

UNIVERSITY OF WARSAW
Institute of Space Economy

REGIONAL and LOCAL STUDIES

Jan Szczepański
POLAND:
FACING THE FUTURE

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Jan Szczepański POLAND: FACING THE FUTURE

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Foreword

Jan Szczepański's reflections on the destinies of Poland in the past and especially during the Third Republic presented in this volume are truly an exceptional intellectual accomplishment.

The work stands side by side with many other treatises on how to amend the Republic written by such eminent Polish thinkers as Andrzej Frycz Modrzewski and Piotr Skarga and later on by the reformers of the 18th and 19th centuries up to the present day essays on the Polish crisis and the economic reform: I will not by any means undertake to review in detail the contents of Szczepański's work. Instead let me make four short comments.

I. On Clear Thinking and Moral Courage

The author has chosen not to tread the easy path of blaming only the Third Republic, the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) and the Government. He does include in his sweeping survey unsparring critical remarks on the First and Second Republics. Neither does he hesitate to criticize the social classes and establishments throughout our history. Szczepański speaks harsh words on the Polish society at large and exposes the social vices that have brought about, at least to some extent, our national defeats. Last but not least the author does not glorify the opposition in Poland and is fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses and makes them stand out sharply in his cool, balanced and impartial examination against a rich background of historical facts. Although Szczepański casts his net very wide indeed, he merely touches upon the role of the Catholic Church in Poland leaving that area of study – and perhaps rightly so – to Catholics themselves.

II. On the Responsibilities of the Poles

His thesis about collective responsibility for the state and nation is well justified and skillfully defended, in particular with respect to the responsibilities of the Polish United Workers' Party, the Government, the Church and the opposition. Szczepański's work is a discouragement

to all who would be easily inclined to put all blame for our national defeats on external interference and would be naturally led to use that interference as an excuse for every weakness in the handling of our own affairs.

III. On Work

Szczepański puts strong emphasis on the role of work in shaping both the nation and the state. Every front in a battle for the future of Poland is equally important. Yet what appears to be of paramount importance is smooth and effective running of individual enterprises. It is on this front that the battle for Poland in the 21st century Europe will be decided.

IV. On Individuality

The present volume would best be understood when read as a sequel to Jan Szczepański's earlier work on individuality¹. The author sees creative individuality in economic, social, political and cultural life as one of the most powerful driving forces for well-being and progress. Perhaps we will have to think whether or not the works by Szczepański should stimulate into existence a Creative Individuality Foundation concerned with transmitting to the society an understanding of the necessity to create adequate moral, social and political climate for the creative talents of people to blossom.

The above comments, I believe, describe accurately the spirit of Jan Szczepański's work. Let me now quote the author who in his closing remarks wrote:

"The whole problem could thus be reduced to the following question: where are we to appeal in order to raise up to the challenges of the future? Let me repeat: history never asks nations about their past governments or political systems, but it does put to them one question - what can a nation achieve in any given moment, how does it cope with difficulties? In my opinion, Poles can and should appeal to their own selves, to their talents, cleverness and imagination. Much of what was nonsensical in our economy and indeed in public life has sprung from the fact that a significant percentage of our fellow citizens chose to play the fools and preferred imposed forms of living and behaving. Every state can and does take advantage of the weaknesses of its neighbours. There is no charity in politics. Every state uses all opportunities to expand and make profit. And so it was back in the 18th century, and so it is today. The fundamental asset of every nation and state organism is the qualities of its people, their talent, organizational skills, diligence, a will to expand

¹J. Szczepański *O indywidualności* (On Individuality), Warszawa, 1988

and the ability to coexist. What could the Polish state do to meet the challenges of the future? It could use to the full the talent and energies of its people."

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One might wonder why a discussion of such magnitude and topicality as the one raised by Szczepański should be contained within as modest a research programme as "Regional Development - Local Development - Territorial Self-Government". To this let me reply that even a most modest research programme has the right and indeed duty to join in a discussion on the future of our country.

Warsaw, December 24, 1988

Antoni Kukliński

Introduction

The question whether Poland could meet successfully the challenges of the future stems from the fear that she might eventually fail to come out victorious, and consequently obscure Poland's future as both a nation and a state organism. That fear derives from Poland's past records that include a downfall of a once mighty Republic of the nobility caused by an inability to generate sufficiently strong forces inside the country to counter external aggression. It is still feared today that a weak People's Poland, just like the Republic of the 18th century or of 1939 may not defend her independence. Like in the times of the infamous Targowica confederation so in 1988 some political groups in Poland pleaded with Brezhnev to intervene in Poland (cf. P.Wójcik: *Tygodnik Kulturalny*; no.33, August 14,1988). The fears are no less fuelled by Poland's economic and technological devastation, organizational inaptitude, drunkenness, low efficiency and standard of production. The potential hidden in the population increase is levelled out by immigration fed by disillusionment and distrust in the whole system which had gratified its builders with bitterness of pension age. That same system which heralded victories, spread confidence in progress and ever growing well-being, placed trust in science and technology as the means of revolutionary change and encouraged expectations of a better life is now being questioned and reforms are being demanded.

It is interesting that the fears and apprehensions about the future are generating a fascination with things past as people turn to history for lessons that could guide in the future. Literature concerned with forecasting has limited readership among the educated public. For example, forecasts released by the Polish Academy of Sciences "Poland 2000" Committee are normally published in one hundred to two thousand copies and seldom in more than five thousand copies. At the same time historical works reach ten to one hundred thousand copies. One of the reasons is the demand of the reading public. Lists of recent pub-

lications reveal a telling story. Historical titles clearly dominated over prognostic surveys. It looks as if escape into the past could make easier the solution of current problems and tranquilize our fears of things to come.

It may well be that readers have grown impatient seeing a succession of loudly tooted long-term plans collapse and begun to approach forecasts as nothing short of another planner's fantasy. Perhaps again readers are disillusioned seeing bright visions of the system crumble into pieces, or maybe they are unwilling to read forecasts because they know that what the future has in store is the debt burden, inflation and potential political and economic crises. The younger generation fears that it will have to share the same fate as their fathers now approaching pension age. Bearing that in mind it is perhaps justifiable that people turn to the past for inspiration in encouraging accounts of past glories and the necessary forces that in the past safeguarded the existence and progress of the nation and helped to live up to problems and challenges. Yet history shows that beginning with the closing decades of the 17th century the Polish state begun its backslide into crisis that culminated two centuries later in the partition of our country. History also shows how Poles defended their existence throughout the 19th century forfeiting their chance to face the challenges of their times and leaving it to the 20th century to resolve some of the problems inherited from the 18th century. These problems will be discussed in the first Chapter. Fear of the future is little helpful in resolving current problems, which grow into grave issues. The present engenders phenomena and processes which will have to be examined and coped with in ten, twenty or fifty years from now. It is therefore worthwhile to reflect on what exactly future has in store.

Obviously, coping with the future means first and foremost not leaving undone things that require immediate resolution. The future is always experienced in terms of concrete dates. The current affairs have various ranks on the importance scale: some of them could be shelved till later, other disappear, some remain unresolved and still other turn out to be particularly important and demand special attention. Here we will be interested only in such problems which constitute a challenge, i.e., those which may - like in a duel - decide about life or death. Death of a state - like in the 18th century - and threat to the existence of a nation. A challenge is a matter of knightly honour. It must be accepted. *"I shall lose my place in my regiment if I fail to face up to the challenger"*, B.Linde quoted an Old Polish author in his "Dictionary" (vol. 6, p. 660).

Problems can be treated with disdain but he who disregards a challenge disgraces himself. He who fails to stand up to a challenge, or he who is defeated through his inability is also disgraced.

The present work consists of five chapters. The first discusses problems that have been bequeathed from the past either as unresolved issues or so badly resolved that they still need our attention. The first chapter also presents attitudes and ways of thinking and acting inherited from the past. Chapter Two identifies contemporary challenges facing the government, nation, families, individuals, organisations, various groups. Chapter Three discusses the state of the society and basically repeats the theses drawn up for the Consultative Council advising the Chairman of the Council of State. Chapter Four analyzes the ways and means of coping with challenges. Chapter Five is an outline of a prognosis of what may come.

The present work is not a scholarly study, not is it a treaty. It is a collection of personal reflections with no claim to being scientific or infallible. I do not intend to convince anybody. The questions that I discuss here must be answered individually by every Pole.

Chapter 1

The Legacy of the Past

I am going to begin my remarks on how we could confront the challenges of the future with a look into the past. One could wonder why should I choose to do so? Let me respond with a handy metaphor from the sports life. A challenge is a defial, a daring to wrestle, to compete with other nations even indirectly. As the nations from every corner of the Earth are growing increasingly interdependent so the whereabouts of their potential rivals, say, in the field of economy, are less and less identifiable. Therefore if we look at Poland and her chances to meet the challenges – those already visible and those that are only beginning to take shape – we have to assess Poland's present condition and preparedness to "enter the race". Let me compare Poland to someone competing in a long cross-country run. Should we wish to estimate his chances for success we will have to look at his physical condition, coaching methods, equipment etc. A person in bad health, poorly trained, and wearing pinching shoes is doomed to lose on the finish line. The nations of our globe have already started their march towards more or less comparable goals to be achieved in the 21st century. These are: a strong and efficient economy, welfare of their peoples, security and sovereignty, to mention but a few examples. Whatever methods the states will apply and whatever ways they will choose in pursuing their targets their condition – defined by their past record – is seriously determining their actual performance. It appears that the odds are now increasingly in favour of eliminating wars from the list of means and methods of achieving political ends. Nuclear weapons, and for that matter, other types of modern warfare render war politically impotent as a means of scoring a clear victory. Therefore military challenges tend to lose their cutting edge though they would not disappear. Problems of military force, which – as it turned out –

were crucial in the inter-war period, are now i.e., at the turn of the century, gradually moving to the background. In this respect, the Polish past record is quite visible, even outstanding and fostering military challenges. However not without reservations: wars are now won not so much by troops but rather by scientists and technology specialists trying to outsmart their opponents in military equipment with a backing from efficient and flexible economies capable of manufacturing the required number of high-quality weapons. Hence military challenges are also intellectual challenges. They equally challenge the productive capabilities, the economies, and foremostly, the political wisdom.

Poland at the end of the '80s is facing a serious crisis. It has two dimensions. First, it is a crisis of the economy hopelessly fighting inflation, a crisis of political institutions afflicted by instability and ineffectiveness. Second, these facts are being fixed in the social consciousness, which is in turn paralyzed by despair, lack of faith in the system, distrust of the authorities, economic management and choked by a sense of inherent "impotence".

What are the roots of that condition and to what extent could our past be saddled with the responsibility for the present state of affairs? Before giving more substance to the term "the legacy of the past" let me first make the following remark: that state of overpowering paralysis is growing partly out of recognition that so many problems confronting Poland today are in the point of fact "outstanding" matters of distant past. Those unsettled issues are a heavy burden for Poland, which makes her stand apart from other countries where similar problems have long been resolved. Here are some examples:

Poland's relationship vis a vis her neighbours and the sovereignty of Poland's statehood. In past centuries, when the state of war was a "natural condition" of state relations, Poland under the Piast dynasty fought endless battles with neighbouring states. Yet it is interesting that the idea of partitioning Poland's territory was first mooted, if I am correct, as early as the 14th century. One could argue in this place that past records of many a European state abound in conflicts, annexations, or federations. The problem of Poland's position vis a vis her neighbours only grew in importance when the neighbouring states had become stronger than Poland's crumbling might. That is how things stood throughout the second half of the 17th century. Wars against Sweden, Russia and Turkey seriously threatened Poland's sovereignty and eventually made Poland a fiefdom of Turkey following the 1672 peace agreement of Buczacz, a fact all too eagerly forgotten. Although the Polish Diet did not ratify the

peace treaty with Turkey and managed to recapture Kamenec Podolsky in 1699, still the whole affair was a grave remainder of the Respublica's impending fall. It should be mentioned for the record that the following years saw Poland's successful war effort and a victory over Turkey but the second Northern War starkly revealed her total internal disarray as troops of her neighbours marched unimpeded across her defenceless territory. While Russia, Austria and Prussia modernized their state organisms toward a strong state authority, Poland was kept from falling apart by the force of inertia and the pull of impotent conservatism of "noble democracy" no longer capable to defend the sovereignty of the state. Toward the end of the 18th century Poland was partitioned. Instead of the Polish state on the map of Europe there emerged a "Polish question". In 1918 Poland regained independence but all her frontiers had been delineated after wars with Germany, Czechoslovakia, Ukraine, USSR, and Lithuania as if in a remake of the situation prevailing in the 18th century - a country surrounded by enemies. Pacts of non-aggression could be concluded with them though their true value was only to be seen in 1939. The existence of an underground state has been an important but quickly forgotten experience. Yet let us remember that beginning with 1795 Poland existed as a nation without a state; Poles were subjects of alien authorities. The situation was repeated in 1939. The generation that matured in 1939 realized that the fate of the nation had been determined by the weakness of Poland's state and again that only the state could safeguard Poland's national interests. However, in the Polish People's Republic people still clung to a conviction that their socialist state was not fully sovereign and that given the system of alliances it had to sacrifice its rights in favour of a common interest. There is also a lingering feeling of mistrust in the friendship of our friends.

Thus the problem raised in the 18th century remains unsettled: how to sustain state sovereignty that could carry out the nation's interests? What attitudes should be adopted in relationships with the neighbours who turned out in 1945 to be friends on the strength of a political declaration linking Poland to them in a single bloc? In the years between 1920 and 1939 the future of Poland as a sovereign country could be assured in one of the following options: a) an alliance with Germany against the Soviet Union, b) an alliance with the USSR against Germany, or c) in federation of the three states. None of these options had been feasible not only because the Polish nation would not tolerate it but because neither the Soviet Union nor Germany viewed Poland as a serious power that could be useful for their respective interests. In the 18th century Poland

dropped out from the political gambling table. She lost her power position to become a "servant" out of her free will. The chaotic "democracy of the nobility" was powerless to command sufficient might to effectively confront strong absolutist monarchies of her neighbours. In 1939 we set great store by alliances with France and Britain, which as it turned out did not think too highly of Poland and her potential. It concerns in particular the approach of Great Britain as was demonstrated by the fate of over 230,000 Polish soldiers fighting under British command in the West.¹

So here we have the first serious dimension of our past legacy. It hinders the manner of dealing with a political challenge of creating the political power and setting up a state organization capable of safeguarding the implementation of national interests in conditions of Poland's presence within the Soviet bloc and without any support from any other state. Let it be remembered that our former war allies have lost whatever interest they had after the war ended. When they became again interested, in the "cold war" period, it was only in the sole context of doing maximum harm to the Soviet Union and its allies. It was and still is in the interest of the NATO states to keep Poland on a low economic level breeding political unrest that could then spill over to other socialist countries. This was the underlying reason behind economic sanctions of the '80s and the fuelling of discontent and political unrest.

We can see that the past political legacy is a serious burden for the future. The pattern of state-nation relations is still lacking in Poland - unlike in other states where it had been fixed already in the 18th and 19th centuries. Another troubling problem is the maintenance of state sovereignty and political independence (at the 8th Plenary meeting of PUWP Central Committee, 27-28 August 1988, voices could still be heard expressing fears about our state existence being threatened). It is just as if the past bequeathed to the succeeding generations of Poles the fear that they could find themselves back again in the 19th century. And again the ghosts of the past are being resurrected. As Przemysław Wójcik wrote: *"We now know by name the members of self-styled, usurper-like cliques which kept sending memorials to Brezhnev asking for a military intervention"*.²

This is not only the issue of the system as such but of the organiza-

¹cf. Aleksander Gella: *Pozbycie się polskich sił zbrojnych przez brytyjski rząd J.K.M. 1944-47* (The Disposal of the Polish Armed Forces by H.M. Government in 1945-47) in: "Znaki Czasu" no. 9, 1988.

²"Tygodnik Kulturalny" no. 33 of 14 August 1988.

tion of any system. The 18th century has fixed in the popular mind the image of the Polish nation incapable of setting up a strong and efficient government, smoothly operating management, a disciplined society etc. Throughout the entire 19th century the Polish nation learned the art of sabotage of the official policies of the partitioning powers rather than the tricks of strengthening their own house. Yet an independent state did emerge from the three partitioned pieces of our land though with the help of the civil servants of the partitioning powers. Since then Poles have been permanently obsessed with a syndrom of failure, a conviction that they would never manage to run by themselves a strong state organism. What is more that image is cunningly perpetuated in campaigns organized by various political forces hostile to Poland. Therefore the problems of efficient management, excessive red-tape, smooth operation of state institutions, abuse of power and offices, public interest remain a living legacy of the past. We might argue though that other states too, suffer in the grip of bureaucracy, corruption and ineffectiveness. But let us remember that in those states the stabilizing factors play an immense role, which is not the case in Poland, such as in the first place public support for the state activity and its institutions. When one reads public announcements invoking the laws that are one hundred years old, the idea of the continuity of state institutions is firmly driven into one's head. That bequeath of permanence in Poland is all but lacking. The culprit is the way our history unfolded but also the fact that way back in the 18th century Poles failed to win the challenges of modernizing their state.

The past has also awakened the Poles with particular strength to the problem of morality in politics. Historians, ideologues and statesmen examining our roads to independence and the causes of Poland's decline, pointed to moral degeneration of our political classes i. e., magnates who were at the service of foreign courts. Therefore generation after generation and especially all kinds of youth organizations saw Poland's way to restoration in a moral revival. No wonder then that authors and citizens concerned with our future see the moral crisis as the most important issue.³ But it is enough to leaf through an extensive book in three volumes by Longin Pastusiak entitled "Prezydenci"⁴ to learn how many US Presidents were far from moral innocence and how much corruption, fraud, speculation and abuse of office went into American expansion policies. I do not wish to enter into the details of the differences between

³Cf. Zbigniew Paszek, ed.: *Wobec największych zagrożeń* (Facing the Gravest Threats) Kraków, 1988.

⁴L. Pastusiak *Prezydenci* (Presidents), KAW 1988.

the past record of Poland and the US nor do I intend to suggest that the conquest of a vast expanse of territory from the Atlantic to the Pacific could only succeed with brutal force and violence. All I want to do is to throw into an even greater relief the prevailing conviction in Poland, namely, that the fundamental force capable of guaranteeing the future is not a reconciliation of private and public interest but, moral purity. This too, tells us something about our past legacy, one aspect of which is a "morality-based concept of politics" seen as a way of dealing with the coming challenges and, even more importantly, a method of maintaining continuity and identity of state existence.

Just as in the past Poland failed to establish a lasting pattern of international relations to assure to Poland a stable position and guaranteeing her existence, nor did she manage to create a durable system of home rule. The "democracy of the gentry" had come to be identified with anarchy. The democracy of the 1918-1926 period was likewise regarded as a somewhat shameful experience. At any rate the coup by J. Pilsudski had earned him considerable support among the nation. J. Pilsudski's dictatorship followed by a spate of governments headed by ex-servicemen quickly disintegrated only to collapse disgracefully in 1939. The Government-in-exile in Britain was a scene of fierce infighting in total disregard for the realities. The political system of a people's democracy or a socialist democracy exposed to continuous internal tremours fared no better in establishing a more lasting pattern of democratic power. There is much talk about democracy but the Polish model of democracy has never been defined in positive values produced in the past. Instead, it has been described by negative phenomena, which came to be associated in Poland with the pre-partition democracy, the between-the-wars democracy, or the post-war democracy. The underlying reason was no doubt the perennial instability of Poland's statehood which rendered impossible any more stable democratic institutions to emerge. In the past the model of a modern democracy remained in Poland in the sphere of ideology. There were many theoretical concepts of democracy instead of concrete forms of democratic institutions. For example, A. Świętochowski's book *Dzieje demokracji w Polsce* (The History of Democracy in Poland) is foremostly a history of democratic ideas, a history of political movements, political groups and organizations preaching those ideas. It is not a history of a democratic state and its institutions. Poland is lacking a fixed legacy of a democratic system unlike the states of Western Europe or the United States. Therefore we could put our problem this way: the challenge posed by the future - the creation in Poland of a true and effec-

tive model of democracy means trying to resolve the problem bequeathed to us from the 19th century and projected into the 21st century.

What is the historical legacy with respect to the social structure of Poland? At the end of the 18th century Poland had a class structure defined by Lord Acton as characteristic for early Middle Ages. A mild attempt to break the domination of the nobility over the burghers and peasants undertaken in the Constitution of the 3rd of May 1791 was soon destroyed by the Confederation of Targowica. Soon afterwards a partitioned Poland became part of foreign monarchies. Her social structure was then shaped by the laws, policies and economy of the partitioning powers. Even the Diet called by the insurgents of the November Rising (1830) failed to institute any radical social reform in the then Congress Kingdom of Poland. After independence, in defiance of all declarations of a democratic or egalitarian nature the class divisions in Poland were as sharp as ever: landed aristocracy (0.5 percent of the population and 24.0 percent of land ownership) and bourgeoisie (2.0 percent of the population) firmly in control of industry together with banking and big and smaller businesses constituted the dominating and ruling classes in the meaning given by sociology. These were paralleled by substantial masses of poor working class. The unemployed, farm workers and hundreds of thousands of servants of all sorts constituted a relatively high percentage of population living permanently on or below the poverty line. Such a model was radically changed by the reforms in People's Poland through nationalization of industry outside agriculture, the agricultural reform, and growth of a strong sector of socialized economy. Yet the ineffectiveness of the nationalized economy has naturally resurrected private enterprises thus giving rise to new divisions unforeseen under the socialist system. Within the system itself there followed a natural diversification of the society that corresponded to the scope of political decision-making, since the primacy of politics over the remaining walks of public life could not help such differences from arising.

The inter-class relations and attitudes in pre-partition Poland are described in a book by J. Kitowicz: *Opis obyczajów i zwyczajów za panowania Augusta III* (The Description of Customs and Habits at the Times of King Augustus III) or by W. Łoziński: *Życie polskie w dawnych wiekach* (The Polish Way of Life in the Past Centuries) and also from memoirs of J. Ch. Pasek or M. Poczobutt-Odlanicki. The 19th century relations were the subject of detailed historical studies and also described in novels. As regards the inter-war period we now have at our disposal a substantial body of documentation. It would hardly be concluded upon

the examination of those texts that what we have inherited from the past concerning the class relationship deserved such terms as democratic or egalitarian. After every revolution the new social classes that are ascending the social ladder are willingly or unconsciously following in the footsteps of the former higher class because in their past experience it used to mould the "required" standard of behaviour adequate to office and social position. Therefore a worker-made-director tried to emulate a capitalist director, a worker-made-voivod tried to enact the bearing of a pre-war voivod-lieutenant. Evidently those patterns of behaviour tend to change very quickly yet some core elements remained. The pattern of stable class relations and inter-class relations could thus be argued to remain external to the fixed cultural heritage in Poland. In day-to-day life and in the national consciousness there exist a variety of patterns that are linked to various traditions of both class and ideological nature. Yet there is also a feeling that the social structure is still fluid and could be solidified only in some future time.

As regards our economic heritage it is no less tangled and complicated. It is a fact that Poland's economy at the end of the 18th century was seriously lagging behind the economic organisms of the powers that were to partition Poland before the turn of the century. The economic advancement after the partitions was very slow in coming. Even if the Congress Kingdom saw a chance of an early industrialization and economic growth that chance was shattered by the November Rising in 1830. The January Rising in 1864 brought a downfall of noble estates and ruined the agriculture. The Positivist tradition of making economic prosperity the precondition of independence that first started in Great Poland in the 'twenties of the 19th c. and in the Kingdom's territory after the January Rising in the 'sixties is still quoted as the single most valuable economic inheritance. But the ideologues of Soviet-style socialism opposed the Positivist tradition in the years after 1948-on political and ideological grounds as raising the prospect of a restoration of capitalism in Poland.

The inter-war period recorded a modest economic success. It was in the first place the successful merging of the three former partition zones into one economic body. Another significant development was the recovery from the devastation of World War One and the frontier wars followed by the construction of the city and port of Gdynia, and the Central Industrial Region (COP). No less important for the future of our economic effort was the reconstruction of the educational system considered as the intellectual base for further development. All the same the

living standards remained low especially among the manual workers and lower strata of white collar workers. In the country, medium-sized and small farms remained backward, overstuffed and living on the poverty line. Capitalism in Poland could not flourish because a meaningful part of industry was owned by foreign capital, which cared very little for industrial innovation. The Polish economy – divided as it was roughly into two parts – the advanced West and the backward East – failed to produce during the 'twenties a coherent plan for its development. Among the things that were left undone we could mention the existence of small farms, policies of putting together larger farms, overpopulation in rural districts. Industry troubled by lay-offs and crises zig-zagged between attempts to build state-owned industries, and economic planning on the one hand, and pure capitalism on the other. These efforts were accompanied by the development of co-operative-based manufacture to mixed results. Under the circumstances eyes kept turning to the self-sustaining Polish small-size private farming, whose importance grew even further during the times of economic slump. It eventually became in the 'fifties one of the factors in a battle against "collectivization". As we read the various concepts of tidying-up the Polish economy, be it agrarian or social-democratic, or E. Kwiatkowski's *Dysproporcje* (Disproportions) we inevitably learn about the extent of confusion among economists and ideologues. The horror of war and occupation brought the Polish economy to a total standstill. Larger factories were harnessed to serve the Reich, small enterprises, which were mainly owned by the Jews, were destroyed as were the businesses of Polish small capitalists. Millions of peasants were sent into Germany for forced labour. Technical and administrative cadres with any experience in economic management were dispersed.

What amounts to a legacy of the first post-war years is either a spontaneous reconstruction effort of citizens, or an attempt to implement the three-year plan fashioned after the Soviet model and promoted in Poland by Minc, Brus and other ideologues of Stalinist economic methods. But again reading the discussions around the Stage One and Stage Two of the economic reform in the present decade we could easily spot the reverberations of the divergent concepts advanced after 1944. Or, to put it in better words, being put to life then.

It lies in the tradition of the Polish economy that we were constantly confronted with something that could be described as a fluidity of the situation just as it was in the between-the-war period, when the great economic crisis after 1929 effectively eroded the components of stability, or during the period of planned economy oppressed by endless changes

of planning methods and economic doctrines. The desperate voices keep appealing for policy stability, and for bringing under control the legal regulations that are produced at avalanche-proportions but no one can tell if they are to enforce or sabotage the reform. The discussion at the 8th plenary session of the Polish United Workers' Party Central Committee on 27-28 August 1988, reflected perfectly these moods. These are the roots of the pessimism that calls into question the ability of the Poles to achieve an effective economy.

This is how the economic legacy of Poland's past looks like today: a chronically troubled economy ridden by indebtedness, and characterized by low efficiency, high material and energy consumption, also overmanned, oppressed by a gaping discrepancy between pay and effects and blind to a distinction between employment as a legal contract between the employer and employee and work as a relationship between the worker and the material he uses to manufacture a product. It is a one-sided view highlighting the negative aspects and leaving in the background the existing forces of progress. Among the progressive forces one should enlist in the first place the qualified cadres educated in vocational schools, secondary schools, and institutions of higher education. Next, one should point to the vast pool of creative talent and ability, which, if properly directed, could prove a powerful driving force of progress. Polish economy is relatively rich in resources though it is thoughtlessly managing them. The volume of mineral resources has been determined and we already know where to find them and how long they should last. Should the Polish-made products meet the required quality standards they would be sold everywhere. Still, these assets are made poor use of because of faulty planning policies – the so-called “useless capital investments” i. e., unfinished projects or unwanted constructions have consumed a large part of our foreign credits, and also due to bad management, which is a weak link in our economic chain.

Our discussions on economy quite often quote the theories of Karol Adamiecki or Tadeusz Kotarbiński but theirs is a purely theoretical reflection little fitted to the daily practice and little known. However, we do have in the field of economic sciences a legacy of outstanding intellect. The trouble is that it never crosses its path with the daily problems of the economy thus never having a chance to influence its functioning. Our past record knows many well-run, well-organized and profitable firms – but they were rather an exception to the rule. Polish economy enjoyed little respect among Poland's neighbours and the label “polnische Wirtschaft” had a decidedly negative ring to it. The quality of our goods

produced in the between-the-wars period or in People's Poland did not merit high at home nor was it praised abroad although some branches did rather well. The general feeling was that any British-made or German-made product was incomparably better than our own goods.

Here we come to the question about the legacy of our economy in consumption patterns. The two books by Kitowicz and by Łoziński mentioned earlier amply confirm the existence in old Poland of two distinct patterns of consumption, or two life-styles. The first was followed by the nobility and its upper-crust, the magnates. It was sumptuous in interior decoration of their palaces and estate houses, rich in jewelry and boasting exquisite cuisine and plenty to drink. The other – followed by the peasants was a total opposite to the magnates' style of life. Living on poverty line in drab chimneyless cabins, peasants had to cloth themselves in self-made garments and eat whatever they managed to produce. Between these two poles there of course was middle ground populated by burghers both big and small, the lesser nobility, and others. J. Chałasiński in his research on the life-styles of Poland's intelligentsia not so long ago emphasized the "eat-and-drink-oriented" way of living, consumption way above the resources, and frequent indebtedness to cover show-off partying. It could be said with some simplification that the Polish habits of consumption were characterized by excessive claims quite unjustified by the level and quality of input. These starkly disproportionate consumption claims characteristic of life-style of the nobility were to form a lasting feature inherited by our economy.

In the second half of the 20th century the patterns of consumption in Poland were greatly influenced by the mass culture of the advanced technical civilization. The problem then looked quite simple: we have the right to enjoy the same standard of living as the people in the West, and what is more, those standards should be measured by the potential to satisfy our needs. At the same time, people were told in every propaganda text that the ideological target of socialist economy was "maximum satisfaction of the growing needs of the population". This socialist pledge seen against the examples of "mass consumption" in the capitalist world could exert no impact on Polish consumers. All the more so that hundreds of thousands of Polish families maintained contacts with their relatives in the United States, Canada, Great Britain, France or FRG, while the anti-communist propaganda spared no effort to throw into relief the differences in consumption levels between Poland and the West. Let it be remembered that every social movement or political crisis invariably puts to the fore the question of the level of consump-

tion. I will not examine in detail the underlying reasons in this place. What is important however is the question whether these reasons, which are responsible for the gap between the actual level of production and the claimed level of consumption will linger on. This inherited hiatus is rather a tragic burden but we should nonetheless remember that it could be made into an important driving force of change.

The economic legacy of the past includes also the attitude to property of all kinds beginning with private property such as cloths, furniture, home appliances, luxury goods, books, works of art, etc. Then comes the attitude to community property such as houses, public transport, and to state property or social property. Scholars often stress that the approach of Poles to property showed a consistently low consideration for making economies. The statistics on acts of vandalism on, for example, state railways produced similar figures for the pre-war and post-war period. The destruction of lifts, staircases, public telephones, park benches etc., "just for the fun of it" has always been a specialty of young vandals. Surveys of patterns of consumption in the '70s revealed that Poles had a surprisingly carefree attitude to their possessions. Meanwhile, the welfare of the West has rested, among others, on the widespread prudence and thriftiness coupled with care for property be it community property or private property. Money for repairs of train carriages, broken seats, lamps or mirrors is being diverted from investment funds. Therefore destruction reinforces backwardness. Let us not forget that a rise in the well-being of the whole of the economy or individual families or households is a result of a long train of accumulation of profits, even against such odds as economic crises, undercut by inflation, and threatened by unstable economic business trends. Even so the fact remains that the attitudes toward property are an important contribution to economic growth. Let us take, for example, the attitude toward tools and machines. Premature wear, carelessness, waste of energy, etc., all combine to hold down the economy yet they are manifestations of a general attitudes toward property. A man who disrespects his personal belongings, would not respect community property.

The patterns of consumption, care for property, work attitudes have their roots in family life and upbringing. I would like to stress particularly the importance of the household as the first economic institution in man's life where he is taught his "economic behaviour" and where he first encounters the economic attitudes bequeathed from the previous generations. Neither should we overlook the importance of the household as an "enterprise" run by every family in Poland. These enterprises are

very much diverse but in every one of them every citizen may and indeed does put to test the performance of our national economy. The household also gives him a beginner course in economy. Therefore our households not only transmit the legacy of economic behaviour and attitudes but also work constantly on changing them and creating an environment for economic activity.

Research on households conducted by economists and sociologists is not sufficiently developed in Poland hence it would be rather difficult to determine with precision the content and extent of that kind of an economic legacy. Such a perception of economy which children develop already in their kindergarten years and which is later on reinforced in their parents' households and later on compounded or confronted by the knowledge of facts picked up in school can fix for life man's economic behaviour. Analyzing the views of some statesmen and their economic intuitions one could relatively easily reconstruct the economic views of their mothers, who had run the house during, for example, the times of crisis and unemployment. But it is not only the management cadres that I have in mind. We must not underestimate the importance of the "economic outlook on the world", which everyone of us acquires at home and which had been shaped by the ways our homes had been run. Unfortunately no such research had been conducted in Poland. Hence that large part of the legacy of the past responsible for the reaction of the Polish society to the future economic challenges remains elusive and could only be hypothetical.

Let us now pass to cultural heritage. What are our cultural accomplishments, value systems, and material culture at the threshold of the next century and how could that legacy be helpful or unhelpful in facing the challenges of the future?

Similarly to many technical words I have been using in this text, also the terms "culture" and "civilization" will be used in their general meaning adopted from anthropology and sociology of culture. In such an approach it would be impractical to contrapose civilization and culture, because if we define culture as the entirety of products of purposeful activity of man in such fields as intellectual reflection, artistic creation, material production and social behaviour then the division into material civilization and culture seen as a product of a symbolic and spiritual nature becomes irrelevant. However, the sake of clarity let me separate the elements of "spiritual" legacy from "material" inheritance.

Let us start with the latter and ask about Poland's civilizational equipment in her confrontation with the challenges of the future. What

should we include in the list of those civilizational necessities? The material position of a society includes first of all such elements as houses, roads, means of production, transport network, etc. Next comes technology capable of altering that position and the level of technology responsible for the rate of change. Next we have everything that serves the creation of conditions for change and especially conditions for progress in the material equipment such as research institutes, scientific institutions, schools and their equipment. The accumulation of the material product in households and institutions, in enterprises and organizations, etc. Attitudes toward civilizational progress and daily "civilizational behaviour" such as respect for rules specific for some civilizational level. Such rules include for example, the daily hygiene, tidiness, behaviour in public places, rules of civility etc. Every civilization generates also specific attitudes toward material goods and ways of handling them, e. g., the way of handling and maintenance of machines, cars, household appliances, etc. We could thus say that the civilizational level of a given society is embodied by external appearance of their housing estates, streets, roads, yards, as well as the tidiness of their homes and public places etc. Someone once said that the nation which cannot keep their toilets clean will never have a good economy. Civilization constitutes an internally coherent system and therefore neglect of the rules of one of its parts affects other parts of the system and becomes a destructive force. Disregard for the rules of civilization usually signals the beginning of decadence and civilizational impasse.

One could probably reconstruct current attitudes toward civilizational rules regarding technology and material goods but it would take a lot of time and effort to study abundant biographic literature on the subject. Instead, we will have to limit our reflections to general remarks. The civilizational level in Poland is quite variegated yet some leading features are rather easily perceptible. Throughout the 19th century Poland maintained her civilization on a not-too-high a level. In the period between the wars Poland belonged among the backward states. World War Two and German occupation brought immense losses, which deepened our backslide. The years immediately after the war brought tremendous civilizational progress but already after 1948, when Poland was isolated from Western countries, it was also cut off from the budding technological and scientific revolution that was being transferred from the military sphere to civilian industries. Industrialization in Poland followed a 19th century pattern i. e., heavy industry and mining industry was first to be developed, the chief export commodities were raw materials, coal,

sulphur. Our technical know-how was restricted to intra-bloc contacts. This legacy of the '50s has never been overcome. The best evidence of it are the fates of the economic reform and its efforts to chart a new course relying on more innovative and technically promising industries. These problems were discussed during the 8th plenary session of the PUWP Central Committee on 27-28 August 1988.

Society at large and the technical chunk of the intelligentsia widely believe that technological know-how and new inventions that are rapidly becoming home-use appliances are the factors decisive for the civilizational level of nations. Such opinions are then confirmed by news from the Silicon Valley, or from Japan, about micro-chips being put to even more unthinkable uses. No wonder then that this civilizational backlog is so painful for a nation which sees it as an undeserved handicap. Another thing is that the cult of technical progress is being tempered by environmentalists and their gloomy forecasts of ecological catastrophes caused by uncontrolled industrial pollution. It may well look like a civilizational paradox of Poland that such low technical level of industry should be responsible for so much pollution of water, air, soil and food. Still specialists keep piling up ever more convincing arguments that it is nothing but poor technologies that are the chief enemy of the natural environment. And so coal-based electricity generation is producing tremendous amounts of sulphuric compounds that bring acid rain and kill forests; excessive and uncontrolled use of fertilizers in farming and other chemical substances is poisoning waters; there is also a shortage of waste processing plants in expanding cities, irrational management of water resources in industry. These and other manifestations of civilizational retardation are ruining our water, poisoning our food and impairing the physical condition of the population.

The legacy bequeathed by the 20th century regarding the civilizational backlog and environment pollution is raising justified concerns echoed in resolutions, appeals, scientific works and other expressions of public apprehension. They can only deepen the sense of frustration among people because the remedies that are officially taken administered usually the shape of resolutions and legal regulations, while technical solutions are very slow in coming.

We must remember that some of the processes going on in our natural environment have a potential to accumulate the negative effects and may act as a time-bomb. At any rate the condition of the natural environment is an excellent index of the civilizational progress or, for that matter, regress. But in the first place it forms an important component of the

civilizational heritage and bear upon its potential to cope with future challenges.

The accumulation of the material culture begins with the intellectual creativity understood not only as the ability to grasp the "technical spirit" but also as the intellectual potential and power of imagination to generate new ideas and inventions. No less important is the creative potential to emulate and implement at home the achievement of other countries. Let us not forget that the civilizational heritage covers also imported licences. In this respect, reports by the Supreme Board of Control submitted to the Seym and press briefings suggest that our record is rather poor. A number of licences proved unnecessary, many have not been used at all or only in part. But again the mechanisms of planned economy including purchases and management of licences constitute an important part of our cultural heritage much in the same way as the mechanisms suppressing home-bred inventiveness. These are the matters of immense importance and I shall address them later on during the discussion of the future challenges. There can be no doubt that one way to future success lies in tapping the creative talent, inventiveness and ability to respond quickly to innovative ideas both home-grown or imported.

There is yet another reason underlying low economic inventiveness. It has to do with such adverse factors as the system of payments and bonuses (innovations and new products threaten payments if they fail to bring the expected profits), the administrative straitjacket of planning and bureaucracy, bogus actions, domination of politics over economy and application of political criteria in selecting management staff. Under the circumstances, the very institutions and mechanisms responsible for inventiveness, scientific and technical output, management of science are becoming elements of the past heritage which carry the necessary potential to meet the future challenges or at least some of them. There exists a body of phenomena which could be somewhat metaphorically called the culture of economic management comprising such elements as technical input, entrepreneurship, effective contribution of scientists and scholarly experience. Economic culture is a product of general culture bequeathed from the past. It is now time to discuss it at greater length.

When speaking of a culture of the nation we usually mean its language, customs, literature, music, its visual and performing arts, films, its life-styles and general manner of handling its affairs. To sustain continuity and identity of a nation's existence language turns to be the principal linking agent between successive generations. Naturally, it undergoes

changes along with other components of culture and civilization but we do not have greater difficulty in following what our grand-grandfathers had to say. Yet, rapid civilizational progress is bound to leave its imprint on the language we use: each year science and technology introduce us in hundreds if not thousands of new words. Radio and television, the electronics industry, exploration of outer space, etc., not only use their own jargon but introduce dozens of words into our everyday speech. Is the danger of breaking off the linguistic and thereby cultural continuity and national identity under the pressure of technology, science, politics or sport to be treated seriously? Governments in many countries e. g., France, have already made moves to prevent the "pollution" of their language with neologisms and foreign words mainly US-imports. They also publish official translations of international and English specialized vocabularies from all walks of life. In Poland there seems to prevail a reverse trend. Strange-sounding linguistic imports are the hallmark of intellectual prowess. Whatever way we shall look upon the problem it appears to be inevitable as new words are being continually coined, new phrases and shades of meaning added to the language. The crucial thing is that these changes have a particularly strong appeal to the younger generations, who take it in their stride.

This is by no means an unimportant approach. Language, the linguists, anthropologists and philosophers seem to agree, should not be viewed only as an instrument that we use to describe the world but also as a medium of articulating the world, or more precisely, articulating man's concepts about the world. In general terms we could say that people can see as much of the reality around them as they can understand the language in which it is described. Again using very simple terms we could say that the world defined in the language of technology differs from the one described with words taken from the language of the arts or the humanities, and would still be different from the world conveyed in the linguistic phrases of the social sciences. The plain citizen would not be interested very much in the inadequacies between those various visions of the world if only because he sees the world through everyday language, which is several thousand words he uses most often to communicate.

Here we come to a very important question: what image of the world, its people, man himself, economy etc. is being conveyed through everyday Polish language? What is the picture of the world that our language is drawing with every new generation "taking root" in the family, local community, culture and the entire society notwithstanding the vision

that they learn at school? That vision is an invaluable part of our legacy. Never clothed in words and yet tangible, and undeniable much like the existence of a chair and a table in the dining-room or the air that we breathe.

That vision is on the whole quite near to what we call the world outlook i. e., a set of opinions, hypotheses and generalizations on World, Man, God, Life, the Meaning of Life, True Values etc. That view upon the world is defined in philosophical and sometimes even rather crude philosophical terms, and also in religious terms, or political ideology. Sometimes it is common sense i. e., practical philosophy offering intellectual generalizations of daily practice. Still the vision of the world transmitted through language is not quite the same thing. It is subconscious, it is emotional and it makes part of our basic intellectual equipment. For example, when everyday phrase says that the sky is blue then no matter what shade of colour we might actually see we know that the sky is blue. When everyday language says that our nation is brave and gallant then no amount of information nor even our experience would make us think opposite. Yet a distinction must be made between that popular vision of the world and the system of values both those preached and those that are actually followed. Each one of us believes in some values and arranges them more or less consciously into more important and less important ones. Every social group, professional group, social class also cherishes common or at least similar values. The role of values in the lives of individuals and communities cannot be overestimated because they determine our deeds, drive us to action, thereby influencing our destinies and the course of our existence. Systems of education and education ideals embodied in them endeavour to implant the desired values and judgements in the minds of students. These eventually become important elements of both the world outlook and the popular vision of the reality around us.

What heritage in this respect are we leaving for the future generations? It would not be at all easy to prescribe the list of indispensable values and views. Yet taking a random shot I would point to the following: a high sense of dignity both individual and collective, (every protest during the times of crisis strongly underlined the ideal of personal dignity). Next, the cult of liberty and independence – strongly articulated in programmes and ideological declarations of many organizations and unions, and treated as a principal national treasure; justice though variously perceived – as justice in the form of equality or merit, justice in wages and in access to goods and values; a sense of national

value manifested in our knightly or soldierly gallantry and valour; the soldier's duty, the duty to fight occupies the leading place. Far down the list are the duties to work, to be laborious, to be reliable, to abide by the laws. Religion is verbally declared as a value and held in high esteem. Yet considering statistical data on crime committed in defiance of the Ten Commandments one could wonder whether religious values are truly being respected. We could quote many other values that transpire from public opinion polls and predominantly patriotism embodied in the figure of Tadeusz Kościuszko, Polish 18th century freedom fighter.

How useful are these values in the fight against the challenges of the future? We shall return to this question on various occasions as we will be comparing our country with other nations with which we maintain direct contacts and which influence considerably and will continue to influence our destinies in the times to come. We must remember at the same time that culture has in its abundance also other resources in the form of man's creative effort. These include intellectual values accumulated by men of letters and scientists, aesthetic values produced by artists, moral values established by communities. That intellectual legacy played an immense role in the 19th century as one of the factors sustaining the cultural existence of the nation. It could be said to carry a potential massive enough to stand up to the challenges of the future. Let us begin with the arts such as music, literature, visual arts, performing arts and other forms of artistic creation including popular songs. We must not overlook folk art whose role in the future could be very important. Throughout the 19th c. cultural activity in all three partition zones acted as a spiritual force pulling together the divided nation. It also legitimized the existence and talents of a nation deprived of its state. As I have mentioned earlier, politics has to do with the play of elements of power though not necessarily military, economic or cultural power. In our contemporary reality art is not only a proof of the creative potential, power of imagination and artistic skillfulness, but a factor of international prestige and also a commodity quite often carrying a handsome pricetag. Art could also be used as an element of power in international dealings different from but not unlike the political or military power. Beside the big military and economic powers there exist many smaller states whose stability is the outcome of geopolitical alignments, big power interests or their own economic or cultural ability e. g., Switzerland or Sweden. The stability of the political existence of Poland springs from her demographic resources and political potential, but it foremostly hinges on the creative ability of its people including to a large extent its artistic creativity.

The future brings to the fore a dramatic question: to what use could the Polish nation be put by those political forces which might be trying in the future to alter the political map of Europe? The fate of Poland after the war demonstrated that the Western allies i. e., the United States, Great Britain and France, had had no reason at all to get involved in Poland for Poland's sake alone. No interest of political or economic nature was attached to Poland. Instead, this country has remained a pawn in the game played by the NATO against the Soviet Union. It will take some time before Poland becomes a meaningful component of European, or perhaps world, economy despite the fact that our resources of talent, ability and imagination do not preclude rapid advancement once it is freed from organisational straitjacket and mismanagement. The position and prestige of Poland could only stem from the standing and prestige achieved by her artistic and intellectual output. Given the prevailing conditions, that provides an answer to our original question. No doubt Poland will manage to find customers for her raw materials and goods but that is not the factor that will decide about Poland's prestige. That will have to be – for the time being – secured by an internationally acknowledged creative effort.

However, in this respect our legacy has little to offer by way of encouragement. It is true that some of our intellectuals and artists have earned themselves a position of high international standing. Yet the policies of isolationism prevailing during the Stalinist era and also later on have not been auspicious for the consolidation of the prestige of Poland on the international art market. Furthermore, the authorities seemed to show no understanding for the hidden potential of art, nor did they see its economic advantages. One good painting could bring tens of thousands of dollars, far more than a thousand tons of coal, or a thoroughbred horse. Artistic creation does not call for such costly investment as for example, a coal-mine, while the profits are measured not only in money but also in political gains and prestige. The resources of mind and talent are a great national asset.

Let me now say a few words about folk art. It used to be the other vehicle – beside the “national” or officially representative art – of artistic creativity. The full weight of its importance for the survival of our national culture only came into view in the 19th century. It worked in two ways. First, it proved a formidable redoubt against the tidal waves of cosmopolitan fashion like for example the French style, or the trendy artistic ideas from other countries, while at the same time preserving the traditions and values of our national culture. Folk costumes, songs,

architecture, interior decoration, decorative art etc., had been created by the country folk for their own use and not as merchandise, and were therefore a solid cultural background in the overall picture of peasant way of living. Second, folk art provided fresh supplies of ideas and values that could be fed into official art especially when it had exhausted one source of inspiration or reached a cul-de-sac. That was the case with Polish Romanticism tapping the resources of folk culture or another trend called the Young Poland. Folk art's potential to revive art is beginning to wane with contemporary changes among the peasant class and in the country life. The processes of industrialization and the growth of towns are among the main factors altering the role of folk art and genuine folk activity in our life. As soon as peasants ceased to produce themselves their regional costumes, furniture, and other home equipment which have been replaced by mass-scale manufacture folk art just like any art, moved toward official pageantry. It has become a component of pompous celebrations. That is more, it is no longer a matter of family creativity, no longer is it created "by the fireplace". Instead, it is now the exclusive business of so-called "folk artists" employed by a folk art enterprise "CEPELIA" and whose works could only be bought in selected shops largely catering for art collectors or museums. The interesting thing is that such art has ceased to act as storage-space for traditional old values thereby depleting its resources and losing its revitalizing potential. Who and what could fill in this gap? The disintegration of rural communities and disappearance of their traditional modes of behaviour including genuine folk art made by folk people and for their daily use poses a grave danger for the entire national culture.

Could traditional folk culture possibly be replaced with mass culture and its spearheads in Poland - pop songs and video-clips? Not quite. Mass culture is predominantly the kind of entertainment prone to frequent change of fashion. It is chiefly profit-oriented and indeed capable of bringing immense wealth to those who know the ins and outs of show-business. Mass culture is targeted on selected groups, especially the young audience easily deceived by wild drum beats, loud music, eccentric dances and outlandish clothes and transported into a fantasy world away from their drab existence. The songs and music also invoke a sense of other modes of being that have so far remained hidden. The young experience what they describe as a revelation of their true soul. They discover themselves and identify unknown modes of existence. Yet all this is done just on the verge of reality. A few weeks or even days pass by and a new idol pops up on the stage complete with brand-new

style and promising fresh sensations of unmatched quality. It is obvious that no lasting life-guiding values, attitudes or ideals could ever emerge here. Although one might argue that in some respect the Romanticism (at least in the eyes of its opponents) worked along similar lines yet its range was much modest. At the same time Romanticism had managed to establish its style of living and certain attitudes not only emotional but also intellectual. It eventually influenced political reflection and a number of political scientists are now discussing the Romantic trend in Polish politics.⁵ Pop culture can not generate similar lasting values. Nor could they be generated by other kinds of mass culture such as films, tv programmes, glossy magazines and the whole sphere of images that used to be tooted as a replacement of print. One thing is certain. Computer sciences have produced new languages, which are fast becoming as universal as the Latin language in the Middle Ages. But let me return to the image culture, often identified with mass culture. The language of road signs is a good example of a simple language for international communication not unlike various information codes, computer languages etc. Although the proliferation of new systems of communication does pose a certain challenge to the younger generations, the reality seems to reassert the old cultural values. One looks at Gothic cathedrals with fresh eye when one knows the secrets of old-time master-builders. Similarly, old texts reveal new messages. All in all the expanding knowledge about the past is broadening our perception of Man and his world. This in turn could allow to see Man and his reality in a new perspective linking such diverse elements as, say, electronics, robotics and test-tube babies into a logical human chain together with the Egyptian pyramids, the Great Wall, Ancient Greek philosophy and old Roman law. The end result would inevitably reshape the challenges of the future with the main stress on the question about who should be the chain-maker and how it should be done? But such question would lead us out of the province of mass culture and into the territory of modern science and technology with their spectacular, if not crucial, challenges. The mass culture is an elusive creature, whimsical and always in pursuit of more money, and it is money, too, that legitimizes its role. Sales of music records, massive tv audiences are more important than the message they are supposed to carry.

Interestingly, not only folk art but official art too, is being forced to the background by popular art. Somehow surreptitiously or perhaps spontaneously song contests, for one, are stealing the limelight with the

⁵cf. Adam Bromke: *The Meaning and Uses of Polish History*. 1987.

backing of mass audiences, tv coverage and press reviews. They all combine to persuade the audiences that are less aware of official art to identify those performances with art proper. As long as we approach these song contests as business, as fairs designed to sell the performers and songs, everything is all right. The trouble begins when we begin to praise those events as a display of what is best in national culture. Then we have to realize that that kind of art does not reaffirm any national or universal artistic values because it is a transient phenomenon, a cultural mayfly. It will no doubt have its historians, its theory and its fans. It will have some accomplishments. Its development is nonetheless a kind of challenge.

It could then be said that the cultural heritage is being continually reshuffled despite the fact that Józef J. Kraszewski and Henryk Sienkiewicz (both 19th c. Polish writers) are still topping the national readership charts. The cultural heritage is history-biased. The tv 'Book Guide' programme, as anyone can see for himself, mainly focuses on books about the past. The Warsaw daily "Życie Warszawy", which during the '60s used to publish a supplement "Życie i Nowoczesność" (Life and Our Times), replaced in the '80s with a new supplement "Życie i Historia" (Life and History). This retreat into the past is as much an escape from the present as the quest for identity, a return to the roots and the soul of our nation. Under the circumstances, the glorification of the past as prescribed by popular myths even going as far as depicting J. Piłsudski as a great democrat, becomes nothing short of patriotic duty. The historical culture i. e., the elements from the past elevated to the rank of national symbols, appear to be one of the determinants of the reflection about the future.

The 20th century and especially its second half saw a dramatic rise of science and technology, which for that matter have often been used to denote the same thing. Without going into obvious differences between the two – science being concerned with explaining the world, while technology having more to do with ways of altering it – let me first review the scientific legacy that Poland could summon when faced with problems of the next century. In our assessment of the condition of Polish science we could draw on such sources as annual reports of the Polish Academy of Sciences, publications such as *"Informacja o najwybitniejszych osiągnięciach uzyskanych w badaniach przeprowadzonych i koordynowanych przez PAN w latach 1981-1985"* (Information on the Greatest Achievements of Research Projects Sponsored and Coordinated by the Polish Academy of Sciences in the Years 1981-1985), or on annual reports of institutions of higher education. We could make a list of Polish scientific

publications translated into foreign languages. We could list Polish and foreign awards and prizes etc. Periodic reviews of the state of Polish science are done by the Polish Academy of Sciences' Committees. As of the end of the '80 the mood among scholars from many or perhaps even every scientific discipline is one of concern over shrinking outlays for research, limited subscriptions of foreign scientific journals, limited supply of books, poor laboratory equipment, and a general depreciation of the material base of science. Underpaid young researchers often contemplate emigration or are looking for other job opportunities even outside science. The quality of research largely depends on the material base, especially in experimental sciences where research relies heavily on laboratory equipment. In the humanities, mathematics, or theoretical sciences prospects are brighter although these sciences too, need access to specialist literature and research achievements in other parts of the world.

Science today is increasingly becoming an international endeavour. Each discipline has its specialized bodies, many of them sponsored by UNESCO. Scientists from all over the world are meeting regularly at congresses to review the current progress, present new theories, discuss research methods and tools. In this respect Poland is undergoing a regress: fewer participants at international meetings, fewer Poles in executive bodies of scientific organizations, more difficult access for young Polish researchers to international scientific life etc. For all those barriers Polish scientific record in many branches and mainly in theoretical research remains comparable foreign achievements. Yet, we are still waiting for spectacular achievements that could boost our scientific standing worldwide and earn our scientists prestigious awards. Honorary doctorates and membership of universities or scientific associations not always are an accurate measure of talent because they may sometimes be also the outcome of such factors as political situation, ideological considerations etc.

In our review of the present state of Polish science we must not overlook the fact that science is only loosely tied to the everyday business of running the national economy. Just how little interest in science there is on the part of industry and how little credibility is given to scientific knowledge is best illustrated by the fact that the term "theory" among those close to everyday practice has earned not only pejorative but overtly derogatory overtones. This conflict of perceptions between "theory" and "practice" permeates the relationship between science and economy, politics and other walks of public life. Practical knowledge

and experience score much higher than scientific accomplishments. Ultimately, science means less than technology, the applied sciences and technological know-how.

Still in the field of practical implementation the level of technological advancement arouses suspicions and with some exceptions is generally unsatisfactory. The reasons behind the slow pace of technological progress include the system of economic management and planning, the system of wages and benefits, scarce human and technical resources, little time and financial outlays for technical experiments and other organizational hurdles.⁶ We must remember that in this sphere the challenges are going to be the toughest. If for example, historical research would not be aided by computers the general social progress would only marginally be affected. If, however, industry remains backward, the adverse effects will spread to production, the rate of economic growth and, ultimately affect the overall standard of living. It appears that the promotion of new technologies and new methods of organizing work runs into obstacles. The economy is resisting technical innovation and the blame for that state of affairs is put on the system of economic planning and management which allegedly makes progress a wholly unprofitable and risky business. This technical legacy is particularly dangerous. The fact that technology failed to find for itself a niche "inside" the economy while still lingering somehow "on its own", and further that industry has no in-built mechanisms linking economic growth to innovation and not to price hikes or state subsidies all but reinforces the backward slide and inhibits our international competitiveness. The fate of the second (and first) phase of the economic reform are eloquent illustration of how incorporation of various non-economic (political, ideological, social) functions into the economy hampers the incorporation into it of economic mechanisms and technological innovation. New technologies are the driving force behind higher and more effective output at lower cost. Compared with the advanced economies of other countries Polish economy points not so much to the technological gap but rather to organizational handicap as the true cause of its poor industrial base.

The second half of the 20th century saw a vigorous expansion of the social sciences. Apart from economy important advances in psychology, sociology, anthropology and history and also in the sciences dealing with culture have shed new light on the mechanisms underlying individual and group behaviour, launched new theories regarding Man, his social environment, his psychological reactions and social responses. These

⁶cf. A. Gniazdowski: *Badania - wdrożenia*, (Research - Implementation).

have been accompanied by ventures into new scientific fields such as praxeology, management theories, theories of social systems. All these practice-oriented endeavours offered new opportunities to provide logical underpinning to those human activities which thus far had been guided by intuition or habit. To be fair one has to mention that there are critics arguing that the attempts to make matters more rational are interfering with the natural run of things and in the end of the day bring more harm than profit, not unlike the efforts to interfere in the processes in the natural environment that precipitated ecological catastrophes. Nonetheless the trend continues and could not be ignored. The next thing is that social sciences are beginning to penetrate ever deeper into policy-making: economic policies, international dealings, social strategies. Social scientists often act as experts advising governments, international bodies, big concerns, or banks. That "expert-like" role of sciences brings mixed results but let us first point to such projects as the international economic order, huge programmes of literacy and education, political concepts such as cold war, detente, block divisions and interdependencies. They were the brainchild of social scientists including political scientists. Experienced experts from various branches of science serve on advisory bodies to governments and form specialized consulting firms. In this way, scientists become members of political establishments in all countries. Poland is no exception in this regard. Considering the number of various scientific councils and advisory bodies our country is without doubt among the world's leaders. Which among them are genuine assets and which act as mere fronts is another thing. At any rate it appears that the trend toward new applications of the social sciences will continue. This may expose them to additional stress. Let us remember that various expertises or surveys sometimes require supplementary research, various hypotheses need to be verified, ad hoc theories have sometimes to be devised. By doing this science is producing what could be called "applied" social sciences quite often rather different from the old academic model but committed to the daily practice, and sometimes even appearing more as part of policy-making than science in the traditional meaning of the word.

The development of social sciences in Poland followed what could be termed fairly "unconventional" paths. The Stalinism of the 1950's put a freeze on social sciences while at the same time burdening them with ideological and apologetic functions. Even after 1956 the social sciences were being markedly slowed down by prevailing political and ideological controls. The involvement of the economic sciences in the

work on the theory and practice of planned economy backfired when the economic organism of Poland began to totter. At that time sociologists were less attentively listened to, still they were much more persuasive in shaping opinions, and their concepts had a vivid appeal to the peoples' imagination. Sociologists came up with models that were alternative to those produced by official ideology, especially in such areas as sociology of labour, industry, work management etc. The effects were usually very modest because they could not overcome the rigid barriers of planning, management, bureaucracy, political control etc.

Leaving aside the record of the social sciences in Poland as a factor influencing the formal structure and operation of the economy, the authorities, various institutions, the educational system etc. they had and have also another role to play as important inspiration of public opinion and social awareness. In this respect the power of the social sciences is unevenly spread with history recently coming to the fore, especially after 1980.

Not unlikely, that newfound interest in history has been a result of frustration caused by impotence of other sciences in their effort to influence the course of public life. Besides this, the nation expected from historical sciences to unearth the roots of the historical process and explain to the nation who its people are, where they come from and where they are going. Yet at the same time, those expectations have been clearly defined: "the matter boiled down to the history written to make the heart grow fonder". It boiled down to displaying the past glories, to praise the past even to the point of glorifying Marshall E. Rydz-Śmigły (Polish commander-in-chief in 1939), who was branded a deserter by Polish troops in September 1939 because being not a member of the Polish Government but the Polish commander-in-chief he abandoned the troops still in combat and took refuge in Romania, a deed that the military law punished with degradation and execution by a firing squad "for cowardice in the face of enemy" (I quote from memory). History was expected to lay bare the Polish soul, to lay down foundations for an education in a truly patriotic spirit perpetuating an unblemished ideal of being a true Pole. That cult of history has had various faces. Marxists eagerly invoked history for methodological as well as ideological reasons. For methodological reasons because historical materialism aimed at explaining social reality through analysis of the origins and development of social masses. For ideological reasons because socialism was presented as an inevitable outcome of the historical process, as an embodiment of progressive effort of morally perfect and enlightened social groups and

revolutionary classes. Both those functions have been subservient to politics meaning that history was to fulfill Lenin's postulate of having a party character. At the same time liberal- and nationalist-minded historians, who promoted the traditions of writing history books in the spirit of the Sanacja regime or along the national-democratic lines attempted to produce a history that would substantiate anti-socialist and anti-Soviet theses, idealize the Polish nation by depicting it as a heroic people full of martyrdom and religion and ready to make great sacrifices for others. As a matter of fact nobody ever expected those sacrifices to be made, still in the eyes of the Poles they served as an excuse for defeats and failures. Either manner of writing history faced a difficult task. Both had to manage awkward interpretations and reappraisals of source material, and produce synthetic views reinforced with ideological injections. Eventually, in the wake of the crisis of the 1980's, marxist historiography found itself in dire predicament. Facts and accounts from Stalin's rule and the Stalinist period started to surface, "white spots" in history began to be wiped out, and the period of "Solidarity" has been marked by assaults on socialism accompanied by uncritical glorification of a national and catholic Poland. Still, academic historical circles remain convinced that the impact of history depends by and large on its methodological and factual correctness and on the power of interpretation unswayed by idealization or mudslinging. History must not perpetrate what maybe called a "covert patriotic blackmail" because if it does it could only harm the national interest.

One of history's important missions is to help succeeding generations to understand their place in the world, in history, in geographical space and in cultural space of Europe. History explains to the younger generations what it means to be a Pole and what rights and duties to participate in history spring from that fact. The crucial problem of history and historians is that successive political systems want to use it to their ends such as legitimization of power couched either as historical necessity or as optimization of the aspirations of the nation. Hence historical legacy is an important factor for a nation committed to face the challenges of the future.

Yet, besides history written by professional historians every society nourishes its own version of events, the "living history" comprising widely shared, intuitive perceptions of the fates of the nation, its past record etc. The living history is being pieced together from elements of official history, ideology, political doctrines, and also from wishes and dreams, psychological compensation mechanisms etc. It has particular value for

lower-educated people but quite often it is also popular among people with university-level education yet lacking general humanist or historical background. These popular views about things past have been seldom investigated. It would therefore be rather difficult to present a systematic analysis on that subject. One thing is certain: they comprise conventional cut-and-dried formulas about their own nation, a good measure of idealization of the nation's past, some negative opinions about certain other nations, or on the contrary, praise for some nations etc. These views are usually strongly charged with emotion, and carry a tremendous opinion moulding potential. To go against the grain of such formidable force would indeed be a risky adventure. Statesmen know about it only too well and prefer instead to bait it with praise and adulation in their effort to make themselves seen as the outcome of the historical chain of events recorded by the object of their courtship. Yet when it comes to determining the degree of preparedness of a nation to face the approaching challenges this brand of history is all but useless or even overtly dangerous.

The strength of any nation and state rests, among others, on its geographical possessions - its land, soil, waters and its natural resources. How to manage the land and all that is on and below its surface is the business of space management specialists. Space management is an immensely important sphere of activity with a bearing on virtually every aspect of development. It deals with such problems as patterns of human settlements and big agglomerations, communication and transport network, distribution of industry, sources of energy, the network of schools and cultural institutions. All these may either work for or against the development of economy and welfare of the population. They may likewise aggravate or alleviate the problems of economic management and social needs. What have we bequeathed from the past in that respect?

The answer could be found in publications of the Polish Academy of Sciences' Committee for Space Economy and Regional Planning. Of particular value here is the Committee's Bulletin no.123 edited by Antoni Kukliński and published in 1983 under the title: *Diagnoza stanu gospodarki przestrzennej Polski. Wstępne wyniki badań* (A Diagnosis of the State of Space Economy in Poland. Preliminary Results). Although it provoked mixed opinions the message it tried to put across has never been questioned. It urged the introduction of necessary corrections to planning methods and provided suggestions on how to bring under control various spontaneous processes. In the past, political and social criteria have been treated on a par or on some occasions even given precedence over eco-

conomic guidelines. In effect the distribution of industry and population in Poland does not correspond to actual requirements. At the same time, it posed a serious threat to the natural environment polluting the soil, waters and air. Correction of past mistakes and prevention of ecological catastrophes are becoming the major tasks ahead with direct bearing on the economic system and the standard of living of the population. The spatial arrangement in Poland in the past century was a consequence of separate policies of each of the partitioning powers. They approached the divided Polish territory as their border zones with their respective economic activity having been largely guided by military considerations and the need to be prepared in the event of war. Throughout the twenty-year long spate of time between the two world wars our space management policies had been targeted on integrating the former border zones into a single state organism. Yet the two decades proved insufficient time frame to bring meaningful and permanent change. The postwar era began with border shifts and massive population moves, settlement in Western and Northern territories of Poland, resettlement of the German population, Ukrainian population and other ethnic groups. The aim was a Poland uniform in her ethnic composition and situated between possibly natural borders that could be more easily defended than in 1939. The Polish territory and borders defined at Yalta and Potsdam have been "filled in" with Polish population removed from such places as e.g. overpopulated region of Little Poland, Central Poland, from beyond the river Bug. There was also a considerable injection of immigrants, wartime deportees, war veterans etc. The influx of people to various parts of Poland was followed by industrial projects, health resorts, educational centres, scientific institutions. Whether and how much of that spatial legacy will survive depends on the endurance of the fabric of institutions, economy and the international situation.

Finally, we come to the most important element of our legacy – the Polish citizen, his education and upbringing. I have mentioned earlier the potential and strength hidden in the demographic resources of Poland, whose population grew from 23 million in 1946 to over 38 million in 1988. Over the same time-span the population of GDR and also FRG has shrunk by a few million, while remaining stable in Czechoslovakia and Hungary. Our demographic legacy is a very consequential factor. It does represent considerable strength, yet it is not free from side effects. The 500-700 thousand strong age-groups every year put a heavy strain on economy demanding food and clothes, schools and teachers, and in due time also work places, money, and apartments. The social system is

pledged to satisfy those needs but in return asked citizens to work hard and bring effects. And here we touch upon a very important matter. We have already tried to answer how Poles worked in the past when we were discussing the organization and effectiveness of the economic system and management. The conclusions were clear enough: whatever the historical circumstances involved, Poles cannot compete in work with their neighbours and are steadily sliding down the world list of labour effectiveness. This is the most troubling part of our heritage.

Maybe we should look to the system of schooling and access to knowledge for remedies? If we were to assess the system of education by the declarations made by the Polish authorities since 1918 we should soon be running short of superlatives. In reality though, draft reforms and visions of an organisational overhaul since 1918 until 1988 have at all times been far above the economic capability needed to introduce compulsory ten year primary school as envisioned in a well-known resolution of the Political Bureau of the PUWP Central Committee adopted in 1971. Education in Poland just like other aspects of social reality has its bright sides and its bleak sides. In conditions of crisis the latter outnumber the former. I have pointed elsewhere that our educated cadres represent a serious economic and cultural potential. It is sometimes stressed that various investment projects should be seen as "investment in the future times" and that what we are constructing now shall remain useful for dozens of years. Yet, the single most important investment capable of securing the future of states and nations is that made in the educated cadres. It is sometimes recalled and not without mischief that the period of the most vigorous reconstruction of Warsaw was when it had been done by illiterate or semi-literate workers. The efficiency dropped with the introduction of modern equipment and better qualified staff. The conclusion: too much education can be harmful. In my opinion, however, the danger lies in the organization of housing construction. But returning to education it must be said that for all their shortcomings Polish schools provide satisfactory education standards as best illustrated by the achievements of Poles abroad. At the same time attempt to use the education system in a huge effort to change the perceptions of the nation along new ideological lines miscarried. Of the three educational institutions – family, school and the Church, the first and third proved the most effective.

But is it really so that family upbringing alone and Church education could provide guarantees that in the big race into the future Poles will have equal chances or maybe their chances will be better or maybe worse? For the past twelve years or so Poland has recorded steady regress in eco-

conomic performance. Her political prestige, and ranking as a resourceful and brave nation has also dropped. This is a clear message of international statistical surveys commissioned by the United Nations like e. g., the UN Research Institute for Social Development. But that is not the real point. The main thing is that neither school education nor family or Church upbringing seem to be able to reverse that dangerous backslide. And the reasons behind that state of affairs should be thoroughly discussed, if only because it is a particularly big handicap in our challenge of the future.

The conflict between what we might call national upbringing and school education had been ripe in Poland already during J. Pilsudski's dictatorship and the ex-servicemen rule. After 1944 it only grew more acute. While it is not unknown among highly developed states under various guises, nowhere was that problem as painful as in this country. Let us recall that its theoretical foundations, if they had been at all drawn up, for most cases prove to be a misunderstanding. The conflicting situation reduces the State – identified with its government – to a threat to the existence of the nation, while historical experience of Poland ought to have convinced the Poles that only the State could guarantee the implementation of national interests and further that without its state a nation is nothing more than a pawn in a game played by other states: That state of affairs is also a serious handicap for Poland in her competition with others. School education can do very little to diffuse that conflict.

Having said so many words about the legacy of the past let us now ask about the "Poles' self-portrait". How do Poles see themselves and how do they rank their chances? As the famous art exhibition in Cracow revealed the Poles' self-portrait bears some features of our nobility and intelligentsia. Another exhibition (opened in Warsaw in 1985) presenting photographs of Polish peasants brought additional features. What is that awareness of one's own personality and abilities? How do the Poles see the solutions to their problems? It does seem a rather justifiable speculation that the Poles never lose their self-assurance and that somehow subconsciously they have faith in the infallibility of their nation. They remain convinced that every difficulty that future has in store could be overcome. As long as we are alive.

Chapter 2

The Challenges of the Future

Conceiving of a nation's history in terms of "challenges" is like applying classic Darwinism with its "survival of the fittest" theory to historical analysis. It is in a way based on the assumption that each nation's very existence is in perpetual jeopardy from various constellations of forces and if the nation were to prove itself weak and incapable of meeting the threats, if its reactions were grossly inadequate, it might face annihilation. But when we look at the same nation's history in terms of solving problems, the same analysis will have less drama, since problems are known to have solutions. These solutions create new problems; and so the world turns. It is also recognized that certain problems sometimes disappear or lose their critical importance when the spontaneous process of change makes us change our focus. Thus, a challenge, as mentioned in the introduction, means facing someone with a dramatic choice of either meeting the threat or perishing amid the tragic consequences. One may say that a challenge is also a kind of a problem, but one with great, decisive significance for the future of an individual, a group, a state, or any community. Meeting a challenge may consist of undertaking reform, modification, adaptations, or a direct struggle, depending on the type of threat encountered.

Poland in the 18th century was faced with the challenge of modernization of the political system and modification of the nation's social structure. In feudal Poland only three estates were permitted to participate in public life: the aristocracy, the nobility, and the clergy. When all three gave in to degeneration, there was no force to replace them. This was unlike in France, where the Third Estate had acquired enough strength to give new shape and power to the state and the society. Within the Polish society neither the peasants nor the bourgeoisie were able to play a part, and the three ruling classes mentioned above were too demoralized to sustain the country. The challenge encountered far exceeded

the means and goodwill of those concerned, and Poland could not resist the tragic consequences of the partitions. It vanished from the map of Europe. A classic example of not living up to a challenge.

For the purposes of this essay we will label as challenges those situations which face individuals, groups, or nations with a series of problems demanding solutions, and being at once a test of the effectiveness, capability, knowledge and practical skill, character and intelligence, whose outcome will determine some vital interest of these concerned. Under such a broad definition, one might well say that life itself is the ultimate challenge, but here we shall consider only certain specific challenges, i.e., those which are to face the Polish state and nation.

In analyzing the heritage of the past, we have indicated the situations and problems which had not been solved in accordance with objective historical necessity. These were also examples illustrating which types of situations are likely to prove challenges facing a nation with a necessity to act according to the inexorable logic of the historical situation. In retrospect, we are naturally able to see the consequences of decisions made in disregard of historical logic. Thus, it seems extremely important to be able to recognize the significant traits of the ongoing historical process, the nature and tendencies behind current events, as well as to define the contemporary issues which will likely determine the future, if we are to meet the challenges of the future.

The future is not, though, a thing we experience directly, for the simple reason that it is not yet here. It is a vast conglomerate of events and processes gradually coming to be, and becomes available for direct cognition only once it has arrived and become the present. Looking into the future, say, 20 years distant, we can be confident that it will contain many elements we are familiar with today: those durable enough to survive. For instance, a majority of the buildings in cities and in the country will remain (nearly) as they are now. But also many institutions and laws operating today will last into that time. This is easily ascertained, if we look back from 1988 to 1968, and compare the two realities. Also the intellectual, aesthetic, moral, religious and ideological domain, or more broadly, the "superstructure" of much of the human reality of today will surely last for many years to come. We know that certain elements can last for thousands of years. Though, of course, the most important element of social reality are the people themselves. And here too, it is easy to calculate the number of new births within the next twenty years, even if it is an estimate. Likewise, we know the number of those who will depart from this world as a result of disease, old age,

accidents. We can even draw an approximate demographic diagram of Poland in 2000 A.D. Therefore, this factor of the future, rooted in the present, can be foreseen, though perhaps roughly.

In looking forward at the society in 20 years time, we should also consider those elements of modern reality which will vanish, or undergo such transformation, as to lose their present connotations and importance in relationships. The cars we see in the streets, the planes we travel on, the garments we wear, the furniture and numerous household items are bound to wear out and be replaced by new and different objects. Likewise, the social fabric will doubtless change, certain occupations will vanish, along with the production machinery and tools and production processes; though these may not change as radically as had been imagined by enthusiasts of twenty years ago. Therefore, in projecting the future and its challenges, one should try to realize, at least roughly, what will irrevocably vanish from the surface of life, if only to be aware which plants and animals will succumb to technological civilization, and what will be the likely condition of our food and water.

A third class of phenomenon contributing to the shape of tomorrow are the material and spiritual items, ways of doing things and everyday behaviour patterns which exist today, but which are subject to constant modification and in the space of twenty years will undergo transformation or be replaced. Here our method of projecting may be similar as before i.e., we may compare 1988 with 1968, systematically study the differences, and then draw the conclusions as to what may happen to the system of social, economic, political and cultural institutions, as well as to ways of thinking and acting, and human relationships in the time we are concerned with. This perspective is very important, and changes can be bi-directional. Certain elements of reality are bound to regress, i. e., to decay in their functions and structure, usually as a result of atrophy of some constituent component. Other, equally important tendencies, are those of growth and development of existing elements, with their accompanying functional and structural differentiation. And it is especially growth which captures the imagination of scholars and of the public opinion. Ironically, though, growth is conditional upon the continuity and permanence of some elements of reality as well as upon the decay and vanishing of others. But growth, rather than regression and decay, reflects a natural mental tendency for resisting decomposition and the transience of the human being. Therefore, studies of development and growth always take a more important place in prognostications.

Lastly, in considering the future one must recognize the phenomenon

of sudden mutations, which quite frequently appear in the sciences, in technology, consumer goods production, in weaponry, transportation systems, and in the world of ideas, politics, etc. Faced with these, systematic scholars are almost completely helpless. Mutations within the social and cultural realm are almost incalculable and very difficult to predict, and even science-fiction cannot account for them. One has only to read today a science-fiction book on space travel, written before the time of Gagarin's flight, to appreciate the difference. It is easy to project the present tendencies in technology, and look a dozen-odd years into the future but one will necessarily neglect individual human ingenuity. We can foresee the behaviours resulting from imitation of patterns already in existence, but there is no way to predict the works of individual talent.

To have a picture of the future of the nation and of the state, one should incorporate all four of the processes mentioned, in order to appreciate the possible challenges to be expected. The first group of challenges would therefore concern those things which are permanent, unchanging, as guarantees of the durability and continued identity of the nation, its culture, its state with its institutions, etc. Do we consider those elements supporting the continuity of existence, the permanence and identity of cherished values to be strong and healthy? We mean of course those things which of their nature are subject to decay. Are we not witnessing the weakening of those items conditioning our very existence, and that of our culture? Conversely, is there any evidence of reduction or disappearance of those elements which nibble away at our vitality, such as alcoholism, drug abuse, and certain classes of individuals whose contribution to society is zero, and who tear at its living tissue? Is the overall growth process in our case faster than the corresponding decay? What are the chances of having outstanding individuals appear who will multiply this society's assets, and perhaps create a basis for its increased international prestige?

Challenges of the future will then be situational, and will appear as a result of the four mentioned processes. However, it would be helpful to classify these challenges according to the social dimension in which they may be relevant, as the political challenges are different from the economic, or from the cultural. The expectations on people – as individuals, as professional groups, as social classes – are also likely to vary, depending on whether they will concern the preservation of social continuity or identity, or the control over the processes change, of decay and development.

Let us now try to see how the challenge-bringing situations come

about, in terms of their internal and external circumstances. Polish political thinking will for some time to come be over shadowed by associations with wars lost, invasions unrepelled, and outside threats ever-present. For we know that in international politics it is declarations which are made and interests which really matter, and which dictate the declarations as the national interest requires. And hence the persistent timeliness of the 18th c. challenge, i. e., that of threatened national security, and probability of external threat. The challenge might be phrased thus: suppose the political situation in Europe changes so that the Yalta/Potsdam agreements are put in question, by whatever government and for whatever reason. The issue of Polish national frontiers would then be re-opened. What are then the elements of strength - military, economic, political, moral, or cultural? What interests of other nations can be counted on to coincide with our own? Which other country, in the bloc, or outside it, can then be relied upon to support Poland's claim to its present-day borders? We have had experiences of non-aggression treaties with neighbours, as well as alliance with Western European powers: we have had the bitter experience of isolated resistance to Nazi Germany's might. We should ask ourselves about a similar hypothetic situation now, and how, were such a challenge to come again, would the Polish nation meet it? What power of alliance can we count on? On those of our bloc, but that calls for a policy of reinforcing intra-bloc ties and Poland's position within it. But strengthening an international relationship usually means becoming useful for someone else's interests, whether directly or indirectly. Thus the question is re-stated: for whom Poland is useful, and in what way? The answer is that Poland is needed by those whose vital interests it protects in such a way that it could not be easily replaced. Many small countries solve this problem by providing services, and supplying goods at the highest world standard, supplying qualified and highly competitive skills, or by creating unique cultural values, etc. In short, the political challenge, in international terms, boils down to the challenge to Poland's vitality. While any politics are power politics, at least in a sense, international politics especially require either autonomous power, which in our times, is only available to very few large states, or power through alliances, or, occasionally, the power through special importance, such as the importance of Switzerland.

Well, this challenge of power and importance in international relations has remained open for Poland since the 18th century. It may be less felt in the present period of relative stability in Europe, but it is nevertheless present. The challenge was more pronounced immediately

after World War Two, when the possibility of a Third one loomed large in many political minds, and many organizations indeed pinned their hopes on it. Polish opposition leaders, both at home and with the emigration saw such a war as a chance to topple the new political system and regain the old borders, dismembering the Socialist bloc and returning to the pre-1939 political reality. These calculations waned with the passage of years and the setting in of stability. But both opposing blocs, i.e., the Warsaw Treaty and NATO saw in the prospective clash a different role for Poland: NATO strategists envisaged Poland as a land in constant political and economic turmoil, which would seep into the neighbouring socialist countries and thus weaken the USSR and its bloc.

There are those analysts of political threat who maintain that a military threat to Poland does not exist now, nor is it likely to appear in the future. It is argued that new weaponry has made war an obsolete tool of political action, because, after all, a nuclear war solves nothing, leaves no clear winner, and no real gains for anyone. Thus, the political threat to Poland is a peacetime threat (Cf. Ryszard Reiff: *Wybor jutra* (Choosing a Tomorrow), Wola publ: Warsaw 1988). By the same token, increased military spending is a weakening of the economy of the nation to be thus defended. Clearly, in any superpower confrontation today, Poland's military role would be comparable to that it has played in the last war: a hopeless head-on confrontation with Nazi Germany, then a dozen or so divisions scattered on many fronts, guerilla warfare at home, and a final hopeless battle for Warsaw. Poland's political power must therefore be of a different nature, and spring from non-military sources. To be sure, many Poles today question this approach, and they see the military as a prime factor of national sovereignty, citing Sweden and Switzerland, which possess military capabilities that belie the term "paper army".

But one cannot deny also that the ability for independent existence is not limited to defensive capacity. It is rather mostly the ability for making civilizational progress: in the economy, in cultural values, science and technology etc. Our national heritage, as discussed in Chapter One, does not provide inspiring examples in this respect. The ability of independent living also depends on the attitudes of the citizenry, contributing to the strength of the community. Their actions are not necessarily supposed to be moral, and great empires have been built on exploitation, conquest, treachery, and extermination. (In this context, I have already mentioned the book by Longin Pastusiak on the continental conquests of successive US presidents). But the immorality of Poland's noblemen lay in that they willingly served foreign courts against the national interest

of their country. There is a notable distinction between an immoral action confined within a country, an economy, and the kind of action which involves serving foreign interests against those of the homeland. George Washington's illegal speculation in land and appropriation of vast areas on the authority of his office was in the end beneficial to creating a class of wealthy landowners, who were to play a key part in the advancement of the US economy. On the other hand, when Polish aristocrats accepted money for acting on behalf of the Russian or Prussian sovereign, they were guilty of common treason.

The challenge of maintaining national sovereignty is closely tied to that of increasing national strength. Poland's historical heritage in this respect is a tragic one. The 18th century saw the decomposition of the national political body. The aristocracy and the nobility were unable to modernize it and the entire 19th century passed without a Polish national entity, worthy of the name: neither the Grand Duchy of Warsaw nor the (post-Vienna) Congress Kingdom of Poland qualify as such. The period of sovereignty between 1919 and 1939 was short-lived and the independence of the Polish People's Republic is limited by treaty obligations as well as by obligations to maintain the system. These obligations have been written into the Constitution, the statute of the party in power and into the documents of the Warsaw Treaty. One might counter that the modern world has developed strong multilateral obligations for all sides, but it must nevertheless be stated that the extent to which a nation can decide its own public issues is the extent to which it is sovereign. The process of regaining national sovereignty, started in 1956, has been slow and meandering, until now, at the end of the 1980s, it has assumed a more real shape, with the adaptation of the Stalinist-era socialist model to more democratic attitudes. It is now accompanied by encouraging changes elsewhere, such as "perestroika" in the Soviet Union, which legitimizes similar processes in other countries throughout the bloc.

We should stress that the regaining of sovereignty is related to the process of finding a new pattern of democracy. In our discussions of the heritage, we pointed out the very pathetic results of the combination in Poland's traditional patrician democracy with the French political model in the 1920-1926 period. The subsequent dictatorship was a departure from democracy. The people's democracy which followed 1944 oscillated between elements of liberty and those of "proletarian dictatorship", to settle for a dictatorship in the end. As a result Poland today is a land where democracy is always being discussed, dreamt about, but few people agree on what this means and how it should work. The challenge

of democracy can be phrased as a question: can Poland work out a stable democratic system, relatively efficient and durable, as in France or Great Britain, providing the electorate with a way of exercising power by representation, with a non-controversial executive branch and a smooth transfer of power from part to party? An attempts at such a democracy made in 1918 failed. The National Assembly (Polish Parliament) had more than 20 parties, which formed brittle coalitions, and resulted in quick successive changes of government. What the country lacked was a strong group of professional civil servants, able to assure the continuity of the system. Each democracy needs a firm base in the form of efficient civil administration, seeing the state's institutions through all changes of power, cabinet crises, coalitions etc. Ministers and secretaries of state may come and go, but department heads and chiefs of sections, unconnected with partisan issues, go on with their substantial work. The basis of such a corps of professionals is a key element in an effective democracy. Such administrative officials are basically "neutral technicians of politics", who uphold the national interest regardless of party politics. But it is difficult even to imagine such a group within the present socialist system, as this would jeopardize the "leading role of the party".

Of course, a lasting political system will not be built by learned treatises and publications, nor by scholars and ideologues alone, though they are necessary. Rather it is built by long political practice, longstanding collaboration on the part of the authorities and the society, leading to the formation of durable political parties, and recognized rules of the political game. All this takes time, and there were no such long periods of stability in Poland's history. Furthermore, the long period of peace after 1945 did not see a consolidation of the socialist system and its model of democracy. New concepts are being born of the disputes of the 1980s.

Another set of issues facing us with a challenge are the volatile social relationships among the social classes. Soviet-model socialism proposed a three-class society: the working class as the essential and dominant force, the peasants as food-producers, and the "intelligentsia", made up of various types of non-manual workers, providing the corps of "officers of production": technical supervisors, "spiritual engineers", administrators, clerks, etc. This version of the class composition was never fully implemented, however. The working class, for one, has never become a base or a pillar of the system. The intelligentsia have not given up their traditional function of creating new aesthetic and intellectual values, the rural population has remained unincorporated and distinct, economically as well as politically, and the petty bourgeoisie has not been eradicated

as a class. In fact, the economic reform of the 1980s has seen a revival of the importance of small owners and producers, which must be followed in future by increased political importance. Socialism's version of equality – political, economic and cultural – has remained unfulfilled. The society is differentiated according to education, income level, access to power, to culture, and to the various other desirable commodities. Working class protests have incorporated the sentiment against privilege for those in power or otherwise in a position of influence and means. But certain of socialism's egalitarian ideals have penetrated the social consciousness and people make all types of claims for financial support to enable consumption, and generally to match the living standards observed in industrialized Western nations. Socialist societies in the late 1980s are in a state of transition toward new social structures, as yet undetermined and without their institutions. Thus, it would be too early now to name the challenge which will arise. But this situation calls for vigilant observation of the ongoing processes. New occupations emerging as a result of new technologies, especially electronics, must be kept tabs on, including the manner in which they enable individuals to amass power and wealth, if connected with the newly gained access to information, as must be all new factors resulting in new social differentiation. The experiences of socialism have demonstrated how very hard it is to structure a whole society according to a predetermined pattern, and satisfactory techniques in this field do not seem quite around the corner. These experiences have also shown the dangers involved in leaving society unaware of the real processes going on within it. It may not be possible to control the spontaneous processes of social construction, but it is necessary to have the knowledge allowing one to cope with their results.

A very real challenge for both the leadership and for the work force is the present shape of the national economy. Clearly, there are also spontaneous processes at work here, resulting from natural human tendencies, needs, aspirations and plans, in the scale of the national community as well as within each family group. Leaders are faced with the challenge of organizing and managing the economy of the state, the single enterprise, and the workplace, whereas the employees are challenged to improve the lagging productivity, and the quality of work. Socialist economy has failed because it has not solved the problem of motivation, of efficient use of technologies, causing the technical backwardness of the system. The role and position of money within it is another unsolved problem of some weight, as is the inflationary fiscal policy. Money, pay and prices are not real economic categories here, but figments of the planners' imag-

ination. Controlling inflation will become a prime task for the late 1980s, and there is a growing awareness that it is not price-and-wage controls, but the state of production and of the market which will determine the success against inflation. Another unsolved problem is that of socialized property, who and how should dispose of its use.

Many contradictions are reflected in the economy, political as well as social, some due to ideology, some to overgrown aspirations, others to educational mistakes. So the state of the economy is a challenge which requires action in many fields – not just directly economic. Listening to and reading the current debates about economic reform one is overwhelmed by how acutely these economic challenges are felt, and how acute the sense of insecurity arising from them, as well as how great the extent of chaos in economic thinking. Wild strikes are declared, which are supposed to speed up the reform, though they cause severe perturbation to meeting schedules and international obligations, lead to delay of foreign debt repayment, yet they are justified as a way to pressure the authorities into speedier reform. The problem of consumption and claims to a consumer-society standard of living, described in Chapter One, are still a problem, along with consumption patterns unjustified by corresponding productivity. The report of the Seym special commission on reform implementation indicates what a puzzling and complex issue this is, involving industry, finance, taxation, fiscal law, in short – causes an economic policy of chaos, falling production and stifled economic initiatives.

Specific at it is, the challenge of the economy has far-reaching implications. Political power depends on the strength of the economy, and so does the condition of the society. Social stability and the diffusion of tension and conflicts is conditional upon the capacity of the economy to fulfill certain human needs: the aspirations of individuals and communities have everything to do with the health of the economy. And since for the past forty years the party and government have assumed responsibility for this health, each new economic recession becomes an occasion on the part of the public to voice dissatisfaction with the political system. Thus, the fate of socialism in Poland will be decided by all the production enterprises and by each of the millions of households. I wish to stress here the role and importance of the households, numbering about 10 million. All of their small problems – struggling to make ends meet, or wasting goods, rational use of them, or foolish squandering must in the end result in massive scale social phenomena. While there is still a persistent tendency to paint the households in terms of victims

of government mis-policies, mis-planning, and mis-management, let me raise here a very unpopular cause, i. e., one of laying a large share of the blame for the condition of the economy on the households, on their consumption patterns, scale of misuse and thoughtless waste. With each new spree of panic buying of basic foods, perishables, such as flour and other – countless tons of these are subsequently wasted – though there is undeniable historical justification for such behaviour – and contribute to the destabilization of the economy. In popular sentiment, though, the authorities alone are responsible for the state of our economy and it is true that for long decades they have presented themselves as the sole force behind all changes in society, and especially economic ones. The last government under Zbigniew Messner confirmed this tradition when it stepped-down on September 18, 1988 after being strongly criticized for the state of the economy.

Considering the importance of the economic factor in international relations, the role of money, of the quality of production etc., one should also recognize the dependence of the body politic on its economy. A poor economy is a serious threat to national sovereignty, increasing dependence on foreign factors, extending foreign institutions' control over the national economy, and effectively limiting sovereignty. This is a very important aspect of economic backwardness – a dependent economy is always a first step to a dependent political status.

Economic underdevelopment also implies other ominous effects, including that of civilizational backwardness. Of course, one may argue, which is the cause and which is the effect, but without going too deeply into the theory of growth, let us state that the issue is meaningless – both handicaps are a fact, and both go together. We will deal with both at some length. The order of discussion is not a reflection of anyone's socio-ontological views, but is convenient for the sake of argument. And in a socialist society politics dominates over the economy, which is but a base for politics, therefore we shall discuss politics first. Civilizational backwardness may result, as it usually does, from a combination of spontaneous forces and processes, as well as planned ones. It is a synthesis of the elemental circumstances, and the results of planned activities, such as political and economic strategy.

Civilizational backwardness is an underdevelopment of the material base and all those actions and attitudes which contribute to the building blocks of human society. In discussing the Polish historical heritage in this respect, we mentioned behaviour patterns toward material goods, as well as behaviour in some ways related to these. The present civiliza-

tional challenge concerns the condition of the material foundations, the state of knowledge and skills connected with them, and the rules we do or do not observe in our behaviour toward it, the level of public respect for this domain, as well as the level of behaviour arising from the given material base.

Living up to this civilizational challenge requires an adequate level of education in science and technology, education in terms of respect for material culture, which is primarily in the competence of the home, and only then in that of the school. In developed countries, the day-to-day contacts with technical items are provided by the homes, where children have a chance to develop proper attitudes. The same civilizational challenge also faces the scholars who conduct research and who popularize scientific concepts in the world. Though we may no longer share the enthusiasm of science-lovers, so widespread at the turn of this century, and we may not place in science our hopes for the solution of all problems, we are nevertheless more and more aware of its potential. Another challenge posed by civilizational backwardness is one which faces all technicians, whether those involved with research and development, or those who implement and apply the technology in solving problems of work, of production, transportation, information processing, as well as those in households, those involved with education and the schools. The result of their effort, the level of material culture, is after all, measured by the degree of saturation with technology of all aspects of collective and individual life.

A technical civilization calls for a certain type of human relationships within it, between the users of the technology. Mechanization of transport, with its vast and complex traffic regulation, service stations, highway police, parking regulations etc., is just one of the phenomena illustrating the point in question. Similar circumstances are created by the now-ubiquitous telephone network, by radio broadcasting etc. Technical civilization grows along many paths and has many causes: it is developed because it makes daily life easier, and more interesting, because it fills numerous human needs, because it determines the prestige of highly developed countries, enhances military capability, etc. This growth of technology requires many co-operating factors, primarily a healthy and receptive economy, managed so that within it progress means good business, i.e., it needs healthy economic relationships. Their lack cannot be substituted for any tricks, such as the famous "vacuum pump" to deliver new inventions and technologies to the industries. This is so because a subsidized economy, which is supplied with all raw materials and equip-

ment by administrative decree does not want or need any innovation to maintain itself. The attitudes of the population are another effective stopper, as is the general possibility of fulfilling needs without modern technology, coupled with the prevalent easy-going life-style, and a set social hierarchy that technical advancements could upset, etc.

If we ask who is to respond to the challenge of technical civilization, we may easily include almost anybody, but there is a key element blocking us all: the type of management of the economy, and the operating mechanisms within it. If enterprises can turn handsome profits without incorporating innovation, whose introduction may in fact threaten profits, then of course, there will be no change at all. Stagnation of technical progress must reflect on all other fields, including that of a backward research and development domain. Such a backward economy is doomed to growing isolation, being reduced in the export markets to raw materials and semi-finished products, which will not bring in enough money to finance advanced research, and the vicious circle is thus closed.

The civilizational challenge is then primarily one to the creative powers in science and technology. Among the primary conditions requisite for scientific growth is a well-developed educational system on all levels, starting with the primary education. It is at the primary level that the children's minds can be awakened, imbued with the keen interest which will later lead to scientific fascinations, and the basic knowledge can be provided that will accompany the individual throughout the rest of their education. Scholars and researchers often tend to stress the role of the alma mater in preparing scientific minds, and they ignore the lower levels, which is a serious mistake. The quality of higher education is largely determined, in the large sense, by the primary and secondary schooling, which are to awaken the minds, provide the idiom, and the elements of general culture necessary for later independent work leading to a degree.

Another conditioning factor is the overall extent of abilities existing in the minds of the young generation, which if properly encouraged and controlled, will yield a group of useful scholars and researchers. Each nation has its own pool of talent, a basic factor in its capacity for growth, and a lot depends on how this resource is managed and nourished, what chance it is later given to prove itself in young maturity. Thus we come to the challenge facing managers, directors of enterprises employing new promising school-leavers. I believe that the attitude toward talented and highly gifted individuals determined, to a large extent, the outcome of meeting the challenges of the future as far as research and development are concerned.

A third factor of the science and technology challenge is the setting up and furnishing of laboratories, libraries, teams of auxiliary and technical research assistants. This does depend on financing, but primarily on the level of education, of skills and imagination of the researchers themselves. Laboratory fittings, for instance, can roughly be divided into two types: those which must be manufactured in highly specialized industries, and equipment and devices made by the researcher himself as an aid in developing or testing his hypotheses. It is arguable which category of items is more important, but both types are indispensable. Proper equipment of labs, and providing direct and indirect contact with the outside world for scholars and scientists are important conditions for success in meeting the challenges of progress.

There is yet a fourth factor, namely the organization of institutionalized science in general as well as that within each individual establishment. The standard of supervisory work by professors and chiefs of research, and the administration of means and resources are far from satisfactory at present.

A persistent idea reappears now and then stating that the social sciences and the humanities will provide many solutions to issues of social organization. The scholarly community is acutely aware of these expectations, and commonly refers to these solutions as "doing our duty to the country". Scholars are indeed very engaged in prognostications, and contribute with numerous expert monographs, which, alas, are not sufficiently utilized. This has several reasons. Firstly, in this country every adult who takes part in social life "knows for himself" what the scene is, and does not need the "learned advice" of a scholar. Secondly, everyone, including representatives of political authority and many managerial groups, places private interest first, over and above the interests of the community. Thus the ideal solution would be to fuse the two interests, to public benefit, but this is not always possible. Thirdly, the social sciences have developed their own lingo, and a set of specific notions, which seem alien and highbrow to the general public, which curbs any access of scholarly ideas to the society even further. Fourthly, socially controversial issues are not uniformly regarded by all those who are considered as authoritative sources and contradictory opinions abound. This can be easily observed in the present hot debate about the economic reform, for which various economists propose very different solutions. All this makes the average citizen lose his trust in the sense of applying science to everyday problems.

The condition of society and of the economy challenges many groups.

Clearly, it is a challenge for the cognitive and diagnostic disciples, trying as ever to come up with suggestions on the elimination of various harmful effects. Then, it challenges the leadership of the state, of enterprises, institutions, of various social groups, the makers of strategic decisions as well as the implementers of policies. Lastly the condition of society is a persistent, painful challenge to the members of society, housekeepers, small-scale economic decision-makers, it challenges our consumption patterns, everyday behaviour in the political, civic and social realms. The everyday activity of the citizens are the substance of which the social fabric is made, and that of civilization, too. Then the task of the social sciences is to identify the historical logic demanding a certain type of action from the leaderships and institutions, in order to preserve the identity of the nation and help it grow. In the quoted situation faced by 18th century Poland there was a notable illustration of the role played by those thinkers who called upon the nation's personages to measure up to the threat. The call for reforms, as that of Stanislaw Staszic in "Przestrogi dla Polski" (A Warning for Poland) was not to be heeded, and the man was not to play a role in history.

The social sciences can also play a part in meeting the civilizational challenge, by pointing out the relationship between the technical foundations of a society and the general state of its culture. Though we recognize that "economically backward nations occasionally play first fiddle in the realm of philosophy", we also know that the sound of a violin from a poor and backward land is often scorned. What is more, the very condition of the social sciences in Poland seems like another challenge. The present isolation from the world of learning outside assures their slipping into backwardness and provincialism.

It is usually simple to measure the material and civilizational base of a society, or the level of its technical know-how. Comparisons with other countries reveal a lot, though the real state of the arts may lie hidden in some obscure and well-guarded lab or institute. The broad public, being ignorant of the purely scientific advances being made, notices the results, such as the state of industry, the quality and advancement of the products, etc.

Technical backwardness is also reflected in the ecological threat: here the Polish challenge seems especially difficult and manifest. Current levels of land, water, food, and air pollution are indeed alarming, and reported by various organizations. The existence of many species of animals, plants, and of human life itself is in danger. Such phenomena as dying forests, shortage of drinkable water, excessive sulphur emissions

resulting from a coal- and lignite-based power system, land erosion, the misuse of chemicals in agriculture, rain-washing of artificial fertilizer into rivers, etc., etc., are a cause for great concern. There are indications that this technical civilization has run itself into a deadly vicious circle. But man is not busy destroying his environment through ignorance or malice – it is all in the course of satisfying vital needs. To live, he must produce such products as will be useful for his well-being; he must have industry and transportation, must produce electricity. He has invented the internal combustion engine, and uses millions of them in each country on the globe. But the extent of the damage to the natural and the human environment was realized too late. Certain measures were taken, as the limitation of toxic emissions, waste disposal systems are under construction in order to halt the rapid degeneration of living conditions. Though technicians do say that what technology has destroyed, technology can revive, that a “clean” industry and transportation are possible, but no technology will bring back the hundreds of species of plants and animals that have already died out as a result of our mindless pursuits. Thus to save the conditions for life, a new life style is needed, and a new relationship with nature.

The present homo sapiens species leads a life in a few meaningful relationships which determine the course and sense of our life. These are the relationship with nature, that with one's own self, with the society, i. e., other people, with the world of values, otherwise called culture, and, lastly, with God, and the supernatural, if one is a believer. The relationship with nature is usually limited to one of thoughtless and cruel exploitation. This starts with children stomping on grass and plants, breaking twigs and flowers, killing flies and insects, etc. But aside from this thoughtless and needless cruelty, man can survive only by killing other creatures. It is after all calculable how many pigs, cows and calves each one of us kills in a lifetime, and eats as part of our daily meals. Likewise, we can compute the tones of vegetables, bread, fruit, the kilogrammes of fish, eggs, and other life forms which pass through the digestive tract of a typical human being. As far as nature goes, then, it seems that a way to “limit the needless damage” must be found – we must try to harmonize our own vital interests with those of other creatures on this planet.

With regard to our relationship to ourselves, we do not usually notice any socially significant challenges, and this is a remarkable illusion. A growing challenge to society is presenting itself in such phenomena as drug abuse, alcoholism, cigarette smoking, as well as those diseases

caused by thoughtless attitude to health, with mental illness as a major problem in several countries now. These are all related to our ways of conduct, of life, of all behaviour which result from and characterize our own definition of the self, and of the role of the self in the world. This definition is extremely relevant to our social interdependencies, and the growing percentages of abnormal, apathetic, antisocial, addicted and otherwise deviant individuals, including those who consciously indulge their criminal impulses, testifies to this importance.

There are of course many challenges as far as the relationship of individual with society is concerned. Commonly, one talks about anti-social and social behaviour in this context. But there is a much more burning problem – the problem of usefully employing the existing vast pools of special talent and exceptionally gifted individuals, making up a few percent of each population. The elimination of evil from social life has seemed a challenge for many thousands of years, but no solutions yet proved effective. One reason may be our current perception of the relationship between an individual and society. It has shrunk to two dimensions: one, the individual's activity directed towards enriching the good of the society, and two, the individual's expectations as to how he could benefit from the society. Societies are strong with what and how much they receive from their members. Societies which are forced to give away more than they receive from the individuals grow weak and their existence may even be threatened. Contemporary societies have turned into welfare societies with their broad responsibilities for the daily matters of their members while some of them went even further and became over-protective, which has made them assume responsibilities far beyond their reach to the detriment of its individuals. It is clear that in Poland today, man-society relationships bear quite visible marks of a challenge.

Can the attitude of an individual to cultural values create problems that become a challenge for social groups or even the entire nation? Of course, it can. We have already highlighted some of them in Chapter One, like for example, maintaining continuity and retaining the identity of a nation. Yet at the same time realization of aspirations by greater communities of citizens can produce specific threats. A good illustration here is mass consumption that may lead to cultural indifference or to an easy renouncement of the need to identify with one's national culture. In large and affluent nations such phenomena need not be a threat for the future but they are a considerable threat in the case of smaller and less-affluent nations. There is the danger of a loosening of internal ties

that bind the nation and that maintain a feeling of its own value and the identification of individuals with the national whole. The result is disintegration and mass outflow of people to other countries. There can be many reasons for it. But an appropriate attitude to the values of culture, to traditions, the feeling of a bond with the values of one's own nation can diminish the aspirations born in the economic, or political spheres or in social conflicts. There are cases of nations living in a diaspora that for thousands of years have maintained their internal cohesion, their cultural identity, thanks to the adherence to the values of their culture. Poland faces problems caused by changes in the hierarchy of values widely accepted among all social classes. These changes have made economic or political values count more than the values of culture that uphold the nation's existence.

Finally, man's attitude towards God, deities, or supernatural forces is treated as a private affair, although there have been many societies in history and there are many today (e. g., Islam societies) which exercise public control over this sphere of man's life. In Poland the confrontation between religion and atheist Marxism has resulted in a vivid upsurge of religiousness and has made religion a factor of political life. The identification of socialism with atheism, rather unnecessary from the social and political points of view, has entangled the socialist system in a battle against religion, which has proved fatal for the system. I think, however, that in the future a similar adaptation will take place between socialism and religion that had once taken place between liberalism (also denounced by the Church) and religion.

These generally outlined challenges that result from the basic interrelations of human existence are divided on every day life into a multitude of issues resolved by individuals, groups, institutions, organs of the authority, and are the subject of studies of planners, legislators, administrators and families. Therefore, it is very difficult to determine accurately who should respond to these challenges and how, as they cut through the sphere of public life as well as the private sphere, defended not only by custom but also by law. There are certain challenges, noted in militia records that are treated as natural and inevitable, for instance, road accidents. When writing these words, (on September 26, 1988) I heard a radio announcement that over the past weekend twenty-two people died in road accidents and 260 were injured. I hear similar announcements in the morning news each time, with only the numbers of casualties changing. Each day several to several dozen people die and over one hundred are injured. Among the injured a large number are permanently injured,

unable to return to normal work, facing a long process of rehabilitation after which they will take up work reserved for invalids, or obtain disability pensions while unable to work. Automobiles kill thousands of people each year, while remaining an adored and desired "murderer". Each year thousands road accident victims become pension recipients. Automobiles poison the atmosphere, the soil and food products. What then is the automobile? Is it a tool used for work, a mean of transportation, a status symbol, creator of a large-scale civilizational complex, or a tool for killing people and poisoning life with impunity? This is a challenge of the world, which, however, has to be resolved by individual states, organizations, families. There are more of such civilizational challenges, as the technical civilization has at least two faces: it makes life easier, provides luxury, but it also draws a high price for this in its destruction of the natural living environment.

In a certain sense agriculture also poses similar challenges. These are economic, technical, as well as health and ecological challenges. In the 1980's agriculture was a branch of economy that most effectively resisted the crisis. From 1981 to 1988 crop yields were satisfactory, the rise of food prices was lower than the rise of industrial prices. If not for the huge waste in crop gathering, transportation, storage, processing and trade, one could achieve the so much desired food self-sufficiency, naturally within the sphere of products obtained in our climate. Agriculture is a branch of the economy that requires a broad range of biological, chemical, technical, economic and political knowledge. Modern agriculture means utilization of machines, chemical substances, biological knowledge, and these are means and methods that easily become harmful. For example, the incompetent use of artificial fertilizers, chemical herbicides and pesticides, the incompetent use of heavy machinery etc. can lead to poisoning of the soil and water, of food, the deterioration of the soil and even changes in the climate.

We are thus faced with a double challenge of a technical civilization: to adopt its advantages, without which there can be no economic or social progress, or political power, and also to be able to deal with the dangers it carries. Both challenges are addressed to science and technology, but also to the educational system, to business management, to the economic system that must stimulate action in both directions, to families and households, and to individuals - whether working or utilizing technical means for other purposes.

I have mentioned above that the technical challenges are also directed towards the schools system and to the general educational system, which

consists of all the institutions and social groups conveying knowledge, behaviour models and values to the young generation. The report on the state of education published in 1973 was an attempt at surveying education in its general sense, an analysis of its functions and internal interdependencies. Education can be defined as a system of institutions and actions which educate, or as an effect of this activity, or the state of enlightenment of the people. I think that for the purposes of considerations on the challenges of the future this manner of analyzing education as the state of enlightenment of society is the most useful one. The civilizational development of highly developed societies of the technical civilization has to a large extent been dependent on the level and effectiveness of schooling. However, it must be stressed that school provides only scientific knowledge, which is only one component of the system of knowledge used by man in his everyday, professional, public and private life. In a profession practical knowledge is also needed, as well as common knowledge transmitted by the family and community life. Not only the level of school education determines the skills, knowledge, wisdom and manner of behaving of members of a society. However, in a technical civilization this school knowledge is particularly important. It is not possible to create a specialized industry without having trained professionals. It is impossible to create effective forms of organization if the people involved do not understand its principles, if they are not familiar with the system of concepts and reasoning skills required by the given organization. Thus civilizational challenges in both forms – the subjugation of technology and defense against its negative effects – call for an appropriate level of education. And so it is also a challenge for the general system of national education.

The challenge for the educational system has two aspects: it has to meet the educational needs as these are understood by the parents and the students, who have specific expectations connected with education, and also it has to meet the objective requirements of the times for which the students are educated. These two aspects need not be parallel to each other as the concepts parents and student graduates have are usually behind time and oriented to the past, particularly in the case of parents, who idealize memories of their own school. In the post-war period, the educational system in Poland has been discussed many times over, and several times reformed. It has been an ideological and political battleground as well as a reflection of economic crises and difficulties. It is experiencing a sense of neglect, also technical neglect, a chronic shortage of fully-trained staff. It is being shaken by mergers of several schools

into one building with two or even three shifts of classes etc. As I write this, a subsequent committee of experts is preparing a report containing an evaluation and proposals for reform. There is an awareness of the necessity to adapt school curricula to the current state of education and to its constant progress, to adapt to the requirements of technology, to the national culture and its significance in determining the further fate of the nation, to prepare school graduates to the other, already discussed challenges. The motto "education for the future" was already put forward by prof. B. Suchodolski towards the end of the 1940s. In the beginning of the late 1970s a committee of experts formulated the motto "education for development". However, neither of these mottos has been transformed into a compact educational doctrine, much less into a programme or a curriculum of individual subjects. If Poland is to become a modern country, then just as in the 18th century it has to create a system of education that would provide for subsequent generations the knowledge necessary to meet the challenges as well as the will and courage needed for action. Knowledge is but one of the factors necessary for meeting the challenges. Other factors include sufficiently strong will power to overcome individual languidness and to conquer obstacles, the development of feelings that make up a total human being.

One can speak of a double challenge for the educational system in Poland. First of all its very state is a challenge in itself. The second challenge is the state of future generations educated by these schools. The first challenge is the task of the school administration system, for the educational policy or rather for the political management of schools. The second challenge is for educators and requires an analysis of future challenges and an answer to the question: how are educated Poles able to deal with these challenges? What will the future require of them and what are the schools to be like if they are to produce people who are able to deal with these challenges?

Naturally, I am aware that such an application of features of the educational system to the future graduates of it and their activities on leaving school may be a futile undertaking. This is because the influence an educator can have on his students' future behaviour is in a given period determined by future, today still unknown, situations. Nevertheless, certain individual features, which also play a role in outlining future behaviour can be effectively shaped by teachers. These are the ability to work, perseverance at work and in striving towards goals, an attitude of courage that does not shy away from facing obstacles, striving towards innovation and new forms of activity.

I think that an important element of challenges of the future is also the challenge towards taking up initiatives, resourcefulness, courage, intelligence and imagination of Poles. In the past, courage was first of all understood as courage in the battlefield. The international situation was such that it challenged the courage of the soldier. But already Marshal Pilsudski said "The times are coming when the labour race will be a characteristic feature, as before the iron and blood race had been" (I am quoting from memory). This motto used to hang in each school classroom in Poland, but its influence was effected by the war, which was once again the iron and blood race. If we assume that for Europe the iron and blood race ended in 1945, we must realize that - to recall what Osmańczyk wrote in "Sprawy Polaków" (Polish Issues) back in 1946 - during the past ten years we have been hopelessly losing the labour race. Nobody asks a nation what kind of governments it used to have and what kind it has now, but what it is. Therefore, in order to meet all the challenges discussed here, the educational system and all educational institutions must decide what type of model of a Pole it intends to consistently implement. We must stress that various models of an educated Pole have been put forward by various circles of scholars and ideologues. Different views have come together here, of which two are in the sharpest conflict with each other. The first maintains that the factors that determine what a nation and its citizens are like are the social system, the organization of the economy, the prevailing political and socio-economic doctrine, and that these factors set the framework for the behaviour of individuals, who consciously or unconsciously adapt to them. Within the span of decades there is shaping of character patterns, of types of character that are accustomed to function in accordance with the principles of the system and unable to change their behaviour. The second view established a greater autonomy of the individual character in the existing social conditions by stating that an individual character possessing the appropriate moral attitude, convictions and aspirations is able to confront any conditions particularly if it has examples of other possibilities, and with decisive actions can transform undesired conditions, or at least create in them its own enclave of independence. And if such enclaves are created by millions of people, the general state of the nation undergoes change. There is no lack of pessimistic views that Poles are unable to represent the second attitude, that they accept the existing state of things as an excuse for passivity, lack of resourcefulness and indolence.

Whichever way we would use to classify the existing political, inter-

national, civilizational, economic, educational and other challenges, in the final count they always lead to the challenge of people's individual character. In accordance with what we have said about the nature of the challenge, what is required is courage, will power and resolute action. The traditional duels had their own code, and the challenge and standing up to it determined precisely the behaviour of the challenging party and the challenged party. Standing up to the challenge of the future also has its rules, perhaps not as clearly defined as the code of honour, whose strict observance made the difference between a duel and a crime or attempted murder. And who is the challenging party in these challenges of the future? A challenge is always formulated in categories of comparisons and competition with other nations and states. The 18th century challenges for Poland were in the reforms in Russia, Prussia and Austria, which created strong absolutist states. What are these challenges like today, seen in such a perspective? As we have already said, we are losing the modernization race to our neighbours and nearly all the European states, which can be seen for instance in the international survey published each year in the Statistical Yearbook. The economic debt, the huge scope of absenteeism at work, the rate of employee fluctuation, the low rate of utilization of the work-time, the high consumption of energy and raw materials – all these are burdens that from the start rule out possibilities of attaining a good position in the race. As a nation we enter the race in conditions similar to those in the 18th century: with poor organization, worse equipment and less determination, knowing less what we really want and what we aim to achieve. We do not believe that large-scale plans could fascinate us in the manner the six-year plan had fascinated many, in suggesting the opening of a truly new period in the life of the nation. Perhaps the plan has remained a fascinating attempt, but methods of its implementation, connected with and subordinated to the Stalinist political doctrine, have evoked a deep feeling of resentment in the minds of the people, an aversion to if not a fear of new plans.

These, however, are theories of a rather statistical nature, concerning mass-scale phenomena and are too general to answer accurately the question of what the awareness of these challenges is in society and what the forces existing in it are that could meet these challenges. Let us now take a closer look at these issues.

Chapter 3

The Condition of Society

So far we have discussed the heritage of the past relevant to the challenges of the future. Let us now consider the condition of the society poised to face the task in question, and analyze the specific importance of meeting the challenges. Has Polish society evolved the qualities and energies indispensable in solving the problems and eliminating the threats?

Each human society creates its own collective awareness, which addresses the current problems, situations, and likely dangers in the form of circular opinions, judgements, viewpoints, motions and strategies. Each society is conscious of its needs, its ideals and purposes, and is able to assess whether the aims are getting closer or fading away. There is a way in which every society "knows" its condition, and "knows" what must be done. The problem is, this perception could be at times false, because the society's self-awareness is subject to delusions inhibiting the understanding of and reaction to actual threats.

Meeting a challenge comprises, therefore, first the recognition of the elements of danger, and this recognition must reach all the way down to the "grass-roots" level. There have been, after all, very perceptive writers in Poland of the 18th century, like Staszic, and others, who warned of the dangers looming in the wings. But these men failed to get the attention of the landlord upper-class, as they failed to impress the minds of countless deputies to the regional Assemblies or the National Assembly (the Sejm), or the aristocracy of the time. Thus, meeting a challenge, implies drawing up a plan of changes and preparations, and reforms to alter the threatening status quo. The third element is that of mobilizing social energies, galvanizing the will-power to initiate effective counteraction. All social changes by definition take place in a struggle. Each social status quo evolves its own classes which identify with it and which have a vested interest in its continuity and vitality. Such groups therefore are bound to be hostile toward any change likely to jeopardize their position.

Lastly, among the very cornerstones of a society is the effectiveness of any social change undertaken. History abounds in instances of reforms ending in precisely the kind of situations they were designed to avoid.

All of the foregoing elements of meeting challenges listed above have been considered in terms of the social macro-scale. But, in order to counteract a threat effectively, the action taken must be "across the scale" of the whole society, with its array of classes, social institutions, social groups, families and individuals. It helps little to determine the macro-scale actions and tasks when one neglects the middle- and micro-scale social undertakings, i.e., if the general tasks are not devolved downward throughout the existent hierarchies, and throughout broad sectors of society.

Let us then try to analyze the composition of our own society and to name the particular challenges facing the constituent elements, so as to assess more precisely the capabilities of effective measures. We shall start at the level of the individual, and work our way up on to more complex constituents, ending with an overview of the whole.

Polish society as of 1988 is a society in transition. The great social conflict of the early 1980s has galvanized a process of change within the so-called "Stalinist system" of power. The escalated inflation following the failure of the price/wage adjustment operation, as scheduled in the Second Stage of the economic reform, has been the cause of a new wave of working-class discontent, strikes, and renewed social revindications. This was met by the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) and its allies with proportional reaction aimed at defusing the tension. Broad debates of the 1987-88 period have underscored the sense of economic and political threat not only to the socialist system and to the power of the Party, but also to the state and to its vital national interests. The view now almost universally accepted is that a political reform must accompany the economic one if either is to succeed. Political change will focus on the operation of the PUWP and the conception of its leading role, the principle of nomination of senior administrators and managers through PUWP recommendation ("nomenklatura"), the accountability of PUWP functionaries for decisions taken by state administrators, the extent of autonomy of state authorities from PUWP bodies, the increase of civil liberties, limitation of censorship, freedom of association and political/social organization, founding political clubs, journals, etc.

All the foregoing are important elements in the process of change, whose crucial moment was the resignation of the government submitted to the Sejm on September 18, 1988. This government was dissolved un-

der critical public opinion, but also under pressure from the trade unions, representing the work-force, irritated and weary from inflation and the helplessness of the government on this account. A "round table" was announced, where representatives of the authorities, and parties of the establishment were to meet with various circles of the so-called "constructive opposition". Preparatory sessions of the "round table" have seen the presence of "Solidarity" representatives, those of the PUWP, the allies, the Church, which is to have an important part in the debates of the "round table" itself, as not only a mediator and observer, but an active political participant. Such an other meetings and preparations for the orderly co-existence and possible co-operation of diverse political tendencies testify to far-reaching changes taking place within the Party itself, but also to changes within the opposition. Let us remember that in 1981, "Solidarity" championed the slogan "everything or nothing at all", and supported it in subsequent years, rejected participation in elections and the right to form its own Parliamentary representation in the Sejm and the National Councils (regional assemblies). The present situation is no less than a de facto recognition of the opposition as a real political force, an attempt to find for it a place in the political system presently undergoing reform, aiming to preserve the political power of the Party.

This process of change is taking place on many planes. Therefore it is important to examine its relationship vis a vis the challenges of the future. Already back in 1987 the postulates of the Consultative Council provided that the "natural and spontaneous vitality of the society must be released wherever possible, to reinvigorate the society's capacity for growth". Another of the postulates was to review the society and its constituent elements, to examine the interdependencies of the whole without breaking them down into isolated issues of economy, culture, politics, the Church, free associations, and so on. These debates were the scene of attempts to comprehend the totality of the economic crisis with respect to its relationship to politics, to civic attitudes, to the values of culture and of morality. Among the points at issue was one stating that the Polish crisis was becoming one of organizational structures, of will-power, of consciousness and of knowledge. But the prevalent concept was that the dominant factor endangering the crisis has been the crisis of political power. This is not an attempt to argue this case, nor analyze its importance. I would like only to consider certain diagnoses put forth at the sessions of the Consultative Council.

I wish to stress at the outset that we should avoid seeing impersonal organizational structures in terms of autonomous active beings. True,

organizations and institutions, like technical devices, do tend to behave according to their inner "nature", but all are started by people and do what those who control them do. Their utilization relies only on the knowledge, imagination and intelligence of the controllers. As the same power tool can be used by two individuals to turn out completely different items, so two institutions identically equipped and furnished may show different achievement depending on the quality of the personnel. Organization of institutions and social structures determines a lot, but by no means everything. Thus, our discussion will be devoted mostly to the quality of the personnel, that which is the driving force within institutions and machines, laws and material objects. This is to be sure, not a popular viewpoint. One rather hears that the structures which are created should naturally force each individual into behavioural patterns beneficial for all. However, this is not a realistic notion. Even within one family, siblings will display different temperaments, different attitudes toward household duties: this variation within a school-group is even greater, and larger still in the work-place. The most fragmented jobs on the assembly-line can be performed variously by various people. Structure and organization may enforce similar, but not identical behavioural patterns. One must not forget, that humans are not only social beings who adapt to the standards of communal life, but also individualists capable of original and unique behaviour patterns, visible in various fields of life.

We must then begin our analysis of the conditions of the society with the condition of the individuals who make up the society. It was Herbert Spencer who had said that musty bricks will not build a strong house, and this statement provided the cornerstone of his liberal theory of society. Let us ask then about the quality of the Poles, as such bricks, and the durability of the house that can be built. No scientific answer can be produced to this, but then we treat it only as a literary metaphor, which aptly compresses the intentions of this analysis. We wish to determine whether the 38-odd million Poles can present a sufficient number of those endowed with qualities desirable from the viewpoint of meeting the challenges of the future. Many criteria can be used to classify these 38 millions of individuals. Firstly, perhaps by age: and here we can say that Poland's population is a young one, although we are beginning to witness processes of ageing, though not as intensive as elsewhere in Europe. Though with a shrinking percentage of income-earning-age population, Poland continues with a relatively high birth-rate. From the viewpoint of its demographic composition, Poland is

better equipped to cope with its challenges than countries with zero-rate or negative-rate growth. There is, of course, the argument that countries with a natural decrease of the population have less trouble with housing shortages, building schools, hospitals, creating jobs, etc. Poland, with roughly 700 thousand new births each year and almost the same number of first-graders entering school each autumn, with an equally impressive number ending up on the job market a dozen or so years later, has its share of growth-related headaches. But basically, Poland's population is demographically healthy, its problems notwithstanding. The sexual composition of society is likewise advantageous - marrying age population shows a numerical superiority of males over females, with a balance returning in the older age-groups. However, the state of public health is no cause for such an optimism. Excessive infant mortality rates, and the alarming phenomenon of growing mortality of working-age men are just two cases in point. As for education, Poland's population ranks approximately midway on the scale of nations, with a notable drop of university-level students in recent years. The number of primary-school dropout is also disquieting, and casts doubts on the overall quality of education provided, with particular stress on the inadequacy of vocational schools of agriculture. A report, soon to be submitted, is now being elaborated by a committee of experts, under the leadership of prof. Czeslaw Kupisiewicz, and it will itemize a full list of fallacies noticed in the educational establishment. These will be a good illustration of the characteristics of the society as a whole, and their breakdown into social categories. In this way we will be able to project and estimate the numbers of individuals likely to display such and such desirable traits. But one is also aware that two individuals holding similar degrees from the same department, may carry out their professional tasks in diametrically different ways, and therefore, each one will present a different value from the viewpoint of meeting future challenges. A modified classification is therefore proposed: into individuals who contribute highly to the progress of society, i. e., inventors, scholars who propose new theories or hypotheses, discoverers of new research fields, artists uncovering new human values, organizers with significant achievements, and employees on all levels who discharge their duties to perfection - in short: all those who, each in a different field, move this world ahead and create new and lasting values. This group would be decisive for meeting challenges. The second group on this scale would be that of persons carrying their tasks adequately, correctly, albeit without personal creativity. These are the earnest contributors to the maintenance of a satisfactory status quo,

sustaining it against the tendencies of decay or regression. Here are the no-nonsense hard-workers, the implementers who carry out the ideas of the first category.

The third social group is made up of those individuals who care little how they execute their obligations, indeed, sometimes they do this well, sometimes not at all. These care nought for quality, their work is careless and their behaviour is also such, they show little ambition and drive, and do not aspire to reliability. This phenomenon starts with straight "c" in school and a likewise "fair" level of work, and of human relationships, but is often coupled with persistent claims to a better life, and a dexterous use of slogans of equality. This category does not contribute to meeting the challenges and in fact is a hindrance. The last group is those, who are definite stumbling blocks in the society's march ahead. Professional criminals, alcoholics causing losses to the economy and to the community, drug addicts, parasites, persons involved in huge illicit operations leading to great private gains but none at all to the society. To be sure, there are also categories of persons incapable of work, ill, severely disabled, post-traumatics, with congenital defects, etc., who must be supported by the society, as must all elderly and post working age persons. The numerical proportions among these categories in society are significant for the condition of society as a whole, and for the meeting of challenges. But this is really self-evident.

At present we are not able to give a statistical breakdown of Polish society among the groups mentioned. Psychologists tell us that roughly 2.0 per cent of the members of each society are the extremely gifted, another 6.0 per cent are very gifted. The number of those who are, of necessity, a burden to society, in Poland hovers around 15.0 per cent. To that we can add the numbers of criminals in detention centres, the estimated numbers of drug addicts and alcoholics - in short, we do have some data providing us with a chance of quantitatively assessing the composition of forces pushing Poland forward as well as those pulling her back.

But regardless of the capabilities and efficiency of individuals, growth and regression are also determined by the organizational condition of the economy and of the social institutions, which will be discussed later. For the time being, let us analyze the role of the individuals. What do they determine? The level of the individual is critical in the intensity and productivity of labour achieved under the current external conditions. This is also where the individual creativity can be manifested, not only in the arts and sciences, but in all fields of life and at every work sta-

tion. The autonomy possessed by each individual is sufficient (as both Marxism and Christian doctrines happily concede) to give him a clear choice between doing good and doing evil. Sociological research tells us that people act reasonably when they have a sense of importance of what they do, and when their actions bring them closer to a realization of their own vital goals in life. Each one has a pool of energy, talent, knowledge and skills which can be utilized in many ways. The United States are an oft-quoted example of a country which in the 19th century experienced a selective concentration of capable and enterprising individuals, whom the US system enabled to act freely, and to end up in success or in failure, but at private discretion and at private risk. It is also pointed out by sociologists that countries organized according to a welfare-state system, restrict and eliminate the importance of individual enterprise and initiative, leading to a counter-selective process and to attitudes of passivity and escalated claims from society, and unabashed incompetence.

But, as we have indicated, individuals have freedom of action in solving their individual predicaments. To be sure, we do not hold the Poles to be particularly deficient in this respect, in comparison with other nations. The thing needed is for the talents of each citizen to be used to the full. We believe that the present time of transition will stimulate inducements to greater social activity, not only in the political sense, but also in the economic, social, and cultural, and contribute to an improved standard of living for each of us, and an increased national strength for the state. Spencer was correct, I believe, when he said that the structure erected may contribute to the durability of the bricks, but if the bricks are musty to begin with, neither they nor the structure will last long. A society composed of frustrated, embittered individuals will not cope with the challenges listed in the previous chapter. Thus in order to educate and encourage such capable, brave and effective individuals, one must start with the educational institutions and groups, the most essential of which is the family.

The family has become a focus of interest for many reasons. Since there is such common agreement on the importance of the family: scholars as well as politicians, moralists and social workers all profess the family to be of utmost importance to the future of the nation – the greatest attention is paid to the impact of the society on the family as well. Attempts have also been made to determine the best set of conditions, fostering the growth of the family and its fulfillment of the major functions. These are that of the biological continuity of the society and the cultural continuity of the nation. Demographic growth can be

sustained by families whose children are numerous enough to provide a natural population increase, and who are raised up to certain standards. And, before school-age, family provides the initial contact with language, customs, the criteria of good and evil, teaches to recognize people and objects, react to the actions of others in desirable behavioural patterns. It helps internalize basic values, manners, provides basic knowledge about the world, about others, about hygiene and what not. Most of all the family transmits to the child the colloquial knowledge and skills, which are the basic "survival kit" for anyone in later life. Throughout life, the family remains a reference group, which verifies the values and attitudes.

There are also important economic functions for the family. It feeds, clothes, provides shelter, ensures safe physical growth and health care. Many crucial issues of public health and of the economy are determined in the families, which also cater to the emotional needs, provide a sense of security, privacy, compensation for the "wounds and humiliations" incurred outside. Thus, it is a vital element in preserving the mental health of society, but also in supervising the behaviour of its members, primarily children. A balanced, cohesive family is a hedge against abnormalities of all kinds. Most social misfits originate from broken homes. All of the foregoing provides proof that the role of the family in meeting the varied challenges of the future will be great and that a lot depends on the family's continuing ability to fulfill the functions requisite for a successful society of the future.

Are Polish families able to handle these vital functions adequately? Many scientific analyses have been devoted to the family life of the various social classes. At present we can safely maintain that the educational function of the family has been eroded as families have been drawn into the ongoing conflict between school and Church. As a third most important educational institution, the family has stood mostly on the side of the Church, but various factors have combined to weaken its influence. Primary among these has been the employment of mothers outside the home, the massive housing shortage (families unable to get their own flat and thus severely limited in the child-bearing function are rapidly growing in numbers). The influence of mass-culture, mostly through TV, on the young generation is also a factor, as are the changing school curricula, which eliminate parental "help with homework problems". Youth culture, being a product of the consumer society, uses the young as a tool to create a distinct, lucrative market. The generation gap, a result of the increased pace of civilizational change, causes parents and children to live in mutually-exclusive worlds. Can the family thus continue as a

source of social energy necessary for stand up to the challenges of the 21st century?

Naturally, we must start with the status quo observed in Poland in 1988 A.D. Despite the negative factors mentioned above, the family still generates the inner force involved in the strong emotional and biological ties, mutual interdependencies, ties of custom, moral obligation and economic necessities. The family not only provides the infant with its first experiences of socialization, it also "places" the child within various hierarchies, social, economic, and creates the material foundations of support. Children raised without families, in various care-centres, have a much harder time making their way through life. Among the contributing factors to the strength of the family, one should list the biological ties between parents and offspring, the sexual ties between the spouses, sense of moral obligation toward the family, common traditions and customs, the possibility of facing outside threats together, and a wide scope of acceptable behaviour, the linking of one's economic status to that of his/her family, etc.

Under the welfare state, however, these inner ties are reduced, and, in a manner of speaking - "defused". The administrators take on some of the traditional responsibilities of the family, especially those connected with the care of the young generation - social welfare, free education, health care, full employment. Other services tend to weaken the family's importance in this respect, and instill in the young an attitude of claims proportional to the extent to which the state has relieved the family of its basic duties. But the economic crisis, having paralyzed the states ability to discharge its obligations, reinstates the traditional role of the family; albeit the family is now ill-equipped to cope with the material as well as moral and motivational aspects of its regained functions. A significant proportion of Polish families are now in this situation, as we can conclude, the reduced capacities of the state welfare system forces them to undertake tasks, of which they are no longer capable. Then, the so-called "crisis of the family" arises primarily from the initial taking away of certain family functions by the state, and the subsequent default on these obligations, caused by a general crash of the economy.

In any case, regardless of the root cause, the question about the family's ability to generate the social energy needed to cope with the 21st century challenges, remains open, and we must conclude, that under present conditions, the answer is only partly positive. One must add, nevertheless, that the potential is there and that it may become accessible and usable, which we shall discuss in the following chapter.

The economic functions of families are concentrated in households. For many years now, I have advocated the view that these are the places where the issues of our national economy are decided, though few in my audience have taken me seriously on this count. Few people think that households can be significant elements in overcoming the crisis, and that a reform of housekeeping should rank high on the agenda. Of course, by this I do not mean any regimentation, but a fuller use of the existing potential — the households are, after all, a very sensitive indicator of the state of the national economy. Any upswing, any deterioration, are reflected immediately in the homes, which also provide the first signals of imminent (economically motivated) social unrest. But we are used to thinking of the households strictly in consumer terms. However, the functions of the households can be seen in a different light when we analyze consumption as a process of five stages, i. e., of purchase, possession, utilization (consumption proper), waste, and mindless destruction of goods. Clearly, the way in which commodities are possessed, used, wasted or destroyed in nearly 11 million households is their "controlling" function in the economy: they are the institutions which monitor the conditions, the policies: they juxtapose promises and plans with the actual situation, they measure and judge with merciless objectivity. Within a planned economy such as ours, this function is especially important, because of the statutory limits on individual economic enterprises, and the employment of the majority in the socialized sector. Households check the extent to which the managers of the economy are delivering on their promises, and, naturally, they are also the first to introduce economy-minded thinking. Long before a child even hears of economics in school its mother will have introduced it to the habit of penny-saving, or else to free-spending attitudes and to wasteful patterns. Households are then responsible for creating and verifying views on money, its management, economic values, obligations being the essential attitudes toward economic matters among the population.

I have said that the initial warning signals about the economy are generated by the households. One should add here that many instances of popular unrest in Poland have been of the "consumer revolt" type, unleashed by the distressed housekeepers and views. After all, they are the ones charged with the "unconditional" duties, those of feeding, clothing and nursing the family. They are called upon to compensate for the shortages with their own resourcefulness and ingenuity. The first hallmarks of rising discontent are those shown by the wives and mothers, which bear upon the attitudes of the husbands and sons. Women, to

be sure, also temper some of the most extreme forms of protest. Their centuries-old wisdom dictates the ways of coping with privation, saving "for a rainy day", etc. These are passed on from mother to daughter for many generations. This is also the mentality which underlies the common Polish sprees of panic buying of staples, which could threaten the stability of even the healthiest economy. Two world wars have taught these mothers and wives to cope with daily life while their husbands fought their battles. Thus, each economic crisis tests primarily the value of the housekeeper. These have for generations consisted of practical and common knowledge, passed on by the enterprising and foresightful women. At present, Poland's households have not been as dramatically influenced by the technological revolution with all its deep-freezers, refrigeration and vacuum packing, pre-processed foods and the limitation of house chores. Those countries which have undergone the process in its fullness, i. e., the developed capitalist states, are able to naturally harmonize the households with the rest of the economy. Advertising helps producers distribute commodities, and marketing enables the adjustment of production to the current levels of demand, as felt by the households. In Poland, these elements are substituted by central planning which, as is daily shown, is not able to provide comparable efficiency, due to its impotence against the inertia of producers. This is among the chief paradoxes of the socialist planned economy: it aims to organize and ensure supply, yet is plagued by notorious shortages which cause periodic social rebellion.

The household is important to the planned economy for a number of reasons: it not only tests the plan and the output, in its quantity and quality, but it also determines the level of consumption and its composition. Households in consumer societies become a driving force in increasing output, because of the current and projected demand of the market. Such a situation is not possible in an economy whose market is not demand- but supply-oriented. This is precisely the kind of market which has proved a "holy scourge" of the planned economies, unable to emancipate themselves from the Stalinist model of management. However, Polish households have never fully reconciled themselves to this mentality. Each Polish housekeeper has her own "economic policy", her own ideas about the vital needs of the family, by which she determines the spending of her husband's disposable income. Another paradox of our economy is the virtual impossibility of gauging the real income of each household, whether in terms of cash, goods, or services. It is remarkable how the monthly spendings always exceed by far the officially-stated in-

come. Recent drastic inflation has gone far toward exacerbating these "irrationalities" of the economy, and "auxiliary sources" of income have come to play a major role in family budgets. An ever-greater number of households are joining the "parallel economy", where the US dollar and other convertible currencies are used as tender, or else a direct exchange of goods and services replaces purchases. No doubt, this is a reaction to the economic crisis, an adjustment to being left to one's own resources to get by.

We have recognized that the household is a major source of social and economic energies, and thus are faced with a question: how can these energies be tapped toward overcoming the crisis, can they be harmonized with other economic tendencies in the society at large? As homes are a place where the economic awareness of the nation is shaped, they can also, possibly, send spurious signals of deepening crisis, and aggravate further the social discontent leading to revolt. The socialized economy has always claimed the large scale as its area, heedless of the necessity for a leverage linking it to the individual consumer, to promote the thrifty and rational use of its products, cautious and frugal attitudes toward personal property, educating the youth in proper respect for economic success through gradual accumulation, etc. What the creators of this economy failed to take into account was also the impact of the households on public opinion and thereby on governmental policies, the factor of social control and evaluation of the managers of the economy. They did not believe, in short, that the future of socialism would be decided in the families and their households.

Among the society's families, the greatest importance attached to the individual farmers' families with their integrated households-farms. The farmer's homestead is a type of enterprise where the family is directly engaged in production, where it makes a certain proportion of consumer products, and therefore, its own productiveness reflects its level of consumption. As we should add, peasant families have for centuries also had an important cultural function, and have become, along with the intelligentsia, a second social class responsible for the national culture, especially the arts.

The farming homestead-household is then an operation which is better equipped to tackle the crisis with efficiency, because it relies directly on the energies of the family, the aspirations, ambitions, and emotional involvement of each member. This is in keeping with the view that agriculture, owing to the direct participation of the family, is less vulnerable to the crisis, and emerges from it sooner, and thus can "pull through"

the rest of the economy. Indeed, it seems that farming can be critical to overcoming the crisis, and in re-orientation of the Polish economy away from heavy industry into less capital- and energy-intensive branches that can nevertheless provide high returns. But the present condition of agriculture calls for important investments, including those of the political and social kind. I would like to draw attention to the following points.

There is presently a division into three branches of what was once perceived as one, i. e., of farmers, the village, and agriculture. The villages, for one, are gradually being inhabited by non-farming population, by some estimates now numbering roughly 40.0 per cent. Some villages with no farming and no farmers are known to exist around big metropolies, and their number is growing. Agriculture, for its part, is fast becoming a thing of research institutes and farming vocational schools. More and more city-bred entrepreneurs treat the farm as an enterprise, able to give them better returns than any other investment. And the farmers are becoming a political category, whose importance to society lies not in the production of food or the creation of folk-art, but in the potential for political action. What course these processes will further take is difficult to predict, but the issue deserves more attention.

Another important element is the flight of youth from rural areas: if "flight" seems an improper word, let us speak about an "exodus". The exodus of young women and girls creates special problem, as it impedes the creation of families by the young farmers taking over farms. Other factors hindering agricultural production include the over-dispersion of land-holdings, and the consequent need for integration. One can also cite the faulty relationship between agriculture and industry which is not interested in supplying badly-needed farming machinery and tools, chemicals, and auxiliary equipment. The incompetence of industry on this count is a prime cause of waste in agriculture. The situation is similar with regard to produce-purchasing and supplies. These factors combined mean that the efficiency of the individual farm is determined by a weighted average of the imagination, devotion and know-how of farmers on the one hand, and the attitude and competence of regional and local administrators on the other.

In the outlook of the administrators of agriculture, their own role has come to be identified with that of the "high priests", in control of the magic of society and of farm production. Moreover, the present forms of regional "self-government" lack the necessary competence, and the legal framework of the representative organizations is not fully taken advantage of by farmers. So, as it seems increasingly clear, framers should

count primarily on themselves, their own ingenuity and resourcefulness. Traditional strength associated with the rural family and the vitality of the family farm, if properly used, may become a meaningful driving force in overcoming the economic crisis. The rural family has preserved to the greatest extent the traditional work-ethic and an attitude toward life as a duty, which may well provide the basis for a moral revival of the society as a whole.

In continuation of our analysis of the condition of society, let us now consider the importance of the individual work-place to the economy. Planners and economists tend to see the economy in the large scale, in terms of its branch make-up, the constituent strands, etc. But as we try to reach down to where the individual, as producer and consumer, makes his impact, we inevitably come to the individual work-place. on the machine-hall floor, at the desk, at any location where the employee appears daily with his abilities, his aspirations, ambitions, his will to work and to create something new from the material entrusted to him - be it matter, or words, or numbers, or human beings. At each work-place the quality and quantity of production is determined, here the real labour productivity is revealed, here meet the individualities of the workers with their attitudes and aims, determined by the individual upbringing, with the economic policy of the state, and the organization of labour, reflecting in turn the capabilities of the ministers and party secretaries and managers - all these condense in the daily product and its quality. The organization of the workplace determines the condition of the economy as much as anything else. Any governmental reform which does not find its reflection in the individual workplace, will indeed be a paper reform, because the negative phenomena reforms aim to eradicate are manifest mainly in the workplaces - waste and squandering of resources, material, time, energy, premature write-offs of machinery, defective products, etc. It is common for reforms to try big. Then those large-scale measures somehow "get lost on the way down to the workplace". And a whole lot in the workplace depends on the will, skill, sense of duty and culture of the individual. It is here that people display their interests, aspirations, their will to work, or their indolence, apathy, lack of self-motivation, or plain stupidity.

There is a technical justification for each workplace in the economy: in a broad sense, each manual or white-collar job has its technique implicit in the type of its material, which is an element in a technical system. But it is also an element of an economic system, which must balance the cost of creating the workplace, of the materials used, the wages paid, against the profits brought by this work. Among the greatest ills be-

falling our economy is, I think, the number of workplaces without a justification, being instances of employment, but not of work. At the actual shop-floor level, one can easily see whether a given post provides only employment, i. e., a legal condition between an enterprise and an employee, or provides work, i. e., a real relationship between a worker and a material used to create a product. Lack of a product should indicate the economic unviability of a job. The planned economy is plagued by the creation of ever-new sectors of administration and economically useless posts, particularly at the managerial level.

Nevertheless, this is very hard to eradicate, as the socialized economy, having dispossessed the individual of this right to economic enterprise, has undertaken to provide all with a subsistence. The simplest way to do that is to provide employment for all within state-owned enterprises. Hence, mandatory full employment becomes a consequence of socializing the economy. The employment relationship becomes a sort of "pledge of a maintenance" by the state regardless of the goods thus created. Pay cannot thus be related to the quantity or quality of product, as every paycheck must provide a type of barebone "pension", paid to each individual by way of "damages" for depriving him/her of a chance for self-employment. This is naturally a very short and metaphorical description of the situation, and the issue has not as yet been adequately researched.

Many attempts to verify the technical and economical viability of posts so far have ended in failure, or worse, in a parody. This is clear when we consider that a planned economy upholds the principle of full employment, and is used to increasing output by increased employment and not by increased efficiency – verification then goes against the grain of such an economy, and is pointless.

Any analysis of the workplace will bring forth the importance of the individuals and their qualifications and attitudes. Hence the simple conclusion about the great role of proper education in a healthy economy, as well as, naturally, in all other fields of public life. Upbringing and education should prepare the future citizen to meet the challenges with competence and determination. As we have already dealt with the issues of upbringing in the family, let us devote some space to public education and related institutions.

The educational system is commonly viewed as responsible for a society's level of literacy, its standard of ethics, level of culture and similar categories. Educators themselves are partly responsible for this excess of credit, for they ceaselessly and proudly stress that the "natural family" and non-professional educational institutions offer little by comparison

with their own highly enlightened services. They claim to bring literate, rational, patriotic, reliable and hardworking citizens. But, alas, the educational system is presently caught up in the middle of an ideological conflict between Marxism and Roman Catholicism, and this greatly reduces the efficiency of the system. Other political controversies between the authorities and some sections of society also weaken the educational system's influence on youth. Teaching as such, however, has less to do with these much publicized conflicts, and more indeed with providing adequately trained personnel and properly-equipped buildings. Critical assessments of Polish schools bring out various shortcomings, so, lest we repeat our remarks of the previous chapter and lest we prejudice the verdicts of the expert committees, we shall only say that school-leavers in the post-war period have shown "normal" work-patterns, i. e., there was a sizeable percentage of talented individuals, a good measure of these with average abilities, and a large one of work-shirks as well.

What is notable about the eighties is the disquieting emigration of university-level graduates, i. e., of gifted, capable and enterprising persons who would be, in objective terms, most useful for the Polish economy. It is also remarkable that upon taking up employment in the highly developed countries they match or outstrip the performance of local-university graduates. This implies that they would achieve similarly high work-standards at home if given similar conditions, except perhaps that they are under greater pressures abroad, related to the necessities of resettlement.

But the question stands: do schools prepare their graduates to cope with the crisis, or make full use of their potential? I believe not, because the socialist system makes one tend to rely on the planned activities of the state more than on personal stamina. Among the basic faults of our schools is the fact that they do not develop any will of action, that they favour passivity, they reward a dutiful sticking to the directives rather than self-reliant adventurism. So the schools are not a place which prepares youth to overcome a crisis; if anything they train attitudes which could prevent crises. They reflect the society within which they function. It is equally worth pointing out that upon entering a workplace, graduates usually feel helpless and powerless to change the arrangements they find there, the relationships between management and the workforce as well as within each of these bodies. They only begin to be effective after they have adjusted to these conditions, and this often means, after giving up their plans and ambitions.

In analyzing the institutions which will decide the meeting of the

challenges of the future, let us begin by an overview of the enterprises of our centrally-planned economy. The term "enterprise" is used here in a loose sense, in a sociological rather than legal sense, and we include here various levels of management and coordinators, enterprises proper, large combined-establishments, whether industrial or otherwise, and in general socialized workplaces. There are over 50,000 such entities in the industrial branch alone. The supervisory and coordinative bodies are in fact "enterprise equivalents" whose activity is nothing short of clerical. Their managers surely feel more as functionaries than entrepreneurs, due to the system of "supplying and directing" the economy (which despite the publicity, has so far been left untouched by reform), the managers of these bodies are supposed to implement the policies passed down to them from the top. These bodies are notable for the variety of functions which they perform: not only the economic, but also political, social, educational, cultural, etc. The essential interests, regulations, organizational make-up of these institutions, as well as the habits and positions of their functionaries have become entrenched in the past forty years and are holding on despite the winds of change. This legal and organizational plexus, combined with the political power of the party supporting it, aims to fulfill numerous and diverse functions, and with a government-subsidized base, shows remarkable resilience in all crises - in fact no political or economic recession since 1956 has been able to undermine it. As it was identified with socialism itself, party ideologues had always come to its rescue, and defended its vital prerogatives. To be sure, one can find individual enterprises which, even under this system, continue achieving excellent returns, but this is mostly due to the individual ingenuity of their managers and employees, in contrast to the universally-followed guidelines.

Recurrent periods of strikes and social unrest also underscore another characteristic element: strikers nearly always advance social-welfare demands of their enterprises. As chairman of the Parliamentary Commission on Accords in 1981 I had a chance to review countless agreements signed in the 1980/81 strike wave. I do not recall a single mention of increasing production, of greater efficiency, etc. All the materials concerned wages, fringe benefits, working conditions, living standards and the political system. One can therefore conclude that there has been a widespread identification of the socialized enterprise as primarily a social and political institution. If so, then any attempts at reform based only on the economic view of the enterprise are bound to encounter great resistance and difficulty.

Here, one ought to stress that the organization of the present-day socialized enterprise has been determined by political considerations. Following the success of the political revolution, the socialized economy was to be the foundation of the new system, and thus it was appropriately "politicized", i. e., it had to provide for such organization which would never threaten the ruling party. These contrivances have proved singularly ineffective, and since 1956, it has been the large socialized enterprises which provided the focal points of the anti-party revolts. Thereby, the late 1980s reform movement has faced a typical "squaring the circle" problem, i. e., of increasing the economic productivity of the enterprise without jeopardising the political, social, educational and cultural functions of the workplace – only perhaps modifying its political tasks in accordance with the address made by Wojciech Jaruzelski at a briefing of the party secretaries of large socialized enterprises, delivered on Oct. 5th, 1988. On this occasion the leader outlined the political functions of the party within the enterprises, to be exercised through inspiring, leadership, innovation, and not by force of administrative decree.

Though the enterprise is indeed a crossroads of the influences of individuals as well as of the large-scale actions of economic organizations, the most powerful factor determining its performance is the overall action of the whole economy. Regardless of other reasons for the current plight of the economy, one must conclude that the existing economic structure are not capable of meeting the challenges of the future facing the economy at the turn of the next century. I am skeptical that the closing years of our century will see the necessary extent of reorganization, and individual enterprises rebuilding their systems and becoming the healthy foundations of a strong efficient economy, ensuring our nations prosperity.

The socialized economy was born at a time of post-war and post-revolutionary austerity, and thus was geared primarily to coping with shortages, with dividing inadequate supplies fairly – it is expressly not geared to creating prosperity. Hence the terrific waste when periodic "bumper crops" of certain fruits hit the countryside, as well as "surpluses of milk", squandered by an economic system that cannot handle abundance. Its broad scope of objectives and complexity of problems has caused the failure of the socialized economy since 1948 to solve a number of problems, which are now only made public in reform-related discussions. But I believe that it has failed on few crucial points – i. e., firstly, on the issue of work motivation. The policy of full employment, and complete economic security for all on the one hand, and the stopper on acquiring private wealth on the other have indicated to public-sector

employees the possibility of living almost without work, or of living by faking work. A second point is the failure to achieve tolerable labour productivity, and good quality of products. This problem has been exhaustively discussed in economic literature, but the progress achieved has so far been minimal. The poor quality and low productivity (which are also a product of the constitutional full employment) continue to block the development of the planned economy. Next in line for a solution is the problem of the indifference and impermeability of this economy to technical advancement, conditioned by the bonuses system, tending to promote the fulfilment of the plan, as well as other factors, which make it impractical to implement any "drain" of technical innovation on the enterprise level. The issue of money, wages and prices are another unsolved problem. The fiscal policy of the state has boiled down to printing money until acute inflation set in and pay no longer reflected the value of work, whereas prices became only a figment in the planners' imagination. An attempt at reforming this kind of economy in the early 1980s brought only disarray. Lastly, there is the problem of socialized property - the responsibilities and rights of its administrators. The use and control of this property has been the economic foundation of the party's political power, but with the passage of time and complication of the social structures, depending on the functioning of the economy, the problem has grown more pronounced. The crisis of the 1980s has put the use of this property among the key bones of contention. Attempts to raise the value of money have also focussed hope on these reserves. Underway at present is a strong clamour for greater clarity in the rules governing the disposal of this property, and the personal responsibility of the perpetrators of large-scale economic mismanagement.

Stage Two of the economic reform was dramatic, as was the failed "price/wage adjustment" and the resignation of the Messner government had all brought home the threat of economic and political collapse. A clearer view of the relationships influencing economic issues has been afforded by linking of political reforms with economic ones, by the drive for replacing the "nomenklatura" system of nominating senior-level economic managers by party-bodies. Thus, the "politicized" economy is now becoming a liability to the PUWP. Naturally, the Party is not accountable for the actions of managers within their own enterprises, but it must be responsible for the character of the nominees.

Under the socialist economy a prime weakness has been the replacement of the manager by an administrator, or of the entrepreneur by an official, with the implicit widely differing work-style. In an economy, ad-

ministering brings different results than management proper. The official acts on regulations while the manager acts on economic principles and his own logic of economics. Administrators of the socialized economy are a part of the state administration which is anything but production-oriented, and thus administrators have no understanding for production – their actions aim to enforce orderly behaviour, according to the rules which they themselves lay down. By their standards, an economy is efficient when everyone follows regulations. The actual effect is irrelevant to them as long as it has no correspondence in the regulations. And this may be why economic systems plagued by red-tape often collapse in the glory of legality.

The ongoing debate in the Parliamentary Commission for Reform Implementation, in the trade unions, in the academic communities, and in the press, reveals ever-new areas paralyzed by irrational regulations. As it is popularly agreed that Poland's future, in all major aspects, will be determined by the economy, and that here lies the primary responsibility of the political authorities and the Party. This is to be sure a natural consequence of the many years of declaring the Party's leading role and presenting the government as an implementor of party policies. Anything of importance happening in the country was a result of party decisions. Decades of the same slogans had influenced the public consciousness and the subconsciousness. This was reinforced by the limitations on forming free public associations, enterprises, social and political organizations. By and large the people have become habituated to passivity and thinking in stereotypes, to shun independent action – and this will probably be hard to reverse and galvanize them to self-reliant action, enterprise, and self-government. At any rate the process is bound to take years.

Let us now consider the condition of the state and of its administration as the agents critical to real socialism. As noted in the previous chapter, state affairs have been particularly tangled in Poland, even in the 19th century. An impotent central authority was considered natural, and chaos was thought a better guarantee of national survival than political order. Since the beginnings of the People's Republic, her government was considered by many as an illegal one, "imposed" and of dubious independence. Consequently, it is thought commonly that it does not reflect Poland's national interests and so cannot be a decisive force in meeting the challenges of the future. Such an attitude toward a political body in power is an important element. Several other variations of civic attitudes toward the government now exist, such as full acceptance of the status-quo by Party members, on the conviction that a complete

alliance with the USSR, and Marxist-Leninist ideology give Poland the greatest chance of peace, stability and growth. Another approach is that one must accept all within the system which truly contributes to security and growth, though this is not identical with espousing the political aims of the PUWP – this is in fact a positive-philosophy type of approach. The third attitude seeks to combine the economic opportunities extended by the system with the long-term drive for greater political autonomy, focussed on reducing Poland's dependence on alliances within the bloc. This attitude, manifesting an inclination toward political plurality has recently been reinforced by Gorbachev's reforms, the regional autonomy movements in the Baltic states, in Armenia and other parts of the USSR. A fourth type of popular attitude is one of opposition, varied as it is in self-definition and intensity. One thus hears about the "constructive oppositionists" who aspire to gradually seize political power through cooperating with the Party's political reforms which must ultimately lead to a multiparty democracy, thus making the Polish United Workers' Party only one among many parties represented in the Parliament. Another offshot is the "radical opposition" aiming to squeeze the PUWP out from political life, and move the country toward full independence from other socialist states. It is hard to determine the numerical proportions among these factions, and to gauge now their influence on Poland in the 21st century. We do know that the proponents of the first outlook are in control of the armed forces, and thereby, of real power. But history teaches that control over armed forces is never complete, and certain militarily overconfident regimes of the past have shown this to be true. One thing is certain, though no military-equipped power elite has ever given up power without struggle.

For us, the interesting issue is which of the described tendencies is most suited to meeting the challenges of the 21st century properly? Of course the international scene is also part of the picture, with the current military, political and economic factors in Eastern Europe, the impact of NATO and its policies. The importance of each factor is, secondly, dependent on the inner force of the tendency; and thirdly, on the platform of action proposed by each of the associations.

One weakness of the Polish state has sprung from the fact that it is identified with the government only, and not with each one of us – from the excessive distinction made between the state and the nation. This is something unknown to other European countries with a nationhood as old as ours. Here, the state is the government – its citizens are the nation. I do not propose to deal exhaustively with this issue. I only wish

to point out that clearly the interests of any nation can only be advanced by a powerful state, and any nation unable to maintain a lasting state will remain a pawn in the hands of those nations which are able to do it. There are numerous reasons for the impotence of the present Polish state. It is periodically shaken by economic crises, by political turmoil, by an unmanageable extent of tasks overburdening the administration, by an obsolete relationship of the PUWP to the government which enabled the forging of effective administrative action forty years ago, but has since been corrupted and contributes to a situation of twin-authority, with one making the decisions and the other taking the responsibility. The administration has become all but a "technical implement" which only translated the decisions of the Political Bureau or Central Committee into daily activities. What the Party sought to ensure for itself was that its decisions would be effected smoothly. By nominating people for governmental and administrative posts, the PUWP could count on internal discipline to assure compliance. Hence the government and administration have been transformed into a de-facto executive branch of the Party. Thus, a socialist society is by definition a political one, i. e., it recognizes the primacy of politics over all other fields of public life. And the overriding aim of policies in such a state is the maintenance of the PUWP's political power. This is perhaps one of the reasons for the sense of estrangement among non-party-members, who feel the state should have the interests of all its citizens equally at heart.

A large part of the weakness of the state is due to the excessive burden laid on the administration and government. By way of example: if a state undertakes to furnish each and every citizen with a daily helping of potatoes and onion, the bad quality of these staples will become a liability for the state and not for the farmer or retailer. So also, in undertaking to create cheap housing for everyone, the government has created a source of endless discontent. The operation of the so-called "housing cooperatives" with their bureaucratic growths, and of the state-owned construction enterprises, afford the young generation a 20-year waiting period for a flat. For many millions of "under-35-ers" it makes more sense to subvert this system and see it fall, than wait patiently in line for an apartment till old age.

Most of the rhetoric of the 1980/81 period was directed at the incapacitation of the individual, and my personal parliamentary experiences from that period indicated that this was a primary cause of discontent and rebellion. This was a rebellion against the omnipotence of the state, though mellowed and paralyzed by administrative inertia and by the

mammoth legal system, tending to overwhelm and curb civic initiative. So, then, can the reforms of the late 1980s do away with the bureaucratic operating mode of the state? One must point out that under socialism the bureaucracy is the only real organization endowed with the capacity for effective action. All other organizations: free civic associations, social, economic, political and cultural are closely controlled. So, the oft-heard slogans of "fighting the bureaucrats" are empty words. The PUWP cannot turn against the administration, as it would be cutting off its own arm. There may be attempts to reorganize, streamline, liberate from non-productive idle work, even reduce the numbers, but a real "tooth-and-nail" struggle against the bureaucracy would be sheer nonsense from the party-interest viewpoint. What party-interest does demand is the elimination of various "organizational idiocies" plaguing the administration, as, for instance, the bureaucratic requirement that a prospective builder of a family house must first collect around a hundred certificates, statements and other official papers completely needless from the pragmatic standpoint. But the struggle is hopeless even in this, because it is waged by creating yet new authorities and new regulations issued against the bureaucracy, but in effect causing its proliferation.

Certain hopes are now pinned on local and regional representation which will supposedly rationalize the system. But as Yugoslav experiences show, local self-government (autonomy) spawns its own bureaucracy and countless regulations just as quickly as big government does. Limited Polish experiences with certain forms of self-administration, such as workers' councils, local self-government, and neighbourhood councils, have also not achieved impressive results. The basic obstacle to any success was the concept of the role of the PUWP which was, essentially, Stalinist, and sought to avoid creating any center of public authority other than party committees.

Meanwhile, however, the society is becoming aware that the socialist state is now at the end of its tether, insofar as it operates within its traditional methods, as has been observed by the Consultative Council, an advisory body with the government, where regular citizens lodge their complaints. Yet, this same state still prevents autonomous action by individuals, local representations and civic organizations. An acute need is felt to liberate new forms of social activity from the yoke of the bureaucracy. But here comes the inevitable clash with conservative notions about the leading role of the party. If the organs of government and administration become a field for civic initiative, free from direct party control, a completely new age will dawn on the relationship of

the party with the people, and the administration vs. the people. So far, the state, with its administration and government are entrenching themselves within ramparts of innumerable regulations protecting the bureaucrats and the bureaucracy. One "administrative" theory of the state identifies it with the regulations it produces (and c. 40% of these are unpublished law), and whatever is not expressly legalized there is considered a threat to the state. Such a net of rules aims to paralyze individual initiative in caring for the basic needs, such as housing, etc., and it may be the greatest single cause of weakness for the state. If the reform movement fails to change it, the ossification of the system and perpetuation of inefficiency will continue, and an ossified system will not cope successfully with the challenges of the 21st century.

The condition of the state, of the economy, and of all public activity in Poland is decided by the Polish United Workers' Party. This "directing role" of the party is written into the Constitution and charges the party with responsibility for the state. Recent discussions, i. e., in late 1988, have seen the emergence of a distinction between the "directing role" and the so-called "leading role" of the party. The distinction happens to be a vital one. When they "direct", party secretaries, executives and committees issue binding decisions which oblige the officials of the administration or of other bodies to carry out the directive. A leading role, on the other hand, consists of inspiring, suggesting, calling attention to needed action, but not in determining the precise actions to be taken. For instance, it was as part of its directing role that the party decided to use force in the farm collectivization process, in the 1956 Poznań worker revolt, and in the 1970 Gdańsk and Szczecin riots.

The process of change, though slow and gradual, is also affecting the party. Each political crisis, the emergence of populist movements such as "Solidarity" is a test of the attitudes of party members and its structural make-up. Here, we view the condition of the party with one question in mind: can the party in its post-1948 structure, measure up to the challenges of the 21st century, and solve the problems of recognizing the administration, modernizing and reforming the economy, create new democratic patterns, find its place among the multiplicity of parties, ideological and cultural movements without resorting to exclusive control of the means of coercion, and without the statutory party-nomination of officials? What will the party's strength then be based on?

However, these are questions which reach far into the future. As I have said before, no party with the means of state force at its disposal ever gives up its dominant role without a struggle. The fate of "Soli-

darity", a populist and fundamentalist movement showed that the party needed the armed forces and martial law to prevail. And even the reforms announced at the 9th and 10th PUWP Congress are not uniformly viewed by members and functionaries. Especially the strategy adopted by the PUWP Political Bureau and government toward the 1988 summer strikes has been divisive to the PUWP, particularly so far as the treatment of "Solidarity" was concerned. These are not the traditional liberal wing vs. conservative wing controversies. Now, a certain proportion of members are disillusioned and bitter, irritated by the creeping pluralism and toleration of openly hostile political groups. On the one hand, what prevails here is a sense of fear, but not of intervention by Warsaw Treaty allies; rather a fear that Poland will be left by its allies to wither away in a bloodless, or even bloody civil war. There is a fear in the PUWP and in her coalition-allied parties that "Solidarity" radicals will thwart a reform of the economy, which after all, must involve some self-denial, and cause the collapse of an already weak economy.

"Solidarity" and the opposition, on the other hand, openly attack the PUWP for incompetence - it had failed to act decisively and effectively even when it had all the elements of power. On this count, there is also some controversy within the Party itself, and some are "longing" for a total return of the Stalinist model, though few believe that such a return to the 1950s is possible. Among the factors which reduce this chance are Gorbachev's reforms in the USSR, the eruption of ethnic unrest there, changes within the Soviet Communist party and reform-spirit in other East-bloc countries.

On the other hand, there are reformist groups in the party proposing solutions much more radical than the present Political Bureau and Gen. Jaruzelski are willing to go. They propose the PUWP should recognize the existence of political plurality, including opposition, and should maintain its leading role in a free play of political forces, capitalizing on the natural animosities of competing parties, which can safely be expected to occur, given the Polish political tradition and national temperament. This orientation would require a complete overhaul of Party operation and procedures, and it no doubt is scary to some, offering only uncertainty. Therefore, more moderate tendencies currently prevail and aim to preserve the leading role and privileged position of the Party by finding new ways and styles of work that will account for the actual needs, attitudes, interests and aspirations of all social categories and classes, with a broader voice given to the PUWP's rank-and-file.

Various recognition and acceptance is afforded to the three tenden-

cies described above by PUWP committee full-timers, Party activists, and regular members, and they find varied ideological expression. The Party which had considered itself an emanation and champion of the working class lost touch with the workers back in the Stalinist times, after it proclaimed itself the "mind" of history and claimed that only it can interpret the past and determine a "proper" condition of social awareness. The way back, from a perception of society as a ideological model toward a realistic one was a long and thorny one. An important milestone along this path was the "Kubiak report" (named after the chairman of a PUWP Commission investigating the mistakes of the past). Up to then everything had been straight and clear in the ideological model: the working-class, being the most numerous in the nation expressed the interests of all the working people of the nation. The PUWP was to articulate these interests and to devise programmes for their realization in one-year and five-year plans, encompassing all fields of life and enlisting the cooperation of the whole nation. As it was, the last 40-odd years have witnessed a shift in the numerical proportions of the society, the emergence of new branches of the economy, the numbers of white-collar workers have jumped up, farmers have remained as private land-holders, intellectuals have held on to their traditional role in creating cultural values and an autonomous folk-culture has remained a part of the lives of country-dwellers. The political power-crises that have come, originated as a result of working-class discontent. The PUWP had discovered that the working class remains revolutionary, even toward a revolutionary state authority. Thus we come to the inevitable question: whose interests does the PUWP express now and how does it wish to implement them? The opposition charges that they are the interests of the PUWP and state bureaucracy, a new social class, now in political power, using it for the advancement of its own selfish interests. Thus, the PUWP is in dire straits, and it must adapt to social change, in a crisis whose depth nobody had predicted, amidst a growth of opposition and inner struggles.

Martial law, imposed in December of 1981 was a significant event in the history of the Polish United Workers' Party. The Army, though acting on behalf of the Party, had to appear on the scene as a distinct political force. This fact is common enough in the histories of many systems, but in a Marxist state this was a change which questioned a large part of Leninist party-theory. And so, the process of accelerated change had also affected the Party, and her coalition allies, the United Peasant Party (ZSL), and the Democratic Party (SD). The parties are

to represent different social groups: ZSL is a political body of farmers and farm workers, SD - of craftsmen and small producers, owners of various small- and medium businesses. Political events of the 1980s have created an environment for a greater autonomy of both parties and their enlarged membership, with a new radical definition of programmes. In the context of the growing importance of farming to our economy and a greater recognition of the role of small businesses in creating a consumer market, both parties are able to accelerate the process of change and reconstruction of the state and the economy.

Farming is fast becoming an economic force for a number of reasons. It has preserved the old work-ethic, a sense of unconditional duty of man to the land, to his livestock, to other men, and has become a champion of private enterprise in other branches. The reconstruction of the economy, the de-emphasized heavy industry and mining, and re-emphasized farming, electronics, light industry, and the creation of a consumer market are all factors bound to increase the political strength of both ZSL and SD.

The view is often heard as well that the path to political diversification may be opened by increasing the role of the two parties. The opposition, certainly, places little if no store by such a possibility. The opposition itself, in fact, is a very diversified entity, an aggregate of ideals, groups, tendencies, ideologies, and attitudes. Usually, one hears of the distinct "constructive opposition", i. e., those groups which are willing to cooperate with the PUWP in solving our economic and national problems, and this is the circle which originated the so-called "anti-crisis alliance". Here are the people willing to gather at the "round table" debate, supposed to work out principles of accord, and of government by coalition. Some factions of "Solidarity", including Lech Wałęsa, also sympathize with such a viewpoint and have accepted the invitation to join the "round table". Other sections of the former trade union do not share the optimism and are busy printing a broad selection of underground periodicals, bulletins and booklets. It is still hard to determine how united these groups are and whether they will play a part in solving the problems of the future.

One thing is curious - and that is how often these radical groups' thinking shows strong influences of political stalinism. To begin with they profess complete primacy of politics over all other fields of life. Thus they reject any positive philosophy, advising that the foundations of economic, cultural, social strength must be worked out first, and then politically used. Their catchword is that all such things can be taken care

of after political power is seized. They have no tolerance for the adversary, and aim for his total annihilation. The classifications of individuals and groups is clear-cut, and made according to their own political ends, which are mutually exclusive. It is likely that many young people are not even aware how intensely they have absorbed a certain style of thinking and where their ideals about political action originate from. What they also do not realize is that their ideals in politics are just about as effective and practical as Stalinism was in its time. However, this is understandable: the young generation knows but one type of political action, but this statement does not augur well for the management of the challenges of the future.

The Roman Catholic Church has a high rank among the social organizations in Poland today. Other religious denominations list only about 5% of the population. Thus, religiously, as well as ethnically, Poland today is homogenous as never in history. Before World War Two, national minorities made up about 36% of the population and over 30% were non-Catholics. As a social entity, the Church is most independent from the state's administration, though there are more Church affairs taken care of by the state than is popularly thought. It is accepted that, with its religious control over the minds of believers the Church can influence important social events, and thereby is an important factor in Poland's collective life. One could then ask whether a Christian political party, similar to ones in West Germany and Italy could be created in this country? But there is another question we must answer first: how can the Church contribute to solving social problems caused by the behavioural patterns of its believers, such as attitudes toward work, alcoholism, crime, etc? How can the Church itself help overcome the crisis?

Clearly, the Church is a powerful organization of many facets. Without addressing the issues of it as a "spiritual body", nor analyzing the religious bonds among the faithful, we are interested in the Church as an organized society of humans, controlled by the hierarchy of clergy which enforces certain principles of discipline. The Church has the power of both the pulpit and of the confessional. It intercedes between God and the faithful, decides about salvation, and is an ultimate authority on issues of faith. Parish priests have a powerful influence on the masses of the faithful, but it might be a mistake to treat the Church as a sort of political force or party only, as it does not anywhere play such a role, and the parties it supports do not speak on behalf of the Church.

The Polish Church hierarchy have been related to certain political

movements in recent years. Support had often been found in the parishes by political organizations, strike committees, and dissident activity. Dissidents were often able to speak publicly in the churches. Lectures and political discussions were often held there. Since 1980, high level representatives of the hierarchy have participated in important negotiations and debates of political bodies. And although the social role of the Church in European history had mostly evolved from its religious functions as a society of the faithful and the clergy, the Church nevertheless provided certain institutional services to the ruling houses of Europe, using both the blessing and the excommunication for political ends. Since the formation of the Polish state, the Church played an important role and the consolidation of Poland's place in Europe's political system was closely tied to the growth of the Polish Roman Catholic hierarchy. This process was accentuated even after the Second World War, in the drive to subject the Western Territories to the Polish Episcopate. For centuries, the Primate had been called upon to serve royal functions in an interregnum, and in recent times of political crisis, there seemed to be an automatic return to that capacity.

Among the factors enhancing the political importance of the Church is the fact that Marxism-Leninism is an atheistic ideology and that similar hopes were tied to its struggle against religion as had been by French revolutionaries in the 18th century. This tendency on the part of real socialism to eliminate religious beliefs had placed religion in focus of an issue involving being true to one's cultural identity. This revitalized the stereotype of the "Catholic Pole". Anyone embracing atheistic Marxism made himself an outcast from the religious-national community: a Catholic Pole could not accept socialism as being created by avowed atheists. In this way the fundamentally irrelevant issue of belief in God, without a significance for social or economic processes, became a political issue of great weight, embroiling the party and government in a formidable conflict with the Church, and indirectly lent new vitality to religion. Long ago, it had been observed by sociologists of religion that nothing erodes religious communities better than long periods of economic security and full tolerance marked by indifference. A persecuted Church-at-war, however, concentrates, galvanizes energies, and incessantly stimulates an ardent, fanatic faith necessary to resist the advance of atheism and accompanying pressures. And thus, by comparison with the religious indifference of the West, religion and the Church in socialist countries is very much alive.

Let us consider the question: what problems, social and economic,

could the Church solve directly, given, on the one hand Christ's words: "My kingdom is not of this world", and, on the other, the vast organisational power of the Church? A popular line goes that the Church is the sole factor which could overcome the moral crisis of society, and if allowed to act, could overcome alcohol abuse, drug addiction, prostitution, broken marriages, crime, shoddy work, etc. However, it seems that on such counts the influence of the Polish Church over society is minimal, as Catholicism in Poland is strongly tied to rituals and services, but outside of that it does not determine the daily actions and behaviour patterns, work, and collective life of the believers. So it follows that its great political role is related to the political struggle. The Church is probably aware that the elimination of socialism from Poland could also reduce its own role, and within a liberal Polish society, the Church could only play a role comparable to that played by the Church in Western Europe – relegated to the sidelines of public life, would wage a struggle for souls infected with indifference.

For the time being, in late 1988, such a vision need not bother the Church. Though a political piety is not the ideal, and neither are throngs of people packing churches to hear political sermons, these help to consolidate the material strength, erect hundreds of new church buildings, and develop a network of parish organizations and institutions. And it is in the parishes that essential issues are decided between the Church and the society. Open political conflicts, strikes, unrest, are not in the Church's interest, because they test it on the international scene, and, locally, they place demands which the Church may have a hard time tackling. The Church may help to manage the challenges of the future in a stable, well-organized society where its preachings, commandments and principles would be followed amidst peace and harmony. It is by nature a "perpetual" institution, and so must always take a long view of events, and that not just in decades, but in centuries. Thus it may not become identified with transitional social and political movements. If the Church had involved itself with the ideals of the Enlightenment of the 18th century, it would have passed away with the "fashions" of that period. And so today, it cannot espouse the "consumer society" and its fashions, nor identify with today's anti-communist movement, because the Church itself will have to last for centuries to come when both Communism and anti-Communism are long dead and buried. Two centuries ago the Church fought liberalism much as it is fighting Communism today – but who remembers that? It has since adapted itself to coexistence with a liberal system, and so it adapts to socialism now, though many

young priests believe that the days of real socialism are numbered.

Conclusions? The Church may play its part in coping with future challenges as a factor of peace and stability, of man's dignity and belief in his moral vocation. Many years will pass, though, before these will become daily practice for most Catholics, however.

In addition to the impact of forces and tendencies so far discussed on meeting the challenges of the future, we should mention a number of others which bear upon our chances for a better future. Science and technology are popularly believed to be decisive, and we dealt with them in the previous chapters. So, what are the real chances for science and technology to play a role, as we can infer from their present state? Both the heritage of the past and the present state do not inspire optimism. The organization of the economy does not favour the integration of recent advances into practice, and science, on the one hand identified with ideology, and on the other with technology, has been weakened and stripped off its influence on society. It seems that the manner of planning, organization and financing of research have contributed to this state. Let us take a case to prove our point: in 1937, professor Józef Chalasiński, then Director of the National Institute of Rural Culture, collected 1,544 autobiographies of peasant youths. With the assistance of colleagues, he made a statistical analysis of the content, drew up a thematic index, and in a few months of intense work he wrote "The Young Peasant Generation", a work in four volumes, with 2,000 plus pages including over 700 of his own original text (the remainder were selected autobiographies). The typescript was serially delivered to Paweł Mitreğa's printing shop in Cieszyn and in 1938 the four volumes, fully edited and beautifully printed appeared in book-shops. If today a scholar submitted in his plan an intention to research, write and print a four-volume monograph he would simply be considered crazy. I think this aptly illustrates the extent of achievement in our present organization of research.

Of course research today is better-financed than it was in the pre-war times, but a disproportionate amount of time and effort is now spent on ostensible work, on bureaucracy, on form-filling for projected research, for reported research and as a result the research institutes devote nearly half of their time to paperwork needed to obtain funding. It may well be that such a tendency is observed in other countries too, but for Poland's science to become a factor in meeting the challenges of the future, it must be overcome soon. Organizational and administrative work has never been, and is not now, the same as research proper.

Among other factors, reducing the impact of science in Poland, is

the popular perception of scientific knowledge ("theoretical knowledge") against common knowledge ("practical knowledge"). Practitioners do not respect science and scientists, and the tag "theory" has a pejorative ring. Old hands tend to attach this tag to anything which displeases them. This worship of practical skill and a contempt for science is a powerful factor of Poland's backwardness. Of course practical knowledge is a necessary element in the "furnishing" of our minds, but in the economy, it contributes only to maintaining the status-quo. Practical knowledge views innovation with suspicion, as something that has yet to be proved in action.

Without venturing into a study of the social role of science in Poland, of which there are not just volumes but whole libraries, including the special periodical "Zagadnienia Naukoznawstwa" (Problems of Knowledge-Studies), I only wish to point out that, in my view, Polish science has sufficient talents and capabilities to assure its growth, but that these human resources are not made use of and are not in high social esteem. As in education, any overhaul of science should start with its socio-political environment.

The debate is still on about the role of the mass-media in maintaining the continuity and growth of society. It is emphasized that this role consists mainly of shaping public opinion, influencing popular attitudes and convictions, and also a way of transmitting knowledge though in the end it all boils down to information. Information-society theories are still familiar only to academics here and a handful of mass-media employees but the interest within the economy is negligible. A degree of modernization and new thinking about the information age is enforced now by joint economic ventures with foreign companies and by the growing number of mixed-capital enterprises, though. Certain hope for modernization is implicit in the appearance of satellite tv, the now-fashionable computerization, the new pressure on developing electronics, in the information, entertainment and production branches, all causing a slow but sure revolutionization of these fields. One may also count on the ambitions of young-generation scholars and researchers, and the low salaries in research institutes are bound to stimulate a drive for scholarly achievement so highly valued abroad. This of course implies the emigration of highly-trained personnel, but there is always a chance of reclaiming them for the country once the research-funding and pay-systems are reviewed.

The influence of the mass-media seemed to have been eroded by its engagement in the propaganda-campaign during the martial law. Gradually, though this function has been replaced by media-criticism of author-

ities, administration, bureaucrats, and media-support for the economic-reform programme. However, a criticism which brings no change or improvement has an effect contrary to that desired. Exposed for many years to public criticism of a situation which nevertheless persists, a viewer or listener accommodates himself to the situation in the belief that it is necessary and immutable. So then, such criticism may create stereotypes of helplessness that habituate us into accepting abnormal situation, and in the case of the economic crisis in fact contributes to its perpetuation. By popular thinking: either the absurdities criticized are inevitable, or are written into the system, or there is no authority sufficiently powerful or intelligent to remove them – in any case, the viewer/listener concludes that he/she must conform to those idiocies. Support for Stage Two of the economic reform also did not raise the prestige of the mass-media, as the much tooted reform got nowhere. Despite all the energy spent on informing, persuading, discussing, mobilizing opinion – no results were produced: production was not intensified, quality got no better, inflation continued unabated, organizational changes were not implemented. All the phenomena branded by the radio and tv as reprehensible have remained to testify to the powerlessness of the media in reaching down to the real “leverage” on the economy, the system and the society. And who in Poland does have this leverage? Which institutions, groups, professions and organizations can become an efficient force?

One widespread view holds that the socialist system as practiced today has ceased to guarantee desirable changes in society and fails to guarantee adequate coping with the challenges of the future: that it does not solve any more problems than it creates. The party and government have shown insufficient energy and efficiency in tackling the economic crisis, but also in a number of other fields. So, is there room for the society, the individuals, the families, free public groups, local representations to take action unsponsored by the authorities, to accelerate overcoming the crisis and find a way out of the stagnation? This would probably be a delusion, as too large a section of the economy is dependent on the government, and party-control reaches down through the whole society. But there are certain fields where much depends on the initiative and determination of individuals: private farming, though dependent on the nationalized industry can still venture to organize its own purchasing and processing of produce: the private crafts, mixed-capital companies of ethnic Poles, these cooperatives which are true to their name – in short – a growing sector of the economy which should become a means of pressure on the nationalized sector and effect its transformation.

The trouble with this society, however, is that it has largely become one of perpetual complainers, bemoaning the fact that too many of us are playing dumb, pretending to accept the situation, and busy repeating that absolutely "nothing can be done". Atrophied will of action is among the chief psychic problems of Poles today: a will to use whatever small freedom one has toward action which would improve one's situation. Any farmer can improve his farm, if only marginally, any worker can increase efficiency and/or product quality, any clerk can rationalize his operations, etc. Why don't they? Because they give in to the comfortable faith in large-scale changes only. But great empires have emerged out of small-scale actions: the toils of individuals and families, and not of governmental programmes. The industrial revolution in Britain was opposed both by the government and the academics - but business stood alone, and prevailed.

The Poles, for their part, have become habituated to the party's propaganda that only the party PUWP can act and the nation must do what it decrees. Getting rid of this sensibility is exceedingly difficult, as exemplified by the behaviour of the opposition, subconsciously adopting the tenets of party-propaganda and preaching the primacy of politics in determining the shape of public life; as well as the opposition's intolerance, operating style, etc. The whole society seems hypnotized by its own helplessness. Making it worse is the popular prejudice against individuals manifestly successful in private enterprises. Anyone with impressive economic achievement is morally suspect, as one acting on the verge of the law, and of good ethics. This follows the line that: "nobody makes it by just working hard". And the phenomenon is not new. In the inter-war period, successful businessmen were looked down on as "upstarts", and only inherited wealth was respectable. Such a mentality persists even today. The very word "success" seems to ring pejorative following the campaign branding the false "propaganda of success" of the 1970s. New, few would venture to boast of success in anything, particularly making money. A change is necessary here, if we are to surmount the crisis, but, as the sociologist Ogburn had once remarked, it is easier to smash the atom than one prejudice.

Such, in outline, is the condition of Polish society at the end of 1988. It is no doubt a society in transition, changing its political system toward liberating the creative energies of the whole population. What are the chances that this attempt will succeed and Poland will overcome the challenges of the 21st century?

Chapter 4

Facing the Future: the Means

It is rather obvious that Poles, given their present organisation, attitudes and intellectual and technological potential could not come out victorious from a confrontation with the challenges of the coming times. Yet, is it really so that the Polish people are altogether lacking the potential or misusing the forces that are already in operation to cope with the upcoming tasks? The only answer to this question must be in the negative. The resources are already there, rooted in individuals, groups or organisations. We shall now try to describe at least the most essential ones.

Let us begin with a single man and his internal capacities. Philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome adopted a concept of man – later on developed by Christian theology as well as Marx and modern sociology – namely that we all are social creatures and as such have been moulded by our communal existence and subjected to all sorts of social behaviour patterns. Conversely, that part of our inner being which responds to our individual preferences, to our egos is nothing less than the source of all social evil. Bearing that in mind, I will nevertheless base my reflections on a thesis saying that there are two fundamental and equally important modes of human existence: one, as a social being, i.e., shaped by the social environment and culture, and two, as a personality free from social bounds, autonomous and capable of creating things previously unknown to his fellow men.

What it means to be a social creature is commonplace: it simply means to respect the laws and habits of a community, to apply the code of behaviour to one's conduct, to respect others and to cooperate and be helpful and respectful of recognized values. It is believed that the more socialized one becomes, the greater becomes one's openness to co-

-operate for the benefit of others, the more articulate become one's social attitudes in an effort to enlarge the common social heritage. Society-oriented behaviour is sometimes contrasted with egoism or self-centred attitudes, with distrust of group solidarity, unwillingness to cooperate in a common effort. Similarly, such social evils as greed, thirst for power, hatred, aggression, competition, destruction, etc., are manifestations of insufficient training in social-minded behaviour.

I wish to suggest at this point that aggression, hatred, exploitation, greed for wealth and power are nevertheless products of our social existence. Someone living on a desert island would remain insensitive to the call of wealth or the lure of power. Nor would he stoop to exploit or give vent to hatred for the simple reason that he would first have to have in his company at least on proverbial man Friday. Such feelings and actions are a response of that part of man which may call a social creature, while man's personal mode of existence remains within the confines of his individuality. Individuality here could be defined as a mechanism through which a person can leave his personal imprint on everything he undertakes. Each and every one of us is equipped with a range of properties: we share certain features with the whole of mankind or large collectives, we also have in common some characteristics that our neighbours have and we also harbour traits that act as our personal signature. That last group of traits forms a basis of man's personality. It gives man a sense of personal integrity and autonomy when it comes to saying no to social pressures or resisting an urge of the flesh or a temptation of the mind. Further, individuality is one of the driving forces of creativity and contributes original values not only to culture and science but also in such down-to-earth chores as the work of a housewife, a blue-collar worker or a farmer. Let us remember that these small innovations brought daily into our lives are overall no less important than great the revelations of artists, scientists or inventors. Thus we could say that a creative contribution from individual persons, anything original and innovative derives in the first instance from man's individuality and not from the degree of socialization. I will willingly confess in this place that I am no adversary of man as a social being and am equally far from putting in doubt the benefits of socialization. All I wish to do is to demonstrate that socialization is no cure for every social worry let alone every social evil. Significantly, attempts to eradicate evil through more medicine of socialization has only bred more evil if only because struggle, competition, exploitation and the like are borne out of intense identification with groups which choose to call those as their own objective. Educators and

politicians used to look at socialization as if it were a fundamental force driving mankind while at the same time remained blind to the weight and importance of the individual. Maybe that was one of the reasons why individuality has been made identical with the sum total of man's personal features and, consequently we would say that someone is a personality only when he or she betrayed some unusual human traits. The concept that I have adopted in this work is different. An individuality is a conglomerate of all three kinds of features, while personality is only a part of individuality. To be more precise it is that part of individuality which makes man stand apart from other human beings constituting a person's distinctness. Individuality is decisive for man's identity in the process of continuing change be it physical, mental or social. Within the space created by an individual mode of existence there is room for genuine, singular vision of the world, as well as for original non-society-controlled ideas, ingenuine inventions of the mind and new innovative applications.

Now, how do the above reflections relate to the central problem of future challenges? In my opinion the basic thing is to be able to influence our citizens in such a way as to inhibit undesirable behaviour, increase the number of gifted people and encourage creative effort among not only the geniuses but among people at large. People might then understand that through their daily search for modest improvements they could eventually achieve changes because big things usually are a sum total of small steps. If only every employee in Poland (over 17 million) every day performed a bit better than the previous day and made a small qualitative and qualitative contribution to the accumulation of our GNP, then after a few years the economic affects would be stunning. We are in a way being hypnotized by the miracle of "system solutions" but tend to overlook the bare fact that our daily waste of resources, energy, capital could only in part be attributed to the system. It is also the effect of how we work. Looking into the ways and means of minimizing waste at each workplace does not require additional investment or organizational change. What it does call for is good will. Similarly, office work of every kind depends on diligence and dedication of employees. There is, alas, no magic power in any society that would turn average bread-eaters into angels.

Polish economy, or for that matter also socialist economy is being managed with a magnate's recklessness as no other term would describe more adequately the on-going manic dedication to giant projects. Thousands of small-size workshops have been replaced by industrial mam-

moths at no less gigantic cost yet they all are appallingly ineffective. Their running costs for one are a distaste. The same fate has met in due time electric power-stations, bakeries, slaughter-houses and various service-shops and processing plants. The devastation has been accompanied by the mushrooming of monopolies, which in their turn spawned a great number of non-productive pest institutions. Obviously, a reform of some kind is necessary but it is no less clear that the process must go hand in hand with a step-by-step accumulation of small successes by every workman at every workplace across the whole economy and by every consumer. Some time ago I have argued that the pieces of bread thrown away by each of the ten million of households did add up to a huge waste. I have been rebuffed by professor Zienkiewicz, who said that it constituted only a negligible percentage of annual harvest. I cannot escape seeing such an approach as a projection of a magnate's carelessness - several hundred thousand kilograms of corn is peanuts on the economic macro-scale. But such precious little bits and pieces are soon to be found all over the place: take electric power wasted in countless households or costly repairs of foolishly devastated houses. These too, could be regarded as peanuts. The same goes for mismanaged resources, energy and material waste, etc. caused by stark laziness and stupidity, which qualities seriously contribute to the inefficiency of "system solutions"! Are all these to be treated as trifles?

I therefore think that we must see the two faces of the economic reform: "systems solutions" to galvanize groups and macro-activity toward economic efficiency on the one hand, and on the other, actions designed to release the inner energies of the people, stimulate their determination, heat up their aspirations. Let us not forget that the "system" may force certain behaviour on individuals but only to a limit. That limit is the inner autonomy of the human being, which has the power to resist the pressure of organizations, groups or orders. In my view the notorious "price-income" operation has run aground because people reacted in a totally different manner than the relevant "system solution" took for granted. The individual's response had been incompatible with what the system expected. Why has it ever happened?

For one, reactions could be prompted by a perception of the economic system quite different from that adopted in official drafts. Individuals as well as families and households and employees in both state and private sectors failed to upgrade their work effectiveness. What we saw in effect was a distrust in the overall success of the whole operation on the one hand, and on the other hand, the operation had been introduced through

much too complex set of legal tools (well in excess of 550 legal acts were needed to introduce the second stage of the economic reform). Among them were unintelligible legal formulations and even unlawful decisions and counter-productive taxes. Overall the attempt to halt inflation generated no steam to work for the success of the whole endeavour. Social scientists would call it lack of motivation and incompatibility of solutions (organizational manoeuvres, economic mechanisms) with individual interests of the general public. It works on the principle that in a situation when every pay-check comprises two kinds of payment: money for the effect of work, and a minimal social benefit (treated as compensation for not being entitled to run a private business and look for oneself on one's own) the worker would meticulously keep down his physical input while at the same time manoeuvring to get more money for less work much in the same way as did enterprises by increasing their profits through raising prices instead of increasing their volume of production.

Challenges of the future could only be successfully met by those nations whose citizens know how to fend for themselves and who know how to look after their own business without looking to the state for help. In order to make our citizens do the same we need to go beyond slogans calling for the rallying of creative forces of the nation. This slogan has been around for quite a long time, perhaps even as far back as the times of the reformers of the Enlightenment. Let us examine what message it could still carry under socialism in our times.

If we look back into the past we would remember that throughout the 40s the mobilizing effort focussed on the energies and eagerness of the social classes which had been underprivileged under capitalism. Workers and peasants were offered a glimpse of a better life, a chance to climb upwards, to improve culturally and upgrade their living standard. One would even claim that the fast-moving post-war reconstruction effort and a relative success of the three-year plan have been the result of harnessing that potential. In the years immediately after the war a large number of people realized that they could get educated, get a job in reconstructed factories, or earn their living building new houses across the country. They saw new prospects for their farms if they chose to settle in Poland's western territories. In short, people believed that it was worth working and saw work as a means to realized their plans that could never have materialized in pre-war Poland. Any study of the social structure of Poland before the war would reveal huge unemployment figures, farm workers living on poverty line, several thousand exploited house servants and a similar number of lumpen proletariat. Small wonder that those

people's desires for a better life have been a forceful driving force ready to be tapped by the authorities.

But let us not lose from sight the fact that one's dreams and plans could only be transformed into a creative force if one were aware of one's pursuits and more, when one were ready to make an effort to realize one's plans. Here we come to the issue of creative force, which can and must be mobilized if we want to meet future challenges. Creative forces comprise, on the one hand, human aspirations and a readiness to work and make sacrifices. Yet even those ambitions are manifestations of individual choice. While the society at large can create goods, open up prospects, offer encouragement and prompt patterns of behaviour, it is up to each and every member of the society to make a personal choice depending on individual talent and personality. For example, not all from among the underprivileged pre-war masses took the chance offered by postwar Poland. The decision has invariably been a personal act in which all psychological mechanisms have had to be engaged. Hence the conclusion that in order to prepare people to make such decisions they must be taught how to use their will-power, courage, ambitions and talent.

It could be said that the years of the war and occupation have been for the Polish nation one big school of deed but it would be repeating a worn-out cliché. Obviously people representing whole occupations have had to train themselves in other jobs in order to survive. Yet even during those demanding times not everybody knew how to adopt. Again much depended on individual dispositions. This would confirm the above claim that creative forces revealed through social conditions are in essence accumulated desires of individual people and that the right social conditions alone are not sufficient if there is neither will nor courage.

The message from all this for the Polish nation is this: the system of education must put greater emphasis not only on the process of socializing but, in the first place on bringing out individual character. It must help students to discover their inner potential, an ability to construct an individual perception of things, to clearly identify their goals in life and pursue them with force and determination. The year 1988 brought about a new situation throwing the door open for the energies that had been blocked for decades and which may now be put to good use in revitalizing the economy. The immediate goals are: getting a place to live, be it a flat or a house, rising the standard of living, improve household facilities as well as seeking ways of using one's own resourcefulness in business activity. These are powerful stimulants but people must be given the

right opportunities and be taught how to use their potential. People must learn how to attain their goals through consistent and determined action. Meeting the challenges will require a special type of personality – strong, targeted on achievement, efficient in action and strong-willed. And here our system of schooling is weak and I mean not only the school but also the family and other institutions: we do not develop strong will-power, we do not teach our young to be persistent in action.

The concept advertised since 1948 of the leading role of the party was based on a crude assumption that the party draws up plans which are then implemented by the people. The initiative was placed with the party only while civic initiatives were confined to what had previously been approved in party plans. In particular any privately sponsored initiative in the sphere of the economy was given the cold shoulder. Little wonder then that teaching active attitudes and entrepreneurship was suppressed and any profit-oriented posture was unwelcome. Therefore if we want to unblock huge potential of energies we have to teach again the basics of individual initiative in business and link it to the individual view of things, in short we must teach how to be a winner again. In the final count individual activity, be it in private enterprise or collective effort, will determine the outcome of our struggle to succeed in the face of future challenges and to change the state of things described in Chapter Three:

In order to be effective an individual must have a clear-cut goal, strong motivation, determination, persistence, knowledge and necessary skills and means. What stands in the way of such a model is the traditional model of a personality branded by martyrdom, favouring self-sacrifice for the national cause and putting on a pedestal warriors of clandestine movements, insurgents and sufferers. Beginning with the defeat of 1939 such model was to serve as a shield against moral submission to Germany and the USSR, which had divided between them the Polish state. After 1945 the struggle against the "imposed" political system stood in opposition to collaboration, while it was patriotic to set up clandestine unions resisting the "sovietization of Poland". Such a model of patriotic personality clashed with another model, one of socialist self-sacrifice, of work not for private benefit but for the benefit of the community. While at the same time the system has had no in-built institutionalized ways of accumulating the "communal good" but has been all too well equipped with ways to waste and destroy the common good the end result has been that the realization of either the patriotic model or the socialist model of personality led ever more deeply to poverty of individuals and households. A third model represented by the positivists

of the second half of the 19th century and the activists gathered around Roman Dmowski professed that patriots and socialists and every Pole ought in the first place to create and amass wealth, eliminate poverty and backwardness, work for modern economic foundations, and advance the civilizational level of the nation which is the indispensable fabric of ideals, be it patriotic or socialist. A nation of martyrs is always suspect and little respected either because it is weak and too impotent to resist exploitation or because it is not clever enough to prevent exploitation. Martyrdom and self-sacrifice are poor credentials to respect and to a prominent place among other nations. The Jewish nation has won prominence not through martyrdom but through diligence and cleverness in accumulating wealth.

People operate under a prescribed legal order, which is a safeguard against individuals acting to the detriment of one another. Bearing in mind the experiences of the socialist legal order, and earlier still the experiences of capitalist Poland between the wars, and also the lessons of the cooperative movement in Poland at the beginning of the 20th century from Abramowski, Stefczyk and Wawrzyniak, one could imagine a set of operative rules of business activity that would promote entrepreneurship and individual wealth without the negative effects of exploitation either private or state.

Summing up the above remarks let me say that the basic precondition of succeeding in the face of the future challenges is education of individuals characterized by bravery, prudence, entrepreneurship, ones that may accumulate substantial wealth but at the same time reaching a high civilizational and cultural level.

The second set of conditions lies with the social structures in which people live and work. While subscribing to a thesis that man, as a social creature, is moulded by his social environment including his family, local communities, social groups, work collectives, social classes, we have to ask: what in fact is the nature of collective life in Poland and how does it influence the individuals? Where are the roots of "Polish impotence", non-productivity, incompetence and general failure to get things done? Is the opinion well-founded that there exists something called a "Polish hell", or a society effectively suppressing any successful individual against whom spiteful coalitions spring to life in no time, a society where man of success hides his achievements from the public eye? The socialist system had already produced a belief that its legal order does not allow anybody to get rich. Hence a simple conclusion that a wealthy man must be a criminal to say the least and suspected of shady dealings. Private

businessmen used to be suspected of illicit operations, people from the top echelons of power were seen as bribe-taking and corrupt. On the other hand, a law-abiding Pole is as a rule modest, less than thriving, living a life within the limits of his monthly pay-check. Are we right in claiming that Polish economy is an example of disorder? Why is it so that Polish villages and townships are less clean and tidy than their German or Czech counterparts? Why new blocks of flats look decrepid in a matter of months from their construction?

Trying to answer these questions one should admit that each of them is not quite unfounded. The Polish nation just like any other nation consists of brave and efficient people along with mediocre characters or starkly stupid, lazy and hateful creatures. Maybe the percentage of the latter is higher in Poland. The mechanisms of coexistence that operate in the Polish hell are not absent in other nations, the distribution of emotions and postures is no other in Poland than abroad. What is different, however, is the world outlook, the preceptions of success. For example, a man of success in the United States is respected and his success is measured in the first place by his income. The Polish philosophy of life has for considerable time remained under the influence of views preached by our noble classes and one of their rules of conduct prohibited them to be active otherwise than in farming or public service. A certain measure of noble disdain for hard manual labour and contempt for labourers has survived even until People's Poland. Similarly, there persisted a dose of ill-disposition toward people who grow rich probably because getting richer could only be accomplished by morally impure methods or because of envy, or finally because the Polish society is still being guided by specific code of prestige and merit.

Traditionally the age-old overt categories of prestige have been the moral virtues, and merits have been measured by patriotic deeds. It could have been some form of expiation for the feeling that the Polish state had been "doomed" by the magnates' pursuit of their private interests and that Poland could only be rebuilt by impeccable moral dedication and total sacrifice for Motherland. The heroes of those times were leaders of conspiracies or uprisings, martyrs or moralists preaching lofty moral principles. At the same time realists committed to building a strong economy and healthy institutions or, in other words, people adding up to the strength of the state enjoyed a much lesser degree of public respect. The roots of such attitudes reach far back into history. The proud maxim "gold to gold but we Poles prefer iron", which is in fact a rather foolish slogan, is still in school-textbooks for moral instruction.

It must be admitted that the influences of western technical-consumer civilisation that are beginning to reach Poland are swaying life styles and attitudes toward wealth. They are also reshaping though still moderately our values and criteria of prestige. A testimony of just such an evolution is the appointment in 1988 of a private businessman to the post of minister for industry in F. Rakowski's government. This signals the recognition of private business success as a positive value. It also means a green light for the harnessing of private entrepreneurship to the task of changing economic policies. Of course the appointment has met with criticism from ideological purists and moralists as well as from those who contend that running a business and wielding political power are two different things. Putting it shortly: traditional social structures responsible for a view that prestige and recognition used to be associated more with martyrs have begun to evolve during the past decades in favour of a positive approach to success and a belief that the lack of success is to be blamed on the emigration of able and educated Poles. For that matter let me add that those who emigrate soon discover the taste of the effort that must be taken to be successful and come to realize that the same amount of effort could have proved them no less successful in their own country.

Therefore it could be said that proper functioning of social groups is determined by an evolution of perceptions of prestige and public recognition in such a way that they would not obstruct our struggle with the challenges ahead. Yet, these informal mechanisms of social life are marred by other obstacles. These are the mechanisms determining the effectiveness of individuals. Any organized community has certain commonly accepted goals acting as an organizing principle for individual efforts. When such common goals are ill-defined and barely outlined, if they eventually prove unattainable for the simple reason that the effort put into their achievement does not accumulate properly than any activity tends to disintegrate into ineffectiveness. First because it is difficult to establish a course of action and second, because no one at any one moment can know whether some partial result is really bringing the set target any nearer. For example, the construction in Poland of a new political and social system has become just such an elusive goal. Unless the ultimate objective is translated into concrete activity, then the whole process is all too easily disorganized. We shall discuss this aspect in a broader context of the organisation of the society and economy in Poland.

Social group are also organized in an informal way. This spontaneous

process ensures inner coherence and effectiveness of the mechanisms of life itself. Again these mechanisms operate in such a manner that every member of the group is expected to undertake some activity while the group exercises control over that activity. What is controlled is an anticipation that every person would behave in a desirable manner and would desist unwelcome behaviour. By comparing various pressures and expectations addressed by societies to their members one can identify differences between the various countries. The differences mainly involve the sphere of privacy, the degree of interference into the private life etc. For example, in residential areas in the United States a local community would not tolerate someone neglecting his house because a shabby-looking house would inevitably pull down the price for real estate in the neighbourhood. Such group pressure stemming from financial interests of individuals is an excellent means of keeping the external look of houses in good condition. The above example well illustrates what we mean by group expectations. If, however, the community of people inhabiting a house feel that they have no title to intervene and discipline someone who is devastating community property then they cease to feel compelled to join in a cumulative improvement of their standard of living. I wish to put special emphasis on the weight of those informal social structures because they constitute an important element of life of any society and are as self-evident as the air we breathe in, and yet act as powerful stimulants of formal structures. For example, what goes into a body of the law in a given society is not the content of the laws but the idea of lawfulness that is affixed in common knowledge spinning from informal structures. What is currently called the culture of the law is not the product of the law-maker's knowledge but an extract of shared perceptions handed down in spontaneous processes of socialization of younger generations. Text-book basics are not sufficient. Specifically for those who do not go beyond primary education the role of scientific information is rather limited while their attitudes on important social questions rely heavily on common sense.

The force of informal structures and popular wisdom is quite clearly visible in the lives of over ten million Polish families and households. Their impact on the life of our society is undeniable. It could be said that the way families live and households are run is the way the whole of our society lives including in the picture the entire informal side of our economy. The daily life is apparently being organized within a certain legal order and formal social organization, yet the whole sphere of family privacy is regulated by custom, individual habits, personal ambi-

tions and postures. Problems that erupt now and then within families or households are being settled against the resources of common wisdom and tradition. It must be remembered that these problems more often than not involve economic decisions on consumption, eating habits, the manner of dress, household capital investments, savings, choice of goods, etc. In my opinion the failure to make economic planning an effective tool could be linked to a general failure to devise adequate methods of attuning macro-economic decisions to the millions of micro-economic decisions made daily at family and household level. It could be said that the decisions made by planners concern only the formalized, institutionalized side of the economy. The decisions made daily by housewives are determined by immediate personal and family needs and it is these actions that constitute the core of the economy while official planning and decision-making serves only as a superstructure. Admitting their helplessness in the face of that unbridled sphere of economic life, planners all too eagerly focused on heavy industry, mining, producer goods industry, in short, all that resisted "irrational" decisions on household level.

At the same time it is in that sphere of social life that we can find no small potential for dealing with the future challenges. A well-entrenched conviction associates all hopes and tasks with the formal side of the economy, politics and social life, but let us not forget that the whole formal side of social life is founded on, and also constructed from informal source material. No formal structure can be built in defiance of social habits and customs, nor can it run against the grain of all that the people regard as natural, obvious, undisputable truths. It is here that the driving forces of any society are deposited including interests, aspirations and initiatives. Society is driven by action, it is making itself through activity and it lives by individual initiative. These generate the necessary steam to be used or misused in general growth.

In my opinion, the situation in Poland at the end of 1988 is characterized by an accumulation of huge energies that had been blocked for decades and thus easily accessible. These include the energies of young educated people as well as those who want to make money and know how to do it but are hindered by excessive red tape. These are also the energies of those who want to build themselves a house, set up a business, sell an invention, implement some technical innovation etc., but are blocked by bureaucratic inertia, unnecessary monopolies, ideological fear and countless other hurdles. Releasing that potential does not require large investments but may generate additional resources. This is just one opportunity to face up the challenges. Unblocking the ener-

gies means releasing a pool of talent and ability, innovative courage and skills. The basic capital asset in every nation are the talents and intellect of outstanding individuals working in the forefront of inventiveness and creativity. The problem is how to spot the talents at an early stage, how to coach them and how to use them for the benefit of everybody.

In such activity Poland has just begun experimenting. The frozen energies of the young generation could fuel the activity of many a social group. The necessary potential could also be found in small private circles based on informal social contacts, friendship, prestige or respect for one's abilities. Let us remember that the strong capitalist economies have tapped in the first place the energies of small informal groups, especially during the initial stage of activity in the 19th century. However, socialism has pretended not to see that side of the reality and preferred to belittle its potential role in development. And if it did notice it then only in negative terms as something to be suppressed.

In the closing months of 1988 there began to emerge a tendency in Poland to re-introduce capitalism in its primitive accumulation form. At least various declarations have repeated slogans promoting unfettered market mechanisms, initiative, which in truth is no less a deception than rigorous central planning. The socialist economy believed erroneously that the central planner had the knowledge of everything and could therefore plan everything. Similarly, a market economy could lead itself into deception thinking that market mechanisms were faultless and that every businessman was an ideal market researcher. Let us, however, leave these matters at this point although they indeed are important for the analysis of formal structures which is the next sphere crucial for our struggle against the challenges of the future.

It has already been said that Poland attaches great importance to "system solutions" and regards as unassailable the thesis that society and even more so the economy is a system in a strict sense of the word. In my often repeated view such an approach is close to self-deception. In the first place, the society and the economy represent the drama of man's aspirations and needs, illusions and errors, and only after that they are rational systems. The drama stems from ill-defined goals, miscalculated means, excessive ambitions, inaccurate knowledge of the facts of life. There is no such thing as an organization rigidly handling its people with an iron-grip of its logic. Each individual is an autonomous being with its own perception of the reality and individual judgement on the functioning of the system. Therefore the individual can never be seen as a cogwheel only. He sometimes happens to defy the system

and its mechanisms. Thus dreams of returning to market mechanisms operating in a more or less unrestrained manner looks like some sort of misunderstanding.

Another reason is that there can never be a full "post-revolutionary restoration" as eloquently demonstrated by the case of the restoration of the Bourbons dynasty. A reform of an established order of things cannot be reduced to a restoration of the old order because a revolution or introduction of a new order inevitably brings in some permanent elements which rearrange the previous state of affairs. Socialism in its shape of 1988 in Poland has not only introduced organizational forms of economic management that could eventually be modified or substituted with old forms but it has also instituted permanent attitudes of the working class, a style of work of several millions of office-workers, methods of exercising power, of education and organization of research alongside with new world outlook, new approach to career-making etc. All this cannot be eradicated through "system solutions", it can however be altered in a long process of change. What then could be done with the faulty organization of the Polish economy?

The reform must start with a thorough review of forces operating in the economy, especially the positive forces that could push the economy forward. Next, we should proceed with an analysis of the negative aspects and determine their impact and underlying reasons. The reform should not be restricted to an elimination of negative aspects or their causes, the reason being that such an elimination would not automatically bring about an improvement since under the existing order of things these negative phenomena had been the driving force of the economy. For example, in a bureaucracy-oppressed economy, the only driving force are the masses of officials who make decisions, control, distribute resources, direct sales etc. Their elimination from the economic machinery would in the initial period mean nothing short of a paralysis. A clear understanding of the forces operating in a given system of economy would allow to start an offensive on two fronts simultaneously: promotion of creative and effective forces, and elimination of unwelcome developments. Only when the two kinds of activity are done in parallel a successful reform is possible. An elimination of a whole order and a return to a previous state of affairs is usually an illusion.

In the same way the Polish economy and society could be changed by promoting the existing creative forces. What are these forces? I am not in a position to analyze them in full, instead, let me refer to some of them by way of example. Socialism for one has evolved a strong sense of

equality and social justice and though their perceptions remain widely different they are nonetheless universally accepted values. Therefore if the reformed economy is to enjoy social support, those values must not be injured. On the contrary, they ought to be cleverly employed to win mass backing. The system of planning incorporates elements found in every advanced world economy. It would be hard to imagine a business corporation, or a bank operating without a well-organized planning division. Therefore one of the reformers' tasks must be an improvement of planning methods.

The transition from primitive, family-based forms of capitalism to a capitalism of organized corporations has brought to the fore the issue of organizing things and necessitated a science of management, which was soon surrounded by an almost religious cult of management and managers. Organization of work, of which the classic example is Taylorism, and the business of management (C.J. Barnard) as well as management science and the emergence of the managerial class have established the business of getting things organized and its connections with information science as the key to the future. By concluding that disorganisation is the fundamental worry of the Polish economy, a state of disarray penetrating all from top centres of management down to enterprise level and even further down to the shop-floor level is not only a diagnosis but also a form of therapy under the guise of efficient management. Let us remember that the effort that had gone into development of management sciences and planning methods in Poland has always been great. It has produced logical and methodologically sound theories but our economy proved immune to the lessons of science. Works by Kotarbiński, Zieleniewski, Gliński and many others remained in the shadow making little or no impact on the practical side of management and work organization in the Polish economy. Of course one could quote numerous explanations of such a state of things and, similarly, one could continue to stress organizational improvements as a powerful source of progress with little investment input. Organizational improvements require knowledge, determination, courage and imagination - why then does it strike so many snags along the way? The simple answer is that it upturns many entrenched informal structures. Any new organizational framework requires new qualifications and this in turn necessitates new cadres. It also poses a threat to the old hierarchy of prestige, power and income. The political power, which in Poland rested on ruling the economy, was the first to cast an unwilling eye on any organizational reform because it could bring in the process political independence of economic organisms. This

in turn would undermine methods of "nomenklatura" which has been devised to assure that those responsible for economic policies would remain subjected to the PUWP. Thus in the final count the organizational change, prompted as it were by the rules of effective economic activity and new technologies, management and information methods, has been countered by the inertia of the established organizational framework going hand in hand with law regulations of assigning competence, power, privileges and money within the old setup and also internal informal yet strong and well-knit structures further compounded by methods of political control and parallelisms between the organization of the economy and the PUWP apparatus.

Every organisation in its formative days is naturally "progressive" meaning that it is determined to boost the effectiveness of the economy. Yet, when it fails to evolve the in-built mechanisms of self-adaptation and self-improvement, it gradually becomes backward and begins to slow down only to become ossified. At this stage it becomes a factor not only of stagnation but also of regress. The organization of economy in Poland finds itself precisely at that stage but its change requires not only a new rational model and appropriate laws that would articulate that model but much more than that. It requires a change in the way the party is operating. Hence such a strong pressure on political reforms. Further it calls for new attitudes toward work requiring in turn greater respect for the interests and independence of others.

If we manage to unblock initiative and social energies through a new organizational setup, if this new framework throws the door wide open for entrepreneurship, if we succeed in harmonizing vocational training with managerial training, then maybe the new principle of work organisation could "enter the bloodstream" of the society. Sociological studies have proved that a child's training in organizing its life and work begins at pre-school age. It takes place in the child's immediate surroundings of the family where the child is given some work to do regularly and can learn to arrange its time-table, allocate time for recreational activity etc. So, when a child first goes to school it has already had its beginners course in work organization, and later on, as an adult, can cope with new demands and adopt to new work requirements. This process of educating young people is of course also possible in Poland though it may take quite a while but let us not forget that it took no less time in countries known for their technological civilization. In Poland training of the young generation has relied more heavily on the theory and philosophical underpinnings of organization than on its practical aspects. The

organizational chaos is responsible for huge losses in time and effort. It is therefore quite correct to say that the process of streamlining the Polish economy ought to begin with eliminating all causes of waste and squandering of materials accompanied by better-organized work-schedule. It appears that the dominant view on those matters in Poland holds that it is the business of those in power to decide how things ought to be organized. It is again a delusion. Unless the idea and practice of organising things penetrates the privacy of the informal sphere, the top-to-bottom moves to improve organisation in enterprises and administration will prove futile.

Rising up to the challenges of the future will depend on the state of organisation in the spheres of politics, administration, citizens activity. It covers a vast area of problems while being often reduced to crude relations of the party vs. government, PUWP vs. non-party citizens, government vs. citizens, state bureaucracy vs. the public, Stalinism vs. democratization, subjectivity vs. objectivity, political opposition vs. official authorities. In all these oppositions stress is laid on requirements addressed to the authorities with tacit idealisation of the public and the opposition. Much depends on the way the political activity in Poland will be organized. So far, as a remnant of Stalinism in both the party and among the opposition, a belief has been fairly widespread about the primacy of politics over every other sphere of social life. The conviction was justified at the time when the economy and culture as well as broad areas of social life had been subjected to politics, or in other words, to a struggle and consolidation of power. But now, in 1988, the message is beginning to come through ever more forcefully that resolving political issues creates conditions for resolving economic problems but it does not actually resolve them. Limiting the power of the PUWP inside factories does not automatically resolve economic difficulties, which require changes also in the informal sphere of economic behaviour. Yet that simple fact is denounced by those who still preach the old Stalinist primacy of politics along with intolerance toward opponents and disinterest for anything that is not arm-twisting show of force. At any rate new concepts of political organisation of the Polish state are being forged in a struggle against and negation of the Stalinist model. Therefore some new concepts are either negative copies of Stalinism based on denying the components of the Stalinist model, or adaptations of Stalinism to one's own ends. It is quite understandable because for over four decades now new generations of Poles have had no other political experiences. Yet, it must be said that neither a straightforward negation nor appropriation

can resolve political problems and problems of political organization in Poland.

The question of a democratic political setup in Poland has never been clearly articulated. After 1918, there sprung to life several dozen political parties. Together with the parties of national minorities the Polish Sejm (Parliament) grouped about twenty political parties, neither of which could form a lasting government. That period of democratic rule ended in May 1926. Just under eight full years of experience in the entire 20th century is indeed very little. Predictably, when there again appear the possibilities to establish new political parties in Poland, the situation could develop along a similar scenario. It is hardly imaginable that there will be only two or three strong political parties forming the foundations of parliamentary democracy. More probable, there will surface a whole range of smaller parties fighting each other and unable to form a government. Therefore the challenge of a political arrangement in Poland arises justified concerns as do such issues as economic order, organisation of work and social life.

In my opinion, the basic source of difficulty accompanying the organization of economy, state, social life lies in the field of culture. I do not have in mind the spheres of culture falling under the competence of the Ministry of Arts and Culture. The issues in question rarely land on a minister's desk. They are concerned with the culture of social coexistence, the culture of work, of management, or political culture. These spheres of culture are tightly linked with everyday life of families, friends and employees. Generally, the behaviour patterns and values are seen as obvious therefore arising little interest. They are nevertheless very important because they generate patterns of social behaviour, values, they are powerful opinion-forming agents. Let us remember that formal organizations and structures are entered by people whose basic cultural equipment has been gathered in the micro-world of culture.

Let us examine the problem in a little more detail on the example of the culture of work. The quality of work and, consequently the quality of goods, is a notorious weakness of our economy. There have been many so-called "actions", many organisational solutions have been tested, control measures taken and economic decisions implemented. Alas they produced little effect. Let us stress the persistence of that phenomenon, which has been known in Poland since before World War Two. What is then the role of the culture of work? We mean by this term a certain body of values associated with work, behaviour at work, attitudes toward the effects of work and towards the consumer. Further, it com-

prises the moral sense of duty. Without going into details of the ethics of duty and obligation let me assume here that that duty designates any action, which if refrained from would cause some wrong. Therefore the duty of a worker is to produce good quality products because bad quality goods are not welcome by the potential buyer. This is a moral concept of duty, which must be seen as something else than a legal duty. Legal duty means doing something, which if not done, would result in punishment or a punishable action. The legal duty to work well has never been sufficient without the support of moral duty. The moral duty to work well may derive from religious ethics, secular ethics, it may spring from ideological convictions or from ethical rules of social conduct, or as a manifestation of man's respect for other men. Whatever definition we might accept, we must admit that it is important for the quality of goods, and further for their economic value and international market competitiveness. Thus the culture of work is not a figment of a philosopher's imagination but an important economic determinant of daily behaviour of employees at their work-places. The planned economy has been quantity-oriented, while quality control has been made subservient to the system of payment and other extras. This has led to widespread feeling of disrespect for the quality of goods because pay and other bonuses were tied firmly to the quantity and not quality of products. Therefore along with "mis-carried investment projects" the other plague of the Polish economy has been "miscarried production" turning up inferior goods.

The culture of work is transmitted to children within their families. The basic elements of proper attitudes toward work are then amplified, enriched and fixed at school. Unless small groups find a way of a grass-roots pressure for good work, legal regulations and philosophical speculations will fail to affect everyday attitudes of the working people.

Besides work attitudes we have to deal with such social phenomena as petty crime and thefts of factory property. One might dismiss it with a "magnate's gesture" but one might instead try to draw a scrupulous balance-sheet of profit and loss only to conclude that a change in workers attitudes toward their work must be eventually introduced or else the reform will remain a half-baked success. We could study the cultural standards of work in Great Britain, Germany or Japan and draw conclusions that could prove helpful in designing the Polish approach to the awaiting economic challenges.

The next immensely important issue is the level of political culture and of the living standards. I have said a lot about it on previous occasions but let me repeat how necessary it is to have things changed in

order to rise up to political challenges such as democracy, good state administration and management. The decade of the 80s has brought a conviction that there are two categories of citizens: advocates of the system, and those standing in opposition of various hues. The emergence of the "Solidarity" movement has created an umbrella for all kinds of opposition groups united in the officially declared goal of creating a trade union, which has, however soon been transformed into a political organization. The bonds of trade unionism have proved insufficient to hold together a political organization, which then began to split into various factions each advancing its own political concepts; the opposition was soon divided vis a vis the authorities and the system itself. There emerged groups representing rural "Solidarity" and scores of other orientations. In November 1981, during a manifestation at the Tomb of Unknown Soldier in Warsaw "Solidarity" paraded a whole spectrum of political groups each demanding legalisation. Martial law has put an end to that movement toward a new political configuration but after a few years, in 1988 it is beginning to resurface again. Riding on the crest of restructuring the political make-up of the state, a variety of social groups voice their access to legal activity. Consequently a range of scenarios is possible: a) alongside the existing parties, groupings and Christian political groups whose deputies sit in the Sejm (Parliament), there spring to life legal political clubs associating people of various orientations e.g. the B. Gotowski group, or drawing together advocates of Christian concepts as e.g., the people around prof. S. Stomma. This is now a reality. There is quite a number of similar clubs and the question now arising concerns their future role in Polish political life and also when they would eventually begin to transform into political parties. b) Another variant holds that the so-far illegal or semi-legal organisations such as PPS, KPN, various "Solidarity" splinter groups would re-emerge on the political scene through political activity, ideological activity, demonstrations, publishing etc. Government may face such activity with tolerance in a conviction that sooner or later all those factions will inevitably clash with one another. Government repressions would be a blessing to those groups landing them an aura of martyrdom and consequently stimulating greater popular support. c) The third eventuality is to return to the old stalinist model complete with repressions against every opposition grouping and, ultimately, openly inviting a new crisis. d) The fourth scenario depicts the creation of a new group, Christian democracy enjoying a tacit or even overt backing of the Church. This would expand the coalition but at the same time it would represent a qualitative change as the new party

would inevitably differ in approach from the United Peasants Party or the Social Democratic Party. The new party would be closer to what we could call a real opposition. It would, in fact, be constructive and would not seek to eliminate the PUWP. Yet it would stand for greater respect of the will of the nation. e) Let us assume that the "round table" meeting proposed by the PUWP in 1988 will effectively take place and that the groups that would gather there including the government, the official trade union, non-party, opposition will eventually agree on some sort of a council for reconciliation and initiate a political movement affiliating various groupings united in a search of solutions to the pressing problems of the reality. Under the circumstances the PUWP while ceasing to act as the "leading" force would become an avantgarde force incorporating the various political tendencies but respecting their individual political image and activity. f) Finally, a possibility articulated during a meeting of the leaders of opposition groups in October 1988, who declared that they saw no further chance open for cooperation with the PUWP and that their goal had been to strip the PUWP of its power, that they had not wished to cooperate in reshaping the socialist system but instead wanted to eliminate it altogether. Given the fact that no party would give up its power of its own accord, the PUWP would then face the challenge by restricting democratic trends and taking a defensive posture. Such a turn of events would ultimately be less auspicious for agreement and would encourage more confrontational behaviour. g) The situation in Poland is bound to be exposed to external influence, the political developments in the Soviet Union, the presidential elections in the United States, and the policy of the new US president, especially when we recall the fact that the peaceful declarations of US Under-Secretary of State A. Whitehead coincided with the demonstrations in Gdańsk to which "Solidarity" would not consent without the US blessing. Next come the developments in Yugoslavia, Hungary and Romania. Should the socialist states succeed with economic reforms and follow them up with new political framework for increased citizen participation in the running of the state and exercising state power then in Poland, too, the process will proceed without violence.

At any event the key role in the process befalls to the party but a question remains: would the PUWP be able to hold on to power while at the same time giving a go-ahead to other parties and political groupings and to free elections? Or to use different words: is the political state of our society such that a smooth transition to a new political system is possible meaning along the way a radical change of the nature of the

PUWP? It is little probable. Our political life is too much burdened with old antagonisms and matters still left to be settled; there is too much pain that people do not wish to forget and too much bitterness. In the final count the solution will depend on what we have described above as political culture. Some impact will probably be made by the generational switch-over as the new generation of people, who may not recall facts and events but very serious about myths and legends enters active politics.

Every political system produces its own brand of political culture. R. Kapuściński's account of two absolutist governments – emperor Haile Selassie's in Ethiopia, and Iranian's R. Pahlavi – provides excellent description of the political means and forces engendered by that particular form of rule that ended in a downfall. Of particular interest is the political culture of the Iranian shiites, which overthrew the shah and created an islamic republic. Elites bring along new ideas, concepts and methods but the masses usually write their own meanings into the new slogans, advance old ambitions and are poised to reach old goals with tried and tested methods. Changes in political culture proceed very slowly, and attempts to impose top-to-bottom new patterns of behaviour usually take much time; some elements do come to stay but rarely in their pure, original form. As of 1988 the images of the desired political order in Poland are still very disparate and rather unclear. They are linked if anything by hostile feelings toward Stalinism and especially towards any of its manifestations that are still standing in the way to new achievements and aspirations. The times of political overhaul seldom encourage the emergence of permanent elements of political culture; they rather stimulate divergent postures and antagonistic attitudes. Therefore I do not think that the present-day manner of thinking about the authorities, about the state, the administration or politics would prove a positive factor for overcoming the challenges of the future.

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We have discussed the confrontation of the challenges of the future in four aspects of social life i.e., individual, small groups, formal bodies, and the culture of communal life. Of course the fate of Poland will have to be decided in a lot more of aspects of national existence. Yet, I think that those four main levels of social life constitute what I would call the "substance" of the society because it is in individual attitudes, informal and formal structures and in the somewhat natural patterns of culture that the fundamental forces of the society are being generated.

The conclusions are, however, not too optimistic. The greatest amount of hope should, as it seems, be pinned on the previously blocked energies of individuals and groups which seek to live precisely the kind of life that they think matches their life-styles. However, the patterns of interpersonal relations, patterns of work, political culture could seriously diminish the impact of those unblocked forces. For the time being attention is focused on normalizing the political side of socialism. If the systemic changes highlighted during the recent (7th and 8th) plenary sessions of PUWP Central Committee are really put into effect, if the "round table" conference does succeed in bringing together the various political options and if the opposition agrees to channel its effort into a gradual restructuring of our system toward coexistence and "normal" political struggle among a number of parties instead of confrontation, toppling down the system and the PUWP, then maybe the released energies of our nation will help to resolve the outstanding economic issues. Let us not forget that the resolution of political conflicts does not automatically mean that all other problems will be resolved, too. Moreover, political changes are not even the basic precondition for economic, social or moral change. The expectations widespread among the Poles today resemble the social mood of World War One, when Poles believed that once they have independence the amount of social energy released would soon make Poland a country of "glass houses". No wonder then that the feeling of disillusionment that swept Poland during the 'twenties was tremendous. Nobody could imagine that Polish soldiers would use firearms against the striking workers and therefore the charge by the uh-lans on the workers in Kraków had been such a terrible shock. It simply turned out that the Polish state and the Polish authorities had the same duties as any other state organism and that the change of the political system could not change the "nature" of politics, that every government had to have its security forces, its special services. It must collect taxes, control crime, maintain law courts and prisons and cannot make every dream come true.

Chapter 5

A Look into the Future

Satirists contend that the business of forecasting the future of states and nations is the easiest of tasks: all one has to do is to foretell crises, poor harvests, wars, revolutions, social unrest, catastrophes, ecological disasters. But seriously speaking: we could extrapolate current trends in such areas as population growth, levels of education, space management and other similar processes whose components are already given for us to examine. We could likewise extrapolate some backward trends concerning population, economy, politics or culture. But it is hardly ever possible to predict rapid changes of direction, sudden mutations, new ways of thinking and doing things. When we eventually come to examine such occurrences *ex post* we usually conclude that they had been quite obvious and foreseeable were it not that scholars, statesmen and citizens alike had at the time been preoccupied with such a perception of things that rendered impossible to make a correct forecast. Well, taking the risk that the eye-glasses that the 20th century has put on my nose do somewhat blur a clear view of things to come I will still try to look beyond the year two thousand.

The international situation of Poland will continue to be determined by geopolitics i. e., our location between Germany and the Soviet Union. I believe that the two German states will be eventually united sometime in the next century in some form, be it federation, a set of international treaties, or a full unification. This will be facilitated by close cooperation between the WTO and NATO states. Although Poland has eyed with concern every German-Soviet agreement since the 18th century because it invariably resulted in successive partitions of our land, she will find herself in a political partnership position in the next century. I hope that far-gone economic homogeneity of the three states and close business

links will create appropriate conditions to remove economic barriers and promote a good measure of political openness. All this, however, on one condition, namely, that Polish economy becomes an interesting trading partner for our neighbours. Improbable as it may appear at first sight, Poland can play a complementary role in a system comprising not only our immediate neighbours but also other states from within a broader economic organism in Europe. By no means the overcoming of hostile stereotypes of the kind of a "communist East" or "imperialist West" cannot be done overnight. Still it is feasible in a longer perspective. European states may try to perpetrate ideological and political divisions and keep in place the economic differences of the two types of economy but I believe a conviction will gradually be winning the upper hand that cooperation is ultimately better than isolationism and confrontation.

Working towards accommodation the socialist economies will have to embrace market mechanisms, new monetary policies including currency convertibility and they will also have to give up central planning methods. Even before the economic reforms are implemented, the socialist states including Poland will undergo further changes in their political systems. From a whole range of political changes which I have discussed in the previous chapter the turn-of-the-century Poland will reshape democratization, multi-party system and new parliamentary democracy. Admittedly the PUWP will staunchly obstruct such evolution as many party-members will find it hard to accept the loss of power and the leadership role, but this long-running process of change will expose the PUWP to an ever greater pressure from the more active chunks of the society. In fact the following two processes will occur in parallel: changes in the economy increasingly freeing itself from political control, and political modifications within the PUWP forced by less support from the economic side. I think, the next parliamentary elections and elections to the People's Councils will be conducted along revised electoral laws and will enable the voter to choose from a much wider list across the political spectrum. A rise in political weight of new ideological groupings will doubtless encourage them to exert a vigorous pressure on the economic side thereby dovetailing political change with economic evolution.

This in turn will necessitate smooth operation of central government and state administration bodies if only because they will be suddenly relieved of a huge burden of economic decision-making. The government will stop dealing in trifle deals because this will be the business of tradesmen. Consequently, large numbers of office-workers could be removed into the productive sphere. Also the relationship between parties

and government will change because state administration will no longer be directly dependent on the Party. State administration will cease to be the executive arm of the PUWP and will no longer bear the brunt of responsibility for failures. Restoration of citizens' rights including the right for business initiative will deflate the value of state-owned market and will decrease the social benefit burden. This will allow to correlate payments with the economic outcome of work. Workers will be paid for work done and not for being employed.

Such evolution of the economy will force change in production, distribution and consumption. Although there will be no shortage of pessimists claiming that the changes will have no bearing on the culture of work and that new organisation framework will not eradicate carelessness, bad quality work, alcoholism, it is clear that a reformed state-owned economy nor private firms would tolerate incompetent drunkards.

I also think that the evolution of the economy will act as a driving-engine in politics and, for that matter, not only the policies of the parties but also of the opposition.

The shape of the opposition is largely determined by the way the economy is operating. It may be that the leading opposition groups of every conviction see politics and the pursuit of power as their main area of activity. At the same time opposition sympathizers and its rank-and-file are mainly people dissatisfied with the present state of our economy. The intelligentsia with opposition leanings have reproached the government over freedom of speech and access to information but they also make financial claims and complain about their living standards and limited contacts with the outside world. All the same the tenor of political struggle is usually suggested by the leaders set to combat the existing forms of authority. This in the first place concerns the Stalinist model of authority and its remnants. Changes in that model of authority will push the opposition to modify their tactics or even to review their overall strategies. It could be said that opposition in the socialist states, especially in Poland, has been under the influence of Stalinism and even borrowed some of the model's properties. The opposition began with exposing and condemning the crimes of the Stalinist era. It continued with bringing to light the plight of the Poles resettled or forcefully removed to distant territories, describing the tragedy of labour camps and the practices of the internal security forces. The next stage saw opposition increasingly focusing on the economic activity of the state, methods of exercising power, ways of resolving national grievances and on a general inefficiency of the authorities across a whole range of vital issues. Next,

the opposition went to great lengths to put in the limelight the backwardness of Poland against Western Europe and even Czechoslovakia, Hungary and the GDR. Successive waves of workers' unrest brought to life new forms of dissident activity. At present, at the end of the 1980s we can see a growing internal differentiation of the opposition – from unreserved outwardly manifested hostility toward communism, through varying degrees of radicalism to constructive opposition ready to take the political role of "her Majesty's Opposition". I am of the opinion that sooner or later opposition will find its way into the Sejm be it in the guise of small groups or a strong Christian-democratic party.

Changes within the socialist formation necessitate changes within the opposition. The criticism of the Stalinist era is gradually subsiding, exposition of its methods and facts can take us only so far, while to the fore comes the need for a programme and declaration of what there is on offer. The hour in which opposition reveals its political and economic programmes and puts forth concrete solutions will be a turning point in Polish politics. Let us remember that there is a difference between a criticizing opposition and one putting on the table an alternative programme of action. Now a question arises: will the opposition succeed in introducing a new quality into Polish politics? Well, it will be bound to do so just as it had had to change under the pressure of the changes of socialism as such. But again one may ask whether that new quality will be better? I will not dare to answer that question. The opposition is also being moulded by official authorities simply because it must adjust its strategy and tactics to those of its opponents. The imperative of being concrete on the side of the opposition is a very important stabilizing factor since the opposition cannot afford to behave as if it were detached from the reality. Therefore I think opposition as well as the PUWP will accept a parliamentary order of doing business and from that moment onwards its role will depend on the number of votes cast for the opposing parties. I say parties because I believe that there will be quite a number of them, maybe as many as in our Parliament back in the 'twenties. I am not convinced that any single opposition party could accumulate enough power to form a majority government. I do believe instead that under the new conditions there will be many separate parties in opposition to communism and that will keep weakening their political thrust. I do not envision any radical evolution of the political culture in Poland. It will take a very long time to form a category of senior civil servants acting independently of political parties in power. It will take as much time until old sentiments and prejudices, hostilities and ambitions disap-

pear between the extreme opposition groups and fundamentalists of the PUWP.

If then the evolution of the opening decades of the 21st century follows the path of overhauling socialism toward a multi-party system and if this is accompanied by a diffusion of inter-bloc tensions then we could expect that in the second half of the next century the problems that have awaited solution since the 18th century might disappear.

One more component of the international situation must now be discussed, namely, the North-South, and Asia-Europe relations. These have a predominantly demographic aspect: let us imagine that sometime near mid-21st century some 700 million white people will be sharing this planet with seven billion people of other races. Another aspect of this issue is the economic confrontation of the rich North and the poor South. The third aspect involves the political alignment between Europe, the United States and other "white" countries vis a vis the rest of the world. In comparison with such challenges the conflict between East and West may well look like a "child's play", a mismatch sparked off by ideological frenzy and political blindness.

Let us now take a look at the evolution of the class structure of the Polish society in the future. Technological progress will tend to decrease the number of necessary work-force but the working class will maintain its internal differentiation. Some jobs will demand a high school certificate or even a university diploma. New jobs will fast be created in step with progressing increase of electronic equipment in manufacture, services, or information. Progress in fact will be determined by two factors: population growth and employment pressure on the one hand, and technological progress eliminating excessive labour on the other. The experience of the 20th century suggests that sweeping generalisations should rather be avoided. The views that automated assembly lines cause layoffs but create jobs in other sectors or that future factories will be manned by only a handful of technicians are still sheer fantasy. The services will see a huge influx of new jobs but it will take a while to improve the technical standard of services. The process will be accompanied by another trend i.e., reprivatization of the services sector in step with the growing role of market mechanisms. Freeing private sector services from a push toward fast profit-making.

Thus we could say that the coming century will witness a growth of the middle class in Poland. This in fact will represent the biggest single change in our social structure. The middle class in Poland, which was destroyed during the war has recupped after the war in a completely

new crippled form of craftsmanship and services. Recent changes in the political system and the economic reform seem to be breathing new life into the middle class, which betrays signs of a new revival. This could not be called a revival of the old middle classes but a new quality adopted to the changed socialism with its partly-regulated market, with remnants of the 20th century still in their minds together with old habits, ideology and politics. Also the consumer patterns will undergo a change as will life-styles. The world economy burdened with the billions of people living in Third World countries will of necessity change. Similarly, the Eastern and Western bloc relationships will have to change given the current pressures of the South. Therefore we do not necessarily have to expect that our middle class will be a replica of the middle classes of developed capitalism because that form of capitalism as we know will also change under the pressure of the Third World. Throughout the 21st century the impact of the Third World on the developed nations will keep increasing and the process will not spare Poland. The East-West conflict, which determined policies and economic decisions in the 20th century will recede to the background as unsolved but no longer vital.

The Polish society will continue in the next century to reduce the number of office workers. The percentage of university graduates will increase and there will be more professionally skilled persons among the intelligentsia. At the same time the role of intellectuals will slowly diminish. Let it be recalled that in the second half of the present century the social prestige of intellectuals in Poland was associated not so much with the intellectuals' high scholarly, scientific, artistic or philosophical qualities but rather with their political activity. By joining the mainstream of political struggle, ideological disputes and fight against Stalinism Polish intellectuals succeeded to focus the attention of all the forces involved in East-West ideological conflict. Hence the appearances of intellectual prestige. Yet historians of culture, science and technology will not have much to put for the record in the next century. It is probable that the process of overcoming excessive red-tape barriers to economic growth, social life and political activity may help channel intellectual potential toward artistic creativity.

Peasants, so far a large social class will diminish in number after a pattern already experienced in other countries. Poland is a scene of an ongoing differentiation of the rural areas. Still in the first half of the 20th century rural population and land-farming were one and the same thing. But at the end of the 80's about 40.0 percent of the rural population finds employment outside agriculture. Increasingly, agriculture is becoming a

thing of interest for research institutes and special agricultural schools, attracting growing numbers of employees of non-peasant descent. At the same time peasants are becoming a political category but peasant political; leaders are to be found in cities. There are more and more villages surrounding big cities populated by non-farmers. Peasants who used to be the sole producers of food, and were reckoned with as a strong politically independent social class within their own original folk culture – therefore the other, next to intelligentsia culture-generating class – are losing their characteristic marks, which may in the longer run have far-reaching consequence for the nation at large. The rural population ceases to act as the country's demographic reserve. Moreover, it ceases to produce genuine national culture which is the necessary underpinning of official culture. It likewise stops infusing other social classes with its members. But perhaps most importantly the rural element is gradually losing its role as a class that is binding the people with their land, and traditional rural family is nearly extinct. All these worries though raised by researchers seem to arise little interest. But one day the nation will suddenly wake up to see that nearly all that used to make their national identity is no longer there.

What then will be the cultural image of the Polish nation in the next century? For one thing, our culture will be exposed to the technical civilization and therefore will inevitably grow more cosmopolitan. As new technologies are absorbed so is the whole civilizational complex created by the engineers of a given technology including language, attitudes, interpersonal relations and values. So we could say that absorbing a technology means also absorbing that technology's cultural environment. The second factor determining the cultural complexion of our nation will be our reaction to the 20th century socialism. It will not necessarily be a negative response but also it may take the form of perpetuation of recognized values. And there will be more such values that we are today ready to accept. The third factor will be nationalism in various forms treated as a safeguard of national identity. At the same time some components of social micro-structures and elements of the culture of work, of coexistence, and also political culture will evolve only to a limited degree.

Changes of the political system usually stimulate creativity and I think new creative energies will be released especially in the arts, science, education and, it may well be – as it generally happens in times of transition – we will witness a rapid civilizational progress. What elements of our national culture will then be sustained and promoted? Well, it

will be without doubt our language. Next, it will be our history and tradition. With the peoples' mobility greatly increased, the developed countries will cease to be the primary attraction and closer personal contacts with the millions of Poles living abroad or foreign nationals of Polish descent will inevitably alter the picture of foreign countries and introduce corrections to the perceptions of life abroad. Literature, film, theatre and the media as well as the schooling system will continue as important cornerstones of cultural identity. Maybe the civilizational uplifting will boost our national pride and strengthen our national ties. At the same time, it is not impossible that closer links with the Polonia and immigration, the change in the nature of emigration accompanied by a switch in the perception by dissociating emigration from political opposition will all contribute to the emergence of one universal Polish culture developing both at home and in other countries.

How is it possible to galvanize the forces which I have mentioned in the previous Chapter? Will there be a change in the fundamental substance of the society that is decisive for the success in facing the upcoming challenges? Any textbook in sociology will tell us that such changes occur very slowly indeed, and that the basic structure of feelings, attitudes and aspirations of our contemporary human being are not far from those of the heroes of the Illiad but at the same time there may be substantial differences in their content. We can hope for changes in formal structures toward unblocking social energies. We can count on an explosion of energies thus far crumpled by Stalinism and its remnants and we can count with equal conviction on unexpected mutations of the Polish society. I think that what seems to be the most realistic thing would be the unblocking of energies of the younger generations and these may, I think, yield quite unexpected results.

All this will be made possible if our schooling system renounces crude methods of socialization in favour of greater attention to the individual. We may also hope that the educational system will succeed in transmitting to the young more facts about effective action and pragmatic thinking. The conclusion from the preceding discussion is thus: unless there is a change in social micro-structures, the quality of organization of formalized economy, of politics and culture, unless there are changes in the culture of work and of social coexistence, Poland will fail to win a position among European states, which would enable her to lead a secure life on a level comparable to that of her neighbours.

The whole problem could thus be reduced to the following question: where are we to appeal in order to raise up to the challenges of the future?

Let me repeat: history never asks nations about their past governments or political systems, but it does put to them one question - what can a nation achieve in any given moment, how does it cope with difficulties? In my opinion, Poles can and should appeal to their own self, to their talents, cleverness and imagination. Much of what was nonsensical in our economy and indeed in public life has sprung from the fact that a significant percentage of our fellow citizens chose to play the fools and preferred imposed forms of living and behaving. Every state can and does take advantage of the weaknesses of its neighbours. There is no charity in politics. Every state uses all opportunities to expand and make profit. And so it was back in the 18th century, and so it is today. The fundamental asset of every nation and state organism is the qualities of its people, their talent, organizational skills, diligence, a will to expand and the ability to coexist. What could the Polish state do to meet the challenges of the future? It could use to the full the talent and energies of its people.

Warsaw, October 26, 1988.

Epilogue and a New Beginning

In the last days of October 1988, when I was writing the closing paragraphs of this book, hardly anybody in Poland would have guessed that a year later, precisely on September 12, 1989, Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki would open an entirely new chapter in Polish history, a chapter of a post-communist Poland. The developments of the past twelve months have in a PUWP-led Poland indeed brought remarkable effects: the leadership of a communist party agreed to hold national election which the PUWP was doomed to lose, next, the Senate, the Sejm's upper chamber, was created with not single Senator holding a PUWP membership card. A coalition of the Polish United Workers' Party with the Democratic Party (SD) and the Peasant Party (ZSL) to control the Sejm had not survived more than a few weeks. A new coalition was then borne when the Democrats and Peasants joined "Solidarity" to form a parliamentary majority. It is no other but "Solidarity", untill a few months back definitely unacceptable for the PUWP as a restituted organization, that had proposed Mazowiecki for premiership. All this raises a lot of questions but the most essential one, at least for the problems discussed here, is as follows: if the Polish nation has revealed such an astounding ability to make rapid changes maybe, too, Poles have a way, unforeseen in these pages, of coping with their future challenges.

The final sentence in this book contains a veiled declaration of my belief in the creative abilities and potential energies of our nation. But here another question comes up: is the political programme of Prime Minister Mazowiecki powerful enough and also, will his Cabinet, which after all enjoys a full backing of the Sejm, be a success in the face of the tasks ahead? True enough the new MP and his government have quite a lot more trump cards than their predecessors: for one, the new cabinet can safely count on a high percentage of mass support. The cabinet can rest assured of Church support too, which is a fact not to be disregarded; next, Mazowiecki and his ministers have grounds to believe that Western

governments and other institutions will adopt a more helpful posture vis à vis Poland if only because they see this country as their decade-long-dream come true – an elimination of a communist system.

In my view the sweeping changes that occurred in Poland in the past year have been overshadowed by one event of crucial importance – a quiet and unexpected resignation from power by the PUWP. Maybe professor Jerzy Borejsza was right when he wrote: *When an elite of a ruling totalitarian mono-party takes up reform to democratize the system when that very system had already lost popular support, then such reform is a fatal cure for the system*¹ The national election proved that the PUWP, quite apart from imperfections in the electoral law, has lost popular support while PUWP-inspired democratic reforms have set free the forces that in the final count turned against the party. Not improbable is the fact that the four plus decades of uninterrupted PUWP rule without ever fearing of a power struggle, brought the party to lose its survival instinct. It may well be that many of PUWP members thought that giving up power would be a clever way of saddling "Solidarity" with a burden that proved too heavy for their own shoulders. The failure of PUWP-inspired reforms revealed that the party no longer enjoyed "credibility" among the nation and also pointed to the fact that the administrative apparatus established by the PUWP to run the state and its economy proved too complex and cumbersome and in the final count ineffectual. Undoubtedly the problems, or challenges as they were labelled in this book, still retain their economic, psychological and social sense. Future developments will hopefully help to establish how far political system affects the nation's capacities to resolve its fundamental problems of existence and progress. So far the view has prevailed (also expressed in this work) that political change, i.e., elimination of party control, elimination of the "nomenklatura", departure from political decision-making in matters of economy etc., are absolute preconditions to overcoming the economic, social and moral crisis.

The period since the new-style government assumed power freed from the traditional leading role of the party (PUWP) and marked by a full authority of our Parliament is too short to reveal all potentialities hidden in the new order of things. But already now there is a growing sense of frustration at the face of the fact that it is easy to make political changes, it is easy to make policy reviews and appoint new captains of economy but the mechanisms of, for example, inflation had been set in motion in the past decades are far less easily correctible. Similarly, there is a

¹Jerzy W. Borejsza in his book *Mussolini was First*, Czytelnik 1989, p. 109.

painful suspicion that certain habits, perceptions and aspirations borne in the past 40-year period seem to be permanent and not affected by political change. Therefore if I wished to write an epilogue to this book I would rather have to write an introduction to not only a turning of a new leaf but also an opening of a new chapter in our history, to quote the Speaker of the Sejm, Mikołaj Kozakiewicz, after Prime Minister Mazowiecki's inaugural address.

The challenges of the future have been overshadowed by the painful worries of daily life: inflation, skyrocketing prices and wage claims, worker unrest, production breaks, shortage of raw materials, quality of manufacture, clumsy management and work organization, state subsidies in industry and services, speculation by "parasite companies" and by our foreign indebtedness. A transition from "party power" to "state power", from authority based on ideology to one based on competence and reliability is proceeding by slow degrees, too, because it is one of elements of a complex process of social evolution. As I have said it is relatively easier to change legal acts, ideological declarations, institutional statutes, but it must be remembered at the same time that society can be said to have changed only when each and every of its members has changed his way of thinking and doing things, his habits and his work patterns, his sense of duty, values as well as his sensibilities and perceptions on what is natural and what is not in a given community. In other words, a lot of the heretofore components of the socialist system in Poland have come to be seen as "natural" facts of our reality and when these are violated there is a nervous group reaction in the society. A considerable number of Poles will consider it natural that the Mazowiecki government will bring to us all that socialism promised. Only he will do it faster, more efficiently and in greater quantities.

The society will be changing on number of planes. These will include:

a) formal structures of power, economy and political parties, institutions and other organizations;

b) classes and social strata. There is a necessity to revive in Poland the middle classes which are a bedrock of democracy. Neither the intelligentsia nor private-farm owners could replace the petite bourgeoisie in upkeeping the system of democracy;

c) social microstructures, small community groups, families, local communities, social circles, employee associations and every other small form of collective life, where opinions and values are shaped and attitudes and beliefs are moulded;

d) interpersonal relations, between a group and an individual, mu-

tual understanding sympathy, cooperation and conflict - in other words that great sphere of daily activity, privacy of our inner lives and their projection onto the surrounding world.

On each of these levels (barely outlined here) we can observe facts that are characteristic of the socialist system in its version perpetuated in Poland for more than forty years. Let us not forget that for many plain citizens as well as statesmen in this country, from both the PUP and the opposition, the socialist system has been the sole political experience. Even when they chose to oppose socialism they did it only through action that was a negation of what they deemed as socialist thereby their actions were determined by that which they wanted to denounce.

The slogans calling for a departure from socialism, which seem to have the greatest appeal, are those encouraging decentralization, freeing economic activity from its bureaucratic straitjacket, releasing new energies driven equally by the idea of free choice and a wish to get rich. Let us remember that such and similar appeals were voiced in 18th century Poland by Staszic and other reformers, and again in 19th century by positivist. They were also repeated in the inter-war period. Each time the results were only limited. In the period between the two world wars the press accused the young generation of seeking employment with the state, which was less paid but more stable rather than turning to private entrepreneurship. Indeed, today a serious obstacle to private business will be lack of capital and credit. Any textbook on economy will list a whole set of factors determining a business success. Therefore heating up hopes and hinging them solely on personal skill and willpower may lead to bitter disillusionment. The new coalition government feels obliged to create conditions favourable for entrepreneurship and to remove obstacles to individual initiative and drive.

Yet in my view the conflict between lingering elements of socialism and new political ideas will continue long into the future on all four levels of social reality. The formal structures of offices, administration and other state institutions will evolve slowly for the simple reason that the employees in those bodies are lacking the necessary knowledge and experience of other than known forms of organization. The class structures too, will keep changing at a very slow pace, as will our perceptions of egalitarianism, equality of classes of social groups. The rise of a class of the privileged rich will be welcome with anger. It will take no less time to get used to inequality than it had taken to get used to equality at least that preached in ideological statements. The new era ahead of us will be troubled by the closing of the socialist period and the teething

problems of its post-socialist successor. The difficulties will be especially conspicuous on the planes c) and d) above i.e., in microstructures and interpersonal relations. Coming to a close is a period of party rule and party ideology, ideological censorship, party-protecting security services, party-serving propaganda, and internationalism defined as peddling the Soviet interests. The end is approaching to glorification of the international worker movement in education, especially in history teaching. New facts until now hidden from public eye are being brought to light. But even a full exposure of all that has been concealed does not mean doing away with everything that is characteristic of socialism. What with habits and realities which had won the acceptance and status as "natural" and "matter-of-course", like medical care for all, schooling, claims for a better life never associated with better work, pay demands, attitudes toward the country's political and economic bosses, the ideology of egalitarianism, etc. Next in line to linger on for quite a time are the manner of handling people's matters by state officials of every category, the manner of treating customers in the services, together with an unarticulated definition of a citizen as one whom the state is doing great favours. All told the period of "closing up" will be with us for quite a while and will proceed not without coercion with the "opening up" of the post-socialist era.

It will be so because, as I have earlier underlined, new legal acts, ideological declarations, political programmes and new institutions on a macro-scale may come to life relatively soon. The trouble begins when we get down to every day life with its duties and chores, attitudes towards superiors, household management, perception of public property or enterprise property – its tools and machinery, its power consumption and resources, ways of protecting the property of a private businessman and that of a private person. A private manufacturer will have to "educate" his employees and explain to them how his business operates. Also he will have to make clear that employment does not equal work and that he is hiring them for their labour and not for employment sake. A re-orientation of attitudes from those functioning in a socialized, planned economy toward behaviour patterns more suited for a private business establishment i.e., to bring profit to its owner will take a long voyage across rough seas.

It must not be overlooked that the new opening will have to confront its international limitations. Fortunately, in these first days of October of 1989 as I am writing these words, only Romania has offered armed assistance to defend socialism in Poland. Other countries have their own

headaches: the Soviet Union has to confront a wave of national sentiments in its republics, the GDR faces mass immigration of its citizens, Czechoslovakia has to confront a growing opposition calls for democratization of the system. On top of this parties in all these countries are undergoing a change of a generation guard in their political elites. The situation in the immediate environment of Poland and Hungary allows the two countries to loosen significantly their intra-bloc ties. The process of opening is verbally supported by the NATO states, which are interested in eradicating socialism in Poland and in a decay of the bloc from within. At the same time Poland's huge debt and debt-servicing payments are and will be a nightmare to our economy and a yoke that the Western countries may use to influence the course of Poland's development. In politics and in business there are no sentiments, no friendship or compassion. Eventual aid to Poland will obviously be determined by the interests of those who might come to rescue. Therefore it is crucial that Poland should not lose her own interests from sight. At any rate a political re-orientation in Poland could only take place thanks to processes set in motion by the Soviet perestroika, the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and the Soviet dialogue with the United States on the reduction of armaments and diminishing of mutual military threat. Should these favourable trends continue the beginning of a new chapter will also proceed smoothly.

In the final count also the future challenges might be more easily confronted at least within the areas of political institutions, and the economy within its formal structures. Yet in the areas dominated by attitudes towards work and duties, our daily life, household life, family relations or in short within the entire social microsphere I would not foresee greater change. Although communism will indeed disappear as a handy excuse it will be soon replaced by another one – just as it has always been here in Poland. Since the 18th century Poland has changed her political and economic system more than once, and seen many rulers both Polish and alien. Serious problems did change but they had invariably been overshadowed by more down-to-earth issues. The new opening of 1989 must too, face the immediate troubles such as inflation, over-employment, monopolies in the economy, weak currency. In politics Poland has to reconstruct an efficient system of management and find a satisfactory form of self-government. Confronted with an acute feeling of the urgency and importance of these matters the great challenges move to the background.

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