

March 21, 1990

**Working Record of the Conversation between the
Prime Minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the US
Secretary of Defense D. Cheney**

Citation:

"Working Record of the Conversation between the Prime Minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the US Secretary of Defense D. Cheney", March 21, 1990, Wilson Center Digital Archive, Personal papers of Ryszard Wojtkowski. Contributed by Tomasz Kozłowski and translated by Jerzy Giebułtowski.

<https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/300002>

Summary:

Mazowiecki and Cheney discuss Poland's military, Soviet troop withdraw, and the future of NATO.

Credits:

This document was made possible with support from The Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars

Original Language:

Polish

Contents:

Original Scan

Translation - English

Classified

Working record of the conversation between the Prime Minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki and the US Secretary of Defense D. Cheney

Washington, 21 March 1990.

Prime Minister T. Mazowiecki referred to the expected visit by Mr. Cheney in Poland. This visit would be so important that now the "spell" should be removed from certain areas which have been put on hold. Against this background, the Prime Minister invited American warships to Gdańsk and Szczecin.

D. Cheney promised to send American ships on a visit of friendship. He then became interested in Poland's defense budget against the background of the current political struggle in the Congress. The Prime Minister informed the guest of the size of this budget and of the intentions to restructure and introduce civilians to the leadership of the Ministry of National Defense. He then added, "This is guaranteed by the president and Gen. Siwicki.

Another stage of reforms is nevertheless necessary. Only then will restructuring be possible. It is particularly important for us to reorient the army's thinking in terms of statehood. The Polish army is potentially ready make this adjustment. What should be changed is the educational mechanism. This is a process which takes time."

The guest then expressed interest in the process of change in the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Having been informed about this, he said: "I am watching with interest the evolution of the Soviet military presence in Eastern Europe. Do you envisage change in the status of Soviet troops in Poland?"

"Yes," the Prime Minister said, "for a number of reasons we want to do so peaceably, not ostentatiously. We have a unique geographical location different than our neighbors. Poland lies on main strategic line. We now want, in the first place, to regulate the presence of Soviet troops in the Republic of Poland, particularly the financial matters and the difficulties it poses for the population. Second, establish the principle of reduction leading to the total evacuation of those troops." The Prime Minister then referred to the talks of Baker-Shevardnadze and the importance of parity of 195,000 to reduce the presence of 430,000 Soviet soldiers in Poland.

D. Cheney expressed the hope of reducing conventional troops. Prime Minister T. Mazowiecki shared these hopes and referred to the departure from the policing role of the Soviet forces. He went on to say: "I think it is important to think intensively about a system of pan-European security. It is my intention to suggest that NATO is to be dissolved. However, we need to think of something of a pan-European nature. No one in Europe has a clear picture of what it should look like."

"Do you have," D. Cheney asked, any reservations regarding the presence of US troops in Germany?"

In response, the Prime Minister presented the Polish position on the neutrality of Germany and underlined the need for the Europeanization of Germany.

D. Cheney said: "The USSR is opposed to Germany's presence in NATO. How will this evolve in the future?"

"Under the formula of neutrality according to Gorbachev" Prime Minister T. Mazowiecki replied, in fact, there is a problem of balance of forces and of finding a formula for it". He then pointed to Genscher's statement that a united Germany would not shift NATO to the East and to the consequences of the adoption of the 195,000 parity. He then put these cases in the context of Gorbachev's domestic situation.

"You see this too," he asked D. Cheney, "as his internal problem?"

"Yes," T. Mazowiecki replied, "there may be consensus concerning reunification if this does not break the balance."