

Alberts Kviesis

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Alberts Kviesis was born on 22 December 1881 in Kalnamuiža (Tērvete) small rural district. He obtained his first education at home with his parents. He further studied at Jelgava Grammar School. In 1902, he entered the Faculty of Law at the University of Tartu, which he graduated from in 1907. After the graduation, he worked in Jelgava practicing as an attorney. He took an active part in the public life of Latvia. He was Acting Chief of the Jelgava Latvian Society and a member of the Red Cross Latvian Committee in Jelgava.

On 25 April 1917, he attended the Kurzeme local assembly in Tartu, where he was elected at the Provisional Land Council of Kurzeme. On 28 May 1917, the Congress of Latvian Lawyers in Tartu elected A.Kviesis to the Bureau of Latvian Lawyers in Tartu, where he took part in the discussion of Latvian nation rights for self-determination and the new judicial system.

On 17 November 1918, A.Kviesis was among the delegates of the People's Council of Latvia and was elected as the Vice-Chairman of Justice of the People's Council chaired by Jānis Čakste. Over the first years of Latvia's independence, he actively worked over the development of the legal system. On 23 July 1919, A.Kviesis was elected as a member of the Judicial Panel and was elected as the Chief Justice on 26 March 1923. In 1927, A.Kviesis ran for the presidency, but Gustavs Zemgals was elected to the President of Latvia.

In 1930, he became the President of Latvia and was re-elected in 1933. According to the coup organized by the Prime Minister Kārlis Ulmanis on 15 May 1934, A.Kviesis retained at his post until the end of his mandate (until 1936). After the coup, the President of Latvia lost the real power.

Having resigned from the office as the President of Latvia, A.Kviesis resumed his practice of law. On 14 June 1941, having prior known already about the expected deportation, Kviesis spent hiding in a distant forest-guard house in Tērvete small rural district. On the fall of 1941, Kviesis continued his practice of law. Drekslers, the German general commissar in Latvia appointed A.Kviesis to the Nazis established collaborationist Latvian self-government as Director General of Justice in March 1943. Kviesis resigned due to the heart disease a year later.

A.Kviesis died on boards a ship "Monte Rosa" on 9 August 1944, when it just left the port of Riga to sail to Germany. He was buried at Meža Cemetery in Riga. Throughout the period of his presidency, A.Kviesis neither submitted any own developed bill to the Saeima, nor sent back any bill for reconsideration, nor convened any meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers in Riga Castle.

<https://www.president.lv/en/alberts-kviesis>

