

**Justyna Ball from 2**

No picture of Jarosław Kaczyński's cat was to be found anywhere so I cannot comment on it.

As of the beginning of 2010, many thought that the fall elections in Poland would be boring. The Economist predicted that the unpopular president Lech Kaczyński was going to be defeated by any candidate that Civic Platform would bring to the game. It all changed on April 10, with the Smolensk crash.

The remaining twin quickly seized the opportunity to run on a sympathy vote and it worked. Not to appear as an opportunist, first he was nowhere near the cameras, sending his campaign director popular Joanna Kluzik-Rostkowska to nearly every event, as it was officially said that he was in mourning, which was understood. But time passed and he still tried to be invisible, the strategy: the less of him, the better, seemed to work.

He showed up for the debate and convinced watchers that arrogance is new confidence (*déjà vu* from Bush era), I personally was scared.

Nobody ever tried elections in summer months, but even with every other Pole away, the turnout wasn't bad at 55%, and it seemed to be well organized too, with flood victims escorted to election polls etc. There was a larger than ever number of absentee votes at sea resorts and also a record number of ...invalid votes. Well, because some decided that Lady Gaga and Paris Hilton were better than the Komorowski & Kaczyński duo. Funny, very funny!

The election night was as exciting as the World Cup, with numbers shifting from one candidate to another. The morning after, Kaczyński quickly thanked and congratulated his opponent, and went back to being his old self. Hoping to keep the energy (and anger) till the fall, the parliamentary elections, Kaczyński's aggressive language poured like hot lava. It was expected to return anyway. His new agenda of spreading peace and mutual cooperation was just an act.

The very next day, Kluzik-Rostkowska accused the government (Tusk etc) ... "If they had agreed to the trip, there wouldn't be a crash." Dear Joanna, sorry, the crash happened not because Tusk wasn't on board, it happened because the crew took a risk to land in extreme weather conditions.

If Lech Kaczyński did not get into a coalition with Andrzej Lepper and his Self-defense Party, he wouldn't win the presidential elections, would not become the president and he wouldn't be on that plane, but rather sitting in his comfortable apartment in the Zoliborz district of Warsaw with slippers on his feet and reading his paper. Others would be alive as well because there wouldn't have been any plane crash.

It is obvious that the parliamentary elections campaign will circle around the Smolensk tragedy since P&S has nothing else to go on with (against the Civic Platform).

The symbolic cross placed in front of the Presidential Palace is there to divide the nation again. The president asked to remove it and place it in a more suitable place like the Cathedral or cemetery. Fanatics are setting up a shrine in front of it. (I can never figure this out. Is the church using P&S or P&S is using the church?)

Now, here is an idea that some "artist" had. He purchased land, an empty field, and moved a barn there from a neighboring town. Yes, a barn. Then he collected small white pieces of paper, each representing a person that you want to symbolically burn inside this barn. That's right! It's a new style of art, I guess, a new "art" of a sick mind. Just play along... On the anniversary of the Jedwabne massacre the barn will be burnt, and with it so called "Polish anti-Semitism." Poles are supposedly living in a post-holocaust trauma... The guy is

serious, some Jewish Poles think he is little too radical, the idea does not sit with everybody. It's like burning down Auschwitz, they say, to teach Germans a lesson. Actually, I do not know who the people that donated their cards are; I assume his closest family and friends. Those who don't want to tell the guy that he is nuts! One farmer said that it is not a good idea to burn the barn in the open field during a heat wave, and the fire department did not give permission to set the fire so I guess he has to wait for cooler weather. By then it may not be so spectacular. By then some may actually come to their senses and remove the cards and pick another crazy event.

The human mind works in the strangest ways. Some may have funny or politically inclined ideas, other may be dangerous... Further into summer... it's not the post-holocaust trauma dummy, but heat stroke that confuses people, and I heard that artists who have delicate minds (and brains) are prone to it. □

**Taxes - Roth Ira's from 3**

making a conversion, your beneficiaries will pay ordinary income tax on distributions of earnings. However, they can withdraw converted amounts with no federal income tax or penalty.

If you have additional questions about the ideas mentioned here and/or the many other strategies available to you, they may be directed to me at 800-CPA-KROL (272-5765), or you may write to:

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**H.RES.1489 from 6**

suffer from any mechanical failures and ruled out a terrorist attack, explosion, or fire;

Whereas Russian investigators have released preliminary reports concluding that the crash was the fault of the pilots who did not listen to the air traffic controllers;

Whereas Polish investigators have released preliminary reports concluding that the crash was the fault of the air traffic controllers who gave delayed commands to the pilots;

Whereas some Polish security and aviation authorities were denied access to the crash site;

Whereas only the transcripts of flight recorders have been given to Polish investigators;

Whereas the black boxes have not been handed over to Polish investigators; and

Whereas over 50,000 Poles have signed a petition calling for an international investigation: Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives calls for an independent international investigation of the April 10, 2010, plane crash.

**Ratajczak interview from 2**

dangerous from the viewpoint of political correctness, which was pouring, at first unnoticeably, and then like a waterfall, inside the university walls. And, of course, I was standing up to it in plain sight, feeling intuitively that we were facing the danger of replacing communist censorship with its soc-liberal equivalent. What is more, I anticipated that the result of the victorious invasion of political correctness would be a slavish subjugation of the science of history to politics. There has never been my consent to this.

I prepared a number of "*incorrect topics*", which I followed through during classes. Let me mention only a few of them: "Starve the Rat, or Critically about American feminism", "Freemasonry Yesterday and Today", "Hitlerism and Communism - Common Roots", "Does Colonialism Deserve to be Unconditionally Condemned?", "The History of French Algeria", and so on, and so forth. The students liked it a lot, but, at the same time, more and more often, I was called on the carpet by the director of the History Institute, Professor Stanisław S. Nicieja (privately, the supervisor of my PhD thesis, and, later, the almighty Rector of Opole University). He would tell me, more or less, this: "I don't impose anything on you; you've got excellent term marks, and we appreciate your knowledge. But do you really have to charge like this? I know that what you do is based on sources, but do not go against the current, or it may end up bad." Frankly speaking, I didn't listen attentively to the professor, although he was a distinguished expert on "going with the current", which he proved a few years later, when he did not hesitate to sentence me to "devouring", during an action, organized at the "top", whose purpose was to finish off Dr. Ratajczak.

Those friendly chats over coffee were not the beginning of my real troubles nor was it my defending of my PhD thesis entitled "The Attitudes of the Inhabitants of Opole Silesia in the light of the military court sentences in 1945-55". Here - a short explanation. This work, in spite of its neutral title, was, actually, a 500-page review of communist repression in the Opole district during the first decade of "People's Poland". Its "uncomfortableness" was based on the fact that I mentioned in it the names of judges, prosecutors, employees of the UB (29), militiamen, and informers, who were responsible for minor and major crimes of that period. It just so happened that in the footnotes appeared the names of daddies of the current employees of Opole University. For this reason, the defense of the thesis took place behind closed doors. The beginning of real troubles is connected with my publishing, in March 1999, of a little journalistic book entitled *DANGEROUS TOPICS*. Before I move on to the consequences of this publication, let me once again make a few introductory remarks. During the lectures, more than once, I touched on the so-called Jewish subject. This was most justified, especially in the context of the most recent history of Poland. When I was speaking of the functions, structure, and make-up of the Ministry of Public Security, the grim ubecja, I would mention that in this institution there was an overrepresentation of individuals of Jewish extraction, especially on the decision level. When I mentioned the case of the monstrous murder of Bolesław Piasecki's son, I would say, in accordance with truth, that all the traces of the murder led to Israel. When, finally, I was discussing the attitude of the majority of Jews toward Poland's regaining independence in 1918, and their conduct in the years of the Polish-Bolshevik war, as well as after the Soviet invasion of September 17, 1939, I would state that they were not, by any means, the paragon of patriotic virtue. This irritated the university abacus. The end came eventually, under some pretext, in 1998, when my classes on the most recent history of Poland got cut back; they were "transferred" to the 19th century.

This did not help much, because the Jewish ubeks could always be replaced with the Jews-Litwaks (30), who were equally anti-Polish. All in all, this was painful to me, the more so that, firstly, I would always base my lectures on sources, and, secondly, the Jewish subject was not the center of my historic interest. Of course, there was much criticism on my part there, but this precise posture is connected imminently with the job I do.

In any case, no one accused me of the infamous anti-Semitism. It was similar in the case of several lectures devoted to Holocaust revisionism, which I had within the university walls in 1997/98. The university authorities murmured a little, whereas students stumbled over one another to attend, because, perhaps for the first time in the history of a Polish university, somebody was objectively relating the opinions of this milieu, one which is a social and historical reality. A milieu - let us add - that includes also Jews. By the way, after these lectures, many students demanded from me behind the stage, a clear attitude toward the theses announced by the revisionists. Invariably, I would reply as follows: "If the revisionists think there were no gas chambers, they are wrong. If they think six million Jews did not perish during the war, they are right. If they state that the Holocaust is not the pivot of the 20th century martyrdom, they are right. Otherwise, we would feel contempt for victims of the Soviet Gulag Archipelago, the Armenian victims of Turkish politics during World War One, or our own countrymen, victims of German and Soviet savagery in 1939-45. And what about the poor Tutsis, murdered by the gone-mad members of the Hutu tribe? Can victims be divided into better and worse ones?" As I have mentioned, at the beginning of March 1999, I published, at my own expense, and in the symbolic edition of 320 copies, the book *DANGEROUS TOPICS*. I did it in order to leave behind, to record in a journalistic form, a trace of some of my university lectures. One of its subchapters was entitled 'Holocaust Revisionism'. For a month, nothing happened at the university, even though I had personally handed in the first copies to Rector Nicieja and the university "top", with an appropriate, polite dedication. A month later, I am being summoned. No, not the Rector, nor the director of the History Institute, but one of the editors of the *Gazeta Wyborcza* (31) who tells me with a smirk: "We'll trample you into the ground for the little book, and the little subchapter on the Holocaust". Well, so it all started out. On April 8, the Council of the Pedagogic-Historic Faculty of Opole University gathers up summarily, and condemns me "spontaneously". Only Prof. Joanna Rostropowicz breaks off, by observing soberly: "I can't condemn Ratajczak, because I haven't read the book. I get the impression that none of the present has read it. Who the hell are those Holocaust revisionists?" Rostropowicz is right, but never mind that - we are told to condemn, so we are condemning. Stalinism rises from the dead in Opole. At the same time, the *Gazeta Wyborcza*, and other left-wing periodicals, the Auschwitz Museum, the Israeli Embassy, the "moral authorities", some members of Buzek's government (32), as well as people from the entourage of President Kwaśniewski (the left and right in the same line), begin a sharp assault. The Director of the Auschwitz Museum states that I am a neo-Nazi. The spokesman for the Israeli embassy, Michael Sobelman, is surprised that "such a man works at a Polish university" (a clear suggestion to "kick me out"). Władysław Bartoszewski (33) sends me to a mental institution, and so on, and so forth. Meanwhile, the frightened Rector Nicieja receives phone calls from the VIPs in the Ministry of National Education, the "Simon

**Ratajczak interview to page 16**

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