



News of Polonia

Serving the Polish Community since 1995

Wiadomości Polonijne

Volume 14, No. 09

February 2009

Free or Home Delivery

January 29, 2009

Mr. Janusz Kurtyka, President
Institute of National Remembrance
(IPN)
ul. Towarowa 28
Warsaw, Poland

Dear Mr. President Kurtyka:

For some time now, Polonian circles in the United States are being informed of attempts undertaken in Poland and the U.S. – based on documentation of the IPN – to reveal former agents, collaborators with the secret services of the Polish People's Republic (PRL), who operated, and, possibly, continue to operate, within American Polonia.

Understandably, this information engenders much interest from Polonian organizations and Americans of Polish descent. But information about these matters is, at present, selective and incomplete. That creates the possibility of varying interpretations, aggressive speculation, mutual accusations and personal conflicts. This could have a negative impact both on American Polonia and on its cooperation with Poland.

In that connection, I appeal to IPN to undertake systematic studies on the activities of agents of PRL within Polonian circles in the United States, and to inform the Polish American Congress of the results of such studies.

Comprehensive and credible information prepared by IPN specialists, in accordance with scientific principles of thoroughness and openness, would serve to reveal historical truth and to strengthen relations between Polonia and democratic Poland. On our part, we guarantee full cooperation in filling in the blank spots of our mutual history.

I thank you in advance, Mr. President, for your help and understanding.

Respectfully,
Frank J. Spula, President

Translation: Ted Mirecki

Polish Perspectives

Exhibit

National Conference for the Social Studies

By: **Jo Louise Winters**,
PR Chair, ACPC



A visiting teacher and Barbara Lemecha,

Each year members of the American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) look forward with great anticipation to the report made by Co-Chair Barbara Lemecha on the Council's important role in the National Conference for the Social Studies. The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), which organizes these annual conferences, serves as an umbrella organization for a network of over 110 affiliated state, local, and regional councils and associated groups, representing elementary, secondary, college teachers, faculty, curriculum designers and specialists, supervisors, and leaders in the various disciplines that constitute the social studies. About 5,000 teachers and other individuals from throughout the U.S. attend the conferences and have the opportunity to visit the various exhibits. In her current report, which follows, Mrs. Lemecha eloquently describes the extensive months of planning, preparations, and handling of the exhibit that she and Co-Chair Henrietta Nowakowski undertake each year, as well as the reactions of teachers to the exhibit and the materials freely provided to them at the 88th NCSS Annual Conference in Texas.

Recently, a prominent U.S. Senator told a "Polish joke" during one of his public speeches. When informed that some Polish Americans were in the audience, he remarked that in that case it would be necessary to tell the joke again at a much slower pace. To combat such defamation we need reports like Mrs. Lemecha's, which inform readers of the bountiful supplies of books, pamphlets and lesson plans by distinguished Polish and non-Polish authors that we distribute at the exhibit each year, which factually describe the rich contributions and sacrifices made by Poles and Polish Americans to the freedom, growth and culture of the United States of America. The sacrifices and unselfish dedication of Polish Americans throughout the history of the U.S. is significantly and thoroughly explained in the materials offered to the teachers who eagerly seek out our booth each year. ACPC has proudly accepted the opportunity to be responsible for organizing this important exhibit with the

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Wikipedia website: Defiance is a Golden Globe-nominated 2008 war film directed by Edward Zwick. Set in the eastern regions of German Nazi-occupied Poland (now western Belarus) during World War II, the film is an adaptation of Nechama Tec's *Defiance: The Bielski Partisans*, which is based on the true story of the Bielski partisans. Tec's book told how Polish Jews came together for common protection and to oppose the German occupation of their homeland.

Defiance is about four brothers from Poland who escaped the Nazi persecution and fought back to rescue fellow Jews. Production began in early September 2007. The film had a limited release in the United States on December 31, 2008,^[1] and went on full release in January 2009.

The mixed record of the Bielski Partisans: The Untold Story

Polish Educational Foundation in North America – January 2009

Part 2 of 3

Did the Bielski partisans take part in Soviet operations against the Polish partisans?

No credible evidence has ever been presented that any member of the Bielski group was killed by the Home Army, or any Pole for that matter. On the other hand, many Jewish partisans took part in the Soviet-led assault on the Polish underground, in particular the "disarming" of the Kmiecic and Pelka units. Several Jewish partisans recorded sanitized accounts of those operations.

The "disarming" of Burzyński's unit in August 1943 was described in a memoir penned by Shalom Yoran (then Selim Sznycer), a member of "Revenge" (*Mest* in Russian, *Nekama* in Hebrew). "Revenge" was a partisan unit composed of Jews within the Vorshilov Brigade commanded by Fedor Markov.

Brigade Commander Markov decided to rid the area of the AK [Armia Krajowa] menace. Our entire brigade was moved to the region close to the AK bases. We surrounded and attacked them. After three days of fighting, the entire area was free of the AK. Many of them were killed, many were taken prisoner, and the rest ran away to the areas close to Vilna [Wilno], where another AK brigade was located.

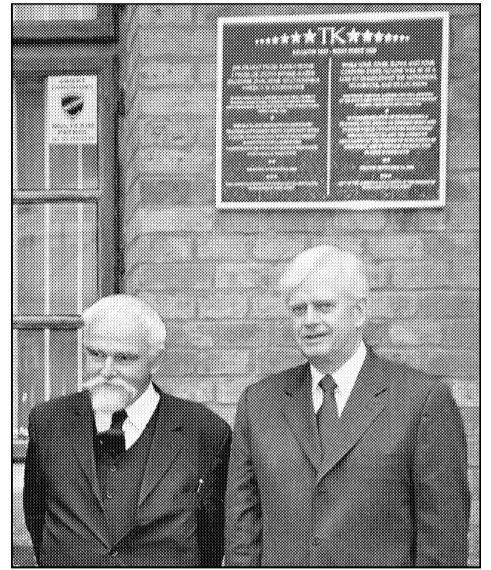
Alexander Bogen, another member of the Jewish "Revenge" detachment, recalled:

One morning, a messenger arrived from the brigade headquarters with an order: The division of Nekama had to get ready for a mission. All the fighters had to go with a weapon to a forest thicket a few kilometers away, taking position in a frontal line and then waiting for orders. ... All of a sudden, we saw a large camp of partisans walking toward the direction of the clearing. We were very surprised to see that all of these people were without weapons – they looked devastated and downcast, walking in groups of four. ... They were the Armia Krajowa (AK). Only a short time passed before we heard shots from the directions of the clearing. Then a deathly quiet descended. Headquarters of the Soviet partisan movement in Belarus and Lithuania received orders from Moscow to get rid of the AK.

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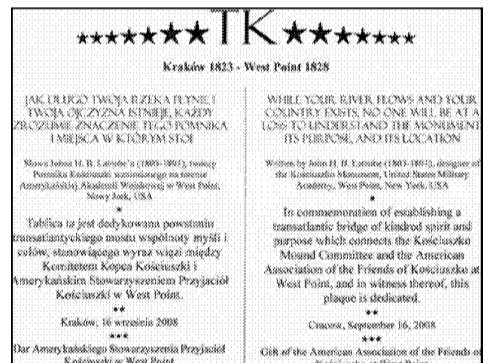
American Association of the Friends of Kościuszko at West Point (AAFKWP), Inc.

www.kosciuszkoatwestpoint.org



L. - Dr. Rokosz and Dean Bajdek

On September 15 and 16, 2008 AAFKWP President participates in symposium and establishes a special relationship with the Kosciuszko Mound Committee in Krakow.



Plaque

After several years of planning, President Anthony J. Bajdek and his wife, Cynthia, traveled to Poland on a mission designed to build a "bridge of kindred spirit and purpose" with Poland's venerable Kościuszko Mound Committee (Komitet Kopca Kościuszki) that had been established in 1823 to sustain perpetual care of the Mound that was destined to be one of Poland's greatest historical sites built by Poles, Lithuanians, and Ruthenians who carried soil from all parts of the partitioned Commonwealth in honor of Kościuszko's memory shortly after his death in 1817.

Hosted by Dr. Mieczysław Rokosz, President of the Committee and Professor of History at Jagiellonian University, Bajdek was invited to present a paper to the members of the Committee and both university and secondary school educators and students in the Historical Museum of the City of Kraków (Muzeum Historyczne Miasta Krakowa) situated on the Main Square (Rynek Główny). An Associate Dean (ret.) and Senior Lecturer in History at Northeastern University in Boston, Bajdek selected to title his topic, "West Point and the Secular Sainthood of Tadeusz Kościuszko in the Early American Republic" (West Point i Świecka Świętość Tadeusza Kościuszki we Wczesnej Republice Amerykańskiej). Upon agreement with the suggestion of Professor Rokosz, Bajdek's presentation – along with several others he made over the two days, will be published in Poland by the Committee and made available to the general public in a booklet. Included

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