

PRM.168/3

PRM 168/3

POLSKA YMCA

Polska Y.M.C.A.

ZMIKROFILMOWANE DNIA 10.12.1993  
ROLKA NR. 119

ZESKANOWANE 01.03.2005 n.

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PREZES RADY MINISTROW

PRM. 168/3

TEKA Nr. 168 / 3

Polska Y.M.C.A.

1	9.	I. 1945	Korespondencja z Dyrektorem Generalnym Polskiej Y.M.C.A.
2	21.	II. 1945	Raport o pracy War Prisoners Aid Y.M.C.A. wśród jeńców wojennych i internowanych w Niemczech, Szwajcarii i Francji.
			--- 000 0 000 ---
			<p>Telesy Lennowa 10 Stron. 7.III.1991  <i>[Signature]</i></p>



DNIA

PRM 168/31  
No 31

POLSKA YMCA

*w Wielkiej Brytanii*

POLISH Y.M.C.A.

*in Great Britain*

Biurow Głównie : H.Q.  
Nash House  
39a, Maddox Street  
London, W.1.  
Tel. : MAYfair 7540

Konto bankowe : Royal Bank of Scotland  
64, New Bond Street, London, W.1

Oddział w Szkocji  
Scottish Branch :  
1, Atholl Place,  
Edinburgh  
Tel. : 21583

Londyn dnia 9 stycznia 1945

Pan Dyrektor Urbański  
Ministerstwo Pracy i Opieki Społecznej  
43, Lowndes Square  
LONDON S.W.1.

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Szanowny Panie,

Stosownie do dzisiejszej rozmowy telefonicznej Pana Dyrektora z panem Majchrzakiem, przesyłamy w załączeniu projekt listu od Pana Arciszewskiego, jako Ministra Opieki Społecznej do p. Supera, generalnego dyrektora Polskiej YMCA w New Yorku.

Uprzejmie prosimy o łaskawe polecenie przepisania niniejszego listu na blankiecie Ministerstwa oraz przedłożenie go do podpisu Panu Premierowi.

Z poważaniem

za Polską YMCA

Helena Lubińska

/ 1 Załącznik/



PRM 168/3

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L. dz. 129/111/45  
Jurek

9th January, 1945

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Mr. Paul Super  
General Director of the Polish Y.M.C.A.  
347, Madison Avenue,  
New York City  
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Dear Mr. Super,

Mr. Tadeusz Tomaszewski, Chairman of the Polish Y.M.C.A. Committee in Great Britain, has informed me, that Mr. Kenneth Smith has joined the Polish Y.M.C.A. H.Q. in New York - as your Associate Secretary, in order to help the present and post-war reconstruction work.

Considering, that the Polish Y.M.C.A. is working in many countries, and especially on the Continent, we should like very much to have Mr. Kenneth Smith here and in other countries to see the present needs and the possibilities of further help for Poles.

We shall need very urgently the assistance of the Polish Y.M.C.A. in refugees Centres for repatriated workers and prisoners of war from Germany.

With thanks for all you did for Poland during your long service,

I am,

sincerely yours,



PRM 168/3



**POLSKA YMCA**  
*w Wielkiej Brytanii*

**POLISH Y.M.C.A**  
*in Great Britain*

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Projekt listu do Pana Supera, Dyrektora Generalnego  
Polskiej YMCA

Mr. Paul Super  
General Director of the Polish YMCA  
347, Madison Avenue  
NEW YORK CITY  
U.S.A.

London 9th January 1945

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Dear Mr. Super,

Mr. Tadeusz Tomaszewski, Chairman of the Polish YMCA Committee in Great Britain, has informed me, that Mr. Kenneth Smith has joined the Polish YMCA H.Q. in New York, - as your Associate Secretary, in order to help the present and Post- War reconstruction work.

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I am sincerely yours

PRM 168/3

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2.

Biuro Główne : H.Q.  
~~Head Office~~  
~~30, Old Bond Street~~  
 London, W.1. S.W.1.  
~~Telephone 7540~~  
 61, Eaton Place  
 S.W.1.

Konto bankowe : Royal Bank of Scotland  
 64, New Bond Street, London, W.1

Oddział w Szkoci  
 Scottish Branch :  
 1, Atholl Place,  
 Edinburgh  
 Tel. : 21583

London dnia 21 lutego 1945

Pan Premier Tomasz Arciszewski  
 18, Kensington Palace Gardens  
 LONDON W.8.

4

w załączeniu przesyłam przyrzeczony przez Dr. T. Strong'a  
 raport o pracy War Prisoners Aid Y.M.C.A. wśród jeńców wojennych  
 i internowanych w Niemczech, Szwajcarii i Francji.

*Henryk Majchrzak*  
 Henryk Majchrzak  
 Dyrektor.

PRM 168

3

2

February 16, 1945

Summary Report on the Work of the War Prisoners Aid  
of the Y.M.C.A. Amongst Polish Prisoners and Internees  
in Germany, Switzerland and France

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In July, 1939, the Executive Committee of the World's Committee of the Y.M.C.A. agreed that in case of the outbreak of war, it would (a) be the responsibility of the National Committees of the YMCA's to organize work for the armed forces, and (b) be the responsibility of the World's Committee of the Y.M.C.A. to initiate and organize work for the prisoners of war and internees.

This policy has been followed amongst the Poles, namely, the Polish Y.M.C.A. has organized its work in some sixteen different countries wherever Poles have sought refuge and amongst the fighting forces, while the World's Committee has initiated work in Germany, Switzerland and France.

GERMANY:

Shortly after the outbreak of hostilities in September, 1939, when 420,000 Poles were captured within the first thirty days, representatives of the World's Committee secured permission from the governments of Germany, France and Great Britain to organize, under Article 78 of the Geneva Convention, the War Prisoners Aid of the Y.M.C.A. Permission was granted by the OKW of Germany to visit the Polish camps and to help the Polish prisoners organize their recreational, educational, cultural and religious activities. This service has continued until this day in all the camps where the Poles are still considered as prisoners of war. In January, 1945, there were approximately 60,000 in this category. The Y.M.C.A. was not permitted to visit Poles who were transferred to the Department of Interior and used as civilian workers, or amongst those groups known as forced laborers. During the past five years, tens of thousands of books have been collected or purchased or published especially and sent into the Polish camps in Germany. Large supplies of musical instruments, games, art materials, and athletic goods have been secured in Sweden, Switzerland, United States, and in cooperation with Catholic authorities, in Germany, Switzerland and Poland, Catholic Bibles and the essentials for worship have been provided.

In order to improve the services in the camps, a special prisoner of war office was established in Warsaw with the full approval of the OKW. This office kept up a continuous flow of materials, not only into the prisoner of war camps, but also to those groups of released



PRM 168/3

2

- 2 -

prisoners of war. This office remained open even after the Y.M.C.A. was officially closed in Poland by the German authorities.

The support of the work in Germany for prisoners of war was provided by the Polish American Council of the United States, and by regular funds contributed by the YMCA's of Great Britain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States. 6

Upon the fall of Warsaw, the War Prisoners Aid Committee of the Y.M.C.A. in Germany was notified of the names, number and the camps of the captured Poles. Amongst this number were some 4000 Polish women and 120 children between the ages of 9 and 15. A long list of materials were requested by the Polish women in Stalag X-B, and these have been supplied as rapidly as possible. In Sandbostel where 120 children were interned, the question was raised as to what the Y.M.C.A. could do to help. Negotiations have been initiated with a view to bringing these children to Sweden. In the meantime, special educational work was established.

In a recent cable from Geneva, dated February 8th, we received the following brief report: "During 1944 \$51,300 worth of materials, not including books, were sent to the Polish prisoners of war in Germany. Special attention during recent months has been given to the new prisoners of war, both men and women, who were captured at Warsaw. Have published in 1944 15 editions of books and pamphlets, 5000 to 40,000, for the Poles in Germany; and are now preparing 40 different gramophone records of Polish music. Any additional funds would allow improving the services of the Polish prisoners of war in Germany, especially for the late comers."

REPATRIATION - POLISH PRISONERS OF WAR, GERMANY:

The War Prisoners Aid of the Y.M.C.A. has appointed Paul B. Anderson to represent it on PWX-SHAEF. Mr. Anderson has already had preliminary conversations with the Polish representative on PWX and has assured him that the Y.M.C.A. is prepared to continue its services during the period of repatriation amongst the Polish prisoners of war. While the detailed plans are subject to revision due to the general war situation, it is at present thought that large numbers of Poles will be held in camps pending their eventual return to Poland. The War Prisoners Aid has already approached the Polish Y.M.C.A. War Services and is making arrangements for adequate personnel to serve these men until their return to Poland. This service may call for either Y.M.C.A. hut services (Swietlicka) or mobile services, or possibly both.



PRM 168/3

2

- 3 -

According to a recent cable from Geneva, it is estimated "that Y.M.C.A. services for each large repatriation center or area, either in Germany or in France, will cost approximately \$30,000 for six months." While part of these funds can be provided out of contributions from America, it is hoped that the Polish Government will be able to supplement them.

SWITZERLAND:

7

With the entrance of over 20,000 Polish men and officers into Switzerland in the summer of 1940, the War Prisoners Aid of the Y.M.C.A. immediately secured permission to open up its services in the Polish camps. Under the leadership of the associate general secretary, Henri Johannot, the work has gained the confidence of the Polish general and the Chief Chaplain, as well as the Swiss military authorities. In no country has a more intensive and extensive piece of work been done for prisoners of war. Besides the regular camp visitation, special institutes have been held for representatives of the various camps. In these institutes, the men learned how to organize the social welfare programme of the Y.M.C.A. in the camps.

A cable recently received from Geneva summarizes the work in Switzerland as follows: "Besides general camp services which includes supplying material for canteens, moving picture shows and lectures, the Y.M.C.A. has organized the following courses:

1. Evening primary schools with more than 11500 in attendance.
2. Three central all-day primary schools of six months' duration, with an attendance respectively of 96, 190 and 65. The branches of studies in these primary schools include arithmetic, Polish history, geography, natural sciences, civic education and religion. 464 certificates for completion of the primary school courses have been delivered.
3. Similar courses for civilian men and women refugees.
4. Technical courses for mechanics, electro-technicians, radio-electricians with an attendance of 100 students during 1944 and with a present enrolment of 160. 25 different study books were published for the above courses. A course for automobile drivers is now in preparation with an enrolment of 120.

5. In cooperation with other organizations, other technical courses have been organized, such as cooperative societies, technical drawing, book-keeping, agriculture, road building, land improvement, automobile drivers, with an enrolment of 879 students during the last four years. Ten hand books have been published for these courses.
6. Courses for medical students on epidemiology and bacteriology have been held for one month's duration with an attendance of 21 medical officers.
7. On request of the Swiss authorities, the Y.M.C.A. had considerable share in training several hundred officers for cultural and social work.
8. At Munchensee, a special center has been established by the Y.M.C.A. at which 60 Polish officers and men are working in the offices, the stores, workshops, and are being highly trained for social administrative technical work.

8

This work has been largely supported by the Y.M.C.A. funds, although a special grant was made a year ago by the Polish Government. The importance of this training for future workers in Poland cannot be exaggerated and it is hoped that the Polish Government can increase its support for this unique service.

#### FRANCE:

Immediately after the arrival of large numbers of Poles in France, the Polish Y.M.C.A., under the leadership of Messrs. Woydat and Majchrzak began to organize "soldier foyers". With the fall of France, certain leaders followed the troops to England while Mr. Woydat remained in France and took charge of the new Y.M.C.A. work which he has admirably carried on for four years. The purpose of this work was to maintain the morale of the Polish soldiers who remained in France and the Polish workmen and students. Reports have come to the Polish Government regularly, and until October, 1944, the Government subsidized this work with from Fr.frs.200,000 to 300,000 per month. This was in addition to the amount contributed from regular Y.M.C.A. funds.

Based on experience of the last four years and the continued present needs of the Polish people in France, the Polish Y.M.C.A., in close collaboration with the World's Committee and International Committee of

PRM 168/3

2

- 5 -

the Y.M.C.A., plans during 1945 to carry on the following activities:

- (a) To continue its work in the present 8 foyers.
- (b) To organize immediately foyers in centers thickly populated with Poles. Three large centers and about 20 sub-centers are envisaged.
- (c) To conduct foyers in large cities. 9
- (d) To conduct foyers in 15 centers where the work is now in full operation.
- (e) To open canteens for soldiers in 8 centers; 2 already opened.
- (f) To carry on its educational work for boys in the two boarding schools at Nimes and Sicardou.
- (g) To continue its correspondence courses with an anticipated enrolment of 1000.
- (h) To organize travelling groups of artists who will visit all the Polish centers, both civilian and military.
- (i) To increase the number of travelling libraries. At present there are 56 such libraries.
- (j) To publish a newspaper.
- (k) To found a Polish "humanistic studium" in close relationship to the University in Paris. This studium to offer special courses in Polish law, history, geography and Polish literature.
- (l) To establish<sup>a</sup>/center to train secretaries for 30 new foyers.
- (m) To continually aid the personnel in deepening their knowledge of the YMCA's aims and ideals by organizing conference meetings for the purpose of considering Y.M.C.A. methods of work.

It is estimated that the total service will cost approximately Fr.frs.14,952,000. Of this amount, the Y.M.C.A. is prepared to provide approximately Fr.frs.5,000,000. It is hoped that the Polish Government can contribute a minimum of Fr.frs.500,000 a month for the support of this budget.



PRM 168/3. 2

- 6 -

The World's Committee of the Y.M.C.A. has welcomed the opportunity to enter into the sufferings of the Polish people during these perilous times, and looks forward to continued collaboration during the even more difficult days of repatriation and rehabilitation.

Respectfully submitted,

*Tracy Strong*

Tracy Strong

10