



**Summary of Remarks from roundtable discussion**

***The Polish Transition: Lessons for Cuba***

*With a Keynote Address by  
President Lech Walesa*

***Roundtable discussion held at***

The Olga and Carlos Saladrigas Hall at Casa Bacardi  
Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies  
University of Miami  
Coral Gables, Florida

***Keynote Address held at***

University of Miami Bank United Center  
Coral Gables, Florida

***On***

**Monday, February 13, 2006**

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**The Cuba Transition Project is funded by the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of Award EDG-AA-00-02-00007-00. The roundtable discussion and this publication are made possible in part through support provided by USAID. The opinions expressed are those of the participants and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID.**

## Opening Remarks

### Adolfo Franco

I want to thank University of Miami President, Donna Shalala, and Professor Jaime Suchlicki, the Director of the Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies for inviting me here today for this exciting seminar on the Polish transition and its lessons for Cuba, and to attend the keynote address tonight by the distinguished Polish Nobel Prize laureate and human rights activist, Lech Walesa.

It is always a pleasure for me to return to the University of Miami and Casa Bacardi, but today's events are very special, because they give hope to all of us and to the Cuban people.

I remember the moment when American television first brought us the pictures of Lech Walesa climbing over the fence to join his fellow shipyard workers in Gdansk, Poland, igniting the fire of freedom that Polish Solidarity brought to Poland and Eastern Europe and the rest of the Soviet bloc, and to all people everywhere who suffered under communist tyranny.

The Polish people showed the world the surest way to freedom. They showed how peaceful, courageous, non-violent civic action can defeat the most ruthless totalitarian systems the world has ever known.

The Polish example lives with us yet today, after the collapse of the Soviet Union and the return of democracy to Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Estonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Russia and the Ukraine.

The Polish example remains a shining light for the still oppressed people of China, Vietnam, North Korea, Iran, and yes, above all, for the people of Cuba.

Lech Walesa recently spoke by teleconference with many of Cuba's human rights activists. He told them to prepare for the collapse of communist rule. He told them the Cuban people would soon liberate themselves from fear and discouragement, and even despair, and they must be ready for the task of peacefully rebuilding democratic institutions, with full respect for human rights, and for laying the foundations for a just and prosperous economy.

President Bush has called on the U.S. Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, to reconvene the Presidential Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba to make sure the U.S. Government will be fully prepared to offer assistance to a post-Castro transition government in Cuba.

USAID, the agency I represent – the United States Agency for International Development – is an active participant in the work of the Commission, and I can pledge to you today we will be ready to respond, in coordination with the State Department, the

rest of the United States government, the U.S. private sector and the international community, if a Cuban transition government asks us for humanitarian relief assistance, in helping with the planning and implementation of free and fair multi-party elections.

We will be prepared, if asked, to help with the drafting of a new Cuban constitution, the establishment of an independent judiciary, the drafting of laws to protect freedom of the press, private property, freedom of speech, and all the elements of a free society.

We will be prepared to help with the reconstruction of Cuban education, health, water and sanitation systems, and the building of a strong foundation for free market, private sector-led economic growth and employment.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Polish people have given the Cuban people and all of the rest of us hope for the future. They have shown what is possible under the most severe and discouraging conditions.

As we transmit the Polish experience to the Cuban people, God willing, the Cuban people will take heart, build solidarity with their own human rights movement and hasten the end of communist rule in Cuba.

## **Introduction**

### **Jaime Suchlicki**

We have seen the growing role of the military in Cuban society, the control that the military exercises over the economy, the growing power of Raul Castro in running Cuba. So, instead of transition, Cuba is now in the mode of succession. Furthermore, Fidel Castro has engaged, in the past two years, in a cultural revolution in Cuba not unlike the Cultural Revolution in which Mao engaged in China prior to his disappearance: eliminating opposition, reemphasizing Marxist-Leninist values, reemphasizing anti-Americanism and trying to leave a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate, for his brother and for the military to continue running Cuba indefinitely into the future.

We are concerned about this trend, and we had an exercise here to highlight the possibility that this scenario is the most likely in the future of Cuba rather than the scenario of total transition, total collapse and total change. We do not see in Cuba what we saw in Poland: a strong labor movement. We do not see a strong church with great influence. We do not see a United States determined to transform Cuban society. We do not see a U.S. government truly interested, like the government of the United States during the 1980's [that was] interested in change. And we do not see a government in Cuba willing to compromise, willing to change, willing to sit down with the dissidents and the opposition.

So despite the bravery of some Cubans that have faced the opposition of the regime, and imprisonment at the hands of that regime, we see the Cubans waiting for the

day that Fidel Castro dies in the hope that this will bring about a transition in Cuba. I am personally concerned that we are being set up for a failure and a disappointment because the strength of the institutions in Cuba, the strength of the military, and the measures that Fidel Castro has been taking in the last year or year and a half may prevent the collapse of the system, and may, at least for a while, and we do not know how long, guarantee the continuation of the existing structure and the existing dictatorship in Cuba.

Poland offers significant ideas, significant suggestions, and we have asked two of our distinguished panelists to look at the pre-collapse era and then look at what Poland faced after the collapse of Communism. So first, I would like to turn the microphone over to Janusz Bugajski, who has studied the collapse of Communism and the reasons why Poland developed the way it developed. After hearing his comments, we will turn to Dr. Marek Chodakiewicz, and then to Antonio Jorge for comments. Finally we will open up to your comments and questions. Mr. Bugajski.

## **Roundtable Discussion**

### **Janusz Bugajski**

The political earthquake that shook Central-Eastern Europe in 1989 marked both the end of the communist one-party state and the beginning of a comprehensive transformation of the region's political and economic structure as well as its strategic position. The catalyst for this regional transformation was Poland itself, which already in 1980 had developed the fundamental ingredients for what I will call “demolition” (democratic revolution). In assessing the catalysts for “demolition” it is important to examine both the macro level and the micro level – the external factors and the internal factors

#### *External Factors*

Soviet rule crumbled in Eastern Europe in 1989-1990 because the binding principles of the international Communist system had expired. As former Lithuanian President Vitautas Landsbergis once remarked, it was not so much that Moscow initiated a thaw in the region, but the fact that “the refrigerator finally broke down.” Moscow refused to admit that Russia lost the Cold War and had little choice but to evacuate its military forces and enable satellite states to restore their independence. According to Soviet spokesmen, Secretary-General Mikhail Gorbachev “liberated” the region in order to encourage political cooperation with the West. However, such a policy was not implemented because of an overnight conversion to anti-imperialism or democratic rule but because of a sober calculation that the burdens of empire had become too onerous. Moscow could no longer impose its will by force as this was increasingly costly and could lead to a Soviet implosion.

There were several causes for the sudden disintegration of the Soviet bloc. Soviet Communism, both as an ideology and a system of rule, was politically defunct and economically exhausted. Soviet “stagnation” did not begin under Gorbachev but could be traced to the Brezhnev years from the 1970s onwards. Moscow’s global power was an illusion that could not be sustained without major economic growth that the system was incapable of generating. The Gorbachev leadership eventually grasped the necessity for radical reform to avert an economic meltdown and potential social revolution. However, the Soviet leader was convinced that he could salvage both the essence of the system and the USSR itself through economic restructuring. He was proved patently wrong because of the aspirations and determination of Polish and other Central European citizens and democrats.

### *Internal Factors*

Poland’s “demolition” developed under the receding threat of outside military intervention. It was generated by widespread public involvement and directed by political actors who sought a smooth transition from monism to pluralism. In many respects, this was the first “negotiated revolution” whose leaders capitalized on profound social discontent to press for a new political arrangement while avoiding mass arrests or purges of the outgoing regimes, and it provided an important example for the rest of the region.

An examination of systemic transition should not emphasize “objective” conditions alone, whether social or economic, while neglecting or underestimating more immediate and highly pertinent political elements. It is misleading to simply focus on the economic crisis in “real socialist” societies as the primary determinant of the collapse of Communist rule. The centralized East European economies had been in “crisis” for several years, driven by low industrial productivity, high-energy consumption, perpetual consumer shortages, and non-competitiveness in world markets. Communist rulers largely managed to cushion the working public from the full effects of economic failure either by borrowing from the West, preserving the COMECON trading network for poor quality domestic products, increasing the money supply, or by tolerating and encouraging the expansion of the black market to meet public demands. A full-blown crisis could quite possibly have been avoided for several more years.

In considering the full array of catalysts for “demolition,” several political and psychological factors play a critical role:

First, the building blocks of a pluralistic political and societal structure were already in place in Poland during the 1980s. This included Solidarity, which had developed into a national movement of resistance to communism although forced to operate underground after the imposition of martial law, the Catholic Church which had consistently provided a shelter for social, cultural, intellectual, and organizational

autonomy, a largely autonomous private farming sector, and critical intellectual and worker leaders who refused to accept the communist monopoly and were devising new methods of peaceful struggle to mobilize the citizenry.

Second, there was an evident loss of regime confidence by the late 1980s, either that the political *status quo* could be preserved for much longer or that the use of force and repression could effectively prolong communist rule and not backfire against the government. In estimating costs and benefits, Poland's key communist leaders were not convinced that a violent crackdown would either be supported by Moscow, effectively implemented by local military and police commanders, or ensure prolonged social tranquility. After all, the effects of martial law in stifling social opposition proved short-lived, and it failed to stimulate any meaningful economic recovery or acceptable political reform.

Third, disputes and conflicts were evident within the communist party and government leadership regarding appropriate policy responses to social and political pressures. Differences were evident between hard-line advocates of repression and reformists calculating that some compromises with leaders of the opposition were essential to preserve social stability and improve the country's economic prospects. Government vacillation and compromises in turn encouraged opposition activists to press for more extensive concessions. Once a dialogue was initiated between the regime and local dissidents, prospects for a violent showdown receded. In addition, some sectors of the ruling elite, whether professional figures, local activists, satellite parties, or youth organizers, either declared their neutrality and withdrew support from the communist party leadership, or actively backed the democratic opposition having concluded that revolutionary change was inevitable and a retreat toward orthodoxy was improbable.

Fourth, as the communist authorities were seen to weaken and to waver, and as the tide of public protest escalated, there was a visible decline in social acquiescence. Widening sectors of the intelligentsia and urban residents increasingly scorned government policy and considered the passive "social contract," in which independent activism was forsaken in return for material security, as a dead letter.

Fifth, the strategies of opposition leaders proved highly effective in that violence was avoided and step-by-step compromises were arranged with the authorities. The offer of negotiating a gradual transformation of the political system, and the discarding of violent or vengeful rhetoric, encouraged reformist officials to accede in order to salvage some of their positions, to gain a modicum of legitimacy, and to retain a measure of political influence for their liberalizing policies. Their abandonment of monopolistic communism in turn provoked rifts and splits within the ruling elite and contributed to accelerating the revolutionary process. The dissident counter-elites were also able to organize a virtual alternative leadership and to mobilize credible and well-respected

activists willing to fill vacant government positions. This stimulus for both stability and change helped to promote a smooth and peaceful transition out of communist rule.

If a comparative approach to Poland's and Eastern Europe's revolutionary transition from monism to pluralism is to be elaborated, an array of factors common to each state and those peculiar to some of them must be explored carefully. Generalizations can be avoided if proper account is taken of: economic conditions and popular perceptions of relative material circumstances; the extent and nature of political opposition and autonomous civic activity; and the factionalism within the governing circles in their approaches to political and economic reform. The interplay of various political forces must also be examined: from the inception of the regime-opposition dialogue; through the initial political compromises; to the remodeling of key governmental institutions. At each stage, the progress of democratization was contingent upon successfully negotiated bargains and workable compromises that could pacify public opinion and satisfy dissident demands, without provoking a backlash by the retreating elite.

The breakout from communism was both a revolutionary event and part of a far-ranging transition. Indeed, it would be difficult to demarcate when the revolution or the transition was completed. Events were "revolutionary" because of the sweeping nature of the changes, entailing a wholesale transformation of key political and economic institutions, and the suddenness and speed of the communist collapse. They were also "transitional" in that revolutionary developments were part of a process of transformation between two distinct political and economic systems. However, the transition could not be easily delineated as it involved two simultaneous processes: a breakdown of existing structures and the emergence of new ones. In some instances, institutions such as parliaments and governments could be revived and given a democratic substance. In other cases, new institutions needed to be established, such as autonomous political parties or trade unions, as the machinery of pluralism.

In assessing the progress and completion of the political transformation, it would be valuable to examine the critical ingredients of the transition process: the surrender of power by the old regime at various political and administrative levels; the restructuring or rebuilding of key institutions; the democratization of the participatory process; and the expansion and consolidation of political pluralism. The transition to pluralism could not be readily mapped out in advance; the process was improvised and marked by compromises, slowdowns, and renewed bursts of activity. It also affected different political institutions with variable intensity, while political contestants attempted to benefit from the reforms either by propelling them forward or slowing down the process. Disputes revolved around the speed of transformation, the preservation of the broad coalitions that dislodged communist rule and the division of powers and responsibilities between different governmental bodies.

It is difficult to determine when a former communist system has become a stable and durable democracy. Much depends on the regularization of the formal features of democratic rule, including the periodic holding of "free and fair" general and local elections, open competition between rival political parties, and the democratization and de-politicization of governmental and public institutions. However, attention must also be paid to the extent of social participation, the degree of accountability, and the successful passage of important legislation.

The disintegration of communist rule consisted of a combination of elite concessions, oppositionist pressures, and broad public support for change. In the early stages, the revolutionary process was propelled primarily by dissident groups outside the ruling parties who through pressure and persuasion forged provisional compacts with reformist communist elements in the pursuit of free multi-party elections. These largely peaceful revolutions brought in their wake a number of democratizing and liberalizing reforms throughout most of Eastern Europe.

The most fundamental reforms included the termination of a single-party political monopoly, a respect for civil liberties and human rights, fundamental constitutional changes, increasing openness in the mass media, and the onset of judicial reform. Competitive elections were held on a regular and sometimes more frequent basis, parliaments and governments became genuine decision-making bodies, and political and organizational pluralism began to mushroom.

The first general elections throughout Central-Eastern Europe were more in the nature of a plebiscite to legitimately break the communist stranglehold on power. They were won by broad-based national fronts or anti-communist coalitions of small parties or large movements. Their ideologies and programs were often blurred and like Solidarity in Poland they invariably fissured soon after the assumption of power. These coalitions and their constituent members were poorly organized for purposes of durability, cohesion, and sustained programmatic competition. They were principally based on a single overriding issue – to remove the communists from government. Subsequent ballots and the disintegration of the broad oppositionist movements contributed to crystallizing the most significant political formations and helped to create a genuinely pluralistic political system.

### **Marek Chodakiewicz**

Not surprisingly, the postulates of such mavericks were completely ignored in 1989 when Poland gradually regained its room of maneuver domestically and internationally. Nonetheless, the nation has made enormous strides since then. Democracy is working both at the national and the grass-roots level. Law has been liberalized and so has law enforcement. The press is free. The elite are energetically

pluralistic on the political, social, cultural, and economic fields. Educational opportunities multiplied as private schools mushroomed throughout the land and contacts with the free world continued unimpeded. The economy has been reformed; the stores are full; the inflation is kept at a minimum; foreign investors regard Poland rather favorably. A member of NATO and the EU, Poland's borders seem secure.

On the face of it, then, there is nothing to complain about. However, there are negative aspects of Poland's transformation.

### *Democratic participation*

First, democratic participation is on the decline – about half of the electorate votes. This trend can be traced back to the spring of 1989, when the Communists and their left-wing collaborators in Solidarity concluded a power sharing agreement, the so-called Round Table Deal, which essentially excluded from the legitimate political scene anyone but them. Consequently, in June 1989 the Communists and Solidarity left-wingers duped the people into believing that they were taking part in a free election. In fact, it was an eminently unfair election with only 35% of all parliamentary seats opened to contest. The Round Table Deal virtually assured that those would go to the left wing collaborators. The rest of the seats were guaranteed to the Communists and their puppet proxies in the so-called “United Peasant Party” and “Democratic Party.” Thus “elected,” the parliament promptly voted to appoint Poland's erstwhile Communist dictator, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, as the nation's President.

Since the sham election failed to solve Poland's social, political, and economic problems and they blurred the line between the victims and the perpetrators, the people have increasingly stayed away from the polls. Consequently, the electorate plays the “throw the rascals out” game with a gusto, returning the ex-Communists to power every four years and throwing them out four years later. Simply, the deal of 1989 created a permanently de-stabilized system, where parliamentary majorities among the anti-Communists are well nigh impossible to achieve. Once again, only a de-Communization would have taken care of this.

### *Law and law enforcement*

Second, the liberalization of law and law enforcement has resulted in a virtual crippling of Poland's judiciary and police. Communist judges were not purged for the most part. Oftentimes involved in transgressions and even crimes of the former system, they have now scrambled to establish their “liberal” and “democratic” credentials by cuddling criminals, disregarding the rights of the victims, and, occasionally, indulging in gross corruption as well as hobnobbing with the mafia.

Although the hearts of the post-Communist judges bled over many a common criminal, in particular a fellow party kleptocrat, they failed to apply this touching sensitivity to the victims of Communism. For years, secret policemen guilty of murder

and torture went unpunished. They mocked publicly their victims and the democratic system of Poland. They even sued scholars for slander.

State TV news was censored, for example to exclude the pictures of weeping widows of the “Wujek” coal mine massacre by the Communist riot police in 1981, when the perpetrators were repeatedly acquitted. There were even problems rehabilitating the heroes of the anti-Nazi underground who also fought against the Communists and were judicially murdered by them. The victims often alleged not only ideological but also family connections between the judges handling the cases in the 1990s and their secret police predecessors who had been responsible for false imprisonment, torture, and killing of the independents in the 1940s and 1950s.

This partly explains why the police, only partly purged, has shown itself to be odiously open to laxity and corruption. At best, until recently, much of the police force appeared to be on “an Italian strike,” non-interfering with the law-breaking. Some policemen actively joined the criminal underworld, where, reportedly, many former Communist secret policemen hold sway.

Consequently, the popular perception is that the Communists are still in charge in the police and the judiciary. This was greatly reinforced by the fact that the left-Solidarity elite and the Communists simply amended the Stalin constitution of 1952 (modified in 1976) and touted it as fit for free Poland. Thus, they completely ignored legal requirements of a modern nation and the sensibilities of the victims of Communism. This was to be a stop gap measure before a “real” constitution was enacted. It took five years for the post-Communist-dominated parliament to vote in the current Constitution (April 2, 1997). Its chief purpose became to safeguard the uneven system established in 1989. In fact, the Constitution in its original form was so flawed that much of it is incompatible with EU requirements and had to be adjusted accordingly, a process still incomplete.

Of course, a different solution was available. One only had to restore the Constitution of April 1935. That would have been a superbly significant symbol, underscoring the continuity of freedom from pre-war to present day Poland. With its strong presidency, amended to fit a more democratic time, the April Constitution would have helped to usher in an era of stability into a mercurial political system.

It would have also been prudent to restore some of pre-war Poland’s laws, including, for example, the banking law which contained a proviso against check kiting, a loophole conveniently used by the ex-Communist kleptocrats and other nefarious forces to plunder the state treasury. Naturally, even the best laws fail if there are too few in the elite who believe in them. That would not have changed without a sweeping de-Communization.

### *Economy*

Third, Poland’s economic recovery has not been a uniform success story. Initially, the collapse of the state bureaucracy and laxity of tax collection inadvertently created

propitious conditions for the growth and flowering of the small and medium private sector services in particular. Soon, however, government regulations and excessive taxation undercut the organic, grassroots effort for economic self-mobilization. Many enterprises went out of business; many descended into the murky world of grey and black economy.

Further, unemployment has hovered, rather steadily, at 18 percent, for over a decade. Unemployment is also distributed unevenly regionally with some areas reporting over 30% out of work population. Hidden unemployment goes largely unreported. Such an incredibly high rate of unemployment strongly suggests that it is a structural, and not a market cycle, problem. This can be largely traced back to the fact that Poland's economic reforms were devised by ex-Communists, Marxists, and supporters of big government. Instead of the Cato institute team, the gurus arriving in Poland were such foreign experts as Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs who never hid his love for Sweden's socialist welfare state. This was hardly a paradigm to apply to Poland in its efforts to extricate itself from the coil of Sweden's most malevolent cousin -- the Stalinist welfare state. In other words, Poland's free market still suffers from too many Marxist solutions, statism in particular.

Moreover, that the dominant left-Solidarity and ex-Communist leaders agreed to this jarringly unjust and inefficient economic "solution" of structural unemployment strongly suggests that much of Poland's elite have disregarded the welfare of the people. That is excluding the conservatives and the populists, most of whom are, alas, likewise rather etatist. A de-Communization would have lessened this trend.

### *Media*

Fourth, once again as the result of the Round Table Deal, until quite recently, the media was almost an exclusive domain of the post-Communists, ex-Communists, leftists, and liberals. The monopoly was breached with the emergence of a populist Catholic newspaper, radio station, and cable TV run by the Redemptorist fathers. The newcomers are shrill because their avowed mission is to destroy the elite consensus of 1989. Independently from that, the internet has created a sphere of freedom unanticipated by the Round Table Deal. Both on the web and in the integrist Catholic media, the free market dealt a blow to ex-Communists and their supporters. Simply, the audiences voted in favor of news pluralism. A de-Communization at the outset would have leveled the media field and would have eliminated the need for any populist shrillness.

### *The Elite*

Fifth, as far as the elite is concerned, true, it is pluralistic. However, it is a skewed pluralism engineered from the above in 1989 to benefit the ex-Communists and their leftist allies. Simply, almost anyone opposing their solutions and platitudes is excluded from the mainstream and reduced to penury. There was no level playing field anywhere, least so in finances. The Communists and their collaborators took over banks and industrial enterprises in an orgy of embezzlement probably second only to Russia's kleptocratic revolution of the 1990s.

Most importantly, there was no property restitution in Poland. Instead, there was “privatization.” The chief beneficiaries of the latter were ex-Communists and their allies. Many of the properties thus privatized had belonged to the old pre-World War II elite, at home and abroad, which tends to be conservative. The old elite was left to litigate its indubitable rights in post-Communist courts, where most of the judges have been less than sympathetic to the idea that the victims of Nazi and Communist expropriations should be justly compensated.

No property restitution spells no wealthy elite inclined towards tradition and conservatism. Also because of this, but not limited to, until recently, the conservative forces remained sidelined in the media. One reason was the media distribution scheme of 1989 favoring ex-Communists and leftists. Further, shrill populism does not appeal to many conservatives and, thus, some have elected to stick to the magical circle of low circulation and low distribution scholarly periodicals, most of them irregular, if not ephemeral. Lacking access to the media and finances, the conservatives thus often fail to win the minds of the intelligentsia that are prone to liberalism purveyed by ex-Communists, ex-Communist dissidents, and other leftists. Thus, the conservatives seem to be unable to enlarge their base much beyond Catholic nationalism, verging between a rather pragmatic version and an integral one.

The conservative appeal is also limited on the free market front. And the West prefers to deal with the power brokers: the ex-Communists and their collaborators. Even when foreign capital moved in, it tended to hire, at the top, people well connected in the system, hence, once again, the post-Communists and their covert and overt allies. Nonetheless, many young, talented, and educated people found much coveted jobs with foreign companies. Because of high unemployment, however, the young tend to conform rather than rebel. Once again, the young were not permitted to set up the system, including the overall job environment but, rather, were co-opted to it. Hence, they accommodated, while failing to identify fully with the system. A de-Communization would have included a sense of participation and creation of a new system.

### *Education*

Sixth, the increase in educational opportunities failed to translate into the enhancement of the quality of education. This is reflected in the poor quality of instructions, lax controls over the intellectual output of professors and students, and general corruption. Cheating and plagiarism are rampant, as are numerous cases of bribery in exchange for passing grades and even university diplomas. There is still no full freedom of research. Some archives are still kept off limits to independent researchers; so-called “privacy laws” drafted by the Communists protect all sort of wrong doers, including murderers from the Communist secret police. All this has only recently been revealed. Almost invariably, the old academic guard has been involved in the scandals. After all, there were no purges in Poland’s universities. The old Communist professors now have camouflaged themselves as liberals and sell their Marxist drivel in the liberal garb. Further, the old academic guard has cloned itself and has continued to appoint

oftentimes mediocrities. After all, university salaries are relatively low and the most brilliant graduates move into the job market where there is more freedom and more money. This concerns all schools, including the new ones, across the board and each and every single university department in Poland. Once again, a de-Communization would have addressed a majority of problems on the education field.

### *Security*

Seventh, as far as Poland's security is concerned, things are not as rosy as they appear to be. Once again, the ex-Communists strenuously opposed Poland's accession to NATO. Later, they pragmatically surfed with the wave and Poland was admitted. However, until recently, the post-Communists were sleeping soundly because most senior officers were trained by the Soviets and had been Communist party members. Young officers trained in the West, including the US, often saw their careers sidelined, if not outright torpedoed. Similarly, the secret services, both civilian and military, are largely depositories of post-Communist dinosaurs trained by the KGB. Their nefarious and illegal activities, including maintaining contacts with the ex-KGB and their successors, gun-running, and manipulating the economy, have been well documented. In particular, Poland's energy sector is afflicted by their heavy hand joined in a loving embrace with the post-Communist politicians at home and post-Soviet forces abroad. The proposals to appoint, for symbolic reasons, once again, to denote discontinuity between totalitarian and new Poland, General Stanisław Maczek, the senior-most surviving commander of the Polish-Armed-Forces-in-Exile were dismissed with cynical laughter. (Similarly, the efforts to enlist other experts, including pre-war and war time diplomats, were met with jeering despite their obvious utility for the state). Further, there are countless agents, mostly former agents, of the Communist secret police in the media, Church, academia, parliament, and state institutions. So far they have used their pulpits, often invoking Christian charity and always taking the lofty and impartial tones of sublime morality, to preach against vetting of the agents and de-Communizing the nation. However, only a thorough de-Communization would alleviate the problem of Poland's lack of security.

Last but not least, what Poland needs is moral rejuvenation. Strangely, in the land of the late Pope, moral relativism is the weapon which worked best to benefit the Communists and their allies. The ambiguity of the deal of spring 1989, the defiled sacredness of the June 1989 parliamentary "election", and the stupendous financial success of the Communists and their collaborators is a sin crying to heaven for vengeance. God will take of his own business to be sure. However, a thorough de-Communization, within the limits of the law, is long overdue in Poland.

### *Continuity or Discontinuity*

To summarize, when Poland regained her independence after 1989, the new state was for the most part a legal continuation of the former "people's republic." Next, the old Communists solidified their grip on banks, media outlets, and major industrial enterprises, privatizing them in a kleptocratic orgy of acquisition. Moreover, a nefarious nexus was established between the new "capitalist" class and the Communist secret

police, some of whom continued to work in the secret services of democratic Poland, while others joined the business world or the mafia. Last but not least, the Communists soon regrouped, repainted themselves as “social democrats,” and became one of the most important political parties in the parliament, electing a majority and a President within four years. Their funding initially came from the KGB but soon the local kleptocrats started chipping in generously to shore up their erstwhile comrades. Thus, although they nominally paid lip service to democracy and freedom, the former beneficiaries of the Communist dictatorship have remained in power in all but name. They are the real winners of the transformation process. As a result of the deal of 1989, the elementary sense of fairness and justice is missing from Poland’s political, social, cultural, and economic system.

### *Evolution or Counterrevolution*

This sorry state of affairs had much to do with the evolutionary manner of restoring freedom in Poland. In particular, it reflected the power sharing arrangement the Communists concluded with leftist dissidents in the spring of 1989. And it should not have been so. To negotiate with the Communists – yes. To sacrifice the most cherished principle of democracy – free and unfettered elections - at the altar of expediency augured badly for Poland. After all, the tyrants have no right to enjoy the benefits of freedom after terrorizing the nation for half a century. Freedom should not be just camouflage for their continuing ascendancy in the world of politics and economy.

No agreement with the Communists should have been kept as religiously as the Round Table Deal was. First, in Western tradition, no contract concluded under duress is valid, and the Communists were the party with a monopoly on power and terror. Second, the Communist party self-dissolved in winter 1990 and their Soviet overlords in fall 1991. Hence, no contract remains valid if one party to the agreement ceases to exist.

Nonetheless, the leftist collaborators stuck to the letter of the Round Table Deal long after it became a dead letter. Why? Because their democratic declarations notwithstanding, the leftist collaborators found it convenient to maintain the system. That helped them enrich themselves and shore up their own position in the body politics. Further, to prevent the rise of the Right, it was expedient to keep the Communists strong and to embark upon formal and informal coalitions with them.

### *The West Looks On*

This colossal fraud could not have been perpetrated without active Western assistance. In particular, the US Department of State and US Embassy in Warsaw played nefarious roles in this arrangement. The Americans robustly encouraged the deal between the Communists and their leftist collaborators and guaranteed its perpetuation. The short term result was an apparent abdication of power by the Kremlin’s proxies in Warsaw. The long term result was the re-entrenchment of the former Communists in political and economic power.

To put it in symbolic terms that an average American would understand: How many would rejoice if General Augusto Pinochet was reappointed as the Head of the Armed Forces of Chile by the leftist government in power? Why stand idly by, nay, applaud, like many a Western intellectual has done, for example Timothy Garton Ash, who has recently praised Poland's 1989 electoral farce as "semi-free elections"? Would Garton Ash and his ilk condone a similar deal with the Nazis? Or, say, between the Democrats and Republicans in the US? In any event, the Communists can now enjoy equal protection before the law, which is what their victims were deprived of for 50 years.

### *A Sham Democracy*

Yet, the deal came to pass and its specter is still haunting Poland seventeen years later. That is why the nation has expended so much of its energy to restore its past and penetrate into the Communist archives, secret police depositories in particular.

It is not to say that one should not have negotiated with the Communists. With an eye on Gorbachev's unintended shenanigans, it was obvious that something was afoot. However, to finalize any deal was to play into the hands of the Communists. And Jaruzelski and his comrades did not have any democratic solutions in mind. Instead, they wanted to play the game the way it was dealt between 1944 and 1947.

At the time, the Communists and their allies co-opted the collaborationist part of the independent camp, mostly leftist and liberal, to form a sham coalition government. They held fake elections. Next, gradually, having exterminated the freedom fighters in the forests and the political underground, they turned against the non-Communist leftists and liberals, who were crushed soon in what was a classic example of the infamous "salami tactics." Collectivization, mass arrests, labor camps, jails, and the pacification of the countryside followed. It was coupled with the usual Marxist repression in media and academia. At least until 1949, most Western experts were duped, thinking that Stalin's "the people's democracies" were substantially better off in terms of freedom than those nations had been before the Second World War.

That was precisely the paradigm that the Communists attempted to recreate in 1989. They held firm to the secret police and the military as well as the financial and industrial infrastructure of the state. They falsified the elections of June 1989. Only the implosion of the Soviet Union prevented Jaruzelski and his team from reassuming full power without the liberal disguise.

### *A Lesson for Cuba*

How does all this translate into Cuba's terrible predicament? It is obvious that a negotiated settlement is favorable. However, freedom does not come free. Now that the nuclear threat is out of the picture, a military invasion by the émigrés is feasible, although not probable. Another option is a revolution in Cuba itself. It can be violent and, if

successful, there will be precious few Communists left with which to negotiate. It can also be non-violent, which is preferable of course.

Any which way it becomes free, Cuba needs the émigré expertise. Having spent their lives in a free country, they are better equipped intellectually to understand certain general processes of development and reconstruction than the Cubans who have had the misfortune of spending their entire lives under totalitarianism. The émigrés will have to help prepare a democratic constitution for the island. They will have to draft laws, including the crucial law on de-Communization, symbolically and practically spelling the end of totalitarian violence. They will have to provide the financial backing and expertise for restarting Cuba's economy. The businessmen among them will have to control the natural tendency of corporations to hire top people with ties to the past.

The ex-Communists should wield no power whatsoever in politics, culture, or economy. Instead, ex-Communists can be utilized as technical experts at most. There should be a strenuous effort to hire true dissidents (who should be vetted to determine whether they had collaborated with the Communist secret police), if only to symbolic posts. The local Cubans should feel that new Cuba is theirs and not a foreign transplant, even if the "foreigners" are Cubans from Miami. Remember, pride is easy to offend.

Further, private and church charities should be supported and encouraged to build civil society. Other beneficial grassroots initiatives should be supported in education, sports, and social welfare.

Law must be kept. The guilty, Communist secret policemen in particular, should be promptly brought to justice. The universities should be purged and foreign Marxists and leftists discouraged from imposing more totalitarianism on Cuba in a liberal guise. Cuban émigrés should eschew marshalling the resources of the US federal government for the most part, except as far as the reforms of the military and secret services are concerned. Otherwise, US federal involvement spells the advent of high-jacking Cuba by political correctness, the State Department's kind in particular. However, federal scholarships and grants should be accepted for Cuban students to study abroad. On the other hand, Cuban émigré foundations and leading families ought to endow scholarships for that purpose and to award the best students in Cuba. Also, private foundations should select scholars with a track record most favorable to Cuba's fight for freedom and fund their teaching stints at Cuba's universities.

There is truly much to do. When freedom comes, let the Cubans and their friends be not unprepared. *Viva Cuba libre!*

### **Antonio Jorge**

I will comment on the presentations of Mr. Bugajski and Professor Chodakiewicz. First, with respect to the first speaker, obviously it was a very interesting presentation. He gave us those sufficient reasons to explain, in terms of external and internal factors and macro and micro factors, why what happened had to happen. In a certain sense it was a

retrospective vision of history. In another sense it was an almost Hegelian vision in its exhaustive explanation of factors which account for what truly occurred. So, it was very interesting from an intellectual standpoint.

Also, he stressed the uniqueness of the Polish process, and I think that uniqueness was further underlined by the documentary we saw and the historical events that transpired in the case of Poland and how they slowly, gradually led to the final outcome at the end of the 1980s and early 1990s.

Then he ended with an intriguing question, an extremely interesting question, about Cuba: how the transition would come about in Cuba and what the characteristics of that process would be. He leaves that question for us to ponder. I'll try to address that very briefly myself, as Professor Suchlicki has already indicated his own thoughts on the matter.

Afterwards, we had the presentation by Professor Chodakiewicz, which was, I think, much more normative and value-loaded. In other words, he clearly has a position of his own, and he very vigorously declares what his position is and what his value judgments are. That is a normative question, it is a subjective question, it is an ethical question and moral question if you want, there are political judgments, moral judgments, and I should say outright that I share that position of his.

But now, in a more objective plane, I think that two things are important to stress. First, each transition process is unique. I have been studying transition since 1989, I have published on the matter, and I also have taught a course on transition since 1989 at Florida International University (FIU). I am somewhat familiar with the transition process of Central and Eastern European countries and the republics of the former Soviet Union, and I should say that each case is different. So, consequently, we are not to mimic mechanically any transition process in the case of Cuba because that will not work. Cuba itself is a very different kind of society from Central European or Eastern European society or any of the republics of the former Soviet Union. There are geopolitical and geoeconomic reasons in the case of Cuba that make Cuba a very singular case and that has to be stressed from the very beginning.

Nonetheless, there are some similarities; those similarities are mainly those that pertain to the structural characteristics of a social and economic system. There are some elements which all transitions have more or less in common, and we can all learn from the successes and failures of those elements. I will refer to some of the, in my view, successes of the Polish transition which should be underlined. It is the country that has grown the most in Eastern Europe. In fact, by 1989 Poland was the only nation in the former Socialist Bloc whose level of gross domestic product (GDP) was above what it had been previous to the transition. At present, in accordance with all growth indexes, the Polish economy stands at 150-160 in its GDP index, relative to its position back in 1989, much more ahead than the Czech Republic, not to speak of even Hungary or those countries to the East like Romania and Bulgaria. So Poland has been very successful, extremely successful in effecting this transition.

But let me refer to those elements which I think are common, those commonalities that we may profit from in the case of Cuba. First of all, I think that all of the Eastern European countries, including Poland in this case, share a very fundamental condition: despite the gradualness of the political transition in Poland, if you take into consideration the economic reforms that began in 1956 at the time of the Hungarian Revolution and then in 1970-1971, 1981-1982, the reform processes in the middle eighties, after 1984-1985 and finally in 1989-1990, despite the element of gradualness, the fact of the matter is that at the end – and I would like to stress that – when elections took place, the Communist Party was out. In the end, the monolithic control of the Communist Party came to an end. And the same can be said about all of the other Eastern and Central European countries. There is no transition with the Communist Party in power. This is not a subjective position, this is not an ideological position, it is not a matter of personal political preference, it is a matter that has been proven time and again.

For example, there was a very well known Polish economist, as well as a professor at the University of Chicago, by the name of Oscar Lange. After the Second World War he went back to Poland and was the president of the Central Planning Board. He developed a series of models for Market Socialism attempting to change the system, reforming the socialist system without doing away with the basic characteristics of Marxist socialism – that is retaining the state ownership of the heavy industrial sector and the main industries of the nation, maintaining state control over the political system. All of those models failed, not because of lack of trying.

Hungary tried after János Kádár in 1956. Even in the Czech Republic under Husak, where the least reforms took place, some were tried. Some people do not know that after the death of Stalin, even in the Soviet Union, with the advent of Khrushchev, and from then onwards with Brezhnev, Andropov and with all of those people reforms were tried, and all of them failed. As the first speaker indicated, practically after the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s the Soviet economy stagnated. It began a gradual decline from about 1953 onwards, and by the mid-70s it had stagnated, which is one of the reasons he mentioned that contributed in the end to the fall of the Soviet Union through the incapacity of that country to continue maintaining its role as a world power.

But now, what I am trying to say, again coming back to my first point, is that there is no true transition without the Communist Party being eliminated from power. You do need a pluralistic political system in order to have a market-type economy and in order to have above all a libertarian type of system that would respect private initiative, that would respect the basic rights of the citizens. So I think this is a very important question for all of us that believe that a transition is possible with the Communists in power: that it is not possible. That has been proven by history to be totally impossible. I repeat: this is not a question of a personal preference, it is not an ideological position, it is not simply a normative position on my part. This is something that history has proven time and again.

Another point which is very interesting about the Polish transition which I think we should take into account is the gradualism of the process. Poland tried the shock therapy back in 1989-1990, especially at the behest of American economists, mainly from Harvard like Jeffrey Sachs, that proved to be a major disaster and you know that if you look at the real output, production indexes, unemployment indexes of Poland, which I have here, you will see that that proved to be a major disaster. Only after gradualist style policies were adopted, did Poland begin to recover. Gradualism is something that is really inevitable in a transition process. Any type of shock therapy instantaneous turnaround in which you change all of the elements of the social and the economic system would lead to a major disaster. As a matter of fact, it is interesting that by 1990, with the exception of Poland, and only marginally Hungary and the Czech Republic, most of those countries that had tried other avenues towards transition had not even recovered the production levels that they had back in 1989. So it is extremely important to emphasize the element of gradualism, not shock therapy.

A third point which I think is very important and that we can learn from Poland is the fact that Poland was the first country that stimulated the founding, establishment and growth of small and medium-sized enterprises. Most of the growth of the Polish economy is not due to privatized enterprises, is not due to the old inefficient enterprises that had been developed during the Communist period. Most of the growth in GDP and in employment is due to new small and medium-sized enterprises. Poland has developed more than one million small and medium-sized enterprises, and that is the secret of the Polish success. I have been advocating that we should do the same thing in Cuba, time and again.

Another point which is extremely important, and incidentally, very good Polish economists have brought this to light, among them, mainly in my view Gregor Kolodko, who I think is a great economist, explained in detail why it takes time for the financial and banking system to become functional in a socialist country. The last thing that a new market type of economy is able to develop is financial intermediaries and financial and banking systems, because those are very complicated and difficult types of institutions that need a lot of support in terms of new institutions, in terms of laws and so on and so forth. So initially in Poland, and I advocate the same thing in Cuba, we should look for financing, for state financing, of small and medium-sized enterprises through state developmental banks, like the BANCFAE in Cuba, the *Banco de Fomento Agrícola Empresarial* (Bank for Agricultural Enterprise Expansion) and the *Banco de Desarrollo Económico y Social* (Bank for Economic And Social Development) that already existed in Cuba and were highly successful prior to the Communist revolution.

Another point which is of great interest, although those that advocate a *laissez-faire* type of economic system may not be very much in agreement with, but which has kept the social peace in Poland and I would say throughout Eastern Europe, is that you have to preserve a social safety net no matter how expensive; although from a purely economic standpoint this may not prove to be the most efficient way to go. But in the end, as Janos Kornai, the great Hungarian economist has said, it is more important to preserve democracy and freedom than economic efficiency. So if you have a choice, you

had better try to maintain freedom and democracy rather than to maximize the rate of growth of the Gross Domestic Product. So it is important, therefore, not to completely liberalize the labor market: you have to give minimum wages, you have to have a good safety net, you have to have a welfare state. You cannot simply overthrow that overnight in an impoverished, popularized economy as in the case of Cuba which has an unemployment rate of probably around 28-30 percent at present. You cannot do that. So that is something which is extremely important.

Another lesson is the privatization method followed by Poland which was more efficient than that of Hungary or that of the Czech Republic, for example. I think the privatization methods that were the most effective were those of the German Democratic Republic, former East Germany and of Poland. Why? Because they made possible the emergence of a new entrepreneurial and business class. You do not want diffused ownership. You do not want to give coupons to everybody, because that is ineffective. No market system, no economy can work on that basis. You do not need millions of minority owners holding private coupons. You do need corporate restructuring, you need efficient enterprises, and you need people who know how to operate those efficient enterprises.

In other words, you need a good managerial and administrative system. And for that you have to have unified ownership. If you want to benefit workers, do it in other ways: have minimum wages, give them the opportunity to participate in the ownership of state bonds, if you want. There are many, many ways in which you can compensate your workers, but at the same time you have to have a competitive and efficient entrepreneurial class, and to that effect, I think the Polish transition was very effective because it did promote that instead of the diffused ownership patterns that you find in the case of the Czech Republic, which lead to collusion in investment firms and banks or the case of the Soviet Union which is even worse because you have created a mafia and corruption to no end.

Again, we could go on forever, but I just want to say that these two presentations have been extremely interesting. In the case of Mr. Bugajski, I think his was a very scholarly presentation in terms of its retrospective view of history and how things came to pass, which I think was extremely interesting, and in your case, Professor Chodakiewicz, I feel very much in affinity with your views and I wish that, in effect, the Cuba of the future will be just as you yourself have applied here in your presentation. Thank you.

## **Question and Answer**

**Jaime Suchlicki.** I find this discussion very interesting, illuminating, but disappointing. And my disappointment comes because I expected from this discussion for something to come out on how do you create a “Solidarity” in Cuba? How do you get the Church to become more involved, how do you get the Pope to be more engaged in the case of

Cuba? How do you get the US Government to really do things to undermine the Cuban Government, not by putting a sign in the US Interests Section, but by doing the things they did in Poland, in Czechoslovakia and in other places in the 1980s? And how do you get the international community active in trying to undermine and weaken the Castro regime? And I would like to begin the discussion by asking my three distinguished colleagues to tell me how we are going to do this.

**Antonio Jorge.** Professor Suchlicki, in response to your very provocative question, I would suggest that you have the perfect person to answer those questions right here in the audience, Mr. Adolfo Franco.

**Adolfo Franco.** Let me say just a couple of things. First of all, I agree that the presentations were very enlightening and very good. I love Jaime, but I have to disagree with him. We are doing precisely the same things in Cuba that we did in the 1980s under the Reagan Administration. And this president is committed to the same principles. We did not, my friends, invade Eastern Europe, we did not take any sanctions against Eastern Europe, even when martial law was declared in Poland in 1981. So I want to tell you that what we stood for in the 1980s, what President Reagan stood for, and Vice-President Bush, the president's father, was a peaceful transformation in Europe that we encouraged largely through information and the things you saw in the video: information through Radio Free Europe, Free Radio, the information blockade, and we work very hard in the United States to break the Cuban blockade [on information] in different ways. We stand for principles, we fight Cuba's human rights record every year in Geneva, we condemn Cuba at every single opportunity in international fora, the President refers to it constantly, we stand for an international system of law and principles. It is a sovereign country, a country we disagree with, a country which violates human rights, as does North Korea and a number of other countries throughout the world.

So I had to take exception to that. I think that our program is something that Professor Suchlicki and the University of Miami actually do every day. And that is support the efforts within Cuba through the dissemination of information, to give a voice to the dissidents in Cuba, to say what Alexander Solzhenitsyn said: the most important thing that sustained him in the gulag was the fact that the West never forgot him. But the transition, as many of the presenters have said, is taking place within Cuba. It will be directed by Cubans. It will not be directed by the Miami community, it will certainly not be directed by the bureaucracy in Washington.

So that is my response to the question. We continue, the President is convinced that a transition will happen under his watch, he has commissioned us to do whatever is possible to prepare for it. I agree with what the speakers have said about preparing for freedom, and that is exactly what the US government and certainly the Cuban community is preparing to do, is to lend that assistance when Cuba **itself** transforms itself from a totalitarian to a free society, that we are prepared to assist as Cuba moves to that responsibility being a free country. But I can tell you that our government is fully committed to it, and is applying all the pressure and all the assistance it can on a daily basis. Thank you.

**Jaime Suchlicki.** Adolfo, I thank you for your remarks. While I agree that much is being done, I think that a lot more can be done and I know that you can't publicly say that, (laughter) but in the case of Eastern Europe, we engaged in significant covert operations, the CIA involved in supporting groups, in providing funding. In the case of the plane that is supposed to be transmitting TV Martí to Cuba, it has taken three years of hard fighting, and it is still not in the air. It is coming, and I know it is coming, but as I get older maybe I get more frustrated, and I am reflecting my frustration and my unhappiness with the slowness of this administration and other administrations that haven't done anything. And this one is doing something and I know that your program is being supported by a number of things that are being done in Cuba, but I would like to see more things being done, and quicker.

**Marek Chodakiewicz.** Well, the plan is really simple, the plan is to embolden the freedom fighter. That's what it is, that's what was done under Ronald Reagan. The problem in Cuba is that Castro knows that the best way to defend himself is to attack, and Professor Suchlicki mentioned militarization which is very much akin to what happened in the late years of Ceausescu in Romania as well as what occurred in North Korea in the 1990s. Simply solidifying the grip on the population, making the controls even more totalitarian than ever seemed possible prevents the freedom fighter from being emboldened. People are forced to operate as a unit everywhere, from the village level to the city block. Also in Cuba, unlike in Poland, which is basically all Polish and Catholic, there are tensions between ethnicities, so to speak. In Poland, the Communists encouraged proletarians and peasants to assert themselves against everybody else and this was called "social promotion."

In Cuba, often the Communists use that to incite hatred among the black population against everybody else. So even though Cuban blacks live in hell, they have no food, they have no freedom, but they think "hey, we're not so bad off because we can give it to the other guy." And I think the key there is the Church, but I think you would have to resurrect Bartolomé de las Casas. Thank you.

**Q:** What would the United States do if, despite the Cuban people wanting change, Hugo Chavez comes in and supports a totalitarian regime?

**Janusz Bugajski.** If I could say something, and we had a bit of a discussion on this before the meeting. The question that I have and I don't know the politics of Latin America as well as I do my region of Central and Eastern Europe. The question that I had was: the election of Hugo Chavez and the growing power of the left through elections, what implications does this have for Cuba? Is it giving Fidel Castro and his potential successor a new lease on life? In other words, is this the return of socialism? I know that they are paying huge amounts to keep the Cuban economy afloat. What is the new constellation that we find ourselves in and how do we respond to that, not only vis-à-vis Cuba but vis-à-vis the rest of the continent? What roles can not only the Cuban-Americans play but other Latin Americans? Is there a need for some sort of anti-Communist émigré coalition of the future captive nations of Latin America if indeed

these leftist regimes not only are electoral regimes, but then say that these are the last elections, in other words they begin to consolidate some kind of permanent control over society. It's a question that I have for the future, both of the survivability of the Communist regime and the response to the new political contours of Latin America.

**Jaime Suchlicki.** Obviously, Venezuela is the one case in which you see an attempt to perpetuate himself in power, undermining the democratic institutions in Venezuela, and to answer your question, certainly the support of Venezuela will delay a transition in Cuba, and is not only providing the funding but also other mechanisms for Cuba to continue. And I am less concerned about Venezuela military intervening in Cuba, but I am concerned about the homogeneity of the Cuban military. The fact that they seem to be unified next to Raul, behind Raul, they are running the economy; they don't want to let go. How do you remove the military from the economy back into the barracks? That is a major problem. I am concerned that we are waiting for Fidel to die to see what happens, and it may not happen.

**Q:** We have seen a number of transitions today, and I know that you have said, professor, and many of us do, that you want the perfect transition for Cuba. But I will take any one of those. I will take any one over what we have now. So, shouldn't the strategy be to promote any transition, any and all transitions to see which ones the Cubans will be able to do? And then, the rest is up for debate, the rest is up to the thinking and evaluating and moving that transition into the right direction. My concern, and I would like to hear this from you, should be how to get it started, not so much on how it is going to end.

**Antonio Jorge.** I'd like to say something in regard to that but also some comments on the comments by Mr. Franco. In effect, I think that it is very important, as Jaime said, that we should think about how to bring about the transition in Cuba, how to precipitate or accelerate that. One of the things I think is most important is precisely to articulate, with the help of Cubans in Cuba and Cubans in exile, a transition plan, economic and social. That, Mr. Franco, is not being done with the active participation of Cubans in Cuba and Cubans in Miami. Why? Because the political transition will be accelerated, I believe, and will come about to the extent that you convince the Cuban people that there is a future, to the extent that you can give them a blueprint in which they will invest their hopes. In other words, the fight against Fidel Castro cannot be totally negative: we all know who Fidel Castro is; we know all of the negatives about Fidel Castro. But that doesn't tell us anything about the future of the Cuban people, you have to give them hope, you have to give them faith, you have to give them a blueprint for the future of Cuba. Cuba has to be as Martí said "*con todos y para el bien de todos*" [with all and for the good of all]. But that kind of Cuba has got to be articulated, and that is something that has to be done with the participation of Cubans in Cuba and in Miami and throughout the world. So to the extent that the administration wants to help the Cubans, I think that the administration should keep in mind that the Cubans should be very actively involved in devising their own transition. And that in itself will be a stimulant for those Army men, those military people who are surrounding Castro, if you offer those people, the rest of the people in Cuba, whomever they are, a view of what Cuba would be like in the future

without Castro. You cannot allow Castro to play on the fears of the Cuban people, and to play on the fears that if the Castro regime falls then the Cubans from Miami will come and devastate the island. You've got to have a rational view of what is going to happen. And I think that is part of the political transition and it is something that can be done, it is something which is peaceful in nature, and it doesn't involve any great risks of any sort, kind or nature. It doesn't involve the chapter three or four of Helms-Burton or the wrath of the European Union. It is nothing of that sort; it is something very rational, and in fact, an inexpensive way of promoting that. But to tell you quite frankly, and I am speaking as an individual, I am disassociating myself from any views from an institutional standpoint, I do not think, for example, this should be done without the active participation of the Cuban people.

**Q:** I want to know who financed the Solidarity movement, and how was it done?

**Janusz Bugajski.** Maybe I can take a stab at that one. It was complicated, partly it was self-financed, when they were legalized, when some of their operations were legalized at the end of 1980, they assumed the role of a trade union until the union was banned under martial law a year later. So it was through normal funding processes, fees and so forth, the assets that they acquired as the legitimate representatives of the workers. That was during the first period of legality which lasted more or less from September or October of 1980 until it was banned in 1981, and its assets were then frozen. There were social contributions, there was money coming from abroad from the émigré community. There were many channels of support; some of them were not financial. Some of it was machinery, various types of diplomatic support, moral support.

**Marek Chodakiewicz.** Union dues were one thing, but even before Solidarity, dissident intelligentsia simply pooled resources to produce newsheets. Also, émigré families would send in money and help before Solidarity in the 1970s. Most of the underground did not operate on CIA money. Those were voluntary donations by the locals, grassroots donations, as well as from the church and from the Polish Diaspora. However, the center, as far as the leadership was concerned, did have access to money that came from a variety of sources, including the AFL-CIO, so there were a variety of sources, but to reduce assistance to the dissident movement, to block operations is just silly. I don't know what is going on in Cuba, but I can tell you from my experience with secret services: they prefer bad people, because bad people are easier to control. They are not so interested in dissidents, unless the dissidents are in bed with the secret police.

**Q:** How do the Cuban people do what they did in Poland and support the dissidents in Cuba?

**Marek Chodakiewicz.** Well, again in Poland, this was in large part because of the Church, unfortunately Solidarity was hijacked to a large extent by ex-Trotskyites, ex-Stalinists, etc. As far as the grassroots are concerned, it was nationalist and Catholic. And you have to start at the grassroots.

**Janusz Bugajski.** Solidarity was a broad national movement and it included everybody from former Communists, non-Communist socialist syndicalists, all the way through to varying degrees of centrists, conservatives, liberals, very religious people to nationalists. It was a huge movement. But my question is: can Cuba create such a movement on behalf of a particular cause, which isn't just against something, everybody is against Communism, but what are they for? Who can mobilize them? Mass movement, yes, but you need leadership there as well.

**Antonio Jorge.** This was the point that I was making before. We do need to mobilize the Cuban people, not only on behalf of anti-Communist ideals; we are already there. But Cuba is a poor and pauperized society, Cuba is an under-developed society that needs restructuring, needs development, it needs transition. And we don't have that kind of a program. We do need that kind of a program. That could energize the Cuban people and give them a positive agenda, not only the negative element but the positive element. Because you have got to live for tomorrow, you need to have something for tomorrow, you need to have faith in the future, and in order to have faith, you need something to have faith in. And that is precisely what we are lacking.

**Q:** What can be done to get the Church to be more involved in Cuba?

**Marek Chodakiewicz.** The Church is a hierarchical institution, so theoretically you can mandate things from above. Clearly, the Cuban episcopate is not ready for something like this. However, without inviting a schism, you can embolden the parish priests, and start from there.

**Q:** How would the United States react to the total closing of immigration?

**Jaime Suchlicki.** The United States is in the process of looking at immigration law. They are concerned about unregulated illegal immigration. They will not tolerate illegal immigration, so we will not see another Mariel. They also would like to normalize the process between Cuba and the United States. Whether that would mean ending the "wet-foot, dry-foot" policy, or ending the migration agreement, I don't know because I don't represent the US Government, but those discussions are taking place about what to do about those issues.

There are some people that believe that if you end the "wet-foot, dry-foot" policy, if the Cubans cannot arrive in the United States, we don't have a migration accord, that the pot will boil internally in Cuba. Against that, there are those that believe that this is inhumane, cruel and that would like to get more people. This community is divided between those who arrived more recently and would like to see their family come out, and those who have been here for a long time and who want to close the door. So this is a very divisive, complicated issue with no simple answer.

Now, to try to answer your question about a rebellion in Cuba, I doubt that the United States will intervene in Cuba militarily unless there is a threat to spread out to

other places. The United States will be concerned about the Cuban community in Miami getting involved and becoming active from Miami into Cuba. There will be concerns about smuggling weapons, about out-migration. But if the pot boils in Cuba, I doubt that the United States will put the Marines in Cuba, short of knowing that Cuba has bacteriological and chemical weapons, Cuba has nuclear weapons, or Cuba represents a threat to other countries. Short of that, I doubt the United States would put Marines in Cuba.

**Janusz Bugajski.** If I could just add, it depends what happens with the revolt. When you say public revolt you mean riots, maybe looting, general frustration, but it depends what transpires. If there is violence, if there are mass murders by the regime, are there splits in the security forces? This could be the beginning of a process. It's not something I would advocate, because the ideal scenario would be what we saw in Eastern and Central Europe which was a peaceful transition, even though Communists retain certain positions or certain interests, but there is a step forward each time, though each election.

In Cuba, I couldn't tell you, is there sufficient gravity, will leadership emerge from a mass movement? If it is a much dispersed, amorphous mass movement with no counter leadership, the regime could simply play them off. Leadership is always very important, particularly in moments of crisis. So it is a question I ask the Cuban community. I don't know.

**Mariusz Brymora.** I would like to say that even though I do not agree with the opinions presented here by all the panelists, because we can argue as to whether it is better to have shock therapy or a gradual process in a transformation like the one we had in Poland, but I would like to draw your attention to three things. One of the things that I was waiting for and did not hear was the fact that prior to Solidarity, there was one thing lacking: namely the cooperation between workers and intelligentsia. And I think it was the first time in 1980 and 1981, that Solidarity, meaning workers who had power were backed by those who had the know-how, who had the knowledge, and those who, from the first moment in the shipyard, cooperated with them. And this is apart from the great role of the Pope, the great role of the Church and all the other factors that were mentioned here that we shouldn't forget.

I also think that there was a very true thing said here that every transformation is unique, and that is why I would rather advise not to follow the Polish path, because it is unique, as we said, but rather to look at it and take this and that which you can use and utilize because nobody else can repeat an identical path.

The last thing which came to my mind was that one of the things that you need to work on now is to prepare the people to sacrifice because transformation like that requires sacrifices. Poland was not ready for that; in Poland it happened overnight. For years, we fought in everyday life with hundreds of things that we were not prepared for because it required sacrifices very often and any transformation will require sacrifices from everyday people, so if you can work to prepare the people for that. Thank you.

**Antonio Jorge.** I just want to remind Mr. Brymora that at the time the transformation began to take place in Poland, your per capita income was around four thousand dollars, and in Cuba the per capita income is less than two hundred dollars. Cuba is a pauperized society. It is a society where misery is the rule. You cannot ask the Cuban people for more sacrifices. The very first thing you must do in Cuba is immediately increase the level of consumption of basic goods because you cannot ask people to go through another period of austerity, and to inaugurate policies of austerity, stabilization, the normal Washington Consensus, IMF, World Bank kind of consensus. You cannot ask that of people who receive their food from a ration card that lasts only for ten days a month and which is given at a rate of 1500 calories a day.

And in respect to shock therapy, we do know that the electric industry in Poland is still state-owned. That's gradualism. You haven't even privatized your electric grid so far. So, I just wanted to mention that in passing.

**Jaime Suchlicki.** Well, this seminar has probably raised more questions than answers. That is the function of academia, and this is the function of looking at various transitions. We did one on the Czech Republic, we've done this one on Poland and we hope to do more in the future. So I want to thank the panelists for a very stimulating afternoon.

Thank you all.

### **Keynote Address by President Lech Walesa**

Thank you very much ladies and gentlemen, but I must ask you to save some applause for later. If I have too much applause up front, it may be hard for me to earn it later.

First of all I would like to thank you for your invitation. I wonder why you would like to speak with a politician. I was convinced a couple of times to meet a politician, and I won't be convinced to meet a third. Of course, those were Communist times, so those politicians were very boring. Back then, I didn't think that I would become a politician and that people would be coming to talk to me. But I have learned to be brief and stay on topic. If the first three rows start to fall asleep, then I'll cut this speech short.

My practice in politics has been different than others, because I don't like politicians. I didn't want to be a politician, but I am a politician, and I have to like myself. I come to you from the middle of Europe. Perhaps many of you don't know where our country lies. I have come to the middle of a superpower. I have come here to tell you a few truths, because there are some spots on this earth which have been particularly touched by history. And my country is one of those places that has had particularly stressful experiences. Our geographic location was very difficult and it created many obstacles for us. And those experiences created a certain sense among the people, a sense of opportunity and a sense of threat that older people remember and younger people can read about.

Poland, prior to World War II, tried to warn the world. We were speaking about it: WWII was approaching. But the world was saying; "it's a local issue. None of us will die from Gdansk." Only when the Nazis approached Paris and bombed London did people remember Gdansk, and our warnings. But by then it was too late.

Then towards the end of the war, we were the only ones who warned the world about Communism and Stalin. We asked: "what are the great and powerful men of the world doing? You have no right to let Stalin enslave half of the world." And look what the world did to us. The world broke diplomatic relations with the legitimate government of Poland and recognized the government that was set up by Stalin. And we had to fight for fifty years to throw that yoke off. We wanted democracy, but we couldn't defend ourselves from the system. We lost all our blood and power during the war.

The Communist system was particularly unfit for Poland. When Stalin managed to control Poland, he often made jokes about it. Even Stalin said: "the Communist system fits the Poles like a saddle on a pig."

It took fifty years to fix the errors of those times. During the '40s and '50s we fought with firearms against the Communists. But those anti-Communist fighters were finished off with Soviet help. We lost. Then we started a struggle using strikes and street demonstrations. In 1968, the students protested, the workers in 1956, in 1970 and in 1976. All of those protests were subdued. I say all this because I know Cuba is fighting too, and I would like Cuba to pay attention to what we did. As you see, all those years, we kept losing our struggles. But by trial and error, we noticed from very early on what our opportunities for victory were. As early as 1980, we knew the way to overcome Communism: not individual struggles, but in trying to organize the entire nation.

The Communists were not sleeping either. The police were not sleeping. They kept breaking us apart, at every attempt to organize. At the same time, they kept telling us: "dear Poles, you have no chance of winning." People were telling us, "look, there are two hundred thousand Soviet soldiers in the Polish territory itself, and more than one million Soviet soldiers stationed around the Polish borders permanently, and around us were the Soviet nuclear missiles." So, you could say there was no chance of victory. We kept asking the great leaders of the world, we asked presidents, prime ministers and other heads of state: "is there a chance?" "Will you help us?" Yes, they did try and help us a little. But nobody and I am telling you this, nobody in the world from all of those great leaders gave us any chance of winning. They analyzed our methods of struggle using their databases; they asked their computers "is there a way to overcome the system?" And the bigger the computer, the quicker the answer came: no chance at all. Nuclear exchange is the result. It is un-doable.

I was looking for people who would be willing to struggle for twenty years. I was able to recruit ten people over twenty years. Out of forty million, only ten people, imagine that. And there were others, maybe five to ten other groups like mine in Poland as well. In other Communist countries it was even worse. In some countries, there was no resistance at all. People just did not believe there was a chance of winning. Even if we

fought, we fought for bread. We left the struggle for freedom until later. We were waiting for more favorable conditions.

But nobody expected or predicted one thing, and nobody noticed that the Second Millennium of Christianity was coming to an end and a Pole became the Pope. Nobody predicted that. And a year after becoming the Pope, he came back to Poland to visit. The entire world was looking at Poland, what was happening inside that Communist country. Almost the entire nation was participating in meetings with the Pope, including atheists, political policemen, even Communists. They learned how to make the sign of the cross. (Laughter) The Holy Father did not try to encourage us to do anything. He was not creating any conspiracies. But everyone who was listening looked around and saw how many millions of us there were. And every one of us asked a private question: “there are so many of us. We all believe. So why do we have Communism in Poland?”

So first of all, he awakened the people of Poland and not only of Poland. Those small organizations including mine, we took over during that moment. A year after the Pope left, from ten members I had ten million members. And I led those ten million on strike; negotiating and you know the rest of the history. Of course, the Soviets were paying close attention. There was an attempt to kill the Pope. And the other nations were awakening and the Soviets were panicked: “What to do, what to do to save the system?”

And somebody there remembered there was this political activist who was telling his comrades quietly that Communism needs to be reformed, otherwise it will not survive the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. So they brought that activist to Moscow, and to his surprise, they elected him to be First Secretary. He couldn't believe it himself. And then he proposed that Communism be changed through *perestroika*. He proposed these changes as a way to save Communism. And we kept telling him, “yes, keep trying to rebuild it,” because we knew very well that Communism was not reformable, so we wanted him to dig around the foundations, so that the house would fall, and that's exactly what happened. The reformer did not succeed in anything. He could not reform Communism. He could not reform the Soviet Union or the Warsaw Pact. A complete failure. But that was his success.

I tell you this not to be discouraged by any failures. If a failure goes in the right direction, it may be a success after all. And that is what happened with Gorbachev. Of course this is not just a nice story. At one point there was a group of people that realized what was happening. They realized that Communism was about to fall, and when Gorbachev went on vacation out of town, his Deputy Prime Minister and the premier of the government, they all brought out tanks on the streets and tried to use force to stop the reforms. But we were lucky enough. Yet another Russian politician was found, who climbed on top of one of those tanks, and gave a good speech and stopped the tanks. His name was Boris Yeltsin.

Ladies and gentlemen, if someone wanted to put a percentage on who contributed most to the fall of Communism, we would have to give more than 50% to the Holy Father

and 30% to Solidarity and Lech Walesa. I could claim more, but I would be risking a problem with the Man upstairs, so I'm not saying that. (Laughter.)

This whole historical story was told so that you notice, so that you can take a look whether this fits another country, another struggle. Together with the fall of Communism, an entire epoch was ended: an epoch of divisions, of blocs and systems and states. This was the epoch of land; we were fighting over land. We kept moving the borders over land, we kept subjugating nations. When Communism fell, that epoch ended also.

A new epoch has started: an epoch of intellect, of information, of internet and globalization. When I noticed that, that a new epoch has started, that it doesn't pay to fight over land, that with intellect you could buy anything in the world, then we noticed that all the instrumentation of the previous epoch: the United Nations, the European Union, NATO, all those structures were created for the previous epoch. But for this epoch, when we are not fighting over land, when we are talking about globalization, we have to propose different structures and different ways of acting. That is why we have a question facing all of us: what economic system should we use during globalization? Because as long as Communism existed there were two superpowers, two blocs. Now there is only one superpower. Those two blocs were balancing each other, they penetrated each other. The situation was somewhat predictable. But what should be the role of the sole superpower today? There is no doubt whatsoever that the United States is a superpower on economic issues, on military issues, but is the U.S. a moral and political leader? I don't think so. That type of leadership is most important. So we do have something to talk about. We have many questions, and we have to find the answers to many questions.

We are a victorious generation. We have a chance for peace in the world.

## **Question and Answer**

**Q:** If you could have an event like this one today in Cuba, what would you tell the people of Cuba?

**Lech Walesa.** Well, I have already spoken to them twice, not directly, but through television and interviews and I don't know if my advice would be helpful to Cubans, because of the specific conditions in Cuba. And within those specific conditions, you have to find a solution. I suspect that the United States are trying to preserve Cuba as a museum of Marxism. But the big difference between Cuba and other Communist countries is that Castro is one of the biggest men of our time. He is very intelligent, and he wins over Cubans using his intellect. He is being unbelievably demagogical. He keeps pulling out old arguments and he reuses them. He keeps playing that game. If you want to win, you have to talk about programs and preparations, you have to win intellectually.

For example, I haven't seen any plans for urban development of Havana after Fidel Castro falls. Plans showing what Havana will look like five years after the fall of Communism. You have to show and tell the people, specifically, you will be paid twice

as much, the world will be coming to hotels, health spas and beaches on vacation and many benefits will be seen. But you don't live like that because he doesn't let you benefit from all the things that could be happening. You must talk to them specifically.

Let's just say there are five Cubans in the United States who propose specific construction projects and development plans only for when Cuba is free. [On that platform] I would campaign against Castro and I would win. I wouldn't use force against him, I would use intellect. I am not going to give any more specific advice because I know that Castro is listening.

I remember one person asking me in an interview: "do you see any Lech Walesas in Cuba?" And I replied: "there are too many Lech Walesas in Cuba." This is part of the problem. One. Just one. For one year. After one year you can make a change, but for one year we should have one leader. One good man for one year to promote specific programs and proposals, what the country will look like, that the people will be making much more money, things they can relate to.

Miami is beautiful, but Cuba is even more beautiful. And how much money they could generate, with great environment for recreation, how great their hotels and restaurants they could have. Americans, Europeans and Asians would come from all over the world to Cuba and spend their money. Specific solutions for urban development generate plans on how people will be employed.

Castro has been warning people that after him, there will be unemployment. This is his demagoguery. He strikes at people's frustrations.

## About the Participants

(In order of presentation)

**Adolfo Franco.** Adolfo A. Franco was sworn in on January 31, 2002, as assistant administrator for Latin America and the Caribbean of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Before joining USAID, Franco served as counsel to the majority on the House International Relations Committee. From 1999 to 2000, he was president of the Inter-American Foundation (IAF), an independent government agency dedicated to the promotion of grassroots development throughout the Western Hemisphere. Before becoming IAF president, he held a number of high-level positions at the foundation, including senior vice president, director of congressional affairs, and general counsel, since 1985. In the early 1980s, he was an associate in the law firms of Cole & Corette in Washington, D.C., and Shughart, Thompson & Kilroy in Kansas City, Mo.

Franco is a member of the District of Columbia and Missouri Bar associations and the Inter-American Bar Association.

Born in Cardenas, Cuba, Franco has a bachelor's and a master's degree in history from the University of Northern Iowa and a law degree from Creighton University School of Law, where he was on the Creighton Law Review and graduated cum laude.

**Jaime Suchlicki.** Emilio Bacardi Moreau Professor of History and Director of The Institute for Cuban and Cuban-American Studies and the Cuba Transition Project at the University of Miami.

He was the founding Executive Director of the North-South Center. For the past decade he was also the editor of the prestigious *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*. He is the author of *Cuba: From Columbus to Castro* (2002), now in its fifth edition, and editor with Irving L. Horowitz of *Cuban Communism* (2003). He is also the author of *Mexico: From Montezuma to NAFTA* (2001). He is a highly regarded consultant to both the private and public sector on Cuba and Latin American affairs.

**Janusz Bugajski.** Director, New European Democracies Project and Senior Fellow Europe Program, Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Formerly a senior research analyst for Radio Free Europe in Munich, Janusz Bugajski has worked as a consultant on East European affairs for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department of Defense, the International Republican Institute (IRI), the Free Trade Union Institute (AFL-CIO), the International Research and Exchange Board (IREX), and BBC television in London. Bugajski's most recent publications include: *Cold Peace: Russia's New Imperialism* (Praeger, 2004), *Political*

*Parties of Eastern Europe: A Guide to Politics in the Post-Communist Era* (M.E. Sharpe, 2002), *Toward an Understanding of Russia: New European Perspectives* (Editor) (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 2002), *Ethnic Politics in Eastern Europe: A Guide to Nationality, Policies, Organizations, and Parties* (M.E. Sharpe, 1994) and *Nations in Turmoil: Conflict and Cooperation in Eastern Europe* (Westview, 1992 and 1995). The latter was selected by Choice as an outstanding academic book. He has published articles in numerous journals including Orbis and also contributes to various domestic and foreign newspapers. In 1994, he was selected for inclusion by Gale Research in Contemporary Authors, and in 1998, he received a Distinguished Public Service Award from the U.S. Department of State, USAID, USIA, and the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency in recognition of his contribution to international affairs. He chairs the South Central Europe (Balkans) Area Studies program for U.S. Foreign Service Officers at the Foreign Service Institute, U.S. Department of State, and has testified before various Congressional committees, including the Helsinki Commission, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the House Defense Appropriations Committee. Bugajski holds an M. Phil. in social anthropology from the London School of Economics and Political Science.

**Marek Jan Chodakiewicz.** Professor of History, The Institute of World Politics.

Formerly assistant professor of history of the Kosciuszko Chair in Polish Studies at the Miller Center of Public Affairs, University of Virginia and visiting professor of history, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles. Dr. Chodakiewicz has authored numerous works in both English and Polish. He edited the Chair's bulletin: *Nihil Novi*.

In addition to popular and scholarly articles, his publications include *The Massacre in Jedwabne, July 10, 1941: Before, During, After* (2005), *Between Nazis and Soviets: Occupation Politics in Poland, 1939-1947* (2004) and *After the Holocaust: Polish-Jewish Conflict in the Wake of World War Two* (2003). Dr. Chodakiewicz co-edited *Poland's Transformation: A Work in Progress* (2003) and *Spanish Carlism and Polish Nationalism: Borderlands of Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (2003). He translated and edited the correspondence of the Ulam family of Lwów to the mathematician Stanislaw Ulam at Harvard from 1936 until after the Second World War. In 2003 Dr. Chodakiewicz won Poland's Jozef Mackiewicz Literary Award for his *Ejszyszki: The Background of Events, and Epilogue of Polish-Jewish Relations in the Eastern Borderlands, 1944-45*. In 2004 he co-edited a selection of Ronald Reagan's speeches published as *My Vision of America* in Polish. Dr. Chodakiewicz earned a B.A. from San Francisco State University in 1988 and an M. Phil. in 1992 and a Ph.D. in 2001 from Columbia University.

**Lech Walesa.** Head of the Lech Walesa Institute Foundation.

Lech Walesa was born September 29<sup>th</sup>, 1943, in Popowo, Poland. He attended primary and vocational school before taking up the position of electrical engineer in the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk, Poland, in 1966. In 1970, Walesa was among the shipyard demonstrators. Six years later, he was fired from his job when he protested the

government's rise in food prices and emerged as an anti-government union activist. Walesa was arrested several times between the years of 1976 and 1980 for his dissident activities.

On August 14, 1980, the workers seized control of the shipyard and demanded the reinstatement of Lech Walesa, who had scaled the shipyard fence to join the workers inside. Walesa chaired the Interfactory Strike Committee. On August 31, 1980 Walesa and Poland's first deputy Prime Minister, Mieczyslaw Jagielski, signed an agreement that gave the workers the right to organize freely and independently. In September, Solidarity was officially formed in Gdansk, and Walesa was elected chair. Walesa's role in the negotiations and as the chair of Solidarity brought him immediate national and international recognition.

In 1981 however, the Polish Prime Minister General Wojciech Jaruzelski imposed martial law and Solidarity was outlawed. Walesa was arrested and for the next seven years he was either under arrest, watched closely by secret police, or harassed. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1983, Walesa had his wife Danuta accept the award for him in Oslo, fearing that authorities would not allow him back into Poland if he left.

By December 1988, it was clear that the unrest, social dissatisfaction and economic conditions could not continue. Faced with intense pressure, Jaruzelski finally agreed to talks with still-illegal Solidarity in early 1989. After historic "roundtable talks," the two sides signed a 400-page agreement on sweeping political and economic reforms that officially recognized Solidarity. In June 1989, in the first free elections ever in the communist bloc, Solidarity won the maximum number of seats allowed in both houses of parliament. With two smaller parties, it formed the first non-Communist government in the Soviet bloc. Six months later, the Berlin Wall came tumbling down.

In 1990, Walesa became President of the Republic of Poland. He led the country through industrial privatization, Poland's first set of free parliamentary elections in 1991, and international relations with the newly emerging states of Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the well-established Western powers.

Walesa is the author of *A Way of Hope*, 1987; *The Struggle and the Triumph*, 1991; and *Everything I do I do for my Country*, 1995.

Currently Walesa is the head of the Lech Walesa Institute Foundation, established in December 1995. He is married and has eight children.

