



POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

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Polish American Congress's Statement on Street Demonstrations to Stop Senate Resolution 447

Democracy is self-correcting. This is why the best way to redress a wrong law is by legislative means and not by street demonstrations. The Polish American Congress is working to enact a Congressional Resolution in the nature of an amendment to remove Poland from the list of countries named in Senate Resolution 447, which now is Public Law No.115-171, signed by President Trump on May 9, 2018.

The street demonstrations with the slogan "Stop Senate Resolution 447" call for repeal of the entire bill. This tactic is profoundly misguided because Senate Resolution 447 calls on all 46 countries which signed the Terezin Declaration on Holocaust Era Assets to pay compensation. The Polish American Congress, unlike the obscure organizers of the street demonstrations, only is concerned with Poland and not with the other 45 countries.

This is why the Polish American Congress never registered its integral opposition to Senate Resolution 447. This bill calls on all 46 countries which signed the Terezin Declaration to fulfill their responsibilities for restitution/compensation of movable and immovable property formerly owned by Jews and for maintaining Holocaust Memorials. Instead, the Polish American Congress does not want Poland included among these countries. My Statement in Opposition to the Just Act of 2017, posted on our web site over one year ago, clearly expresses the position of the Polish American Congress on Senate Resolution 447. This resolution should not apply to Poland for two reasons.

First, the Polish Government does not consider the Terezin Declaration binding.

Second, there was no state-to-state collaboration between Nazi Germany and the Polish State. During World War II the governmental authority of Poland, set up after the collapse of the Second Polish Republic in early October 1939 was based in France and then in the United Kingdom, and represented by its Delegatura in Poland. This government, in exile, never cooperated with Nazi Germany or its leaders.

These reasons explain why the Executive Committee of the Polish American Congress, at its meeting on Monday, 18 March 2019, voted to censure the "Stop Resolution 447" street demonstrations, because their purpose is contrary to the standing policy of the Polish American Congress. Moreover, the Polish American Congress intends to make its opposition crystal clear by disclaiming authorization of Polish American Congress flags and banners at the street demonstrations.

Instead of going into the streets, support the Polish American Congress's position by asking those who represent you in Congress to sponsor Congressional Resolutions to put forward the truth about Poland and the Poles during World War II. The Polish American Congress Statement on Poland and the Poles during World War II should inform the resolutions you ask your members of Congress to sponsor. Asking your members of Congress to do this will be more effective than participating in misguided street demonstrations calling for repeal of Senate Resolution 447, which involves many more countries than Poland.

Frank J. Spula

President