

CONFERENCE
INAUGURATION

Ewa Junczyk-Ziomecka

Excellencies, Honorable Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Two anniversaries are celebrated this year—the 100th anniversary of Polish-American diplomatic relations and the 100th anniversary of Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, where for 40 years Professor Jan Karski was a teacher. Today, these two events bring together outstanding Polish and American diplomats, scientists, and international policy experts in this auditorium of the University of Warsaw. Among them are Karski’s former students—Michał Mrożek and Ambassador Stephen Mull; Professor Peter Krogh (Karski’s friend) and his successors from the School of Foreign Service—Professor and Ambassador Barbara Bodine and Director James Seevers; and David Harris, the Executive Director of the American Jewish Committee, who annually gives the Jan Karski Award to a deserving politician.

The organizer of today’s event is the Jan Karski Educational Foundation together with the University of Warsaw’s Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies. The Foundation, like our patron, who was Polish and American, also has two citizenships. The Jan Karski Educational Foundation was first established in the United States and soon the Jan Karski Educational Foundation’s sister organization began operating in Poland. From the beginning, we have set a goal not only to preserve the Karski legacy but also to educate, since education was the area to which Karski devoted most of his life, primarily at the School of Foreign Service to which we send

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two deserving young men and women every year. These young civil servants, NGO staff members and academics take part in the Georgetown Leadership Seminar. All our GLS alumni are here today.

It seems that in accordance with the topic of our conference, young Poles today are looking for answers to the basic question: Do we, Poles, or do we not have influence on the fate of our country? And the young are torn between two extreme views. From dreams of Poland as a great international power to a bleak prospect of Poland without any significance in the family of nations. Nothing in between.

There is a lack of careful and wise reflection on Poland's place in the world and its involvement in the policy of the great powers. What is missing is a cool, analytical perspective, so characteristic for Karski in his magnum opus *The Great Powers and Poland 1919-1945: From Versailles to Yalta*. This book (the jubilee edition has its premiere today) is a must-read for anyone who claims to be an intellectual.

The book was important when it was published in 2014 by the Poznan Publishing House (Pol. *Wydawnictwo Poznańskie*) in partnership with the Jan Karski Educational Foundation and the Polish History Museum. And today it is even more important. Andrzej Pomian, an emigre historian and journalist of Radio Free Europe wrote in the review for the first edition that "the book written by Professor Karski is a powerful boost of sobriety, an essential vademecum for Polish politicians." He added that "if it were up to me, I would make reading it a must for them [Polish politicians]."

We are convinced that this conference's panelists, practitioners and academics, by sharing their experience, knowledge and their opinions will bring us closer to a fuller understanding, which will help Poland's young people (primarily) in coming up with their own mature reflection about the true nature of relations between the Great Power and Poland, the history of diplomacy between our two countries, and the importance of those past 100 years for today's uncertain times.

Krzysztof Szczerski

The substantive question pertaining to Polish-American relations is perfectly reflected in the title of the conference: “The Great Power and Poland”. It refers, of course, to Jan Karski’s key work *The Great Powers and Poland 1919–1945: From Versailles to Yalta*, but at the same time it draws our attention to the basic starting point of Polish-American relations, which is the disproportion of potentials. Indeed, we are dealing with relations between the Great Power and Poland, which, in fact, is not a great power, although it is not a small state. Its importance in international relations is functional, not potential-based, which means that it is to a much greater extent the function of the policy pursued by Poland, whereas our status and our position in these relations are subject to significant and continuous changes, from the state of necessity (an indispensable participant in politics) to the periods marked by complete lack of political subjectivity. Such a state is alien to great powers, which even in times of political collapse are never confronted with the problem of total exclusion or undermining of their existence.

Therefore, the disproportion of potentials, which constitutes the fundamental context of Polish-American relations, has to be addressed by politics, practical conclusions should be drawn from it, one should also try to respond to the disproportion of potentials in different ways.

Professor Krzysztof Szczerski – Secretary of State in the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland, Chief of the Cabinet of the President of the Republic of Poland.

In my view, a two-pronged approach can be applied.

Firstly, the disproportion of potentials can be reduced by means of idealistic politics, i.e. by acting according to common values. Idealism and values are not quantified, therefore, if it is values and not interests that unite states, then the difference in potential does not prevent joint undertakings. The community of values makes countries with vastly different resources and international positions partners in action. This applies also to Polish-American relations. For it is worth stressing that, regardless of specific actions resulting from the common interests as described below, Poland and the United States have always been linked by bilateral relations based on a common catalogue of values, among which freedom as a human right and the right of nations to pursue their own path towards happiness occupy the central place. Both our countries would get involved in various international undertakings (including as difficult ones as military interventions in the territory of third countries – Afghanistan, Iraq) precisely in the belief that they are justified, because their aim is to restore security and freedom. Above all, however, it is precisely due to our shared commitment to the common basic political convictions that Poland and the United States co-create the most important security alliance of countries founded on democracy and freedom in the world, that is NATO. Hence, we should never underestimate the importance of the community of values, because these translate directly into political decisions.

Still, what kind of conclusions could be drawn from the difference of potentials and a vastly different international position of countries if we abandoned idealism and entered the realistic school of thought?

On the one hand, it can be assumed that a Polish-American policy based on partnership is not feasible, since it is impossible to create a common field of interests between countries with so

hugely differing international positions. It is only possible to have an American policy vis-à-vis Poland or a Polish one vis-à-vis the USA, not a common policy, though. If we adopted yet another perspective, the one regarded as realistic, one could say that Poland's policy would always be subordinated to American policy. In recent years, this thesis has repeatedly echoed in the Polish public debate. It means that the difference in potentials is hierarchical in its nature and results in subordination of a smaller country to a superpower. In consequence it would be marked by such features as unilateralism of commitments and guarantees, one-vector character of favourable activities (with a smaller state doing favours to a superpower), or symbolic disregard (not taking into account the prestige needs of a smaller state). Personally, I do not subscribe to any of these two theses. I do not believe that a Polish-American policy is impossible, nor that it must be burdened with the defect of subordination. What is more, I do not wish to delve into the question of sources underpinning such concepts.

For in my opinion, there is a third possibility to provide a realistic response in the situation of a difference of potentials. This answer is the need to find a political lever for Polish-American relations. In the mechanism of the lever, even an ant can outweigh an elephant if an appropriate support is provided for the lever. If we build a lever arm in the right way, then the difference of potentials can be offset by the appropriately applied political power of a given country, even of a much smaller one than a great power.

And this is precisely how we have been trying to create policy recently, having in mind a realistic assessment of relations between Poland and the United States. Thanks to this, I believe, we can talk about an effective and real policy of partnership between our countries.

We are using several types of political leverage in these relations.

The first one consists in the intensity of bilateral contacts. One can say that at various levels, including the highest political one, our countries maintain a constant and ongoing contact. The credit for that goes both: to the previous ambassadors of both countries, who have laid the foundations and, with varying degrees of intensity, paved the road for cooperation, but above all also to the current US Ambassador to Warsaw and the Polish Ambassador to Washington as well as the cooperation between the White House and the Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland. The statistics on bilateral contacts in recent years are impressive. Suffice it to say that the Presidents of Poland and of the United States have met nine times in the last three years. Over the course of one year, the President of Poland paid two official visits to Washington and one working visit to New York. A number of documents have been officially signed by the Presidents themselves, which are important for Poland's security in particular, and which set the framework for cooperation between our countries in the coming years. The defined areas include: military and energy cooperation as well as investments in the sector of new technologies. The intensity of contacts has also translated into very good personal contacts, a matter of importance in today's difficult times. The intensity of contacts has evolved from appropriate, as defined by the diplomatic rhythm, to above-standard.

The second lever concerns the implementation of very specific joint action programmes. We ourselves are creating instruments for the implementation of the Polish-American partnership. We are active and effective. This is related to concrete expectations formulated by both Presidents vis-à-vis their staffs – the state apparatus, in the three above-mentioned areas of Polish-American relations. The Presidents require tangible results and have them delivered. First of all, security. The presence of American troops in Poland, enhanced both qualitatively and quantitatively, is com-

pletely reshaping the realm of Polish-American relations. The American troops in Poland are the first foreign troops in the last 300 years invited by us. The cooperation in this area will continue to develop. Secondly, we are building a Polish-American partnership in the field of energy and energy security. Investment opportunities have opened up, while the LNG terminal and the possibility of having an open gas market in Poland are conducive to the partnership. Strategically important economic interests connect the United States with the Polish market and through Poland with the Central European market. The latest declaration on energy cooperation between Poland, Ukraine and the United States presents Poland with an opportunity to re-export American gas to one of the countries in our region. The energy sector combines strategic and economic interests as well as those related to energy security. The third lever is new investments, technologies and business activities that are conducive to the American economic and investment engagement in Poland. The Three Seas Initiative, in which the United States has been present from the very beginning, with President Donald Trump personally attending the Three Seas Summit in Warsaw in 2017, makes Poland increasingly attractive. New investment ideas, uniting the countries along the north-south axis, from the Baltic States to the Adriatic and the Black Sea, open up opportunities for linking American economic interests with the region and with Poland.

The fourth lever in our relations is the ability to overcome the impossible. The best example of this is Poland's inclusion in the Visa Waiver Programme. This issue, though it has featured on the agenda of bilateral talks for the last 30 years, was stuck in the meanders of an administrative impossibility and lack of political decision-making. Now it has proved to be implementable.

It is worth noting that Poland has been able to find its place under new conditions proposed in the doctrine of the incumbent

President of the United States, Donald Trump. Given the fact that the American doctrine says *America first* and the Polish one should say *Poland first*, we are looking for places where these two approaches intersect. Let us not explain that the American policy should be different. Let us find ourselves a place in this reality, in the doctrine of *America first*, to ensure that Poland as well as Polish-American relations can profit from it.

Having said that, I believe that today we are trying to provide a positive solution to the basic issue connected with Polish-American relations, as expressed in the title of the conference, namely the disproportion of potentials. By identifying the levers and the possible common projects that are beneficial to both countries, we are able today to constructively develop our bilateral relations and ensure that they bring good results and are in line with the common interests.

This is, of course, possible thanks to the continuation of the American policy towards Poland and the efforts of the ambassadors, as well as the appropriate choice of instruments. They should be adapted to modern realities, while building on the experience, work and achievements of the predecessors. This seems possible to me today.

Georgette Mosbacher

Rector Pałys, Minister Szczerski, Ambassadors Fried and Mull, Ambassador Kupiecki, President Junczyk-Ziomecka, Dean Krogh, good morning. Good morning to all!

It is also fitting that we mention Jan Karski, the namesake of the foundation, which has co-organized today's event. Jan was the embodiment of bravery and compassion—a true freedom fighter and Polish-American hero, whose actions affected not just Poland and the United States, but humankind more broadly.

In addition to the heroes that give us common ground and bind our nations, I want to stress the shared democratic principles and broad values, which define our partnership. One value in particular, deeply held by both Americans and Poles, is our common belief in entrepreneurship and economic freedom. The values of free enterprise serve as both a unifying element and a driving force, shaping and guiding our destiny.

As President Ronald Reagan aptly stated: “Only when the human spirit is allowed to invent and create, only when individuals are given a personal stake in deciding economic policies and benefiting from their success—only then can societies remain economically alive, dynamic, prosperous, progressive and free.”

Poles and Americans believe in this freedom. We believe in economic freedom and private initiative. This shared value is integral to our relationship and should be central in our relationship for the next century and beyond.

Foreign direct investment is a key manifestation of economic freedom and a primary feature of the U.S.-Polish business relationship. Since 1990, American companies have invested over \$43 billion in Poland. IBM, Motorola, International Paper, 3M, Guardian Glass, Avon, Citibank, Cargill, Google, Microsoft, Discovery are just a few of the industry-leading American companies that have invested and continue to invest in Poland.

Foreign direct investment creates jobs, good jobs, and over 230,000 people work for American firms in Poland. Direct foreign investment also ties countries together in a way that gives life to the words of treaties and declarations. American investments in Poland fortify our already robust partnership, which encompasses everything from security cooperation to cultural connections to trade. There is a simple equation here. The more American companies invest in Poland, the more intertwined our futures become.

This is not a one-way street. The United States is also reaping the benefits of foreign direct investment, as Polish investments in the U.S. continue to grow. Americans also find jobs thanks to Polish investment and its free flow into our country. We both win.

Looking forward, Poland's reputation as a business friendly country will continue to attract investors who sagely place their bets on this country. Investors go (and stay) where they are wanted.

An American business leader, at a company with investments of over \$200 billion worldwide, recently shared with me the most important factors for his company when considering future investment destinations. Those are: rule of law and ease of investment.

Rule of law is about certainty, recourse to fair courts, and the ability to enforce a contract. Ease of investment is about efficiency, clear and fair rules and regulations, and lack of unnecessary bureaucratic red tape.

Poland does well on both accounts and needs to keep doing so. Poorly thought-out taxes and rules created without input from business and industry can have a negative impact. An independent judiciary helps business grow and is critical to the development of its market economy. Poland is sure to continue its path to the “Silicon Valley” of the EU, with the forward thinking, investor-friendly policies that have supported the economy’s uninterrupted growth thus far.

Energy is another critical and growing part of the economic elements of Polish-American relations. Together we are making great strides here. In the past year, Poland has signed three long-term LNG contracts with American firms worth tens of billions of dollars. This supply of LNG makes Poland an energy security leader in Europe. This will both help free Poland from dependence on Russian natural gas and empower Poland to be a natural gas hub for the region. Poland’s role as an energy security leader will facilitate the completion of gas interconnectors and can energize the Three Seas Initiative, which has energy infrastructure as an area of focus. Here we both agree: energy security is national security.

Our common devotion to economic freedom will continue to pave the way for even greater cooperation and mutual economic benefit.

Business ties are but one pillar of our relationship. Those trade deals and contracts pay dividends, both literally and figuratively, permeating many other aspects of the U.S.-Polish alliance and strengthening the partnership in tangible ways. When we speak about U.S. investments in Poland, we speak not of profits and assets alone, but of a commitment to our mutual prosperity.

Andrzej Rojek

Good morning,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks to the team responsible for organizing this wonderful conference. I would like to start by saying that when I called Georgetown University to speak to Barbara Bodine and James Seevers and to invite them to our meeting in Warsaw, they accepted immediately. And maybe this is the best summary of what Madam Ambassador was talking about a moment ago. Our American friends are keen on coming to Poland, and interested in doing so. They are interested in the changes in our country, in its history, its current state and future prospects.

“Timing is everything” is a good English saying that emphasizes the right moment to hold our conference. Minister Szczerski has just returned from another visit to Washington. Madam Ambassador travels almost every month between our two capitals. The media in the US frequently writes about Poland and the media in Poland is very interested in the United States. Understanding and cooperation between our countries is expanding and deepening at an amazing pace. The abolition of visas between Poland and the United States is only a matter of time. So the moment is right. When we held our previous conference, “Memory and Responsibility”, five years ago at the University of Warsaw, we talked about values, Polish-Jewish issues, moral problems and patterns

of behavior that Jan Karski praised and supported. Today, we are talking about the historical perspective of Polish-American relations in order to better understand how these relations can develop further. We are very happy that we have managed to gather such a distinguished group of conference participants, Ambassadors, Madam Ambassador, and the Minister.

However, let us not forget about yet another anniversary. This year, Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service is celebrating its centennial. On November 15, one thousand guests will gather at the official anniversary ceremony. The wait list today exceeds five hundred names. President Clinton and President Kwasniewski announced their presence at the ceremony. This illustrates the importance of this institution in which Jan Karski spent over forty years of his life. This is undoubtedly one of the best schools in America and maybe in the world, dedicated to the study of diplomacy and international relations. Its graduates work not only in the State Department, but also in the private sector and charitable institutions around the world. What is particularly important to us is the fact that thanks to the initiative of Dean Peter Krogh in the last five years, twelve scholarship holders of our Foundation have also become Georgetown graduates through the participation in the Georgetown Leadership Seminar (GLS) program.

So, leaving this room today, let us think about the state of Polish-American relations and the great role that Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service plays in the education of diplomats of the world, who was also taught by our patron, Professor Jan Karski.

Stanisław Sulowski

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As the Dean of the Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies, I welcome all the wonderful and honorable participants of this conference today. We are starting the second academic year in this magnificent edifice and probably the *genius loci*, this protective spirit of this place, is American in character, because the first international conference organized in this building included the participation of American guests and was dedicated to Professor Zbigniew Brzezinski. In June of this year another very important event took place—the unveiling of a memorial plaque dedicated to professor Brzezinski, a prominent political scholar, whom we hold dear. I warmly welcome Mr. Ian Brzezinski, the son of the Professor who is present today.

Ladies and gentlemen, Polish-American relations are the subject of this conference, but I am particularly glad that today's event has become an opportunity to honor a distinguished man, Dean of Georgetown University, Peter Krogh. Sir, we thank you very much, and we thank the School of Foreign Service for creating conditions where this extraordinary Pole, Jan Karski, a man of honor and intellect—who did so much for his homeland and for the United States—could work. It is a long and well-known tradition that the United States has provided protection and support to prominent Polish exiles who then contributed to

Professor Stanisław Sulowski – Dean of the Faculty of Political Science and International Studies of the University of Warsaw.

Polish-American cooperation and friendship. Suffice it to mention Ignacy Paderewski, Zbigniew Brzeziński, Jan Karski, among many other outstanding figures.

Referring to the topic of the conference, it is worth noting that the balance of Polish-American relations over the last hundred years is very positive. In spite of adversity, and this is very important, because a friend in need is a friend indeed, Poland has always received support from the United States. We prove wrong Seneca the Roman's remark that it is rare for people to retain gratitude for the benefits received. Poles do remember the contribution of American diplomacy to the cause of Poland's independence, we remember the aid programs after World War I and World War II, and above all, we are grateful to the United States for its support of the political transformation of Poland after 1989, which led us to freedom and sovereignty.

At the Faculty of Political Sciences and International Studies, we study international relations, including those between Poland and the United States. I think I have to say this: we need to keep reminding our American friends that the stronger Poland's role in Europe, the greater the importance of Poland for the United States. And I am pretty sure that our American friends understand. Thank you very much.