

Bronisław Kawęcki has died. A Solidarity activist and witness to the history of Radom June '76 has passed away

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Bronisław Kawęcki has died — an activist of the anti-communist opposition, linked with Solidarity in Radom and for years committed to preserving the memory of the workers' protest of June 1976. He died on Saturday, 29 August 2026, aged 72. News of his death was given by his daughter.

Bronisław Kawęcki belonged to those whose lives are inseparably bound up with the struggle for freedom under the Polish People's Republic. His activity included both work in the structures of NSZZ "Solidarność" and later underground activity after the introduction of martial law.

A special place in his work was occupied by the memory of the events of Radom June 1976. He was chairman of the Social Committee for the Construction of the Monument to the Workers' Protest of June 1976, caring for the remembrance of the workers who protested against the policies of the authorities of the time.

Involved in Solidarity in Radom

In 1980–1981 Bronisław Kawęcki was active in NSZZ "Solidarność" of the Radom Land. In May 1981 he was entrusted with the chairmanship of the Committee for the Commemoration of the 5th Anniversary of the Workers' Protest "June '76".

In the autumn of the same year he took part as a delegate in the First National Congress of Delegates of NSZZ "Solidarność" in Gdańsk — one of the most important events in the history of the emerging independent trade-union movement.

His activity was brutally interrupted by the introduction of martial law.

On 13 December 1981 Bronisław Kawęcki was interned. He was held, among other places, in Radom, at the prison hospital in Łódź and at the Isolation Centre in Kielce.

During internment he did not abandon his stance. He was among those involved in the protest of internees at the Kielce centre. He also took part in talks with

representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross from Geneva, who visited the Remand Centre in Kielce in March 1982.

He regained his freedom on 7 July 1982.

After internment he did not give up

Regaining freedom did not mean the end of his opposition activity. Kawęcki continued it in underground structures operating in the then Radom voivodeship.

He was involved in creating and distributing independent publications, including *Wolny Robotnik*. He also took part in organising demonstrations and events linked with underground Solidarity.

That activity meant constant pressure from the state apparatus. In 1983–1989 Bronisław Kawęcki was repeatedly detained and summoned for warning interviews.

Towards the end of the 1980s, as the communist system in Poland was clearly collapsing, he again worked in open trade-union structures. From October 1988 to February 1989 he was a member of the Inter-Enterprise Regional Commission of NSZZ “Solidarność” of the Radom Land.

He cared for the memory of Radom June

One of the most important areas of Bronisław Kawęcki’s work was preserving the memory of the events of June 1976.

The workers’ protest in Radom became one of the symbols of social resistance to the authorities of the Polish People’s Republic. The brutal repression of its participants entered the recent history of Poland for good.

For years Kawęcki strove to ensure that the memory of the participants of the protest and of those who were repressed would not be forgotten.

His knowledge and experience were also used in films devoted to the history of Radom and opposition activity.

He was a consultant and assistant director on Wojciech Maciejewski’s productions. One of them was *A City under Sentence*, telling the story of Radom June 1976. The other was *And the Body Shall Quietly Rest in the Grave*, devoted to the life and work of Father Roman Kotlarz.

Honoured for his work for a free Poland

For his long years of activity Bronisław Kawęcki was honoured with important state decorations. In 2018 he received the Officer's Cross of the Order of Polonia Restituta. The decoration was presented during the commemorations of Radom June '76.

In the same year he was also awarded the Cross of Freedom and Solidarity, given to those who contributed to Poland's recovery of independence and sovereignty and to the defence of human rights under the Polish People's Republic.

It was a state recognition of a man who for a large part of his life was engaged in the struggle for freedom and in preserving the memory of those who opposed communist rule.

The last years of his life

In 2021 Bronisław Kawęcki suffered a serious stroke. Five years later, on 29 August 2026, he died at the age of 72.

His funeral was planned for Saturday, 5 September 2026. The ceremonies were to begin at 11:00 a.m. in the Collegiate Church of St John the Baptist in Radom.

The passing of Bronisław Kawęcki is a loss not only for his family and for the Solidarity community in Radom. A man has gone who was both a participant in and a witness to the events that helped shape Poland's path to democracy.