

February 5th 2016

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Dear Ms Reisman,
Dear Ms Crocker,

I am writing to request that the book “Flight And Freedom: Stories Of Escape To Canada”, by Ratna Omidvar, published by Between the Liners publishing house be withdrawn immediately from sale in bookstores and online. This book contains false and defamatory statements, which are anti-Polish. The writing contains words that insult and injure the reputation of a person and the entire Polish nation as well as its diaspora (including Canadians of Polish origin) around the world as a result of exposing them to hatred, contempt or ridicule. With this withdrawal we would like to see a public statement of correction and apology.

Of note, on page 178 in this book there is mention of “Polish SS”, which is grossly inaccurate and offensive. The SS was a German paramilitary organization most responsible for the implementation of the so-called “Final Solution” for racial cleansing. Its members committed crimes against humanity during World War II (1939–45). They were responsible for the killing of millions of people, including Poles and Jews. After the defeat of Nazi Germany, the entire SS corps, along with the Nazi Party, was judged by the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg to have been a criminal organization. There was never any “Polish SS” unit!

Poland was the first victim in the aggression of WWII. Invaded from the West on September 1st 1939 by Germany and from the East, on September 17th 1939 by the Soviet Union, Poland suffered great losses. The German - Soviet occupation of Poland lasted 5 tragic years. Poles formed an Underground State (WIN and NSZ) and a Home Army, known as Armia Krajowa (AK), which resisted and fought its occupiers throughout the 5 years. As a result of German mass execution, torture, imprisonment and ethnic cleansing, 6 million Poles lost their lives, including 3 million Polish Jews (referred to as the Holocaust).

Both the Polish Underground State during WWII and the Polish Home Army established official administrative, financial and organizational structures to help and protect Jews in German-

occupied Poland. This was nobly carried out, using all available means in a time of terror and oppression, at the cost of incarceration, bestial torture and death. Thousands of Poles participated and in recognition of these efforts, 6,339 Poles of a total of 24,356 people have to date been granted the highest civilian award of the State of Israel, i.e. the title of "Righteous Among the Nations" This means that the State of Israel has acknowledged that from among all the nations engulfed by the war waged by the German Third Reich, as much as 26 percent of all documented cases of aiding Jews at the peril of death to the helper and his or her family, are credited to non-Jewish Poles.

This brief reminder of the history of Poland and its people during WWII underscores the defamatory nature of the above-mentioned book, which is unfit for publication, sale and distribution.

We request your prompt and immediate action.

Respectfully yours,

Waclaw Kujbida
for the Council of North America Polish Gazette Clubs
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
February 5th, 2016