



Orange County News

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Good-bye to 2007! Welcome 2008! Happy New Year! Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku!!!

As we stand on the threshold of the New Year we wish all the readers of the "News of Polonia" and all our friends a New Year full of health, happiness, peace, joy, prosperity and God's blessings. Reminiscing about the past year – which was good for some, while for others it could have been better -with the most optimistic spirit, we hope that this year will be truly good and happy for everyone, and will bring on many memorable experiences, successes and events!

This will for sure be a memorable year for the Pope John Paul II Polish Center in Yorba Linda, since we will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary, and many special events are being planned to commemorate Center's Silver Jubilee. The main celebration will take place on April 27th – more information will follow

2008 was ushered in at the Polish Center at the gala "Sylvester Ball" on December 31st. Happy partygoers wined, dined and danced to their hearts delight till the wee hours, having fun, enjoying friendship and the endless flow of gourmet food prepared by our own Super Chefs Teresa and Czeslaw Turek. The Ball was under the capable direction of Viola Turek and her committee, under the auspices of the "Polanie", the Center's Folk Dance Ensemble. Not putting to rest their talents and energies "Polanie" soon after followed with a dance and song performance at the "Kolendowanie" – an evening of beautiful Polish Christmas Carols and Folk Dances which filled hearts of all present with real Christmas spirit and joy. Another big attraction: "Bal Karnawalowy" (Carnival Ball) filled the Center with partygoers on Saturday, January 19th.

The "Pączki Dance" on Sunday February 3rd (1pm - 5pm) is also an annual event and a big attraction at the Polish Center and many dance lovers from near and far come to enjoy it and to dance their hearts away to the tunes of the well known band "Roger and the Villagers". "Pączki Dance" is sponsored by the Ladies Guild, and this year is under the capable chairmanship of Henia Dolmat. Many fine prizes and good Polish food will await everyone attending. Admission is - \$7; children 12 & under – free. All are welcome!

Putting aside all the fun things enjoyed during this joyous Christmas Season, the Polish Center's community opened their hearts to people who met misfortune and needed help. After receiving sad news about the tragic fire which caused a great loss at the Institute for the Blind in Laski, Poland, a special collection was organized, and thanks to the generosity of the Center's members a donation of \$5,000 was sent to Laski recently. □

Nine Foreign Language Films Advance in 2007

Oscar® Race

Polish Film "Katyn" by

Andrzej Wajda is among them

Los Angeles - Nine films will advance to the next round of voting in the Foreign Language Film category for the 80th Academy Awards®. Sixty-three films had originally qualified in the category.

The nine films are from Austria, Brazil, Canada, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Russia, Serbia, and Poland, which is presenting "Katyn," Andrzej Wajda, director.

Foreign Language Film nominations are determined in two phases

The Phase I committee, consisting of several hundred Los Angeles-based members, screened the 63 eligible films and their ballots determined the above shortlist.

A Phase II committee, made up of ten randomly selected members from the Phase I group, joined by specially invited ten-member contingents in New York and Los Angeles, will view the shortlisted films and select the five nominees for the category.

Screenings of the films will take place from Friday, January 18, through Sunday, January 20, in both Hollywood and New York City.

Nominations for the 80th Academy Awards will be announced on Tuesday, January 22, 2008, at 5:30 a.m. PST in the Academy's Samuel Goldwyn Theater.

Academy Awards for outstanding film achievements of 2007 will be presented on Sunday, February 24, 2008, at the Kodak Theatre at Hollywood and Highland Center®, and televised live by the ABC Television Network beginning at 5 p.m. PST. The Oscar presentations will also be televised live in more than 200 countries worldwide.

Jadwiga Inglis, International Correspondent from Hollywood California □

Pope John Paul II Polish Center

3999 Rose Drive,
Yorba Linda, CA 92886

Mass Schedule:

Saturday 4:00 PM ENG

Sunday 7:00 AM Tridentine

9:00 AM ENG 10:30 AM PL

Tuesday - Friday 8:30AM ENG.

First Friday of the month

8:30 AM Eng 7:30 PM. PL

First Saturday of month

8:30 a.m. ENG

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Letter to the BBC

(British Broadcasting Company)

Dear Sir,

Over the past couple of years, I have complained to the BBC website about a number of issues. Sadly, no action has been taken by the BBC website to correct them. Some examples of what I am talking about follow:

In the article on the Battle of Britain it sates "They ((Luftwaffe)) had won convincingly in the Polish campaign in 1939." What does that mean? With a 5 to 1 numerical superiority over the Poles with 400 planes, the Germans lost 285 planes plus another 279 were badly damaged.

However this is one of the better articles as it does at least say "The experienced Polish and Czech squadrons achieved a better kill ratio against the Germans than the British squadrons."

At Monte Cassino the Polish 2nd Corp suffered 4,199 casualties including over 1,150 dead. The BBC website gives these brave men's contributions only the shortest of mentions "and the Polish Corps took Monte Cassio."

It is worse when you report about the battle at Arnhem, where Poles gave their lives but there is no mention at all in the article of the Poles' contribution.

Your coverage of the holocaust events fails to mention Poles and Slavs in general. Instead you say "Six million Jews were murdered in the Nazi death camps of World War II, along with thousands of Gypsies, homosexuals, disabled people and political dissidents." It was GERMANS not Nazis and it was not thousands BUT millions of others who died (e.g. Soviets prisoners of war). In Poland, 3 Million Polish Jews and 3 Million Polish Christians died at the hands of the Germans. I am pleased to hear that the Polish government is fighting back against the German attempts to rewrite history. It is clear that the BBC website is giving its full support to the German lies rather than the historical truth.

The following are some new complaints to show that the BBC website is still biased against Poles and Poland.

Recent examples of bias include your coverage of the breaking of the German codes used in World War Two. Not only do you fail to mention the brilliant work done by the Poles to break the codes BUT you then claim "The Nazi Enigma codes had baffled British and Polish cryptographers because there were so many millions of permutations." IT WAS POLES WHO BROKE THE CODE. It was the British who were baffled until the Poles gave them the secrets.

Even when you appear to do some good, you turn it into lies. The BBC survey on Poles in the UK has interesting results BUT then twist the results. In the section called "Unconvincing answers", you say "Scrutinising the results, we found some of the answers decidedly unconvincing. Many of the Poles appeared not to speak much English, and yet few have admitted to that in the survey". Only 35% thought them good at English. 52% said they can get by. I cannot speak Polish but when in Poland know enough to get by. When approached by someone in the street, I cannot talk to them as your writer would claim Poles are saying BUT I can ask for a table, order my meal, ask for the bill and say goodbye in Polish.

"It also seems unlikely that quite so many read British newspapers as say they do". They NEVER said that. The question was "I look at a British newspaper or see the British television news at least once or twice a week..." I am surprised that it was not a 100%. After all the Poles are hard working and would look (NOT read) at a newspaper once a week if only to LOOK at jobs and do you seriously believe that if you lived in a country you would not SEE a British television news programme at some point in a week?

Other parts were almost as bad. The article states "Whatever their feelings about Britain, our Poles appear unhappy about sharing their life here with Bulgarian and

Is it all ducky with Donald?

Mike Drobniewski

drobo39@hotmail.com

Living almost nonstop in Poland for the last four years and observing the political scene, I became terribly disenchanted and quite vocal about the political plunderers that are ruling this country. They stem from the various "parties" in other words "political clubs" that form the parliamentary representation of the electorate. Local city officials as well as national representatives do their utmost to hold on to their power by every conceivable means. Many club members sell their "loyalty and allegiance" to the highest bidder and/or switch parties and even form new ones if any of their certain expectations aren't met. Some of the even better known political figures cross over without any regard for party principles or promises made to their electorate. They feel that as "politicians" they are the "elite" (like God's chosen people) and can do whatever they see fit. Their belligerence and show of voter disregard is a daily soap opera carried out by the media. Kwasniewski, Lepper, Gertych, Kaczyński, Tusk, Rokita just to mention a few, relish in the attention they're getting for the daily nonsense they utter or do. These days Poland doesn't lack in "former politicians" but rather is running out of places to shelf them - for they just don't go away on their own. No one totally falls from grace in this political arena where graft, bribes and sex favors are not a scandal but rather a "mode of operation". Here, national patriotism is expressed by critical overtones and open jeering of Lech Wałęsa and other former Solidarity members who are held in high regard everywhere but Poland. Such an example of democratic self rule and patriotism will require years of mature and sober thinking that as yet has not seeded itself in the Polish political soil. One native Pole told me that it took Moses forty years of wandering in the desert before his teachings were accepted. So, Poland still has a few decades to go. I admire the poles for their patience and tolerance.

Granted the "Twin Power", as I previously nick-named the Kaczyński brothers were perhaps too zealous in their approach of cleaning up the corruption of the past administration which even extended beyond Poland's borders to Chicago and recently to Arizona. Perhaps this was only one of the contributing factors to the twins' political demise. But on the other hand, let's look at the opposition from the "sejm" (congress and the senate), right after the election of two years ago. Donald Tusk, as a leader of PO, demanded that a premier be chosen from his losing party, preferably him. Since he, so very much wanted to be second in command and this didn't happen, but instead, a weak coalition was formed with Lepper's Samo Obrona and Gertych's Liga Polskich Rodzin he and his party became non supportive of everything the fragile lame duck government attempted to do. It was easy for Tusk's club, Platforma Obywatelska, to promote fear of investigations, loss of title and political clout or possible imprisonment among its members and other clubs since, most were guilty of the improprieties that were being investigated. Where greed, hunger for power, sex in various forms and the "almighty złoty" is a concern, it becomes a fight for preserving the status quo among this "elite political society of greedy politicians."

These PIS hearings, like the McCarthy trails of the 50's, in the U.S. were dubbed "a witch hunt". The difference being that the 50's trails ended with an untimely death of one senator, Joseph McCarthy, and not with the abolishment of the entire government as happened in Poland. How can the costs of these elections in this impoverished nation be justified when nothing has really changed for the betterment of Poland?

Today, the Poles are asking themselves what the elections accomplish. They see the same "good old boys" standing at the trough - perhaps in a slightly different fashion, nevertheless fighting for the same thing –

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