

## Komorowski Gets Polish Central Bank Opinion This Week

An April 20 article by Dorota Barzytel on Bloomberg.com reports... -- Acting Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski won't receive two legal opinions on how swiftly to appoint a new central bank governor until later this week, less than seven days before the bank's next rate-setting meeting.

"That means he may not deal with the issue until the end of the week," Komorowski's spokesman Jerzy Smoliński said by telephone today, rejecting a report in Rzeczpospolita newspaper that the opinions will be delivered today.

Governor Sławomir Skrzypek was killed in an April 10 plane crash together with President Lech Kaczyński and his duties were taken over by Deputy Governor Piotr Wesołek. Komorowski needs to know how soon a replacement must be appointed and whether the acting governor is authorized to lead the Monetary Policy Council, which sets the benchmark interest rate.

The 10-member rate-setting council, which should be led by the governor, is due to meet on April 28 and economists surveyed by Bloomberg expect it to leave the benchmark interest rate at 3.5 percent. The council voted on April 13 to allow Wesołek to preside over the meeting and cast a vote.

Some constitutional experts have questioned Wesołek's right to vote, which "increases the risk that any MPC decisions between now and the appointment of the next governor could be legally challenged," BNP Paribas said in a report on April 16. "The risk in Poland's external environment is not insubstantial, and if it materializes, it might necessitate a reaction by the MPC. Such a reaction must not be open to a legal challenge after the event."

### 'Possible Risk'

The council's decision that Wesołek can also lead the MPC was based on an opinion by Dariusz Dudek, a law professor at the Catholic University of Lublin.

"The duties and powers of the central bank governor by law devolve in their entirety to the first deputy governor until those duties are assumed by a newly appointed governor," Dudek said in a legal opinion posted on the central bank's Web site.

That stance has been challenged by Marius Chmaj, a specialist in constitutional law who heads a law firm in Warsaw.

"To avoid any possible risk for the stability of monetary policy, Komorowski must choose a governor as soon as possible," Chmaj said by telephone today. "Broadening the competencies of the first deputy governor to include leadership of the MPC is only an assumption of

competency, and as such is illegal. That creates the possibility for challenging MPC decisions."

Bogusław Grabowski, an economic adviser to Prime Minister Donald Tusk said the law doesn't allow the deputy governor to lead the council.

All the legal uncertainties must be cleared as soon as possible. Central bank spokesman Maciej Antes said no one was available to comment at the central bank.

### Possible Candidate

Grabowski, a former central banker, has been mentioned in the Polish media as a possible candidate, along with Dariusz Filar, a member of the previous rate-setting council, and Jerzy Pruski, who was once a member of the bank's management.

A quick replacement for Skrzypek will be awkward for Komorowski and the ruling Civic Platform party as it may expose them to criticism of dividing the spoils after the plane crash that killed President Kaczyński and Skrzypek.

"It would be better for all of us if the legal briefs say the speaker has time," said Grabowski. "Everybody is saying that Komorowski has assumed the president's full powers and at the same time everybody's saying that it would be better for political reasons if he doesn't use them." □

## Pawlak to run for PSL in presidential elections

Deputy Prime Minister Waldemar Pawlak is to run for president in the upcoming elections for the Polish Peasant's Party (PSL).

The decision of the PSL National Executive Committee and Presidium of the party's Supreme Council confirmed the decision, Wednesday morning.

Earlier this year it had been suggested that the party, which is a junior coalition member of the current government, would choose a woman, deputy speaker in the lower house of parliament, Ewa Kierzkowska as their candidate. But the re-scheduled elections brought forward to June 20 after the death of President Lech Kaczyński has meant that PSL needs an immediately recognizable candidate to the electorate, says Stanisław Żelichowski, a member of the party's Supreme Council.

"In the case of such a short campaign, we wouldn't have any time to promote someone less known than him. That would be a waste of time and money," he told Polish Radio today.

Acting president Bronisław Komorowski announced that the first round of elections will take place on June 20 with a possible second round – if none of the candidates get the necessary 50 percent plus of the popular vote – will take place on July 4.

Other parties have till next Monday to name their candidates. □

## Russia-Poland: A thaw in public sentiment

*MOSCOW (RIA Novosti commentator Dmitry Babich)*

*Analysts covering Russian-Polish relations have changed their opinions from positive to negative several times in the last two days.*

Immediately after the plane crash near Smolensk on April 10, in which Polish President Lech Kaczyński died, they wrote that the tragedy would incite hatred of Russia in Poland. But when Prime Minister Vladimir Putin flew to the site, Russians laid flowers at the Polish Embassy and President Dmitry Medvedev made an unprecedented announcement of a day of mourning for the death of foreign citizens (the Polish press emphasized the latter), Polish society expressed gratitude.

Even people who usually post critical comments on the web sites of Polish newspapers have expressed gratitude and even a sincere desire for unity with Russians.

Then it was reported that the airport tower controllers at Severny Airport in Smolensk did not speak English fluently and so could be indirectly responsible for the crash, which again provoked negative sentiments.

These public opinion tides are a mirror reflection of difficult Russian-Polish relations, even though a majority of Poles and Russians view each other positively despite the anti-Russian and anti-Polish propaganda in their countries.

Russians visiting Poland don't see Russia haters there, unless, of course, you discuss openly in a restaurant the problem of Katyn from Stalin's viewpoint or demand, while having a traditional walk in downtown Warsaw, that a tsarist envoy be returned to the Belvedere Palace. Poles have a genuine interest in events in Russia, and central Polish newspapers carry Russian news. But then, there are reports and there are reports.

For example, Polish TV and newspapers present Russia as a country where members of the Memorial international history and human rights society are the only honest people in Russia, where the Russian special services and the Nashi youth movement terrorize Russians morally and even physically, and Garri Kasparov is the last incorruptible Russian politician.

They have forgotten that Kasparov invited Yury Mukhin, a man who refused to admit that it was the NKVD secret police who shot Poles at Katyn, to address his National Assembly coalition.

At the same time, recent reports in the Russian media regarding Poland have concentrated mostly on the aborted U.S. plans to deploy a ballistic missile defense system there, or on other similar events.

This has created a huge gap between what common Russians and Poles feel and the reports and statements by the media, politicians and diplomats.

The wave of empathy in Russia after the death of the Polish president, flowers laid at the Polish Embassy in Moscow, and a positive change in bloggers attitudes have shown that nationalists make up a minority in both countries. Unfortunately, they are a very active and influential minority that has access to the media and the ear of the men in power.

This is not surprising; the same has happened in other countries. We have seen an aggressive and politically active minority in Ukraine force their will on the inert majority for five years.

Most Poles, just like most Russians, have no time for finding their way through a maze of diplomatic and historical intricacies. They only pay attention after dramatic events such as the crash of the plane that carried the Polish president.

The 9/11 tragedy in the United States, when Russians expressed sincere

sympathy for Americans, is indirect proof that flowers at the Polish Embassy do not guarantee long-term improvement in bilateral relations.

In a few days, the well-wishing majority will return to their everyday problems, job, kids, and TV news in the evening. But the aggressive minority, which has representatives in all parties in both the Polish and Russian parliaments, will not sit back. They have already advanced the idea of a conspiracy behind Kaczyński's death.

Negative information about neighboring countries is known to travel faster and sell better than positive news. But the huge wave of public sympathy will not be forgotten. Evidence of that is a reader's commentary posted on the web site of the Polish daily Gazeta Wyborcza, which said: "We are all Slavs, but we have been fighting each other like a pack of dogs. It is pleasant to see human faces and feel support extended from people you never expected."

It is not the president but the parliament (Sejm), and in particular the ruling party or coalition, who holds the key place in the Polish political system. Therefore, we cannot expect any dramatic shift in Poland's foreign policy.

The most favored candidate at the upcoming presidential election in Poland is Bronisław Komorowski, the marshal (speaker) of the Sejm who is currently the acting president. Several weeks ago his nomination in the presidential race was supported by most members of his party, Civic Platform, which holds the majority in parliament.

Another candidate is Michał Kleiber, president of the Polish Academy of Sciences, and more candidates could still be nominated.

But no matter who is nominated and who wins the election set for June 20, 2010, the new president will have to take into account the unexpected April thaw in Polish-Russian relations. That is, if Poland is really a democratic country.

The opinions expressed in this article are the author's and do not necessarily represent those of RIA Novosti. □

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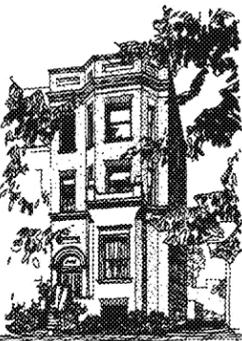
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## What's Your Legacy

Many people talk about leaving their will to worthy causes, but don't have a will, and do not realize it requires a will to do so. The laws of most states make it clear that personal property goes automatically, by law, to your nearest relative, even if they are quite distant ones, unless you have a legal will that says otherwise. If you have no relative, it goes to the state. More than half of all adult Americans die without having made their wills. Most of them undoubtedly planned to do so, but never got around to it. Some had wills but didn't keep them current. When you have a will, you should update it every few years as conditions change. Also, always name an executor who will carry out your wishes. Besides money, non-cash possessions can also be used as contributions and various donation plans can be carried out. Be a philanthropist: leave your stocks, bonds, real estate, art, valuable collection or insurance to continue the Polish - American traditions. Your will is the most important way of giving. When you're gone, it is a legacy that is not forgotten. In your will, you can specify what you would like your donation to be used for. For help in making your will, contact a competent lawyer. **The Kosciuszko Foundation is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that needs your help and legacy.**

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