

November 1, 2009

New Mission Statement of the American Agenda of the Polish American Congress,

During the PAC conference in San Diego, CA in October of 2006, an attempt was made to pass a resolution which would set in motion an open discussion of the new American Agenda. The resolution was not adopted at that time, but another attempt succeeded in May of 2007 during the PAC meeting the Rosemont, Illinois PAC conference, but it was never reporting in the official minutes which were prepared for the PAC Phoenix conference in May of 2008. Another attempt to re-introduce this resolution at the Phoenix, AZ failed again. Finally, it was passed successfully on October 17, 2009 at the Rosemont, Illinois PAC conference.

I consider adoption of the new American Agenda to be of the paramount to the success and the future of the Polish American Congress, since it clearly defines to the New PAC Mission Statement. If properly implemented and administered, the new American Agenda will engage, connect and serve above all, all of the Polonia in the United States. Adoptin of the American Agenda may at last become a cookbook of guiding principles which ultimately will help us all to fulfill lofty ambitions of the Polish Americans in the United States.

Unquestionably, the PAC must turn itself inwards and make the Polonia in the USA to be the center of its attention, and when you read the various conceptual ideas, you will quickly notice that indeed, they address primarily the political/economic and social improvement of the Polish Americans in the USA.

**The adoption of the American Agenda does not mean that the Polish Agenda will be abandoned, it strictly stresses the fact, that the execution of the American Agenda by the PAC will indeed be the top priority of the PAC at the national and state levels.**

The list provided below is by no means complete and it deserves to be carefully scrutinized and eventually prioritized. At the San Diego convention there were only 14 different initiatives suggested. With the help of other reform minded individuals, I took the liberty to add additional ideas and I have expanded this list now to 47 entries.

Above all, please keep in mind, that as much as the adoption of the resolution is essential to the new direction to the PAC and its new Mission Statement, the various conceptual ideas are merely suggestions for directives, how to implement successfully "the American Agenda" of the PAC. Also, obviously this will be a long term commitment undertaking and a laborious process which made easily take a decade or more to accomplish.

Please do not be afraid or feel threatened by the new American Agenda, a far greater danger to the PAC today, is not to do anything at all, when the Polonia expects so much from the Congress and from each one of you. Have the courage to change the image of Your Congress!

**LET POLAND LIVE FREELY, BUT CONQUER AMERICA!**

Kazimierz Casey Chlebek  
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President of the PAC – Illinois Division

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A number of initiatives should be undertaken to accomplish goals outlined by the new PAC Mission Statement:

1. PAC must establish a very strong lobbying strategy on local, state and federal levels.
2. New funding mechanisms must be introduced to finance PAC initiatives, for example, by obtaining specific 501(c) IRS status permitting charitable contributions to be made to PAC.
3. The PAC must engineer formation a central umbrella of a Political Action Committee groups, commonly known as a PAC. This would amount to formation of a PAC PAC – Political Action Committee at the Polish American Congress. Such formation will allow for raising of “hard money” expressly for the purpose of electing or defeating of political candidates.
4. Establish a scholarship fund for the most influential universities in the U.S., e.g. Yale, Harvard, Stanford, Princeton.
5. Establish formation of “think tank” groups which would help guide the PAC through the re-structuring effort. Such groups should consist of businessmen, academia, doctors, lawyers, journalists, clergymen, media representatives and other professionals.
- 6A. All Polish organizations in the U.S. should be invited to assist PAC in this process and they should become de facto member organizations of the PAC.
- 6B. Each Pol-Am organization should have at the very least a non-voting observer at the PAC meetings.
7. In order to promote the agenda of the new PAC, it would be desirable to have a voice on the PAC’s own TV/radio channels. Initially such air time can be rented from existing local broadcasting stations. (AC)
8. On a regular basis, the PAC should organize and promote conventions/meetings to reach out to and access Polish communities in the U.S.
9. Employ more effectively new information and internet technologies to insure more effective communication and advertising/promotion.
10. The Polish-American student population across all levels of education should also be engaged in the process to become, in the future, the prime benefactors of these initiatives. To this end, the PAC should support miscellaneous programs:
  - A. Develop mentoring /internship / career development programs for students to assist them in professional and political development,
  - B. Establish incentive / recognition programs for outstanding students;
  - C. Facilitate cooperation / networking among and with the young generation of Polish-Americans to win their hearts and minds for the cause of PAC.
  - D. Encourage and/or expand Pol-Am student exchange programs at all academic levels.
  - E. Ask educators to develop reach-out programs for Polish children/students
  - F. Create a program for radio broadcasting from different Polish Saturday schools

where children are encouraged to speak publicly and to express freely their ideas on selected topics.

11. Develop smart non-offensive strategies to counter and stop negative portrayal of the Polish image and the history of Poland.
12. Invite other successful lobbying organizations (including the Jewish lobby) to share with us their experiences in the development of methodologies and strategies to build effective large-scale lobbying infrastructures.
- 13A. Engage the Polish government to provide funding for the new agenda of the PAC.
- 13B. Ask the Polish government to provide PAC with information and/or assistance regarding the business opportunities in Poland.
- 13C. PAC should engage actively in the support and promotion of the Polish Agenda only to the extent that the Polish government actively supports and participates in. (e.g. Government of President Kaczynski did not actively support “Visa Waiver” program, and therefore there is no reason for the PAC to put up Herculean efforts to have it passed by the American Congress)(BB)
- 13D. PAC should make every effort not to polarize the Polonia with respect to policies of the Polish political parties, unless such policies are designed to undermine the Polish independence, sovereignty, or are detrimental to Polonia.(BB)
14. Build presence of the PAC in all states – less than half of the states currently have PAC Divisions.
- 15 .Provide some sort of informational/educational/financial conduit for assistance to newcomers from Poland.
16. Develop information infrastructure will provide general business networking guidance. Its goal will be to insure one-stop business networking equivalent to the Chicago’s “Informator Polonijny”.
17. Increase greater participation of Polonia by increasing the number of National Directors from 134 to 400-600 or higher, and include in its ranks young college, business, and organizational and community leaders. By example of the US Congress which has least 435 congressmen, therefore, may be the number of the PAC national directors could be also expanded to 435.
18. To aid in various initiatives, the PAC should develop a comprehensive database of all Polonia across all states.
19. As time progresses the PAC should be less and less financially dependent on the PNA. Eventually, it should be financially self-sustaining organization, and PNA should be relieved of its role as the major financial sponsor to a financial contributor, and toward this end:
20. Maximize funding for the PAC using various approaches to procure funds, eg:
  - A. Develop graduated system for payments the PAC membership dues, e.g. from min \$10 to \$250 max for single individuals depending upon the longevity in the U.S.

- B. Establish various levels of the PAC membership to allow higher annual dues, e.g.; Life Member, Platinum Member, Gold Member, Benefactor, Patron, Sponsor, Donor, Friend, Associate or Junior memberships for students, etc.
  - C. Advertise openly for 2% - 5% inheritance contribution to PAC, just as the Jewish Community does.
  - D. Make special appeals for donations to the top-tier of wealthy individuals/ professionals as the potential donors and/or the major fund raising organizers for the PAC.
  - E. Seek aggressively for corporate sponsorship of events/programs/projects.
  - F. Seek aggressively for PAC membership of all local Polish organizations.
  - G. Whenever possible seek federal/state and local funds.
  - H. Engage Polish government in funding of selected PAC projects.
  - I. Look hard at other local organizations as a source of guidance for our own fund raising activities/programs.
  - J. Recovery on the State unclaimed funds(list published annually by States) Locate and notify the account owners and assist them to recover funds.
  - K. Create office/internet stores to sell books, special magazines, recordings of special PAC events, commemorative issues and other items of interest to the Polish-American Community.
  - L. By example of other Polish organizations/clubs organize summer picnics, monthly luncheons/brunches etc. for fundraising purposes.
21. At all local, or state, or even federal levels where governing bodies may impact Polonia, whenever possible the PAC should insist to have its own Public Relations observers at such gatherings/meetings to be well aware any decisions which may impact the Polish communities.
  22. Create voter education and voter registration network on year around basis using unlimited “soft money” potential of the groups organized under the 527 section of the IRS code. Employ ASAP other organization and churches for these purposes.
  23. Connect with Polonia of all ages by example of Internet Café, Art Exhibits, and Dance Groups recently organized by PNA in Chicago. Other possible popular programs: reading of stories for children, poetry recitals, wine tasting, travels...
  24. By example of the recent merger of Polish American Chamber of two functionally similar organizations Commerce(PACC) and the Polonia Networking Chamber (PNC) in Chicago, encourage integration of the highly diluted landscape of numerous and somewhat inefficient Polish Organizations to develop more robust and stronger merged organizations.
  25. Conduct a highly pro-active Public Relations campaign to exploit to the fullest all opportunities where Polish culture/history can be promoted by way of state, or federally sponsored events such as the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Jamestown colony celebrated this May. Key point to be made regarding this missed opportunity for a publicity of grand proportions:  
All key events were planned this year, all the U.S. media spotlight on these events was this year, and not the next year when the Polonia is planning its own version of the Jamestown commemorative festivities.

Simply put, whenever possible - do not be the doer, find the helpful doer for your cause.

26. Systematically promote, propagate and publicize contributions and achievements of prominent Polish-Americans in the United States on national, state or local levels. Every attempt should be made that such individuals are recognized not only by our own organizations but most importantly that they are recognized by the American media, business and civic organizations. Noteworthy examples: engineering - Rudolf Modrzejewski, Henryk Magnuski, Kazimir Patelski; Ludwik Koncza, politics - Zbigniew Brzezinski, Barbara Mikulski; artists - Ignacy Paderewski, Bobby Vinton, Pola Negri, etc.. (JP)
27. When creating new PAC programs every attempt should be made to use catchy logos/phrases which carry the intended message. Eg. New PAC initiatives could be called **GO PAC – Growth and Optimization of PAC, or “Dwa razy PAC, dwa razy tak”**.
28. Publish monthly a newsletter, or annually commemorative issue with PAC activities.  
Whenever possible produce video materials promoting various PAC initiatives.
29. Engage prominent and well known guest speakers for all major PAC events.
30. PAC should seek sponsorship or membership in local, state or federal level organizations which may be used to promote and to propagate the American Agenda.
31. PAC must have a designated personnel to conduct an effective public relations campaign promoting all aspects of the American Agenda..
32. PAC must have available for general distribution folders and flyers with a short history, PAC program and a mission statement.(MJ)
33. Important PAC events such a Heritage Banquet should be planned on Friday so that local politicians can attend(FS).
34. Local media representatives should be invited to all meeting whenever important PAC news and policy announcements are made(JEB).
35. In order to attract the most influential Americans, PAC should strive to organize all major events at most prestigious venues and hotels.(JEB)
36. In order to project the new mission statement of the Polish American Congress onto the membership of the Congress and the Polish Community at large, it is of paramount importance that the mission statement be imbedded into the most vital documents such as: By-Laws of the Congress, WEB pages, and major announcements in the public media.
37. In order to project all resolutions adopted by the PAC National Convention onto the membership of the Congress and the Polish Community at large, it is of paramount

importance that they are imbedded and vigorously publicized on the PAC WEB pages, and in all available public media.

38. The very next modifications of the National By-Laws and individual State By-Laws must adopt all necessary changes required to implement the new mission statement of the American Agenda outlined in this document.

39. If indeed, it is the objective and the will of the PAC to carry out the program of the American Agenda, then at all levels, PAC must strive incessantly to adopt the English language during all PAC proceedings. English is a natural tool of communications of younger generations of Polish-Americans, and we must accommodate them as well as the English only speaking Polish-Americans in order to bring them all into our own fold(JEB).

40. Stipulation for the Divisions.

All vice presidents for the PAC Divisions should come from the biggest Polish organizations in each Division. These organizational representatives would be selected by each organization, and no voting at Division level would be necessary for these positions. Such make up of the Division administration guarantees that Polonia of the given State is the most equitably represented at the Division level. Furthermore, each vice president should be responsible for a specific committee, e.g. membership, fundraising, public relations, etc. The number of vice presidents at the Division level should equal at least to the number of Working Committees. Such structure ensures that all vice presidents are active and accountable for the work on behalf of the Division. These should not be honorary positions(EB).

41. It should be of utmost concern to the Congress to aid and support establishing of centers of Polish Studies(Katedry Studiow Polskich) at all major universities in the United States. Such centers will not only tend to popularize and promote the Polish culture amongst Polish-Americans, but also among entire American student population. Additionally, they will also serve as a platform from which our own version of Polish history will be voiced(RS).

42. Stipulations for the Divisions.

A. The most important assignment for each division is to either nominate, or to endorse candidates of our preference for important political offices on local, state or federal level.

B. Each division will assign a committee responsible for maintaining a pool of eligible candidates for each political office. Additionally, each division should secure mentoring and an on-going efforts to engage such an elite cadre of candidates in the political dialogue and to facilitate them the public exposure when running for the office. Such can be achieved, for example, by acting as a spokesperson for the Polish American Congress. Such a committee will outline the campaign structure and a the campaign program to aid the new candidate in the first steps of the campaign. Furthermore, such a committee will carefully monitor all local political offices

for possible vacancies to be filled from the pool of our office candidates.

43. The most important asset of the PAC is the youth of the today's Polonia, and especially the student population of 15,000 in the Chicago area alone. Every effort should be made to garner the Polish youth into the folder of the PAC, since they represent the next generation of Polonia leadership. Therefore, the PAC must establish not only a special PAC membership charter for all local students, but it must engage in a very constructive leadership and mentoring initiatives to secure a viable continuation of the PAC itself.

Currently, the PAC does not have even a student membership category.

44. In order to engage effectively our student population, the PAC must strive to sponsor creative programs similar to "Poland in the Rockies" offered by the Polonia of Canada, where the youngsters participate in the discussions forums with the most prominent leaders of Poland and Polonia.

45. At least one month before each bi-annual convention of the National Directors, each state division should hold its own convention. Resolutions and action items adopted at such a state convention would be used as essential elements of the comprehensive agenda for the National Directors meeting.

46. Stipulation for the Divisions.

In order to encourage a greater participation of membership at the monthly meetings of the PAC, each division should strive to adopt open forum discussion programs with city Mayors or city Aldermen and to attract attention call such meetings - "Meet your Mayor", or "Meet your Alderman".

47. Whenever unusual opportunities arise, such a recently a vacant seat senate after Barack Obama , create a relentless and massive campaign to seek either or both selection by the Governor, or endorsement by the party of a Polish candidate for a specific office.

And finally remember, that in order to regain our influence in this country and elsewhere, the challenge for the Congress can be declared as follows:

**YOU FIGHT FOR YOUR LIFE, BUT YOU BUILD YOUR IMAGE!**

As Peoples, we have achieved spectacular successes in fighting for life, but we are all failing miserably the fight for the image. Why, because we keep insisting on fighting for it instead of building it!