

Danuta M. Zawadzki, † née Sienkiewicz 1918 – 2010



Nothing had such a huge impact on my mother's life as the location of Poland. The land of Copernicus, Chopin, and Marie Skłodowska Curie is between Germany and Russia. For 125 years, Poland was occupied by its neighbors and wiped off the map of central Europe. In some parts, use of the Polish language was banned. My mother lived in Polesie, the area of lakes, wetlands, and forests in eastern Poland which was taken by Russia. Hers was one of the leading families. Two uncles were career military officers. Her great-grandfather took part in the 1863 uprising. As punishment, the Russians sent him to Siberia.

Poland regained its independence after the defeat of Germany in World War I and the Polish victory in the Polish-Russian War of 1920. Mom was fortunate to live the first 20 years of her life in a free Poland. She was taught the importance of freedom, patriotism, tradition, and Faith.

Mom attended the school of the Sisters of Nazareth in Warsaw. Sometimes, her father did not have enough money to pay the tuition and instead, he sent fresh meat from the family estate. She was spending the summer at home when the Germans invaded Poland on September 1, 1939. Hitler and Stalin had a secret agreement to divide Poland again. On September 17, 1939, the Russians invaded Poland. With the help of local communist sympathizers, they viciously killed members of the leading Polish families. Some of my mother's cousins were thrown into a well to drown. Others were beheaded, or burned alive in their home. My Mom's father and her teenage brother, Roman, tried to escape to Romania on horseback. They were never seen again, apparently shot in the forest.

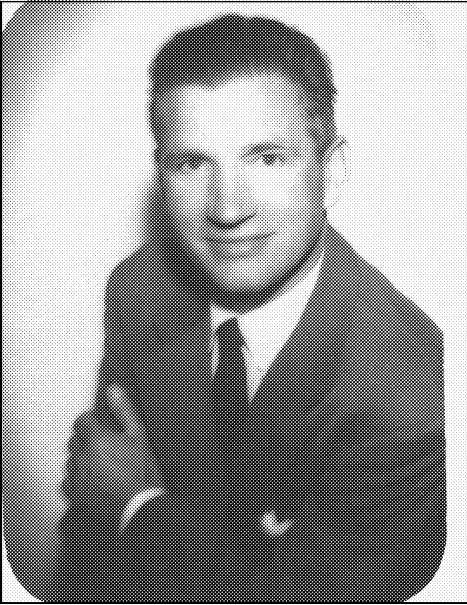
My grandmother and Mom fled to the town of Pińsk. There they changed their residence frequently to avoid discovery. Eventually, they decided to go to Warsaw where relatives lived. Life under the Germans would be safer than under the Russians. One night, they tried to cross into the German zone wearing white sheets to blend in with the snow. However, a Russian patrol caught them. They were accused of being spies. To make it harder for the Russians to connect them to other family members, they gave false birthdates. I learned my Mom's real birthdate just last year and I still do not know my grandmother's real birthdate.

After about a year in Russian prisons, my Mom and grandmother were sentenced to 5 years of forced labor. They were split up and put in cattle cars for the 4-week trip to the east during the Russian winter. It is estimated that 1.5 million Polish men, women, and children were

Danuta M. Zawadzki to page 14

Joseph Stanley Dudzick

Born: August 27, 1919 in Hartford, CT
Died: February 20, 2010 in Culver City,
CA



My dad was born on August 27, 1919 in Hartford, Connecticut. My grandparents, each having come over from Poland separately, had met and married in the United States, and my dad was the youngest of the children born in the US. When my dad was 18 months old, the family returned to Poland, near Toruń. The year was 1921, after World War I, and Poland had regained her independence after 125 years of partition by her neighbors – Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The hope was that the political and economic climate in Poland would finally be stable, and my grandfather believed that being in his homeland, now that it was free, would be easier than living in a foreign country. Poland would experience 20 years of relative peace and prosperity.

On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland, and World War II began, just days after my dad's 20th birthday. My dad and his siblings were taken as forced laborers, and my dad worked for a German farmer. He managed to escape and enlisted in the Polish army, which was fighting on multiple Allied fronts, and was stationed in Egypt for the remainder of the war. My dad was always very proud of his service in the Polish army. After the war, my dad went to England and then returned to the United States in the late 1940s. He initially stayed in Connecticut with his oldest sister and her daughter. His sister Sophie had left Poland and returned to the United States before World War II began.

My dad's oldest brother Michael had also returned to the United States after the war and had moved to California. When my dad drove across the country to visit his brother in California, he was hooked. He returned to Connecticut, packed up all of his belongings, and drove right back to California. My dad spent the majority of his professional life working for Ducommun Incorporated, a company which manufactures components for the aerospace industry, and has the distinction of being the oldest company in California having been founded in 1849. My dad initially settled in the area near Forest Lawn Glendale where he bought his first house.

One of the first things that my dad did upon his arrival in California was join this Polish church and community. My dad belonged to this parish even before this church was built and when Mass was celebrated in the rectory. He also belonged to the church choir for many years – well into the 1980s. Even when the choir was not singing, my dad would sit in the choir area upstairs during Mass, and my mom and I, who sat downstairs, could make out his voice in the flurry of voices above.

My dad would often speak with nostalgia about the Saturday evening dances that took place at the Polish Home

Joseph Stanley Dudzick to page 14

Russia wants to re-create the former Soviet Empire

By: *John Czop*

Last month, we read about the first component of The Second Annual Kościuszko Chair Lectures, at The Institute of World Politics, Washington, DC, on Saturday 14 November 2009. Readers recall that Professor Marek Jan Chodakiewicz, who holds the Kościuszko Chair at IWP, challenged in a systematic, persuasive, and forthright way the official, and wrong, views on the so-called "Collapse of Communism."

Last year, the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall, official propaganda extended without basis in fact the exceptional German situation (Communist East Germany ceased to exist because it was absorbed by West Germany or the German Federal Republic) to all the countries of the former Warsaw Pact. West Germany had an interest in removing Communists from positions of power (which is called "Glauking" in Germany and "lustration" in Poland) in the now enlarged German Federal Republic.

No other former Warsaw Pact country had a kin country in NATO as did the former Communist East Germany. This is why Communists were ousted from power in the former East Germany. In none of the other former Warsaw Pact countries were Communists removed from power; except for Estonia where the pre-World War II elite was restored to power with its private property.

Professor Chodakiewicz puts forward the unpleasant facts rather than deferring to the "propaganda of success." He shows how Communism transformed is still Communism. The professor demonstrated this at the beginning of his lecture by asking his auditors to crumple a piece of paper and then to straighten it out in order to illustrate Communism transformed. By contrast, a demonstration of Communism destroyed would require burning or ripping-up that piece of paper. Therefore, change in the name of the intended Polish national and democratic revolution was trumped by continuity in the form of a transformed Communism.

Today, the idea that Communism did in fact collapse is fixed in public opinion because the official line on the nearly non-violent so-called "Collapse of Communism" was uncritically heralded as a great success by the mainstream mass media (what the professor aptly calls "the propaganda of success"). There was no success, according to Chodakiewicz, in the sense that Communism collapsed. There was only success for the former Communists who now masquerade as free market democrats. The mainstream mass media is the chief accomplice in perpetrating and perpetuating this lurid deception which violates truth, responsible memory, and history.

The gist of Chodakiewicz's lecture, "Transformation, 1988-1992: The Case of Poland", is that Communism never collapsed in Poland, instead it was transformed. Continuity looms larger than change in today's Poland. Former Communist civil servants are the business and media leaders of today's Poland. Competition for elective offices proceeds on anything but a level playing field. Lustration, or the weeding -out of Communist secret service agents from positions of public trust, has made little progress because this is not in the interest of the former Communist upper level civil servants who wield real power in today's Polish economy and society and who are the key contributors of funds to candidates running for office.

Moreover, Chodakiewicz calls our attention to how Poland's national security is jeopardized by the refusal to press forward with lustration. The United States and the United Kingdom, the key

ACPC Scholarships for summer studies in Poland

By: *Jo Louise Winters*

The American Council for Polish Culture (ACPC) Scholarship Committee Chair, Mrs. Camille Kopielski, announces the availability of applications for the 2010 Summer Studies in Poland Scholarship Awards. Winners receive \$2,000 toward summer study at a university of his/her choice in Poland. To be considered the applicant must submit all application documents timely so that they are received by Mrs. Kopielski no later than April 1, 2010. Two scholarships are available for this year.

Last year's winner, Christopher Wojdak selected the Jagiellonian University in Krakow to undertake a course in Polish language. Upon his return home, Christopher enthusiastically reported that he recommends this scholarship opportunity as a superior learning experience. Students were placed in groups according to their language skills and each group had two "phenomenal" teachers. Material was presented in an interesting and fun manner.

Christopher discovered that Krakow was "beauty in and of itself, and the Old Town with its magnificent castle, cathedrals and monuments represented a fascinating array of sightseeing as well as nightlife attractions. Tours were scheduled every weekend, e.g., Zakopane with a great chance to hike in a very scenic mountain range, and a visit to Wieliczka, Poland's oldest salt mine with its beautiful crystal sculptures. Christopher added that he met people of all ages from many parts of the world. Students were "amiable and open-minded" and he made a number of new friends. He concluded that "I will cherish this experience for the rest of my life."

At an appearance during an ACPC Board Meeting in Rochester NY, Christopher's parents personally thanked the Council for giving their son such a great educational opportunity. His mother said that not only did this experience improve Christopher's language skills, but also he grew to have an even greater fondness for Polish cuisine. His father added that the three weeks in Poland deeply enriched their son's personality. It was a journey like no other he ever experienced."

An application and requirements list to apply for the Summer Studies in Poland scholarship may be obtained by visiting the ACPC website, www.polishcultureacpc.org or by contacting Mrs. Camille Kopielski at 847-394-2520. □

NATO countries, are convinced that Poland merits only a second level security status in NATO affairs precisely because lustration of Poland's armed forces has not proceeded far enough. Why should the Americans and the British fully trust Polish officers at NATO headquarters when Poland's rulers refuse to implement lustration?

According to Professor Chodakiewicz, Poland's key allies fear that some Polish officers at NATO very well may give NATO secrets to the Kremlin. Why then should the Americans and the British risk giving top secrets to the as yet incompletely lustrated Polish armed forces? Can Poland, which is not fully trusted by her key allies, really expect NATO to come to Poland's aid in the event of trouble, like an invasion of Polish territory from the East? Professor Chodakiewicz answers these questions in the negative.

Professor Chodakiewicz makes a persuasive case for concern about Poland's security because continuity from

Czop - Soviet Empire to page 13