

# NOTES ON THE SENATE



SENATE  
OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF POLAND

## *The Sejm Library*

CHANCELLERY OF THE SENATE  
6, WIEJSKA STR. | 00-902 WARSAW  
TEL. 48 22 694 90 34 | FAX 48 22 694 93 06  
senat@nw.senat.gov.pl  
www.senat.gov.pl

**THE SEJM LIBRARY IS A SCIENTIFIC LIBRARY.** Its main purpose is to serve the needs of the Sejm and the Senate, parliamentary clubs, deputies and senators, parliamentary research services as well as the needs of other employees of the Chancelleries of the Sejm and Senate. The Sejm Library is also open to scientists and to all those who are interested in Parliament-related issues. **THE SEJM LIBRARY IS THE CENTRAL LEGISLATIVE LIBRARY** in the Polish library system. It is an organisational unit of the Chancellery of the Sejm. The Library also comprises the Sejm Archives and the Museum Exhibits Department.

The establishment of the Sejm Library is connected with the restoration of Poland's independence in 1918 and the 1919 parliamentary elections. The Sejm Library was set up at the end of 1919 and, after many organisational changes, it came to incorporate the Sejm Library and the archives of the Sejm and the Senate.

By 1939, the library's collection consisted of 78 thousand volumes, including materials of the Sejm and the Senate, official documents, as well as books and journals on law and social, economic and historical sciences. In September 1939, a fire destroyed a part of the collection. The remaining 62 thousand were taken by the Germans to Berlin where they disappeared in circumstances that have never been explained. Only a small part of the collection, hidden before the end of the war in Castle Houska in Czechoslovakia, returned to Poland.

The reading room of the Sejm Library (photo by J. Zawadzki)



## The Sejm Library



(Photo by M. Józefaciuk)

**AFTER THE WAR**, as a library of the then single-chamber Parliament, it was named the “Sejm Library”. It had to rebuild its collections almost from scratch. **THE LIBRARY’S COLLECTION** (with over 500 thousand volumes) consists of two separate parts; they differ in terms of their origin, nature and location. The first part is the main collection of the Sejm Library. It consists of materials related to the primary role of the Sejm Library as a parliamentary library, which have been gathered since the very beginnings of its existence. The core of the second part is the book collection of the former Archives of the Polish Left, incorporated into the Sejm Library in 1991 (previously stored in the Central Archive of the Central Committee of the Polish United Workers’ Party “PZPR”). It comprises 145 thousand volumes and is stored and made available to the public at the Social History Collection Department of the Sejm Library.

**THE SEJM ARCHIVES** were established as a separate State archive in 1991. Following the reorganisation of the Sejm Chancellery in 1993, they were incorporated into the Sejm Library as one of its Departments. The Sejm Archives comprise archival documents generated in the course of the work of the Sejm and its bodies, i.e. minutes of sittings of: the Sejm, Presidium of the Sejm, Sejm committees and sub-committees, records of issues agreed by the Council of Seniors, documentation of acts and resolutions of the Sejm, interpellations and questions of deputies, parliamentary forms, stenographic records of the Sejm sittings etc., as well as audio and video recordings of sittings of the Sejm and its Committees. Archival documents produced by parliamentary clubs and deputies’ groups, deputies’ offices and teams as well as by the Polish Group of the Interparliamentary Union are treated as deposits. The Archives also function as an institutional archive of the Sejm Chancellery.

The Sejm Archives are also tasked with collecting and editing archival sources on the history of the Polish parliamentary system. Museum exhibits associated with that history have been collected systematically since 1985, when the Presidium of the Sejm Presidium resolved to establish the Polish Sejm Museum. The collection of the Archives include objects of art (paintings, graphics, drawings, posters), documents (old printed documents, manuscripts, election leaflets, etc.), coinage depicting the Polish parliamentary history from the 15th century onwards, as well as a rich collection of photographs taken between the two Wars and in the post-war period. These items are used to prepare virtual exhibitions on different topics and other web content.

Compiled on the basis of information posted on the website: [www.sejm.gov.pl](http://www.sejm.gov.pl), 2012



(Photo by M. Józefaciuk)