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New strategy of “Nowy Dziennik”

KEY WORDS

Polish community press, emigration, local matters in the media, management of editorial office, Polish community abroad, Poles in New York

ABSTRACT

“Nowy Dziennik” is the largest Polish community journal on the East coast of the United States. The daily, first published in 1971, has been noting a systematic drop in sales, which, among other things, is related to Poland’s accession into EU, changes in the direction of Poles’ emigration, and, in consequence, a reduced number of Polish citizens arriving and permanently residing in the territory of the US. This article attempts to characterize the strategies underlying the changes introduced to “Nowy Dziennik” by the new Management Board of Bicentennial Publishing, the publisher, appointed in 2008. These changes (such as a shift towards local matters, refreshed brand image on the Internet, reinforcement of the role of the daily as an organiser) are intended to stabilise the market position of the newspaper and enable it to sustain its position as one of key Polish community public institutions in the USA.

New York is the second largest, after Chicago, Polish press publishing centre in the US. In the city, there are several dozen various Polish community organizations and a dozen or so Polish parishes, most of them printing their own periodicals¹. The largest papers, with most universal (general) profile and most professional in character are “Kurier Plus” and “Nowy Dziennik” (“ND”). In the nearby New Jersey, published is “2Tygodnik Polonijny”, distributed in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Pennsylvania. “Kurier Polski” is edited in Greenpoint, the largest Polish neighborhood on the East coast. It is a free of charge daily, published since 1987. It has magazine format and predominantly discusses politics, public affairs and culture. “2Tygodnik Polski”, published since 2005, has also got magazine format (printed in full color) and is of informative character. Additionally in New York, since April 1996, there is an American version, addressed to the Polish community, of the daily “Super Express”.

¹ W. Piątkowska-Stepaniak, *Konflikt formuł – sprzeczności w postrzeganiu roli polonijnego pisma „Głos” między wydawcą a kierownictwem redakcji*, [in:] *Środki masowego komunikowania a społeczeństwo*, ed. M. Gierula, Katowice 2006, p. 189.

The oldest, most prestigious and most widely read Polish community daily is “Nowy Dziennik”, published since February 1971, initially in Jersey City². It was founded by Bolesław Wierzbiański, an activist and former Radio Free Europe and Voice of America commentator, the head of Foreign News Service, a press agency publishing materials on USSR policy and the situation in Eastern-Central Europe, also one of the directors of Polish Community Congress. “ND” replaced “Nowy Swiat”, its predecessor, liquidated due to financial difficulties. According to Stanisław A. Blejwas, its founder’s intention was not just to provide readers information on Poland, aid the country in its fight for sovereignty and democracy but also to help the Polish community hold on to its identity and to motivate it to be active in all spheres of American life. “The daily was established during the short and rather meagre period of ethnic renaissance of the third generation of Americans from Europe. It was a good moment though, as “ND” appealed to those who did not want to accept advancing changes in Polish community consciousness. All in all, it was a difficult endeavor to take on. As Wierzbiański sarcastically noted, “the anti-intellectualism of Polish descent masses will not aid in the increase of press readership in any language”. Paradoxically, “ND” became a bridge uniting those Poles born before the war with ones born in communist Poland times”³.

“ND” has been present on the American press market for 39 years. At the time of its establishment, Wierzbiański forecasted that it was a risky and not very promising project⁴. Despite this, “ND” has survived numerous difficulties and even crises, mostly of economic and personnel character, remaining in its position as the most prestigious Polish language daily in the US, also in a dominant position among Polish community media on the advertising market. According to Wiesława Piątkowska-Stepaniak, there are several reasons for the daily’s success and continuing leader loyalty. It is the effort of its founders in the realization of the “emigration mission” as well as the paper’s ability to adapt to the changing character of the Polish community. Another proof of its adaptation abilities on the changing political and public markets is the latest change in the publisher and management of the daily, which resulted in a modification of its programme line carried out by new editors.

Since 2004, Bicentennial Publishing (BP) has been noting a systematic drop in profits from the daily’s sales and what goes with it – the offered advertising space. This was partly due to Poland’s accession into the EU which resulted in changes in the direction of Poles’

² Ibidem, p. 187.

³ P.A. Blejwas, *Nowy Dziennik, Polska, Polonia i Ameryka*, “Przegląd Polski” August 3, 2001.

⁴ Ibidem.

emigration and a general decreasing number of Poles coming and staying in the US. In 1999, "ND" printed an article by Czesław Karkowski in which the author forecasted that Poles will continue to migrate to America, despite economic and political changes in Poland. "Organized Polish community circles have, for decades, been fighting the communist system in Poland. With its collapse, Poles no longer need to emigrate for political reasons, however, the difficult years of rebuilding the social and economic structure of the country will result in people continuing to emigrate for economic reasons. These emigrants will, for years, continue to move over the ocean"⁵. Although Karkowski's prognosis is undoubtedly true, the scale of the migration turned out to be much smaller.

Until 2004, the US was the second, after Germany, most popular country for Poles emigrating for economic reason. Between 1991–1995, 12 660 people emigrated to the US, between 1996–2000 – 11 870. In comparison, emigration to Germany was at 79 720 and 80 950 correspondingly, to France – 1490 and 1340, to Great Britain – 590 and 780, to Canada – 7290 and 6080, to Italy – 820 and 1020⁶. According to the latest census, as of May 2002 there were 786 000 Poles abroad, out of which 626 000 were there for a period longer than 12 months. Most Poles were working in Germany (294 000), in the US (158 000), Italy (39 000), Canada (29 000), Great Britain (24 000) and France (less than 21 000). After Poland's accession into the EU and the opening labour market borders, the direction and dynamics of emigration have changed considerably. It is estimated that as of late 2007, there were about 2.27 mln Poles abroad, of which 1.925 were in Europe⁷. "A large majority of emigrants are placed in EU countries – about 1.86 mln in 2007 and this number has increased by 310 000 within just one year. The number of Polish emigrants in EU countries in 2007 doubled in comparison to the initial period of our membership in the EU"⁸. In 2006, the population of Poles in New York was 60 153, a decrease of 7.8% in comparison to 2000. At the same time, the number of New Yorkers admitting Polish background from 213 447 to 211 389⁹.

Another reason for a decreasing number of Poles in the US is more stringent American emigration regulation regarding illegal immigrants. In the 1990s, there were thousands of Poles in New York illegally and they could more or less easily find employment in the

⁵ C. Karkowski, *Najnowsza emigracja polska w USA*, "Nowy Dziennik" March 16, 1999.

⁶ Z. Stachowiak, *Ekonomia międzynarodowa wobec wyzwań cywilizacyjnych*, Warszawa 2004, p. 216.

⁷ *Informacja o rozmiarach i kierunkach emigracji z Polski w latach 2004–2007*. Department of Demographic Research GUS, Warsaw 2008, p. 3–4.

⁸ Ibidem.

⁹ *Ojczyzna nęci Polaków*, www.wprost.pl, September 22, 2008 [accessed: 18.06.2009]. See also: A. Dobrowolski, *Nowy Jork przyciąga imigrantów*, www.expatspol.com, August 15, 2006 [accessed: 18.06.2009].

construction industry. However, in the late 1990s, there were increasing anti-immigration tensions (mainly toward Latinos) and they also affected Poles. “There was an increasing number immigration inspections on constructions sights (especially in New York where it was an almost unlimited source of lucrative work) and mounting pressure on employers to make sure their employees had work permits. Today, it is increasingly difficult for illegal immigrants to find a relatively well paid job. As a result, more Poles started leaving for Poland or other EU countries where no work permit was necessary”, as Karkowski, the chief editor of “ND” noted¹⁰.

A decreasing number of Poles residing in the US resulted in growing financial difficulties of companies targeting the Polish community, including publishing firms. They were increasingly weakened by the changing character of the Polish community. The US have become a less attractive country for younger and better educated people. For example, in 2007 only 13 500 people took advantage of the Work & Travel programme which enables students employment in the summer time. In 2006, it was 16 500, while in 2005 – 19 500¹¹. Those social groups, traditionally interested in these types of newspapers, were shrinking in numbers which was reflected in the sales of the daily and its economic condition. It can be said that the entire service market targeting ethnic minorities, including Polish, has suffered. Between 2004–2008, the number of Polish companies registered in NY decreased by 30%. This also had an influence on press advertising profits.

As a result of all of the above factors, “ND” began experiencing symptoms of economic crisis. “This crisis is not typical; decreasing reader interest, competition from electronic media, lower advertising profits – no one knows how to reverse this process. Despite being familiar with these issues and having analysed them numerous time, there are no new conclusions since there is no way to stop these trends”, states Karkowski¹².

Bicentennial Publishing does not divulge data regarding company budget or profits between 2004–2008. The fact that the situation was difficult was reflected in “ND” employment cuts as well as other activities carried out to reduce costs. The first changes that took place regarded staff. On August 19, 2008, BP shareholders appointed Malina Stadnik, a former urban section editor and one of the shareholders, president of the company. Stadnik, aside from her journalist activity, was also a successful businesswoman on the real estate and

¹⁰ Letter from Czeslaw Karkowski to Michal Kaczmarczyk on “ND” new strategy, July 14, 2009. Letter in author’s possession.

¹¹ K. Iglicka, *Wizy do USA. Mity, fakty, rekomendacje*, Warszawa 2008, p. 7–8.

¹² Conversation between Czeslaw Karkowski and Michal Kaczmarczyk from November 2008 in New York. Recording of the conversation in author’s possession.

catering markets¹³. She replaced Barbara and Adam Wierzbianski, “ND” founder’s wife and son. Earlier, in October 2007, as new chief editor appointed was Czesław Karkowski, Ph. D. in philosophy from Wrocław University and Adam Mickiewicz University, former editor of Berlin’s “Poglad” magazine, director of NY Pilsudski Institute and philosophy and sociology academic teacher at New York’s Mercy College¹⁴.

Barbara and Adam Wierzbianski managed the daily for over ten years. Barbara became president of the company in 1999, earlier (since 1995) she was the vice-president, in charge of most management responsibilities. Adam, on the other hand, was active in BP since mid 1990s, responsible, among other things, for introducing computerization¹⁵. Wierzbianskis introduced numerous changes, adapting the daily to new trends and growing reader expectations. Under their management, the paper changed its layout twice, became computerized and had new blood injected into it. In September 1996, its typesetting was changed from hand to computer. A year later (first issue printed on September 24, 1997) it adopted a new graphic design (by Tomasz Tomaszewski). Other modifications regarded a larger Polish section, a weather forecast section and an economic section (with stock exchange ratings). Also, the front page now included announcements of what is to follow. On December 24, 1997, the daily for the first time presented colour photographs¹⁶. Other graphic design and editorial changes took place on September 26, 2005. Its new layout was designed by Garcia Media company, previously the designer of the “Wall Street Journal” and “Liberation”. The paper’s articles became shorter, with more room for colour pictures. All in all, the daily became more modern and easier to read¹⁷. The changes introduced by Wierzbianskis also regarded editorial work. “ND” started cooperating with more younger journalists (such as Łukasz Bułka), published more of its own texts, re-organized the work of the secretariat and hired more people in the IT department. Moreover, the daily now also printed a weekly 28 page colour supplement, “Weekend”. In February 1998, BP opened a branch office in Brooklyn’s Greenpoint, the Polish district¹⁸.

The above changes, however, had short term effects. There were growing economic and demographic problems which no reform introduced by Wierzbianskis could counter. Over

¹³ A. Ostrowska-Galanis, *Art Deco z dala od Manhattanu*, “Twój Dom” 2005, No. 4.

¹⁴ *Who’s Who in Polish America*, New York 1996, p. 184; Cz. Karkowski, *Dwa lata z „Pogładem”*, [in:] *Autoportret zbiorowy. Wspomnienia dziennikarzy polskich na emigracji z lat 1945–2002*, ed. W. Piątkowska-Stepaniak, Opole 2003, p. 183.

¹⁵ For more see: Z. Basara, *Rodzinne powinności*, “Decydent”, September 2006.

¹⁶ T. Deptuła, *Różne szaty „Nowego Dziennika”*, www.dziennik.com [accessed: 10.02.2009].

¹⁷ *Ibidem*.

¹⁸ W. Piątkowska-Stepaniak, *„Nowy Dziennik” w Nowym Świecie. Pismo i jego rola ideowo-polityczna*, Opole 2000, p. 192–205.

the last four years, the daily's financial situation has gradually been deteriorating. Its average circulation decreased from 25 000–30 000 in early XXI century to less than 18 000 in 2008 (publisher states that daily sales vary from day to day but are not higher than 18 000 while weekend edition circulation is at 20 000).¹⁹ Marek Tomaszewski, former “ND” journalist and chief editor of the competitor, “Polski Dzień”, questions this data. According to his estimates, “ND” circulation, both during the week and on weekends is no greater than 8500, with average sales at about 40%. “It means that about 3500 copies are sold daily and 4000 – at weekends. There are also subscriptions but it is a small percentage of total sales. This data is obtained from various sources, mainly from press distributors as well as my own knowledge and experience gained during work on the paper”, writes Tomaszewski²⁰.

“It is all very sad from my point of view. I feel as if we are slowly dying out”, says Tomasz Deptula, “ND” journalist since 1991.²¹ It has also become increasingly difficult for the publisher to afford the paper's several storey high building in Manhattan, estimated worth about \$ 6–7 mln. In an interview for “Gazeta Wyborcza”, Karkowski admitted that, “The company is considering selling the building [...] as one of its future option. However, as of now nothing is for sure”²².

A change in management was carried out in order to introduce reforms which would improve the paper's financial situation. “It was a generation change. Barbara Wierzbianska was president for a long time, managing the firm out of habit. The shareholders' council expected a new president to be someone younger, more energetic, with new, fresh ideas to revive the firm”²³. In 2008, the staff was reduced by a dozen percent. Presently, there are only ten journalists employed full time²⁴. The daily has also decreased its volume²⁵ – its issues now include 24 columns. “ND” bases more now on press agency materials. This regards both, journalist texts and photographs. As a result, reduced are editorial costs. Additionally, modified was the paper's thematic line, altered in order to meet changing reader profile and interests.

Since the beginning, „ND” predominantly focused on Polish issues. It was its founder's instrument for the realization of his and the community's political goals. The paper's mission was to fight for Poland's democracy and independence, hence, most texts

¹⁹ Conversation between Czeslaw Karkowski and Michal Kaczmarczyk...

²⁰ M. Tomaszewski, *Ostatnie wydanie „Polskiego Dnia”*, “Polski Dzień”, June 4–6, 2008.

²¹ K. Semple, *A Land of Opportunity Lures Poles Back Home*, “New York Times”, September 20, 2008.

²² V. Makarenko, J. Telega, *Potrzebny cud nad Hudson*, www.gazeta.pl, August 31, 2008 [accessed: 11.02.2009].

²³ Letter from Czeslaw Karkowski to Michal Kaczmarczyk...

²⁴ Conversation between Czeslaw Karkowski and Michal Kaczmarczyk...

²⁵ V. Makarenko, J. Telega, *Potrzebny cud...*

focused on politics and Poland's domestic issues. "By informing about the regime's abuses or cases of infringing human rights, "ND" attempted to exert pressure on Washington, hoping that American administration, in turn, would put pressure on communist authorities. Those were our priorities until 1989", says Karkowski²⁶. After the fall of communism, "ND" mission had to be modified. It still, though, mainly focused on Poland's domestic issues. The paper's goal was to promote Poland and Poles on the international arena and to build a positive image of the country among American political elites. "I have no doubt saying that events from 1989 have stunned American administration and many Congressmen. Americans were rather reluctant to spend money on post-communist countries while they really needed economic help. It became the daily's priority to lobby for financial aid to Poland and to get Washington to support the new government. Later on, it was work on making Poland a member of NATO. "ND" succeeded in convincing defiant Congressmen to support Poland's accession into the Treaty", notes Karkowski²⁷. By informing about Poland and presenting opinions on Polish priorities, "ND" attempted to influence American opinion about Poland, be a kind of bridge between Warsaw and Washington.

It should be noted, though, that after 1989 and for the next fifteen years there was one other factor which determined the predominantly Polish theme of the daily. It was massive emigration of Poles to the US for financial reasons, for a temporary period of time. These Poles lived and worked in the US but were emotionally attached to their home country. "Our world, America, the Polish community and their issues did not interest these temporary immigrants. For them most important was Poland, including the results from the 2nd and 3rd football leagues", says Karkowski²⁸. "ND", by writing mostly about Poland's issues (politics, sport, culture, economy), met the needs of a large group of emigrants for which it was sometimes the only source of knowledge about their home country. Once many of these temporary residents left, there was a change of reader interests and "ND" met those needs. A modification of the paper's thematic profile is presently the most visible example of the publisher's new policy carried out in order to strengthen the daily's position on the Polish community press market.

Modern "ND", instead of on Polish issues, now focuses more on local matters. This has become the paper's characteristic trait, to inform about events imperative from the perspective of Polish community in NY. The paper attempts to meet the needs and interests of

²⁶ Conversation between Czeslaw Karkowski and Michal Kaczmarczyk...

²⁷ Ibidem.

²⁸ Letter from Czeslaw Karkowski to Michal Kaczmarczyk...

this closely tied internally community. It combines formal locality (texts on Polish community life in NY) with material locality, expressed in playing the role of a public institution acting on behalf of Poles living in the daily's geographical scope. In 2005, "ND" devoted about 5–6 pages to Poland's and Polish issues. Presently, it has been shortened to about one. "This thematic shift is taking place gradually and systematically, with more and more on local and ethnic matters. This is what our readers expect. These are emigrants which are here for good and they think of America as their world. They are interested in local and city issues which directly affect them but also in more general domestic matters, of America as a whole, a country in which they live"²⁹.

"ND" management strategy predicts strengthening of the role the daily plays as a local institution, engaged in multi aspect activity for the Polish community in New York. The headquarters, located at 333 West 38th St. in Manhattan, is the centre of cultural and intellectual life. It is a place where various events take place such as charity balls, exhibitions, recitals and meetings with authors, artists, etc., addressed to a wide variety of recipients. BP devotes attention to pluralizing the offer of social and cultural events organized by "ND" in order to meet the needs of readers with different interests and expectations. For example, "ND" organized a meeting with traveler Marek Kaminski, reporter Wojciech Tochman, poet Tomasz Rozycki, painter and graphic artist Witold Kaczanowski, journalist Alex Storozynski, writer Malgorzata Kaluza, critic and poet Marek Bartelik. It has also invited pop culture celebrities such as singer Dorota Rabczewska (Doda), footballer Wlodzimierz Lubanski, and boxer Tomasz Adamek. Moreover, "ND" cooperates with the Polish Community Traveller's Club whose members, together with "ND" editors, prepare discussions and photo exhibitions from expeditions. The daily organizes hiking trips, "Trips with "ND", under the patronage of journalist and traveler, Halina Niedzielska, who also invites people from other circles such as Americans from the New York Hiking Club. Next to the editorial office, there is a bookstore offering thousands of books, magazines, journals and papers, also over the Internet. In the building, there is a Polish Art Gallery, a cultural institution and discussion club, a general meeting place for the Polish community. Additionally, "ND" organizes entertainment evenings such as dance parties (in 2008, was the first dance party after a long break, at a Polish restaurant Cracovia Manor in Wellington, New Jersey), Valentine's Day and holiday balls. Tadeusz A. Kondratowicz, BP vice-president, wrote in "ND" that in 2008 the daily decided to return to organizing large entertainment events, including discos, sport

²⁹ Ibidem.

tournaments and concerts of Polish artists. “We still all remember the concert, “On Empire debris”, to celebrate the end of the Communist system”, writes Kondratowicz, announcing more such events, under the patronage of “ND”, in the future³⁰.

According to Malina Stadnik, BP president, the paper’s goal is a shift toward locality. It wants to organize Polish community life and to motivate it to articulate their interests and needs³¹. “ND” management considers its organizational function the most important, while cultural and opinion forming – secondary³². “It can be said that the daily has always been an organizer but surely in a different way and under different circumstances than it is today. In the past, we used to send letters to politicians regarding their support for Poland’s accession to NATO. In communist times, we believed that people in Poland could not speak for themselves because they were living under a regime. We considered ourselves their voice, the voice of a free nation. Now, there is no such need. Now, Warsaw can talk to Washington when it sees fit. We, meanwhile, are New Yorkers and it is time to take interest in our own matters. “ND” organizational function today is organizing the Polish community to become a strong, united group which can lobby for its own interests, first on the local and then, on a national level. In the US, other ethnic groups such as Latinos, Jews, Armenians or Greeks are well organized and very influential. We are striving to do the same. We want Poles to be heard and to be taken into consideration during elections and when money is allotted to ethnic minority programmes. Unfortunately, we are somewhat behind other ethnic groups. We were focused on Poland instead, forgetting about our closest NY neighborhood. So now we manage the paper to make up lost time”, declares Karkowski³³.

“ND” new strategy toward its closest environment is visible also in its marketing strategy. The paper advertises locality with the slogan, “New York – your city, New Dziennik – your daily” which emphasizes the paper’s ties to the NY metropolis and its inhabitants. “ND” is eager to be a patron of various cultural and public events organized by the Polish community, such as Easter auctions of Polish artists’ work at the Consulate General in NY or the parade of Polish cars in New Jersey. “ND” has also recently changed its strategy regarding obtaining advertising. The marketing department, in charge of sale of advertising space, considers small, local Polish community companies in the NY and neighboring states the main target group. This has not been so in the past. “Previously, we did not need them as we

³⁰ *Tradycyjne Andrzejki z „Nowym Dziennikiem”*, “Nowy Dziennik”, November 22–23, 2008.

³¹ Conversation between Michal Kaczmarczyk and Malina Stadnik, BP president from November 2008. Recording of the conversation in author’s possession.

³² Conversation between Czeslaw Karkowski and Michal Kaczmarczyk ...

³³ *Ibidem*.

were getting enough business from large Polish community firms in the city. Now, reaching these smaller companies, further away has become our new focus”, states Karkowski³⁴. As a result, the paper has widened its local scope onto place outside NY. This is another difference which is clearly visible under new management. “In the past, we were not interested in small business outside the metropolis and their issues because we were focused on international events and Poland. Now, this has changed”, adds the chief editor.

Another new field of activity is work on refreshing and modernising the paper’s image and adapting to new conditions of competition from electronic media (including the Internet). For these reasons, in 2009 the publisher created the paper’s www cite. “ND” is divided into different sections: “Metropolis”. “From Poland”, “From America”, “The World” and “Sport”. The home page includes most important and current events, local news and a section with upcoming events in NY and the Polish community, including cultural and sport events. On the left there are tabs for different sections as well as to journalist columns divided into nine categories (as in the printed version) of the paper: “Editorials”, “Polish Review”, “Weekend”, “Education”, “Tourism”, “Legal Matters”, “Auto”, “Finances”, “Health”. The “Polish Review” and “Weekend” are also available on the right side, being the best and most popular sections. The “Polish Review”, edited by Julita Karkowska, is considered to be among the most professional and opinion forming supplements published outside Polish borders. It has even been compared to the Parisian “Kultura”. “Polish Review”, in cooperation with “Zeszyty Literackie” prints essays, literary works, scientific articles (historical, philosophical), reviews, feature articles, interviews with artists and picture stories. The website, www.dziennik.com, includes select texts from the paper version, both current and from archives (since 2000).

“ND” motivates users to rate articles, comment and take part in various surveys. Moreover, users can also find there video files and a classified section. Additionally, there are blogs by “ND” journalists: Mieczysław Mietko Rudek, Piotr Milewski, Tomasz Deptuła, Elżbieta Kieszczyńska and Aleksandra Słabisz.

The website has recently been modernized and refreshed, which proves that BP cares about the paper’s image and increasing its scope through effective use of the Internet. The www.dziennik.com web page is now more user friendly and easier to read. It was designed in accordance with the latest trends in computer graphics. It also makes better use of multimedia and interactive technologies and offers more functional navigation tools. As far as content, more emphasized are, again, local matters.

³⁴ Letter from Czesław Karkowski to Michał Kaczmarczyk...

Since the beginning in 1971, “ND” has been a missionary paper, with specific political goals, a forum for presentation of Polish community opinion on Poland’s strategic place in post-Yalta Europe and the world. After the change in political situation, the fall of communism, new Polish-American relations, Poland’s accession to NATO and the EU as well as new demographic trends such as decreasing numbers of Polish emigrants in the US, “ND” mission was re-defined. The paper attempts to be a source of information for the Polish community in the US and, even more so, an institution of Polish community public life realizing specific public goals. These goals have changed over the years, considerably. The daily, established by Boleslaw Wierzbianski, has evolved from a paper fighting for Poland’s cause on the international arena into a modern Polish community daily, meeting informational, cultural, educational and entertainment needs of Polish New Yorkers, defending their interests, motivating, creating a positive image of this ethnic group and strengthening its position in political lobbying on the local, regional and national levels. In communist times and during the first years of democratic Poland, it was focused on public and political activity on a large scale. “Poland was most important to us. We collected money for KOR and Solidarity and encouraged voting in the first free elections against the PZPR party. We appealed for funds via the paper, organized auctions and charity balls bringing in large sums of money. In 1989, during the legalization of Solidarity issue, we ran a campaign encouraging readers to write letters to Sejm, pleading for its legalization. “ND” was involved during the June 1989 elections, writes Jan Nowak-Jezioranski³⁵.

Now, the daily’s ideological character is focused on NY locality. As Karkowski says, “ND” has a political line but it regards matters important from the Polish community point of view. “Political and ideological divisions in Poland are not our business anymore. We do not favour any party or any candidate for Prime Minister or President. Instead, we speak up in matters such as American immigration policy. We want Poland to be an important player on the international arena and for the Polish community to be respected in the US. We do not take part in Poland’s internal conflicts at all. We are interested in New York”³⁶.

Being open to change and able to adapt to new political and demographic conditions in which the Polish community found itself in the US, has resulted in “ND” surviving on the

³⁵ J. Nowak-Jeziorański, *Pionier. Bolesław Wierzbiański 1913–2003*, “Tygodnik Powszechny” 2003, No. 14, p. 6.

³⁶ Conversation between Czeslaw Karkowski and Michal Kaczmarczyk...

press market, in contrast to other papers such a “Polski Dzień”. It still is, despite financial issues and low circulation, a key, trusted and valued daily and Polish community public institution in the US.