

**March 1, 2010**

**Szanowny Panie Konsulu Zygmuncie Matynia wraz małżonka oraz przedstawiciele Polskiego Korpusu Dyplomatycznego wraz z Plk. Andrzejem Kopackim, Szanowny Prezesie Kongresu Polonii Amerykańskiej, Panie Franciszek Spula, Szanowny Prezesie PRUCA, Panie Wallace Ozóg wraz z małżonka, Szanowny Panie Prezesie ZPPA Stanisławie Zagata oraz Szanowni i Dostojni Goście dzisiejszego Bankietu. W imieniu Kongresu Polonii Amerykańskiej Wydziału na Stany Illinois, jest to dla mnie wielki honor i zaszczyt powitać Państwa na naszym Bankiecie z okazji Dnia Kazimierza Pułaskiego.**

**Good evening Ladies and Gentlemen, all distinguished guests and dignitaries of the Pulaski Day Banquet. It gives me a great pleasure and honor to welcome you to this Banquet on behalf of the Polish American Congress of the Illinois Division.**

**Today, both, Polish Americans and their American friends must take a special pause to commemorate the 265<sup>th</sup> birthday of Casimir Pulaski, a hero of two continents. A son of Poland who left his homeland to fight for the cause of independence of another, a new nation of United States of America. Polish Americans have a special reason to be proud of the profound legacy that Pulaski has left behind not because who he was, but for what he did, and how he did it. To many of us today, it may be unfathomable that a young member of the Polish nobility would decide to come to the war torn country and risk his own life for the sake of a new nation. Although he did not live to see the day when the nation emerged victorious, but the newly born nation has recognized the profound impact and contribution that General Casimir Pulaski has made during the American Revolutionary War. Many of us are quick to associate the name of Pulaski with the Battle of Savannah, but the father of American Cavalry is credited with many other acts of heroism in the War of**

**Independence. But one of them, particularly stands out above all, the young Polish soldier saved the life of the first American President, George Washington, at the battle of Brandywine.**

**Today, in nearly all states there are many towns, streets, highways, counties, and other landmarks named after Pulaski during the many years since he died in 1779. Even recently he continues to be recognized. Not only the Illinois General Assembly has designated some years ago, the first Monday of the month as the Casimir Pulaski Day to commemorate his birthday on March 6, 1745, but also last year he became one of the seven people to be awarded by the U.S. Congress with an honorary citizenship of the United States.**

**Pulaski may have died for the cause of a new nation, but we must remember that he has also died for even more profound cause which is shared by all until today. He died also for the spirit of freedoms that the constitution of the new nation has guaranteed its peoples.**

**Today as stewards of the constitutional rights, we exercise these duties, but above all, we must exercise our write to vote. I think it will be quite appropriate, if such occasion as this one is used for a general call for action:**

**Lets all register, and lets all vote!**

**We must all understand that by exercising the constitutional right to vote, We empower Polish Americans! We empower America!**

**I sincerely would like to see that this message to be adopted during the Constitution Day Parade on May 1, 2010. The reasoning here is very simple and convincing. We should exploit every opportunity for such moving calls for action, in order to mobilize and ignite our electorate. At each major event such as this one, we should use the concept of calls for united actions whenever they can be readily implemented.**

**In addition to the Pulaski Day festive spirit, please let me take a moment to unveil some important missions we would like to accomplish as Polish American Congress of the Illinois Division.**

**Not just as PAC-IL but as the entire Polish community, we must realize that our most precious resource is our Youth. We should seize on every opportunity where we can extend to them our gesture of goodwill to engage them for the greater cause of our society.**

**Simply put, if we fail our kids, we will fail the mission of Congress. This may be the first year that as PAC-IL we joined the senior classes of graduates from all Polish Saturday Schools at “Studniówka”, which was held on February 13, 2010 at Drury Lane in Oakbrook, Illinois. This is our small and modest beginning with single scholarship, but with much bigger plans for future scholarships for all schools participating in “Studniówka“. Obviously we cannot do it all alone, we need to engage all Polish organizations in this effort. Also, maybe, instead of giving scholarships for many schools, it would be more appropriate to create a single scholarship to a selected Ivy League School, such as Harvard, Yale or Princeton.**

**I would like also inform you that three Forums were organized, one in December and two in January before the Primary Elections.**

**At the conclusions of the Forums a project ACT was born – “ACT” is an acronym for “Assertive Campaigning Together”, or if you like it to sound more aggressive, call it “Aggressive Campaigning Together”. The purpose of the ACT project is to educate, mobilize, and energize our electorate.**

**To this end, we can and we must use every available resource to insure that Polonia becomes politically active again. In this effort, we must employ and count on every organization, every school and every parish to create a massive network of volunteers engaged in the voter registration.**

**If we have a desire to be counted in this society, we have no choice but to ACT, and we must ACT now! Take a good notice, we are just beginning, but we are on the march!**

**I think General Pulaski would have liked it.  
Thank you very much for your attention, and enjoy the Banquet.**

**Amen.**

**White Eagle Banquet Halls  
6839 North Milwaukee Ave.  
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