



The Ambassador

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August 24, 2009

H.E. Dr. Janusz Kochanowski
Commissioner for Civil Rights Protection
Aleja Solidarnosci 77
00-090 Warszawa

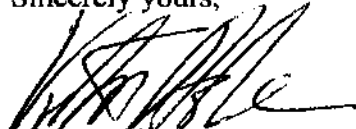
Dear Commissioner Kochanowski:

Thank you for your thoughtful letter of August 17 which drew to my attention the brutal murder of a Polish-American Marine, Sergeant Jan Pawel Pietrzak, and his wife, Quiana, in the United States.

I share your outrage concerning this senseless crime. As President Barack Obama said in his letter last month to Mrs. Henryka Pietrzak-Varga, mother of the slain Marine, no words can ease the pain of such a tragic loss. The case remains open, and I sincerely hope that the successful prosecution of those responsible will bring some measure of comfort to Mrs. Pietrzak-Varga. If those convicted are proved to have acted out of racial motivations, it would make a heinous act even more reprehensible, and heighten the need for Americans and Poles to denounce such forms of hate crime.

These bestial murders have captured the attention of our nation and our highest officials. Justice must be done. While we cannot yet assess the results of the prosecutors' actions, it is not too early to note our deepest appreciation for Sergeant Pietrzak's service on behalf of the United States. He served his country faithfully and selflessly as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps, particularly during combat service in Iraq. Poles, too, can be proud that one of their native sons contributed so nobly to the cause of freedom. The slaying of such an individual in the prime of his life deepens our sense of loss, but I hope as well that it redoubles our effort to honor Sergeant Pietrzak's legacy.

Sincerely yours,



Victor Ashe