

Hitler told Germans to kill Poles “mercilessly and without compassion”

By: **Frank Milewski**

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There's good reason why America's Polish community is always in the forefront of those who commemorate September 1st as the day World War II began. On that date in 1939, the evil mind of Germany's Adolf Hitler decided the only way to deal with Poland was to bring it to its knees in a war far different from any that took place before.

It would be a war in which the civilian population of a country is as much a target as its army.

At a time when voices from other nations in Europe were urging appeasement – even surrender – to satisfy Hitler's ominous threats and demands, Poland had the courage and determination to stand firm and be the “First to Fight.”

In New York City, the Polish American Congress will remember that dark and tragic date in history at a 9:30 a.m. commemorative mass on Sunday, August 29th at St. Matthias Church, 58-15 Catalpa Ave. in the Ridgewood section of Queens. The public is invited to this memorial observance and the reception that will follow.

As the Germans launched their invasion, they unleashed a massive and merciless blitzkrieg of death and destruction on the people of Poland. A little more than two weeks later, Communist armies of the Soviet Union marched in from the east and joined the Germans in the carnage.

The brutality of the German mindset was obvious from the very start. The invaders were carrying out the order of Hitler who, only ten days before the attack, instructed his generals to “send to death mercilessly and without compassion men, women and children of Polish derivation and language. Only thus shall we gain the living space (lebensraum) which we need.”

These words of hate are permanently displayed at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. on the wall at the entrance to the museum's exhibit depicting Poland's agony under German occupation.

Heinrich Himmler, the SS boss of the German concentration camps, had a similar message of misery and murder: “All Poles will disappear from the world ... It is essential that the great German people should consider as its major task to destroy all Poles.”

Michael Preisler is a Polish Catholic who saw and experienced the full impact of these barbaric commands after the Gestapo arrested him and sent him to the dreaded Auschwitz death camp. “Just like Hitler ordered them, the Germans who ran Auschwitz would never show any mercy or compassion to anyone,” he said. Preisler is presently co-chair of the Holocaust Documentation Committee of the Polish American Congress.

Mr. Preisler will participate in the commemorative observance and will speak about his Auschwitz experience. Other Polish survivors will also take part.

Because the Russian Communists had taken over Poland when the war ended, he was unable to return home and immigrated to the United States where he became a U.S. citizen. He also joined the Polish American Congress and has been active in the organization ever since.

Having lived through the war and surviving Auschwitz, Preisler regrets that the American public has still not been given an accurate and truthful account about Poland's ordeal.

“Nowhere else is Holocaust history as



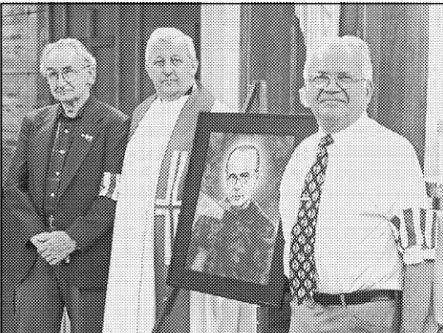
POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

Polish Remembrance Day observance in Buffalo, NY

By: **Joseph Macielag**,

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Steve Kroczyński, AmPol Eagle photographer

Auschwitz survivors L. Stanely Blake and Józef Pośliński with Mass celebrant Rev. Tadeusz Bocianowski

Our thirteenth annual Polish Remembrance Day observance took place on Saturday, August 14, at St. Stanislaus Cemetery's Resurrection Mausoleum. The Sacred Eucharistic Liturgy was celebrated at 12 Noon by Rev. Tadeusz Bocianowski, our PAC Chaplain. This annual event reminds us of the terror and horror suffered by those interned and murdered in German Nazi concentration camps as well as those deported to Siberia and held in Stalin's gulags.

This annual commemorative observance was held in conjunction with Saint Maximilian's feast day and is in compliance with a resolution passed by the National Polish American Congress fourteen years ago that August 14th be commemorated as Christian Holocaust Remembrance Day.

Six million Poles (half were Christians, half were Jews) were among the 11 million death camp victims throughout Europe. We will NOT allow the fact that 3 million Christian Poles killed in World War II be forgotten or shunned as nonexistent. They were more than “and others.” As Christians, our prayers are for ALL of God's people. Several survivors were with us at this Mass. September 1 will be seventy-one years when the tragic events initiated by Nazi Germany began enslaving, raping, murdering and pillaging Poland. □

and as misrepresented as it is about Poland,” he said.

The Holocaust Documentation Committee he co-chairs was formed more than twenty years ago and has spent much of its time correcting repeated errors and misstatements the media continually make about Poland.

He attributes some of the problem to “careless or unprofessional reporting.” But a lot of it suggests “an intentional anti-Polish or anti-Catholic prejudice.”

Preisler has also influenced the Polish American Congress to form another committee which he personally named Children of Polish Christian Holocaust Survivors. He intends to have his children and the children of other Polish survivors carry on the work of their parents.

“It's the Polish perspective which still hasn't been adequately told. It's authentic. It's the truth. It needs to be known,” he said.

Polish Americans serving with the U.S. Armed Forces made important contributions in defeating Nazi Germany. Col. Matt Urban shared the distinction of being the most highly decorated U.S. soldier with Audie Murphy. Col. Francis “Gabby” Gabreski was America's top air ace in the skies over Europe. □

Taste America 2010

“Protect and Defend”

Poles and Polish Americans in Service to the United States and the World

By: **Basia Anderson**

Polish American Congress, Washington DC Office – On July 29, 2010, for the fifth consecutive year, the Washington DC Office of the Polish American Congress (PAC) presented the interests and perspectives of the Polish American Community during the annual event Taste America.

During its 19 years of presence on Capitol Hill, the Taste America event has drawn approximately 650-700 visitors annually – primarily members of the House of Representatives and Senate and their families, to whom the event is addressed. Traditionally, the reception is held in the Members' Dining Room of the U.S. Capitol with a rich choice of hors d'oeuvres and a string quartet; today, it is the only public event that is authorized to take place in this historic setting.

The event, an elegant reception with an expo of approximately 12-15 exhibitors, once again invited the Polish American Congress to present its display, the only ‘ethnic’ exhibit at the event. The preparations for the event were once again conducted under the oversight of Dr. Barbara B. Andersen, Director of Research at the Washington D.C. Office.

Each year the event is organized under a different theme; this year it was Protect and Defend (The PAC suggested the theme to the organizers as a way of highlighting two anniversaries—the centenary of the Kościuszko and Pułaski monuments in Washington DC, both of which were unveiled on the same day a century ago).

Although the PAC Washington D.C. Office traditionally strives to keep as close to the theme as possible, this year's theme was approached from a much broader perspective – one that emphasized many Polish and Polish American military achievements throughout history and all over the world, while also highlighting accomplishments in the health sciences and the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage.

To create a clear link between the theme of the event and the many books, brochures and handouts on the two PAC tables, the office organized its display into six sections (clearly marked with corresponding signs):

Protect and Defend Historical Awareness primarily included information about the Katyń Massacre and German Nazi concentration camps in Poland. The memory of these tragic events cannot be forgotten.

Protect and Defend Memory of Heroes. Here, the PAC focused on extraordinary individuals, such as the generations of Poles and Polish Americans who have served the United States and the world, as well as Polish Righteous Among the Nations.

Protect and Defend Cultural Heritage and Accomplishments. This very rich section included a wealth of information ranging from that about Polish presence in Jamestown, where Polish settlers successfully organized and carried out the first strike for civil rights on American soil in 1619; booklets about Frederick Chopin and the 200th anniversary of his birth; a book about Joseph (Korzeniowski) Conrad; handouts which discussed the first Polish settlement in Panna Maria, TX; the Crazy Horse Monument that is being carved in South Dakota by the Polish family of Korczak Ziolkowski; and finally, the many

contributions of Polish Americans in health sciences (e.g. info about Casimir Funk, the discoverer of vitamins and Hilary Koproski, who discovered the polio vaccine, to name a couple) and Polish American inventors, such as Stephanie Kwolek, who invented Kevlar – a life-preserving material used in fragmentation resistant vests worn by soldiers and police officers.

Protect and Defend Cultural Dialogue. Although the main focus of this section was Polish-Jewish relations, several other pieces of interest were also presented, including the contributions of Poles to cultures of other continents as well as albums about Pope John Paul II.

Protect and Defend Sovereignty presented visiting members of U.S. Congress with information about the many contributions of Polish American soldiers and the Polish military throughout American history, including current efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan. The section also included information about the Polish and American constitutions, as well as Poland-related legislation in state legislatures nationwide.

Protect and Defend Health presented the visitors with complimentary colorful antibacterial hand wipes.

The two tables were flanked by large posters prepared by the Office for the purpose of the event; the first poster presented the greatest contributions of Generals Thaddeus Kościuszko and Casimir Pułaski and highlighted the monuments dedicated to both Polish heroes, which were unveiled on the same day, May 11, 1910 in Washington, D.C.; the second poster showed the most important milestones in the history of Polish presence on American soil and in US-Polish relations. Both posters proved to be major conversation pieces during the event.

Months of preparation resulted in the creation of an environment that allowed the PAC staff to engage in short but lively conversations with more than 30 Members of Congress as well as various Capitol Hill liaisons and diplomats. In addition to such great supporters of Polish American causes as Rep. Daniel Lipiński (D-IL) or Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI), the PAC also talked to Representatives Leonard Boswell (D-IA), Jerry McNerney (D-CA), Robert Aderholt (R-AL), and Paul D. Tonko (D-NY), the Republican House Whip Eric Cantor (R-VA), Reps. Jim Moran (D-VA), Don Young (R-AK), and Scott Garrett (R-NJ), to name a few.

The attending guests of the Polish American Congress included His Excellency Robert Kupiecki, the Polish Ambassador to the U.S., Maciej Pisarski, newly appointed Deputy Chief of Mission at the Polish Embassy in Washington, D.C. and Pawel Kotowski, Chief of the Political Section at the Polish Embassy. Unfortunately, a scheduling conflict made it impossible for Frank Spula, the PAC president to attend.

To complement the wealth of information, the PAC also offered all visiting guests Polish delicacies for tasting, such as famous Polish chocolates and perfectly chilled fruit juices – a beverage that in previous years was very much appreciated in the sizzling heat of Washington summers.

All of the materials available on the two tables of the PAC exhibit were complimentary, so the PAC staff of four made every effort to encourage visitors to take copies of each piece of information. As a result, hundreds of books, booklets, brochures, handouts and promotional items were distributed during the three-hour event. Each visitor was also presented with an elegant gift bag containing an attractive color Taste America Newsletter, which was prepared for the event by the PAC Office in order to summarize the display and provide information about the sponsors. The gift

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