

Associated Press articles in the *Global Edition of the New York Times* – *International Herald Tribune*

Polish PM names former dissident Justice Minister

WARSAW, Poland: Poland's prime minister has named former communist-era dissident Andrzej Czumak as the country's new justice minister.

The 70-year-old Czumak will replace Zbigniew Cwiakalski, who resigned this week following an uproar after the apparent suicide of a man imprisoned for kidnapping and murder.

Czumak said Thursday it was "a great honor and responsibility" to lead the Justice Ministry.

He was jailed by Poland's Soviet-backed regime in the 1970s and again during martial law in the early 1980s for his anti-communist activities.

Czumak has been a lawmaker from Prime Minister Donald Tusk's pro-business Civic Platform party since 2006.

Poland's president is expected to confirm Czumak's nomination. □

Polish Parliament asks president to sign EU treaty

WARSAW, Poland: Poland's Parliament is calling on the country's president to sign the stalled European Union treaty intended to streamline the operations of the 27-country organization.

Parliament approved the EU's so-called Lisbon Treaty in April but President Lech Kaczyński has not yet signed it. Kaczyński had promised to sign it but delayed after Ireland rejected the document in a referendum last year.

The lower house of Parliament voted 256-147 Friday in favor of a resolution calling on Kaczyński to consider that both chambers voted in favor of the treaty.

Kaczyński has said he will not block the treaty. But he says he will only sign it if Irish voters reverse course and pass it in another referendum. □

Poland avoiding worst of economic crisis

An Associated Press article in the January 15, 2009 issue of the *washingtonpost.com* website, Poland's Finance Minister Jacek Rostowski said Thursday that the country has managed so far to avoid the worst fallout from the global economic crisis that has driven some other European neighbors into recession.

Mr. Rostowski cited the health of Poland's banking sector as a key factor, noting that no Polish banks have yet failed and that the government has not been forced to bail out financial institutions.

"We have a healthy and strong banking sector," Rostowski told reporters in Warsaw. "Unlike Western countries, Poland has avoided the direct effects of the financial crisis."

The economy of this Eastern European country, the largest ex-communist state to join the European Union in recent years, grew at a quick pace of about 5 percent last year.

But some effects of the economic crisis already have been felt. The currency, the zloty, slumped against the dollar and euro in past months, while industrial production fell sharply in late 2008. Also, the unemployment rate rose to 9.1 percent in November, up 0.3 percentage points from October after five years of steady declines.

Economists predict growth will fall to around 2 percent in 2009. A key vulnerability lies in the fact that Poland exports heavily to Germany and other countries in Western Europe that already have fallen into recessions. □

Polish-born doctor seeks to replace Emanuel



On December 4, 2008, Polish-born Victor Forys, M.D., raised on the Northwest Side of Chicago, announced his candidacy for the congressional seat vacated by Rahm Emanuel. He calls his campaign a "Prescription for Reform." If elected, he would be the first Polish immigrant elected to Congress in the last 75 years. Emanuel left Congress to become President Elect Obama's Chief of Staff.

Forys is a 15-year radio and television commentator in the Chicago Polish media with what he says is the largest medical practice in Chicago catering to Polish immigrants.

Emanuel's 5th Congressional District has the Highest Polish Population in the United States and has been without Polish Representation since Dan Rostenkowski left Congress. Over 20% of the District is made up of Polish immigrants and people of Polish descent. Nearly 50% of the District is made up of immigrants of various ethnicities.

Forys plans to announce his "Prescription for Reform" on issues of immigration reform, healthcare reform and stimulating job creation. As a medical doctor, small business owner and immigrant, Forys knows firsthand more than most of those who have been promoting themselves in recent weeks for the office.

"The last thing the U.S. Congress needs is another professional politician from Springfield or Cook County," said Dr. Forys. "We need more outsiders in Congress who are professionals with diverse backgrounds and broad, varied experiences. I bring that and far more to the table as voters who get to know me will see."

Forys moved with his parents from Poland to the United States when he was four years old and grew up on the Northwest Side of Chicago in Humboldt Park, attending Lane Technical High School where Dr. Forys excelled as a soccer player. His father worked at Klein Tools in Skokie, where he organized a labor union and served as its first secretary-treasurer.

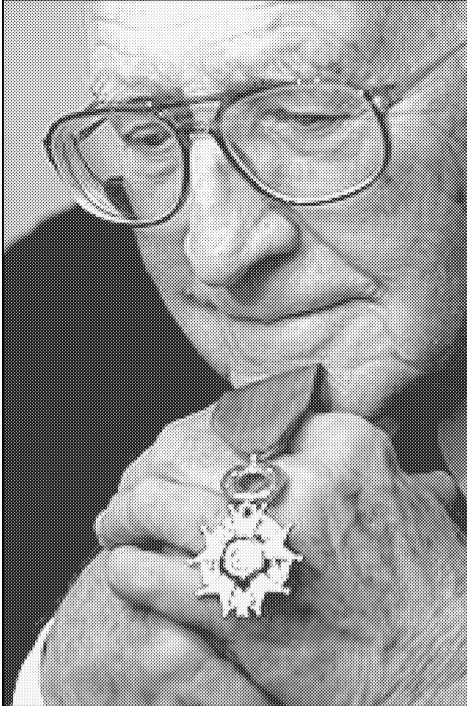
After attending the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), where Forys also played soccer, he then moved to Poland to attend graduate school and ultimately received his medical degree.

While in Poland, Forys participated in student demonstrations and protests against the Communist puppet government, despite the risk of expulsion from school and arrest. He and his wife were attacked with tear gas and had various encounters with Communist riot police during the anti-communist protests.

Upon returning to the United States, Forys practiced medicine in Southern Illinois until he returned to Chicago and opened his own practice in the heart of the 5th Congressional District on the Northwest Side near Central and Lawrence Avenues. □

An old soldier's new medal

Soldier who played role in D-Day awarded French Legion of Honor



A January 9 article by Chris Smith in the *Santa Rosa Press Democrat* tells about Marion Grohoski, 85, who was awarded the French Legion of Honor, as a veteran of the 1st Polish Armored Division. Grohoski was a Polish soldier who had never lived in Poland.

At nearly 86, he figures it helped his odds to be one of only a few remaining members of the 1st Polish Armored Division, which distinguished itself through its valor and punishing impact in the battle of Normandy.

"Maybe they liked my story," Grohoski said at his Bennett Valley home after the French consul general in San Francisco had thanked him on behalf of the president of France. It is, he conceded, a pretty unusual story.

Grohoski was born in 1923 in China to a Polish mining engineer father and Latvian mother. Author Jack London had been among the guests at his parent's wedding in about 1915 at St. Boniface Church in San Francisco.

When Germany overran Grohoski's ancestral home of Poland in 1939, he was studying at a Polish high school in Harbin, Manchuria. He began college at an American school in Japan, and following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the situation got tense and he used his Polish passport to obtain passage to Britain by getting diplomatic status from the Polish embassy in Japan and was able to leave the country as part of an exchange of Allied and Axis diplomatic personnel. He eventually went to Scotland.

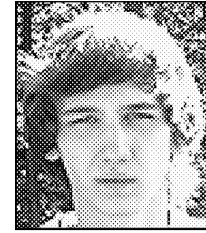
In Scotland Grohoski was commissioned as an officer and later as a tank commander in the 1st Polish Armored Division, comprised largely of expatriate Poles. The division was attached to the 1st Canadian Corps when it hit the beaches of Normandy in 1944 -- the D-Day invasion.

His division played a major role in the defeat of the German 7th Army troops who were encircled in the battle of Falaise Gap, a major turning point in the war to liberate France. Grohoski's division suffered nearly 1,500 casualties, but captured over 5,000 Germans, including a general. They also fought in Belgium, Holland and Germany. Grohoski was promoted to captain and received four Polish and three British decorations. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery praised the Polish division as being the cork that kept the Germans bottled up.

Grohoski fought through the end of the war in Europe. In 1949, the combat veteran accepted a British offer of passage to the United States. "Her majesty's government gave me five pounds, a new herringbone suit and a ticket on the Queen Mary to New York," he said.

He came to California in 1960. He hadn't been here long when he noticed a striking and familiar face while attending a play at San Francisco's California Palace of the

Grohoski's new medal to page 13



Janek's Corner

Janek Szczepański
Adam Mickiewicz U.
Poznań, Poland

janek.szczepanski@gmail.com

The first time

The first time in an English-speaking country always brings mixed feelings. It is usually a mix of excitement and fear, which stem from a personal need to discover the new and to survive through the new. Being abroad makes one wonder about his country of origin, too. It is commonly a time of juggling adaptation to the new surroundings and lack of direct attachment to the country of origin, i.e. no regional food, no sounds of the native language, no lifetime friendships. Now, it is time for me to uncover cruelty and happiness from a few days in England. That happens to be the first time in an English-speaking country ever for me.

The journey

I have always been scared of going somewhere by plane. Such a feeling had been arising inside of me for a few days before actually getting on a plane, without a chance to change my mind, with other people sitting around me, with one thought in my mind – what will happen next?

I was not acting rationally although I'd always been taught to keep my head down to earth. I was subconsciously thinking that something might not go well even though there was very little that could go wrong. Finally, after a successful take-off and two hours in the air (which is by the way less than going from Poznań to Warsaw, or Berlin by train). I finally made it. No worries, that's just how life goes on; it was only my awful deception and scare that caused all that drama!

England... England...

Whether you are a foreigner or a national, the UK offers rain all day long. They treat you equally, no matter where you're from or what you're doing in the UK. Indeed, rain is the key part of an ordinary day in the UK. If not the rain, one is definitely going to be greeted with a number of people speaking with different accents. It's easy to understand what people are talking about; however, it might be difficult to get answers from them, because they will pretend they do not understand what one is saying. Such behaviour is easily noticeable, but it is hard to imagine that it actually takes place within such an ethnically varied society. It is also unimaginable for me how a car or a couch can fit in those tiny streets that they have here. It's almost as if one tries to fit an elephant into an underpass for mice. Strange and impossible? See how Britons do that and amaze yourself!

Competition

It is commonplace for Britons to call something "competitive." Is it weird? A competition is ongoing here, and, frankly, little can one know about it. Whether it's an application process or simply getting your tickets for the nearest concert, one has to think about it in advance or else one will be mildly dissatisfied with the results of his actions. Is it practical or in the public interest? I do not think so. I guess this just stems from the internal structure of the society that is levelled that it is difficult to progress from one level to the other. On the other hand, it's believed that Britons do have time for everything, thanks to their sluggishness. Isn't it then a contradiction in terms when one thinks of a "sluggish competition" or "being competitive in a sluggish society?"

Lovely label, nothing upon that

As scary and unrealistic as it sounds, it is usually true. With hundreds of colourful leaflets apart, it's rather uncommon to find what is actually being described in a

Janek's Corner to page 13