

Warsaw, 7 August 2024

**STATEMENT BY THE KULSKI FOUNDATION FOR POLISH-AMERICAN RELATIONS
ON THE BOOK BY GRZEGORZ ROSSOLIŃSKI-LIEBE
*POLNISCHE BÜRGERMEISTER UND DER HOLOCAUST***

Julian Spitostaw Kulski is a unique figure in the history of Poland and Warsaw – as numerous testimonies and documents prove. Any claim or even suggestion that he collaborated with the Germans in the extermination of the Jews or was himself an anti-Semite contradicts the historical truth.

The book *Polnische Bürgermeister und der Holocaust* (Polish Mayors and the Holocaust) by Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe, which was published in German at the beginning of August 2024, mercilessly attacks the late Julian Spitostaw Kulski and – indirectly – his surviving family members. The publication is currently being scrutinised by lawyers, who will then recommend concrete measures against the author and the publisher to the Kulski Foundation for Polish-American Relations. A preliminary analysis of the book's content shows that Grzegorz Rossoliński-Liebe labelled Julian Spitostaw Kulski as acting to the detriment of the Jewish community in the Polish capital. Julian Spitostaw Kulski became deputy mayor of Warsaw in 1935 and served under mayor Stefan Starzyński. Kulski was the acting mayor of Warsaw during the war (1939-1944). He exercised this function with the approval of the authorities of the Polish Underground State and the government-in-exile.

Kulski had Jewish roots – his great-grandfather was the Polish patriot Dow Ber Meisels, who was chief rabbi of Warsaw from 1856 until the January Uprising (he had previously been chief rabbi of Krakow from 1832 to 1846).

During the war, Kulski hid Jews in his own flat. In 2018, he was posthumously honoured with the From The Depths Mosberg Award by the From The Depths Foundation. He saved the lives of tens of thousands of Polish citizens of Jewish origin. Together with employees of Warsaw City Hall, Kulski issued Jews with false identity papers and certificates confirming their “employment” in the municipal office. He helped members of the resistance, fugitives wanted by the Germans and Jews fleeing the Warsaw Ghetto.

He received numerous honours and medals for his heroic deeds, including Silver Cross of the War Order of Virtuti Militari (1922) for his participation in the Polish-Bolshevik war; Commander's Cross of the Polonia Restituta Order (1929); Independence Cross (1931); Cross of Valour (four times, including for the defence of Warsaw in 1939); Gold Cross of Merit (twice: in 1939 and 1949); Medal for Bravery (three times); Grand Cross with Star of the Order of Merit awarded by the Order of Malta for work for their hospital in 1939.

In 2021, the monument to the mayors of Great Warsaw, Stefan Starzyński and Julian Spitostaw Kulski, was unveiled on the Vistula Boulevards in Warsaw. One of the streets in Warsaw's Mokotów district was also named after Julian S. Kulski (2004). In the capital, there is also a memorial plaque to Julian Spitostaw Kulski and the employees of Warsaw City Hall, who harboured thousands of people during the occupation, including Home Army soldiers and Polish Jews. The memorial plaque is located on the façade of the Jabłonowski Palace (the former City Hall building) at 16 Senatorska Street.

It should be emphasised that the author of the book does not back up his theses with sufficient scientific evidence and the conclusions formulated in the publication often do not emerge from the sources cited. The insinuation that Julian Spitostaw Kulski was an anti-Semite, which makes him partly responsible for the Holocaust and puts him almost on a par with the German occupiers, is the author's own opinion, which we consider unscientific and contradictory to the available findings of historians and scientists, both Polish and German.

A preliminary analysis of the content of the book shows that the author uses a number of abusive practises, including the following:

1. He flattens and simplifies complicated historical realities, e.g. by placing those mayors of Polish cities and towns who actually collaborated with the occupiers and were condemned for it after the war in a row with those who provided aid to the Jewish population and helped them as best they could and who are considered heroes in the light of historical facts.
2. He recognises every mayor who worked in an administration overseen by the German occupiers as a collaborator who shares responsibility for the Holocaust.
3. He recognises the pre-war membership of individual mayors in the OZON (Obóz Zjednoczenia Narodowego, Camp of National Unity) as one of the prerequisites for claiming the involvement of individual mayors in the extermination of the Jews. For example, he accuses the pre-war mayor of Warsaw Stefan Starzyński, who was shot by the Nazis in December 1939, of having “implemented the anti-Semitic policy of OZON”.
4. He makes an unfounded negative assessment of the municipal officials, labelling them collectively as “administrative criminals” who “participated in the processes of persecution and extermination”, ignoring the fact that the Polish administration in occupied Poland carried out the Germans' orders under threat of death.
5. He fails to back up his insinuations and assumptions with real and verified historical documents, while ignoring the available findings of historians that contradict his claims, which disqualifies his research from a scientific point of view.

The contents of the book are currently being thoroughly scrutinised in order to compile a detailed list of the abuses it contains in relation to the person of Julian Spitośław Kulski.



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