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15 YEARS OF THE “POLSKA W EUROPIE”
TALKSHOP AND FOUNDATION

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The “Polska w Europie” talkshop and foundation

I

The present sketch is devoted to a certain little-known civic initiative. This initiative embraced a highly select cadre of independent Polish intellectuals, academics, experts, publicists, political scientists, and politicians who were vitally interested in the development of international relations. Back when it arose, the true picture of those relations in Europe, as well as across the globe, was neither a topic of public analyses nor was it the subject of any broadly understood orientation. Moreover, Poland's place in Europe remained unclear for independent public opinion, as did Poland's position vis-à-vis the unfolding process of European integration. Thus, Poland's *raison d'état* was by no means obvious.

Having passed through various stages, the initiative I am setting out to describe contributed to the founding and development of the Polish Council of the European Movement in Poland. The character of the stages along that route reflects a certain European standard, but it also indicates Poland's uniqueness.

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The undertaking in which many of us were directly involved and which was the first of its kind in Poland, one rife with important consequences, was the independent orchestration of studies into Europe and Poland's place in Europe. That undertaking dates back to the mid-eighties.

After the lifting of martial law, a period ensued during which people of good will and high abilities, no longer willing to wait passively, decided to come together and act. This was a period conducive for the organization of efforts to prepare the anticipated political and systemic changes whose inevitability was self-evident, but whose advent in time was yet completely unforeseen. Of course, the sine qua non for those changes was Poland's attainment of sovereignty in the international sphere, something Poland had been deprived of since the Second World War. Among the central problems that had to be analyzed was the place of Poland in Europe, with careful consideration of 1) our geopolitical position between Germany and Russia – and thus, our being outside the realm of European integration – and 2) the issues arising from the process of the integration itself.

Hence, the basic need to commence analyses and studies of Europe and the European Communities was beyond discussion.

It therefore became necessary – though in circumvention of the law – to set up a high-level, independent team of political experts who would carry out systematic studies into international politics and the place and role of Poland within that system. A surpassing part in that effort was played by the aptly named “Polska w Europie” (Poland in Europe) Talkshops that we brought into being at the turn of 1985 and 1986. From their outset our Talkshops upheld such premises as: an exclusive cadre of regular participants selected on the basis of competence and trust; regular meetings of a seminar character (usually opened with key-note addresses); the closed character of meetings; and the utmost discretion among colleagues (as throughout opposition milieux).

These premises bore fine results. First of all, the very initiative aroused great interest among the persons invited; at the same time it met with immense hospitality on the part of the open and tolerant priests from the Holy Trinity parish in Warsaw's Powiśle district. Deserving special mention

here is our invaluable protector, Father Marek Kiliszek. Our Talkshop gathered over fifty permanent participants, the majority of whom met for nearly five years at bi-weekly Saturday meetings. Those persons – academics, publicists, writers, political scientists, and politicians – boasted high professional qualifications and, while representing oftentimes differing ideological and political views, they upheld firm moral convictions.

Among the most active regular participants of the Talkshops we need to list the following individuals:

Wojciech ADAMIECKI, Andrzej AJNENKIEL, Halina BORTNOWSKA, Leon BÓJKO (†), Stefan and Roma BRATKOWSKI, Oskar CHOMICKI, Jacek CZAPUTOWICZ, Paweł CZARTORYSKI (†), Andrzej DRAWICZ (†), Hanna DYŁĄGOWA, Kazimierz DZIEWANOWSKI (†), Akos ENGELMEYER, Wanda FALKOWSKA (†), Andrzej FRISZKE, Bronisław GEREMEK, Wojciech GIEŁŻYŃSKI, Jan GÓRSKI (†), Andrzej GRAJEWSKI, Jan GROSFELD, Artur HAJNICZ, Jerzy HOLZER, Jerzy JARUZELSKI, Jerzy JASIŃSKI (†), Ryszard KAPUŚCIŃSKI, Marek KARP, Father Marek KILISZEK, Waclaw KOC (†), Katarzyna KOŁODZIEJCZYK, Grzegorz KOSTRZEWA-ZORBAS, Andrzej KRASIŃSKI, Eligiusz LASOTA (†), Tomasz ŁUBIEŃSKI, Tadeusz MAZOWIECKI, Jerzy MIKKE (†), Jacek MOSKWA, Zbigniew NOSOWSKI, Jan OLSZEWSKI, Janusz REITER, Jerzy REGULSKI, Ernest SKALSKI, Zygmunt SKÓRZYŃSKI, Jan STRZELECKI (†), Adam STRZEMBOSZ, Klemens SZANIAWSKI (†), Jacek SZYMANDERSKI, Anna SZYMAŃSKA, Andrzej SZCZYPIORSKI (†), Krzysztof ŚLIWIŃSKI, Ryszard TURSKI, Wojciech WIECZOREK, Andrzej WIELOWIEYSKI, Stefan WILKANOWICZ, Kazimierz WÓYCICKI, and Jacek ŻAKOWSKI.

The above list does not include several less frequent participants and guests from Poland and abroad, ones such as: Zbigniew BRZEZIŃSKI (Washington), Wanda GAWROŃSKA (Rome), Stanisława GRABSKA (Warsaw), Bohdan HORYŃ (Kiev), Andrzej KAWCZAK (Montreal), Andrzej KORBOŃSKI (Los Angeles), Krzysztof KOZŁOWSKI (Krakow), Aleksander MATEJKO (Edmonton), Jan NOWAK-JEZIORAŃSKI (Washington), Andrzej STELMACHOWSKI (Warsaw), Leopold UNGER (Brussels), Bolesław WIERZBIAŃSKI (New York), Jacek WOŹNIAKOWSKI (Krakow),

and many others.

From the very beginning of my time in presiding over the activities of our cadre I relied on the enormously effective assistance of the secretary of our Talkshops, the then young theology student Zbigniew NOSOWSKI.

From 1986 to 1989 our Talkshop organized some eighty seminars devoted to the most pressing issues concerning the international situation of Poland, Europe, and the world. Materials from those discussions were published in journal form and circulated outside legal channels.

The culminating event of this period was the four-day international seminar entitled, "Central Europe: an illusion or an opportunity", held in 1989 - after nearly two years of preparation - at the Dominican monastery in Krakow and at the Benedictine monastery in Tyniec not far from Krakow. Around fifty eminent experts from the West and thirty selected participants from Central and Eastern Europe took part in that seminar. The ideas we discussed then, along with the proposals we tabled, preceded by several years the concepts of Polish, Hungarian, Czech, and Slovak politicians that led to the creation of the Visegrad Group.

At the beginning of that same year, a "Kajetan Morawski Club" was created within the Talkshop, a club gathering Francophone members of our milieu. The club organized the "France-Poland Encounters". Thanks to the hospitality of the Piwnica Artystyczna (Artistic Underground) of Wanda WARSKA and Andrzej KURYLEWICZ, interested intellectuals, artists, politicians, and diplomats from both countries were able to discuss issues important for relations between Poland and France.

The choice of regular participants of the "Polska w Europie" Talkshop proved itself after the historical breakthrough of 1989, in that severe test in political acceleration in Poland's most recent history. Two of its participants became prime ministers, several became chairmen (and vice-chairmen) of the Parliament, six became ambassadors, numerous others senators and deputies to the Sejm, and still others took their place among the eminent representatives of the developing public life of the Third Republic.

From the circle of several dozen steady participants there were also members of the Citizen Committee headed by the Chairman of the

independent trade union “Solidarność”. Many of them took part in the Round Table talks. Many entered into the ranks of the political elite of the rapidly forming new state.

Today, from a sixteen-year perspective, it is clear that the early “Polska w Europie” Talkshops were highly important not only as Poland’s first center for systematic analyses and political studies of European and international issues, but also because of the abiding scale of their impact. Their explicitly elitist character created favorable conditions for cognitive reward as well as for future programmatic concepts, just as the wide range of individual participants’ specializations provided a basis – in the form of systematic discussions – for thorough-going verification of the hypotheses presented.

Suffice it to say that the vast majority of the participants of our Talkshops are convinced that the studies we carried out directly led to an outlining of the main thrusts of the foreign policy Poland was to pursue once having regained full sovereignty.

II

After the parliamentary elections in June 1989 and the resultant creation of the new Sejm and the first Polish Senate since the Second World War – and together with the appointment of Tadeusz Mazowiecki’s government – the entire context of the exertions of those associated with the “Polska w Europie” Talkshop changed completely.

The political breakthrough of that historic year led to the emergence of new initiatives and new organizational structures that were a direct continuation of the experiences of the Talkshop to date. Thus it came as no surprise when the freely-elected Senate of the Republic of Poland, having deemed it necessary to call into being a think tank on international political issues, turned to the Talkshop. Drawing on the Talkshop’s experience and from among its members, the Senate created the “Ośrodek Studiów Międzynarodowych” (OSM –The Center for International Studies). With regard to the Center’s role and significance over its five-year existence in the forming of Poland’s foreign policy, it would seem appropriate to mention

here the names of those who made up its cadre. Artur Hajnicz was named its director. Among its experts were Tadeusz CHABIERA, Jacek CZAPUTOWICZ, Kazimierz DZIEWANOWSKI, Wojciech LAMENTOWICZ, along with myself. In 1990 the Center hired Eligiusz LASOTA, and from outside the Talkshop came Jerzy Marek NOWAKOWSKI and Rafał WIŚNIEWSKI.

Shortly thereafter Jacek CZAPUTOWICZ, Wojciech LAMENTOWICZ, and Kazimierz DZIEWANOWSKI were drawn into foreign service by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and thus left the Center.

Other changes in personnel took place when Artur HAJNICZ passed on the function of director to Jerzy Marek NOWAKOWSKI and when Wojciech ZAJĄCZKOWSKI and Paweł ZIOŁEK took permanent posts. Moreover, Oskar CHOMICKI and Andrzej GRAJEWSKI took on important duties. The Center was also ably served by the several people working in its Secretariat.

In a short time the OSM became a locus of independent analyses of international relations, parliamentary consultations, contacts, meetings, and talks of both national and international scope.

The activity of the OSM within the structure of the Senate of the Republic of Poland was limited not only to the parliamentary field. The OSM also cooperated with respective governmental offices, with the President's Chancellery, with political parties, and with academic centers and institutes of international relations both in Poland and abroad. The Center quickly became one of the most important bodies from outside academia that systematically dealt with key aspects of international relations.

The tasks of the OSM in the Senate included carrying out research and analysis as well as organizing conferences and consultative meetings on international politics and the activities of Poland on the international arena, with special stress put on integration with NATO and European Union. The Center prepared expert appraisals of international relations and of Poland's position on many issues of foreign policy.

The seminar meetings of the Talkshop that had come to an end in their illegal form in the second half of 1989, found their continuation in the OSM

as consultative meetings. They were organized every few weeks in the Senate and included the participation of several dozen representatives of political, parliamentary, and governmental circles, as well as diplomats, experts, and publicists. They were dedicated to the analysis of topical political issues in Polish foreign policy and international relations, especially the processes European and Euro-Atlantic integration. By 1995, when the OSM was removed from the structure of the Senate Chancellery, some fifty large-scale sessions had been held in the chambers of the Parliament. Materials from those sessions were published on a quarterly basis in the first sixteen issues of our journal “Polska w Europie” by the OSM (together with the “Polska w Europie” Foundation). Thus, they were dedicated to key issues of Poland’s international policy and to the situation in Europe and the world.

The issues of our journal were accompanied by separate publications of the OSM entitled “Documents and materials”. In 1994 and 1995 they also included the bulletin “European Security”, drawn up every several weeks.

At the beginning of 1995 the OSM ceased to be part of the Senate Chancellery and for some time thereafter functioned – under the same name – as a non-governmental organization (NGO), thanks to the hospitality of the Polish Robert Schuman Foundation.

III

An initiative parallel to the Senate’s OSM, but brought into being somewhat later, was the formal creation of the “Polska w Europie” Foundation by participants of the Talkshop. Having signed an appropriate document on March 8, 1990, its founders were: Andrzej AJNENKIEL, Halina BORTNOWSKA, Stefan BRATKOWSKI, Jacek CZAPUTOWICZ, Paweł CZARTORYSKI, Kazimierz DZIEWANOWSKI, Artur HAJNICZ, Andrzej KAWCZAK, Zygmunt SKÓRZYŃSKI, Franciszek SOBIESKI, and Janusz ZIÓŁKOWSKI.

This group consisted of people representing highly important institutions and associations, chairmen of the Sociological and Historical

Scientific Societies, as well as of the renewed Association of Polish Journalists, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Affairs Commission, the deputy chairman of the Congress of Canadian Polonia, members of the Citizen Committee headed by the Chairman of NSZZ “Solidarność”, along with advisors and experts from the Polish Senate.

The goal of the Foundation has been to promote the cultural, social, and economic unity of Europe and to act in manifold ways to overcome the division of the continent, ever placing stress on the full participation of Poland in European and Euro-Atlantic structures.

Thanks to the support of Germany’s Konrad Adenauer Foundation it was possible to initiate a multi-pronged program dedicated to this goal. Here mention must be made of the “Europe in view of unification” program, which I led. Ever since the Foundation was created, this program was carried out in the form of a series of closed Talkshops or small seminar meetings dedicated to key issues of European integration. At the same time, more open conferences on selected international issues were organized. Introductory presentations have always been entrusted to experts, and participants have been selected on the grounds of their competence and from wide-ranging political and scientific quarters (apart from extreme ones). Materials from these meetings are published by the Foundation’s own publishing houses and in the issues of “Polska w Europie”.

A further endeavor pursued in the first years of the Foundation’s independent functioning was the program dedicated to “The Poles’ Conscious European Identity”. The point of departure was that Poland’s partnership with the countries of the European Union demanded a doing away with barriers relating to politics, economics, development, legislation, and even more – a doing away with the barriers that had accrued in the societal awareness of the two sides of divided Europe. This program, carried out by an eminent team of sociologists led by Elżbieta SKOTNICKA-ILLASIEWICZ, included first of all a critical analysis of materials from over thirty sociological studies, observation of current changes in the European consciousness of Poles, as well as the formulation of diagnoses and practical, political and educational proposals. The series of seminars,

meetings, and publications was accompanied by an attempt at coordinating activities in this domain within Poland, as well as by a search for suitable partners in other post-communist countries.

Another very important measure was the Foundation’s “Polish-German Relations’ program, which prepared and organized seminars and conference with interested German organizations (like the Adenauer Foundation, the Goethe Institute, the European Academy in Berlin, the European Houses Federation, and others). Eminent Polish and German experts participated in those gatherings and session materials were published among the Foundation’s studies. Through this program groups of guests were invited to Poland and trips of Polish studies groups (primarily young teachers) to Germany were organized.

This went hand in hand with other educational programs of the Foundation. The “Szranki Szkolne” program, meant for young teachers - mainly of history - included monthly seminars on European integration and the place of Poland in Europe. We also need to mention the “Journalist Workshops for the Young” program, consisting of a basic course and a series of seminar meetings, as well as editorial meetings connected with the POLIS monthly. The monthly was edited directly by the youth. It was published by the Foundation together with the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAN), and also later with the Human Rights Foundation in Helsinki.

In 1994, thanks to the support of the European Union Cooperation Fund PHARE-Democracy, the educational programs listed above were transformed into the new, broader SIEĆ POLIS program (POLIS Network), connected with the “POLIS” monthly. Under this program several workshops were organized for participants in various school competitions, for candidates to law school, candidates to the caring professions, participants of European Youth Clubs, etc.

The great size and scope of this educational program, along with its youth character and the set of problems pertaining to accommodation, organization and finances, prompted the Board of the Foundation and Project Manager Halina BORTNOWSKA to decide to separate the program

both in terms of organization and location and make it fully independent. This happened at the turn of 1995 and 1996.

IV

The parliamentary changes that occurred over the winter of 1993/94 resulted in the inability to achieve an agreement between the new presidium of the Parliament and the Senate's OSM. Ultimately this led to the OSM's closure in 1995. Thus, a base that, in terms of organization, people and location, had in many ways been ideal for our Foundation, derived as it was from the historical roots and ideological traditions of the "Polska w Europie" Talkshop, ceased to exist

Thanks to the help of kindred social organizations (i.a., the Batory Foundation), in 1994 our Foundation managed to obtain and adapt to its own needs a new office in an exceptionally favorable place in Warsaw, to wit, at Plac Unii Lubelskiej in the immediate vicinity of such institutions as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Office of the Council of Ministers, and the Prime Minister's Chancellery.

This setting was taken full advantage of in the establishing of the Foundation's new "Klub Stosunków Międzynarodowych" (International Relations Club), created only for a narrow, elite group of experts, diplomats, political scientists, and politicians interested in this field.

The system then introduced, one of regular closed meetings devoted to discussions on current international relations, replaced the previous Talkshops and the consultative meetings held by the "Polska w Europie" Foundation and the OSM.

Over the course of 1994 and at the beginning of 1995 some twenty meetings of the Club took place with the participation of leading Polish and foreign politicians and experts. Among the participants and the guests of those regularly held meetings we need to mention: A. ANANICZ, T.G. ASH, H. BORTNOWSKA, S. BRATKOWSKI, T. CHABIERA, T. CZAPUTOWICZ, J. DOWGIAŁŁO, A. DRAWICZ, K. DZIEWANOWSKI, J.GAC, P. GRUDZIŃSKI, A. HAJNICZ, A. HARASIMOWICZ, E. SKOTNICKA-

ILLASIEWICZ, M. KARASIŃSKA-FENDLER, K. KOŁODZIEJCZYK, O.A. KOPROWSKI, A. KORBOŃSKI, M. KOZŁOWSKI, E. LASOTA, J. ŁUKASZEWSKI, T. ŁUBIEŃSKI, M. MORAWSKI, J.M. NOWAKOWSKI, J. ONYSZKIEWICZ, A. POTWOROWSKI, S. PUZYNA, J. SARYUSZ-WOLSKI, Z. SKÓRZYŃSKI, A. STRZEMBOSZ, D. SZCZEPAŃSKI, W. SULIMIRSKI, T. De VIRION, L. UNGIER, W. WIECZOREK, A. WIELOWIEYSKI, M. WODZIŃSKA-WALICKA, K. WÓJCICKI and others.

In mid-1995, thanks to the hospitality of the Foundation’s “Centrum Prasowe ds. Spraw Europy Środkowo-Wschodniej” (Press Center for Central and Eastern European Affairs), the attempt was successful to reactivate our large, interdisciplinary Talkshops in political sciences. The “Polska w Europie” Foundation and the Polish Council of the European Movement assumed the convening of the Talkshops. Thus began a new era in the history of our Foundation, one that has been continued to the present day.

The reactivation of the Talkshops prompted the organizers to specify more clearly the role and function of the Foundation’s International Relations Club, which remained active independently of the Foundation’s other undertakings. At the same, worsening material conditions (i.a., an increase in rent) compelled the Board of the Foundation to change our location once again and accept the invitation extended by the “Friends of Warsaw Society” (TWP) to hold our meetings in the TWP’s historic seat in Warsaw’s Old Town.

The change in the seat and character of the Club was accompanied by a change in the topics discussed. The need to tackle more general subjects and international issues of a more basic character (in comparison with the clearly more diagnostic character of hitherto meetings of the Talkshop) led to the acceptance of the principle that we were now to discuss selected problems of the contemporary world, contemporary Europe, and contemporary Poland, in the professionally and politically diverse circle of invited guests.

In these new conditions and in the new setting the meetings of the Club took place less often than before and with a broader circle of relevant

experts.

The modification of topics discussed at the meetings is reflected in the following topics of seminars and meetings (cf. Annex III):

December 5, 1996 - "China facing the challenges of the contemporary world"

February 6, 1997 - "The Promotion of Polish culture in the West"

December 4, 1997 - "The world of Islam at the close of the XX century"

July 30, 1998 - "The Polish diaspora and the image of Poland abroad"

May 25, 1999 - "Jews - Poles - Christians. In quest of an understanding".

In the new format of the Foundation's Club nearly twenty meetings took place, ones which were recorded and then published. In terms of the need for information and analysis so evident in Polish public opinion, a very important service was provided by the publication of our discussions on public matters of national or domestic interest.

In the last couple years, at the turn of the century (and millennium), several newly created organizations, foundations, and associations younger than ours began to be very active in the field of discussions. Naturally, this has had a bearing on the frequency of meetings organized by our Club. Still, we do see a clear need of continuation of its activities.

V

The activities described above also had an influence on the launch of a special Foundation program whose main goal was to support the institutional admission of Poland to the International European Movement. Those endeavors, partly aided from Brussels and Strasbourg, and carried out with organizational help from the Senate's OSM, on the one hand required access to reliable representatives of numerous organizations, associations, clubs, etc., that acted in diverse places in Poland on behalf of European integration. On the other hand, they required access to many eminent representatives of Polish public life in politics, science, culture, and diplomacy with a strong pro-integration orientation. In November 1992 this led to the creation by thirty-five founding members of an association named the "Polska Rada Ruchu Europejskiego" (Polish Council of the European

Movement), which two months later became a member of the International European Movement.

The founding members of the Polska Rada Ruchu Europejskiego (PRRE) included: Waldemar BOHDANOWICZ (Łódź), Father Adam BONIECKI (Rome), Tadeusz CHABIERA (Warsaw), Stanisław DEMBIŃSKI (Toruń), Aleksander GIEYSZTOR (Warsaw), Stanisław GROCHOLSKI (Brussels), Andrzej HARASIMOWICZ (Warsaw), Maria KARASIŃSKA (Łódź), Jerzy KŁOCZOWSKI (Lublin), Andrzej KOMAR (Poznań), Mikołaj KOZAKIEWICZ (Warsaw), Jan KUŁAKOWSKI (Brussels), Jerzy ŁUKASZEWSKI (Paris), Aleksander MAŁACHOWSKI (Warsaw), Artur MIĘDZYRZECKI (Warsaw), Jerzy MIKUŁOWSKI-POMORSKI (Krakow), Maciej MORAWSKI (Paris), Józef OLEKSY (Warsaw), Jerzy PIETRUCHA (Katowice), Eugeniusz PIONTEK (Warsaw), Jacek PURCHLA (Krakow), Jerzy REGULSKI (Strasbourg), Jacek SARYUSZ-WOLSKI (Warsaw), Elżbieta SKOTNICKA-ILLASIEWICZ (Warsaw), Zygmunt SKÓRZYŃSKI (Warsaw), Zofia SOKOLEWICZ (Warsaw). Jacek SZERER (Wałbrzych), Edward WENDE (Warsaw), Andrzej WIELOWIEYSKI (Warsaw), and Jacek WOŹNIAKOWSKI (Krakow).

The “Polska Rada Ruchu Europejskiego”, fully independent in both organizational and legal terms, once it finished its statutory matters and had accepted over one hundred new members i.a. from among the leading activists of pro-European organizations and had secured initial financial support from interested organizations, launched broader activities in domains which, naturally, will not be discussed here in detail.

Here it need only be added that the practical experiences of the PRRE, owing to the wide-ranging needs and expectations of sundry circles and social groups – differing from one another by age, education, profession, place of residence, etc. – gradually led to a highly diversified program policy. Let us add that this policy has been dependent on the possibilities of obtaining relevant commissions from interested public institutions, social organizations, and foundations (this dependency is due to the PRRE not having any steady financial sources, which fact has, of course, impacted the scope and effectiveness of the PRRE). This situation contributed to the

organizational separation of the whole sphere of analysis and studies, regarding, e.g. diverse aspects of integration and structural problems of the EU, as this sphere required from the participants of such programs necessary abilities and qualifications. This was expressed, for instance, by the fact that the elitist programs of the Foundation (its Talkshops, meetings of the Foundation's Club, etc.), which have attracted only the intellectually awakened part of youth connected with the European Movement, functioned completely separately. At the same time, the PRRE's youth movement has utilized its possibilities and acquired means to develop various concrete forms of activities in the spheres of information, education, organization, etc., addressed to young local and regional journalists, young schoolteachers, young representatives of municipalities, and students.

The European Movement, organized in Poland forty-odd years after the birth of the International European Movement in the West, is still in an early developmental phase. However, the social clubs and pro-European organizations spontaneously created in many places throughout Poland, ones gradually coming together under the Polish Council, have already taken a proud place among the ever broader activities of diverse Polish groups and social environments dedicated to the cause of European integration.

VI

From the beginning of 1996 the "Polska w Europie" Foundation together with the Catholic Information and European Initiatives Office (OCIPE) held seminars on "Poland in the international system - issues of integration and security". Participants were young experts who dealt with international issues in various public and social institutions. The goal of these seminars was the mutual confrontation of views and the harmonization of the conceptual framework pertaining to the issues of European integration and international security. The seminars constituted a forum for the free exchange of ideas on the international setting of Poland's foreign policies. These seminars were brought to a close with the

publication of a book edited by Jacek CZAPUTOWICZ (*Bezpieczeństwo europejskie. Koncepcje, instytucje, implikacje dla Polski* [European security: the concepts, institutions, and implications for Poland], Warszawa 1997) and another entitled *Integracja europejska. Implikacje dla Polski* [European integration: the implications for Poland], Krakow 1999.

VII

Over the most recent period the “Polska w Europie” Foundation has steadily focussed on two basic matters:

(a) the continuation of meetings of the Talkshop every 1-2 months, to concentrate on international issues that require diagnostic analysis,

(b) the further publishing of “Polska w Europie” on a quarterly basis.

Since the principle of publishing the materials (presentations and more significant contributions to discussions) from the most current Talkshops has been upheld without fail for ten years, these two forms of activity of the Foundation can - in a sense - be treated together. And so they are by organizations or institutions (recently, the Office of the Committee for European Integration) that can afford to finance every few issues of this complex editorial project.

A review of the topics of those meetings may be said to entail a review of the international events of those years. Such a review also enables us to calmly assess to what extent our program policy accompanied and reflected recent history, particularly in the European and Euro-Atlantic region. Relatedly, we may determine to what extent this analysis of processes underway in international politics during our meetings was conducted by truly competent and objective minds. A positive assessment would verify the premises and principles the Foundation has relied upon in its labors.

As a member of the Board of the Foundation, and thus being responsible for the whole thrust of our activity, I would like to express my immense gratitude to our Foundation colleagues Katarzyna KOŁODZIEJCZYK and Tadeusz CHABIERA for their unrelenting consultative and organizational assistance to the Talkshop.

The “Polska w Europie” publications are well known to all the participants of the Talkshop as well as to many readers from the world of politics and diplomacy, from the world of social organizations, foundations, and pro-European clubs – and at universities, institutes, research centers, press offices, and radio stations. To date (30.IX.02) we have published 41 issues, their contents being available here on-line. In touching on our journals it strikes me that this is the appropriate place to once again bid farewell to our dear friend and colleague, Eligiusz LASOTA, who passed away on September 19, 2001. It is to his enormous commitment and unflagging day in, day out (mostly unpaid) work at the post of editor-in-chief that our journals owe their high level, topicality, and their altogether broad international presence. May he be forever remembered!

By the decision of the Board of the Foundation the function of editor-in-chief has been assumed by our colleague, member of the Board, and co-founder of the Foundation, Minister Jacek CZAPUTOWICZ, Ph.D.

VII

The “Polska w Europie” Foundation, being the direct continuation of the “Polska w Europie” Talkshops, is recognized in Poland as the oldest pro-European foundation. Bearing this in mind, The Convent of Founders together with the Foundation’s Board decided in 2000 to organize a celebration on the occasion of the Foundation and Talkshop’s fifteenth anniversary. That celebration was held at the end of 2001.

With a view to the exceedingly difficult period leading up to Poland’s referendum on membership in the European Union, it was decided that our 15th anniversary celebration would focus on and discuss the central issues pertaining to European unity following expansion.

The main event in our program, one which gathered Poland’s most eminent experts, was thus the conference entitled “Tomorrow’s Europe”, which was held on December 13, 2001 in the Staszic Palace in Warsaw. Following the opening remarks I addressed to the conference, Artur HAJNICZ sketched the development of our initiative over time, giving

special focus to the role of the Center for International Studies at the Polish Senate.

In our first panel discussion, entitled “What kind of political system for the united Europe”, the two main speakers were the former ministers Professor Bronisław GEREMEK and Dr. Jacek SARYUSZ-WOLSKI, the most highly regarded experts in their field in Poland. Their discussion was moderated by Andrzej OLECHOWSKI, former Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Our second panel discussion was entitled “The Future of Nation-States in the United Europe”, and featured Professors Andrzej AJNENKIEL, Anna WOLFF-POWĘSKA, and the highly renowned writers and publicists Stefan BRATKOWSKI and Bartłomiej SIENKIEWICZ. The debate that ensued was very highly appraised by those in attendance.

Our third and final panel discussion - “European Security and Defense Policy” - boasted former ministers or deputy-ministers of defense Janusz ONYSZKIEWICZ, Bronisław KOMOROWSKI, and Bogdan KLICH, and also the eminent senator Andrzej WIELOWIEYSKI, who is also the president of the Polish Council of the European Movement. The discussion and debate led by these renowned authorities outstandingly contributed to the success of our anniversary celebration. The materials from all these panel discussions have been published in our journal “Polska w Europie”.

In deciding upon the topic of “Tomorrow’s Europe”, our Foundation has commenced a new stage in its activities, ones now focussed on the central issues faced by the united Europe, as well as by Poland in the present preaccession period.

Artur Hajnicz*

The Center for International Studies at Poland's Senate

The organizers of the "Tomorrow's Europe" conference honored me with the task of delivering this anniversary paper. It so happened that the conference was held on December 13, 2001 and marked the 20th anniversary of martial law, hence my reflections on that historical date as the beginning of my address.

Martial law has been and will remain a matter of controversy. December 13, 1981 is a historic date in Polish history. We all remember that grim, dreadful night. I spent it at the State Security headquarters on Rakowiecka Street, handcuffed, awaiting interrogation.

Let me discuss a few issues, which, in my opinion are beyond controversy. Martial law was introduced because a 10 million-strong trade union, independent of the party and the government, was at loggerheads with the political system and Poland's place in the bipolar world order. Equally unquestionable is the objective behind martial law, i.e. the liquidation of "Solidarity", "normalization" of the situation, a return to the status quo ante and the subsequent reform attempts. None of these was achieved: "Solidarity" was compelled to operate as an underground organization, but was not liquidated. The party eventually crumbled, and

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the Polish economy suffered terminal decline.

This situation can be described as follows: at that time Polish communism was dead, a brutal reanimation failed, the decaying corpse proved impossible to live with, but equally impossible was its burial, given the then international situation.

The key to this impasse lay in the international constellation, an understanding commonly-held in opposition circles then searching for a way out of the abyss. This discussion had begun earlier on, before Zygmunt Skórzyński organized our Talkshop. All these concepts, projects, and visions elaborated upon for many years were discussed at regular Talkshops held every fortnight at the Holy Trinity Church, under Father Marek's patronage. One can say that this Talkshop was, in a way, a warehouse, where we could present our goods, praise and exchange them. It was a kind of market of ideas. Here is a handful of the best-known projects and variants.

The first is the "KOR" project (named after the "Workers" Defense Committee), put forward by Jan Lityński when "Solidarity" was still legal. It was nominally an address to the nations of the East, but in fact was an address of Polish dissidents to their fellow-dissidents in the other countries under Soviet domination. This momentous concept was made public before martial law, which exacerbated the already dramatic situation of "Solidarity". I remember that the possible consequences of this address for our legal movement sent shivers down our spines at "Solidarity Weekly".

The second formula may be described as "Promethean". This was the vision of those at the center of the Paris "Kultura", put forward by Giedroyc and Mieroszewski: Poland as a leader in an alliance with Ukraine, Byelorussia, and Lithuania. The formula was great, but to what extent feasible in the 1980's?

Yet another project was called by the late Andrzej Krasieński "Hapsburgian". It envisioned a Central European grouping of Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, and Hungary. This variant had its distinguished representatives: Gyorgy Konrad (Hungary), Milan Kundera (Czechoslovakia), Erhard Busek (Austria). The Talkshop organized a

conference at Tyniec entitled “Central Europe - Utopia or Reality”, one of our greatest achievements.

Finally, pro domo sua, the “geopolitical” project. It was based on the assumption of the symbiosis between the Polish question and the German question: without a Polish breakthrough, without “Solidarity”, Germany stood no chance of achieving its constitutional objective, i.e. the reunification of the two German states. At the same time, without reunification, Poland would have been surrounded, cut off from Europe, a Soviet protectorate and a hostage of the Warsaw Pact. I put forward this concept in the renowned monthly “Aussenpolitik” (1/1989) in the article “Poland in the Geopolitical Triangle”, written in June 1988. The editorial foreword contained information about our Talkshop.

In the mid 1980's all these projects and visions had one thing in common: they were far from realistic. As regards the “geopolitical” concept, its additional shortcoming was the fact that it went against Polish social and historical consciousness. Its advantage, on the other hand, was that history proved its value. The Senate's Center for International Studies contributed to its success.

The Center was established in the fall of 1989, the year of the Round Table talks, the victorious parliamentary election of 4 June, and the formation of the Tadeusz Mazowiecki government.

The first democratic election to the Sejm and the Senate in decades - with the paramount role of the Citizens' Parliamentary Club and the first non-communist government between the Elbe and Sakhalin - meant an “explosion” of foreign policy. For only then could we take full responsibility for our state, and hence, for our foreign policy. The time had come for us to confront our visions with reality.

It then turned out that the newly elected MPs and senators did not really know the principles of this totally new foreign policy. Professor Janusz Ziółkowski, chairman of the Senate's Foreign Policy Committee, spoke of this problem in blunt terms. It was by his and Andrzej Wielowieyski's initiative, who had been a long-serving member of our Talkshop and was then Deputy Marshal of the Senate, that a Senate consultative body (made

up of 100% Solidarity-supported senators) was to be set up in reliance upon our long-time activity. This proposal was supported by professor Bronisław Geremek, the chairman of the Citizens' Parliamentary Club. That was significant, as it meant that the Center was not only the Senate's consultative body, but that it also enjoyed the support of the Citizens' Parliamentary Club. After preliminary discussions I accepted the mission of organizing and running the Center. Naturally, our foreign policy architect was the Minister for Foreign Affairs Professor Krzysztof Skubiszewski of the widely recognized Poznań School of International Law. As a minister of Poland's independent Third Republic, Professor Skubiszewski pursued a reactive policy (one that reacted to the situation at hand). It consisted of assessing the situation and possible dangers, defining the main objective, and determining operations that would lead to its achievement. This did not require any visions or concepts.

The heart of the matter is that the Poland of 1989-1991 was not yet a fully independent state. The Third Republic was not born suddenly, neither on June 4 nor on September 12, 1989. For we were still then part of the Soviet system, a member of the Warsaw Pact. In December 1989 the Polish prime minister and the minister for foreign affairs were in Moscow at a session of the Warsaw Pact's governing body, where they sat beside Ceausescu and Honecker, men bent on breaking the Polish hydra's neck.

The Second Republic of Poland was not born suddenly upon Józef Piłsudski's arrival in Warsaw on November 11, 1918. It took two years to complete the process of state formation, notably through the Treaty of Versailles, the Poznań Uprising, the Silesian Uprisings and the defeat of the Red Army driving westward. The birth of the Third Republic had required the fall of the Berlin Wall, the "2+4" Treaty, the international and bilateral recognition of Poland's western borders, the failure of Janaev's putsch in Russia and the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Hence, the fall of the Berlin Wall was, internationally, a historic moment for Poland. The prospect of German reunification was finally real, which fact brought new opportunities both for Poland and Europe to do away with the post-Yalta order.

Exactly a fortnight after his visit to Poland and the fall of the Berlin Wall, Helmut Kohl surprised his partners with his 10-point program of overcoming the division of Germany and Europe. This meant that the German government went on from constitutional and declarative policy to a pro-active policy aimed at the reunification of Germany. Thus, the German Chancellor tried to catch up with history and take over initiative and leadership.

Reactions to this varied. Germany's European allies François Mitterand and Margaret Thatcher were afraid that a unified Germany would undermine the European balance of power. Washington expressed positive interest and hope. In the German Democratic Republic the process aimed at reunification and first democratic election was accelerated. On December 9, 1989 Mikhail Gorbachev stated, "the GDR is and remains the USSR's strategic ally and a member of the Warsaw Pact". Poland, on the other hand, suffered further serious disappointment and apprehension. There were doubts as to Helmut Kohl's true intentions. Why was there no point 11 on the Odra-Nysa border? - this question echoed for many years. Yet, from the legal standpoint, only a unified Germany was able to recognize this border.

Minister Krzysztof Skubiszewski decided that the main objective of Polish foreign policy was the defense of its border, threatened by the prospect of German reunification. Attempts were made to win support in those capitals that were ready to halt and block the reunification process. In January 1990 a note to this effect was sent to the Soviet Union, with Polish public opinion kept in the dark. The Russians did not fail to use this note to Poland's detriment during Helmut Kohl's visit to the USSR in the summer of 1990.

At the Senate's Center for Foreign Studies, we assessed these events differently. Of course, there was no questioning Polish foreign policy or its minister. We supported his policy in numerous talks and meetings, but laid our accents elsewhere, underlining our support for German reunification. Why? Let me reiterate our arguments and our line of thinking:

1. without a unified Germany, Poland would have been surrounded and

cut off from the West;

2. without a unified Germany the Warsaw Pact could not have been liquidated, as its armies, (indeed, the Soviet army) guarded the GDR and the pact's borders;

3. without a unified Germany Poland would have been unable to cast off the Soviet protectorate. Moreover, a border treaty with West Germany, which had no power over the GDR, could not change this situation. Also, according to German law, only a unified Germany could finally recognize our border;

4. only the joining of the "German question" with the "Polish question" could gain sufficient weight to undermine the existing European order. Poland acting alone had no such clout.

History proved our thinking right. Politicians are incapable of predicting the future. While making decisions they take chances, move in the dark, but they are not blind. Naturally we had to stand our ground, in the sometimes heated debate with Germany. But heated debate is one thing, while playing for the opponent is another. For the Western European powers, rich and safe, the maintenance of the status quo seemed advantageous. For Poland it would have been fatal. What would have happened if the attempts to preempt the reunification of Germany had succeeded? Where would we be?

Therefore, we at the Center found ourselves between the Scylla of loyalty to the minister and the Charybdis of disagreement with many of his undertakings. We played the part of chimneysweepers, clearing long-clogged ducts and channels of communication: e.g. we kept in touch with the Chancellor's Office, the decision-making center. Sometimes we were like fire-fighters. Such a "fire" took place in 1991 when Minister Skubiszewski's main objective was the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland. In order to achieve this he was prepared to block the transit of Russian troops from Germany. But it was not in Moscow's interest to withdraw those troops. This policy also meant Poland's blocking of the "2+4" treaty that had envisaged the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the former GDR and resulted in the three months' stoppage of Polish-German treaty negotiations. We found ourselves in a dangerous spot, since

Germany had already been reunited and the border treaty of November 14, 1990 had not yet been ratified. In Russia it had played into the hands of Gorbachev's opponents, the future Janaev putchists. We then took steps at odds with the strategy of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In January 1991, at our initiative, the Senate's Foreign Affairs Committee proposed a visit to Germany to discuss the growing controversies. This met with considerable interest in Germany. It was the first such initiative of the Polish Parliament. The delegation included Professor Stanisław Dembiński, and Senators Andrzej Szczypiorski and Dorota Simonides.

Professor Dembiński put forward three points: we opposed the blocking of troop transit, but we did not agree to being excluded from the decision-making process in matters of transit. Thus, the conditions of transit must be negotiated with Poland. We also demanded the resumption of the Polish-German treaty negotiations.

The Polish delegation was received by high-ranking German politicians: Foreign Affairs Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the Speaker of the Bundestag Rita Süsmuth, and the then representative of the Bundesrat Gerhard Schröder, now German Chancellor. Our hosts agreed with all these points. The exclusion of Poland, the transit country, was considered a mistake due to haste, inadequate co-ordination, and staff overwork. Having returned to Warsaw we were immediately received by Prime Minister Jan Krzysztof Bielecki, who was getting ready for his first visit to Germany. The account we gave of our mission met with his full approval. In a relatively short period of time treaty negotiations were resumed. The withdrawal of Soviet troops from Germany gained momentum, not only by sea as before, but also by rail via Poland.

Looking back from a historical perspective I feel emboldened to say that the Senate's Center for International Studies fulfilled its mission and left its mark on the birth of Poland's Third Republic.

Let me conclude by adding a few words about the "Polska w Europie" Foundation. Given the uncertain situation of the Center we were looking for a "life-saver", as there were always rumors of the Center's impending liquidation. As one of its founders and initiators I can today state that the

Foundation was meant to be such a “life-saver” in the event that the Center was removed from the Senate. With pride may I add that the “Polska w Europie” Foundation remains a power-house of thinking and action.

The history of our Talkshop, the Center for International Studies, and the Foundation deserves a comprehensive monographic study. We have published a number of books in Polish and German, dozens of articles, and the “Polska w Europie” journals. We have preserved archives, in part scattered in private houses. Once having left the Senate, for two years the Center functioned as a non-governmental organization at Poland’s Robert Schuman Foundation, where we conducted our enormously important program entitled the “Expulsion Complex”. We attempted to overcome our own and the Germans’ complexes and fairly assess the facts of the early post-War period. ZNAK Publishers issued a 300-page monograph on the program and its results.

The human side is a separate issue. Some of us have found employment in diplomacy, the press, activist societies, and non-governmental institutions. We have mourned the passing of our colleagues. One name cannot be forgotten, that of Eligiusz Lasota, our tireless chronicler and an indefatigable participant of our many struggles, discussions, and campaigns. Without his arduous work, energy, and devotion much of what we have done would never have gotten documented and published.

This text obviously cannot replace an in-depth and comprehensive monograph. I have only tried to answer some basic questions: what did we strive for, what was the meaning of our objectives, what were the practical results of our work, and how do we see it 15 years on.