

Poles demand Britain hands over secret papers on war leader's death

An article from Warsaw by Matthew Day in the NEWS.scotsman.com website states, the Polish government is to demand access to classified British documents as part of criminal investigation into the death of the country's wartime leader.

A resolution passed by the Polish parliament, which obliges the government to ask for the secret files, called on Britain to "as quickly as possible declassify and grant access to any documents relating to the circumstances surrounding the death of General Władysław Sikorski".

The general, who was the Polish prime minister and commander-in-chief, died when his RAF Liberator crashed into the sea seconds after taking off from Gibraltar in July 1943.

Despite a British wartime inquiry attributing the cause of the crash to a technical malfunction, speculation has abounded for decades that the Polish leader was assassinated.

The conspiracy theories have been fuelled by certain British files relating to the case remaining top-secret, although 65 years have passed since the tragedy.

"Without those documents we will never get the whole truth into the death of Gen Sikorski", said Zbigniew Girzyński, a Polish MP who has spearheaded the campaign to get access.

Earlier this year, Poland launched a criminal investigation into the accident, and last week experts exhumed the general's body from a crypt in Krakow's cathedral to ascertain whether he died by accident or was murdered.

Some historians argue that Gen Sikorski could have been killed by either Britain or the Soviet Union, both of whom may have seen his demands for Polish rights and independence as an unwanted impediment to good relations between the allies.

Historians point to the fact that the general had been the subject of two assassination attempts, both involving his aircraft, before his visit to Gibraltar, and that many mysteries surround the fatal crash.

The Czech pilot, the sole survivor, was found wearing his Mae West lifejacket – despite it being known that he habitually never wore one – and the plane had waited an unusual length of time at the far end of the run way before it began its take off.

At Gibraltar, due to the special treatment accorded to VIPs, there was uncertainty about who had boarded the plane and its cargo – and thus the identity of the bodies recovered.

The body of Sikorski's daughter, Zofia, was never found, and there were reports in 1945 that she was spotted in a Soviet Gulag by a member of the elite Polish commandos.

By 2000, only a few British intelligence documents relating to Gen Sikorski's death had been declassified. The majority are to remain secret for the next 50 to 100 years.

One recently declassified briefing paper was dated 24 January, 1969, to the British Cabinet Secretary, Sir Burke Trend, from Sir Robin Cooper, a former pilot employed in the Cabinet Office.

After reviewing the wartime inquiry's findings, he wrote: "Security at Gibraltar was casual, and a number of opportunities for sabotage arose while the aircraft was there."

Although Sir Robin doubted sabotage had taken place, or that the pilot had crashed the aircraft deliberately, he went on to add: "The possibility of Sikorski's murder by the British is excluded from this paper. The possibility of his murder by persons unknown cannot be so excluded."

The crash of the Liberator is portrayed in the 1958 film *The Silent Enemy*, in

which the team of divers charged with retrieving his briefcase from the wreck is led by Lionel "Buster" Crabb, himself later to disappear in 1956 in mysterious circumstances while diving in the vicinity of a visiting Soviet warship.

In 1968 "Soldiers", a play by a German writer staged in London, alleged that Winston Churchill had been in on the plot.

Fact Box

General Władysław Sikorski wanted to be buried in a "free Poland".

When he died in a plane crash off Gibraltar in 1943, aged 62, his body was flown to Britain and buried in a Polish war cemetery in Newark, Nottinghamshire, along with 500 comrades.

His remains were repatriated in 1993 when hundreds of Polish and British servicemen attended a requiem mass. The cortege travelled to the RAF base, where the coffin, draped with the a Polish flag, was put on a horse-drawn carriage.

He was laid to rest in a tomb in Wawel Cathedral in his native Krakow. □

Helena Wolińska-Brus Died

Helena Wolińska-Brus (born 1919 as Fajga Mindla Danielak died 2008) was a former military prosecutor from Poland, involved in Stalinist regime show trials of the 1950s. Since 1999, Poland has been striving for extradition of Wolińska from the United Kingdom to stand trial in Poland. The official charges against her were initiated by the Commission for Investigating Crimes against the Polish Nation. Wolińska was accused of being an "accessory to a court murder," classified as a Stalinist crime and a crime of genocide, and is punishable by up to ten years in prison. Among other crimes, she

Wolińska-Brus to page 10

From Michael Blichasz

Host of *Saturday Variety Program*
1540 AM - WNWR Philadelphia, PA
MichaelSupportsAmerica.com

Commentary...

Saturday, February 14, 2009

In 1998, when I first spoke up and encouraged people to support American workers and American Made Products, people told me, Michael you have to understand we're now in a global economy and America is in competition with the world! They told me that there will always be more than enough jobs for Americans. Well, being in competition with the world is a reality, but that doesn't mean we should have our businesses move abroad or outsource American jobs to the point it hurts American workers.

In recent responses to my commentaries, people expressed concern that there was very little outcry as businesses left America to manufacture their products elsewhere for less money, and then watch those businesses ship those products back to America to be sold at a decent profit. There were also those who thought that the American service-oriented job market would last forever. It's a lot to think about, but I'm glad people are speaking up about these very important issues.

What made America great for years was the production of our day-to-day needs were being produced by locally based or national American businesses. This provided numerous levels of employment opportunities and thriving communities. Today, the balance has shifted. Now a growing number of the items we purchase for day-to-day use are imported from abroad, and more and more local, regional and national employers are closing their doors because they can't compete with imported products. I urge you to take a few minutes to look closely and see where

Michael Blichasz to page 10

Consulate General
Republic of Poland in Los Angeles
 website: www.PolishConsulateLA.com
(310) 442-8500
Consul General
Paulina Kapuścińska ext. 109
 e-mail: mailing.list@consulplla.org
Culture, Science Education,
Public Affairs
Consul position to be filled ext. 108
 e-mail: culture@consulplla.org
Administration and Finances
Consul Malgorzata Kopeć ext. 104, 105
 e-mail: admin@consulplla.org
Passports/Visas/Citizenship Section
Consul Marzena Gronostajska
 ext. 103, 106
 e-mail: visapascit@consulplla.org
Legal Affairs/Consular Protection
Consul Wojciech Bergier ext. 102,
 e-mail: legal@consulplla.org
Economic and Trade Division
www.wehusa.gov.pl
Receptionist X 115

Jan Gruen – Gruszecki
(Native of Wieszchowo – Dom Dziecka)
Concrete Contractor
Residential or Commercial
 Concrete Driveways, Patios
 Stamp Concrete
 Brick, Stone, Flagstone,
 Sidewalks, Curbs
 Retaining walls, Block walls
 Remodel swimming pools
 Waterfalls, Pool decks
No job too small
 Contractor License # 501466
(818) 896-5087 or 378-6121 (c)

A Petition Seeking Sponsorship and Passage in the *California State Legislature* of a

Joint Resolution Supporting the Republic of Poland Being Granted Visa Waiver Status

We, the undersigned American citizens of Polish descent along with our other American friends of varying ethnicities in the great state of California, ask for your support in our state's legislature for the sponsorship of the aforementioned proposed Joint Resolution for the following reasons:

- Poland, a loyal ally of the United States in NATO, has supported our nation's war against terrorism with its ground forces from inception of current American involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.
- Citizens of Poland, however, who travel to the United States to attend family weddings, baptisms, graduations, and funerals, for example, are required by our government to have visas.
- In contrast, citizens of France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Spain and Austria, for example, are able to travel to the United States without visas.
- Poles first arrived in Jamestown in 1608; Thaddeus Kościuszko and Casimir Pulaski fought with great distinction for the "Glorious Cause" of American freedom and independence in our Revolutionary War.
- Consequently, we Americans of Polish descent in California who number 491,325 according to the 2000 U.S. Census are troubled, as are our other fellow American friends of varying ethnicities, by the apparent disregard on the part of our federal government of Poland's significant contributions to the spread of democracy and political stability in Central and Eastern Europe, despite the fact that our prior President described Poland as being one of America's best friends in Europe on several occasions.
- Accordingly, we join our fellow Americans of Polish descent, all of whom nationally number more than ten million, in this national effort to engage our state legislatures in support of the federal matter of facilitating Visa Waiver status for Poland by way of state legislative resolutions and federal action.
- To date, the state legislatures of Massachusetts (May 2004), New Jersey (October 2004), Vermont (January 2005), Pennsylvania (April 2005), Connecticut (May 2005, Senate only), Maine (May 2005), Nebraska (June 2005), and New York (June 2005), Ohio (June 2005), Michigan (June 2006), Arizona (April 2007) and Illinois (October 2007) have passed either joint resolutions or separate resolutions in one of their legislative branches, and in one case, a unicameral legislative resolution, urging the President and the Congress of the United States to grant Visa Waiver status for the Republic of Poland, thereby extending both equitable and honorable treatment to a proven friend and loyal ally of the United States of America. Fair play is the American way! The state resolutions above support that principle.
- No other Americans of European descent have had to seek the support of our nation's state legislatures.

Please help us in this national campaign to admit Poland to the Visa Waiver Program. Thank you.

First and Last Name:	Street Address:	City/Town/ZIP:	Date:
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
6. _____	_____	_____	_____
7. _____	_____	_____	_____

Please present this completed petition to:

NEWS OF POLONIA	2245 Colorado Boulevard 104-177	Pasadena, CA 91107
------------------------	---------------------------------	---------------------------