

Krzysztof Langowski

Warsaw



The beginnings of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in New York (1943-1956). Part II (1951-1956)

Outline: This is the second part of an article devoted to people who made a lot of effort to build an independent research institute with an archival base dedicated to promoting knowledge about Poland and its history. The Józef Piłsudski Institute was financially supported by the Polish community abroad, membership fees, and larger donations by some of its members and sympathisers.

Keywords: New York, the Józef Piłsudski Institute, independence circles in the USA

In 1951, the Institute suffered severe losses because of the death of some of its key founding members, e.g. Stefan Łodzieski, the Chairman of the Institute, and Henryk Floyar-Rajchman, the deputy chairman. In addition, Juliusz Łukasiewicz, a member-correspondent, committed suicide in Washington. Also, Franciszek Januszewski, a founder of the Institute and its previous Chairman, died on April 10, 1953. This death was really painful as he had planned to purchase a building in New York for the needs of the Institute¹.

The Institute's cooperation with other institutions both in New York and beyond developed apace in subsequent years. The Vatican Library, the British Museum, Yale University, the Polish Library in Paris, the Polish University Abroad in London, the Alliance College in Cambridge Springs in Pennsylvania, the Library of Congress in Washington, the Polish University of London, the University of California in Los Angeles, the Journal of Central European Affairs – the University of Colorado in Boulder (Colorado) joined the already mentioned institutions, i.e. the Kosciuszko Foundation, the Polish Institute of Sciences in New York, as well as the Polish Museum in Chicago².

1 Announcement of the Józef Piłsudski Institute, October 1953, p. 2.

2 Minutes of the Tenth General Meeting on May 29, 1952, in Woodrow Wilson Memorial Foundation; Report on the Tenth General Meeting of Members of the Institute on June 4, 1953, in Woodrow Wilson Memorial Foundation.

The attitude of the people in charge of the Institute to Radio Free Europe was really interesting. Waclaw Jędrzejewicz stated that “this is a typical foreign agency which came into being due to the State Department and Bedell-Smith from the Central Intelligence Service. They produce very interesting national newsletters and various lists. We decided not to disturb [Edward] Kleszczyński, [Kazimierz] Wierzyński, [Jan] Lechoń, [Adam] Koc, General Wincenty Kowalski in their work there until they find other jobs. As you can see, the work is lousy and it is difficult to counteract it because people are bought off. Sometimes they do not require anything like Wierzyński or Lechoń. It seems that the only tactic is to show what it really is and what is hidden behind this and not to boycott people who work there”³.

In 1956, Colonel Roman Michałowski was appointed a representative to contact American institutions, and scholarly and historical foundations on the motion of the Council of the Institute. The Academic Advisory Board of the Institute, which was supervised by Professor Oskar Halecki, was set up for the first time. Professors and members of the Institute in New York such as A. Coleman, Marian Kamil Dziewanowski, Ludwik Krzyżanowski, Eugeniusz Kisielewicz, Waclaw Lednicki, Zygmunt Nagórski, Bolesław Szczęśniak, Michał Sokolnicki also belonged to the Board. People fighting for Polish independence in the 1950s were encouraged to write down their historical recollections. A section of the so-called young generation of the Polish community abroad was established to attract new members stressing the need to recruit Polish emigrants. The meetings of the Council were more frequent and in 1956 eight meetings were held. During the Council of the Institute, General Wincenty Kowalski was appointed the executive director and Colonel Adam Koc as his deputy and the head of the section of studies and archives. In the Institute’s announcement issued in July 1965, there was a note titled “the big loss”, informing about the sudden death of Jan Lechoń (Leszek Serafimowicz) on June 8, 1965. The authors of the note wrote “He was one of the most prominent social poets and writes, he was also a constant correspondent and a co-worker of the Institute from the beginning. His contribution to the Institute’s activities was immense and invaluable. May his work live on”⁴.

The Council of the Institute began working on the analysis and preparation of some materials from the archival collections, which were to be made available to researchers. It concerned the following collections:

- a. The January Uprising of 1863, General Valerian Platonov’s documents.
- b. The Silesian Uprising of Upper Silesia based on documents that were not available to historians.

³ AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Waclaw Jędrzejewicz’s letter to Tadeusz Schaetzl, Wellesley, December 16, 1951, zesp. 53, vol. 2, k. 53.

⁴ Damian Wandycz’s report on the Thirteenth General Meeting of Members of the Institute on May 12, 1956, p. 4; Report of the Institute for the year 1956, February 1957, pp. 1, 2; Press announcement of the Józef Piłsudski Institute on its new activities, p. 1; Announcement of the Józef Piłsudski Institute, July 1956, pp. 1, 3; AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Jerzy Braynack’s file, agreement, August 15, 1956.

- c. The Polish participation in World War I, documents collected and prepared by General Julian Stachiewicz⁵.

Also, solutions of some members of the new Institute's authorities in terms of their previous political involvements and certain decisions were the result of changes in the Institute's profile. An image of such reflections emerged from the preserved correspondence. Some members of the Institute, among others Prof. Waław Lednicki, were informed about it. Adam Koc wrote to Lednicki "We were deeply concerned with the Institute's fate as it was slowly dying due to the lack of a clear development aim. Therefore, in spring, Henryk Korab-Janiewicz, the Chairman of the Institute, General Wincent Kowalski and I [*Adam Koc*] decided to elucidate the accretion of oblique statements and deviations from the Institute's real activity, and determine its tasks. Now the Institute is expected to follow a scholarly and historical path. It neither serves any political idea nor glorifies any individual people. However, it continues the work initiated by Józef Piłsudski. The Institute should not deal with glorifying any individual people". A similar letter was also sent to Boguław Kunc, in which Koc wrote "I want to draw your attention to the fact that the Institute is far from Polish internecine and political feuds. Facing the break-up of the Polish community abroad into two camps (the Zaleski camp and the Sosnkowski camp) – we excluded the Institute from struggles, not taking part, but sticking close to our scholarly aims"⁶.

The Archives and the Library of the Institute

Information on gifts and archival deposits handed over to the Institute was placed in the bulletin of 1951. Documents of the Association of the Polish Centres in Northern Bavaria and the Polish Centres in Wildflaken and Ludwigsberg, along with a brief monograph written by Jerzy Ptakowski, were delivered to the Institute by the Polish Association set up in the American zone of occupation in Germany. Otto Szymański, the President of the Centre of the Association of Polish Refugees in Amberg in Germany, sent sixteen packages containing the archives of this organization. Waław Studnicki, who came to the United States, also deposited archives belonging to the Polish Association in Germany and materials showing the life and work of Polish refugees in the Institute archives. The archives were a supplement to the already submitted materials from Germany. Henry Floyar-Rajchman's archive was also sent to the Institute. It consisted of "thousands of letters, documents, notes, studies, reports, books, newspapers and cuttings. The whole of this material is sorted and declassified"⁷.

5 The Institute Chairman's report on the Fourteenth General Meeting of Members of the Institute, March 14, 1957, pp. 2, 3; Report of the Józef Piłsudski Institute of America for the year 1956, February 1957, pp. 2, 3.

6 AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Waław Lednicki's file, Adam Koc's letter to Waław Lednicki, New York, December 17, 1956; AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Boguław Kunc's file, Adam Koc's letter to Boguław Kunc, New York, September 29, 1956.

7 Bulletin of the Józef Piłsudski Institute no. 1, September 1951, p. 2.

In 1951, Dr. Anna Mars sent copies of appeals and leaflets produced during the struggle for independence in the years 1916-1918 to the Institute's collections. The Institute appealed to everybody who had any materials of historical value to deposit them in the Institute in New York, where "they will be carefully stored for public use. The confidential materials will be used in accordance with their donors' will and reservations"⁸.

By viewing the contents of the reports of the Institute's activities, we can find information about the archive records handed over to the archives of the Institute and collected by different institutions, editorial teams of newspapers and weeklies, and individuals. For example, in the report for 1953, we can find information that the Main Committee of the National Treasury in London gave a set of their materials. In addition, the Main Board of the KNAPP in New York continually sent letters and brochures, and the League of Polish Independence acting in England and France donated sets of letters. Furthermore, the editors of the magazine "Polak w Kalifornii" [*The Pole in California*] published in San Francisco, gave letters and brochures. What is more, J. Biłasicwicz from Chicago gave three hundred and fifty press cuttings; the Soldiers' Circle of the Home Army in New York sent a set of writings; Damian Wandycz donated his own archival collection including brochures and correspondence; the Polish Library in Paris sent nine brochures, eighteen letters and diaries. Also, Zbigniew Spotowski from New York sent thirty booklets, six hundred and fifty Polish letters, fourteen diaries and four albums, Klaudiusz Hrabyc from New York sent forty-eight booklets, five hundred and fifteen Polish writings, eight diaries, four hundred press cuttings; Waław Gawroński from Toledo in Ohio handed over several sets of journals "Polityka Narodów" [*Policy of Nations*], the materials concerning the attitude of the Polish community in America to Józef Piłsudski, extracts from the Polish press in America after the death of the Marshal, and the Marshal's album of caricatures by Zdzisław Czermański. Leon Orłowski, the former Polish Ambassador in Bucharest, gave many valuable books and pamphlets to the Library of the Institute⁹.

In 1954, the Institute purchased the so-called Valerian Platonov Papers. This collection survived several decades unrecognized and forgotten in Paris, in the French family of Platonov's wife. After determining its value, the collection was put up for auction in the United States. The Papers consisted of manuscripts, files, correspondence from the period of 1861-1863, which was a part of the legacy of the former Tsar's Minister and the Secretary of State for the Polish Kingdom. It also contained forty-three files with a total number of more than one thousand three hundred assorted loose leafs, which usually concerned Polish affairs. The files included e.g. an extensive memorandum written by Siergiej Szypanow (in manuscript) sent to Tsar Alexander II concerning the Russian policy towards Poland as a whole, and pro-

8 Bulletin of the Józef Piłsudski Institute no. 2, March 1952, p. 2.

9 Report prepared at the Eleventh General Meeting of Members of the Institute; Announcement of the Józef Piłsudski Institute, October 1953, p. 2.

protocols of the meetings of the Agriculture Chamber in Warsaw and merchant organizations in Warsaw. Furthermore, there are materials on the January Uprising such as insurgent orders, commanders' instructions, insurgent papers ("*Strażnica*" [*Watchtower*], "*Ruch*" [*Movement*], "*Wiadomości z placu boju*" [*News from Battle Field*]), and from the Russian side: proclamations, official orders of the authorities, etc. Among hundreds of letters written in French, Polish and Russian, there are letters of Margrave Alexander Wielopolski, Count Fyodor Berg, Prince Michael Gorchakov and many others¹⁰. Also in the same year, Stefania Bardziłowska from Boston handed over collections on the social welfare of the members of the Polish Armed Forces during the war. Wiesław Frontczak from Detroit gave a collection of the Polish press and sent a set of prints and magazines of the activity of the Polish National Defence Committee. The Institute had financial problems which impacted on the opportunities to collect and classify the collections. In a published announcement it was written that "The archival collections are stored in three dispersed rented locations, the Institute's office, a storehouse, and W. Malevich's cellar in a New York tenement, which was free of charge." Expenses connected with the storage of the Institute's property in various locations were significant but very rarely revealed in the financial statements (e.g. the sum of \$ 421.30 appeared in the Report for 1953)¹¹. Thanks to the work of Jan Kowalski, the secretary of the Institute, these collections were combined and located in three rented rooms. The plan was partly possible because Jerzy Braynack offered a new set of metal shelves to the Institute. The shelves facilitated a more accessible arrangement of the archival and library collections in terms of storage and availability to researchers, and also to secure them properly. Firstly, the gathered and still in-coming collections were arranged and classified professionally. In order to do this, the help of the Polish community living abroad was necessary. Apart from financial support, which would allow to hire appropriate locations for the archives, also the help of volunteers was indispensable to conduct maintenance works in the archives. A good example of such engagement is the commitment of Jan Kowalski, who arranged and classified the Polish press from forty-one countries. The classification of the historical and political bibliography of Poland, which was drawn up in the 1940s and at the beginning of the 1950s, "has been abandoned since four years because of lack of funds. This bibliography is essential for the Institute to study the recent history of Poland. The resumption of this significant branch of work and making up for the backlog are very important." In reference to the above mentioned, a large volume of a similar bibliography for all countries in the world, but only between 1942-1952, which was drawn up and published a year earlier by the Council of Foreign Affairs in New York and which "does not bear the hallmarks of the abovementioned Polish bibliography, was taken

10 Minutes of the Twelfth General Meeting of the Members of the Institute on April 12, 1955, in Woodrow Wilson Memorial Foundation in New York; Announcement of the Institute, December 1955, pp. 1, 2; Jan Kowalski's report on the Meeting of the Council of the Institute on June 4, 1954.

11 Report on the activity of the Institute for the year 1953 (the financial report), p. 1.

into consideration”¹². Also, an initiative to collect and arrange reports of people who participated in the struggles and work for Polish independence before, during, and after World War II, was undertaken.

Publications of the Institute

A brochure “O zapomnianym liście Piłsudskiego do Masaryka” [*Pilsudski's forgotten letter to Masaryk*] by Damian Wandycz was published in 1953. It was a reply to Winston Churchill's book, which was published at that time¹³.

In 1954, the Institute published a brochure “Polish Americans and the Curzon Line”, which was a kind of answer to President Frank Delano Roosevelt's statement issued in Yalta in 1944. This declaration stated that the Polish community living in America supported the so-called “Curzon Line” as the Polish-Soviet border. Damian Wandycz wrote “We know the Polish community did everything to prevent the separation of the eastern territories from Poland and, therefore, no one can blame the country for this”¹⁴.

A year later, in 1955, the Council of the Institute decided to publish volumes 2 and 3 “Poland in the British Parliament”. As noted in the Report of the Director of the Institute, “An anonymous donor was ready to grant a loan to the Institute in the amount of two-thirds of the costs of print, paid from the sale of the book. The Institute had to cover only one-third. Jędrzejewicz has prepared volume 2 for print. Volume 3 is almost ready”¹⁵.

The Institute supported Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski in publishing his work titled “Najnowsza historia polityczna Polski” [*The Contemporary Political History of Poland*], which was realized between 1952-1960. Correspondence with individual directors of the Institute and with Jędrzejewicz proved that. Apart from delivering indispensable information, the Institute collected advance payments for the book to be published. The payments were supposed to pay for the book and the shipment of other volumes. The delay in publishing the next volumes, which were excessively enlarged by the author, influenced their deliveries to readers who bore grudges against the Institute. In order to calm the disgruntled subscribers, who had already made advance payments, an official announcement was issued stating that “the author of the book says that the printing was to be finished in September, and the book was to be sent in October. The difficulties in publishing volume 2 caused other delays”. However, the Institute should receive copies for American subscribers within a few weeks. The size of volume 2 “would be much bigger than

12 Announcement of the Józef Piłsudski Institute, July 1956, p. 2; Report of the Józef Piłsudski Institute, February 1957, p. 1.

13 Damian Wandycz's report for the year 1953.

14 AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Maria Kosko's file, Damian Wandycz's letter to Maria Kosko, New York, November 5, 1954.

15 Damian Wandycz's report on the General Meeting of the Members of the Institute on May 12, 1956, p. 2.

initially planned. The volume will have seven hundred pages instead of three hundred and fifty". Also, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski wrote about his situation and the enlargement of his work and stated that he is "exhausted and tired. And, I live in a nervous atmosphere. I know that the difficulties enforced by émigré conditions and the excessive enlargement of the volumes absolve and excuse me". In addition, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski received a scholarship from the Institute to finish the book and the institution was a guarantor for the Canadian distributor – the bookshop "Mosaic Publishers Co."¹⁶

The undertaking of editing "Niepodległość" [*Independence*] was an important element of the publishing activity of the Institute. The idea of reissuing the pre-war bulletin, coming out in the interwar period by the Józef Piłsudski Institute in America, was ahead of the idea of establishing an Institute in London that decided to continue publishing the bulletin. General Władysław Bortnowski's short stay in Canada and the United States in 1946 and his conversations with Ignacy Matuszewski, Henryk Floyar-Rejchman, Waław Jędrzejewicz and Franciszek Januszewski on reviving the magazine were connected with the idea of the bulletin. Some examples of these conversations can be found in one of the letters, in which General Bortnowski stated that "together with the late Franciszek Januszewski we decided to issue a monthly titled "Niepodległość." The aim of this historical and political annual periodical was to reach all Poles on all continents. Franciszek Januszewski was supposed to be the chairman and Ignacy Matuszewski the editor. Setting up the Institute in London has not been discussed yet. I discussed this with Ignacy Matuszewski on June 3, 1946"¹⁷. Waław Jędrzejewicz sent a paper with the draft of a statute for the new Institute. The letter appeared during preparations for the Second Meeting of the Council of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in London in April. Also a remark that "the Institute in New York is going to continue the works of Walery Sławek, Aleksander Prystor and Leon Wasilewski by publishing a historical periodical under the same title, which was identical with the one published before the war in Warsaw, "Niepodległość" was mentioned in the letter¹⁸. Waław Jędrzejewicz's speech was

16 AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, Waław Jędrzejewicz's letter to Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, Wellesley, May 21, 1951, zesp. 85, k. 454; *ibid.*, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski's letter to Waław Jędrzejewicz, Paris, April 25, 1952, k. 480; *ibid.*, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski's letter to Waław Jędrzejewicz, Paris, August 12, 1952, k. 270; Announcement of the Józef Piłsudski Institute, December 1955, p. 3. *ibid.*, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski's letter to Waław Jędrzejewicz, Paris, November 22, 1953, k. 511; *ibid.*, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski's letter to Waław Jędrzejewicz, Paris, January 3, 1955, k. 524; *ibid.*, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski's letter to Waław Jędrzejewicz, Paris, April 10, 1956, k. 527; *ibid.*, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski's letter to Waław Gawroński, sygn. XLII/A; *ibid.*, Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski's letter to General Wincent Kowalski, vol. Va/2, Archives of the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the Józef Piłsudski Institute of America, November 22, 1952.

17 AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Konrad Libicki's file, General Władysław Bortnowski's letter to Damian Wandycz, London, December 12, 1953.

18 J. Zuziak, *The Józef Piłsudski Institute in London*, London 2002, pp. 22, 23; AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Tadeusz Schaezel's file, Waław Jędrzejewicz's letter to Tadeusz Schaezel,

the result of Władysław Bortnowski's letter where it was stated that "the supporters of Piłsudski [*it was about a circle connected with Bronisław Helczyński and Michał Grażyński, against whom were the supporters of Piłsudski, Ignacy Matuszewski, Waclaw Jędrzejewicz, Henryk Floyar-Rajchman, Mikołaj Dolanowski and others – K.L.*] want to publish the magazine here. Thank God, they decided to do this. The magazine will be titled "Niepodległość." This name has its own tradition as the publishing house of the Institute. In case of reissuing the magazine as a yearbook, even at the beginning published by New York and the new branch of the Institute, we will not have a title". General Władysław Bortnowski tried to guarantee access to the periodical for the Institute of America. Therefore, writing to Waclaw Jędrzejewicz, he mentioned among others that "The Institute in New York has to uphold its point of view anyway. Julek [*Łukasiewicz*] told me that you know about these intentions. Please, state your view. To sum up, please take a stand on waiving the right to the title of the magazine "Niepodległość", and in case of a positive decision please leave space for columns and supplements for the Institute"¹⁹.

Consequently, during the Meeting of the Council on April 22, 1947, there was a statement – publishing the magazine "Niepodległość" – in article 4 determining the main tasks of the Institute (section 2, subsection d of the Statute). The appearance of the first issue of "Dzieje Najnowsze" [*Modern History*] published by the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw was the main reason for reissuing "Niepodległość". Nevertheless, the magazine was supposed to include the period, which the editorial board of the pre-war "Niepodległość" wrote about. Tadeusz Munich stated that "The Institute and 'Dzieje Najnowsze', created by the Warsaw administration, were to replace the Józef Piłsudski Institute and 'Niepodległość'." Some people were anxious of the fact that Henryk Wereszycki and Wanda Kiedrzyńska, two well-known figures of the pre-war Józef Piłsudski Institute, started cooperating with the new magazine²⁰.

The first issue of the yearbook (after its resumption) dated March 19, 1948, was published in accordance with the assumptions of the Board of the Institute in London. It was on the first anniversary of the Institute's activity. Jan Starzewski and Konrad Libicki did the editorial works of the magazine and a list of regular collaborators living outside the UK was created. It was decided that the members of the Institute would help publish the yearbook and General Władysław Bortnowski would supervise the whole process. On August 6, 1947, the Board of the Institute and the editorial team of "Niepodległość" sent a letter to potential collaborators, presenting them both the form and the main objectives of the future magazine. The letter said, "The

New York, April 1947.

19 AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, General Władysław Bortnowski's letter to Waclaw Jędrzejewicz, London, zesp. 37, April 5, 1947.

20 AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Tadeusz Schaetzl's letter to Waclaw Jędrzejewicz, zesp. 53, Cairo, August 2, 1947, k. 117-126; *ibid.*, Cairo, August 8, 1947, k. 130-131; AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, zesp. 91, vol. 45 f, Tadeusz Schaetzl's letter to Michał Sokolnicki, Cairo, August 9, 1947, k. 155; From the editorial team, "Dzieje Najnowsze", vol. 1, January-March 1947.

Józef Piłsudski Institute for Research in Modern History of Poland, the Department in London, is going to issue the first yearbook, devoted to the contemporary history of Poland, including ideology and independence-orientated activities". The editorial team planned to publish first and foremost works devoted to the following periods:

1. Polish issues in the years 1794-1914.
2. Marshal Piłsudski's activity during the period of clandestine activities, his Legions' struggles and the interwar period of national independence.
3. World War II until today from the perspective of the Polish contribution to history, both at home and abroad.

The works, which were supposed to be placed in the yearbook, could relate to Polish military, diplomatic, organizational, public and secret efforts; the development of political ideology; national problems; social and economic processes. The editorial team made efforts to receive texts on the problems and activities of prominent representatives of national life. Special attention was paid to the precise study of actions whose participants could provide less known contributions and explanations. The editorial team wanted to devote a separate chapter of the magazine to personal memories of contacts with Marshal Józef Piłsudski and his closest collaborators. They also tried to maintain a high level of expertise, primarily by confirming the content of this section by juxtaposing the statements that were made with primary sources, and objective in-depth analyses. The Board of the Institute and the editorial team of the yearbook expressed a strong belief that many authors had manuscripts which were worth publishing and suitable for printing. The editorial works of the first issue of "Niepodległość" were almost finished at the end of 1947.

The editorial team collaborated closely with the Institute in New York. This was proved by Waław Jędrzejewicz's letter to Michał Sokolnicki, where he stated that publishing Michał Sokolnicki's manuscripts was not possible in New York, but he decided to send this fragment of "the diary about the Riflemen's movement to London for publication. Now, I am in touch with Libicki"²¹. The first volume of this yearbook was printed in Germany. At the turn of 1948-1949, it appeared in London and was sent to all members of the Institute without charge. The Institute in New York received one hundred and ten copies which were given to its members. From the editorial team's note on page 7 we can find out that "Niepodległość" was being revived in London as a body of the Józef Piłsudski Institute devoted to research into the contemporary history of Poland with the approval of the Institute in New York. The changed conditions of Polish life had an influence on the content of the publication including studies on struggles and Polish efforts since the partitions up to the present day. In independent Poland, the main section of the publication was devoted to documents and recollections. In the future the editorial team would strive to col-

21 J. Zuziak, *op. cit.*, pp. 25, 27; AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, the letter of the Board of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in London and the editorial team of "Niepodległość" to future collaborators on August 6, 1947, *zesp.* 37; AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Waław Jędrzejewicz's letter to Michał Sokolnicki, New York, January 24, 1948, *zesp.* 91, vol. 45g.

lect a greater number of reminiscences and take into account the source material". Konrad Libicki dealt with the preparation of the first, while the second volume, and the third volume appeared in March 1951. The Organizing Committee consisting of Stanisław Biegański, Konrad Libicki, Józef Moszczeński and Tadeusz Schaetzel edited the third and fourth volumes of the journal. The fifth issue of "Niepodległość" appeared in 1955. Some changes were made in the composition of the editorial team, which consisted of Stanisław Biegański, Józef Moszczeński, Kazimierz Okulicz, Józef Poniatowski, Tadeusz Schaetzel (Chairman of the Committee and its editor) and Jan Starzewski.

Purchasing the house for the Institute.

Franciszek Januszewski, the Chairman of the Institute, took steps to purchase a house. On December 20, 1951, he stated "He will personally purchase a house for the institution in New York." He also informed "He authorizes Stefan Ropp to buy a suitable building and set up a committee composed of Waław Jędrzejewicz and Ignacy Nurkiewicz to choose the most appropriate building. Chairman Januszewski is also asking Damian Wandycz and Kazimierz Wierzyński to take part in the Committee". On Kazimierz Wierzyński's motion, the Council unanimously passed a resolution thanking the Chairman for his decision. The Council also stressed that "Chairman Januszewski refers to examples of generosity for patriotic aims and care for our national heritage"²². Józef Lipski talked with Polish activists (including Stanisław Gierat and Edward Kleszczyński) about the Institute and the plans connected with purchasing the building during one of his visits in New York. In his report, written to an unknown person, he stated "Franciszek Januszewski has the intention to fund a building in New York for the Józef Piłsudski Institute"²³.

Also, Waław Jędrzejewicz wrote about the Chairman's plans: "As you know, I discussed the problem of the future of the Institute with Franciszek Januszewski in December. The result: we did not manage to convince Walenty Porański and other Polish millionaires to give more money for the Institute, Franciszek Januszewski decided to donate a sum of \$ 40 000 – 50 000 and buy the house for the Institute in New York. Now we are all busy with fulfilling this plan. I work from a distance (I work 10 miles from Boston), but others work there. It is about purchasing an appropriate building in spring"²⁴. In line with this decision, the representatives of the Institute were in touch with Stefan Ropp, who was permanently employed in "Dziennik

22 Bulletin of the Institute, Report on the Meeting of the Council of the Institute, no. 2, March 1952, pp. 1, 2; Press announcement published after the General Meeting of the Institute on May 29, 1952, in Woodrow Wilson Memorial Foundation, p. 1; AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Franciszek Januszewski's file, Damian Wandycz's letter to Franciszek Januszewski on January 16, 1952.

23 AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Józef Lipski's letter to an unknown person, January 16, 1952, p. 1, zesp. 67, vol. 39.

24 AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Waław Jędrzejewicz's letter to Władysław Bortnowski, January 16, 1952, zesp. 37, V/t3/D.

Polski” (American Publishing Corporation) in Detroit. It is confirmed by Stefan Ropp’s letter to Damian Wandycz, the Director of the Institute, in which he stated that: “Probably you have your eye on a building which would be suitable for you both in terms of profitability and the layout of the rooms inside.” He also asked for the basic data concerning the building to be sent quickly, i.e. its location, the amount of the rental income from tenants, the mortgage and planned expenses. “This gives me a chance to compare it with other buildings which were already known to me”²⁵. Waclaw Jędrzejewicz went to Boston in order to help buy the building. In one of his letters to Damian Wandycz, he wrote that, in line with previous decisions, he was going to go by train on Friday evening just after finishing lectures with students “and having arrived I would call you to meet you on Saturday morning. I suggest meeting, if it suits you, e.g. in the Institute on Saturday at 10.30 or 11.00. We can talk and see the house. Yesterday, I met Kazimierz Wierzyński, who is staying in Boston for a couple of days. He told me about his impressions of the house at 37 Street”²⁶. As a result, Mrs. Porceri, an estate agent, was asked to look for appropriate offers, i.e. similar to the building of the Institute. Among others, they evaluated a building, at 108 East 37 Street, which was supposed to cost 130 000. In order to buy the building, it was necessary to make a down-payment of 38 000 in cash and 92 000 was borrowed from the bank on security. Another building was located at 18 East 80 Street and cost 115 000. However, Stefan Ropp stressed that in his opinion, buildings in Manhattan in New York are usually bought “at higher prices than our offers.” Furthermore, he suggested that the sudden drop in prices on the property market, caused by ongoing turbulences in the building market, were getting closer. Consequently, “a serious decrease in rents will appear and all calculations based on current rent levels would be unattainable within two years. He also mentioned that the constant inflow of inhabitants on the outskirts of Manhattan could additionally cause a dip in the value of properties. Therefore, taking into account the purchase of the building for the Institute, we have conditions securing the capital and income in mind. I personally saw four buildings, which were totally inappropriate, but the prices were low.” He was aware of the fact that the financial offers he made to the owners of the buildings, “would not be accepted. Yet, maybe counteroffers would be more appropriate to what we can pay. We will wait for the reaction”²⁷. A couple of days later, Waclaw Jędrzejewicz wrote that he had come back to Wellesley from New York where he had seen two houses identified by Stefan Ropp and Franciszek Januszewski as suitable for purchase. Then Jędrzejewicz stated that: “I talked with the owner for a long time and saw the house at 80 Street. And it seems that the first of them will be better for the Institute and is more appropriate in respect of prof-

25 AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Franciszek Januszewski’s file, Stefan Ropp’s letter to Damian Wandycz, Detroit, February 7, 1952.

26 AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Kazimierz Wierzyński’s file, Waclaw Jędrzejewicz’s letter to Damian Wandycz, Wellesley, March 2, 1952.

27 AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Franciszek Januszewski’s file, Stefan Ropp’s letter to Damian Wandycz, Detroit, March 5, 1952.

itability.” However, on the basis of the conversation with the owner of the building at 37 Street, Waław Jędrzejewicz figured out that he would not agree to sell the building for \$ 130 000, which “by way of compromise would be similar to the asking price set by Mr. Gulak (the owner of the building). The owner may lower the price by about \$5 000 at most, i.e. the price would amount to 160 000.” Waław Jędrzejewicz opted for buying the building because he thought that despite this very high price it could give a basis for the sound financial condition of the Institute in the future. In a further part of his letter, he wrote that Kazimierz Wierzyński was against purchasing the building. Wierzyński did not like the location of the building as it was situated in a dangerous district. However, Jędrzejewicz did not share Wierzyński’s view. He praised this location because of the vicinity of the Morgan Library & Museum and the New York Public Library at 5 Avenue, the corner of 42 Street. Jędrzejewicz wrote “The street is busy, that is true, but all streets are the same. In another block of flats at the corner of Lexington Ave and 37 Street, there is the very good Shelburn Hotel and opposite our building there is the American Association of University Women, a very respectable institution. Therefore, I do not think that the location of the house discredits it for our purposes”²⁸. Both Chairman Franciszek Januszewski and Stefan Ropp in their correspondence with Waław Jędrzejewicz and Damian Wandycz, expressed their opinion that property prices would decrease soon. Stefan Ropp stated firmly that: “if the discount would not be serious, I could not advise Franciszek Januszewski to buy the house.” Besides, he stressed the belief that “We are in a period in which we should expect a significant drop in the value of houses. The economic collapse and a serious depression will probably appear at the beginning of 1953. Until then, electoral propaganda and the Christmas period do not allow for a serious breakdown.” Stefan Ropp’s suggestion contained in the extensive correspondence evinced considerable reluctance to fulfil Franciszek Januszewski’s pledges to buy a suitable place for the Institute. It was also proved by Damian Wandycz’s words, who invoked the need to cooperate while attempting to purchase the planned building. By the end of 1952, the attempts did not bring any positive results, because “we were waiting for the decrease in prices, or a real bargain. The offer which I recently brought you was about 25 % cheaper than last year. Yet in your opinion, the price is excessive. If I understood correctly, you are advising me to wait for the expected crisis to buy the building for next to nothing. However, I am afraid that this would put the purchase of the house off for an unspecified time. In reality, the crisis may or may not come. We know that predictions in this matter are unreliable”²⁹.

During the General Meeting of Members of the Institute, on June 5, 1953, President Franciszek Januszewski apologized that he had not had an opportunity to buy the house for the Institute, but he stated that “he made a steadfast resolution” to ful-

28 *Ibid.*, Waław Jędrzejewicz’s letter to Stefan Ropp, Wellesley, March 11, 1952.

29 *Ibid.*, Stefan Ropp’s letter to Damian Wandycz, Detroit, March 18, 1952; *ibid.*, Damian Wandycz’s letter to Stefan Ropp, New York, February 7, 1953.

fil his promise. However, all serious plans of purchasing the building were ruined because of the sudden death of Chairman Franciszek Januszewski (June 10, 1953, in Detroit). Members of the Institute have been informed about the situation by a special message. Vice-Chairman Edward Kleszczyński and Director Damian Wandycz, who personally paid the last tribute to the Chairman, represented the Institute at the funeral. The Chairman remembered the Institute because he bequeathed a part of his estate to the Institute. According to unofficial rumours, one thirds of his fortune, which had been assigned to his wife, would be given to the Institute in the future. In order to continue the plans of purchasing the building, on June 26, 1953, during the Meeting of the Council, Members of the Institute decided to co-opt the Chairman's widow, Mrs. Stefania Januszewska, onto the Council³⁰. However, little was still know about the amount of money Januszewski really bequeathed to the Institute. Waclaw Jędrzejewicz stated that: "We were told that a sum of \$ 40 000 is provided for buying the house, but I stressed that we did not have it in writing and we did not know the conditions for using the sum. Damian Wandycz and I are counting on it that the sum will be transferred this year. Then we will set about buying the house, which will be time-consuming. The above mentioned sum will decrease to 33 000 for the house because we need to have a few thousand dollars for renovation and the installations needed for our work"³¹.

Stefan Ropp also confirmed the amount of the bequest for the Institute, which was provided after the death of Mrs. Stefania Januszewska. However, he was not able to state whether the amount of the bequest would be equal to the money donated to buy the building as it was not clarified under the legal regulations. He stressed that "it was a private donation for the house, whereas the personal property of the deceased was part of American Publishing's share. The remaining part of the property belonged to the widow. Lawyers will clarify these problems in the nearest future"³².

All hopes for obtaining the necessary sum from Franciszek Januszewski's inheritance soon faded. It was confirmed by Klaudiusz Hrabyk's account of a conversation with General Kazimierz Sosnkowski which took place in Alfred Jurzykowski's house in Bronxville in New York. General Sosnkowski met Stefan Ropp, who confirmed that obtaining the sum donated by Franciszek Januszewski for the Institute would not be possible. Stefan Ropp stated firmly "There is no money from [*Franciszek*] Januszewski's property and we should not have any hopes of obtaining money to buy the house for the Institute, unless [*Mrs. Stefania*] Januszewska, the widow, bequeaths her wealth for this purpose in the future. General [*Kazimierz*] Sosnkowski really took it to heart"³³.

30 Announcement of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in New York, October 1953.

31 AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Waclaw Jędrzejewicz's letter to Władysław Pobóg-Malinowski, Wellesley, July 20, 1953, zesp. 85, vol. XLII/A/2.

32 AOS in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, Stefan Ropp's file, Stefan Ropp's letter to Damian Wandycz, Detroit, July 24, 1953.

33 AOG in the Józef Piłsudski Institute, New York, notes on the conversation with General Kazimierz Sosnkowski, zesp. 48, vol. III/A.

General Władysław Bortnowski mentioned again the problem of purchasing the house for the Institute during the Meeting of the Council of the Institute on April 19, 1955. He also stressed the need to purchase it because “There are no prospects for obtaining the inheritance from the late Franciszek Januszewski in the near future. We should think about buying the house for money collected for this purpose”. The General suggested combining this action with honouring Marshal Józef Piłsudski on the twentieth anniversary of his death and proposed establishing a committee for building a house. All who were present at the meeting, Chairman Henryk Korab-Janiewicz, General Władysław Bortnowski, Damian Wandycz, Jan Kowalski, Stefan Lenartowicz, Ignacy Nurkiewicz, Juliusz Kanarek, took part in the discussion. Ignacy Nurkiewicz saw little chance of collecting the necessary funds to build a house for the Institute. In his opinion, a house shared by many Polish organizations seemed to be a more realistic undertaking. That idea, as he emphasized, was repeatedly brought up for a long time, and there would be a place for the Institute. Henryk Korab-Janiewicz, Wiesław Domaniewski and Stefan Lenartowicz did see the possibility to collect the relevant sum to build a house. General Władysław Bortnowski stressed that the case is not easy, but he “does not mean a big house in the town centre, but he believes that buying even a small house on the outskirts is more real and suggests establishing a committee for this purpose. He proposes that the director of the Institute should deal with this problem”. In response, Damian Wandycz stated that appointing such a Committee and its action were not within the scope of the Institute’s official current concerns. He thought that it was necessary to appoint a special committee consisting of members of the Council. He also suggested that General Władysław Bortnowski should establish the committee. This proposal was accepted³⁴.

A year later, in 1956, the Council of the Institute decided to initiate an action to collect the relevant funds, which were to be allocated to purchase a building for the institution. Plans for further collections of books, public lectures and administrative problems were to underpin this decision. The whole institution required “much more space.” During the discussion, it was stressed that it should be “a small house in the middle of New York. The ground floor should be rented out to commercial enterprises, and the income could be used to pay for the Institute’s office and administrative expenses and potentially supplemented by a mortgage.” However, the need for funds at the beginning was really important. Therefore, the need to collect money was crucial in 1957. After a long discussion it was decided to adopt the following: to plan a start-up drive [*collection of money – K.L.*] to collect funds for the purchase of a house for the Institute; to lay “foundations” for this fund even before starting the drive by declaring the donation of the Institute of the first payment; to ask the Chairman of the Institute to supervise the drive. As a result the following made donations: General Władysław Bortnowski – \$ 100, General Wincenty Kowalski – \$ 100, Jan Kowalski – \$ 100, lawyer Juliusz Kanarek – \$ 200, Edward

34 Secretary Jan Kowalski’s minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the Institute on April 19, 1955.

Kleszczyński – \$ 100, Colonel Adam Koc – \$ 100. Stefania Januszewska stated that “She will think about her financial possibilities and declare a precise sum in the nearest future”³⁵. It turned out that the plans connected with providing a safe building for the Institute were not successful.

In conclusion, it should be stressed that despite huge difficulties in the initial period of the Institute’s activity, it was possible to keep it alive, and also successfully develop both archival and publishing activities. The undertaken efforts paid off in the future activities of the Institute in New York, leading to its successful development

The beginnings of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in New York (1943-1956). Part II (1950-1956)

The second part of this text about Piłsudski Institute in New York is dedicated to people who make efforts to build this independent scientific research institution. They tried not only to collect and organize historical documents, but also to popularize unadulterated knowledge about Poland and its recent history. Piłsudski Institute was based on financial support granted by Polish activists and membership fees as well as larger donations from some members.

Thanks to energetic work of people connected with the institution both archival and library collections grew rapidly. Simultaneously, the Institute published significant sources of recent history of Poland. Documents such as *Poland in the British Parliament* (Volume 2, 3) by Waclaw Jędrzejewicz and two brochures: *A forgotten letter of Piłsudski to Masaryk in 1953* and *Polish Americans and the Curzon Line* published in 1954 prepared by Damian S. Wandycz were published in English.

Translated by Marta Antoniuk

³⁵ Report of the Józef Piłsudski Institute in America for the year 1956, February 1957, p. 3; Minutes of the Meeting of the Council of the Institute on December 3, 1956, p. 3.