

August 22, 2019

Mr. John Tomczak
President, National Board of Directors
Canadian Polish Congress
3055 Lake Shore Blvd W
Toronto, ON M8V 1K6

Mr. Bartłomiej Habrowski
President
Canadian Polish Congress Toronto District
206 Beverley Street
Toronto, ON M5T 1Z3

cc: Mr. Juliusz Kirejczyk, First Vice President / Canadian Affairs, Canadian Polish Congress
cc: Executive Board of Directors, Canadian Polish Congress Toronto District
cc: Executive Board of Directors, 28 member organizations under the Canadian Polish Congress Toronto District umbrella

Sent via email on behalf of a group of concerned citizens

Dear Mr. Tomczak and Mr. Habrowski,

As you are aware, an anti-Semitic open letter, dated April 12, 2019, entitled *LIST OTWARTY DO POLONII KANADYJSKIEJ*, and signed by Mr. Bartłomiej Habrowski, President of the Canadian Polish Congress (CPC) Toronto District, was published on the CPC Toronto District website on May 27, 2019 – the online date of publication as was provided on the CPC Toronto District website.

The letter clearly alludes to anti-Semitic conspiracy theories, embeds video of a Polish far-right extremist pronouncing anti-Semitic rhetoric, and calls on Canada's over one million Polonia to support the "initiative" of the extremist spewing hateful anti-Semitism in the embedded video.

We, the undersigned, a group of concerned citizens, hold strongly that it is our moral duty and responsibility to stand up against anti-Semitism and all forms of hate and that it is categorically unacceptable for hateful content to have appeared on a CPC website.

In response to a letter of complaint - dated August 16, 2019 and sent to Mr. John Tomczak via email on August 17, 2019 – Mr. Tomczak acted quickly to have the offensive publication removed from the CPC Toronto website. In the email exchange between Mr. Tomczak and the complainant, Mr. Matthew Samulewski, a member of Canada's Polonia community, Mr. Tomczak confirmed that the Canadian Polish Congress "firmly stands against racism and anti-semitism in all its forms."

We are grateful to Mr. Tomczak for his immediate response and quick action in having the letter removed. We also appreciate Mr. Tomczak's further statement against racism and anti-Semitism.

We, the undersigned, call on Mr. Bartłomiej Habrowski to resign, on principle and of his own accord, as President of the CPC Toronto District. With this letter and publication, he has brought discredit to the

community leadership position he still currently holds, and he has brought dishonour to the CPC and to Polonia in Toronto and Canada.

Expressing one's opposition to another country's laws is fair and legitimate in a free and democratic society. Resorting to anti-Semitism to communicate that political opposition is racist and unacceptable. Using the vehicle of the CPC to publicize such intolerant dissent is indecent and is an insult to Canadian Polonia.

Not only has this anti-Semitic incident placed a dark cloud over the CPC - the letter had remained public under the CPC banner for over two and a half months – but, because the CPC's stated purpose is to "represent Canada's Polish community, its interests and the interests of Polish Canadians,"¹ that same shadow falls on Canada's Polonia community as a whole.

This cloud must be lifted.

We note, in the CPC's publicly available General Operating By-Law, in Section 10.01, that "All Districts are autonomous internal operating divisions of the Congress *acting in accordance with the governing documents of the Congress and the Act*" (NB – bolded italics our own).²

The executives of the national CPC, of the CPC local district branches, and the 28 member organizations under the CPC Toronto District umbrella can also help determine whether Mr. Habrowski can, in good conscience, carry on in his position of responsibility and leadership following this disgraceful incident.

Attached is a screen shot of the open letter in question. The screen shot was acquired on August 16, 2019.

Please note, the date of online publication of the open letter as was provided on the CPC Toronto District website is May 27, 2019.

The letter was removed from the CPC Toronto District website on August 17, 2019.

We look forward to your very prompt response.

Sincerely,

Małgorzata P. Bonikowska, PhD, Editor-in-Chief, "Gazeta" and POLcast
Gabriela Bragues, Dundas, ON
Victoria Bragues, LLM Human Rights, Dundas ON
Victor M. Bragues, Dundas, ON
Lucien Conrad, Past President, National Board of Directors, Canadian Polish Congress
Micha Czyzewska, Leven, Fife, Scotland

¹ <http://kpk.org/articles-of-continuance>

² <http://kpk.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/GOB.pdf> Further, in the same document, Section 1.01(a) reads: "Act" means the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, S.C. 2009, c. 23, including any regulations made pursuant to the Act and any statute or regulations that may be substituted, as amended from time to time." Section 1.01(t) reads: "Governing Documents" means the Articles (including the Purposes), this Bylaw, all other By-laws and all Policies of the Congress, as adopted or amended from time to time."

Yolanda Czyzewski-Bragues, Vice-President, Canadian Polish Congress, Hamilton District
Ewa Henry, Artist and Columnist, Toronto, ON
Alicja Gettlich, Past Secretary General, National Board of Directors, Canadian Polish Congress
Helen Glogowski, President, Canadian Polish Congress, Hamilton District
Prof. Jan Grabowski, Department of History, University of Ottawa
Sławomir Grünberg, PhD, Film Director, Yonkers, NY
Barbara Grünberg, Film Producer, Yonkers, NY
Piotr Jassem, Past President, Polish-Jewish Heritage Foundation of Canada, Toronto Chapter
Krzysztof Kasprzyk, Retired Teacher, Blogger
Mohammed Khan, Mississauga, ON
Henry Lewkowicz, Ottawa, ON
Dr. Witold Liliental, Retired Metallurgist and Journalist
Ursula Madey, Radio BIS Hamilton
Martin Michalak, Winnipeg, MB
John Mokrycke, Hamilton, ON
Michael Newmark, Brooklyn, NY
Prof. Rafal Pankowski, Collegium Civitas, and President of "NEVER AGAIN" Association, Poland
Barb Paradowski, Toronto, ON
Bożena Przedborski Miller, Montreal, QC
Leo Samulewski, Toronto, ON
Mary Samulewski, Past President, St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish Council, Toronto
Matthew Samulewski, Ottawa, ON
Krystyna Świrski, Retired Teacher
Marek Świrski, Volunteer at Salon of Music, Poetry and Theater
Louiza Szacoń, Board of Directors, Konekt Polish Canadian Professionals
Larry Szpirglas, Hamilton, ON
Katie Szymanski, London, UK
Dr. Anna Tatar, "NEVER AGAIN" Association, Poland
Dr. Jolanta Urbańska, Wiceprzewodnicząca Rady Miasta Częstochowy; Prezes, Stowarzyszenia Demokratyczna RP, Poland
Philip Weir, Leven, Fife, Scotland
Piotr J. Wróbel, Professor and Konstanty Reynert Chair of Polish Studies, University of Toronto
Wit Wojnarowicz, Radio BIS Hamilton
Monika Wyrzykowska, Former Member, Board of Directors, Canadian Polish Congress
Marcin Zachara, Toronto, ON

Matthew Samulewski
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