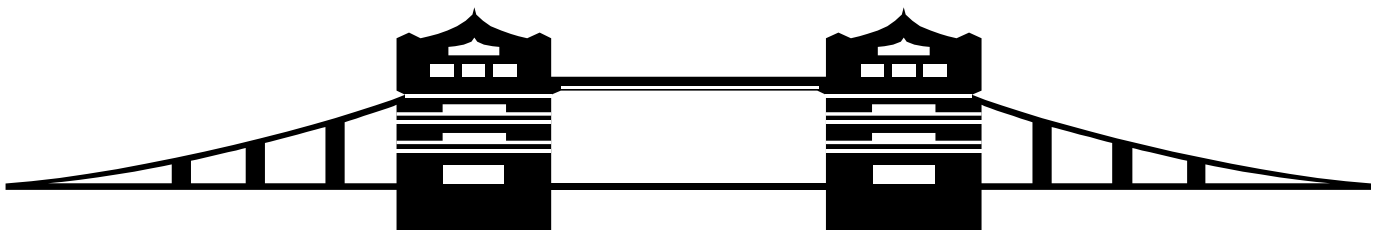




# **REPORT OF OFFICIAL DELEGATION TO CITY OF LUBLIN, POLAND**

APRIL 22 – 29, 2001

SUBMITTED BY: COUNCILLOR DAVID CASSIVI  
JERRY BARYCKI  
ANTHONY BLAK  
JUNE COX  
JOSEPH OUELLETTE  
JOANNA POGORZELSKA  
JESSE FLIS  
SOPHIA FLIS



On the 25<sup>th</sup> day of April 2001, in the elegant and stately former Royal Supreme Court of Poland, the formal protocol for the Twin-City Agreement between Windsor, Ont. Canada, and Lublin, Poland, was officially executed.



The Signing Ceremony

This formal ceremony, in the presence of T.V., radio, and newspaper journalists, was the climax to a series of extensive discussions, diplomatic correspondence, and formal Council resolutions, initiated in 1998 by the dynamic Polonia of Windsor.

That year, at an executive meeting of the Polish Canadian Business & Professional Association, the idea was proposed for discussion by Anthony Blak, and spearheaded by President Jerry Barycki. The initial twinning project was driven by the recognition of the compatibility of both cities and the great potential for mutual benefit. The respected international business skills and the personable nature of Mr. Ouellette, President of Acrolab Limited, of Windsor and Lublin, were major factors in Lublin's eagerness to embrace Windsor as a partner and a friend. It should be noted in this regard, that the Mayor officially presented the Lublin Medal of Honour to Mr. Ouellette, in recognition of his contribution to the Windsor/Lublin twinning.

The project gained considerable momentum on June 26, 2000, when a delegation from Lublin, led by the Honorable Mayor, President Andrzej

Pruszkowski formally signed the first of a two-phase protocol to officially undertake a Twin-City agreement. This formal ceremony took place at the beginning of a public Council meeting in the Chambers of Windsor City Hall. Signing the official document for Windsor was Mayor Michael D. Hurst, and Ms. June Cox, Chair of the International Relations Committee. Tribute must be paid to Ms. Cox for her effective role in gathering local political support for the twinning initiative.

An invitation to Mayor Hurst to lead a delegation to Lublin for the completion of the agreement was received on January 6, 2001. Unable to attend, Mayor Hurst authorized City Councillor David Cassivi to lead an official Windsor delegation to Lublin, composed of:

Jerry Barycki – -----President, Polish Canadian Business and Professional Association of Windsor

Anthony Blak -----Regional Manager, St. Stanislaus & St. Casimir's Polish Parishes Credit Union Ltd.

June Cox – -----Chair, International Relations Committee

Joseph Ouellette -----President, Acrolab Ltd. (Windsor and Lublin)

Joanna Pogorzelska – Board of Directors, The Polish People's Home Association.

Jesse Flis – ----- Former Member of Parliament in the Gov't of Canada

Sophia Flis ----- Maria Sklodowska-Curie Association.



A. Blak, J. Flis, J. Barycki, D. Cassivi, J. Cox, J. Pogorzelska, S. Flis

As in all official diplomatic visits, considerable pre-planning is required. Several letters, faxes, and e-mails were exchanged in order to properly coordinate the itinerary. The planning process included contact with government officials in Poland by Jerry Barycki, Joseph Ouellette, June Cox, and Anthony Blak. Indeed, Mr. Blak's commendable record of community service, and his acknowledged expertise in human relation skills proved to be a significant asset both prior to and during the mission.

Most notable of the Polish contacts for future reference are:

- Andrzej Pruszkowski -----Mayor, City of Lublin.
- Helena Pietraszkiewicz -----Chair, City of Lublin Council
- Zbigniew Wojciechowski---Deputy Mayor of Lublin
- Piotr Semeniuk-----Secretary to Mayor of Lublin
- Dariusz Jezior----- Development Director – City of Lublin
- Marta Cwiakala-----1<sup>st</sup> Secretary – Department of External Relations
- Donald P. McLennan-----Canadian Ambassador to Poland

The invaluable inclusion of Joanna Pogorzelska to the official delegation cannot be overstated. Ms. Pogorzelska provided endless technical assistance in the preparation, editing, translation, and interpretation of official documents and speeches. Her knowledge of Polish customs, her boundless energy, and her natural skills in diplomacy, gained her instant respect and affection of both the Windsor delegation, and Polish government officials at the highest levels.

Flight arrangements were completed with LOT Polish Airlines, for whom our delegation has nothing but the highest of praise. Recognizing the importance of this diplomatic mission, Directors of LOT very generously provided a seating upgrade to Business Class both ways between Toronto and Warsaw. This special thoughtful gesture allowed us to work more effectively in preparing the demanding itinerary of the week. Our sincerest gratitude goes to LOT for a most pleasant journey.



J. Barycki, D. Cassivi

Upon arriving in Warsaw, after the nine-hour flight from Toronto, the delegation was greeted at the airport by Dariusz Jezior, Development Director, accompanied by an official mini-bus and driver that stayed with us for the duration of our visit.



D. Cassivi, J. Barycki, S. Flis, J. Ouellette, J. Pogorzelska, J. Flis, M. Cwiakala

Collectively, the delegation felt a sense of awe and privilege to be guests in the culturally rich and historic homeland of such renowned scientists as Nicolaus Copernicus, and Maria Sklodowska-Curie; literary and artistic icons Jan Kochanowski, and Frederic Chopin; and of course, our current Holy Father, Karol Wojtyła, Pope John Paul II.

A two and one-half hour scenic drive from Warsaw brought us to Lublin at 4:15 pm, about 20 hours after leaving Windsor.



Lobby of Unia Hotel

Our home for the next four days would be the elegant and hospitable Unia hotel in central Lublin. Almost immediately upon check-in, the round of events began with a warm welcoming dinner hosted by Mayor Pruszkowski, Helena Pietraszkievicz, and senior officials from the Mayor's office. Our education and appreciation of a fascinating city in a fascinating country was dramatically unfolding.

The City of Lublin is the 9<sup>th</sup> largest in Poland, and the largest east of the Vistula, with a population of 360,000. Just as Windsor is the gateway to North America, Lublin is truly the gateway to Eastern Europe.

Dating back to the 7th Century, Lublin has a turbulent but illustrious history. The city was officially granted a municipal charter in 1317, which gave rise to the rapid development of the town. In 1569, the Lublin Union was signed, uniting Poland and Lithuania into a single political entity for the next several centuries.

Social and economic life flourished during the Renaissance, with the appearance of many national and religious minorities enjoying freedom and tolerance. However, numerous wars with the Cossacks, and the Swedish Invasion Army in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century brought an end to the prosperity. The decline continued throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> Century when Poland suffered three partitions effected by Russia, Prussia, and Austria.



SS Uniforms Majdanek

Further severe destruction was brought about by the two World Wars. The outbreak of World War II was especially costly to Lublin. As a result of the terror by the German occupying forces, thousands of Poles lost their lives. The fate of the Jewish community was particularly tragic. In 1941, the Nazis set up Majdanek – the second largest concentration camp in

Europe, where thousands of ordinary people of many creeds and nationalities were systematically exterminated. It would be difficult to match the profoundly moving and soul shattering experience of our chilling day at Majdanek. Surely this was man's inhumanity to man in its basest form.



Israeli students visiting the ovens at Majdanek, which consumed 1,000 bodies a day,



Lublin Medical Academy

Following the horror of that war, Lublin played the role of temporary capital of Poland. It became an important university center, with the Medical Academy, the University of Maria Skłodowska-Curie, the Academy of Agriculture, the Lublin Institute of Technology, and the renowned Catholic University of Lublin. Indeed, one of the great mysteries of Poland today is the “miraculous” survival of this prestigious Catholic institution during the most oppressive decades of Soviet totalitarianism.

Today, Lublin is a remarkably attractive city. The capital of Lubelskie province, it is a scrupulously clean city of industry, science, history, and culture; a city of splendid architecture, and exquisitely beautiful landscape.

It is noteworthy that one Lublin citizen in nine is engaged in academic study, which underscores the enormous human resources potential of this culturally- rich city. With grain companies that supply one-fifth of all flour market products in the country, and with the largest furniture manufacturer located in the Lublin region, it is now the fastest developing area in Poland.

Like Windsor, Lublin is a leader in the automotive industry. The firm “Same Deutz - Fahr Polska” situated near Lublin, produces 5000 Lamborghini tractors each year.



D. Cassivi, T. Fijalka  
President of Communal  
Water Company

Of particular interest to the Windsor delegation was the tour of the Municipal Water Company. The mission statement of this publicly owned and publicly operated enterprise is to provide the residents of Lublin with water of superior quality, and to collect and ecologically treat all municipal and industrial waste water. This is achieved by utilizing the most current technology, including a computer system to monitor the quality of the water and to oversee its production and distribution. The commitment of leading specialists and the loyalty of all employees are major contributing factors to this company’s reputation.



H. Pietrzkiewicz, D. Cassivi, A. Pruszkowski, J. Cox

Since the official signing of the Twin City agreement was the central focus of our visit, the formality and dignity of the event certainly rendered it the ceremonial highlight of our week. Honoring Windsor by their very presence at the signing, and adding to the prestige of the occasion was the Canadian Ambassador to Poland, His

Excellency Donald P. McLennan. As well, the Leader of the State Government, the Hon. Waldemar Dudziak attended the event. Both participated in the official program, and both delivered formal remarks of congratulations and good wishes to both cities. In attendance in the public gallery were municipal officials, university and business leaders, church and school authorities, and citizens of Lublin.

What was especially gratifying was the presence of so many young school children waving small Canadian flags, and unfurling the large City of Windsor flag at the precise moment of signing. Indeed, it was a clear demonstration of their respect and esteem for Windsor and Canada, as well as their depth of support for this partnership.



D. McLennan, J. Flis, W. Dudziak

This protocol of partnership co-operation acknowledges that issues of mutual benefit in education, medicine and health, social services, technology, and arts and culture, will be pursued. In addition, both cities reaffirmed their strong belief that regular contact will serve to enrich the friendly relations between Poland and Canada.

While the very logistics of the twinning process have resulted in a visibly strong bond of friendship and goodwill between our two cities, this particular mission elevated the relationship to a level of more imminent economic and social benefit. In this regard, public acknowledgement must go to the outstanding contribution of Jesse Flis to the delegation's agenda. His wealth of Polish/Canadian experience at the Federal level, and his high level diplomatic contacts in both countries, opened many doors. Mr. Flis is



widely recognized throughout Poland in general, and throughout Lublin, in particular. Through him and Sophia, a grand reception was held for the Windsor delegation at the Ambassador's Residence in Warsaw to celebrate the historic twinning agreement. For their active participation on the official delegation, the City of Windsor is profoundly grateful.

Poland is regarded internationally as the rising star of Eastern Europe. Lublin, we would add, is the rising star of Poland. Since there is such significant potential for shared benefits by actively embracing this relationship, it is imperative that it not be permitted to wither on the vine.

Accordingly, the delegation respectfully submits the following recommendations:

1. The City of Windsor, through the International Relations Committee, and the Mayor's Office, continue to maintain regular dialogue with the Mayor of Lublin, his officials, and the staff of the Department of External Relations.
2. The City of Windsor endorse and honor the terms of the April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2001 Twin City Agreement.
3. The City of Windsor be prepared to receive and host official Delegations from the City of Lublin, with the expressed view of advancing further the twinning relationship.
4. The International Relations Committee, in consultation with the local Polish Community, support and encourage the practice of Windsor school children exchanging correspondence with the school children of Lublin.
5. The City of Windsor, in collaboration with the Essex County Medical Association, initiate dialogue with officials at the Medical University of Lublin, to explore avenues of reciprocal assistance to meet mutually identified needs.

6. The City of Windsor actively plan a visit to Lublin with a delegation of representatives from the Development Commission, Public Utilities, Business and Industry, and the Polish Business and Professional Association of Windsor.
7. The City of Windsor actively explore Federal and/or Provincial Government agencies to access financial assistance for the exchange of economic and artistic/cultural initiatives.

As head of the Windsor delegation to Lublin, I want to express my sincere gratitude to Mayor Michael D. Hurst, members of City Council, and each member of the International Relations Committee for not only supporting and sanctioning this important undertaking, but genuinely recognizing the significance and potential benefits of cultivating this partnership. Special tribute must go to Jerry Barycki whose vision, organizational skills, diplomacy, and passionate commitment to this cause, ensured a fruitful, productive, and truly memorable experience.

Respectfully submitted,

David Cassivi  
For the Delegation



J. Barycki, M. Mączka, J. Cox, J. Ouellette, D. Cassivi, J. Flis, E. Dumkiewicz, A. Blak, J. Pogorzelska



Elementary Cardinal Wyszyński School  
Number 50 in Lublin



D. Cassivi, J. Ouellette at Acrolab Polska



Windsor Delegation, and  
Z. Wojciechowski, Deputy Mayor of Lublin  
With Windsor's plaque at Lublin City Hall



Lublin castle built in 13<sup>th</sup> century



Grodzka Street in Lublin



The Gold Room in the Former Royal  
Supreme Court Building



H. Pietraszkiewicz, D. Cassivi, A. Pruszkowski, J. Cox – signing the official twining agreement



The witnesses to the signing



Translating the speeches



Lublin Business School  
President Rev. Tadeusz Zasepa



The ashes of the victims of Majdanek



The quadrangle of the  
Catholic University of Lublin



The bridge to the old City Gate



The Zamoyski Museum in Kozlowka



At the Canadian Ambassador's residence in Warsaw



Guests at the Ambassador's residence



Sejm the Lower House of Polish Parliament



Mayor of Lublin Andrzej Pruszkowski, & June Cox, chair of the International Relations committee