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland. In 1934, he arranged the Second Congress of Poles Living Abroad and became the president of the World Association of Poles Living Abroad (Światpol). He visited Polish diaspora centres, for example in South America.

On 30 September 1939, he was sworn in to be the fourth President of the Republic of Poland. Firstly, he served his office in France, and after June 1940 – in the United Kingdom. He died there in 1947. He was buried at the cemetery in Newark where Polish pilots had their graves. In 1995, the most spacious room for Senate committee meetings in the building of the Senate was named after him. The ashes of Raczkiewicz were placed in the Mausoleum of the Polish Presidents-in-Exile, located in the Temple of Divine Providence in Warsaw, in 2022.

ALEKSANDER PRYSTOR (1874–1941)

Senate of the fourth term (1935–1938)

He was born in 1874 in Vilnius. He studied mathematics and medicine in Moscow and Dorpat (now known as Tartu). He was a conspiracy activist and a member of the combat unit of the Polish Socialist Party. As a close collaborator of Józef Piłsudski, he co-organised and took part in the Bezdany raid (a robbery against a Russian mail train in which 200,000 rubles were taken over for the purposes of the Polish Socialist Party). He was arrested and exiled to the interior of Russia in 1912.

Initially, starting from 1918, he played various military roles in the circle close to Józef Piłsudski. Later, he became the minister of labour and social welfare, the minister of industry and commerce, and in 1931–1933 he was the prime minister. It was the time (1930–1935) when he was a deputy to the Sejm of the Republic of Poland, and from 1935 to 1938 he was the Marshal of the Senate of the Republic of Poland. In late 1939, he supported aid activities targeted at Polish refugees in Kaunas. After Lithuania was incorporated into the USSR, he was arrested by the NKVD in 1940. After brutal interrogations, he was sentenced to death, but the capital punishment was replaced by 10 years of gulag. He died in the Lubyanka Prison in Moscow in late July 1941. His place of burial is unknown. The symbolic grave is situated at the Powiązki Cemetery in Warsaw.



BOGUSŁAW MIEDZIŃSKI (1891–1972)

Senate of the fifth term (1938–1939)

He was born in 1891 in Miastków Kościelny near Garwolin (Mazovian Province). He studied at the Lviv Polytechnic and the Jagiellonian University. At that time, as a member of the Polish Socialist Party, he was actively engaged in activities aimed at the restoration of Poland's independence. After the First World War broke out, he was one of the co-founders and commanders of the Polish Military Organisation. Since 1918, he played a number of roles in the Ministry of Military Affairs, where he was the head of the Second Department for Information. He was among the closest collaborators of Józef Piłsudski. In 1927–1929, he worked as the minister responsible for post office and telegraphs. He was elected a deputy for three parliamentary terms (1928–1938), and during one of them, he was the deputy marshal of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland.

In 1938, he was elected the Marshal of the fifth term Senate, but the term was interrupted by the Second World War. On 2 September 1939, he presided over the very last session of the Senate of the Second Polish Republic. During the night of 17 September 1939, together with the other representatives of the highest authorities of the Republic of Poland, he managed to reach Romania and then Italy. In September 1939, he was wanted by an arrest warrant issued against him by Germans. In 1940, he travelled across France to Portugal, where he attempted to join the Polish army, but the Polish Commander-in-Chief, general Władysław Sikorski, objected and sent him to South Africa in 1941. This was a form of political isolation. In 1946, Miedziński came back to Europe and settled in London. He worked in a bakery and was a historical journalist. He became a member of the Board of Józef Piłsudski Institute in London. He died in 1972. His grave is located in the South Ealing Cemetery in London.



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