**April 24, 1932**

Dear fellow countrymen and countrywomen, I greet you with the words: Praised be Jesus Christ!

Our own Henryk Sienkiewicz, in the novel “Mr. Wołodyjowski”, describes in the following way the funeral of the hero of Kamieniec and the first soldier of the Republic: ‘In the Stanislaus collegiate church stood the tall catafalque, bountifully adorned by candles; and on it lay Mr. Wołodyjowski in two coffins, lead and wooden. The lids were already nailed shut and the funeral rites were taking place. All the bells were ringing in the church, filled with nobles and soldiers, who for the last time wanted to look at the coffin of the “Hector of Kamieniec”, and the first knight of the Republic. Old soldiers, friends or subordinates of the departed stood in a circle around the catafalque. By a strange coincidence, almost nobody was missing of those who once had sat on benches at the Chreptiów fire; all of them had survived the war; only he who was their leader and model, that good and just knight, terrible to his enemies, sweet to his own men, only that fencing master above all others, with the heart of a dove – he lay there up high, in the light, in immeasurable glory, but in the silence of death. The hearts, hardened by war, still gave way to sorrow at that sight; the yellow luster of the candles shed light on the stern, anxious faces of the warriors, and was reflected in shining glimmers in the tears which were shed. The bells rang; at the high altar, the Mass was ending. At the end resounded the high voice of the priest, crying “Requiescat in Pacem”, almost as if from an abyss. But the ceremony was not yet over. The knighthood had prepared numerous speeches, which were to be said while the coffin was being let down into the grave. However, Father Kamiński, the same who had often been in Chreptiów and had prepared Basia for her death[[1]](#footnote-1), walked up to the pulpit. In the church, people started to cough and clear their throats, as usual before a sermon; then they grew quiet and all eyes turned to the pulpit. Suddenly from the pulpit came the rolling sound of a drum. The listeners were surprised. Father Kamiński hit the drum as if to sound an alarm; suddenly he stopped and deathly silence fell. Then the growling of the drum started for a second, and then a third time; suddenly Father Kamiński threw his drumsticks onto the church floor, lifted up both arms and cried out: “Mr. Wołodyjowski!” The convulsive cry of Basia answered him. The atmosphere in the church became terrible. Mr. Zagłoba, together with Mr. Muszalski, lifted up and carried the girl, who was in a faint, out of the church. Meanwhile the priest carried on: “For God’s sake, Mr. Wołodyjowski! They are sounding the alarm. War! The enemy within our borders! And you do not rise up? You do not reach for your sword? You do not mount your horse? What has happened to you, soldier? Have you forgotten your virtue? That you leave us alone in sadness and fear?” – The knightly breasts heaved with emotion, and universal crying filled the church, once and again, as the priest lauded the virtue, the love of the fatherland and the courage of the departed, and the preacher himself was carried away by his own words. His face grew pale; his forehead was covered with sweat, his voice faltered. He was carried away by sorrow for the little soldier, sorrow for Kamieniec, sorrow for the Republic, which was lost by the hands of the moon-worshippers, and finally he finished his speech with a prayer: “They will change churches into mosques, and they will sing the Koran where we once sang the Gospel. You have crushed us, Lord, You have turned away Your face and You have given us up to the foul Turk. Inscrutable are Your sentences, but who now, oh Lord! Who will oppose him now? You take away such defenders behind whose backs all of Christianity could praise Your name? Good Father! Do not abandon us! Show us Your mercy!”[[2]](#footnote-2)

Dear radio listeners! And today I cry out to you, for God’s sakes, dear countrymen, the alarm is sounding, the enemy is within our borders, and you do not rise up? You do not stand in the ranks? What has happened to you? Have you already forgotten the virtues of your forefathers? Do you want your churches to be changed into cold, empty and soulless meeting halls and Protestant churches, and the places where the Gospel used to be sung to become filled with empty human songs? What has happened to you, fellow countrymen? Where are the old-fashioned virtues of our forefathers: piety – love of your neighbor – and sobriety? Are attachment to and the memory of the heroic deeds of our forefathers, which made the Poles the bulwark of Christianity and the model of knighthood, entirely gone? Are we no longer possessed of national pride, rising from the fact that the Pole is a type of Christian soldier, that the Pole is the model of civic virtue, that Poles are the chosen nation of God, over whom God’s Providence in a special way opens its protective wings? Have we fallen so low that we regard ourselves as the worst, the most vile, as the outcasts of society? Do we have on our foreheads some mark of Cain, that we are ashamed of ourselves, that we explain that it’s not our fault that we are of Polish descent, that our father is – a Pole and our mother - a Pole! Instead of being proud of it, and honored by the fact that we are the sons and daughters of this noble and martyred nation, whose every page of history is written in blood and gold, we have fallen into a torpor, into some deep sleep, into some chilling insensibility. Our enemies do not rest, but watch both day and night, exerting their forces and talents to weaken and gradually destroy us. Are we to give up of our own free will and once again fall into slavery, and to cry and groan under the feet of foreigners? No, and once again no! Although the enemy is within our borders, we will not give up, so help us God. And to give you, my dear radio listeners, courage and hope, my last radio speech to you this season carries the title:

**Our Enemies**

Our first and most lethal enemy is apathy. Apathy in regards to American affairs – in Polish and religious matters. Let us see! We are American citizens, we pretend to both American rights and privileges, but do we fulfill fully the duties of a model citizen? Far from it! To pay our taxes and conscientiously and fervently break the Prohibition laws, and then fold our arms and sit quiet, this is far, very far, from fulfilling civic duties! Why, in our times, in our country, are laws passed which are incompatible with God’s law, with natural law, which infringe on personal rights? Why are laws passed so quickly which save the citizens of foreign and far-away countries, when here within the borders of this richest republic, the angel of poverty and destitution spreads his wings ever wider, and death from starvation looks millions in the eye? Why is the payment of war debts to rich superpowers systematically and purposely prolonged, while here for not paying their taxes, in every town and village, thousands of poor wretches are thrown out into the street – their houses are confiscated, their farms are sold at public auctions? Financiers are eager to aid foreign enterprises, while they squeeze out the last penny of debts from their own fellow citizens? Part of the responsibility belongs to the citizenship, that is, to us! When the time of voting comes, do we go to the voting booths? Do our Fathers – Mothers – Brothers and Sisters go? Far from it! The Polish man and woman shrug their shoulders and say: “And what does my vote mean? How does this concern me? What do I care?” It is not surprising then, that other nationalities disregard us, hold us in contempt and push us around? Here in America we could be a superpower and giant, and we are weakness itself and a midget! With shame we must admit that the justice of him who, at the approach of the Polish division during a certain public demonstration, turned to a group of dignitaries and said: “And now here comes the dumb nation!” Unfortunately he was right! What influence does the Chicago, the Buffalo, the Detroit, the Cleveland, the Pittsburgh, the Milwaukee Polonia have? Who reckons with us? Nobody at all. At most they give us what drips from their moustaches and beards, and instead of Polish officials, we have street-cleaners – sweeps and dogwalkers!! Dear radio listeners, wake up from this unnatural and uncivic sleep, learn to vote intelligently, and wherever it is possible, support your fellow-citizen candidates, because in the ballot there is power and strength and – victory! – The same goes, but in an even greater degree, for interest in the matters of far-away Poland. I understand, that we are not allowed to stick our nose into the matters of the Polish government; it is the concern of citizens in Poland. Here we should avoid factious battles fought against the political background of the Polish Republic. Here we should not divide up into separate groups, but in the question of the good, in defense of Polish matters, we should unite and not permit the country of our fathers and forefathers to be unjustly treated and reviled. Unfortunately, we still have not grown out of this. Before the world war the enemies divided us into Prussians – Russians and Galicians. After the war, here in America we ourselves divided ourselves into supporters of Piłsudski – Padarewski and Dmowski! We are ashamed! We play hide-and-seek! “Whenever someone says, “I belong to Paul”, and another, “I belong to Apollos”, and I to Cephas, and I to Christ. Is Christ then divided?” [[3]](#footnote-3) And I ask you: A supporter of Piłsudski, or Paderewski, or Dmowski, are they not all Poles? Is Poland divided? We should be ashamed! Archbishop Cieplak cried, “Do not cut off contact with Poland! Get to know well the Polish language, Polish literature! Not superficially, but thoroughly. Travel to Poland. Get to know the Polish spirit. Learn Polish history and the rich Polish past.” In our ranks ever more often, we see indifference in religious matters. And what a painful picture it is. The descendants of knights of the ‘bulwark of Christianity’ pass into the camps of the enemy! A great part of the blame is to be laid on those demagogues, the self-proclaimed Apostles, the propagators of teaching proud and twisted minds, who instead of serving God, bow down before Baal! They throw mud and dirt at the things which are dearest and most sacred to us; things for which their fathers and mothers died in Russian citadels, in handcuffs; for which they died from hunger and cold, a smile on their lips, chained to wheelbarrows in far-away Siberia! God and the Fatherland – Faith and Language were for them the most precious treasure, in defense of which they gladly gave up their lives! Dear radio listeners, try to bring to mind the innocent years of your youth, when by the side of your worthy father or pious mother you piously said your prayers; remember the day of your first Holy Communion, when with such attention and such devotion you took for the first time to your heart Christ the Lord! Is the faith of your fathers and mothers, is the faith of your youth – is this the faith which you profess today? For God’s sake, for the salvation of your soul, return to this holy faith, to this true faith, and you will find peace of conscience and an abundance of God’s grace! Do this right away; do not say tomorrow, because who knows if tomorrow will be yours. Maybe tomorrow will already be the beginning of your eternity. Apart from the enemy of apathy, there is yet another enemy who, more and more frequently, marches boldly into our ranks; it is the enemy who undermines the whole foundation of our existence - it is the betrayal of our culture and nation. The good and model son loves his wife, but he must never cease loving his mother. Our duty is to love this country of ours, but we should not abandon Poland, we should continue loving that which is Polish. We may appropriate the best, take advantage of it, but never be ashamed that we are of Polish descent; we must never renounce our Polish tongue, let us keep our traditions, those nice Polish traditions, close to our hearts! The law of nature requires that we love our nationality more than others, however, at the same time not scorning others or hating them! Oh, our Polish language, after our sacred faith, is God’s greatest gift. Lovely, graceful and as agreeable as angels’ singing. In this language our mother taught us to pray to God, and in this language did she rock us to sleep! Of this language someone wrote:

“In this language one can see the greenery of the forest, smiling meadows,

In it you hear the thunder roar, the oceans rage, the rain drip!”

Especially you, my young radio listeners, prick up your ears: the late Bishop Bandurski described such an event: A certain boy in Miłosław was threatened with a caning by his professor if he didn’t reply in German… the professor warned him, “I give you five minutes to consider.” And what did this small, innocent, poor Polish boy reply? “I do not need to consider, I will take the beating, and not reply in German; because a beating will hurt for 10 minutes, while my conscience will hurt all my life.” - This is the noble fight for our soul and the purity of the national conscience! Another boy, thrashed mercilessly, until his hand was covered in blood, replied, “You beat the hand, but the Polish heart will never stop beating!” And a tiny girl, when she was threatened with her tongue being torn out if she didn’t reply in German, calmly replied, “Very well, you can tear my tongue out, but you will never tear out the Polish heart”…

And among us here, what is happening? In some Polish families, not only do the parents not speak Polish to their children, but even grandpa and grandma do not speak a word of Polish to their grandchildren. And today comes true what Hieronim Wietor wrote in the 16th century, “All other nations love their own tongue, propagate it, embellish it, and only the Polish nation scorns its own tongue.”

A certain Frenchman Marquis de Noailles said that if Polish women knew how beautiful they are when they speak their own language, they would never speak French!

Henryk Sienkiewicz talks about meeting a certain old man, a honey supplier, who lived alone in the wild forest for twenty years. When asked why he spoke the old language which was no longer spoken in Poland, he smiled and said, “I have one book at home – the Bible translated by Wujek, which I read aloud everyday, so as not to forget my language nor become mute in the language of my fathers.”

And now, listen, our good Polish girls, to what Mickiewicz once wrote:

 “Polish woman! Polish woman! Defend us loyally,

Your shield is in your word,

You stand like a rock by your faith,

Stand like a statue by your tongue!”

And finally, let all the radio listeners of the Rosary Hour learn by heart the following lines:

 “A foreign language is nice, but still nicer is the language

In which I have spoken my first words ever,

It will be dear to me, and when death stands at the threshold

I will give up my soul to God in the Polish tongue!”

And so, dear radio listeners, let us awaken and by word and deed courageously and boldly face our afore-mentioned enemies. Let us show the world that we are the great sons of great forefathers, that we do not want what belongs to others, but that we will not let our greatest sanctity, our faith and our tongue, be stolen from us. Let us not ask for mercy, but let us always call for justice! Apathy will disappear, everyone will return to the same sheep-fold, the betrayal of our nation and culture will cease, and so further and wider will grow the branches of the wonderful and healthy tree of the Polish Emigrants in this our adopted Fatherland!

One more national enemy – envy! “I don’t have anything, so you shouldn’t either; why should anybody be better off than me?” That is the slogan of Polish men and women. The worker envies the other worker; and unfortunately the greatest and most evil envy reigns among experts, professionals and, to be brutally honest, in the hood of the monastic habit and under the priest’s biretta! We humiliate each other, we insult each other; we argue at meetings and in newspaper columns; we heap abuse on each other both in public and in private, and by doing this we dig a deep and dark grave in politics, and close the way to promotion to better civic and ecclesiastical posts. The Polish maxim of “Where there are two Poles, there is one Pole too many” is based on suspicion and jealousy. It is not surprising that the Biblical sage said, “But jealousy rots the bones.”[[4]](#footnote-4) Saint John Chrysostom called envy „the mother of all evil”. And Saint Cyprian wrote: „It is the root of all evils, the fountain of disasters, the nursery of crimes, the material of transgressions. [...] By this the bond of the Lord’s peace is broken; by this is violated brotherly charity; by this truth is adulterated, unity is divided; men plunge into heresies and schisms.” [[5]](#footnote-5)

Dear radio listeners: for our own self-defense, for our own good, let us renounce jealousy. Let us help each other, let us encourage each other and let us work together. In unity is our power and might, both physical and moral. We will earn the respect and esteem of other nationalities, and we will merit the blessings of God!

1. During her long illness – adnotation by UAC. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This fragment is a very loose paraphrase of Chapter 56 of Mr. Wołodyjowski by Henryk Sienkiewicz. Adnotation by UAC. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Father Justin paraphrases 1 Corinthians 3: 4 and 1 Corinthians 3: 23, New American Bible. Adnotation: UAC. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Proverbs, 14: 38. New American Bible. Adnotation by UAC. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Saint Cyprian. Treatise X on Jealousy and Envy. From „Ante-Nicene Fathers. Volume 5. Hippolytus, Cyprian, Caius, Novation, Appendix.” By Philip Schaff. Accessed at Christian Classics Ethereal Library, [http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.html on February 26](http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf05.html%20%20on%20February%2026), 2008. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)