

On Thursday (October 19th, 2017) around 4.30 pm in the city centre of Warsaw a man attempted to burn himself to death.

He attempted to burn himself accompanied by a song „Kocham Wolność” („I love freedom”) which is often played during protests in Polish cities. He was rescued by passer-by's who used fire-extinguishers. The man is alive and is being taken care of by doctors. Below is the letter left by him.

1. I am protesting against this government restricting civil freedom.
2. I am protesting against those who govern and break the rules of democracy. In particular against them destroying (in practice) the Constitutional Tribunal and the system of independent Courts.
3. I am protesting against the government that is breaking the law, in particular the Constitution of the Republic of Poland. I am protesting against those who are responsible (i.e. The President) and want to take any steps to change the current Constitution – without abiding by it in the first place.
4. I am protesting against a method of governing that means the people who hold the highest position in government only execute commands coming from an unidentified Centre belonging to the PIS party. Those people do not bear any consequences of their actions. I am protesting against the style of work in the Sejm (Polish Parliament) which means bills are rushed through, with no discussion, no consultation, very often in the middle of the night which then have to be redone, almost straight away.
5. I am protesting against the marginalization of Poland on the international arena and against making a mockery of our country.
6. I am protesting against those ruining nature, especially those who should be protecting it (i.e.: the cutting down of Białowieża Forrest and other valuable natural reserves, the favoritism of the hunters lobby, promoting coal based energy).
7. I am protesting against the division of society, the reinforcing and deepening of those divisions. In particular I am protesting against the building of the ‘religion of the Smoleńsk tragedy’ and dividing people on its basis. I am protesting against the screenings of hate, which we see during the monthly Smoleńsk commemorations in Warsaw. I am protesting against the hate speech and xenophobia, which this government has pushed into public debate.
8. I am protesting against the filling of all positions with their (PiS) people who are largely un-qualified to do what they are chosen to do.
9. I am protesting against the belittling, throwing mud at and destroying of such authorities as Lech Wałęsa or the former presidents of the Constitutional Tribunal.
10. I am protesting against the centralisation of power and changing laws which concern territorial self-governments and non-governmental organizations just so they fulfill the needs of those who rule the governing party.
11. I am protesting against the hostile attitude to immigrants, against the discrimination of minorities, women, homosexuals (and other LGBT), Muslims and others.
12. I am protesting against the absolute incapacitation of public television and almost all of the public radio, making them into propaganda tubes of those in power. And especially against the destruction of the public radio station Trójka (3) that I have listened to since I was young.
13. I am protesting against the use of the Special Forces, Police and Public Prosecutors Office for their own (political or personal) gain.
14. I am protesting against the thoughtless, un-consulted, unprepared reform of the education system.
15. I am protesting against the ignoring of the mass needs of the healthcare system.

I could have mentioned more points with which I am protesting against this government but I wanted to concentrate on those which are the most important ones, which are detrimental to the existence and functioning of the whole state and society.

I do not address any calls to the current authorities, because I think that it would not achieve anything. Many people wiser and better known than me, as well as many Polish and European institutions have already called this government to various actions, and invariably these calls were ignored and the caller was only pelted with mud. I will probably be pelted with mud too but at least I will be in good company.

On the other hand, I would like the President of PiS and the entire PiS nomenclature to acknowledge that my death directly condemns them and that they have my blood on their hands.

I appeal to all Poles who decide who governs in Poland to oppose what the current power is doing and this is why I protest. And do not be fooled by the fact that from time to time the activities of the authorities quieten down and that there is the appearance of normality (as recently). In a few days or weeks, they will again continue their offensive, they will break the law again. They will never step back and they will not give back what they once obtained.

It's a pretty old-fashioned saying, but it's very fitting here: Who if not us ? Who – if not the citizens, can clean up our country? If not now when? Every moment of delay causes the situation in the country to become more and more difficult and it will be increasingly difficult to fix everything.

First of all, I urge the PIS supporters to wake up – even if you like the PiS postulates, take into account that not every way of their implementation is acceptable. Implement your ideas within the democratic rule of law, not the way you do today.

Those who do not support PiS, because the policy is indifferent to them or have other preferences I call for action – it is not enough to wait to see what time will bring, not enough to express dissatisfaction in your circle of friends, you need to act. There are a lot of forms and possibilities to do so.

Remember, however, that the PiS electorate are our mothers, brothers, neighbours, friends and colleagues. It is not about fighting a war with them (that is what PiS wants) or „converting them” (because it is naive) but to make their views comply with the laws and principles of democracy. It maybe enough if you change the leadership of the party.

Me, an ordinary man like you, I call you all – do not wait any longer! We need to change this power as soon as possible before it can completely destroys our country, before it completely deprives us of freedom. And I love freedom above all.

That's why I decided to do this self-inflammation and I hope my death will shake the conscience of many people, that society will wake up and that you will not wait until the politicians do something – because they will not!

Wake up! It's not too late yet!

Tłumaczenie i tekst – MS i MW