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Memorandum on Lech Walesa Statement

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

June 20, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR HAROLD ICKES
ERSKINE BOWLES
DOUG SOSSNICK
ALEXIS HERMAN
GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS

FROM: NANCY SODERBERG

SUBJECT: Walesa Statement

Attached is a statement made by President Walesa regarding recent anti-semitic comments made by a Polish priest. We need to decide whether we can set up the meeting in San Francisco with Walesa.

Please give me your comments as soon as possible.

JUN 21 1995

Official Statement of President Lech Wałęsa

Warsaw, June 20, 1995

The sermon given by the priest of St. Brigida Church parish in Gdańsk has raised public concerns regarding Polish-Jewish relations. It requests an explicit definition of the Polish position in this matter.

In the reborn Republic of Poland, Polish-Jewish relations have been based on truth and mutual respect. As President of Poland I have done my best to deepen the memory about the Holocaust within the Polish society, and to make the long history of the people of Israel on Polish lands a foundation for good relations between Poles and Jews and also between Poland and Israel, now and in the future. I am convinced that any manifestation of anti-semitism both in Poland and throughout the world should be met with complete contempt as well as condemnation.

The terrible crimes committed in the Second World War upon millions of sons and daughters of the Jewish nation lives on in our memories.

As a Pole and as a Christian I view the Star of David as the great sign of faith and of the Jewish community, which should be held with respect.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 20, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR HAROLD ICKES

FROM: ALEXIS HERMAN *AH*
SUBJECT: SAN FRANCISCO TRIP

Attached is a memo concerning the potential meeting with President Lech Walesa of Poland. I want to call your attention to President Walesa's official statement of today attached as well as concerns related to the Polish-American community noted in the memo.

cc: Billy Webster

CC ERSKINE ROWLES
GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS
DOUG SOSNICK
NANCY SODERBERG

June 20, 1995

MEMORANDUM FOR ALEXIS HERMAN

FROM: MARILYN DIGIACOBBE 

SUBJECT: BILATERAL MEETING WITH PRESIDENT LECH WALESZA OF POLAND

I understand that there are concerns about the potential reactions of the Jewish community and the gay community to the President meeting with Poland's President Walesa in San Francisco next week. I want to address these concerns from my vantage point and emphasize the domestic importance of a Walesa-Clinton meeting.

The Jewish community. President Walesa issued a very strong statement today condemning the anti-semitic remarks made by the Polish priest. Please see attached statement. The Jewish community although they have mixed feeling about Walesa, has not made an issue of this incident or protested in any way a meeting between Walesa and Clinton. Jay Footlik and I both believe that the President should meet with Walesa, and address the anti-semitism issue in their meeting.

The Gay community. Marsha Scott believes it's risky to have the Walesa-Clinton meeting in San Francisco with the current state of relations with the gay community. I can't judge this one, but I do want to raise the question as to whether a gay reaction would be focused at the President or Walesa? Isn't there a potential reaction that exists toward the President already based on the White House events of last week?

I believe that it is short sighted to base a decision on this meeting around the reactions of these constituencies without clearly weighing the domestic upsides of a meeting with Walesa. President Walesa is a strong symbol of democracy, one that touches the Polish-American and other Central and Eastern European-American communities around the country. These constituencies are roughly 8% of the nation's population and still have strong 1st and 2nd generation networks in the key states of Connecticut, Illinois, Michigan, New York, New Jersey, Ohio and Pennsylvania. See attached population breakdown.

Meeting with Walesa presents a high profile opportunity to highlight our commitment to democracy in Central and Eastern Europe and to NATO expansion -- key wedge issues for these ethnic communities. The Polish-American community pays great attention to Walesa and has been following the possibility of the two meeting in San Francisco. I have been getting calls about the possible meeting from national Polish-American organization leaders for the last month.

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CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN ETHNIC POPULATION

STATE	ETHNICS	%	STATE	ETHNICS	%
United States	21,262,029	8.55%	Missouri	228,215	4.46%
Alabama	53,940	1.33%	Montana	52,251	6.54%
Alaska	33,344	6.06%	Nebraska	194,773	12.34%
Arizona	160,376	4.37%	Nevada	84,402	7.02%
Arkansas	39,906	1.70%	New Hampshire	87,338	7.87%
California	1,931,758	6.49%	New Jersey	1,368,364	17.70%
Colorado	236,190	7.17%	New Mexico	52,507	3.47%
Connecticut	605,527	18.42%	New York	2,582,440	14.35%
Delaware	66,743	10.02%	North Carolina	140,966	2.13%
D.C.	35,691	5.88%	North Dakota	63,393	9.92%
Florida	1,040,481	8.04%	Ohio	1,362,059	12.56%
Georgia	168,448	2.60%	Oklahoma	76,609	2.44%
Hawaii	30,565	2.76%	Oregon	153,808	5.41%
Idaho	33,884	3.37%	Pennsylvania	2,175,477	18.31%
Illinois	1,767,634	15.46%	Rhode Island	84,944	8.47%
Indiana	367,722	6.63%	South Carolina	68,116	1.95%
Iowa	136,800	4.93%	South Dakota	42,481	6.10%
Kansas	109,420	4.42%	Tennessee	84,092	1.72%
Kentucky	56,729	1.54%	Texas	644,826	3.80%
Louisiana	60,793	1.44%	Utah	42,985	2.49%
Maine	51,999	4.23%	Vermont	35,960	6.39%
Maryland	459,986	9.62%	Virginia	291,931	4.72%
Massachusetts	699,473	11.63%	Washington	275,921	5.67%
Michigan	1,419,636	15.27%	West Virginia	71,947	4.01%
Minnesota	478,348	10.93%	Wisconsin	803,721	16.43%
Mississippi	29,298	1.14%	Wyoming	25,764	5.68%

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 20, 1995

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cc ERSKINE HOWLES
cc GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS
cc DOUG SOSNIK
cc NANCY SODERBERG
cc: Billy Webster

June 20, 1995

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