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**Kontrowersje wokół roli tzw. polskiego procesu w amerykańskim programie
kauczuku syntetycznego w latach 1942-1945**

**Controversies over the role of the “Polish formula” in the American synthetic
rubber programme of 1942-1945**

SUMMARY

The author presents the history of the so-called “Polish formula” for producing synthetic rubber and describes the role that it played in the American synthetic rubber program of 1942-1945. The paper is based on an analysis of U.S. Senate documents and reports from the period of World War II that deal with the issue, as well as of American publications from the 1940s until the present day. The Polish formula for producing synthetic rubber was developed in the mid-1930s at the National Chemical Institute in Warsaw by a team headed by Waclaw Szukiewicz, Chem. Eng. At that time, Poland was the third country in the world to have introduced the production of synthetic rubber on an industrial scale, with ethyl alcohol being used as the material for the synthesis. A research program aimed at launching production of synthetic rubber was started in the USA, when – after the outbreak of World War II – the country found itself cut off from supplies of natural rubber. The Polish formula was one of the several options taken into account. The idea of using that method was actively supported in the U.S. Senate by the farming lobby. The Senate’s original decision to adopt ways of producing synthetic rubber using alcohol-based methods (including the method devised by Szukiewicz), and thus to base the American rubber industry on renewable agricultural resources, was vetoed by the President, who acted on pressure from the oil lobby. A special Senate committee recommended instead that methods basing on oil products be used for the synthesis of rubber. This change in approach was accompanied by a campaign of disparaging the value and importance of methods based on alcohol, including the Polish method. The effects of the campaign can still be seen in publications that demean not only the Polish formula, but also its author. The current paper is an attempt to give an objective account of the controversies surrounding the Polish formula and the role that it really played in the American synthetic rubber program.

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