

Mr. Janusz Bugajski

By: *Susanne S. Lotarski*, Ph.D.
Vice President for Public Relations
Polish American Congress

Janusz Bugajski has been named as the inaugural holder of the Lavrentis Lavrentiadis Chair on Southeast European Studies at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington. CSIS announced the establishment of the new chair and Mr. Bugajski's appointment in a half page notice published in the Washington Post, on Monday, October 19, 2009, page 16A.

The Chair will:

--Strengthen U.S.-Southeast European relations through specialized visibility given to the region in Washington.

-- Educate the Washington policymaking and European diplomatic community on issues impacting the region through a range of public events and publications.

--Generate recommendations for U.S. policy toward the Southeast European region.

"Before this appointment, Mr. Bugajski was director of CSIS' New European Democracies Project. He previously served as a senior research analyst for Radio Free Europe in Munich and as a consultant on Central-East European affairs for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the U.S. Department of Defense, the International Republican Institute, the Free Trade Union Institute (of the AFL-CIO), the International Research and Exchange Board, and BBC television in London.

In 1998, he received the Distinguished Public Service Award from the U.S. Department of State, USAID, U.S. Information Agency, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in recognition of his contribution to international affairs.

Bugajski holds an M. Phil. (Masters in Philosophy Degree) in social anthropology from the London School of Economics and Political Science."

Mr. Bugajski spoke to the Polish American Congress Washington Metro Division in March 2009, on the subject of "Putinist Russia's Pragmatic Reimperialization." His book titled "Expanding Eurasia: Russia's European Ambitions" was published earlier in 2009. PAC congratulates Mr. Bugajski on his appointment and accomplishments. □



PAC meeting from 1

was present in the Senate with President Spula.

Susanne Lotarski, Vice President for Public Relations, reported that she is sending information to the national Directors. She had a letter published in the Washington Post regarding the appointment of Lee Feinstein as Ambassador to Poland. She worked with Frank Spula on a letter to President Obama regarding the Center for a European Coalition and she worked on the Symposium Planning Committee.

Debbie Majka, Vice President for Cultural Activities, spoke about the exhibit of eight Polish posters displayed at the Symposium. The ACPC is in possession of eight more. They are available for borrowing – at no charge, except the necessary postage. In addition: 1.) She has been appointed to the American Red Cross Holocaust Tracing Committee and will report on the WW II 70th Anniversary events. Mrs. Majka would like to receive information from the divisions. 2.) At the symposium there were several discussions regarding youth involvement. The ACPC Youth Leadership Conference will be held in Washington June 20 - 26 (for ages 18 - 25.) The cost is \$500. Each division was urged to sponsor a student. 3.) Holy Family Church in Pittsburgh has closed. The Jan de Rosen mural is being moved to Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, Pa. on November 1. The ACPC needs \$15,000 for the restoration of the mural.

Award:

The President of Cepelia (in Poland) presented an award to President Spula for the fine job that he is doing.

Committee Reports:

Credentials Committee Chair Theresa Bunk (Upstate New York) presented the following nominations: V.P. – Public Relations – Susanne Lotarski (Washington Metro), V.P. - Financial Development - Paul Sosnowski (Philadelphia), and V.P. – Membership Development – Roman (Roy) Pulko (Eastern Massachusetts.)

Antoinette Trela-Vandernoot (PWA Chicago) reported for the Nominating Committee. Each of the candidates gave a brief biography.

Francis Rutkowski, Election Committee Chair, recommended that the Secretary cast a unanimous ballot.

Newly elected Paul Sosnowski has many innovative ideas. One is to raise dues. Others are to get corporate sponsors, to get support from Poland, to try for public funds (the stimulus), and to get more member organizations.

Roy Pulko, Membership Development V.P., will use the census information to determine where Polish people live. He will stimulate communication and seek membership at masses.

Institute of National Remembrance

IPN President Kurtyka explained that the IPN has 11 branches – the central branch being in Warsaw, with 2,000 employees. There are four divisions: Research, Education, Lustration, and Crimes Against Poland from 1939 – 1989. If the papers in the IPN archives were put side by side they would measure fifty-five miles long.

There are four ways to gain access to the files: 1.) Journalists and researchers – full access, 2.) apply for access – only information for that person, 3.) restricted – regarding the security of Poland, and 4.) persons in positions of public trust are obligated to admit if they were in the Secret Police and file a vetting declaration.

A question and answer (Q and A) session followed: (Polish/English translations were used.)

Q - Can a U.S. citizen apply to get their files from IPN?

A - Yes, everyone can apply -- regardless of citizenship.

Q - Can organized Polonia apply for study regarding actions against Polonia?

A - If the PAC asked about certain persons, they cannot answer – only private persons may apply.

Q - Who is qualified to be a researcher?

A - PhDs and journalists.

Q - How can the PAC build trust when disruptive members are present?

A - All I can say is that a New Jersey delegate resigned.

Q - Who recommends persons for PAC membership?

A - There must be two sponsors on the application. It is then sent to a committee in the national office that accepts or rejects the application. The Chicago office has questioned some. The final decision is at the national level.

Q - In the future, will we know more about infiltration in the U.S.?

A - If the documentation exists. Some documents were destroyed in 1980. Some were microfilmed. IPN is working on putting the records in order.

Q - The PAC is divided on this Lustration issue. The PAC bylaws state that former communist collaborators be excluded from the Board of Directors, National Directors and Division officers. How do we know how to comply with this?

A - An applicant writes to IPN to have access to his/her records. An applicant gets a letter. There are two types of replies: 1.) They can view the files or 2.) They have no access to the files, as they were communists or informants. This procedure consists of the self-vetting procedure. Self-vetting was easier before, as everyone could apply. Agents/informants only will receive part of the materials and will be denied access. Self-vetting is effective in 90 % of cases.. A team of researchers is a better solution to sort out the 10% of ambiguous self-vetting cases.

Q - Why has so little vetting been done on the Germans?

A - This is not true. In 1997 German information was begun.

Q - What were the benefits in being an informant?

A - There were various awards, such as: money, employment, helping to pass given exams, removing the competition, permission for the spouse to leave the country.

Q - In the U.S. we have constitutional rights and the right to privacy. We also have the presumption of innocence until proven guilty. The researchers violate this right to privacy.

A - Books and newspapers are open to the public.

Q The degrading of Polish organizations in the U.S. was the reason for the weakening of the Community. The agents still have influence. Please comment.

A - The PolAm Community is responsible for itself and must make their own efforts. Agents often work behind the scenes. Businesses, journalists, and people working in the scientific field are often used as a cover. The institute has offered to help with this situation.

President Spula thanked the speakers. The information brought out issues at hand. Some PAC members are in favor of lustration. Personal contacts in Poland are important and we need to communicate with Poland's leaders.

Resolutions

Resolutions Committee Chair, Francis X. Gates presented the following resolutions, which passed:

1.) The American Agenda needs a greater emphasis on American issues and approaching legislators.

2.) The 2010 census ignores the count of Polish Americans. They should write in "Polish" where it says White.

3.) The PAC needs to have a flag designed and made.

4.) The Visa waiver should eliminate all fees.

5.) The PAC should create a monument in Warsaw, regarding the contribution of immigrants.

6.) The PAC President will appoint an Ethics Committee with five members to investigate any allegations made against any Board members or officers.

Resolutions to be brought to the Executive Board for discussion were:

1.) PAC dues should be reduced

2.) Polish Anti-defamation classes should be given.

Polish Institute received Polish Heritage Award

The Polish Institute of Arts & Sciences of America (PIASA) an academic and cultural society based in New York City, was presented with the coveted "Polish Heritage Award" during the 40th Annual Polish Heritage Award Gala on Sunday, October 4, 2009 at the Marriott O'Hare Hotel, Chicago Illinois. The annual event is sponsored by the Polish American Congress/Illinois Division. The Polish Institute was cited "for steadfast dedication to the cause of Polish Intellectual Freedom and human dignity in an era when those inalienable rights were profoundly endangered and for maintaining a strong center of learning and Polish culture in the capital city of the world." The presentation was made by the President of the Polish American Congress/Illinois Division, Kazimierz Casey Chlebek and Teresa B. Buckner Vice President of PAC and chairperson of the event.

Dr. Thaddeus V. Gromada, President and Executive Director of the Polish Institute, accepted the coveted award. He has been associated with PIASA over 38 years and served formerly as its Secretary General. Dr. Gromada expressed thanks for this recognition as a tangible sign that the Polish American Congress understands and appreciates the role that PIASA has played for 67 years, since 1942. He further stressed the need of developing a creative cooperative partnership among Polonia organizations that is based on the principles of coordination, division of labor and emphasis on positive activities. "Such a partnership will go a long way in helping Polonia secure a more influential position in mainstream America", he declared.

PIASA is an academic society founded in 1942 whose mission is to advance knowledge about Poland's intellectual and cultural heritage in America and Polish American contributions to America's pluralistic society. Its headquarters is a five story townhouse on 208 East 30th Street, New York, NY 10016 which contains a reference library, archives, editorial offices, a gallery and a lecture hall. For more information visit the Institute's website: www.piasa.org

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Conclusion

Susanne Lotarski announced that there will be a celebration in Washington in May, and she will send more information to the News of Polonia when it is finalized.

President Spula felt that compromises had been reached, and the lustration issue should be put behind us. He said that it was a "grueling day", but we should "walk out as one." The Symposium was a great success, and hopefully will be continued.

(Editor's note: An article about the PAC sponsored Symposium held on October 15 and 16 at Northeastern University will be printed in the November issue.) □

Polish American Congress

Of Southern California

Invites you to attend our monthly meeting

Sunday, November 22 12:00 - noon

Pope John Paul II Polish Center
3999 Rose Drive
Yorba Linda

Non-members are welcome to attend our meetings. You can see the many projects we have achieved and are working on for Polonia. To get a PAC Mission Statement please call:

Information: (323) 240-8525 (626) 577-9797