

Kaminski Uncovered: a profile of Michal Kaminski's extremist past

Michal Kaminski, a Polish MEP with extremist links, was imposed as candidate for Vice-President of the European Parliament in July 2009 by Timothy Kirkhope, Tory MEP leader. This disastrous choice was part of a deal which would have seen Kirkhope become leader of the David Cameron's already controversial new ECR group without an election. Conservative rules of procedure were ignored.

Edward McMillan-Scott (r) stood against Michal Kaminski and won by 244 votes to 174. Tory MEPs were assured that the backgrounds of their new allies had been scrutinised. This scrutiny has never been published: the two staffers who did it sought alternative jobs rather than work for the ECR. **This document is a response to the 10-page defence of Kaminski produced by the Conservative HQ as part of its bizarre media strategy.**



This so far unpublished political profile is based on web research by Edward McMillan-Scott and largely completed by July 14 2009, sometimes using Google Translate from Polish. [It now includes Kaminski's "denials" and other reactions in red.](#)

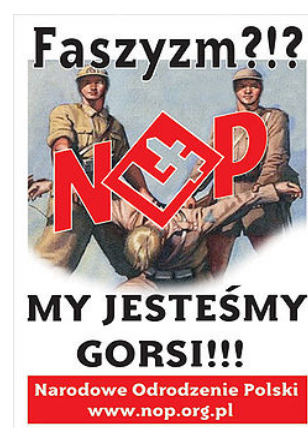


Michal Kaminski (r) was born on 28 March 1972 in Warsaw. He went to the University of Warsaw but did not complete his studies after he became involved in extremist politics¹. After



some regional journalism he has been a national MP and MEP and is widely known as spin-doctor for Polish President Kaczynski and his twin brother (l). He is now a 'Friend of Israel' - but some ask 'Is he a friend of the Jews?'

From 1989-1991 Kaminski was a member of the neo-fascist organisation National Revival of Poland (NOP). This movement is anti-Semitic, homophobic and xenophobic. NOP's manifesto states that **"Jews will be removed from Poland, and their possessions will be confiscated"** – a statement taken directly from Hitler's *Mein Kampf*.



¹ <http://wyborcza.pl/1,75478,2973805.html>

The official greeting is the Nazi salute.² NOP is part of Roberto Fiore's European National Front. The NOP poster (r) states **"Fascism?!? We're worse!!!"**

On June 25, the day after Edward McMillan-Scott – now Vice-President for democracy and human rights - warned the inaugural meeting of the ECR group about extremist links, **Kaminski's Wikipedia page was edited to remove reference to his membership of NOP.**

Kaminski claims that he was in NOP 'as a schoolboy' before the fall of communism in 1989, **but an NOP spokesman told the Daily Telegraph he was in it from 17 - 20 years of age, his formative political years: "He was in the party from about 1989 to 1991"** said Marek Wojciechowski³. McMillan-Scott has confirmed this statement.

Kaminski denies that the NOP was a fascist party when he was a member **"It wasn't the radical organization that it is today, I didn't meet any skinheads. We were rather a discussion group"**⁴. However, a former member of the NOP tells the interviewer otherwise **"NOP was always an extreme right, fascist organization. Most of them were always skinheads."**⁵

Kaminski had several articles published in NOP publications.⁶ NOP is a member of the neo-Nazi International Third Position (ITP) and its publications include *The Myth of the Holocaust* (1997), consisting of translations from the most infamous Western Holocaust deniers. David Irving is a regular contributor to NOP newsletters.

Kaminski was featured on the home page of National Revival of Poland with the commentary that he was defeated as Vice-President of the European Parliament on the grounds of his past membership of NOP **"and so another member who spoke against his ideals/beliefs was defeated (...)** which just goes to show that it is better to be courageous than foolish and cowardly"⁷

1993

Kaminski was the spokesman of the right-wing Catholic Electoral Committee **"Fatherland"**.⁸ He handed out pamphlets at Warsaw's main train station denouncing **immigrants from the east bringing "typhus,**

² <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/3096/>

³ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/poland/5837378/Tory-MEPs-led-by-Pole-with-extremist-past.html>

⁴ <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/20816/exclusive-michal-kaminski-im-no-antisemite>

⁵ <http://wyborcza.pl/1,75478,2973805.html>

⁶ <http://www.eszkola.pl/baza-danych/czytaj/679>

⁷ <http://www.nop.org.pl/>

⁸ <http://ludzie.wprost.pl/sylwetka/Michal-Kaminski/>

malaria and other diseases" to Poland. He now says this was not his idea⁹ and "that was then the policy" of Fatherland.¹⁰

1999

Kaminski travelled to London with other Polish right-wingers to visit General Augusto Pinochet, the Chilean dictator who was being detained in the British capital. "This was the most important meeting of my whole life," he told the BBC at the time. He now admits this was a "mistake."¹¹

2000



Kaminski gave a TV interview in which he refers to homosexuals as "*pedaly*", literally pedals which is the near equivalent of "faggots" but also implies paedophilia (see NOP 'boy-bangers' logo, left).

When the interviewer said it was an offensive term he repeats it: 'What should I say - they are *pedaly*'.¹²

In July 2009 the BBC ask if he is homophobic and he answers "I'm not homophobic, it is absolutely not true and you can please quote me if I said anything homophobic in my past".¹³ The BBC then play the Polish TV clip and Kaminski shifts his ground (to view click [here](#)): "I said I would never use these words again....it was a word used commonly by Polish politicians about homosexuals. Since I discovered that this word was offensive in the eyes of homosexuals, I never used it again."¹⁴



Robert Biedron, a board member of Poland's Campaign Against Homophobia told the BBC, "Michael Kaminski has become a symbol of homophobia in Poland. As an MEP he constantly voted against resolutions that fight homophobia in Europe."¹⁵

2000



Kaminski was a co-founder of the Christian-National Union (ZChN), described by The Times as "*a hard-line Catholic organisation*"¹⁶

In July 2000, Kaminski caused a scandal after his public declaration of support for

⁹ <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/poland/091120/poland-michal-kaminski>

¹⁰ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newspnight/8374686.stm>

¹¹ <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/20816/exclusive-michal-kaminski-im-no-antisemite>

¹² http://www.thefirstpost.co.uk/51802_news-comment_news-politics_david-camerons-damaging-association-allies-with-a-polish-extremist-barack-obama_2

¹³ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qt3iaTwVirw>

¹⁴ <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/20816/exclusive-michal-kaminski-im-no-antisemite>

¹⁵ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/8154670.stm>

¹⁶ <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/europe/article6715542.ece>

the infamous pre-war slogan **“Poland for Poles,”** which was traditionally directed against Jews and invokes memories of the anti-Semitic violence of the 1920's and 1930's in Poland.^{17 18} "I want us to have the courage to say, 'We want Poland for the Poles'". Recently he said he did not mean it racially, and that he was just campaigning against corruption.¹⁹

According to the magazine Warsaw Voice, ZChN's politicians **“had contacts with Western neo-Nazis”**.²⁰

As the former British Ambassador and human rights activist Craig Murray says "I knew Kaminski slightly when he was a young political activist in the late 1990s", he continues **“Kaminski certainly was anti-Semitic.”**²¹

2001 – THE JEDWABNE SAGA

Kaminski organised opposition in 2001 to a national apology by then Polish president Aleksander Kwasniewski (right) for the infamous Jedwabne massacre in 1941 in which several hundred Polish Jews were herded by their neighbours into a barn and burnt to death.²²



Footage of a television news bulletin from 5 March 2001 shows Kaminski, then Jedwabne's MP, reacting to news about the apology: **“I think that Mr President can apologise but for other things. He should withhold apologies for Jedwabne.”**

Kaminski then gave an interview to the right-wing journal *Nasza Polska* in which he said: **“Maybe it is an attempt to quieten the consciences of those Jews who did terrible harm to Poland during the Soviet occupation?”**²³

‘I am prepared to say the word 'sorry' but only on two conditions. First I have to know what I am saying sorry for. Secondly I can do it if I know for sure that someone from the Jewish side apologises for what Jews were doing under Soviet occupation from 1939 to 1941, for the mass collaboration of Jewish people with Soviet occupiers and for fighting against Polish partisans in that area. And finally, for murdering Poles.’²⁴

¹⁷ <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2005/poland.htm>

¹⁸ <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/20816/exclusive-michal-kaminski-im-no-antisemite>

¹⁹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8374686.stm>

²⁰ <http://www.warsawvoice.pl/view/3096/>

²¹ http://www.craigmurray.org.uk/archives/2009/10/michal_kaminski.html

²² <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2009/jul/29/david-ferguson-european-parliament-conservatives>

²³ <http://www.globalpost.com/dispatch/poland/091120/poland-michal-kaminski>

²⁴ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8374686.stm>



< The Jedwabne massacre was the basis for the play 'Our Class' which ran for six months until January at the National Theatre.²⁵

When Kaminski was contacted recently by Observer reporter Toby Helm (who had covered the 2001 commemoration) to get his side of the story about Jedwabne he tried to cover his tracks:

"I never tried to stop the commemoration, that is not true," he said. He had always been in favour, he insisted. But when asked if he had, as a supporter of the apology and as the local MP, attended the event in Jedwabne to say sorry, led by his country's president, he was completely thrown. "Actually no, no. I was out of the country at that time," he said at first.

So he did not attend an event of international importance in his own constituency town, even though he supported it? "I am sorry I don't remember," he then said. "Maybe I was there for a few minutes... I do not remember. I can't remember where I was at that time."



Kaminski also denied ever having conducted the interview with *Nasza Polska* or telling the paper – which is known for carrying far-right material – that the Poles should not apologise until the Jews apologised to them. "I never said it. It is absolutely not true," he said.

To discover if this was correct, we contacted the editor-in-chief of *Nasza Polska*, Piotr Jakucki, who issued a statement confirming that the interview had been conducted with Kaminski by the paper's Kaja Bogomilska and that the article had been published on 20 March 2001. Jakucki emailed us a hard copy.²⁶

The Polish author Anna Bikont told a BBC *Newsnight* special 'Digging up the truth about Michal Kaminski' (to view click [here](#)) that "Kaminski came to the place where an incredible crime was committed," she said, "and he told not about the women, children, old people who died in this horrible manner, but he told about Jews who collaborated with Soviets and who killed Poles. It's not important what you have in your soul, but how you act, and he acted at this time like an anti-Semitic person... Maybe he did it only because he wanted to



²⁵ <http://www.nationaltheatre.org.uk/?lid=49663&dsp=discover1>

²⁶ <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2009/oct/11/michal-kaminski-europe-conservatives>

have votes from Jedwabne, but also it's not a good recommendation for a politician to do things only for votes."

Jan Skrodzki, a witness to the Jedwabne massacre, told the same programme "Because of his views he should not be in the European Parliament because those are sick views".²⁷



Michael Schudrich, the Chief Rabbi of Poland, said: "It is clear that Mr Kaminski was a member of NOP, a group that is openly far right and neo-Nazi. Anyone who would want to align himself with a person who was an active member of NOP and the Committee to Defend the Good Name of Jedwabne (which was established to deny historical facts of the massacre at Jedwabne) needs to understand with what and by whom he is being represented²⁸. Concerning Kaminski's comments on Jedwabne, I completely disagree with his stance".²⁹

Regarding Kaminski's presence in the European Parliament Rabbi Barry Marcus of the Central London Synagogue stated "Any politician of any political party should have the moral courage to clearly distance themselves from those who espouse and promote anti-Semitism"; the European Jewish Congress said: "We remain extremely vigilant. We have communicated this to the president of the EPP and the new elected parliament president [Jerzy Buzek, the former Polish prime minister]".³⁰

2001

Kaminski created a new political formation known as the Right Alliance, which merged with the Kaczyński brothers' Law and Justice Party (PiS).³¹ Before the 2009 European Elections, the PiS absorbed two ultra-extreme groups, the Self-Defence League and the League of Polish Families, one of whose MPs, Ryszard Bender has said "Auschwitz was not a death camp, it was a labour camp," [nearly one million Jews perished at Auschwitz].³²

2008

An anti-communist "exhibition" held in Warsaw at the last minute withdrew the inclusion of the NOP stand, possibly because it included a direct reference to Kamiński: "From the children of the NOP we can list

²⁷ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8374686.stm>

²⁸ <http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/public-accounts/2009/10/kaminski-160-rabbi-jewish-tory>

²⁹ http://news.bbc.co.uk/today/hi/today/newsid_8333000/8333370.stm

³⁰ http://www.eurojewcong.org/ejc/news.php?id_article=4283

³¹ <http://ludzie.wprost.pl/sylwetka/Michal-Kaminski/>

³² <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/jan/26/conservatives-europe-antisemitism-poland>

Michał Kamiński, presently a minister in the office of the President and a former young activist in Warsaw." According to the same report, the sudden removal of the NOP's stand was 'influenced by the intervention of a certain minister from the office of the President'³³. Kamiński was working in the President's office at the time.

2009

Kamiński gives an interview about his candidacy as an MEP saying he "wants to reclaim Poland's debt from the Allies". He remarked in May to *Gazeta Wyborcza*: "Today, when a European taxpayer asks: 'How did this Poland come to be?' it is worth reminding him: 'your grandpa, my dear Frenchman, fought in WW2 arm in arm with a Pole for the freedom of all of Europe. You got lucky and it worked out: we were betrayed by the Allies.'³⁴

2009

Kamiński denies wearing the Chrobry Sword, the symbol of the NOP and originally the emblem of the pre-war extreme right wing National Democracy. In 2000 Kamiński said "I'm not ashamed of National Democracy. It's my tradition. In my lapel I wear the Chrobry Sword... I feel myself a Pole and a Catholic, and I'm proud of that."³⁵ However, he recently told the *Jewish Chronicle*: "No, I never wear it. I don't even know which symbol you are referring to." But Kamiński later issued a clarification, where he admitted he had worn the badge. He said: "I did wear the sword... there are similarities with how the BNP in Britain has taken the Union Jack as their symbol. When I felt the symbol started having this meaning I stopped wearing it and I asked the rest of my party to stop too."³⁶



³³ http://www.nop.org.pl/?artykul_id=786

³⁴ http://warszawa.gazeta.pl/warszawa/1,34889,6658767,Eurorealista_Michal_Kaminski_chce_odebrac_dlug.html

³⁵ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8374686.stm>

³⁶ <http://www.thejc.com/news/world-news/20872/kaminski-admits-wearing-fascist-symbol>