

Father Jerzy Popiełuszko

Źródło: <http://en.popieluszko.pl/xje/documents/trials/372,After-the-Torun-trial.html>
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After the “Toruń trial”

All the convicted officers of the Security Service appealed against the judgement of the Provincial Court in Toruń, claiming their punishments were “strikingly disproportionate” to their acts. The High Court rejected their arguments and upheld the judgement (22 April 1985). However, the following year (on 24 September 1986) the sentences were reduced for (Adam Pietruszka - from 25 to 15 years, Leszek Pękala - from 15 to 10 years and Waldemar Chmielewski - from 14 to 8 years). Again one year later (on 17 December 1987) the sentences were further reduced (Pietruszka - to 10 years, Pękala - to 6 years, Chmielewski - to four and a half years), and Grzegorz Piotrowski - from 25 to 15 years. Each time it was the Act for Special Proceedings against Perpetrators of Certain Crimes dated July 1986 applied, but in fact illegally, contrary to its provisions. The first one to come out of prison in May 1989 was Chmielewski, however, he was again imprisoned, pursuant to the judgment of the High Court of 23 December 1991; eventually he was freed two years later at the beginning of December 1993; Pękala was released in 1990;

Pietruszka □ in 1995; Piotrowski □ on 16 August 2001.

In October 1990 General Zenon Płatek (former director of 4th Division of the Ministry of the Interior) and General Władysław Ciastoń (the late Vice-Minister of the Interior and head of the Security Service) were imprisoned for some time, accused of directing the commission of a murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko. Both were acquitted on 19 August 1994 by the Provincial Court in Warsaw. However, the Court of Appeal quashed the judgements and in 1996 returned the case to this court (to the Regional Court after the reform of the court system). The proceedings were instituted again on 23 February 1998, however, the court returned the case files to the prosecutor's office. The indictment was submitted to the court again at the end of the year. In January 2000 proceedings against General Płatek were stayed (due to bad health of the accused) and the proceedings against General Ciastoń commenced on 30 October. The latter accused was acquitted again in December 2002.

On 5 February 2002 the Institute of National Remembrance - IPN (named prosecutor Andrzej Witkowski from the local commission in Lublin, who was earlier in 1991 excluded from the case) started its own investigation into this matter. It aim to reveal the existence of a "criminal gang" in the Ministry of the Interior of Polish People's Republic, operating in 1956-1989. A notice from October 2003 read as follows: "First direction of procedural acts is a case of kidnapping and murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko on 19 October

1984, later his body was recovered on 30 October 1984 from water at the dam on the Vistula River in Włocławek. One basic version is a hypothesis that - if the priest died on the night of 19/20 October 1984 - his body may have been thrown into the river late on 25 October 1984. According to the second version, Father J[erzy] Popiełuszko was murdered on 25 October 1984 and his body was thrown into the river on the same day late at night. These versions were based on results of the analysis of case files of the Provincial Court in Toruń, file no. II K 53/84, together with the results of numerous wide ranging procedural acts concerning this matter, including testimonies of witnesses and forensic medical opinion issued by court appointed experts. At the same time procedural acts are carried out to charge persons occupying positions in the party and government structures higher than Generals Władysław Ciastoń and Zenon Płatek with direction from the commission for the murder of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko." In July 2004 the Minister of the Interior handed over the materials from investigation carried out by Witkowski at the beginning of the 90s to IPN. In October 2004 after disclosing surprising information on the former Ministry of the Interior Mirosław Milewski, actions were taken to define the political responsibility for death of Father Jerzy Popiełuszko, however, in the same month prosecutor Witkowski was excluded from investigation, while Milewski died in February 2008.

The investigation was taken over by a local IPN commission in Katowice. In March 2006 the materials from Lublin investigation (carried out

from 2002 to 2004) were submitted to the prosecutor's office in Toruń, and at the same time it was decided they were insufficient to resume the proceedings. This opinion was upheld by the National Public Prosecutor's Office.

At present the investigation is carried out by the local commission in Warsaw (file no. S 17/06/Zk) and according to the notice: "Evidence collected in these cases justifies suspicions that these crimes might have been committed by Security Service officers. Information and materials that have recently been disclosed constitute a legal basis for carrying out new investigation traces or instituting and resuming proceedings pending in the past, which were usually discontinued by failure to identify perpetrators."