

Remarks for the American Chamber of Commerce Breakfast
Ambassador's Residence
June 9, 2010

Several weeks ago, Roman asked very casually, if I would host a breakfast for Amcham members. I said yes, of course, not realizing until after I had made the commitment that it would involve tents, and invitations to more than 100 people.

That says a lot about Roman. He gets the commitment first, and provides the details later. And as I learned quickly after my arrival last year, not only is there no possibility of saying "No," there's no reason you would want to. Because when Roman has a proposal, it is always for a good reason. So now, I simply call Roman the boss.

Very seriously, I have worked with many Amchams over the years, and there is none more focused and dynamic than yours; and a lot of that credit goes to Roman. So thank you for that introduction, and thank you for your years of service. And while I have worked over my career to support democratic change, can you please amend your bylaws to become chairman for life?

I think the billing for this event is that I would relay my experiences in Poland so far, and offer thoughts for the future.

I will only say on the first score, that it has been an amazing year. A sad year. A dynamic year. And an incredibly rich year. Poland demonstrated its resiliency to the world in how it has bounced back from April 10. Some of the challenges are yet to come, but Poland's economy, its market, and its international reputation only grew since the terrible toll of the crash in Smolensk, and the world has taken notice.

I also say that my experience on the ground has reinforced what I believed would be true before I got here. Our security relationship is, of course, essential. And it has deepened and improved in the last year. We have concluded agreements that had been hung up. We have brought programs to fruition that had been in doubt. We have established new government-

to-government talks. We meet routinely at cabinet levels. I was with The Secretary and the Foreign Minister when they met in Washington in May. We will meet again in Krakow next month. And these meetings are part of the regular rhythm of our relationship.

Yes, there is no area where we can do more to advance my job description – serving U.S. interests and improving relations between our two countries – than in promoting three Es: Education, Energy Security, and trade and Economics – all areas where you are playing pivotal roles.

Thomas Jefferson had it right: Opportunity is the heart of democratic societies: as he put it: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And you are at the heart of creating opportunity here for Poles and Americans. You can and should be proud – I am – of the role you have played in Poland's 20-year transformation, which is a model for the world.

This week we had 25 countries from around the world, not just central and east Europeans, but Afghans, Pakistanis, Haitians, Kenyans, and Timorese here to share experiences with Poles and Americans on establishing open and prosperous societies. The dynamic chair of the Polish-American Caucus of the Parliament said here two nights ago, in a reception for the Democracy Partnership, sponsored by the House of Representatives, "Today I feel like Poland is the capital of the world." And as the international model for a successful transition, Poland can make that claim credibly.

And you do it, in consumer services, in high tech, in the energy sector, in the services industry. You have played a pivotal role in the more than \$20 billion you have invested in Poland's economy, in the jobs, well into the six figures, you have created, and in sharing technologies, and management skills with Poles.

Not only is economics at the heart of the bilateral relationship, you have shown Poland America's heart; with IBM's support for Europride 2010; Proctor and Gamble's support of women's groups; Philip Morris and Citibank's support for Fundacja 10 April; and the announcement just this

week of UPS's impressive matching of U.S. support for Polish flood victims, which it is announcing now. And which I hope many of you can also match.

There are other good causes I can recommend. Those of you generously contributing to our annual Fourth of July party, thank you. Those of you who haven't, you know who you are, and there's still time. This year we wanted to have a theme, rather than just a deluge of people, and we have settled on "Real American Cities," and we will have testimonials to the people of Poland from the mayors of Chicago, Brooklyn, New Orleans, Seattle, and, Miami, each of which will be featured here on July 2. Plus there will be an American gospel band, Rhythm Road, in concert, complementing music of a talented Polish military band.

I spent many years at the Council on Foreign Relations in Washington, DC, and I can say that the interaction of business people with foreign policy practitioners can produce rich results, and I am very pleased to help foster that ferment here in Warsaw.

So, in closing, let me thank you for enriching Warsaw: economically; culturally; intellectually. And I will continue to rely on you, my close friends and partners, in the years to come as the heart of our efforts to create opportunities for Poles and Americans, and to deepen and broaden relations between our two countries.

And, finally, I have to say thank you to my staff. I can't call them my staff. They are the Residence's staff. They have been here longer and with greater dedication than any ambassador. This is the third of five events they are doing this week, including one that lasted late into last evening. We will have hosted three dinners, one lunch, and one breakfast, and on the order of 450 people or more. And that's just this week. Fortunately, for them, Elaine and I will be out of town next week. But we are fortunate to have this team of six, who do the work of many more, as our colleagues and friends and our family away from home.

With that let me please open up the breakfast to your questions which, despite the presence of 100 people here, I will treat as off the record.