

empires—czarist Russia, Prussia/Germany, and the Habsburg Empire. The Constitution of 1791 was greatly admired by Edmund Burke for its good sense and moderation. Another national day is November 11, the date when Poland regained her independence in 1918, which coincides with the Canadian Remembrance Day, the last day of World War I. It is little known in the West that Poland had to fight a series of wars in the aftermath of World War I, especially against Bolshevik Russia, to secure her borders.

As the Canadian-born offspring of postwar Polish immigrants, I am a rare bird in my community, having retained most of my heritage, including language. There have been several waves of Polish immigrants to Canada, from at least four distinctly different Polish societies. The Golgotha of World War II—in which over five million Christian Poles perished—has been no less central to Polish identity than the holocaust has been for Jews. Poles heroically participated in the war against Nazi Germany in virtually every theater of conflict. The Poles' reward was their betrayal by the Western Allies—incorporation into Stalin's Soviet Empire and the displacement of their frontiers westward, with a 20 percent net loss of territory.

The postwar wave of Polish immigration to Canada consisted mostly of Polish soldiers who had fought beside the Allies and who were both unable and unwilling to return to a Sovietized Poland. Some came to Canada directly; others moved to Canada after settling in Britain. Those Polish soldiers who came directly were, as the price of their admission, required to work for two full years on remote farms.

As things improved, many ex-soldiers went to Poland to marry, especially after the 1956 post-Stalinist thaw. Their children make up one of the largest demographic sectors of the community. Sadly, few of them have maintained their Polish heritage.

The situation of Polish-Canadians—and other white ethnic groups such as Ukrainian-, Italian-, Portuguese-, and Croatian-Canadians—points to a larger dilemma: How are people who are often “Old World” in their social and cultural outlooks to be assimilated into the prevailing liberal order when, despite an official policy of “ethnic cultural preservation,” such assimilation means the annihilation of their cultural identity?

This situation splinters the commu-

nity into a small number of activist die-hards, who carry the torch of identity, and the largely assimilated, mostly apathetic masses. These masses still identify with Roman Catholicism, however. For the majority of Polish-Canadians, their religion is their one main institutional link to their community, *via* their ethnic parishes. As Poland today becomes increasingly North Americanized, a culture that is over a thousand years old yields to the realm of “McWorld,” “Coca-colonization,” MTV, CNN, and stupefying reality TV shows.

Indeed, the North American future for Polish-Canadians appears increasingly problematic, and, considering the substantial (though underappreciated by most Canadians) contributions they have made to Canadian society, this should be an issue of broader public concern. The achievements of Polish professionals—especially architects, engineers, technicians, and research scientists—in postwar Canada, have been remarkable and far out of proportion to their numbers. Not infrequently, the highly developed Polish sense of honor has actually put the Polish-Canadian community at a disadvantage. Their abiding loyalty to the Liberal Party has certainly not been rewarded or even especially noticed. Stanley Haidasz and Jesse Flis, the two prominent Polish-Canadian Liberal MP's, retired years ago. After Flis's retirement, a non-Pole parachuted into Toronto's Parkdale-High Park area, as part of Chrétien's tendentious promotion of female candidates.

These white ethnics have reached a virtual vanishing point as a matter of positive interest and concern for Canadian governments, media, and large corporations today. When was the last time Polish-Canadian and Polish issues were significantly discussed in the Canadian media? To what extent do the federal, provincial, and municipal governments' disbursements of multiculturalism funds reflect the actual proportion of white ethnics in the Canadian population? Are not such white ethnics—who can count on neither the established networks of English- and French-Canadian elites nor “designated group” or “accredited minority” status—operating at a significant disadvantage in Canada today?

Born in Toronto of Polish immigrant parents, Mark Wegierski is fluent in Polish and has written for Canadian, American, Polish, British, and German publications.

Letter From Poland

by Greg Kaza

A Pilgrimage to Jasna Góra



Three Polish nuns, wearing traditional robes and habits, stand in a circle, studying their train schedule. Little sleep and the absence of coffee on the night train from Berlin contribute to my slow reasoning. “Can you direct me to the platform for Częstochowa?” I inquire. The eldest nun points to a platform, and then to her watch. They, too, are on pilgrimage to the shrine at Jasna Góra (Shining Mountain). A believer might conclude that Providence allowed a lost pilgrim to cross their path. Today, however, most would say that it was coincidence, good fortune, or luck.

I have just returned from a trip to Berlin, where I was reminded that the conservative movement has its own shrines and relics commemorating the former Soviet Union's collapse. These include the Ministerium für Staatssicherheit (the ex-headquarters of the Stasi, the East German secret police); the last section of the Berlin Wall on the Bernauer Strasse; and the shuttered embassy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, one block off the Unter den Linden, all in the former German Democratic Republic. A relic—Lenin's visage—is still visible on the latter's exterior. Another, Lenin's death mask, can be seen on a desk in ex-Stasi chief Erich Mielke's office, along with a portrait of the late *chekist* Felix Dzerzhinsky. While these are not on the scale of the secular shrine in Moscow where the ultimate Soviet relic—Lenin's embalmed corpse—remains on public display 80 years after his death, these secular curiosities of East and West share one characteristic: Christianity is not a central theme. A pilgrim will have an easier time finding a Lenin medallion near these shrines than one commemorating a saint. Certainly, there are a few reminders of the Marxist-Leninist persecution of Christians, such as Berlin's rebuilt Protestant Chapel of Reconciliation. The chapel, near the infamous “death zone” (the Wall), features a superb Last Supper woodcarving defaced (save for Judas Iscariot's face) by communists.

The conflict between Marxism and the Church founded by Jesus Christ gripped

Central and Eastern Europe for most of the 20th century. Yet the drama is presented, in the secular East and West, as a struggle between economic systems or political regimes, not between God and mammon. Washington does not remind the world of the crucial role the Christian Faith played in Marxism's collapse, because it is a secular regime. Conventional conservative wisdom in the United States attributes the Soviet Union's collapse to the Reagan military buildup, the Soviet economy's internal economic contradictions, or a combination of both factors. Yet ignoring traditional Christianity's resilience against social systems that seek to conquer does not change history. The role that Christian religious faith played in Marxism's collapse, and Christianity's resistance to militant Islam in Europe, are highly relevant, even to a secular regime where conflict is measured in election cycles, not centuries. One conflict, from Marx's key early writings to the Soviet Union's collapse, was concluded in less than two centuries. The other, dating to the Battle of Tours (October 10, A.D. 732) is in its second millennium. History suggests that secular systems based on such abstractions as "the materialist forces of history," "the market," and "global democracy" are at a disadvantage in long struggles with aggressive religious systems.

The Marian shrine at Częstochowa, Poland, about 450 kilometers southeast of Berlin, is *Christian*, not secular, and it provides insights into both conflicts. Traveling there by train, you clearly see Poland's Catholic heritage—large churches, not Golden Arches. You can also see her Marxist past. The industri-

al city of Katowice was briefly renamed Stalinogród in the mid-1950's. There is Nowa Huta, Stalin's model industrial city built to rebuke Krakow, Poland's cultural center. Nowa Huta was the flashpoint of a two-decade struggle between the Church and authorities over a church for workers. The communist government issued a building permit in 1958 but withdrew it four years later. Karol Wojtyła, Krakow's auxiliary bishop and later her cardinal, persisted with other priests in seeking a permit. Workers erected crosses that were torn down by authorities. Wojtyła and other priests held Mass in a field. The communists finally relented, and the Ark Church was completed in 1977. Ironically, Stalin's model city was one of the key centers of Solidarity, the Soviet bloc's first independent trade union. The other was Gdansk, the Baltic port.

It starts to rain as the three nuns and I exit the Częstochowa train station. At first, it drizzles, and then the sky opens in a downpour. We trudge ahead through puddles. The nuns open their umbrellas and beckon me to follow, my luggage slung over a shoulder. I am grateful for the kindness of strangers. Near the orphanage, the rain ceases. I tell the three nuns "Thank you" and bid them farewell. The nuns (Little Sisters of the Immaculate Conception) who operate the orphanage are grateful for the gift I have brought them—clothes from a mutual friend who has traveled in the socialist bloc. I am plied with instant coffee and toast with jam. Outside, the sun begins to peer through the clouds.

Jasna Góra is a short distance away. The religious shrine is visited annually by four-to-five million Christian pilgrims; only Vatican City and Lourdes receive more. The shrine's treasure is the icon of the Black Madonna with Christ Child, revered by the two churches that share seven Sacraments. Legend suggests Saint Luke painted the icon, which has survived trials by fire and sword and has been protected by Pauline monks since the 14th century. The Church's use of pilgrimages to Jasna Góra strengthened the will of Polish Catholics to resist the Marxist-Leninist regime. Numbering in the millions, the pilgrimages served as the key forum in which to speak openly without fear of arrest or imprisonment under communist rule. Wojtyła himself recognized the shrine's role shortly after his election as Pope John Paul II—the first Slavic pope—in 1978. Speaking in Polish during his inaugural Mass, the

Pope said, "My dear fellow countrymen . . . I ask you: be with me at Jasna Góra and everywhere. Do not cease to be with the Pope who prays with the words of the poet, 'Mother of God, you who defend bright Częstochowa . . .'" The Pope declared in a radio address, "There would not have been this Polish Pope upon St. Peter's Capitol without Jasna Góra." Indeed, the Soviet Union might not have collapsed without the shrine. Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev, in a 1992 interview in the Italian daily *La Stampa*, credited religion with a greater role in the Soviet collapse than any Beltway analyst preoccupied with "global democracy."

Pilgrims pray fervently before the Black Madonna on the day of my visit. I hear Russian and Ukrainian spoken along with Polish. Some pray while shuffling on their knees. Others are crying. Perhaps this is the universal Christianity, uniting East and West at Jasna Góra, envisioned by Russian Vladimir Sergeyevich Soloviev (1853-1900), a theologian and philosopher whose books have influenced John Paul II.

Jasna Góra played an important role in the conflict between Islam and Christianity. Muslim armies seeking to conquer Europe have been defeated in three crucial battles: Tours, Lepanto (October 7, 1571), and Vienna (September 12, 1683). On these fields, aggressive Muslim hordes were defeated by defensive Christian armies. Charles Martel, Don John, and Polish King Jan Sobieski III led successful battles for God and homeland.

During my visit, I saw four unmarked frescoes depicting Sobieski's visits to Jasna Góra. Sobieski led the Slavic and German army that defeated the Ottomans at Vienna and made pilgrimages to Jasna Góra before and after the battle. His message to Pope Innocent XI after the victory read simply: "*Veni, vidi, Deus vicit.*" A guidebook does not mention the frescoes, but a French priest confirmed their existence for me. In a nearby room, I found a vivid reminder of the French adage "*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose*": a 17th-century painting depicting a massacre of Slavic religious put to the sword by the ancestors of today's Muslim terrorists.

Greg Kaza served three terms (1993-98) in the Michigan House of Representatives.



The fortress sanctuary at Jasna Góra, where the icon of Our Lady of Częstochowa resides.

The Jihadist Fifth Column: The Cure

Contrary to numerous optimistic assurances from high places, three years after September 11, the reach and operational capability of Islamic terror cells remain strong. They are present in areas previously closed to the recruiters of future “martyrs”—notably in Iraq—and in countries where, only a decade ago, they did not have a significant presence (e.g., Indonesia). The United States has been temporarily spared fresh outrages, but the rest of the world has not, and it is to be feared that there will be many more New Yorks, Balis, and Madrids in the years to come.

Al Qaeda and its loosely linked offshoots are diversifying their range of possible targets to include vital infrastructure and energy installations in the West. They are also fielding a new generation of recruits, many of them Muslim immigrants and their offspring in Europe and North America. The decentralized pattern makes countermeasures difficult, especially with self-motivated young people deeply embedded in Western host societies—such as the five young U.S.-born Yemenis from upstate New York convicted last year of plotting terrorist attacks, or the eight U.K.-born British citizens of Pakistani descent charged last summer with plotting attacks on financial institutions in the United States.

It is alarming that the political class in the United States remains unwilling to examine the implications of the existence of a large Muslim diaspora in the country. Law-enforcement and intelligence professionals privately admit that the existence of that multimillion-man presence is essential in providing the terrorists with the recruits, the infrastructure, the mobility, and the relative invisibility without which they would not be able to operate, but neither the September 11 Commission’s final report nor a host of related statements and proposals from both ends of the duopoly have acknowledged that reality.

That there is a correlation between the presence of a Muslim population in a country and the terrorist threat to that country is a demonstrable fact. Muslims are the only group that harbors a substantial segment of individuals who share key

objectives with the terrorists, even if they do not all approve of all of their methods. They are the immigrant group least likely to identify with America: In response to a survey of newly naturalized citizens, 90 percent of Muslim immigrants said that, if there were a conflict between the United States and their country of origin, they would be inclined to support their country of origin. In Detroit, 81 percent of Muslims “strongly agree” or “somewhat agree” that *sharia* should be the law of the land.

This internal threat to America is increasing. In the aftermath of September 11, various estimates of the Muslim population of United States have been made, ranging from two to nine million. The number of mosques and Islamic centers is around 2,000 and keeps growing. The total number of mosques increased 42 percent between 1990 and 2000, compared with a 12-percent average increase among evangelical Protestant denominations and a two-percent average increase among old-line Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox groups.

Immigration into the United States from the Middle East—around 1.5 million now, and expected to rise to 2.5 million by 2010—is likely to be exceeded by Muslim immigration from the Indian subcontinent (Pakistan, India, Bangladesh). Currently, Muslims account for one tenth of all naturalizations, but their birthrates exceed those of any other significant immigrant group. The number of U.S.-born children under 18 with at least one parent born in the Middle East will zoom from 600,000 today to just under a million by 2010.

A long-term counterterrorist strategy is impossible as long as these trends remain undiagnosed and unchecked. The application of ideological and political criteria in determining the eligibility of prospective visitors or immigrants has been and remains an essential ingredient of any antiterrorist strategy, and Islamic activism should be treated as eminently political, rather than “religious,” activity. The problem of Muslim influx, however, is inseparable from the phenomenon of Islam itself—and, in particular, from that faith’s impact on its adherents as a political ide-



ology and a program of action. The notion that terrorism is an aberration of Islam, not a predictable consequence of the ideology of *jihad* that is inseparable from it, reflects a flawed elite consensus that must be changed. Only then can a coherent program of political and legislative action be developed to make America truly safer.

The preliminary to any such effort is to seal our borders. Preventing illegal immigration is a desirable objective *per se*; in the context of stopping terrorists, it is mandatory. The means exist, the political will must be found. The September 11 Commission’s final report says: “[B]etter technology and training to detect terrorist travel documents are the most important immediate steps to reduce America’s vulnerability to clandestine entry.” That is incorrect. Better technology is needed, but “the most important immediate step” is controlling the borders. Knowing who is already in the country illegally, expelling them, and stopping illegal newcomers is the highest priority. State and local law-enforcement agencies should be enlisted in enforcing the law and protecting national security.

Law-enforcement agencies at all levels should be freed from the irrational ban on “profiling.” Not all Muslims are terrorists, but, for some years now, nearly all terrorists of concern to America’s national security and to the quality of life of her citizens have been Muslims. “The development of terrorist indicators has hardly begun,” the September 11 Commission’s report says, “and behavioral cues remain important.” This is correct, and it is therefore time to accept that “profiling” based on a person’s appearance, citizenship, origin, and apparent or suspected beliefs must be an essential tool of the trade of law enforcement and the “War on Terror.”