

## **‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association**

# ***‘Our Hero’. A Hero’s Welcome For An Apartheid Killer by Football Hooligans. Report***



Warsaw, April 2025

## SUMMARY

On the anniversary of Chris Hani's tragic death, the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association publishes a report on the glorification of the racist killer Janusz Walus by football hooligans. On 10 April 1993, Walus assassinated Hani, a leading South African anti-apartheid activist and a close associate of Nelson Mandela. In December 2024, Walus landed in Warsaw, Poland. The far right has created a peculiar cult around the killer.

Walus emigrated to South Africa from Poland in 1981. He became involved in the activities of a neo-Nazi organisation called Afrikaner Resistance Movement (Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging, AWB). By murdering Hani, he tried to stop democratic changes aimed at dismantling the system of racial segregation. He was sentenced to death, but his sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. In 2022, he was granted parole but was required to remain in South Africa for an additional two years.

The report by the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association documents recent expressions of support for Walus in the football context. Hooligans have demonstrated their admiration on banners during football games, on city walls, and on social media.

The appreciation for Walus was demonstrated in January during the football fans' annual pilgrimage to Czestochowa (Jasna Gora), the most important Catholic monastery in Poland. The organiser of this event, Father Jaroslaw Wasowicz, has been known for preaching extreme nationalist views. For years, he has supported Walus in his public appearances, for example in 2017, during a Polish community event in Slough, UK where he posed for a photo with a banner glorifying the murderer. Wasowicz is a member of the Support Committee for the Candidate for President of the Republic of Poland, Karol Nawrocki.

On his return to Poland, Walus confirmed his attachment to the ideology of racism and his complete lack of remorse for the murder he had committed. In one of his YouTube interviews, he argued his case firmly by exclaiming 'We had to eliminate someone'.

Rafal Pankowski, co-founder of the 'NEVER AGAIN' Association, Professor at Warsaw-based Collegium Civitas, and Rotary Peace Fellow at Makerere University

in Kampala, Uganda says: - ‘The cult of Walus was largely built in the stadium stands. It is tolerated by both football authorities and clubs’.

The report includes an appendix with the words of Ewa Walus, the daughter of Janusz Walus, who contacted the ‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association, ‘I have never shared my father’s views. I think that proclaiming such harmful, racist and neo-Nazi statements is outrageous, but above all, it is dangerous. Because we see how the world is getting radicalised’.

The ‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association is an independent anti-racist organization founded in Warsaw in 1996. It has campaigned against antisemitism, racism and xenophobia, and for peace, intercultural dialogue and human rights both in Poland and internationally. ‘NEVER AGAIN’ has conducted the first anti-racism campaign in Eastern European football, ‘Let’s Kick Racism Out of the Stadiums’ and is a founding member of the FARE network.

The campaign ‘Let’s Kick Racism out of Stadiums’ was a brainchild of the late Marcin Kornak (1968-2014), who chaired ‘NEVER AGAIN’ for many years. ‘Let’s Kick Racism out of Stadiums’ has run since the mid-1990s with the aim to combat racism and discrimination at stadiums. One of its main components is monitoring and reporting of hate crimes and hate speech cases.

Rafal Pankowski (‘NEVER AGAIN Association’) with Lester Kiewit about the welcome of Chris Hani’s unrepentant killer Janusz Walus by the far-right in Poland: <https://nigdywiecej.org/en/multimedia/video-materials/5543-rafal-pankowski-with-lester-kiewit-about-the-welcome-of-janusz-walus-by-the-far-right-in-poland-24-01-2025>

\*\*\*

**Report by:** Rafal Pankowski, Anna Tatar

**English translations by:** Krystyna Cwierniewska, Ilona Nowaszczuk, Bartosz Pelka

**English-language editor:** Kaja Raszewska

**‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association contact information:**

e-mail: [info@neveragainassociation.org](mailto:info@neveragainassociation.org)

[www.neveragainassociation.org](http://www.neveragainassociation.org)

[www.facebook.com/Respect.Diversity](https://www.facebook.com/Respect.Diversity)

[www.twitter.com/StowNIGDYWIECEJ](https://www.twitter.com/StowNIGDYWIECEJ)

<https://neveragainnw.bsky.social>

[www.linkedin.com/company/never-again-association](https://www.linkedin.com/company/never-again-association)

## ***‘Our Hero’. A Hero’s Welcome For An Apartheid Killer by Football Hooligans. Report***

**WARSAW.** On 7 December 2024, **Janusz Walus** was deported to Poland. He had been sentenced to death in 1993 in South Africa for the murder of Chris Hani, an anti-apartheid activist, a leading member of the African National Congress (ANC) and general secretary of the South African Communist Party (SACP) and a close associate of Nelson Mandela. His sentence was later commuted to life imprisonment. In 2022, the Constitutional Court had granted his conditional release, but he was required to remain in South Africa until December 2024.

Walus landed at Chopin Airport in Warsaw, accompanied by **Grzegorz Braun** [1], Member of the European Parliament and leader of the far-right party **Konfederacja Korony Polskiej (Confederation of the Polish Crown)** [2]. He has long promoted the cult of Walus, including speaking at a 2017 demonstration outside the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where he criticised the Polish government for failing to support Walus. In 2020, he submitted a parliamentary inquiry about *‘bringing him back to his homeland’*, and in November 2022, he publicly defended Walus’s crime. During a press conference in the Parliament, he stated, *‘I place myself with those who believe that shooting communist party secretaries is not necessarily a crime and, in some cases, may even be an act of higher necessity’*.

**Tomasz Stala**, a **Konfederacja (Confederation)** party [3] candidate in the 2024 Polish general election and owner of **3dom** publishing house, was also accompanying Walus during his flight. Stala had long supported Walus, organising fundraisers for him. One such effort has been the so-called Santa Claus Campaign, where profits from 3dom's sales on 6 December each year would be donated to Walus. Other far-right activists, including **Przemysław Holocher** [4], **Marcin Rola** [5], and **Radosław Patlewicz** [6], also took part in this initiative and expressed support for the convicted murderer on social media.

At Chopin Airport, Walus was welcomed by members of the **Bad Company** motorcycle club, which includes Nazis and repeat offenders [7]. The club’s logo features a World War II Wehrmacht helmet wrapped in Polish colours with the emblem of **Zwiazek Jaszczurczy (Lizard Union)**, a successor to the pre-war **Oboz Narodowo-Radykalny (National Radical Camp)** [8]. In 2024, Bad Company members participated in Warsaw’s Independence Day March, an annual extreme-right demonstration. The group's anthem was recorded by the Nazi rock band **Obled (Madness)**, formerly known as **Konkwista 88** (where ‘88’ stands for ‘Heil Hitler’).

Janusz Walus was thus welcomed in Warsaw by far-right extremists. In the following weeks, he reaffirmed his racist beliefs and showed no remorse or reflection on the murder he had committed.

\*\*\*\*\*

[1] Grzegorz Braun, who is also a 2025 presidential candidate, was charged with seven hate crimes in 2024. In October 2024, the Minister of Justice requested the European Parliament to waive Braun's immunity.

[2] Konfederacja Korony Polskiej (Confederation of the Polish Crown), far-right conspiracy theorists.

[3] In February 2025, Stala was charged under Article 256(2) of the Criminal Code by the Czestochowa District Prosecutor's Office for selling publications inciting national and racial hatred. Konfederacja (Confederation) is a far-right political party.

[4] Przemyslaw Holocher: head of the far-right **Magna Polonia** foundation and former leader of Oboz Narodowo-Radykalny (National Radical Camp).

[5] Marcin Rola: founder of the far-right **wRealu24** online channel.

[6] Radoslaw Patlewicz is the author of books promoting myths of alleged ritual murders carried out by Jews against Christians (blood libel).

[7] Bad Company's co-founder, **Olgierd L.**, is a known Nazi skinhead and football hooligan associated with **Lechia Gdansk** football club. He has multiple convictions for violent crimes and leading an organised crime group. In December 2024, Poland's Internal Security Agency (ABW) arrested him in connection with arson attacks carried out on behalf of Russian intelligence. Authorities also found fascist materials in his possession. Another Bad Company associate, **Grzegorz H.**, is a member of the international neo-Nazi group **Blood and Honour** (*Blut und Ehre* was the motto of the **Hitler Youth**).

[8] Oboz Narodowo-Radykalny (National-Radical Camp): a fascist organisation founded (and banned) in 1934, reformed in the 2000s.

\*\*\*

**At the end of November 2024, the media reported that Janusz Walus would return from South Africa to Poland. In response to this news, the Polish far right began celebrating his arrival:**

**MIELEC.** On 7 December 2024, **Karol Dolina**, head of **Patriotyczny Mielec (Patriotic Mielec)** association, praised the racist murderer **Janusz Walus** on the Twitter/X platform. Dolina wrote, *‘Welcome home, brother!’* and shared two photos: one showing Walus at Chopin Airport just after his arrival in Poland, and the other depicting a flag with the latter’s image and the slogan *‘Stay strong, brother’* which had been displayed during a top flight match between **Slask Wroclaw** and **Lech Poznan** in August 2018 (football hooligans have been expressing their support for Walus in stadiums and on the streets for years).

The ‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association reported this post to Twitter/X, but it has not been removed.

**WARSAW.** On 7 December 2024, hooligans of the **Okecie Warszawa** football club, associated with the informal football fan group **Szwadron’15**, posted on Facebook a praise for **Janusz Walus**, who arrived in Poland from South Africa that day. They announced, *‘Regardless of how the left-wing media present this matter, one thing is certain: WE ARE WAITING FOR YOU, MR JANUSZ!’* And further, *‘Polish state must support its citizens – regardless of their views or situation. It is our duty! Janusz Walus, come back home!’* This post was accompanied by photos of Walus at the airport.

The ‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association reported the post to Facebook for promoting hate, but it has not been removed.

**GLIWICE.** On 8 December 2024, during the top flight football game between Piast Gliwice and **Cracovia Krakow**, visiting hooligans displayed a banner on the fence around the pitch expressing their support for **Janusz Walus**. The previous day, he had been deported to Poland from South Africa, where he had served 29 years in prison for a racist murder. The banner bore a slogan: *‘Janusz Walus, welcome home’*.



**WARSAW.** On 8 December 2024, the Facebook page of football hooligans **Wlady Trybun (Masters of the Stands)**, with over 112,000 followers) published a material glorifying **Janusz Walus**, who had arrived from South Africa to Poland the previous day. The post began with the words, *‘The first 24 hours have passed since the tireless man of tough character returned to his homeland’*. Further on, it turned antisemitic, *‘After entering the arrivals hall, he was cornered by a scribbler representing «GW» [1] asking dumb questions. The last of the Accursed [2] ignored this kike [3]’*. A photo of Walus taken at the Chopin Airport in Warsaw was attached to the post. Under the material, comments containing expressions of appreciation for the killer as well as death threats against politicians were made:

- *‘He did the right thing. Only National Poland!’*
- *‘Respect for him. He pulled out the weed’.*

- 'The only guy who could sort out the alien prime minister who is ruling Poland has returned' [the comment encouraged the assassination of the current Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk]. The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association reported this post to Facebook for hate speech and it has been removed.

\*\*\*\*\*

[1] 'Gazeta Wyborcza': mainstream liberal newspaper and website.

[2] 'Accursed soldiers': name given to a group of anti-communist guerrilla which operated in Poland after 1945.

[3] 'Kike': Pol. 'parch', an anti-Jewish insult in use since the 19th century.

**LODZ.** On 9 December 2024, during the second division football game between **LKS Lodz** and Arka Gdynia, 'fans' of the local team hung a banner on the fence surrounding the pitch, that read '**Janusz Walus, welcome home**'. By doing so, they manifested their support for the racist murderer who was deported from South Africa to Poland on 7 December.



**LODZ.** On 29 December 2024, the Facebook page of **Teo Gang** football hooligan group (**LKS Lodz** supporters from the Teofilow housing estate) posted a photo of graffiti expressing support for **Janusz Walus**. The hooligans spray-painted the phrase '**Janusz Walus - our hero**' on a city wall, and repeated it in their Facebook post.

The 'NEVER AGAIN' Association reported this post to Facebook for hate speech. In March 2025 the post was no longer available.



## 2025

**CZESTOCHOWA.** On 11 January 2025, during the so-called Patriotic Football Fan Pilgrimage at Jasna Gora [1], some participants displayed slogans and symbols referring to racism and neo-Nazism. This provoked no reaction from the representatives of the Pauline Order in charge of Jasna Gora, nor from Karol Nawrocki, a presidential candidate and head of the state-supported Institute of National Remembrance, who attended the event.



Some hooligans of **Rakow Czestochowa** displayed scarves with the slogan '**Janusz Walus is our role model**'. They also exhibited slogans such as '**White honour, white pride**' [2] and the symbol of the so-called 'triskelion', a three-armed swastika, the emblem of the neo-fascist **Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB)**, of which Walus was a member. In addition, Rakow hooligans displayed scarves with neo-Nazi symbolism of the international neo-Nazi organisation **Blood and Honour** [3]. The organisation is banned in Germany, Spain, Canada, and the UK, among other countries.



Father **Jaroslaw Wasowicz**, the organiser of the 'fan pilgrimage', appeared at the event wearing a scarf featuring a crossed-out image of Che Guevara. For a long time now, he has supported Walus in his public appearances, for example in 2017, during a Polish community event in Slough, UK where he posed for a photo with a banner glorifying the murderer.



For years, Fr. Wasowicz has been known for preaching extreme nationalist views. He once expressed his wish for the '*resurrection of our beloved Fatherland, without KOD [4], false authorities, paid traitors. The resurrection of Christianity in Europe, which is heading towards self-destruction. A Europe without multi-kulti, Islamists, leftists, and political correctness*' in '**Gazeta Polska**', a right-wing weekly. He became a member of the Support Committee for the Candidate for President of the Republic of Poland, Karol Nawrocki.

\*\*\*\*\*

[1] Jasna Gora monastery: one of the most important Polish shrines and religious pilgrimage sites.

[2] Title of a song by a neo-Nazi band **Konkwista 88**, with the digits 88 symbolising the greeting '**Heil Hitler**'.

[3] Blood and Honour: originally *Blut und Ehre*, the motto of the **Hitlerjugend**.

[4] Committee for the Defence of Democracy (KOD): NGO promoting liberal values.

**BYDGOSZCZ.** On 14 January 2025, at the headquarters of the far-right organisation **Bydgoscy Patrioci (Patriots of Bydgoszcz)** a dozen or so members of this group celebrated the birthday of Janusz Walus. They posted a recording of the event on their YouTube channel. The ‘birthday party’ – although without the celebrant present – took place in a room with a large banner with his portrait and the slogan ‘*Lone White Wolf*’ on the wall. One of the leaders of the Bydgoszcz group paraded around in a T-shirt featuring Walus’s image and praised the assassin, ‘*He is a very important person for us. You could say – the last accursed soldier*’. He also presented racist gadgets displayed in the organisation’s headquarters. The walls were adorned with dozens of football club scarves featuring Walus’s image, slogans supporting him (e.g., ‘*Stay strong, brother*’, in English), Celtic crosses and ‘triskelion’ symbols. Slogans such as ‘*Death to the enemies of the fatherland*’ and other inscriptions were also visible, including ‘*White Zawiszenie*’, a reference to hooligans of the **Zawisza**



**Bydgoszcz** football club. Additionally, a scarf bearing the distinctive red, white and black logo of the international neo-Nazi organisation **Blood and Honour** was on display. The headquarters of the Bydgoscy Patrioci also featured a **Confederate** flag [1]. Furthermore, there was an exhibition in the building, honouring Captain **Romuald Rajs ‘Bury’**, who commanded the unit responsible for committing genocide against the Belarusian minority population in the Podlasie region in 1946.

Also on 14 January, Bydgoscy Patrioci published a post on their Facebook page expressing support for Walus, ‘*Our previous wishes have come true, you are now a free man and have returned to your homeland*’ and an image of ‘*Lone White Wolf*’.

Comments supporting the murder of Hani were made under the post, for example: ‘*Well done, Walus, you dealt with this commie, respect. [...] Once with a sickle, once with a hammer [hitting] the red rabble!!!*’ and even a ‘poem’, ‘*And communism among the primitives / Still wild n\*groes / It’s a hundredfold horror there / Bloody cliques rule / In South Africa, Hani the Bolshevik / Fell by your hand / It’s a repeat of Russia / The country is going through torment!*’ signed: **Slawomir Mazur**.

The ‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association reported the materials for hate speech respectively to YouTube (not removed) and Facebook (removed).

\*\*\*\*\*

[1] Confederate flag: historically used by the Southern states defending slavery during the US Civil War and considered a symbol of racial discrimination.

**POZNAN.** On 6 February 2025, the Facebook profile **Wildeccy Fanatycy**, which belongs to a far-right group of hooligans of the **Lech Poznan** football club, posted the slogan ‘*Only Nationalist Poland II*’ as a caption to an image of a banner honouring **Janusz Walus**. The flag, bearing the inscription ‘*Janusz Walus – welcome home*’ was displayed by the hooligans on an flyover above one of Poznan’s main roads.



Comments supporting the murder and inciting national hatred were made under the post, such as:

- ‘*He killed a Communist terrorist – bless him for that*’.

- ‘*Poland for Poles*’.

- ‘*Finally, something pro Polish! Now it's time for anti-Ukrainian banners*’.

The ‘NEVER AGAIN’ Association reported the post to Facebook for promoting hate and it has been removed.

\*\*\*

## **APPENDIX**

### **EWA WALUS, DAUGHTER OF JANUSZ WALUS:**

#### **Who do you think is Janusz Walus?**

On the one hand, he is my father, which cannot be changed, and on the other hand, he seems to be growing into an idol of the Polish far right.

Of course, I follow my dad's public media appearances and what do I feel? I feel shame above all. And when I read the comments under these interviews, I simply feel terrified that it can be perceived and praised in such a way. I myself have never shared my father's views. I think that making such harmful, racist and neo-Nazi statements is outrageous, but above all, it is dangerous. Because we see how the world is getting radicalised.

What apartheid really was and what my father tried to do through an assassination, in order to maintain this system, I learned, I actually understood in depth only now, as an adult, when I visited him last year [2024] in Africa. I spent a month there, I met a lot of people, mainly Black people, who are very open, very curious about people from different countries. I really got the best impression of them, and I also realised how important the murder of Chris Hani still is in South Africa, how it is still remembered.

#### **Have you been to the famous Apartheid Museum [in Johannesburg], where there is a display case dedicated to Chris Hani?**

Yes, it was one of my most difficult experiences. I simply saw in such an inconspicuous display case, I really do not know anything about weapons, but such a really small pistol, that changed the lives of Hani's daughters, mine, and perhaps of many other people, so I saw it and I know. And imagine that at the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of democracy in South Africa, when I was waiting to enter, hearing that I was a foreigner, a soldier guarding the entrance asked me where I was from, I said I was from Poland, and he asked, 'Have you heard of Janusz Walus?'

#### **Did you ask why exactly he killed a man he didn't even know?**

In fact, we only started seriously talking about it in April last year [2024], when I went to see my father, because when I got involved in various initiatives on his behalf, I always emphasised that family was my motivation, because he is my father.

#### **Do you have a problem with what your father currently represents?**

Of course I have a problem with this, because it was in Africa when it turned out that my thinking, perhaps naive, that I would somehow regain my father, that I would gain a grandfather for my daughter, who was of course born during his imprisonment... It turned out that all this time in jail did not bring him any reflections, any change. I even began to fear that he might have further radicalised.

#### **What does your relationship look like now?**

I will go back for a moment to my visit to Africa, because when I found out how the things really were, and we had those serious talks, [then] I found out what all of Poland is now finding out from my father's media appearances. I told him that he still had time to think it over, because if

he got involved in public, political activities here on the side of the far right, he would lose us. He would lose me, he would lose my daughter, because a certain line would be crossed. Currently, our relationship is rather chilly. My father has not met my daughter. We are in occasional contact.

**Grzegorz Braun, not you, but Grzegorz Braun brought Janusz Walus over from South Africa to Poland. What do you think about that?**

It was, of course, my father's decision to invite Mr Braun over to South Africa. It even put me in an awkward position with the Polish diplomatic services, with whom I was still coordinating some details about his return. When I look at the comments under the interviews... People can think different things. However, what is terrifying is that they are currently finding their representatives among politicians, such as Mr Braun, such as Mr Nawrocki, who will run for the highest office in this country.

**Do you think your father can be dangerous both politically and literally? Why does he carry a knife on him?**

It is hard for me to answer for him, why does he carry a knife with him? Is he politically dangerous? In my opinion, supporting racism, neo-fascism and similar ideologies is extremely dangerous. As for the direct danger, obviously I would like to believe that there is no danger. However, in the interview [with Krzysztof Stanowski on Kanal Zero], when he was cornered, he finally said that you don't necessarily have to be a terrorist to die at his hands.

**Do you think that Janusz Walus killed Chris Hani out of hatred, or was he manipulated into it or did the secret services get involved?**

In fact, I do not know if it matters to me, because the personal, human dimension that my father distances himself from has always been important to me. He claims that it was nothing personal, that it was some kind of mission, some kind of war, something that justifies it. I simply see it as a crime that has harmed many people.

**Did you talk to Chris Hani's daughter?**

Yes, a few times.

**And what did that conversation look like? You are about the same age, right?**

Yes, and we have somewhat similar experiences, mainly professional. I remember the first conversation in particular, because Lindiwe said that we both lost our fathers on the same day.

The conversation was broadcast on 23 January 2025, on Tok FM Radio in Warsaw, interviewer: Mikolaj Lizut.