

## **MEMORIAL RESOLUTION**

### **WITOLD S. SWORAKOWSKI (1903 – 1979)**

Witold S. Sworakowski, a Professor Emeritus at Stanford University and long-time Associate Director of the Hoover Institution, died of cancer on Monday, January 15, 1979, at the Stanford University Hospital. A private family Mass was celebrated on Friday, January 19, 1979, at St. Anne's Chapel in Palo Alto.

Witold S. Sworakowski was born in 1903 in Romania of Polish parentage, and was educated in Austria, Romania, and Poland. He obtained an advanced degree in international law and diplomatic history from the Academy of Political Science in Warsaw in 1933. After research work in the Institute for National Affairs in Warsaw, he joined the Polish foreign service in 1933. His doctoral dissertation in political science was approved in 1939, but the invasion of Poland made his final examination impossible. Diplomatic assignments took him to Latvia, Lithuania, France, and the United States. After the Yalta conference gave recognition to the communist-dominated government of Poland, he resigned his post as Polish Vice-Consul in Chicago. He received political asylum in this country and in 1953 obtained American citizenship.

It is in 1947 that Sworakowski's long and fruitful association with the Hoover Institution began. That year he received a Slavic research fellowship under the Rockefeller Foundation Grant, which brought him to Stanford. His genuine interest in scholarly research, together with exceptional linguistic abilities, was instrumental in the decision of the Hoover Institution to keep him permanently and to offer him various positions of ever-increasing responsibilities. Between 1947 and 1949, he was curator of Hoover's Polish collection, and between 1949 and 1953 he added to this the post of curator of the West European collections. In 1952, he was appointed curator of all East European collections at the Hoover Library, and he exercised that function until 1963. His competence and hard work brought him also into the higher administrative ranks of the Hoover Institution. Between 1956 and 1965, he was assistant director, and later, until his retirement in 1969, an associate director in charge of library operations. Even after his retirement, he continued to serve as consultant to the director of the Hoover Institution.

Besides his curatorial and administrative duties at the Hoover Institution, Sworakowski was appointed in 1952 an Assistant Professor of History at the University, advancing to full professorial rank before retiring.

Probably the most important contribution of Witold S. Sworakowski was in the field of acquisition of library and archival materials. He was responsible for doubling the number of volumes in the Hoover Library, and he spared no effort to gather published and unpublished documentation for the archives and the library. He was, indeed, a natural collector. The alertness, discrimination, enthusiasm, and skill which he brought to the Institution's collection efforts have greatly facilitated scholarly research on historical studies, as well as on current problems. His endeavors put him in the same category as the Hoover Library's great pioneers, collectors, and scholars, such as Professors E.D. Adams, Frank A. Golder, and Ralph H. Lutz. To give but two

examples: Sworakowski was instrumental in obtaining the renowned collection of Boris Nicolaevsky which contained more than 20,000 books and pamphlets, plus several hundred units of archival units of Russian revolutionary figures; he also negotiated with the State Department for authorization to microfilm the archives of the Nazi party, then housed in the Document Center in Berlin.

Sworakowski was also a scholar and bibliographer. In addition to helping others, Stanford students and visiting scholars, with their research, he assiduously pursued his own work in the field of Slavic affairs and the international Communist movement. He was the author of five books and over 25 articles in scholarly journals. He toiled for years to complete a world-wide known reference work entitled *The Communist International and its Front Organizations*, the first annotated bibliography on the Comintern. He edited, also, a pioneering and most useful work *World Communism: Handbook, 1918 - 1965*. He initiated, co-directed, and hosted a *KQED-TV* documentary on *The Red Myth: Communism from Marx to Kruschev*, which was shown on more than 100 commercial television stations in the United States during the period 1960-1963. When he passed away he was working on a history of the Institution he served so well.

There were many other aspects of Sworakowski's activities that merit a brief mention. In 1967 he became co-founder of the consortium of western universities and colleges, which initiated inter-library cooperation. On his retirement in 1969, the Hoover Institution honored him by establishing a special fund to support the Witold S. Sworakowski Collection on Poland in the Institution's Library. Even after his retirement he continued to serve as a consultant for the acquisition of special collections and archives and as a member of the editorial board of the *Russian Review*.

Sworakowski devoted much time to helping his fellow men. He assisted innumerable Polish refugees, as well as escapees from other countries that had come under communist control. A week before his death, he was made an honorary member of the Polish-American National Congress. He was also a member of the Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences and served as president of the Captive Nations Committee for Northern California. He spoke ten languages - five fluently - and had a passion for fishing, stamp collecting, and the game of chess. He was fiercely loyal and dedicated to his work. He was a devoted colleague, and a warm personal friend to all who knew him well.

Professor Sworakowski had lived at 724 Esplanada Way, Stanford, since 1955. He is survived by his widow, Helena Sworakowski, his son and daughter-in-law, Michael and Agnieszka Sworakowski, and two granddaughters, Dana and Renata.

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