



# POLISH AMERICAN CONGRESS

OVER 65 YEARS OF SERVING THE INTERESTS OF POLISH AMERICANS

May 30, 2012

President Barack Obama  
The White House

Dear President Obama,

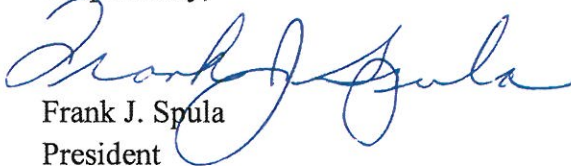
In bestowing the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously on Jan Karski yesterday, you honored a man of conscience and courage, and by extension all those who undertake the responsibility to protect their fellow human beings. We applaud your decision to extend this long-overdue recognition.

Our community in the United States and abroad, however, was deeply hurt by your reference in this context to “Polish death camps.” This is an egregiously and historically incorrect attribution of responsibility for the death camps installed and maintained by Nazi Germany in occupied Poland, camps in which millions of Poles, both Jewish and Christian, perished. Having the President of the United States, speaking at the White House, use this term slanders the country which had the largest organized resistance movement in Nazi-occupied Europe and the thousands of courageous Polish freedom fighters who, like Jan Karski, risked their lives to prevent Nazi war crimes.

This is a teachable moment. The Polish American Congress urges you, Mr. President, to use your leadership to prevent such erroneous terminology being used about Poland in the future.

We strongly recommend that you make an explicit public statement regarding this matter as soon as possible.

Respectfully,

  
Frank J. Spula  
President

#### NATIONAL OFFICE

5711 N. Milwaukee Ave. • Chicago, IL 60646-6294  
Phone: 773-763-9944 • Fax: 773-763-7114  
E-mail: [pacchgo@pac1944.org](mailto:pacchgo@pac1944.org)

#### WASHINGTON OFFICE

1612 K.St., N.W., Suite 410 • Washington, DC 20006-2802  
Phone: 202-296-6955 • Fax: 202-835-1565  
E-mail: [pacwash@pac1944.org](mailto:pacwash@pac1944.org)

Website: [pac1944.org](http://pac1944.org)