

*dziękuję* for the warm hospitality you showed us last year in Warsaw.

Today, Poland and the United States are meeting the challenges of our times, sustained by bonds of kinship, culture, and commerce that unite our peoples. Two centuries ago, Poles fought for America's independence. Before and since, thousands of American communities have been enriched by the energies of millions of Poles who came here to settle.

Mr. President, tomorrow we'll travel to Michigan to visit one of those communities. But pride requires me to point out that the oldest permanent Polish settlement in America can be found in my home State. In the fall of 1854, more than 100 Polish families traveled to the prairies of south Texas, seeking greater freedom and opportunity. They arrived at their destination on Christmas Eve, and they christened their new settlement Panna Maria, or Virgin Mary. The town is still there, a living symbol of our common ties.

Just as Poles keep contributing to America's vitality, Poland keeps contributing to the vitality of the entire world. Poland's opposition to Soviet tyranny inspired half a continent and helped bring down an evil empire. And the passion for human dignity and iron integrity of a Polish Pope has added to the momentum of freedom around the globe. Freedom did not have to be imported into Poland. It is found naturally in the rhythm of every Polish heart, a commitment of conscience and faith stronger than the brutality of conquerors or the official lies of oppressors.

In 1989, Poles on all sides of the ideological divide made an historic decision to build a society based on democracy and human rights and the rule of law. Two years later, more than 100 political parties participated in Poland's parliamentary elections, including one party called the Beer Lovers' Party. We're watching to see how much beer you drink tonight, Mr. President. *[Laughter]* All but a handful of these parties were committed to a Poland founded on freedom.

In the decades since, Poland has continued to be an example for other nations seeking to claim their democratic future. And Poland has found what America has found, that de-

mocracy and free markets are honorable and just and indispensable to national progress.

America and Poland are joined by a commitment to helping each other along freedom's road. Thomas Jefferson once wrote to Kosciuszko and praised him for being true to a single object, the freedom and happiness of man. Today, this single object defines Poland, itself, and it defines the partnership between Poland and America. Together, we can and we will complete the unification of Europe. We will reach out to Russia and Ukraine, and we will win the war against terror.

Poland and America share a vision that is stronger than intolerance and hatred and bigotry. It is a vision of a world that is free and just, a world that respects people's dignity and rewards their enterprise and creativity.

Mr. President, let us toast to friendship between our countries. Tonight the old Polish saying has new meaning in a new century: For your freedom and ours.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:37 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Jolanta Kwasniewska, wife of President Kwasniewski. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Kwasniewski.

## Remarks to the Polish American Community in Rochester, Michigan

July 18, 2002

**The President.** Thank you very much.

So I was telling the President of Poland, I said, "There's a lot of smart people in Washington, but not all the brains are in Washington. Why don't we get on the airplane and come out and see some other smart Americans?" It's an honor to be here. I want to thank you for coming. I appreciate the warm hospitality that you've shown me and my friend.

We had a heck of a dinner last night. It was a black-tie dinner, and I had the honor of sitting next to the First Lady of Poland. And it dawned on me after the dinner that he and I share a lot, starting with the fact that we both married really well. *[Laughter]* The First Lady of Poland sends her best, and

so does the First Lady of America, my great wife, Laura Bush.

I appreciate John and Michelle Engler. John mentioned that she is of Polish heritage. He forgot to say she's got some Texas blood in her, too. But I'm proud to call John and Michelle friends. I'm happy that Aleksander got to meet my friends here who have been doing such a fine job of running this State.

I want to thank Gary Russi, the host, the president of Oakland University. I know it's not easy to host an entourage, choppers and all the things that fly in here. But I want to thank you for providing this fantastic forum, a chance for us to talk about our mutual visions for a peaceful world. So I want to thank all those who helped here at Oakland to make this a successful trip.

I want to thank the Lalewicz. That would be the lady—the fantastic young lady who sang “The Star-Spangled Banner” and her brother, Peter. I told the President he's going to see a budding star singing our national anthems, and she didn't let us down. I want to thank you, Olivia, very much for being here.

I appreciate some of the good folks who work here in Michigan—the Lieutenant Governor, Dick Posthumus, is here. Candice Miller is supposed to be here somewhere. I appreciate Candice—is the Michigan secretary of state.

I want to thank the Polish delegation. We've got a lot of the leadership who are involved in the President's Government. They've traveled with us from Washington today. I want to thank you all for coming. I'm honored you're here.

Our Ambassador from Poland is here, Chris Hill. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador. You're doing a fine job. I appreciate you coming.

I mean, when the President of Poland shows up, all the officials show up. We've got not only Federal officials and State officials, we've got L. Brooks Patterson, the Oakland County executive. We've got the mayor of Detroit. Mayor Kilpatrick, thank you for coming. I want to thank the mayor of Rochester for being here as well. Mr. Mayor, thank you for coming. I'm honored you're here, and the mayor of Rochester Hills is here as well.

And I want to thank you all for coming. It's an honor that you're here. We're thrilled you're here. It gives us a chance to talk about our vision for a peaceful world. There's a lot of war talk these days, as there should be, but it's all aimed at making sure the world is peaceful, peaceful not only for children here in America but peaceful for children in Poland as well. And it's kind of you all to give us a chance to come and to visit.

When we landed our chopper out there on the playing fields—or some kind of field—[laughter]—I know it was a field—[laughter]—we were met by two really fine Americans, Helen Suchara and Erin Chekal. Now they're here, and I want them to stand up here in a minute. But I want to describe to you their hearts. First, you'll see that Helen has lived a full life. But in the early nineties, she decided to go to Poland as a Peace Corps volunteer. She decided to take American values to her—the homeland of her ancestry, to talk about democracy and freedom, those very same values which the country embraces today. And Erin Chekal wanted to do the same thing. And so we've got two generations of Americans with us today who have volunteered their time to make not only America a better place but to help the country they love, Poland, become a better place. And I want you to welcome them. Thank you all for coming. [Applause]

Mr. President, the strength of our Nation is not our balance sheet; it's not our military. The strength of our Nation is the American people. The American people are generous people. They're kind people. They're courageous people. The true strength of America lies in the hearts and souls of Americans from all walks of life.

It has been such an honor to welcome the President here to America. Laura and I went to Warsaw, by the way, as his guest and had a fantastic experience. We were—the people were great, and it was a wonderful time for us to begin a friendship that's an important friendship today.

And the friendship, though, between Poland and America goes back a long way. As Governor Engler mentioned, Poles fought for American independence, and in the century past, we had the privilege and honor of

helping Poland fight for her independence. We had the honor of repaying the favor, because we love freedom, and so do the Polish people. America is proud to call Poland a friend, a partner, and an ally.

The people of Poland and the people of America share strong bonds of kinship and culture and commerce. The sons and daughters of Poland, many of whom I'm pleased we have here today, Mr. President, have been enriching America throughout our entire history. [Applause] There's one or two sons here. Listen, they've contributed to every walk of life, Jan Karski, Ed Muskie, Bronko Nagurski. We had dinner last night with one, a great Polish American, Stan Musial. All throughout our society, Polish Americans have made a tremendous contribution, Mr. President, and we're proud of that contribution. As a matter of fact, it's the contributions from people from all walks of life which make America not only a unique nation but a strong nation.

Poland has given a lot to America, and Poland has given a lot to the world. For 50 years, the people of Poland waged an heroic struggle for freedom. For 50 years, they set an example of what it means to love freedom. It was Polish courage and conscience that caused an evil empire to fear freedom and eventually bring down the evil empire.

And Poland has given the world one of the greatest figures of the last century. The moral authority and iron integrity of a Polish Pope have stirred the forces of freedom throughout the world. Everyone who believes in human rights and human life and human dignity owes a great debt to Pope John Paul II. And I want to thank one of his most distinguished representatives here in America, His Eminence Cardinal Maida, for being with us today as well.

Poland is an example to all of Europe. After all, it's a strong democracy with a market economy. It's a force for stability within Europe, and it's a nation prepared to play an influential role on the world stage.

Five years ago, the United States proudly supported Poland's bid to join NATO. This year, Poland and the United States will meet in Prague and support NATO membership for all of Europe's democracies ready to share in NATO's responsibilities.

In this age, in this era, America needs allies who share the same views about the world's opportunities. We need allies who understand the world's dangers. When America was attacked, NATO and Poland, led by this good man, immediately declared that an attack on one of us was an attack on all of us. You need to know that Poland is standing strong—I mean, strong—alongside America in the war on global terror.

Poland has—Poland—

**Audience members.** Stop the war! Stop the war! Stop the war!

**The President.** Poland has deployed troops to Afghanistan, has shared intelligence, and cracked down on terrorist financing. You need to know that the United States of America will track the terrorists down, one by one, and bring them to justice. [Applause] Thank you all.

Mr. President, the people of America are deeply grateful for your support and the support of the people of Poland. See, a lot of people in our country, and perhaps yours, wonder why would, why would an enemy—by the way, nothing bunch of—nothing but a bunch of coldblooded killers—strike America. And Mr. President, it's because they fear freedom. See, we believe in freedom of speech. We believe in freedom of the press. Like you, we love freedom, and if somebody attacks our freedoms, we'll stand tough and strong.

No, we're bound together in this war on terror. This President understands what I know, that we've entered a new type of war. We're hunting down people that will hide in a cave but send youngsters to their death—that's what they'll do. These are international criminals, and we're going to treat them like international criminals. We're going to get them on the run, and we're going to keep them on the run until we bring them to justice.

We owe it to history; we owe it to our children and our grandchildren. Anytime anybody wants to affect the freedom of our people, they must pay a price, not because we seek revenge but because we seek justice.

I was explaining to the President yesterday that I've submitted a mighty hefty increase in our defense spending. I did so because anytime an American President commits one

of our troops into battle or into harm's way, that person deserves the best training, the best pay, the best equipment possible. And Mr. President, this significant increase, the largest since Ronald Reagan was the President, shows the world, shows our friends, and as importantly, shows the enemy that the United States is a determined, resolved nation. It doesn't matter how long it takes. There are no calendars on our desks in Washington that say, by such and such a moment we've got to quit. That's not how we think, Mr. President, and you know that. The increase in the defense budget says that we're in this for the long haul, that we owe it to a lot of people to be patient and resolved.

Mr. President, I'm telling you that this country is united. We understand this isn't a Republican war, a Democratic war. This is a war that will test the soul and conscience and strength of the American people. And Mr. President, America will meet the test.

We are united. We're a united country, and we're united with Poland. We will not permit the future to be defined by fear and chaos and hatred. We will define a future of greater development of democracy and a future of tolerance. We'll stand together, and, make no mistake about it, we will defeat global terror.

When I spoke to the faculty and students at Warsaw University last year, I said the question no longer is what others can do for Poland, but what America, Poland, and all of Europe can do for the rest of the world. Working together, we will build greater prosperity and greater hope to people of our respective nations and people all across the globe.

Poland has a leader it can trust. He's a good man. He's a man I'm proud to call friend. I'm proud to bring him to the great State of Michigan. I'm proud to introduce him to you. Ladies and gentlemen, President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:05 a.m. in the Athletics Center at Oakland University. In his remarks, he referred to President Aleksander Kwasniewski of Poland, and his wife, Jolanta Kwasniewska; Gov. John Engler of Michigan, and his wife, Michelle; Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick of Detroit, Mayor William A. Johnson, Jr., of Rochester; Mayor Pat Somerville of Rochester Hills;

baseball Hall of Fame member Stanley F. Musial; and Adam Cardinal Maida, Archbishop of Detroit. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of President Kwasniewski.

### Remarks at a Luncheon With Polish American Leaders in Troy, Michigan July 18, 2002

**The President.** Thank you all very much. Thanks for your warm welcome. My fellow club members—[laughter]—thank you all for—

[At this point, there was a disruption in the audience.]

**The President.** Yes, sir, thanks. We—the President and I were just in the neighborhood, looking for a meal. [Laughter] So I just said, “Why don't we stop over? I'm a member of a club in the area.” [Laughter] Stan, thanks for remembering my membership, and thanks for feeding us.

I appreciate you all coming out to greet my friend and a friend of America, the President of Poland, a fine leader and a fine gentleman.

I want to thank Stan and Sylvia. I want to thank all the folks who put on the dinner or—we call it “dinner” in Texas—lunch here in Michigan. And I want to thank my fellow Americans for coming out to say hello.

We had a wonderful dinner last night in Washington. We all wore our black ties. I rented mine right around the corner. [Laughter] But it was a wonderful occasion. And as much as I loved it last night, I was really looking forward to coming with the President here to Michigan, because there's a lot of great—there's a lot of great Americans who happen to be from Polish descent living here, and I thought it was a perfect place for him to come.

I want to thank Cardinal Maida for coming. He was—he came to dinner last night with us, and he jumped on Air Force One. We found plenty of room for him. [Laughter] But he's such a—such a dignified human being, and I'm proud to call him friend. And thank you for your leadership, sir.

I want to thank the Englers, our friends the Englers. The great Governor and the first