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7/6/94, 6 p.m.

PRESIDENT WILLIAM J. CLINTON
REMARKS TO THE
SEJM [POLISH PARLIAMENT]
WARSAW, POLAND
JULY 7, 1994
Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, Marshal Oleksy, representatives of the people of Poland.

I am honored to stand before you in this chamber today, at the heart of Poland’s democracy. I know that you have extended your session in order to hear me today and I am grateful for your hospitality.
We gather here today to honor a friendship that is as old as my nation, and ties that grow stronger every day. We Americans share history with the people of Poland, we admire the contributions that Polish-Americans make to our nation’s strength, and we celebrate the cultural ties that bind our peoples.

But at this moment of decision in history -- in this time of renewal -- Poland has become something even greater.
Your success is crucial to democracy’s future in Central and Eastern Europe and across the globe.

It has been said that, if it were not for the people of Poland, democracy might have perished on this continent half a century ago. For it was the Polish mathematicians from the laboratories of Poznan who broke the secrets of the Enigma code -- what Winston Churchill called the most important weapon against Hitler and his armies.
It was these code-breakers who made it possible for the great Allied landings at Normandy -- when American, English, French, Canadian and, yes, Free Polish forces joined together to liberate this Continent, to destroy one terrible tyranny that darkened our century.

Yet alone among the great allied armies who fought in Normandy, the Poles did not return to a liberated land. Your fathers returned to a nation that had been laid waste by its invaders.
Then, one would-be conqueror gave way to another.

An Iron Curtain fell across your borders and a second foreign tyranny gripped your people and your land.

It was here, in Poland, that all those who believed that communism could not stand first found their hopes fulfilled. Here that you began to hammer on that Iron Curtain and forced the first signs of rust to appear.
Here that brave men and women, workers and citizens, led by Solidarnosc, understood that neither consciences nor economics can be ordered from above. Here that you showed the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe that, with hearts and hands alone, democracy could triumph.

But I come here today not simply to recall the events of 50 years past, or only to rejoice at those of five years ago. Others have done that -- and done it well.
I come here to the heart of a new democratic Central Europe to look ahead. To speak of how we can reverse the legacies of stagnation and oppression, fear and division. Eradicate the artificial line through Europe’s heartland imposed by force a half century ago. And help chart a course toward an integrated Europe of sovereign nations.

The challenges our generation faces are far different than our parents faced. They are problems that, in many cases, lack pressing drama.
They require quiet, careful solutions. They will not yield easily. And if we meet them well, our reward will not be stunning moments of glory, but gradual improvement in people’s lives.

We must find the will to unite around the opportunities of peace, as previous generations united against war’s life-or-death threats and oppression’s fatal grip.
To the courage that enables men and women to drop behind enemy lines, face down rumbling tanks, or advance freedom's cause underground, we must add a new "civil courage" -- the energy, optimism and patience to move forward through peaceful but hard, rapidly changing times.

Our course must be guided by three principles:
supporting democracy, advancing free markets, and meeting new security challenges.
Half a century after our fathers beat tyranny into submission, half a decade after the the Soviet empire collapsed, the voices of violence and militant nationalism can once again be heard. Would-be dictators and fiery demagogues live among us -- in the east and the west -- promoting ethnic or racial hatred, religious divisions, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism. They are weak immitators of Hitler and Stalin -- and yet we dare not underestimate the danger they pose. They feed on fear, despair and confusion.
They darken our road and challenge our achievements.

In this fight, democracy remains our indispensable ally. Democracy checks the ambitions of would-be tyrants and aggressors. It nurtures civil society, respect for human rights and habits of simple tolerance. It’s progress is slow and uneven but it cements economic reforms and security cooperation. And it offers once-captive peoples the opportunity to shape their future.
Five years ago, your nation seized that opportunity. Discarding dictatorship and a failed command economy that was imposed on your nation, you stepped into the unknown and started building a free market economy. Doubters said it couldn’t be done.

But the Polish people have proved those naysayers wrong.
Poland's reforms are working: you are beginning to win the struggle for economic transformation. You have ended hyperinflation, stabilized your currency, privatized enterprises that drive growth, and doubled your exports. You have proved that free people need not wait for the state to tell them what to do. You have demonstrated an entrepreneurial talent that generates one of Europe's highest growth rates.
But we must be sober in our judgment. When you began this process, the old communist system was collapsing. You knew your journey would be very difficult, at best. And although many Poles are prospering today, many others have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Hardships abound. In a time like this, it is easy to focus on the pain -- not the promise -- of reform.
My message today -- to the people of Poland and all of Central and Eastern Europe -- is simple: Free markets and democracy are the only paths to prosperity and peace. Hold hard to those tracks. Sustain the civil courage that has brought you so far, so fast. Do not give up. Do not turn back. You will not be alone.

The United States has stood with you since you began to build a modern economy -- and we stand with you now.
America is the number one investor in Poland, with $1.2 billion already in place and more on the way. The American people are proud to have supported Poland as you have put tens of thousands of your people to work, created thousands of new enterprises, and begun to free your economy from its inherited burden of debt.
Today we are announcing new initiatives that will pump hundreds of millions of dollars into the Polish economy; quicken the speed of privatization; assist people in finding new jobs and housing; and help protect your citizens from the economic pirates of organized crime. Taken together, these goals -- hopeful citizens, thriving entrepreneurs, new investments and expanded trade -- are the future pillars of a prosperous, reformed Poland.
Economic reform and democracy, though important, will flourish only if the free peoples of Central and Eastern Europe are secure.

In moving to guarantee its own security, Poland has become a model for the other nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Your decision to establish good relations with Russia, Ukraine, Germany and Lithuania are shining examples of the potential for peace that the new Europe provides.
At this moment, in fact, Poland faces what may be fairly described as its best prospects for peace and security in 350 years.

And yet, as you have taught us, we must not forget the lessons of history. There appears to be no immediate or short-term threat to Polish sovereignty.

But history and geography caution us not to take this moment for granted.
When my Administration began, I stressed that Poland's security -- and the security of all democratic nations in the region -- is important to the United States. In January of last year, when I visited Prague and met with the heads of the Visegrad nations, I learned a Polish phrase: Nic o nas bez nas. [NEETS-oh-nahs, BESS-nahs.]

"Nothing about us without us."
That phrase echoes in my mind as we solidify and search for new security arrangements in Europe.

Because the simple fact is that Poland should never again have its fate decided for it. No democracy in this region should ever be consigned to a gray area or a buffer zone. And no country should have the right to veto, compromise or threaten democratic Poland’s or any other democracy’s integration into Western institutions -- including those that ensure security.
I am well aware that these are ambitious goals, but history has given us a rare opportunity: the opportunity to join together and form a new, integrated Europe of sovereign nations. A Continent where democracy and free markets know no borders, but where nations can rest easy that their borders will always be secure.

This is the vision behind the Partnership for Peace.
Twenty-one nations have joined the Partnership since we began it last year, and they are already moving to fulfill the dream of a unified, peaceful Europe. They have sworn not only to pursue democracy, but also to respect each other’s sovereignty and borders. They are moving along a course that is both visionary and realistic -- working for the best, while always preparing for the worst.

Poland, as you know, has taken a leading role in the Partnership.
And I am proud and pleased that, some two months from now, your nation will host the first Partnership exercise on the territory of a former Warsaw Pact state. For the first time since 1945, Polish and American troops -- troops that once faced each other across the Iron Curtain -- will train together on the plains of Europe.

The United States recognizes that full participation in the Partnership requires resources.
And I am pleased to announce today that I will ask our Congress to designate $100 million, effective next fall, to help America's new democratic partners work with us to advance the Partnership's goals. In response to your nation's demonstrated commitments to security and democracy, I will ask that $25 million of those funds be directed to Poland.

The Partnership for Peace is only a beginning.
Bringing new members into NATO, as I have said many times, is no longer a question of whether -- but when and how. And that expansion will not depend on the appearance of a new threat in Europe; it will be an instrument to advance security and stability for the entire region. We are working with you in the Partnership for Peace in part because the United States hopes that when NATO expands, as it will, a democratic Poland will have placed itself among those ready and able to join.
How we handle the future of NATO will be a tough test for the leaders of the West. If we move timidly, history will judge us as it judged with scorn those who preached isolationism between the World Wars; if we move boldly, we will meet the standard set by the architects who shaped the transatlantic community after the second World War. We must not now let the Iron Curtain be replaced with a veil of indifference.
I have learned another Polish phrase which, even in my tortured accent, well describes our goal for a more secure, democratic and prosperous Poland. Rowni z rownymi, wolni z wolnymi. [roov-NEE suh roov-NEE-mee, vole-NEE suh vole-NEE-mee] "Equal among equals, free with the free." It is time to bring that phrase to life.

Here, in the middle of the rebuilt city of Warsaw, we are reminded that the Polish people have always fought for that right.
Fifty years ago this month, the Polish home army was planning the greatest urban uprising of this century. On August 1, Polish heroes seized much of their city, preparing for liberation.

The uprising ended in ruin. Some of those heroes perished, others escaped. Yet amidst the flame and rubble, a lone radio signal could be heard in the West. "Immortal is the nation that can muster such universal heroism," came the broadcast from Warsaw.
"For those who have died have conquered, and those who live on will fight on, will conquer and again bear witness that Poland lives while the Poles live."

Here, in the heart of a free Poland, you can hear the echoes of that broadcast today. Now let us summon the civil courage that will keep your nation forever free.
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We must find the will to unite around the opportunities of peace, as previous generations united against war's life-or-death threats and oppression's fatal grip. To the
courage that enables men and women to drop behind enemy lines, face down rumbling tanks, or advance freedom's cause underground, we must add a new "civil courage" -- the energy, optimism and patience to move forward through hard, and seemingly ordinary, times.

Our course must be guided by three principles: supporting democracy, advancing free markets, and meeting new security challenges.

Half a century after our fathers beat tyranny into submission, half a decade after the the Soviet empire collapsed, the voices of violence and militant nationalism can once again be heard. Would-be dictators and fiery demagogues live among us -- in the east and the west -- promoting ethnic or racial hatred, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism. They are weak imitators of Hitler and Stalin -- and yet we dare not underestimate the danger they pose. They feed on fear, despair and confusion. They darken our road and challenge our achievements.

In this fight, democracy remains our most powerful ally. Democracy checks the ambitions of would-be tyrants and aggressors. It nurtures civil society, respect for human rights and habits of simple tolerance. It's progress is slow and uneven but it cements economic reforms and security cooperation. And it offers once-captive peoples the opportunity to shape their future.

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Poland's reforms are working: you are beginning to win the struggle for economic
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But we must be sober in our judgment. When you began this process, the old communist system was collapsing. You knew your journey would be very difficult, at best. And although many Poles are prospering today, many others have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Hardships abound. And demagogues, carrying false promises and empty answers, focus on the pain, not the promise, of reform.

My message today -- to the people of Poland and all of Central and Eastern Europe -- is simple: Reform and democracy are the only paths to prosperity and peace. Hold hard to those tracks. Summon the civil courage that has brought you so far, so fast. Do not give up. Do not turn back.

As you move forward, you will not be alone. The United States has stood with you since you began to build a modern economy -- and we stand with you now. America is the number one investor in Poland, with $1.2 billion already in place and more on the way. The American people have helped put tens of thousands of Poles to work, create thousands of new enterprises, and begun to free your economy from its inherited burden of debt.

Today we have announced new initiatives that will pump hundreds of millions of dollars into the Polish economy; quicken the speed of privatization; assist people in finding new jobs and housing; and help protect your citizens from the economic pirates of organized crime. Taken together, these goals -- hopeful citizens, thriving entrepreuners, new
investments and expanded trade -- are the future pillars of a prosperous, reformed Poland. Economic progress, though, is only one key to creating an integrated Europe of strong, sovereign states. Reform and democracy will only flourish if the free peoples of Central and Eastern Europe are secure.

In moving to guarantee its security, Poland has become a model for the other nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Your decision to establish good relations with Russia, Ukraine, Germany and Lithuania are shining examples of the potential for peace that the new Europe provides. At this moment, in fact, Poland faces what may be fairly described as its best prospects for peace and security in 350 years.

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That phrase echoes in my mind as we solidify and search for new security arrangements in Europe. Because the simple fact is that Poland should never again have its fate decided over its head. No democracy in this region should ever be consigned to a gray area or a buffer zone. And no country should have the right to veto, compromise or threaten democratic Poland's or any other democracy's integration into Western institutions -- including those that ensure security.
The Partnership for Peace is critical to the future. Less than a year after its founding, twenty-one nations have joined the Partnership and it is moving rapidly forward. Poland, as you know, has taken a leading role. And I am proud and pleased that, some two months from now, Poland will host the first Partnership exercise on the territory of a former Warsaw Pact state. For the first time since 1945, Polish and American troops -- troops that once faced each other across the Iron Curtain -- will train together on the plains of Europe.

The United States recognizes that full participation in the Partnership requires resources. And I am pleased to announce today that beginning in the fall of 1995, I will ask Congress to designate $100 million to help America’s new democratic partners work with us to advance the Partnership’s goals. In response to your nation’s demonstrated commitments to security and democracy, I will ask that $25 million of those funds be directed to Poland.

The Partnership for Peace is only a beginning. Bringing new members into NATO, as I have said many times, is no longer a question of whether -- but when and how. And that expansion will not depend on the appearance of a new threat in Europe; it will be an instrument to advance security and stability for the entire region. We are working with you in the Partnership for Peace in part because the United States hopes that when NATO expands, as it will, a democratic Poland will have placed itself among those ready and able to join.

How we handle the future of NATO will be a severe test for the leaders of the West. If we move timidly, history will judge us as it judged with scorn those who preached isolationism between the World Wars; if we move boldly, we will meet the standard set by the architects who shaped the transatlantic community after the second World War. We must
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I am honored to stand before you in this chamber today, at the heart of Poland's democracy. I know that you have extended your session in order to hear me today and I am grateful for your hospitality.

We gather here today to celebrate a friendship that is as old as my nation, and ties that grow stronger every day. We Americans share history with the people of Poland, we admire the contributions that Polish-Americans make to our nation's strength, and we are well aware of the cultural ties that bind our peoples.

But at this moment of decision in history -- in this time of renewal -- Poland has become something even greater. For it was here in your homeland that all who believed that communism could not stand first found their hopes fulfilled, here where the signs of a new world came shining through. America values freedom and democracy above all and, as history has shown, so do the people of Poland. Today, Poland's success is crucial to democracy's future in Central and Eastern Europe and across the globe.

It has been said that, if it were not for the people of Poland, democracy might have perished on this continent half a century ago. For it was the Polish mathematicians in the laboratories of Poznan who years before the invasion of Normandy had broken the secrets of the Enigma code -- what Winston Churchill called the most important weapon against Hitler and his armies. It was the code-breakers who made it possible for the great Allied landings at Normandy -- when American, English, French, Canadian, and, yes, the Free Polish forces joined together to liberate this Continent, to destroy one terrible tyranny that darkened our century.

Yet alone among the great allied armies who fought in Normandy, the Poles did not return to a liberated land. Your fathers returned to a nation that had been laid waste by its invaders. Then one would-be conqueror gave way to another. An Iron Curtain fell across your borders and a second foreign tyranny gripped your people and your land.

It was here, in Poland, that you began to hammer on that curtain and the first signs of rust appeared. Here that brave men and women understood that neither economics nor consciences can be ordered from above. Here that the images of struggle -- from the shipyards along the Baltic to the streets of Warsaw -- were burned into the minds of freedom-loving peoples across the globe. Here that you led the way for all the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe and showed them that, with hearts and hands alone, democracy could triumph.

But I come here today not to recall the events of 50 years past, or to rejoice at those of five years ago. Others have done that -- and done it well. I come here to the heart of a new democratic Central Europe to look ahead. To talk about how we can reverse the legacies of stagnation and oppression, fear and division. Eradicate the artificial line through Europe's
heartland imposed by force a half-century ago. And help chart a course toward an integrated Europe of sovereign nations--committed to free markets, at peace with themselves and their neighbors, driving the roots of democracy deeper.

The challenges our generation faces are far different than those that faced our fathers and mothers. They are problems that, in many cases, lack pressing drama. They will not yield easily. They will require quiet, careful solutions. And if the challenges are well met, the reward will be gradual improvement in people's lives, not stunning moments of glory.

These challenges demand that we unite free peoples around the world to grasp the opportunities of peace--as those who went before us united against the life-or-death threats of war and the ugly hand of oppression. They will not require the kind of courage that lets men and women drop behind enemy lines, hold their ground in the face of rumbling tanks, or crawl through barbed wire in the face of machine gun fire. Instead, they require a new form of civil courage--the energy, optimism and patience to move forward through hard, and seemingly ordinary, times.

Five years ago, your nation stepped into unknown territory. It took the first step on the road to integration for Central and Eastern European nations: you discarded dictatorship and the failed command economy that had been imposed on you, and moved vigorously to embrace democracy and the free market. The naysayers shook their heads and said it couldn't be done.

But in the last five years, Poland has proved the doubters wrong and made inspiring progress.

Your nation is beginning to win the struggle for economic transformation. You have shown that free peoples do not have to wait for the state to tell them what to do. You have demonstrated an entrepreneurial spirit that now generates one of this Continent's highest growth rates.

You have moved swiftly to correct the distortions of the past. You have ended hyperinflation. Stabilized your currency. Quickly and successfully privatized enterprises that drive growth. And doubled your exports in the past five years.

But we must be sober in our judgment.

When you began this process, you knew that--at its best--your journey would be terribly difficult. And although many Poles--and your Central European neighbors--live in prosperous regions, others live where prospects are few and far between. Many have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Hardships abound. Little surprise, then, that they sometimes wonder whether the struggle is worth the sacrifice.

Many have stepped in with false promises and empty answers. All over the nations of Central and Eastern Europe, demagogues have promoted the pain of reform in order to obscure its promise.

My message today--to the people of Poland and all of Central and Eastern Europe--is simple: Reform is the only path to prosperity and peace. Every citizen must summon the vast reservoirs of civil courage that have brought you this far. Hold hard to the path of bold reform. Seize the moment of renewal. This is no time to turn back.

You will, of course, ultimately make your own decisions. But rest assured that you will not be alone. Just as Western Europe recovered after the second World War with American help, so must American and Western Europe continue to help Central and Eastern
We know that our future is inextricably bound with Europe's fate, and that Poland must stand at the forefront of a new, broad integrated Europe.

Success, in the end, depends on investment, trade and growth. That is why, since the beginning of your drive for economic reform, the United States has matched its words with deeds. We have focused on increasing private investment, expanding trade, and transplanting know-how to a society that, for forty years, has been robbed of experience with free markets.

America today is the number one investor in Poland; publicly and privately we have invested $1.2 billion, and another $1 billion has been committed. The Polish-American Enterprise Fund has helped put nearly 10,000 people to work and, today, we announced the formation of two new funds: one that will bring tens of millions of dollars to support mass privatization, another to pump hundreds of millions of new American dollars into your enterprises. As you know, our government is encouraging commercial banks to write off the billions of dollars of debt left to you by a bankrupt system, and we are providing technical assistance to help establish the framework of a modern economy.

In January, after I met with President Walesa and Prime Minister Pawlak, I announced that the United States would do more to help the countries of Central and Eastern Europe cope with the human problems created by communism's collapse. Our governments have been working closely since. Now we are pursuing pilot projects to rapidly develop housing, a $20 million loan program for small business, and help for Central and Eastern European nations who want to fight the emerging threat of organized crime, and others who abuse newfound economic freedoms.

Helping to ensure economic growth is only half the battle. We know that our partnership must encompass the security challenges that face a new European continent.

In recent years, Poland's foreign policy has become a model for the other nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Your decision to establish good relations with Russia, Ukraine, Germany and Lithuania are shining examples of the potential for peace that the new Europe provides. At this moment, in fact, Poland faces what may be fairly described as its best prospects for peace and security in 350 years.

And yet, as you have taught us, we must not forget the lessons of history. Although there appears to be no immediate or short-term threat to Polish sovereignty, history and geography caution us not to take the present moment for granted.

When my Administration began, I stressed that Poland's security -- and the security of all Central European nations -- is important to the United States. In January of last year, when I visited Prague and met with the heads of the Visegrad nations, I learned a Polish phrase: Nic o nas bez nas. [neets - oh - nahn, bess nahn.] "Nothing about us without us."

That phrase echoes in my mind as we solidify and search for new security arrangements in Europe. Because the simple fact is that Poland should never again have its fate decided over its head. No Central or East European democracy should ever be consigned to a gray area or a buffer zone. And no country should have the right to veto, compromise or threaten democratic Poland's or any other Central European country's integration into Western institutions -- including those that ensure security.

The Partnership for Peace is critical to the future. Less than a year after its founding, twenty-one [tk] nations have joined the Partnership and it is moving rapidly forward. Poland, as you know, has taken a leading role. And I am proud and pleased that, some two months
from now, Poland will host the first Partnership exercise on the territory of a former Warsaw Pact state. For the first time since 1945, Polish and American troops -- troops that once faced each other across the Iron Curtain -- will train together on the plains of Europe.

The United States recognizes that full participation in the Partnership requires resources. And I am pleased to announce today that, beginning in the fall of 1995, I will ask Congress to designate $100 million to help America's new democratic partners work with us to advance the Partnership's goals. In response to your nation's demonstrated commitments to security and democracy, I will ask that $25 million of those funds be directed to Poland.

As you know, the Partnership for Peace is only a beginning. Bringing new members into NATO, as I have said many times, is no longer a question of whether -- but when and how. And that expansion will not depend on the appearance of a new threat in Europe; it will be an instrument to advance security and stability for all. It will take place on a country by country basis and -- although I cannot speak for other NATO governments -- the United States hopes that when NATO expands, a democratic Poland will be among the first countries to join.

How we handle the future of NATO will be a severe test for the leaders of the West. If we move timidly, history will judge us as it judged with scorn those who preached isolationism between the World Wars; if we move boldly, we will meet the standard set by the architects who shaped the transatlantic community after the second World War. We must not now let the Iron Curtain be replaced with a veil of indifference.

I have learned another Polish phrase which, even in my tortured accent, well describes our goal for a more secure, democratic and prosperous Poland. *Rowni z rownymi, wolni z wolnymi.* "Equal among equals, free with the free." It is time we bring that phrase to life and -- as Vaclav Havel has urged -- leave behind the days when we refer to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe as former communist nations, or onetime members of the East Bloc or the Warsaw Pact. We must abandon the vocabulary of the past and embrace the new democracies as members of a growing community of the free.

But this trend -- and the actions that must accompany it -- is not inevitable. And that is why our third principle for a new integrated Europe must be the spread of democracy from one end of the Continent to the other.

Half a century after our fathers beat tyranny into submission, half a decade after the Soviet empire collapsed, the voices of violence and militant nationalism can once again be heard. Tyrants and demagogues are among us -- in the east and the west -- promoting ethnic or racial purity, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism. They are weak imitators of Hitler and Stalin -- and yet we dare not underestimate the danger they pose. They feed on fear, despair and confusion. They darken our road and challenge our achievements.

The democratic process proceeds slowly and unevenly but, in this fight, democracy is our most powerful ally. It checks the ambitions of would-be tyrants and aggressors. It nurtures civil society, respect for human rights and habits of simple tolerance. It cements economic reforms and security cooperation. And it offers once-captive peoples their only opportunity to shape their own futures.

Here, in the middle of the rebuilt city of Warsaw, we are reminded that the Polish people have always fought for that right. Fifty years ago this month, the Polish home army was planning the greatest urban uprising of this century. On August 1, Polish heroes seized
much of their city, preparing for liberation.

The uprising ended in ruin. Some of those heroes perished, others escaped. Yet amidst the flame and rubble, a lone radio signal could be heard in the West. "Immortal is the nation that can muster such universal heroism," came the broadcast from Warsaw. "For those who have died have conquered, and those who live on will fight on, will conquer and again bear witness that Poland lives while the Poles live."

The challenges you face today seem ordinary in comparison to those this century has offered. Armies no longer occupy your streets. Tyranny is a memory. The hard, day-to-day choices of freedom have taken its place.

But we know these are anything but ordinary times. The tasks ahead require extraordinary courage. It will often seem easier to turn back. I implore you not to. I pledge that the United States will stand with you. I urge you to complete the task your fathers began half a century ago. I appeal to you to reach within yourselves -- as we must reach within ourselves -- and muster the civil courage that reform demands.

[insert Jefferson/Madison quote on slow reality of achieving progress]

Here, where a new era of liberty began, we will discover whether the events of recent years are but a false spring of hope -- or a lasting summer of freedom and prosperity. The road of reform, I believe, will lead Poland -- and the other nations of Central and Eastern Europe -- to your rightful places at the heart of Western civilization.

You can still hear the echoes of those voices...
Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, Marshal Oleksy, representatives of the people of Poland.

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It was here, in Poland, that all those who believed that communism could not stand first found their hopes fulfilled. Here that you began to hammer on that Iron Curtain and forced the first signs of rust to appear. Here that brave men and women understood that neither consciences nor economics can be ordered from above. Here that you showed the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe that, with hearts and hands alone, democracy could triumph.

But I come here today not to recall the events of 50 years past, or only to rejoice at those of five years ago. Others have done that -- and done it well.

I come here to the heart of a new democratic Central Europe to look ahead. To speak of how we can reverse the legacies of stagnation and oppression, fear and division. Eradicate the artificial line through Europe's heartland imposed by force a half century ago. And help chart a course toward an integrated Europe of sovereign nations.

The challenges our generation faces are far different than our parents faced. They are problems that, in many cases, lack pressing drama. They require quiet, careful solutions. They will not yield easily. And if we meet them well, our reward will not be stunning moments of glory, but gradual improvement in people's lives.

We must find the will to unite around the opportunities of peace, as previous generations united against war's life-or-death threats and oppression's fatal grip. To the
courage that enables men and women to drop behind enemy lines, face down rumbling tanks, or advance freedom's cause underground, we must add a new "civil courage" -- the energy, optimism and patience to move forward through hard, and seemingly ordinary, times.

Our course must be guided by three principles: supporting democracy, advancing free markets, and meeting new security challenges.

Half a century after our fathers beat tyranny into submission, half a decade after the Soviet empire collapsed, the voices of violence and militant nationalism can once again be heard. Would-be dictators and fiery demagogues live among us -- in the east and the west -- promoting ethnic or racial hatred, anti-Semitism, aggressive nationalism. They are weak imitators of Hitler and Stalin -- and yet we dare not underestimate the danger they pose. They feed on fear, despair and confusion. They darken our road and challenge our achievements.

In this fight, democracy remains our most powerful ally. Democracy checks the ambitions of would-be tyrants and aggressors. It nurtures civil society, respect for human rights and habits of simple tolerance. It's progress is slow and uneven but it cements economic reforms and security cooperation. And it offers once-captive peoples the opportunity to shape their future.

Five years ago, your nation seized that opportunity. Discarding dictatorship and a failed command economy that was imposed on your nation, you stepped into the unknown and started building a free market economy. Doubters said it couldn't be done.

But the Polish people have proved those naysayers wrong.

Poland's reforms are working: you are beginning to win the struggle for economic
transformation. You have ended hyperinflation, stabilized your currency, privatized enterprises that drive growth, and doubled your exports. You have proved that free people need not wait for the state to tell them what to do. You have and demonstrated an entrepreneurial talent that generates one of Europe's highest growth rates.

But we must be sober in our judgment. When you began this process, the old communist system was collapsing. You knew your journey would be very difficult, at best. And although many Poles are prospering today, many others have lost their jobs through no fault of their own. Hardships abound. And demagogues, carrying false promises and empty answers, focus on the pain, not the promise, of reform.

My message today -- to the people of Poland and all of Central and Eastern Europe -- is simple: Reform and democracy are the only paths to prosperity and peace. Hold hard to those tracks. Summon the civil courage that has brought you so far, so fast. Do not give up. Do not turn back.

As you move forward, you will not be alone. The United States has stood with you since you began to build a modern economy -- and we stand with you now. America is the number one investor in Poland, with $1.2 billion already in place and more on the way. The American people have helped put tens of thousands of Poles to work, create thousands of new enterprises, and begun to free your economy from its inherited burden of debt.

Today we have announced new initiatives that will pump hundreds of millions of dollars into the Polish economy; quicken the speed of privatization; assist people in finding new jobs and housing; and help protect your citizens from the economic pirates of organized crime. Taken together, these goals -- hopeful citizens, thriving entrepreneurs, new investments
and expanded trade -- are the future pillars of a prosperous, reformed Poland.

Economic progress, though, is only one key to creating an integrated Europe of strong, sovereign states. Reform and democracy will only flourish if the free peoples of Central and Eastern Europe are secure.

In moving to guarantee its security, Poland has become a model for the other nations of Central and Eastern Europe. Your decision to establish good relations with Russia, Ukraine, Germany and Lithuania are shining examples of the potential for peace that the new Europe provides. At this moment, in fact, Poland faces what may be fairly described as its best prospects for peace and security in 350 years.

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