



Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group

The Eclipse of Walesa's Political Career

Author(s): Voytek Zubek

Source: *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Jan., 1997), pp. 107-124

Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd.

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/152969>

Accessed: 20/04/2009 08:24

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=taylorfrancis>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Taylor & Francis, Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Europe-Asia Studies*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

The Eclipse of Walesa's Political Career

VOYTEK ZUBEK

ALTHOUGH EASTERN EUROPE'S 1989 'REVOLUTION' was largely bloodless, it devoured most of its heroes and the leaders of the Polish Solidarity movement were not exempt from this fate. Not long after Solidarity's grand coalition came to power, it suffered a series of debilitating political defeats. In the 1980s Solidarity leaders like Michnik, Kuron, Mazowiecki and Geremek, who championed fundamental democratic values in a decadent communist system, were heralded as eminent leaders in difficult times. By the 1990s most Poles viewed these same individuals as just another group of shifty politicians, undeserving of their trust. This decline from exalted leader to untrustworthy politician was also shared by Lech Walesa, who led the Solidarity movement. Next to Gorbachev, Walesa was the most important leader of the revolution which brought down the Iron Curtain. Idolised in the 1980s for his idealistic fervour, Walesa began to be viewed in the 1990s as just another individualistic, ruthless and controversial politician, responsible for political chaos in Poland. Walesa's decline tells a great deal about the diverse and contradictory groups formerly united by anti-communist fervour who brought down the government, only to splinter into many factions when the revolution was over. It also demonstrates the role the media played in Central Europe in the 1990s.

Such development of Walesa's political persona was accompanied by a steady fall in his popular support.¹ Clearly, larger and larger portions of the population had begun to conclude that there were no other reasons for this behaviour but his own egotistical political interests.² Walesa's behaviour was commonly perceived as destabilising for the precarious post-Solidarity rule, as clearly detrimental to the ongoing socio-economic reforms, and finally, as an important factor helping to pave the way for the rebounding post-communists.

The collapse of Walesa's popular political image was only one key reason for the fading of his political career. He had also become both a very active perpetrator as well as indeed a victim of the intricate and often arcane political games that were one of the key features of Poland's transition. Without an examination of that political manoeuvring, the development of his political career in the 1990s cannot be fully comprehended.

The long shadow of 1989

In 1990 Walesa had still been a very popular figure who had lead a powerful coalition that managed to defeat the first post-Solidarity élite and win the presidential office with the support of about two-thirds of the population. By autumn 1993 his support

had dwindled to only about 10% and it appeared that the steady decline of his popularity was associated with the development of his new political persona. However, the rapidity with which Walesa's popularity collapsed over the short two-and-half-year period raises the question of whether there were some other causes beyond the development of his new political persona that had caused such a precipitous decline. Seen in the broader scope of Polish politics, it had become obvious that Walesa's rapid loss of popularity had occurred in the context of a nearly equally rapid decline in the popularity of some of the most distinguished post-Solidarity leaders and their parties. The post-Solidarity élite in fact appeared to share two fundamental problems faced by Walesa himself.

First, both were unprepared to take over the reins of power from the communists in 1989.³ While the Solidarity grand coalition then was most of all an anti-communist movement, beyond that, its assorted sub-components had very little in common and often were adversarial. Although after Solidarity's initial rise in the early 1980s the communists had managed to suppress its organisational structures,⁴ they were ineffective in their attempts to suppress its unifying ethos, and the loose decentralised movement persevered despite the repression. This stalemate was broken by the progressive disintegration of the economy in the late 1980s and the communists' inability to reform on their own. As a result, by 1988–89 the communists had basically resuscitated the organisational leadership structures of Solidarity and, during the Magdalenka and the 'round table' negotiations, forced it to accept the role of a legal opposition that would support the reforms in return for semi-free elections and many other fundamental concessions.⁵ During the four years of gradual transition to ensue, the communist élite would then reform the economy and transform itself into a social-democratic party. For its part, Solidarity would gain enough time to develop the middle level personnel needed to be ready to eventually take over if it proved capable of winning the free election planned for 1993.

However, despite the carefully prearranged June 1989 parliamentary election, the situation spun out of control. With everything that possibly could go wrong for the communists going wrong, they suffered a devastating defeat⁶ while Solidarity won a stupendous victory. Subsequently the communist party, as well as the communist-led governmental coalition, began to disintegrate precipitously and uncontrollably. Within a couple of months the Solidarity élite, who had initially been extremely cautious and entirely reluctant to reach for power,⁷ had become emboldened.⁸ By the end of the summer they were positioned to stage a deft political coup by prying away some of the members of the communist coalition and forming a Solidarity-led government.

The social euphoria brought about by the sudden collapse of communist rule notwithstanding, the Solidarity grand coalition neither possessed the essential middle level bureaucratic personnel capable of running the system nor had an economic programme in hand that could continue the transformation toward the market economy that had begun in earnest during the last two years of communist rule.⁹ This meant that the Solidarity élite would in fact occupy high office but would leave the statist bureaucracy untouched with the inherited economic programme¹⁰ and a staff of economists also inherited from the communist system.¹¹

The logical political solution to this complex problem would have been for Solidarity's left wing, which formed the first post-communist ruling élite, to take over the reformist wing of the communist party. Out of this, a mass, well-organised Western-style social-democratic party could have emerged. After all, with the exception of a handful of leaders in Solidarity's left wing who had split from the party's reformist wing in the late 1960s and 1970, these two milieus had begun to separate in earnest only in the early 1980s, with the process continuing virtually into 1989.

Instead of undertaking such a bold and also intellectually honest step, the Solidarity left wing decided to continue on its own and to obfuscate¹² the reality of the Polish transition with intensive myth-making. Thus their rule was portrayed as a radical departure from the past and their blueprint for continuing the transition was supposed to be unique and original¹³ while they themselves were supposed to be the supreme élite of the best and brightest.¹⁴ Moreover, in the autumn of 1989, to further boost their already considerable support, Solidarity's first ruling élite made a number of outlandish and bombastic promises, insisting for one thing that the transition-induced period of economic sacrifice for the population would be very short, about six months, and promising rosy prospects for the near future.

However, after the initial honeymoon period with the new élite had ended and social euphoria had subsided, the unavoidable reality began to dawn on the population at large. This not only made the new élite vulnerable to political attacks such as the one mounted by Walesa in 1990 but also discredited it with the population at large. From that time onward, the steady shrinkage of electoral support for the main party of the post-Solidarity Left, the UD, ensued and even if the population at large still perceived some of its most famous leaders as well-meaning, in general, the political promises made by this milieu were judged untrustworthy.

Walesa's own behaviour in the aftermath of Solidarity's stupendous victory in the June 1989 parliamentary election closely paralleled that of the Solidarity left wing. Just as they had, during the summer of 1989 he at first proceeded with utmost caution and then, feeling the flush of success, played a vital role in orchestrating a premature political takeover. He too actively promoted myths about his historical role and his own allegedly unbounded political acumen and prowess. Moreover, just as they had, he was most interested in obfuscating the true nature of the Polish transition. Finally, during his famous presidential campaign of 1990 Walesa bombastically promised that his leadership would be capable of solving Poland's socio-economic problems within a year, just as had the Solidarity left wing in autumn 1989. Clearly, both the Solidarity left wing in 1989 and the Walesa-led coalition in 1990, in the time span of two years, had managed to whip up popular expectations to unrealistic heights. In each case, popular expectations were disappointed almost as rapidly as they were aroused, thus paving the way for the subsequent precipitous decline in the popularity of both adversaries.

This line of argument would also provide an explanation why, during its half-year of rule in the first half of 1992, the post-Solidarity Right was unable to build much popular support and enthusiasm anew although it basically engaged in the same behaviour as had the Solidarity Left in 1989 and Walesa in 1990. However, after being twice betrayed, this time there were few takers in the population at large for the Right's bombastic promises of virtually instant panaceas for the economic hardships

of transition or for the Right's offer of political *circensis* directed at the post-communists who actually at that time had begun to rebound seriously.¹⁵

Frayed nerves and the shattering of the solidarity coalition

From the moment he achieved power, Walesa faced many problems. In the first place Solidarity represented a grand coalition of many disparate groups which had little in common. While Walesa was fundamentally a political and ideological maverick, he leaned to the Left, distrusting those on the Right. In fact Walesa feared and disliked his allies from the Solidarity Right and felt his political future depended on the Solidarity Left. In the 1980s, during the struggle against the communist system, Walesa's position remained basically unchallenged. During this time his idiosyncrasies and crudities were tolerated by his followers, including Polish intellectuals who supported him. His position began to be eroded, however, as soon as Solidarity achieved power. During 1989 and 1990 Solidarity was ravaged by infighting. Walesa alienated both Left and Right during this period, although he persistently tried to re-ally himself with the Left, an attempt which failed.

The Solidarity Left had not adjusted well to its sudden elevation to the apex of political power. Thus, under the pressure of awesome political responsibility, they declared themselves the only milieu worthy to lead Polish society through the transition and openly claimed to be its best and brightest.¹⁶ Under the spell of such self-delusion, the new élite decided that there was no need to cope with the difficult and idiosyncratic Walesa any more and announced that Walesa 'was not suitable' to occupy such an office¹⁷ and that, in due time, the new élite would find him some honorary political office in recognition of his past achievements. However, as was sternly pointed out—his time had already passed.

In a ruthless manner, the new élite was jolted back to political reality. As might have been expected from Walesa, he responded by mounting a vigorous and effective campaign for the presidential office. The post-Solidarity Left's response to this rude awakening was an explosion of truly unprecedented political hysteria. Walesa was decried as a virtual monster,¹⁸ a new Mussolini or Perinea, and his political coalition was supposed to be the harbinger of a national catastrophe of historic proportions. In the midst of these apparently homeric struggles within the post-Solidarity élite, society at large seemed to be somewhat stupefied by the economic hardship brought about by the rapid transition and appeared largely indifferent to the dramatic poses struck by the governmental élite that invoked such concepts as 'Polish hell' and cried out that its defeat would unavoidably result in a national catastrophe of unprecedented magnitude.¹⁹

Even during the political hysterics of summer 1990 Walesa was able to draw a clear distinction between political theatrics and pragmatic deal making as he attempted to negotiate a power-sharing deal. In exchange for the presidency, he would have agreed to be elected by the parliament that was controlled then by the Solidarity Left and would have been satisfied with very limited presidential powers. Moreover, he would have agreed on the addition of a vice-president who would have been nominated by the Solidarity Left. By contrast, however, as his adversaries were not merely acting but actually seemed to believe their own words,²⁰ he was repeatedly spurned.

In the quicksands

After winning the presidency in 1990, Walesa attempted to continue to move between Left and Right. Although the post-Solidarity Right helped him to win the presidency, he began to distance himself from this faction. He was ideologically opposed to these nationalistic true believers, wishing to ally himself with the Right's more moderate Christian-democratic centrists. In 1991 Walesa allied himself with a small regional party of Gdansk economic liberals known as the Liberal-Democratic Congress (KL-D).²¹

By choosing 'Gdansk liberals' to anchor the new government, Walesa managed to skillfully keep the door wide open for a future reconciliation with the post-Solidarity Left, which had been defeated in the presidential election. Although the roots of the main party of the post-Solidarity Left, the Democratic Union (UD), were historically embedded in the socialist movement and its largest faction was openly social-democratic, this party consistently underplayed its leftism.²² Despite its repeated inability to gain more than about 10% of the vote in parliamentary elections (in 1991 and 1993, with its presidential candidate, Mazowiecki gaining only 17% of the vote), the UD believed nonetheless that it was destined soon to become Poland's largest and dominant party. Therefore it attempted somehow to rebuild something akin to Solidarity's grand political coalition from the 1980s and draw relatively diverse ideological options under its wing.²³

Thus, while attempting to cast its nets as widely as possible, the UD sought to claim that it was an ideological or at the least a centrist party that could unite both social-democratic and moderately right milieus. Consequently, despite its fundamentally social-democratic nature,²⁴ the UD attempted to display as much as possible its Christian-democratic faction (associated with such politicians as Hanna Suchocka and Jan Rokita) and brandished its miniscule right-wing faction and its leader Aleksander Hall.

On the other hand, while the Gdansk liberals were militantly neo-conservative and 'thatcherite' on economic issues, the rest of their agenda, especially in social and cultural terms, was basically moderate and centrist.²⁵ Moreover, they were connected by numerous personal and social ties with the Warsaw intelligentsia and the post-Solidarity Left. In short, the defeated post-Solidarity Left found them to be a rather likeable group and did not offer much in the way of resistance or caustic criticism concerning their 'invasion' of governmental offices. As cooperation between the two milieus increased, an alliance emerged between the UD and the KL-D that anchored subsequent post-Solidarity-based government coalitions.²⁶

Although after the presidential victory in 1990, Walesa began to distance himself from the post-Solidarity Right, especially from its plentiful nationalistic 'true believers', he still attempted to keep his alliance with the more moderate Christian-democratic and centrist sub-components of this milieu. Again, toward that end, the elevation of the KL-D was supposed to also yield important results *vis-à-vis* the post-Solidarity Right whose help substantially contributed to his presidential victory. Initially, for the moderate quarters of the post-Solidarity Right, the government anchored around the tiny party of the 'Gdansk liberals' was acceptable or at least very difficult to openly attack. However, paradoxically, within two years the post-

Solidarity Right, including most of its moderate quarters, came to espouse basically quasi-socialistic and collectivist/populistic views of the economic system²⁷ and at the same time took an adamant stand against the ‘Balcerowicz plan’ of rapid transformation of the economy based on market capitalism, and against the Polish economic ‘liberals’ in general.²⁸

Early in the 1990s he continued to be a force to be reckoned with in government and in July 1992 Walesa led a parliamentary vote of no confidence against the Olszewski government after it had been in power only six months. Bringing down the Olszewski government emphasised Walesa’s rift with the Right.

In June 1992 the sudden defeat and the subsequent collapse of the ruling Right-wing coalition brought to the surface and exacerbated the glaring organisational and ideological weaknesses of the Right—its coalition began to disintegrate amidst its leaders’ vicious personal recriminations²⁹, the spewing of outlandish conspiracy theories and anti-semitic baiting.³⁰ While both the post-communist and the post-Solidarity Left were objects of this ire, the Right directed a very particular and intense attack at Walesa himself. Consequently, Walesa became the Right’s scapegoat and whipping boy as it directed at him diatribes so venomous and crude that they could only be compared with the convulsions of hatred organised at the height of Stalinism.

Clearly, Walesa had become the object of the defeated Right’s escapist feelings. The irony of the situation was that, besides the distinctive crudity and vociferousness of the outlandish personal attacks on Walesa (to which Walesa often responded in kind),³¹ by its nature, the post-Solidarity Right’s escapist attitudes toward Walesa were basically similar to those harboured—albeit expressed in a suitably more ‘civil’, even if at times hysterical, manner—by the post-Solidarity Left which had been defeated by the coalition he led against it in 1990. Each quarter seemed to hold a naive and basically groundless belief that if it had not been for Walesa’s ‘treason’, they were on the verge of gaining political domination in society and becoming its true and uncontested élite³² By the same token neither of the two quarters was willing to assess its own distinctive organisational and ideological weaknesses pragmatically and confront them.³³ Instead, for both of them it seemed convenient simply to make a scapegoat out of Walesa.

All in all, by June 1992 Walesa had begun to cross another political Rubicon. Until then the new Walesa had operated in conditions of political isolation; however, with his ‘master politician’ wheeling and dealing, he had still been able to form fleeting *ad hoc* coalitions with most political quarters. Now, the main political quarters began increasingly to refuse to cooperate with him³⁴ and often exhibited utter hostility toward him.

Besides the two main wings of the former Solidarity, the Left and the Right, that became Walesa’s adamant political adversaries, the Solidarity trade union—which in the post-communist era proved unable to restore its former glory and had come to play second fiddle to the massive post-communist union, OPZZ³⁵—began to move rapidly toward the post-Solidarity Right. In so doing it became more and more anti-Walesa. Finally, most of the Catholic Church’s hierarchy had already substantially distanced itself from Walesa.

While Walesa’s foundations lay in his ability to use presidential power and influence to engage in fleeting alliances and to keep the political parties divided and

relatively weak, the emerging new political situation threatened the very foundations of his position on the political stage. Consequently, attempting to reverse this pernicious turn of events, Walesa decided to cross another political Rubicon. Immediately after the dissolution of the Olszewski government, Walesa nominated Waldemar Pawlak, the leader of the post-communist Peasant Party, the PSL, to serve as prime minister and to form a new government.³⁶

It is very likely that at the time Walesa, the ultimate political hustler, whose understanding of strategic and more abstract issues was never his strong suit, simply did not fully comprehend the broader consequences of this move. While he simply attempted to play the only significant card that was still available for him, he also managed to confirm the grave accusations that were directed at him from the post-Solidarity Right and Left, i.e. that he was simply a power-hungry political conspirator who was devoid of any moral scruples and principles.³⁷

In June 1992, in the public perception, the historical division between the post-Solidarity and the post-communist forces was still considered to be very pronounced. Consequently, Walesa's decision to ignore this division for no better reason than to rescue his own personal political fortunes amounted to a grave political mistake. In so doing, he began to destroy his own myth³⁸—regardless of what part of the population still found it believable—of being a founding father of post-communist Poland and the key agent of historical transformation.

By then, Walesa's political prowess had been eroded substantially. In a rare example of common political purpose, all the post-Solidarity forces opposed Pawlak's attempts to form a government³⁹ and hence forced his resignation.⁴⁰ Subsequently, the post-Solidarity Left and some of the more moderate elements of the post-Solidarity Right managed—despite their apparent and continuously manifested mutual dislike—to form a weak and precarious coalition behind Hanna Suchocka, the last government⁴¹ led by the post-Solidarity parties.

When the shaky Suchocka government came to power Walesa attempted to reassert himself by exploiting its systemic weaknesses.⁴² This application of his presidential powers greatly contributed to bringing about the demise of the Suchocka government within a year, in June 1993.

New parliamentary elections were called in September 1993. In the meantime, the election law was changed and a 5% threshold was established to weed out the numerous small post-Solidarity parties which had emerged. The law's purpose was to give the largest percentage of the popular vote to the largest segments of the post-Solidarity movement. This change proved a great mistake as the post-Solidarity parties miscalculated their popularity and electoral strength. As a result, the two major communist parties, the SLD (Democratic Left Alliance)⁴³ and the PSL (United Peasant Party) gained 35% of the vote. Under the new election law, however, the SLD and PSL now occupied two-thirds of the parliamentary seats.⁴⁴ Thus, unwittingly Walesa and the numerous Solidarity factions had begun the return of their former enemies to power.

The corrupt politician in a corrupt society

Another fundamental problem that was shared by Walesa and virtually all his political adversaries—both post-Solidarity and post-communist—was the issue of corruption. In short, from the point of view of Western political culture and, paradoxically, also

in the eyes of ordinary Poles, the mainstream of both the post-Solidarity and post-communist élites as well as Walesa himself were corrupt. Moreover, those few individual exceptions to this rule, such as the first Solidarity prime minister, Tadeusz Mazowiecki, who was considered to be untouched by the prevalent corruption, were later judged, by a peculiar consensus shared by friend and foe alike, to be so power-hungry as to have lost interest in partaking in the prevalent corruption.

The key to understanding the corruptibility of the post-communist élite lies in the development of élite political culture in the last years of the communist system. While various kinds of élite, middle-level and grassroots corruption were endemic in the communist systems throughout their development, during the last years of the communist system in Poland, an entirely new dimension of systemic élite corruption was created.

At the conclusion of the élite-sponsored Great Reform Debate of the mid-1980s and as a result of the long history of Polish communist reformism, as well in response to the *glasnost* and *perestroika* that had just been initiated in the Soviet Union, Poland's communist élite had made a definite commitment toward leading society in the direction of market capitalism and, eventually, political democracy. However, the question remained how to finance the formation of a capitalist class. The virtually bankrupt economy already was unable to carry the stupendous foreign debt that had accumulated and the Soviet Union was on the verge of bankruptcy as well.

Quite ingeniously indeed, the communist élite decided to turn itself as well as the majority of the *nomenklatura* milieus along with the top managers of state enterprises into capitalists.⁴⁵ Since the overwhelming majority of them did not have sufficient funds to pay anything approximating the values of these enterprises, the élite gave those milieus a 'green light' to arrange special non-competitive biddings where the enterprises were 'sold' to their managers and *nomenklatura* for often no more than symbolic fees and to pay for even those modest sums, various sweetheart loans were arranged by state banks.

By such methods the mass transfer of state property began during the last few years of communist rule and was basically completed during the first year of the Solidarity government.⁴⁶ During that time the ownership of most of the viable, more profitable, smaller and medium-size state enterprises had changed hands. Often larger state enterprises were subdivided while their potentially most profitable sub-components were 'sold off' with the largest and intrinsically unprofitable parts left in the hands of the state. In the same vein, the inherently most profitable enterprises, involving trade, distribution and services, enjoyed the greatest popularity among the new capitalists. As a result, what was left for the post-communist governments to privatise belonged often to the category of potentially the least profitable and most unwieldy large state enterprises.

Although the legal system of the 'people's democracy' was modified sufficiently to confer the full aura of legality on such transfers, nevertheless, the popular perception viewed the process as the simple looting of state property by its ruling classes. In the long run, the 'Rakowski privatisation' further galvanized the opposition and became one of the factors that weakened the communists to the point where they could not continue the transition on their own and had to arrange the power-sharing agreement

with Solidarity that eventually backfired. The 'privatisation' had immensely weakened the last ruling communist élite by pushing it into an ideologically surreal dimension: at the same time as they continued to recite Marxist–Leninist incantations about the virtues of the socialist order that they were allegedly constructing, in fact, they were engaging in the rapid construction of capitalism. Such ideological dadaism proved to be another factor that helped generate their crushing electoral defeat in June 1989.

Solidarity's left wing, which formed the first post-communist ruling élite and by then had completely abandoned Marxian economics, was not only forced to inherit the communist bureaucracy and its blueprint for socio-economic transformation—for it simply was not prepared to take power—but also very willingly decided to continue the 'Rakowski privatisation'.⁴⁷ However, at this juncture, the primary beneficiaries of this 'privatisation' became new post-Solidarity élites along with the *nomenklatura*.⁴⁸ In fact, the post-Solidarity élites, who unlike their predecessors were rather unburdened by socialist ideology, began to engage in open unbridled conspicuous consumption.⁴⁹

As many observers had noted, during the communist period most members of the former opposition were plainly poor and devoid of any economic opportunity. But in the new circumstances they decided to compensate for their past deprivation. To do so, they retained the surreal legal system from the last years of communist rule that had conferred legality on these 'special' transfers of state property. Consequently, numerous members of the former Solidarity left wing—most of whom had been all but destitute only a couple of years earlier—virtually overnight became men of serious substance.⁵⁰ Importantly, all subsequent Solidarity élites took advantage of the unique opportunity that presented itself to become capitalists. In time, however, the eldorado-like conditions⁵¹ of the first post-communist years began to diminish while the popular social outcry against such practices reached a crescendo.

More generally, the first, very chaotic post-communist years were characterised by an explosion of what Poles labelled 'affairs', namely, high level manipulations of the tax, banking, legal and customs systems so as to open up large loopholes which could be utilised by selective groups of well connected and well informed individuals to procure stupendous wealth for themselves virtually overnight.⁵² During the initial post-communist years virtually every month brought new press revelations of still another high-level 'affair' that concluded with mind-boggling financial gains for its perpetrators.⁵³

In this regard, Walesa's behaviour also paralleled that of the new élites. To begin with, before he was suddenly catapulted to political prominence in August 1980, Walesa and his family belonged to the class of Poland's most abjectly poor. In part because of his own as well as his wife's truly impoverished family background, in part because of his inordinate—for Polish conditions—number of children, that prevented his wife from working, and finally, owing in part to his opposition activities in the second half of the 1970s that prevented him, despite his qualifications as a skilled electrician, from holding an appropriate position, Walesa was not able even to feed his family without help from the church's charities and from the opposition's network of self-help.

His sudden elevation to political prominence was virtually instantly associated with certain state-granted perks—such as a free, large flat, a better paying position in a state enterprise or the right to purchase a car for the ‘official’, i.e. non-market price—tools that were designed to soften and eventually co-opt him and other Solidarity leaders. This, however, proved to be quite insignificant compared with the sudden flood of resources that were directed at him and the Solidarity movement and especially its trade union, both from Polish society and especially from abroad.

Although throughout the 1980s, the decade of Solidarity’s first legal, then illegal and at the end of the decade again legal activities, the donated funds were very substantial,⁵⁴ they were never actually properly accounted for. In part because of Polish society’s political culture, which was saturated with romantic values, any sort of intra-Solidarity bureaucratic scrutiny over the funds would have been conceived as insulting to its leaders. Furthermore, the solidarity élite were simply very inexperienced in such matters and finally, because during the years of underground conspiracy such accounting would have been very difficult, the appropriation and disposition of those funds occurred without proper accountability. Consequently, during that period, the distinction between funds used for the movement’s organisational needs and for the private needs of those activists who controlled them was completely lost.

Walesa as well as many other Solidarity leaders in fact used a substantial portion of those funds for their own private needs. However, this practice was too widespread for Walesa’s opponents in the 1990s to try to make a case against him—those who live in glass houses don’t like to throw stones.

During the 1980s Walesa had otherwise managed to enrich himself in a perfectly legal way. First, he was the recipient of some substantial international awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize. Second, the rights to his ghost-written⁵⁵ autobiographies were sold to Western publishers and in one case, in December 1989, the film rights to his biography were sold to a Hollywood producer for US\$1 million. However, even if these resources were acquired by Walesa in a clearly legal manner, nonetheless, they were engulfed in a somewhat murky atmosphere. For example, after receiving the rich Nobel Prize in 1993, the still quite humble Walesa properly interpreted it as an award for the entire movement. Consequently, he loudly and repeatedly made official promises to turn it over to various foundations and charities. Eventually, he ceased to mention this issue and the matter was never clarified. Moreover, he never acknowledged that his books were ghost-written, how much money he received for them and how he divided those funds with the real author.

After thus gaining financial experience in the 1980s, Walesa entered the stormy 1990s. In 1990, and later during his presidential years, Walesa and his entourage continued to solicit funds from various sympathetic Western sources in order first to rebuild the Solidarity trade union and later to support the requirements of the presidential office. Predictably, no accounting of those monies was ever given.⁵⁶ However, although this was a well-known practice of Walesa and his entourage, his by then numerous political adversaries simply ‘high-mindedly’ bypassed such opportunities to attack him. Such ‘high-mindedness’ was due in large part to the fact that such practices were also widespread among the post-Solidarity leaders⁵⁷ and, in

addition, the post-communist leaders were then embroiled in an affair involving the secret solicitation of funds from the still existing Soviet Union.⁵⁸

As a consequence of having engaged in such financial practices for 12 years, the Walesa family transformed itself from its initial state of abject poverty and found itself now possessed of comfortable means. Finally, while the parents increasingly flaunted their wealth, the Walesa sons engaged in conspicuous consumption, and eventually were involved in drinking-related felonious car accidents. Besides the embarrassment, their father used his leverage to rescue them from legal action and to secure for them high-paying jobs within the state apparatus that were utterly incongruent with their level of education and work experience.⁵⁹

The menacing vaudevillists

In many respects Walesa's personality was responsible for this political fiasco. Authoritarian by nature, Walesa's political model was monarchical rather than democratic, seeing himself as a 'peasant king'⁶⁰ who would restore good government to the people. During the 1980s his authoritarian tendencies were moderated by the struggle with the communist government. Walesa possessed considerable political realism, cunning and common sense which he used repeatedly against the communists. Circumstances also forced him to cooperate with other leaders of the Solidarity movement. The communist government was a powerful enemy and cooperation was required to bring it to its knees. Once in power, however, Walesa's authoritarian tendencies came to the fore. Increasingly he relied on trusted insiders, most of whom were sycophants.⁶¹ In consequence his arrogance grew as the new leader increasingly believed in his intuition and invincibility.

Walesa's living arrangements might have been partly responsible for his dependence on a few trusted insiders. Walesa's wife refused to move the family from Gdansk to Warsaw so he set up bachelor quarters in the capital, returning home only for the weekends.⁶² At times some of his followers lived with him, reinforcing ties which were already very close. Some of Walesa's entourage changed almost daily it seemed, depending on the alliances he was forming. Momentary political allies were rewarded with positions within the presidential office—which were lost as soon as alliances changed. Soon the presidential office resembled a revolving door in which allies were constantly coming and going. In consequence Walesa often felt he could not trust many who would normally be closest to him. They, at the same time, had very little reason to be loyal to a person who would throw them out on the street as quickly as he had taken them in. In consequence Walesa relied on a very small group of advisers, becoming dangerously cut off from the public he was elected to serve.

The outlook of his closely knit and politically isolated entourage became plainly bizarre. It was ostentatiously devout and, following the irresistible example of its leader, tended to make a spectacle of its Catholic piety. Members gathered at the presidential palace at the crack of dawn for a private daily mass. Throughout the day there were other manifestations of intense piety. Walesa's private confessor, Father Cybula, almost always accompanied him formally clad in a cassock. Walesa called this priest his 'moral hygienist'. A dour and silent man, few could calculate Father

Cybula's influence on the President, but it seemed to be profound and perhaps sinister. Another confederate was Mieczyslaw Wachowski, Walesa's former personal chauffeur, who now served as Minister of State. Wachowski was thought to have criminal connections⁶³ and was accused of being an agent for the secret police during communist rule. A workaholic with a grim and foreboding demeanour, Wachowski was Walesa's day-to-day manager. He made policy, fired and hired staff,⁶⁴ and fought the opposition. Wachowski was accused of being Walesa's 'bag man', collecting money from kick-backs and using it to peddle influence.⁶⁵

Another key member of Walesa's inner circle was Andrzej Kozakiewicz, who might be best described as a figure out of a Hollywood B-grade movie. Relatively young (in his early thirties), Kozakiewicz was a bodybuilder with a crew cut often mistaken for one of the president's bodyguards.⁶⁶ His role was to 'manage contacts' with the private business community. Like Father Cybula and Wachowski, Kozakiewicz was reluctant to speak with the media. He also gained the reputation of being a sinister figure unworthy of public trust.

In contrast to these three individuals, Andrzej Zakrzewski was a pleasant, modest and civil individual. A professor, Zakrzewski served as Walesa's speech writer and strategic adviser. His contact with those outside the inner circle was limited by his health, however, as Zakrzewski suffered from a heart condition. This left communicating to the 'official presidential spokesman', Andrzej Drzycimski, an obscure high-school teacher, whose manner was uncooperative, brusque, and curt. Drzycimski communicated with the media because he had to, not because he wanted to.

On the other hand, Lech Falandysz, who served as the president's legal counsel and often appeared in the media, seemed to be a very capable spokesman for the presidential cause. But Falandysz was also a bizarre individual although in the 1970s and 1980s he was a rising young star in the academic legal community. A recovering alcoholic with a bohemian lifestyle, he had served as an informer for the communist secret police in the 1970s and 1980s.⁶⁷ Although educated and glib, nonetheless, like other members of Walesa's inner circle, Falandysz was poorly suited to communicating the policies needed for the presidential programmes to succeed because he was at the time very much disliked among Poland's intelligentsia and viewed as a virtual dark magician by the populace at large.⁶⁸

Walesa's presidency was faced with many critical tasks and these seemed to overwhelm this group of odd individuals. One of the most important tasks was legal reform. The post-Solidarity governments inherited old communist, even stalinist, laws clearly unsuited to democratic rule. It would seem that rewriting these would be the first order of business. However, the post-Solidarity governments proved incapable of undertaking a fundamental legal reform, and were content to make do with haphazard amendments of already poorly written laws.⁶⁹ Falandysz coldly and mercilessly exposed the legal system's glaring weaknesses, but when these were fixed, it was only to increase presidential powers.⁷⁰

Walesa had always been semi-literate, temperamental and extremely garrulous in a peculiar way. During the 1980s, however, he joined forces with the Polish opposition's brightest minds. They mediated his peculiar outbursts, translating them into acceptable and even brilliant statements. During this period he was protected by

intelligent, dedicated individuals who shared his mission. In the 1990s Walesa no longer enjoyed the support of the best and the brightest. Instead, he was surrounded by eccentric individuals who were not among the nation's keenest minds. These cronies were content to 'let Walesa be Walesa' warts and all. Repeatedly, Walesa's verbal outbursts were not bowdlerized or doctored. Instead they were documented to the last word, demonstrating Walesa's lack of education and intellectual ability.⁷¹ A lack of media savvy characterised those who surrounded the Polish President. This coupled with growing isolationism was increasingly dangerous to his presidency.

Walesa decided to prolong his exit from the political stage by engaging in political spectacle and theatrics.⁷² Thus, in the aftermath of the 1993 parliamentary election, unable to wield any influence over the now powerful post-communist Left and its government, Walesa began to issue broad and outrageous political threats,⁷³ clearly implying that he might stage some kind of an anti-communist coup by leading the masses against them.⁷⁴ Moreover, he issued numerous threats against the parliament and the government, threats that were condemned by virtually all political quarters as clearly illegal.⁷⁵ Finally, his self-aggrandising verbiage began to reach new and unprecedented heights.

In a similar vein, Walesa began to behave as a loose cannon with regard to foreign affairs. While in search of its new place in the new Europe, Polish foreign policy demanded cautious and very calculated conduct, whereas Walesa, grasping for straws in an attempt to regain his popular support, began to lambast the leaders of the West and the East for real and imaginary trespasses against Polish interests. In particular, he often demanded a red carpet welcome for Poland's entry into the European Union and NATO as a reward for its role in destroying the communist system in Eastern Europe, as well as more forgiveness of its foreign debt, more investment and more formal recognition by the West for its leaders, and so on and so forth.

Walesa's propensity to engage in political theatrics reached still another plateau. With particular zeal he began to use various anniversaries to engage in displays of excessive pomp and circumstance.⁷⁶ In many cases, such as with his staging of the importation of the remains of various deceased émigré leaders—often over the objections of their surviving relatives—to take political advantage of their ceremonial reburial in Poland, Walesa simply crossed the limits of tastelessness. All in all, while during the 1980s Walesa served as a potent symbol of Solidarity's struggle with the communist system, in the last, vaudeville stage of his political career, Walesa became *de facto* an anti-symbol. Amidst the pomp and circumstance organised to celebrate various patriotic anniversaries and reburials of Polish heroes, it became a virtual preoccupation to speculate about Walesa's selfish reasons for promoting and participating in those events. Moreover, Walesa more and more promoted an aura of pompous grandiosity around himself and more and more openly engaged in conspicuous consumption. Until this time he had been satisfied with likening himself to the founder of post-WWI Poland, Marshal Pilsudski,⁷⁷ although the two figures could hardly be more different on virtually every imaginable score.⁷⁸ During his pilsudskite period, Walesa had been satisfied to occupy the marshal's former residence, the small historical palace, the Belvedere. (Incidentally, Pilsudski was famous for his lack of interest in material possessions.) However, in reaching for new heights of personal grandiosity, Walesa had a massive historical

palace speedily refurbished and customised as his new residence, regardless of cost.⁷⁹

All in all, Walesa could have continued his merry ride on the Polish political stage only by winning re-election. However, he now had to pay the price for his political *modus operandi* during his first five years in office, and above all, the price for political isolation. The bounty for the seething mass of political enemies he had created, who used free media to retaliate against him in any way they could,⁸⁰ was the shrinkage of his popular support.⁸¹

What goes around comes around: the presidential campaign

As the election approached in the summer of 1995, Walesa's position was extremely weak.⁸² Polls indicated only 7% supported Walesa, while 51% would not vote for him under any circumstances. The Church hierarchy, long a supporter of such a devout politician, had distanced itself from the President. In fact it was quite clear the Church hoped he would resign so that a less controversial anti-communist candidate could be put forward.⁸³ Czeslaw Bielecki, one of his key supporters,⁸⁴ tried to persuade the president not to seek re-election. Other post-Solidarity leaders echoed this view.⁸⁵ More promising candidates, such as Tadeusz Zielinski, a leftist, Jacek Kuron, left-to-centre, and Hanna Gronkiewicz-Waltz, centre-to-right, had emerged with a chance to win the election. Walesa, however, remained convinced he could beat the odds. Running as the 'father of the nation who saved it from communism',⁸⁶ he decided a change in entourage would prove beneficial. During the 1995 campaign Drzycimski, Falandysz, Wachowski and Father Cybula were all dismissed.⁸⁷ Walesa's popularity rose to a mere 12% after this gesture.⁸⁸

Despite his poor showing, luck was still with Walesa. In October, Kuron, Zielinski and Gronkiewicz-Waltz's campaigns self-destructed, leaving him as the only viable post-Solidarity candidate running against Aleksander Kwasniewski, the post-communist candidate. Now Poland was faced with the choice of remaining with the revolution or returning to a form of government which was once despised. Walesa's support suddenly grew and on 5 November he had gained 33% of the vote to Kwasniewski's 35%.⁸⁹ A run-off was scheduled for 19 November, giving the two major candidates an opportunity to fight it out against each other. At this point the tables were turned and Walesa's support swelled to 51%. The campaign was brutal and there were mutual accusations of corruption. Walesa's message was clear—he stressed the danger of consolidating government power in the hands of a post-communist like Kwasniewski, whose 'golden boy' image was greatly dulled and tarnished during the brutal campaign.⁹⁰

In these final two weeks of the campaign the fragmented Solidarity movement put aside their differences and rallied to Walesa.⁹¹ At this point he had 51% of the vote and victory seemed certain on 19 November. Unfortunately, although he attracted many Solidarity leaders, Poland's best and brightest remained disillusioned with Walesa.⁹² While after the first round most of them managed to utter some tepid words of support for his candidacy, they did not vigorously flock to his side, leaving him to rely on mediocre talent.⁹³ Still Walesa felt certain of victory, so when Kwasniewski demanded⁹⁴ two televised debates before the election he readily agreed—clearly a

delusional decision.⁹⁵ By contrast to the popular image, Walesa had never dealt well with the media and was not especially good in front of the camera. Unquestionably, this was the key failure of his presidential campaign because Kwasniewski was a young, slick, well-mannered adversary who played to the television cameras with great skill.

The televised debates were a disaster for Walesa. Rambling and incoherent, he detailed his bizarre ideology before an audience of millions. He was belligerent and boorish⁹⁶ while Kwasniewski appeared respectful, informed and conciliatory. At the end of the first debate Kwasniewski respectfully extended his hand to Walesa. The Solidarity leader refused to take it, offering instead to let the young post-communist leader 'shake his leg'.⁹⁷ Afterwards Kwasniewski clearly recognised he had been the winner, telling the press 'Poland does not deserve a president who speaks gibberish'. The second debate was calmer, but the die was cast. On 19 November Kwasniewski won 51.72% of the vote, Walesa 48.28%.⁹⁸ The communists were back in power.

Once again Walesa was an outsider, a position he had occupied most of his life. The reasons for his defeat are numerous. In the 1980s it was enough to lead an opposition, as the Solidarity movement did not have to create a political programme much less run a government. During that period Poland's best and brightest supported Walesa and his followers, shielding his flaws from the public and making his leadership seem stronger than it really was. Once in power, Walesa's authoritarian nature, narrow perspective and preference for cronies asserted themselves. He surrounded himself with inept people of mediocre talent who seemed sinister and disreputable to the public. Finally, Walesa did not learn to use the media effectively, a flaw which may have ultimately destroyed his presidency. The revolutions which brought down the Iron Curtain were bloodless, but they were very destructive to many who led them, like Lech Walesa.

University of Alabama at Birmingham

Research for this article was funded by a 1995–1996 Fulbright research grant.

¹ See also Wojciech Maziarski, 'Koniec ery Walesy', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 2 December 1991, p. 15.

² See also 'Poznaj racje drugiej strony, rozmowa z Adamem Hodyszem', *Rzeczpospolita*, 18–19 September 1993, p. 3.

³ See also Jan Skorzynski, 'Nie Ma Wolności Bez Solidarności', *Arka*, 1995, 56, pp. 70–88.

⁴ See also Jerzy Holzer & Krzysztof Leski, *Solidarność w Podziemiu* (Łódź, Wydawnictwo Łódzkie, 1990).

⁵ See also Krzysztof Dubinski, *Magdalenka Transakcja Epoki* (Warsaw, Sylwa, 1990); Witold Beres & Jerzy Skoczylas, *General Kiszczak Mowi ... Prawie Wszystko* (Warsaw, BGW, 1991).

⁶ See also Voytek Zubek, 'Poland's Party Self-destructs', *Orbis*, 34, 2, Spring 1990, pp. 179–193.

⁷ See especially '4 Czerwca 1989—nazajutrz', *Polityka*, 4 June 1994, p. 20.

⁸ See also Zbigniew Domaranczyk, *100 Dni Mazowieckiego* (Warsaw, A. Bonarski, 1990).

⁹ See especially 'Balcerowicz', in Teresa Toranska, *My* (Warsaw, Most, 1994); 'Czy zostanie politykiem? Z Leszkiem Balcerowiczem rozmawiają Ewa Milewicz i Jacek Zakowski', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19–20 March 1994, pp. 12–13; Kazimierz Olesiak, *Kto Kupczy Polska Wsiał* (Warsaw, BGW, 1992).

¹⁰ See also Bronisław Wildstein, 'Spor o dekomunizację', *Res Publica* 1993, 4, April, pp. 28–31.

¹¹ 'Odrobina braterstwa'. Z prof. Bronisławem Geremkiem, politykiem UD rozmawia Adam Michnik', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16 September 1993, pp. 12–13.

¹² See also Marcin Krol, 'Nowe szaty cesarza', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 8 May 1994, pp. 1 and 4.

¹³ See also 'Szok wspolczesnosci'. Z Jozefem Oleksym, marszalkiem Sejmu RP, rozmawia Stefan Opara', *Dzis*, 1, January 1994, pp. 6–16.

¹⁴ See also Piotr Skorzynski, 'Towarzyska szlachta', *Kultura*, 1994, 6, June, pp. 141–148.

¹⁵ For example, 'Trzecia Rzeczpospolita—Trzeci Rząd—Trzecia Droga'. Z premierem Janem Olszewskim rozmawiali Joanna Jachman, Andrzej Gelberg i Wojciech Gielzynski', *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, 10 January 1992, pp. 1 and 10–11.

¹⁶ See also Voytek Zubek, 'The Rise and Fall of Rule by Poland's Best and Brightest', *Soviet Studies*, 44, 4, 1992, pp. 579–608.

¹⁷ See also Voytek Zubek, 'Walesa Leadership and Poland's Transition', *Problems of Communism*, 40, 1–2, January–April 1991, pp. 69–83.

¹⁸ For instance Adam Michnik, 'Diaczego nie oddam glosu na Lecha Walese', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 27–28 October 1990, pp. 6–7.

¹⁹ Half a year later Mazowiecki himself had to admit that those accusations were grossly exaggerated—'Przebyłem polowe drogi'. Z Tadeuszem Mazowieckim, przewodniczącym UD, rozmawiają Dariusz Fikus i Krzysztof Gottesman', *Rzeczpospolita*, 22–23 June 1991, pp. 1 and 2.

²⁰ For instance, Tadeusz Chrzanowski, 'Szło stare', *Kultura*, 1991, 6, June, pp. 73–80.

²¹ See also Inka Słodkowska, 'Polityczny awans liberalow', *Wież*, 1991, 7–8, July–August 1991, pp. 192–200.

²² See also Dawid Warszawski, 'Czas politycznych saperow', and Jerzy Sosnowski, 'Kto z kim przestaje', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 22 September 1993, pp. 10–11 and 13.

²³ See also Jacek Kurski, 'Kult antypolityki', *Przegląd Polityczny*, 1991, 1, June, pp. 13–14.

²⁴ See also Tomasz Zukowski, 'Wybory w liczbach', *Zycie Warszawy*, 27 September 1993, p. 15.

²⁵ See also Lech Mazewski, 'Demokratyczny kapitalizm', *Przegląd Polityczny*, 1991, 2, July, pp. 12–16; Janina Paradowska & Jerzy Baczynski (eds), *Teczki Liberalow* (Poznan: Obserwator, 1993).

²⁶ The final outcome of this process was the unification of these two parties into the Union of Freedom (Unia Wolnosci—UW) in the spring of 1994, after a crushing defeat was handed to them in the September 1993 parliamentary election by the post-communist parties.

²⁷ See also Leszek Balcerowicz, 'Czas obroncow', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 27 September 1993, p. 15.

²⁸ See also 'Niebezpieczne, liberalne sklonnosci'. Z prof. Wieslawem Chrzanowskim, prezesem ZChN, rozmawia Ewa Milewicz', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 6–7 November 1993, pp. 8–9.

²⁹ See also Andrzej Micewski, 'Kłotnie w rodzinie', *Wprost*, 10 November 1991, pp. 24–25.

³⁰ See also Adam Michnik, 'Diabeł naszego czasu' *Krytyka*, 1991, 37, pp. 12–18; Maria Fik, 'Nowa fasada', *Puls*, 1991, 6, November–December, pp. 86–90.

³¹ As for example when he publicly asked a right-wing parliamentarian who was attacking him to '... kiss his arse ...', after which invitation Switon proceeded to sue Walesa. 'Zapraszamy na procesy', *Gazeta Polska*, 10 March 1994, p. 12. Also, during a radio interview he made exceedingly crude allusions to Jaroslaw Kaczynski's alleged homosexuality. Barbara Sulek, 'Pan Prezydent', *Kultura*, 1993, 1–2, January–February, p. 215.

³² For example Adam Michnik, 'Pozegnanie z Solidarnoscia', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 31 August–1 September 1991, p. 3.

³³ See also Adam Krzeminski & Wieslaw Wladyka, 'Czym Polska stoi', *Polityka*, 1 August 1992, pp. 1 and 6.

³⁴ See also 'Gdzies we wschodniej czesci Europy ... rozmowa z Adamem Michnikiem', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 29 August 1993, pp. 1 and 5–7.

³⁵ See also Mariusz Janicki, 'OPZZ w natarciu', *Polityka*, 2 March, 1991, p. 7.

³⁶ See also Jolanta Makowska, 'Sila uporu', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 21 June 1992, pp. 1 and 4, Jolanta Makowska, 'Sposo układow', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 12 July 1992, p. 3.

³⁷ See especially Witold Beres, 'Sprawa majora Hodysza', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 19 September 1993 p. 3.

³⁸ See also Krzysztof Grabowski, 'Niepokojacy sygnal', *Wprost*, 19 September, 1993, p. 11.

³⁹ See also Aleksander Luczak, *33 Dni Premiera Pawlaka* (Warsaw, BGW, 1992); 'Uczulenie na kolor'. Rozmowa z Waldemarem Pawlakiem, prezesem PSL', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 20 September 1992, pp. 1 and 4.

⁴⁰ See also Aleksander Luczak, '33 dni premiera Pawlaka', *Polityka*, 19 September 1992, pp. 6–10; Jolanta Makowska, 'Wrzask i Furia', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 16 August 1992, pp. 1 and 4.

⁴¹ See also 'Polityka nie zna milosci blizniego. Rozmowa z premier Hanna Suchocka', *Przegląd Tygodniowy* 18 October 1992, pp. 1 and 5; 'Boje sie hasel'. Rozmowa z Hanna Suchocka', *Polityka*, 25 July 1992, pp. 1 and 5.

⁴² See also Janina Paradowska, 'Zasepieni Hamleci', *Polityka*, 18 July 1992 p. 5; Ewa Milewicz, 'Izba Obrachunkowa', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 17–18 October 1992, p. 7.

⁴³ See also Artur Zycki, 'SdRP Po Wyborach', *Dzis*, V, 1, January 1994, pp. 198–102.

⁴⁴ See also Voytek Zubek, 'The Phoenix Out of the Ashes: The Rise to Power of Poland's Post-Communist SdRP', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, 28, 3, 1995, pp. 275–306.

⁴⁵ See also Jozef Darski, 'Jezeli nie ONI, kto?', *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, 14 January 1994, p. 9.

⁴⁶ See also Jadwiga Staniszkis, '“Political Capitalism” in Poland', *East European Politics & Societies*, 5, 1, Winter 1991, pp. 127–141.

⁴⁷ See also 'Zaczniemy od bankow. Rozmowa z Jaroslawem Kaczynskim, prezesem PC', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12–13 June 1993, p. 4.

⁴⁸ See also Jakub Karpinski, 'Aksamitna ewolucja: komunizm i wyzwolenie nomenklatury', *Puls*, 1993, 5–6, September–December, pp. 9–16.

⁴⁹ See also Halina Maleszewska, 'Nowe wraca', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 16 May 1993, p. 2.

⁵⁰ See especially Smecz (pseudonym of Tomasz Jastrun), 'Z ukosa', *Kultura*, 1994, 6, June pp. 70–80.

⁵¹ See also 'Reforma czy korupcja?' Z senatorem Zbigniewem Romaszewskim rozmawia Jerzy Klosinski', *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, 28 February 1992, pp. 8–9. 'Notatki Redaktora', *Kultura*, 1994, 4, April, pp. 135–139; 'Notatki Redaktora', *Kultura*, 1993, 11, November, pp. 132–135.

⁵² See also Antoni Z. Kaminski & Jan Stefanowicz, 'Korupcja-Schorzenie Panstwa', *Res Publica*, 1994, 7/8, July–August, pp. 31–35; Ernest Skalski, 'Partia niepokoju', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14–15 September 1991, pp. 8–9.

⁵³ Thus, to mention a few of the more notorious affairs, at least hundreds of millions of dollars and even perhaps as much as a billion or more were gained by those who knew how to manipulate the computers in the inefficient state banking system to have their money permanently circulating among the bank's different branches while in fact being paid interest on the money in all the branches at the same time—the so-called 'oscillator affair'. The 'ruble affair' had the Polish state legally forced to buy up by then virtually worthless rubles—at very favourable exchange rates—from phony 'exporters' of Polish products to the former Soviet Union. The 'petroleum', 'tobacco' and 'alcohol' affairs were staged when the state virtually lost control over its borders and the customs system in its dealings with some large-scale importers. Incidentally, the state's loss of control over its borders and the customs system was so complete that more than 90% of certain high-profit merchandise available on the Polish market that was supposed to be subject to high taxation was actually brought in as contraband. Finally, Poland became an unquestionable paradise for various 'pirates' of intellectual property and a massive venue for stolen goods, especially cars, that were either destined for the Polish market or more often were transferred to the insatiable post-Soviet market.

⁵⁴ There were reports estimating them at millions of dollars—in a society where the average monthly salary fluctuated during that decade between 30 and 50 dollars.

⁵⁵ Walesa could not possibly write them for he is known to be semi-literate.

⁵⁶ See also, for instance, 'Notatki Redaktora', *Kultura*, 1994, 7–8, July–August, pp. 154–160.

⁵⁷ See especially Jacek Zakowski, 'Cos w Polsce Peklo, Cos sie Skonczylo', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16–17 April 1994, pp. 8–11; 'Notatki Redaktora', *Kultura*, 1994, 5, May, pp. 149–151; Daniel Passent, 'Oboz Reform, Polityka', *Polityka*, 6 August 1994, p. 28.

⁵⁸ Monika Brakan & Rafal Smoczynski, 'SdRP za czerwone dolary?', *Wprost*, 17 November 1991, p. 5; SdRP i *Trybuna* za pieniadze KPZR', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 8 November 1991, p. 2.

⁵⁹ For instance Edmund Zurek, 'Zezowate szczescie', *Polityka*, 28 May 1994, p. 9.

⁶⁰ See also Jaroslaw Kurski, *Wodz* (Warsaw, Pomost, 1991); Zbigniew Gach, *Antybohater* (Wroclaw, Forpress, 1991).

⁶¹ For example, Andrzej Olechowski exclaimed that in a few hundred years, Walesa would remain the only Pole to be noticed by history ('Miejsce Dla Lemoniady'. Rozmowa z Andrzejem Olechowskim, doradca prezydenta RP ds. gospodarczych', *Wprost*, 13 September 1994, p. 3, and hence assured himself of his nomination as foreign minister. See also Pawel Smolenski, 'Wolny Strzelec Belwederski', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 15 September 1993, pp. 10–11.

⁶² See also Jerzy Slawomir Mac, 'To jest Wlasnie to Miejsce', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 20–27 December 1992, pp. 12–13.

⁶³ See also Pawel Rabiej & Inga Rosinska, *Kim Pan Jest Panie Wachowski?* (Warsaw, BGW, 1993).

⁶⁴ See also 'Dymisja Byla Spodziewana'. Rozmowa z ministrem stanu w Kancelarii Prezydenta, Andrzejem Zakrzewskim', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 6 September 1995, p. 2; 'Nawet Sierzant Ma Swoj Honor, Z Lechem Falandyszem rozmawia Stanislaw Podemski', *Polityka*, 6 May 1995, p. 6.

⁶⁵ See also Marek Markiewicz, *Flaczki Belwederskie* (Torun, LSW, 1994).

⁶⁶ See also Piotr Gadzinowski, 'Premier Wachowcow', *Nie*, 16 February 1995, p. 4.

⁶⁷ See also Lech Falandysz, *Adwokat Prezydenta* (Warsaw, BGW, 1995).

- ⁶⁸ For example Wojciech Mackiewicz, 'Mecenas Wszystkich Polakow', *Polityka*, 27 May 1995, p. 11.
- ⁶⁹ See also Radzislaw Gortat, 'Wybory Prezydenckie a Stabilnosc Demokracji', *Rzeczpospolita*, 19 October 1995, p. 4.
- ⁷⁰ See also 'Walesa Myslal ze Go Zdradzilem. Rozmowa z prof. Lechem Falandysem', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 13 September 1995, p. 13; Mieczyslaw Rakowski, 'Inteligentny Cynik Czy Wiarygodny Swiadek?' *Wiadomosci Kulturalne*, 8 October 1995, p. 5.
- ⁷¹ For instance, 'Wiele Bzdur Kaczory Nagadali'. Lech Walesa w rozmowie z Agnieszka Kublik, Adamem Michnikiem i Pawlem Smolenskim', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14–15 October 1995, pp. 8–11.
- ⁷² See also Krzysztof Wolicki, 'Walesa na szczytach wojennej', *Kultura*, 1994, 5, May, pp. 95–103; Stanislaw Marek Krolak, 'Bilans jednego otwarcia', *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, 11 March 1994, pp. 4–5.
- ⁷³ For instance 'Jestem specem od krzyzowek. Wywiad z Lechem Walesa, prezydentem RP', *Wprost*, 10 October 1993, pp. 13–15.
- ⁷⁴ For example Roman Graczyk, 'Lech Walesa dosiada komuny', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 25 February 1994, p. 15.
- ⁷⁵ For instance, Stanislaw Podemski, 'Krolem nie bedziesz', *Polityka*, 30 April 1994, p. 3.
- ⁷⁶ See also 'Notatki Redaktora', *Kultura*, 1994, 6, June, pp. 117–120; 'Notatki Redaktora', *Kultura*, 1993, 10, October, pp. 98–100.
- ⁷⁷ See especially, Piotr Ciompa & Marcin Kula, 'Gdy spadly korony', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16–17 May 1992, pp. 8–12.
- ⁷⁸ See also Andrzej Micewski, 'I parlament i prezydent', *Wprost*, 17 November 1991, pp. 21–22; Adam Michnick, 'BBWR albo czy Lech Walesa jest Jozefem Pilsudskim', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 12–13 June 1993, pp. 8–9.
- ⁷⁹ See also 'Notatki Redaktora', *Kultura*, 1994, 3, March, pp. 155–157.
- ⁸⁰ See also 'Wlada To Ja. Z Jackiem Merkle, szefem sztabu wyborczego Lecha Walesy w 1990 roku, rozmawia Witold Beres', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 22 October 1995, p. 3.
- ⁸¹ See also Janina Paradowska, 'Autorytety i Kandydaci', *Polityka*, 24 June 1995, pp. 1 and 6.
- ⁸² See also Dominika Wilowiejska & Jaroslaw Kurski, 'Walesa—prosto z Belwederu', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 1 January 1994, p. 11.
- ⁸³ See also Ewa K. Czakowska, 'Zaangazowanie Bardziej Niz Powsciagliwosc', *Rzeczpospolita*, 3 October 1995, p. 3.
- ⁸⁴ See also Czeslaw Bielecki, 'Historia w Pigulce', *Polityka*, 23 December 1995, pp. 28–29.
- ⁸⁵ See also Maciej Rosolak, 'Serdeczne Bog Zaplac', *Rzeczpospolita*, 26 November 1995, p. 19.
- ⁸⁶ For instance, 'Sprawiedliwy Wymiar. Z Lechem Walesa, prezydentem R.P., rozmawia Janina Paradowska i Jerzy Baczynski', *Polityka*, 16 September 1995, p. 7; 'Jestem Ojcem Solidarnosci. Rozmowa z Lechem Walesa', *Tygodnik Solidarnosc*, 21 October 1995, pp. 1 and 12–13.
- ⁸⁷ See also 'Nowa, Stara Twarz Lecha Walesy', *Rzeczpospolita*, 18 October 1995, p. 5.
- ⁸⁸ 'Obraz Tygodnia', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 24 September 1995, p. 1.
- ⁸⁹ 'Obraz Tygodnia', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 19 November 1995, p. 1.
- ⁹⁰ See also Adam Szostkiewicz, 'Demokracja Mowi Proza', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 26 November 1995, pp. 1 and 4.
- ⁹¹ See also Adam Michnik, 'Strach Przed Monopolem', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 16 November 1995, p. 1; Ernest Skalski, 'Mimo Wszystko Walesa', *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14 November 1995, p. 19.
- ⁹² See also Grzegorz Sieczkowski, 'Bez Placzu, ale i Bez Radosci', *Rzeczpospolita*, 31 January 1995, p. 3.
- ⁹³ See also Marcin Krol, 'Sens Wyborow', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 5 September 1995, pp. 1 and 4; Robert Walenciak, 'Druzyna Lecha', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 15 November 1995, pp. 12–13.
- ⁹⁴ For example, Aleksander Kwasniewski, 'Potrzebna Debata', *Polityka*, 11 November 1995, p. 16.
- ⁹⁵ See also Piotr Adamowicz & Kazimierz Groblewski, 'Zwyciestwo Sie Nalezy', *Rzeczpospolita*, 17 November 1995, p. 4.
- ⁹⁶ See also Adam Szostkiewicz, 'Debata Kwasniewski-Walesa', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 19 November 1995, p. 3.
- ⁹⁷ See also Andrzej Kwiatkowski, 'Kulisy Prezydenckiej Debaty', *Przegląd Tygodniowy*, 15 November 1995, p. 4.
- ⁹⁸ 'Obraz Tygodnia', *Tygodnik Powszechny*, 3 December 1995, p. 1.