

# New Right makes headway

## Rafal Pankowski reports from Warsaw for Never Again Association and Antifa-Net

SINCE 2007, the Polish far right has been unable to get any representatives elected to either the national or European Parliament. This changed in 2014 with the strong showing of Janusz Korwin-Mikke's New Right Congress (Kongres Nowej Prawicy – KNP) which polled 7.2 per cent and won four seats in Strasbourg.

Korwin-Mikke, 72, has long been active on the fringes of Polish politics but until recently achieved little success apart from being an MP for a brief period between 1991 and 1993. His politics is a mixture of economic libertarianism, extreme authoritarianism and a general Social Darwinist outlook.

During his election campaign, the KNP leader relied on shock tactics by making outrageous statements that guaranteed him media attention and airtime. For example, in a televised discussion, he questioned the meaning of the word "rape" and claimed "women are always



KNP's Janusz Korwin-Mikke

pretending that they are showing some resistance and this is normal".

Korwin-Mikke has also been known for making offensive comments about the disabled, gays, and virtually every other minority. He frequently uses the term "Jewish communism" and has been a staunch supporter of David Irving's legend that Hitler "did not know" about the Holocaust.

"Hitler would have been acquitted by a court," he said in an interview in May.

The relative success of Korwin-Mikke's party results from its new-found support among the youngest voters: the KNP polled 28% in the 18-27 age group. It has been argued that the abysmally low turnout (23.8%) further aided the radical party. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority – 75% – of the KNP's voters were men.

In contrast, the extreme-right Nationalist Movement (Ruch Narodowy, RN) failed miserably with just 1.5 per cent of the vote.