



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Department of History

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Hon. Jerzy Stepien
Director, Institute for Civic Space and Public Policy
Łazarski University
ul. Świeradowska 43
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Dear Chief Justice Stepien,

I write asking you, as Director of ICSPP, to forward this letter to the appropriate sponsoring authorities of the recent Recovering Forgotten History program. May I say as well that it was a pleasure to see you again in Warsaw.

On behalf of the editors of *New Studies in European History*, our series at Cambridge University Press, I would like to thank the organizers and experts of the recent Recovering Forgotten History program. The Press was both honored and grateful to have three of its authors – Dr. Anna Cichopek-Gajraj, Dr. Oscar Sanchez-Sibony, and Dr. Hugo Service - receive such wide-ranging and constructive criticism from so many Polish experts. The suggestions will make these manuscripts into better books. As an editor, may I say that input at this stage of the book process – just before submission of the final manuscript to the copyeditors – is particularly timely and helpful, because it allows us to incorporate fully the suggestions of the experts.

The Press owes special debts of gratitude to the scholars who prepared such extensive comments on each manuscript. Prof. Dr. Jakub Tyszkiewicz, Dr. Bożena Szaynok, Dr. Piotr Bajda, and Dr. Marcin Wodziński gave Dr. Cichopek-Gajraj invaluable assistance: at the conference, she several times told me how overwhelmed with gratitude she was to have taken part. Prof. Dr. Marek Wierzbicki and Dr. Spasimir Domaradzki gave remarkable critiques of the manuscripts of Dr. Service, while Prof. Dr. Andrzej Nowak joined them for the comments to the text of Dr. Sanchez-Sibony. Prof. Daria Nałęcz graciously took time from her heavy ministerial responsibilities to join us in Krakow for the discussion of Sanchez-Sibony. I have already had several discussions with each author about how to incorporate the excellent suggestions.

All of us who participated owe particular thanks to those who welcomed us and supported the meetings. In Krakow, Professor Dr. Jerzy Wyrozumski, Secretary General of the Polska Akademia Umiejętności, kindly provided us with meeting facilities in the Academy and made it possible for us to stay in lodgings owned by the University. In Warsaw, Governor Jacek Kozłowski of Mazovia, and his associates, invited the group for dinner and a wonderful discussion of our activities. We also had the honor of being joined by Dr. Boguslaw Winid, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs. That high-ranking public officials like Nałęcz, Kozłowski, and

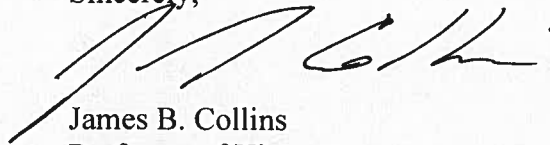
Winid, with such overwhelming other duties, took time from their schedules to show support for the program really brought home to us all, how vital this project is.

As it happens, President Obama made his unfortunate mistake in the speech about Professor Karski while our meetings were taking place: indeed, we had a far-ranging discussion of the incident at the dinner hosted by Gov. Kozłowski. How striking a reminder for us all about the importance of this project: clearly, the young speech writer responsible for this glaring historical error knew little of the story of World War II. I have been involved in several of these meetings, and I have always been struck by the astonishing level of factual error and outdated interpretation that fills so many general Angophone works of European history. The outstanding monographs of young scholars like Cichopek-Gajpaj, Sanchez-Sibony, and Service will go a long way toward overcoming that ignorance: their sort of detailed historical research, after all, forms the building blocks of empirical knowledge on which larger edifices like textbooks and general syntheses are built. As a former colleague, and great admirer of Professor Karski, I was personally aggrieved by President Obama's error, but I was also delighted to be in Poland working on a project whose goal is to make possible a day when this sort of distortion of history will be consigned to the past.

My final thanks go to the direct sponsors of the event, beginning with the Hon. Jerzy Stepien, Director of the Institute of Civic Space and Public Policy (ICSPP), and with Prof. Andrzej Kaminski, originator and organizer of the overall Recovering Forgotten History project. At the ICSPP, Madame Lilka Łazarska and her staff provided the logistical support that made all our efforts possible. The essential travel component of the meetings, which allows participants to see sights as varied as Sandomierz and Birkenau, makes an indelible impression on us all: without the extraordinary efforts of Mme Łazarska and her staff, those travels would not be possible.

On behalf of the Press, and on my personal behalf, please extend my thanks to all who participated in the program, to those who helped administer it, and, above all, to those who sponsored this vital enterprise.

Sincerely,



James B. Collins
Professor of History
Series Co-Editor, *New Studies in European History*
Cambridge University Press