Chapter I

Poland's road to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

1. <u>Towards democracy.</u>

The division of Europe after the Second World War determined the position and power of the countries on the continent. Those of them, which were perceived to be relatively strong, could keep independence and autonomy with their economic potential, whereas the relatively weak ones could survive because the more powerful countries considered it to be correct. However, altogether with the change of power on the European continent, the essential element of the European structure – a system of truly independent countries – disappeared, leaving Europe with a new form of a relationship.

The appearance of a bloc of communist countries was the effect of the Soviet Union's hegemony in Middle-East Europe on the one hand, and the acceptance of such status quo by Western Superpowers on the other hand[6].

This new form of a relationship between some countries in Europe after the Second World War was not accepted easily by all of them. The imposed system encountered much more resistance in Poland than in other countries under the Soviet Union's domination. Such attitudes were formed as a result of a big number of events in Poland's history from different periods of time.

1.1. <u>Shaping Polish-Russian relationships.</u>

The whole XVII century was remembered as the period of Polish-Russian rivalry for the domination of East Europe, which ended with the victory of Russia's taking control of Poland's independence for the next century. The Polish attempts for opposing Russian power in the form of uprisings of 1794, 1830 and 1863 as well as the revolution in 1905 caused stronger Russian repressive measures towards Polish resistance. The beginning of the XX century brought the next war between Poland and Russia (1919-1920), which only

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[6] Wiatr J.J.(ed.), *Demokracja polska 1989-2003*, Warszawa 2003, p. 13.

reinforced anti-Russian attitudes in Polish nation[7]. Although Poland took the role of supporting Ukraine in its fight against Russia, the most dramatic summer 1920 with a direct menace of Poland's autonomy by Red Army could not be removed from the nation's history. Moreover, the events from the beginning of the World War II influenced shaping Polish-Russian relationships. Reaching the agreement about the next Poland's partition between the Soviet Union and Germany on 23 August 1939, striking the backs of Poland in the fight with Germany on 17 September 1939, as well as taking repressive measures on the areas incorporated to the Soviet Union finally determined mutual attitudes.

However, the discovery of a mass crime in Katyn in 1943, committed three years earlier, helped Poles realize that the choice between Russians and Germans seemed to be hopeless, although at that time Germans appeared as a curse and Russians as a remedy[8]. Such a comfortable position for the Soviet Union in the Polish society was reinforced by German policy of mass, cruel and gory repressive measures, which contributed to the lack of an important pro-German orientation in Poland. A more favourable attitude to an eastern neighbour was used by the supporters of friendly relations with the Soviet Union – not only the communist left, but also a part of people in connection with Polish government in London[9]. When in the middle of 1941 the Soviet Union officially became an ally, as a member of anti-German coalition, with the declarations of rebuilding an independent and strong country, the communists as well as the people of different political options began to accept such a form of cooperation with the Superpower. As it occurred later, it was the greatest mistake to start trusting the uncompromising Soviet Union's hegemony.

Except internal favourable conditions for a closer relation with the USSR at that time, a political and psychological situation in Poland was complicated by the attitude of Western Superpowers, especially the USA and Great Britain.

Since the beginning of the World War II, in the main centres of closer and further neighbours of Poland – Paris, London, Washington, Berlin or Moscow – the lots of Poles and their nation were regarded and formulated in different ways. Despite the fact that world opinions about Poland itself were not numerous, the war started with that nation, and for this reason the country was engaged in the development of Russian-German relationships.

The opinions of Poland's western allies – mainly Great Britain and the USA – neither expressed direct judgments nor specified the prospects for Poland or Europe[10]. The parliamentary and newspaper disputes from the end of 1939 presented different views on the

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[7] Ibidem, p. 16-17.
[8] Calvocoressi P., *Polityka międzynarodowa 1945-2000*, Warszawa 2002, p. 309.
[9] Wiatr J.J., *Demokracja...*, op. cit., p. 16-17.
[10] Pasierb B., *Polska myśl polityczna okresu II wojny światowej wobec Niemiec*, Poznań 1990, p. 47.

role of the United Kingdom in the war as well as its approach to both sides – the Soviet Union and Germany. *The Times* from 4 November 1939 published the statement of lord Baldwin of Bewdley, who appealed to British society for supporting *British Association for International Understanding*. It was supposed to be an institution which collected historical materials and evidence of nations whose issues played an essential role in Europe[11]. Moreover, in the letter presented in *News Chronicle* from the same period of time, sir Volter Leyton propagated the idea of a liberated Poland, with its participation in creating the guarantee of a future European security[12]. Other political activists, such as a leader of Labour Party, Arthur Greenwood, were convinced about the result of the war, and truly believed in fighting for the freedom of Austria, Czechoslovakia and Poland, altogether with German nation conquered by Hitler[13].

However, the unanimity in British opinions about Polish future and the causes of such a tragedy was not reached. The article of Lloyd George published in *The Sunday Express* on 27 September 1939 was definitely in favour of the Soviet Union and in the contempt of Polish government as well as the whole imperialist country. This speech met with the Polish ambassador in London, E. Raczyński's disapproval, sending an open letter to its author. In reply to Raczyński's letter, Lloyd George distributed it to both Houses, all embassies in London and to more important political as well as journalist celebrities in London, beginning a polemic[14]. Nevertheless, taking the period of 1939-1943 into consideration, a British concept of creating a safe Europe with a strong Poland as a guarantee of permanent peace predominated in a great number of thoughts. Although the British did not specify this opinion as a task, the ambassador E. Raczyński took the solution of building a possible regional federation of Eastern Europe – including Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary – as a serious concept to be put into effect[15].

The United States of America, however, was a bit reluctant in being involved in European matters at once, following the appeasement policy. It did react, forming the Advisory Committee on Post-War Foreign Policy in 1940, but only a year later the country decided to undergo more decisive actions in order to participate effectively in solving international problems of great importance[16]. Despite a big distance, patience and diplomacy, the Americans followed the events in a remote Europe, with a special engagement of Jewish

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[11] *Sprawozdanie Centrali Informacji i Dokumentacji*, no. 22 from 7.XI.1939, AAN, MIiD, syg. 34, p. 13 [in:] Pasierb. B., *Polska…*, op. cit., p. 47.
[12] Ibidem, p. 3-4.
[13] Ibidem, p. 6.
[14] E. Raczyński, *W sojuszniczym Londynie,* London 1960, p. 49, [in:] Pasierb. B., *Polska…*, op. cit., p. 48.
[15] Pasierb. B., *Polska…*, op. cit., p. 394-395.
[16] Grudziński P., *Przyszłość Europy w koncepcjach F. D. Roosevelta (1933-1945)*, Wrocław 1980, p. 58, [w:] Pasierb B., *Polska…*, op. cit., p. 49.

centres. Some important Jewish journals, such as *Der Tag* shared Polish aspirations for being rebuilt in its ethnographic borders as a free, independent country. On the other hand, there were also more sceptical predictions which introduced more rationality in Polish expectations for restoring their country in former borders, claiming that such a vision seemed to be a real illusion[17].

However, these numerous manifestations of identifying with Poland's lot in the first period of the war did not survive in confrontation with political interests. Taking into consideration the raison d'etats of their countries and heading for an alliance with the USSR, the leaders of two Western Superpowers – the president Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the prime minister Winston Churchill – accepted not only Russian demands concerning the border, but also the Soviet Union's hegemony in Eastern Europe. The conference in Yalta on 4-11 February 1945 with the leaders of three Superpowers was perceived by Poland as a betrayal of the allies, who legitimized including western Ukraine and western Belarus in the USSR and creating a new communist government in Poland, the only recognized by Western Superpowers. In the face of an accomplished fact, Poland would feel nothing than bitterness and loneliness.

Despite the fact that Poland had a weaker pro-Russian tradition than other countries incorporated into a communist bloc, there were some circumstances conducive to introducing a communist system, which resulted from Poland's history[18]. The first important reason concerned a pre-war social and economic structure of a Polish society with few privileged social strata. As a matter of fact, there was one of such groups – the egoistic nobility, incapable of reconciling their freedom with a strong state authority. It led to creating a solid tradition of an individual liberty as a basis of a country. The rest of the society, however, suffered in poverty, which formed grounds for the birth of a social radicalism.

The next argument favourable to a communist system in Poland was associated with a deepening weakness of the privileged strata, such as landowners, bourgeoisie or intelligentsia, by a policy of German authorities. After the partitions, the independent Poland based on a democratic Polish and European tradition. Nevertheless, the democracy functioned poorly, which ended in a coup d'etat in 1926 introducing a military regime. In spite of following an extermination policy, the regime did not succeed in destroying the liberation tradition and ideals.

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[17] *Sprawozdanie Centrali Informacji i Dokumentacji* no. 33 from 18.XI.1939, AAN, MIiD, syg. 34, p. 151, [w:] Pasierb B., *Polska…*, op. cit., p. 49.
[18] Wiatr J.J., *Demokracja…*, op. cit., p. 18-19.

Moreover, beside the liberation tradition, Polish society was distinguished by strong Catholicism, which in connection with patriotism influenced great aspirations for independence. Although such a religious nation was regarded as left behind well-developed European countries, but on the other hand the traditionalism toughened the society, making it more resistant to changes.

One more argument perceived as a communism-favourable factor concerned the disappointment towards pre-war political elites as well as the Western Superpowers, whose attitudes and approaches led to leaving Poland at the mercy of the Soviet Union.

Despite the hatred to German occupiers and the desire of the retaliation, in spite of treating the army as more Polish than communist one, and indispensable for the revenge, a communist system was not accepted in the history and tradition of Poland, which had become saturated with strong anti-Russian manifestations throughout a few centuries.

1.2. <u>The profile of a communist system.</u>

The introduction of a new communist system in Poland took place mainly with the machinery of the army and police forces. It was necessary, as Poland defended its territory from an unwanted system with a well-developed resistance of Polish Underground Country. Unfortunately the resistance became weaker after the Warsaw Uprising and the ranks of Home Army numbered fewer and fewer members. However, the Russians managed to break the Polish resistance using a trick – the representatives of the conspiracy authorities were lured under the guise of political disputes to the Soviet Union. After being exposed to repressive measures, they were judged in a display suit in Moscow.

The process of taking office by communists was accompanied by the modest forces of the Peasant Army supported by the units of the First Polish Army, which was yet not sufficient to subordinate the nation and introduce the Soviet rule. For this reason, it occurred to be necessary to begin forming an army for a new system.

Although the Soviet Union stayed in opposition to the people from London camp, it was willing to cooperate with the eager ones of different political views, and to incorporate them into the structures of the state administration, the army, the police or secret police forces.

Nevertheless, the new authorities needed the evidence of their acceptance in the Polish society, and the only way to prove it was fabricating the public support in two general elections of 1946 and 1947. The desirable manifestations of reinforcing their position in Poland resulted from the necessity of staying in good relations with foreign countries rather

than keeping proper relationships with their own citizens. The citizens, though, were convinced to the authorities in different ways[19].

Firstly, it was easier to convince the Poles to the communist system by virtue of a stabilized international situation on the continent. The nation "abandoned" by Western countries needed any form of a state, regardless of the regime. Moreover, an essential role at that time was played by the Church, which did not express its approval of the system on the one hand, but realized the necessity of the Polish nation, on the other hand. Such a balanced policy led to signing an agreement between the Church and the state authorities in 1950.

Secondly, the matter of borders affected the acceptance of the new system to a considerable extent. Whereas the eastern border had been lost irreversibly, the Polish-German frontier posed a great unknown, the guarantee of which, for the lack of clear standpoints of the western countries, was the Soviet Union. Furthermore, as the process of introducing Polish language to post-German areas required significant expenditure, the state help was irreplaceable.

Thirdly, the restoration of the country would have been impossible in the situation of the opposition against the authorities.

The last argument that convinced the citizens to the communism was a social promotion of the poorer strata. As a result of the agricultural reform, educational transformations, a better access to culture or creating the possibilities of promotion for workers, the communists won the acceptance among unprivileged strata.

Nevertheless, the existence of some circumstances in favour of the new system did not mean uncritical and endless approval for such a form of the rule. However, determined opponents were in a minority of no significance, and it was a big advantage of the communists. Moreover, the system was easier to be accepted by young people, beginning the adulthood, as they were not aware of any other reality, and the system transformations contributed to their better life start.

The profile of the communist system in Poland can be divided into four distinctive periods: from 1944 until 1989[20]. The first period, 1944-1948, based on building the regime. Some totalitarian inclinations of the authorities were moderated by the acceptance of legal opposition, towards which the communists undertook repressive measures and persecutions, but still the opposition was allowed to the public activity. Moreover, the relations between the Church and the state were considered as proper, and the science, education as well as culture did not encounter any communist resistance. The economy, though, was divided into

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[19] Ibidem, p. 21-22.
[20] Ibidem, p. 25-40.

three sectors: state, cooperative and private, which provided the society with a poor substitute of democracy, named "peasant democracy". Although the level of the repressive measures was considerably high, it did not have the signs of totalitarianism[21] as they were used against anti-communists, the underground activists or the politicians of the opposition.

The whole policy in Eastern Europe was dependent on a general strategy appointed by Joseph Stalin in Moscow, who was governed by the relationships with western countries. The transformation took place at the end of 1947, which was influenced by several events, such as: establishing the Information Agency of Worker's and Communist Party, issuing the doctrine about the world division into two opposing camps, eliminating non-communist governments in Hungary and Czechoslovakia, announcing the collectiveness of agriculture, removing the legal opposition and joining obligatorily the communist and socialist parties. These events initiated the transition to a totalitarian period, called Stalinism.

The totalitarian phase began at the turn of 1948/1949 and lasted until 1956. During this period took place a personal change of the authority structure into the Soviet representatives. Furthermore, all forms of political and social pluralism disappeared with the emergence of a mono-party system (Polish United Worker's Party) in 1948. The economy rejected a three-sector system in favour of the economy under the state control. Moreover, Stalinism removed the pluralism in culture and science and accepted "Marxism-Leninism" trend as a basis of social, humanistic and even some natural sciences, whereas the literature and art based on "socialist realism".

This period was also abounding in the attempts of conforming the Church to the state authorities, with numerous repressive measures towards priests and bishops. The police repressive measures presented a mass terror against innocent people, such as the officers of Polish Army, the soldiers of Home Army, the members of Polish United Worker's Party accused of the relations with western countries.

The greatest change came after Stalin's death in 1953, with the signs of liberation in the form of lighter terror and liberated prisoners. After 1956 there was a first manifestation of freedom in Poznań, where the workers' strike ended up suppressed by army forces. The year 1956 started the transformations in Polish United Worker's Party, which initiated democratic tendencies and loosening the Soviet ties[22]. This period caused the changes in the party's leadership – in the front of which stood Władysław Gomułka, the former prisoner of Stalinism. The liberalization from the pressure of the Soviet Union affected the party's

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[21] A regime which maintains itself in political power by means of secret police, propaganda disseminated through the state-controlled mass media, personality cults, regulation and restriction of free discussion and criticism, single-party states, the use of mass surveillance, and widespread use of terror tactics.

[22] Calvocoressi P., *Polityka...*, op. cit., p. 317-318.

decisions, which were governed by the raison d'etat, and were more independent, although still within the confines of the Warsaw Treaty.

The third period in the communist system started with the Seym Election on 20.01.1957, a non-democratic election, but not fabricated. The period – called an authoritarian party-bureaucratic dictatorship – began with the leadership of Gomułka and lasted until 1980. During this phase there was a change of the Polish United Worker's Party policy, which encountered regression, the students' strikes for liberties and anti-Semitic campaign in 1968. Moreover, the Polish United Worker's Party became the main force of the state, accepting the limited forms of pluralism, and normalized constitutionally in 1976. Besides, the cruel forms of terror ceased, giving way to moderate repressive measures against illegal activists. Furthermore, the party stopped interfering in culture and science, limiting its participation to maintaining political correctness, which resulted in lively commentaries and the revival of natural sciences. The party put an end to the fight with religion, which influenced better relations between the Church and the state. The change took place in the economic policy as well, eliminating the collectiveness of agriculture and introducing the comeback of a private sector. The ideology in the party was replaced with a state work, and the break in the dictatorial structures of the state was the establishment of the Committee of Worker's Defence. It appeared to be a real precedent, as it created a communist country with a functioning legally-persecuted, but not destroyed-democratic opposition. Moreover, the authoritarian system in this period was based on an unwritten contract with a society, according to which the masses refrained from anti-governmental speeches, and the authorities carried out a mild policy, fulfilling the promises of a better financial situation.

The crisis of that phase took place in 1980-1981, along with the first strikes in the northern part of Poland – the Polish Baltic Coast – and the appearance of Solidarity movement[23]. The Polish economy was in the state of recession, a responsibility for which was taken by the government, giving the strikes a political nature. The conflicts could not have been solved in the way of collective negotiations as the workers were not entitled to them, and the government did not have the right to choose, because it would mean betraying the system. However, in consultation with Moscow, Polish government decided to reach the agreement with the striking workers in order to avoid a clash with the whole society. The acceptance of the leading role of the communist party, the existing socialist system as well as Poland's membership in the Soviet Bloc allowed the workers – with Lech Wałęsa as a leader – achieving such successes as: the right to strike, the right to create trade unions, a possibility

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[23] Ibidem, p. 328-329.

of influencing the economic policy to some extent, liberalization of censorship, a rule of being promoted regardless of a party membership, a rise of payments and pensions, a promise of better work and social conditions, additional free days of work and regular transmissions of Sunday masses.

The opposition, not existing officially, took advantage of achieved rights and led to meeting the demands and restoring the political dialogue eventually. The creation and activity of Solidarity movement proved the necessity of fighting not only for the sole material sphere but the need of freedom and a human dignity.

1.3. The crisis of a communist system and the beginning of a political transformation.

The last, fourth period of the communist system revealed a different face of the authorities[24]. The party still presented the basis, but in fact, an authoritarian rule of the army, with a respect of the national interest and the raison d'etat, predominated in the state. However, such a form of the system met strong resistance of the society, especially in the first years of the period, hence the introduction of the martial law gained the understanding or passive acceptance among the citizens.

The Solidarity movement, although banned, still reached the support of hundreds of thousand of people, who expressed their attitudes in the form of street demonstrations. Moreover, the underground activity also worked. Such public conditions led to increasing the repressiveness, which reached the highest level since Stalinism. The martial law meant interning Solidarity and democratic activists. A lot of people lost their lives in street demonstrations, and a big number of them were abducted and murdered. Nevertheless, the repressiveness decreased gradually, and after the amnesty for political prisoners in 1986, the authorities resigned from undertaking repressive measures against the opposition activists.

The feature of this period was the fact that the party underwent reformist initiatives of two directions. The first was connected with an economic reform, which included a greater role of the market on the one hand, but not going beyond the restrictions resulting from the domination of the state property and the state control over the prices of goods as well as services, on the other hand. Therefore, the reform did not bring the expected results. Furthermore, the economy was in a bad condition and the party was reluctant to radical transformations, yet there was an expansion of private firms on the market.

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[24] Wiatr J.J., *Demokracja…*, op. cit., p. 40-42.

The second initiative concerned establishing the institutions for creating the basis of the lawful state and was associated with several significant steps. In 1982 there were some shifts introduced to the Constitution, such as the rein station of State Tribunal and the establishment of Constitutional Tribunal, a new act about higher education and the establishment of Civil Law Spokesman in 1987.

However, the reforms were introduced without the agreement with the opposition, as the party intended to reform the state from above until 1987. The year 1987 turned out to be a determinant of lost hopes. In the referendum of 29.XI.1987 the government did not gain necessary majority to rule on its own, besides, altogether with the surge of next strikes and unfavourable referendum to national councils in 1988, the government was forced to resign. The military phase of the communist system, therefore, became a transitional period to democracy.

February 1989 was perceived as a determinant of a new chapter in the history of Poland with historical proceedings of Round Table – the negotiations of system transformations between the communists and the opposition. In the same year the government of Wojciech Jaruzelski succeeded in solving the dispute of military forces and communists, and legalized "Solidarity"[25]. The beginnings of changes into a democratic state meant the agreement for a multi-party system, the abolition of censorship as well as the Seym and Senate elections. The parliamentary elections in June 1989 occurred to be a total victory of "Solidarity". Nevertheless, General Jaruzelski, after his resignation from the party leader, was elected for the president of the state by both houses of the parliament.

However, such transformations were not accompanied by the improvement of the economy; on the contrary, the economic condition required the intervention of western countries. The European Community, the United States of America and Japan decided to support Poland in the form of three-year subsidies.

The presidency of General Jaruzelski did not last long, as in 1990 he resigned from being the head of the state and the helm was taken by Lech Wałęsa. Since the beginning of the tenure of the first democratic leader deriving from the people, there were some signs of economic revival, such as: the economic growth of 6 percent annually, the decrease of unemployment, a significant influx of foreign investors or the reduction of hyperinflation. Nevertheless, it did not contribute to the position of Lech Wałęsa, who stayed in fight with the parliament as to the sources and methods of the state repair as well as the authority of the state departments. Despite his success at defeating the communism, Wałęsa still had some problems with adapting to liberal democracy.

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[25] Calvocoressi P., *Polityka...*, op. cit., p. 331.

The new stage of building the Republic of Poland was characterized by the establishment of lots of parties: 27 out of 67 participating in the 1991 election found place in the parliament. Democratic Union (UD) under the leadership of Tadeusz Mazowiecki and Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), the ex-communist party, took the first and second seat. Lech Wałęsa, who also aspired for the position of the prime minister, did not succeed. Moreover, a new Poland began with the first victory of the democratic opposition since the end of the Second World War, the system determining a new direction of a state development.

Shaping a democratic parliamentary scene encountered a lot of problems resulting from the complexity of the party system as well as the difficulties in adjusting to parliamentary democracy[26]. In 1993 election, SLD altogether with the Peasant Party (PSL) took the victory, appointing the leader of PSL, Waldemar Pawlak, to the post of prime minister. However, Wałęsa's tenacity and his excessive desire to rule led to a political destabilization, which ended up with Pawlak's resignation, giving up his post to ex-communist Józef Oleksy. Lech Wałęsa, though, did not prolong his tenure of the presidency, as he was defeated in 1995 by a young and intelligent ex-communist, Aleksander Kwaśniewski, who stayed on the president post for two terms.

The shifts of the nation leadership were accompanied by the parliamentary changes. In 1997 the SLD-PSL coalition's seats in the parliament were replaced by Solidarity Electoral Action (AWS), which consisted of two main branches of the former "Solidarity" movement as well as about thirty smaller groupings. Whereas SLD maintained its electorate, PSL lost the support of a great number of rural voters. In this situation, therefore, the political scene became a two-bloc system.

Western countries treated all transformations in Eastern Europe, including Poland, with an affinity, although they did not expect substantial changes to happen[27]. They were fascinated by big resistance against the communist system, long existence of the underground structures, the underground publications of independent press, and a great desire to be liberated of the unwanted and unaccepted control of the Soviet Union. France, which did not participate in determining the lot of this part of Europe during the conference in Yalta, assured the delegation of "Solidarity" of calling an international conference, during which the decisions made by the Superpowers would be invalidated, as long as "Solidarity" survived the following six months. Unfortunately, the discussions took place in October

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[26] Ibidem, p. 332-333.
[27] Geremek B., *Szansa i Zagrożenie. Polityka i dyplomacja w rodzinnej Europie*, Warszawa 2004, p. 75.

1981 and two months later the government introduced the martial law[28]. Sweden tried to comfort Poland and warn at the same time, as they realized the power and influence of the Soviet Union. So, on the one hand the western countries felt integrated with Polish society, wearing the badges of "Solidarity" in Germany, France or Belgium, but on the other hand, there was some anxiety among political elites concerning the maintenance of peaceful relations with the USSR. The Americans, however, were not afraid of the problems associated with supporting the solidarity movement. Both president Reagan and the trade unions, integrated with the opposition activists and approved of taking the anti-communist actions.

The first significant step towards a common Europe was made in 1989 with the integration of Germany, which determined a new arrangement after the period of Cold War. Such actions encouraged Western Europe (excluding Great Britain) to accelerate the process of not only an economic and political, but also military integration on the continent[29]. At that time Germany took the leadership of creating the community, with strong support of France.

The beginning of 1990s abounded in various western concepts on visions of future security of Europe. France offered the citizens of Europe a community of national states and their inhabitants, with common goals for developing a European identity. Such a vision was based on a political and economic unison and created an organic entity, was to stay in cooperation with the USA. On the other hand, Great Britain was in favour of building a Europe of national states, willing to open for post-communist countries of Eastern Europe, which entered a road to democracy. The prime minister Margaret Thatcher warned of creating a European Superpower, as it would lead to the attitudes in contradiction with American interests, and moreover, would contribute to the rise of a dangerous world of competing blocs[30].

Despite the offers and declarations of shaping a united Europe, European political elites were not ready for taking decisive actions after 1989. The European and world public opinion expressed their understanding and support while the surge of transformations began in communist countries, but they appeared to be less favourable and more sceptical when the change became a fact. The political elites, on the contrary, were more unwilling at the beginning of fighting the communist system, but soon after 1989 Western European countries, especially France and Germany, started to support the attempts of post-communist nations, mostly Poland, for entering a European unity[31].

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[28] Ibidem, p. 75-78.
[29] Brzeziński Z., *O Polsce, Europie i świecie 1988-2001,* Warszawa 2002, p. 100.
[30] Ibidem, p. 101-102.
[31] Geremek B., *Szansa...*, op. cit., p. 79.

2. **Poland's Foreign Policy after 1990.**

After the downfall of the communist system in Eastern Europe, the Soviet Union as well as the post-communist countries began to settle down in a new political reality. The Soviet Union was not able to cooperate with the USA any longer, as after mutual liquidation of colonial superpowers, both nations tended to reduce each other's possibilities in subordinated to them influence zones[32]. The only point, though, that seemed to join both countries, was the ending process of decolonization of the world. Nevertheless, the USSR did not notice it, which might have contributed to its downfall. Moreover, the relationships between two superpowers, at the period of the Soviet prosperity, was based on the acceptance, which was especially desirable for the Americans in order to maintain proper political balance in the world. However, the USSR mistook such an attitude for the sign of affinity, therefore, the Soviet leaders considered this friendship to be superior to the rules of an international arena. Obviously, they were wrong.

Nevertheless, the internal personal and political disputes carried out among high-ranking officers of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, affected substantially the condition of the party. Moreover, a malfunctioning economy at the final phase deteriorated the state of the Superpower, leading to its disappearance in the international arena.

2.1. **The problems of international policy in post-communist Poland.**

Such a different arrangement of powers put post-communist countries, especially Poland, in the situation of uncertainty and a potential threat, which resulted from the creation of a new Russian policy aimed at retrieving the areas of its former influences. On the other hand, Poland realized that Russia's recovery would take some time, and that the division from a direct confrontation with a regenerating power ought to create a chance. Hence, Poland searched for a favourable solution in order to leave the area of a possible future confrontation, directing its actions in two parallel ways[33]. The first direction was the West, which meant the eagerness of joining the integrated structures – the European Community. The second challenge was the East, but perceived as a policy of destroying the Russian integrating aspirations, and directed the interest towards, first and foremost, Ukraine, then Belarus and Lithuania. Poland decided to turn to Ukraine's cooperation not accidentally. The country, similar in size to Polish nation, at the moment of regaining independence in 1991 was located at a crossroads: on the one hand with a status of autonomy, but on the other

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[32] Ziółkowski A., *NATO w XX wieku. Transatlantyckie zależności*, Warszawa 2002, p. 188-189.
[33] Ibidem, p. 190-191.

hand, doomed to and aware of an eternal cooperation with Russia, as 22 percent of the whole population consisted of the Russians, and the Ukrainian language was barely used.

Poland, therefore, ventured to establish diplomatic relations with Ukraine, noticing its strategic position in this region[34]. Unfortunately, Polish attempts for reinforcing its position in this part of Europe ended up with being engaged in different disputes and not paying attention to its own benefits. It disrupted Poland's credibility of a partnership for Western Europe in terms of eastern relations, and gave way to Germany, capable of pressing its economic and political interests.

The Soviet aspirations for regaining the position of a powerful country in the region, however, seemed to be not the only concern of Eastern Europe countries, but its source was also the weaknesses of the former Superpower. The trade relations were limited, which contributed to deteriorating the economy of post-communist states. Moreover, the collapse of the Soviet Union was also regarded as a possible reason for mass migrations to the West, which would have become an excessive burden for the structures of Eastern Europe nations[35].

The international problems of post-communist Poland resulted from its strategic position in Europe. The attachment of the German eastern lands to the German Federal Republic put Poland in a direct confrontation between the East and the West. Hence, the country made efforts to establish all possible diplomatic relations with both sides in order to ensure its security.

2.2. <u>Shaping security in Europe.</u>

The break-up of the Soviet empire inspired the concern of both sides – the liberated countries as well as the defeated system – in regard to the security on the continent. However, this problem appeared to be of international significance, as in the beginning the USA with a solid military basis of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, was perceived as a main guarantee of European security. Such a solution, though, met with the Soviet anxiety, caused by the possibility of moving the borders of western security zone to the East. For this reason, it was necessary to consider a new strategy of either implementing post-communist states into NATO structure or the security structures of Western countries, or searching for a brand-new solution, which would satisfy both sides.

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[34] Ibidem, p. 192.
[35] Brzeziński Z., *O Polsce…*, op. cit., p. 106.

Zbigniew Brzeziński, one of the most outstanding celebrities of international affairs, a scientist of national and international security issues, but first and foremost, an expert as well as a long-term participant of the USA politics, in 1994 debated the care about the security of Europe, presenting, in his opinion, four indispensable goals to achieve[36]. Firstly, he claimed that the establishment of any system of security in Europe, respecting the new geopolitical realities, needed to aim at maintaining European-Atlantic relations, as the American presence in Europe was the key in this field.

Moreover, Brzeziński emphasized the necessity of consolidating a new European space, the new one as it was broadened with the countries originated in Europe, but treated as the other, worse, part of the continent. Hence, it was impossible to consider this part to be beyond the security system, even if it was safe, it could destroy the political and military balance.

Furthermore, keeping proper relations with Russia was perceived as essential. Although the state was situated in Europe and beyond Europe at the same time, despite the fact that it lost a lot, any country could not forget that it was still a powerful nation, in terms of size as well as military potential.

Therefore, the last purpose seemed to be logical. Brzeziński warned of any irresponsible actions that would lead to the revival of the Russian empire. He was of the opinion that the cooperation between the new post-communist countries was possible, and even advisable, the economic integration of these states to some extent was desirable as well, but on no account could the system of central political control be brought into life. Tightening the political bounds would, undoubtedly, mean a threat for future democracy in Russia.

These proposals, however, were presented from the USA's point of view, hence, they emphasized a significant role of NATO in forming a European security system. Europe, on the other hand, did not need to rely only on Atlantic relations, as the continent had already possessed its own security system. The question was whether the states of the former communist bloc would find their places without the necessity of transforming it into a new formation?

Shaping a new European system of security originated at the end of the Second World War. The conference in Potsdam, establishing a post-war arrangement of powers in Europe, did not satisfy, however, any side. The new period in the history, called "the Cold War", led to emerging two opposing camps – NATO and the Warsaw Treaty – as a balance

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[36] Ibidem, p. 206-207.

of powers on the continent[37]. Both organizations were political and military alliances, creating the security systems of Western Europe (NATO) and Eastern Europe (the Warsaw Treaty, with its main power – the Russian Army). Although the sides stayed in the state of war, "Cold War", they were cautious and afraid to use weapons of mass destructions, including nuclear weapons, therefore they did not lead to the warfare. It resulted from the fact that the possibility of winning such a war was little, and the countries realized it, preparing and arming continuously their units in order to maintain the arms race. The Eastern Europe, however, was not able to follow the Western development, which, to some extent, contributed to the downfall of the Warsaw Treaty.

Simultaneously, there were some actions undertaken in order to keep peace, restrict armaments, and lead to an international agreement. The effect of these international ventures was the establishment of the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) in 1975, which became renamed for the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in 1994[38].

The Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe was intended to harmonize the international life in different dimensions, as the decisions included in the Final Act of CSCE referred to politics, military issues, economy, trade, science, technology, humanitarian cooperation, human relations, information as well as culture and education[39]. Bringing this organization into being, however, was regarded as a strategic solution to some historical events. The first one was associated with the impossibility of signing the treaty of peace with Germany, as the existing two German states were not entitled to sign such a document on behalf of Germany conducting the World War II. Furthermore, it was essential at that time to establish an institution, which would incorporate a greater number of members, and would be able to ensure the continuity of its existence.

The member states of OSCE declared working for better relationships among each other as well as for real and lasting peace, ensuring the security of the countries and their citizens. Moreover, the members agreed to adapt the principles of UN to the European needs, and to base their actions on such rules as:

- observance of sovereign equality and of inseparable sovereignty;
- refrain from the threat of using force or using force;
- sanctity of borders;
- territorial integrity of states;

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[37] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa-Polska 2000,* Wrocław 2000, p. 139.
[38] Ibidem, p. 140.
[39] Ibidem, p. 142-144.

- a peaceful solution of disputes;

- non-interference in internal affairs;

- observance of human rights and basic liberties, including freedom of thought, consciousness, religion or beliefs;

- equality of rights and the states' right to self-determination;

- cooperation among countries;

- execution in good faith of obligations resulting from international law.

A new system of shaping security in Europe, originated in Helsinki in 1975, based its final recommendations on the principles that all states participating in the Conference were sovereign and independent, and therefore, treated equally. Besides, their resolutions would be made by consensus, which meant that possible solutions would be accepted by all members.

The most significant issue, however, concerned the armaments and military forces in each member state. The realization of decisions in this field contributed to a considerable reduction of the armaments and military forces as well as ensured a balance of them among countries in order to guarantee peace on the continent. On 19 November 1990, 22 states signed the Parisian Charter of New Europe and agreed to stop treating each other as opponents, and expressed a will to overcome European differences and divisions[40].

Each conference on behalf of OSCE was a reflection of transformations in the international arena. They might strengthen some changes or correct them affecting the course of events at the same time. Such transformations as in Middle and Eastern Europe, changes in the former Soviet Union, the integration of Germany or the breakdown of Yalta arrangement were and always would be in the public eye of OSCE, as they influenced directly the guarantee of the international stability. Hence, the organization ought to still be regarded as one of the elements of European architecture of security[41].

The next pillar of the European security space was created by Western-European Union. On 17 March 1948, five states of Europe signed the Brussels Treaties, which established the Western Union in order to build the defence system against aggression, and 6 years later, the Western-European Union (WEU) became its continuator[42]. The main aim of WEU at that time was only some aspects of the policy of security, as NATO had already played a predominant role. In the beginning, the Western-European Union was not treated seriously, which changed in the middle of 1980s when the idea of European unity became

[40] Ibidem, p. 145.
[41] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska 2000,* Wrocław 1999, p. 96.
[42] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa...,* op. cit., p. 163.

more real. This concept, though, was governed by Germany and France, presenting new initiatives of creating a common European future, from economy, agriculture, culture, social issues, ecology to foreign and security policy[43].

The Maastricht Treaty in 1992, establishing the European Union, attributed the foreign policy and the policy of security to the EU as a pillar, in the front of which there was WEU. However, its role was restricted to making political and military evaluations until the Summit in Amsterdam. In 1997, the Amsterdam Conference broadened the authority of this organization, leading to its full integration with the European Union, with the following decisions:

- EU would still develop the European Political and Security Cooperation;
- EU would insert the defence policy into the European foreign and security policy;
- EU would create the possibility of common defence;
- EU would commission WEU to make and realize the decisions in terms of the defence policy, which suggested that WEU should become the part of the development process of the European Union.

Therefore, the Maastricht treaty developed the idea of creating European identity in the field of security, raising the importance of the Western-European Union. With reference to the security, the EU appointed WEU to conduct such actions, which would be either impossible or undesirable by NATO, becoming the confirmation of Western Europe's voice as a pillar of the Atlantic Alliance.

Despite theoretical assumptions, though, there were real operational capabilities of WEU, and they were still limited. By virtue of complexity of some actions, the Western-European Union ought to focus on humanitarian undertakings as well as those aiming at maintaining peace. However, the operations, which required peaceful actions could refer to using Combined Joint Task Force, as according to NATO Summit in 1994, they should consist of forces used by either NATO or WEU.

Taking into consideration the operation of the Western-European Union, it is probable that the organization would act effectively for ensuring the security of the European states, contributing to building the stabilization and peace on the continent.

The organization and shape of the European situation was an interest of the Council of Europe, the institution of cooperation among European states. It was created in 1949 to guarantee the basic human rights, the pluralist democracy and the state of law as well as to

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[43] Ibidem, p. 164.

raise the life standards of the European citizens[44]. As an organization ensuring the stabilization in Europe, the Council of Europe is considered to be a significant element of the security architecture in this part of the world.

A desire for a democratic security is based on two circumstances[45]:

- to demand strongly a pluralist and parliamentary democracy, the indivisibility and universality of human rights, the rule of law as well as a common cultural legacy enriched by its diversity;
- to underline decisively the European cooperation based on the acceptance of the foregoing values as a method of creating a continental confidence, which should contribute to preventing conflicts and to finding solutions for common problems.

The concept of propagating such form of security decreased the risk of returning the totalitarian rule, and moreover, became a reply to challenges resulting from the violation of fundamental liberties and human rights, including the discrimination of minorities, the aggressive nationalism, racism, intolerance, ethnic conflicts, terrorism, or social disintegration.

At present the Council of Europe numbers 46 members, and such a significant increase of the member states since the end of Cold War shows the necessity of creating the structures of cooperation in order to avoid new disputes on the European continent as well as of building the civilization of democratic nations. Furthermore, the institution tends to incorporate the operation plan in collaboration with other European organizations, such as the European Union or the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe[46]. The principles of such an arrangement ought to aspire for further widening the Council with next states, first and foremost, from Middle and Eastern Europe, but should also adjust the organization to a new international surrounding of fresh members. Moreover, the Council of Europe intends to introduce a new control system of the European Convention of Human Rights, and also considers the possibilities of returning to the original goals connected with creating a pan European unity[47].

An essential role in terms of the European security space is played by Russia[48]. After the downfall of the Soviet empire, Russia encountered a new situation. The country ceased to be an economic power, but it still remains a military power.

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[44] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska…*, op. cit., p. 98.
[45] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa…*, op. cit., p. 175.
[46] Ibidem, p. 177.
[47] Cf. Ognik H., *Rada Europy,* after *Europejskie struktury współpracy,* ed. S. Parzymies, Warszawa 1997, p. 69, [in:] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa…,* op. cit., p. 177.
[48] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska…*, op. cit., p. 98-99.

At the beginning of 1990s, Russia struggled with the dilemmas of democracy: whether it should break the principles of democracy and disarm the totalitarian parties, weak but remnant after the old system? Whether it ought to respect democratic norms and clear them the way to the rule? Such search was not meaningless for the security in Europe. Therefore, it was, and still remains significant to maintain proper international relations between Russia and NATO, between Russia and Germany, or between Russia and Poland, as appealing to traditional, conservative Russian values may affect the peace in the heart of Europe.

It is the interest of the whole world, and first and foremost, the European stability to keep a peaceful development of Russia itself, as well as its relationships with the neighbours. It is not advisable, though, to make attempts to diminish the role of Russia in this space, as it possesses the potential for counteracting undesirable influences, which are able to threaten democracy, e.g. fundamentalism. Various negative phenomena might have bad consequences for Russia, but also for the surrounding states.

Hence, watching over a proper development of Russian democracy is a way of protecting the European security space, and remained a kind of a protective umbrella.

2.3. Building Poland's defence system.

The greatest dilemma after the collapse of communism in Poland, in terms of the international policy, was whether Poland should leave the Warsaw Treaty. It was a real concern, though, as there were still Soviet armies in some Polish regions, hence, the realization of that task was removed in time[49]. Nevertheless, the case of joining the North Atlantic Pact remained a matter of discussion. None of the political options in Poland presented the proposal of a political neutrality of the state, whereas the main issue was joining NATO.

At the beginning of the political transformation in Poland, post-communists were cautious towards NATO membership, which resulted from a long attachment to the old bloc. However, in the face of the Soviet downfall and the world structures of international cooperation, they perceived a chance in democratic principles, therefore, decided to distance the state from Russia and win the favour of the West.

On 2 November 1992, the president of Poland, Lech Wałęsa, signed the document "The security policy and the defence strategy of the Republic of Poland", prepared by the

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[49] Geremek B., *Szansa…,* op. cit., p. 83-84.

Committee of State Defence, which changed Poland's security policy radically[50]. As a main cause of the indispensable changes, the Polish government announced the revolutionary transformations in the Soviet Union and other countries, which belonged to the communist bloc.

All countries liberated from the Soviet domination turned to democracy. The basic purpose remained ensuring peace among nations, sanctity of borders, independence and sovereignty. By virtue of such great experiences, the policy of security posed a priority for all states of Middle and Eastern Europe. In order to achieve the priorities, the state governments considered aspiring for the integration structures with European orientations to be of highest significance.

Moreover, the countries were eager to make attempts of co-building a new European arrangement by their active participation in the international organizations, such as UN or OSCE. It was regarded as essential to deepen neighbouring relations as well as to establish regional cooperation, e.g. between Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, etc.[51]. However, the road to the development and economic stabilization was intended to include bilateral and multilateral cooperation with all countries, and especially with well-developed western states as well as the United States of America.

The political, economic and social consultations appeared to be indispensable, as the post-communist countries developed the mechanics of democracy, free market and the civic society gradually. The obstacles in the completion of transformations remained different kinds of nationalisms and unfulfilled demands of national minorities.

Poland counted on the realization of the concept of the European unity in a special way, as it was afraid of the dilemmas and distractions on the European continent. In such circumstances, the continent would have been doomed to perpetual conflicts, and incapable of solving problems, it would have become the area without a future. Therefore, Poland aspired for a fast political and economic integration within the confines of European Community, being aware that a dialogue and multilateral cooperation would lead to establishing the Euro-Atlantic system of security.

The weakness of Poland's strategic position in the centre of Europe, with no natural borders in the east or west was evident. The peculiarity of such a location was also distinguished by the U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry, who, paying his visit to Warsaw

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[50] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa...,* op. cit., p. 203-204.
[51] Ibidem, p. 204.

in 1995, called Poland "the key to European security"[52]. For Poland the key to European security was a membership in NATO.

Poland realized that only the cooperation policy in politics and economy with the neighbouring states, world powers and organizations as well as the reorganization and modernization of armed forces in consultation with NATO was able to ensure the state security and the international stabilization. Therefore, such an attitude ought to be recognized as a Polish raison d'etat in the field of security.

3. Poland's road to NATO membership.

The final circumstances of the Second World War, such as the capitulation of fascist Germany and throwing the first atom bomb on Hiroshima, led 50 states to signing on 26 June 1945 in San Francisco the Charter of United Nations[53]. The establishment of the Organization of United Nations was supposed to be a guarantee of the world security, which was so drastically violated in the past centuries.

However, despite the faith in the world peace, the Card of United Nations did not turn out to be such a guarantee, and some new threats became the cause of next actions. 51st article of the Card, which entitled UN members to individual or collective fighting off a military aggression, induced 10 states to turn to the USA and Canada with an offer of mutual assistance. The effect of it was signing on 4 April 1949 in Washington the North Atlantic Pact by the states' representatives.

Analyzing a political-military situation, however, it can be perceived that such events, as the downfall of two trade and military superpowers – Germany and Japan – contributed to making this alliance. Nevertheless, the first omen of the threat of the world peace was the Conference in Yalta, with an unfair division of Europe into two opposing blocs as well as the expansion of the USSR territory.

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[52] Castle M., Taras R., *Democracy in Poland,* Oxford 2002, p. 226.
[53] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa…,* op. cit., p. 15-21.

3.1. The origins of NATO.

Poland was not invited to signing the UN Charter in 1945, as the Soviet Union and the western superpowers were not able to establish the members of the government, which would represent the state.

The consecutive conferences and meetings of the USSR with European countries – in 1945 and 1947 – proved that the Soviet desire for making peace agreements appeared to become promises, which meant not coming to consensus. Finally, the lack of the Soviet cooperation with the West was showed by the failure of the Moscow Conference in 1947. Although the Card gave hope for the peaceful cooperation, the Soviet Union began to torpedo peaceful solutions, which contributed to searching for other ways of the defence of liberty and security by Western Europe.

The intervention of the USA, asked by the West, turned out to be a necessity for bringing to a stop the USSR, whose attitude to the United States of America and other democratic countries was hostile. In spite of looking for the assistance beyond the European continent, the Soviet Union aspired for imposing its will upon not only Europe, but also other parts of the world. The turning point, though, appeared to be the Soviet assault on Greece and Turkey in 1947, which was unbearable for the British army and had to be reinforced with American support.

The president of the USA, H. Truman, offered the support for free nations, which were eager to oppose Stalin. "Truman Doctrine" from 1947 brought American assistance for Greece and Turkey as well as the improvement of a general situation in Western Europe. Despite this aid, European economy got out of the war destructions too slowly, which caused the immediate reaction of the USA. The American minister of foreign affairs, general G.C. Marshall created a plan of Europe's reconstruction, called "Marshall Plan". It was directed against hunger, poverty and chaos of post-war states, but the countries from behind the Iron Curtain were not admitted to it, although Poland and Czechoslovakia were willing to participate.

In the face of next Stalin's moves for the division of Europe, such statesmen as the prime minister of Great Britain W. Churchill and Canadian minister of foreign affairs, L. St. Laurent, in 1946 made an offer of creating a defence union within the confines of UN. Unfortunately, the proposal was rejected. In January 1948 appeared another initiative of Great Britain for a mutual assistance in case of a repeated German aggression. This idea gathered some supporters, however, a better example to follow turned out to be the agreement from Rio de Janeiro, signed on 1 September 1947, a collective pact against any aggression by UN and 20 South American states.

The next encouragement for specific actions was a communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948. The coup resulted in the Brussels Treaties on 17 March 1948, when Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Holland and Great Britain established a common system of defence and reinforcing economic and cultural relationships. In September 1948, according to the Brussels Treaties, the Defence Committee was appointed, which evoked a sudden reaction of the USA, leading to discussions about the North Atlantic territory of security.

After numerous American-Canadian meetings and initiatives, on 4 April 1949 the North Atlantic Treaty was signed.

It was claimed that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was established in order to reinforce the security potential of several European countries, and presented a kind of a forced solution[54]. The difficulty resulted from political conflicts in the relations of some European states, such as Romania and Bulgaria, the events in Norway, Greece, Turkey, Czechoslovakia, and finally the Soviet blockade of Western Berlin.

For the reason of some ambiguities of the international relationships, the North Atlantic Pact was considered to be overwhelmed by, at least, three evident contradictions[55]. The first one resulted from a comparison of a defensive nature of the Pact with the statement of the president H. Truman, quoted earlier, about support of the states with endangered freedom. On the one hand, there was an alliance treaty, and on the other hand, Truman underlined independent decisions made by the USA as to which countries were threatened and needed the American support, declaring a war with a communist system at the same time.

Therefore, the member states of NATO had to accept the Truman Doctrine, that is, accept as an enemy of the opposing system. Such a war took an expectant-defensive character, as territorially, it took place beyond the area of NATO countries. Thus, this approach differed from a classic doctrine of military alliances, giving the actions a global nature.

Moreover, it is essential to remember that the member states were characterized by discrepancies in relations with an enemy. Great Britain, France or Germany treated the Soviet Union in a different way than the USA, which regarded the USSR as an obvious enemy. Such discrepancies were caused by the location of countries in the world as well as their international positions.

The second contradiction, though, was a result of the NATO members, which presented a total denial of the Pact ideology. This ideology, integrating the allies, assumed

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[54] Ziółkowski A., *NATO...,* op. cit., p. 94.
[55] Ibidem, p. 95-99.

the rejection of totalitarianism, including any forms of fascism: German, Italian, Japanese, Hungarian, or even French one.

In the meantime, NATO offered European countries, which waged such total destructions not long ago, a membership in a common arrangement of armed forces. Nevertheless, such a front was justified by the historical necessity, and the tenacity of American attitude forced to accept a new architecture of international security in a way.

The third thing, which was perceived to be a contradiction, remained associated with a theoretical context, with a necessity of changing the definition of a military alliance concept. The conception of such an alliance resulted from a direct or potential exterior threat, whereas this alliance did not assume the existence of a direct danger, focusing on reinforcing the defence of its signatories.

Despite some mutually exclusive circumstances of the Pact, the allies were able to fight against an aggressive communist system without restraining NATO from its development. However, it should not be regarded as unusual to maintain some dependence in the relations in an international arena. Such a kind of subordination, or interdependence, results naturally from international economic, or military alliances; it is a form of flexibility, as a reaction to a common decision making, on the road to a consensus[56].

According to different sources, the development of NATO was conditioned by a great number of significant events, thus could be divided into several periods[57].

The initial phase of building the structures of the Alliance took place from 1941 until 1955. It was a period of developing credibility for the arising Pact: the strategic credibility, which was supposed to base upon a conception of deterring an enemy as well as gathering the states of military and qualitative credibility. The credibility of the strategy relied on the American nuclear weapon and the possibilities of its transport to the territory of the enemy.

Taking this context into consideration, it is essential to notice that the strategic credibility was obtained not only by the USA at that time, but also by the Soviet Union (since 1949). With reference to the credibility of states, however, the United States of America aspired for including in the area of cooperation such countries, which would provide the Pact with a good strategic position. From a geopolitical point of view, Turkey and Greece presented such a chance, as they equipped the USA with one of the most important sea area – the Mediterranean – for the navy to be stationed in this part of the globe.

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[56] Ibidem, p. 100.
[57] Fritzler M., *Stichwort NATO,* Munchen 1995, p. 8-53, [in:] Ziółkowski A., *NATO...,* op. cit., p. 105-117.

The second phase of the Pact, from 1956 until 1966, started the period of consolidating the Alliance. Actually, it began a stage of a hard confrontation between the supporters of more European policy of the Pact with their opponents, opting for more American programme. It was not, however, the phase of a direct confrontation as such, but a consolidation of the USA position as a predominant power as well as their undisputed leadership in NATO.

The hot spot between the two camps of NATO remained the principles of managing the nuclear weapon, as to which, soon after the Second World War, the right of administering was ascribed to the United States of America[58]. For the reason of huge significance of such weapon, the states of the victorious coalition, Great Britain and France, in 1947 made attempts at handing over the management of nuclear energy (in the form of nuclear power and atomic weapon) to the United Nations. Unfortunately, their mission turned out to be a failure. Therefore, the establishment of NATO appeared to be a return to the matter of mutual managing the nuclear weapon for the allies of the USA.

Nevertheless, the illusions were dispelled again by a tenacious American attitude, and moreover, the USA began to demand their participation in the nuclear programmes of the allies. Such an approach forced Great Britain to sign in 1958 an unilateral agreement, according to which the British Royal Air Force was obliged to transfer all information of nuclear research to the American Strategic Air Command[59]. Furthermore, the agreement imposed on Great Britain the necessity of obtaining from the USA acceptance in case of undertaking any actions with the use of nuclear weapon.

Such moves encouraged the signatories of the Alliance to take up a discussion with the United States of America, concerning this sensitive issue. The year of 1962 began a big debate on a mutual control over the nuclear weapon. After several years of efforts made by the allies, the USA succeeded in keeping the control over the weapon, and surprisingly, Great Britain turned out to be helpful at overcoming the European resistance, changing its attitude in favour of the USA.

France, however, persevered in a lonely battle, leaving the military structures of the Pact in 1967, but maintaining its membership in the civil structures, which meant being ready for warfare in case of a communist attack.

The other contentious issue between the camp of the European policy and pro-American one concerned the realization of the tasks connected with foreign policy of the

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[58] Ziółkowski A., *Die NATO. Instrument der US-Politik In Europa,* Munster 1999, p. 19, [in:] Ziółkowski A., *NATO...,* op. cit. p. 107.
[59] Buchan A., Winsor P., *Arms and Stability in Europe,* London 1993, p. 190, [in:] Ziółkowski A., *NATO...,* op. cit., p. 109.

member states. The Europeans felt injustice about the proportions of the American tasks in comparison to their own ones. Despite dissatisfaction, however, the European side turned out to be too weak to be able to oppose its Atlantic partner in the international arena.

The phase of consolidating the Alliance, though, appeared to be the attempts of European partners for making the USA interested in their own policy matters. Unfortunately, the United States of America followed a different strategy, which led to reinforcing their uncompromising position. When they reached their goal, that is when the European partners resigned from the claims for the autonomous foreign policy, the Alliance came to the détente stage.

The sign of a political détente, between 1966 and 1980, was the Harmel report, concerning the future tasks of the Alliance, prepared by NATO in 1966-1967. After a number of battles between two camps of the Pact, a chance of cooperation, and even a chance of following one road of development appeared. The effect of the dialogue was a final document of the Helsinki Conference from 1 August 1975, which initiated a succession of mutual initiatives, the most essential of which remained the establishment of the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The détente was perceived to be a sign of building a relationship between the USA and the Soviet Union, but with NATO on guard of this political game. The improvement of the partners' relationships within the Alliance, however, remained an illusion, as the policy to the European allies' disadvantage was still continued.

The years: 1981-1995 initiated the "star wars" period, with a new programme of waging the war from space by the president of the USA Ronald Reagan. The end of this phase, on the other hand, was determined by the decision of broadening the Alliance with three post-communist states: Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary.

The contemporary stage, including the openness to new members, has taken place since 1995.

3.2. The structure of NATO.

The structure of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization encompasses the civilian and military parts[60]. The civilian part is divided into some institutions, such as the Division of Defence Planning, the North Atlantic Council, the Group of Nuclear Planning and other committees, responsible for the political cooperation of member states, managing the administration, drawing up and implementing the mechanics as well as programmes of cooperation in a political, economic, training, scientific and cultural sphere. Moreover, the General Secretary, with the International Secretary's Office, constitutes an executive organ of NATO. The military section, on the other hand, with the Military Committee and the International Military Staff, as well as the Higher Headquarters of NATO, manages an efficient and democratically integrated defence structure.

The highest organ of decision of civilian structure is the North Atlantic Council, whose task remains reaching international peace and security of the member states[61]. It possesses a complex machinery of assistance organs, which support the Council's operations, or take responsibility for some departments, such as defensive and nuclear planning as well as other military issues. The Council is supplied with permanent representatives of all member countries, who gather at least once a week. Besides, the Council may debate at higher minister levels. The Council discusses and makes decisions on all aspects of the Alliance's operations, taking reports and suggestions of the subordinated committees into consideration.

The permanent representatives of member states act according to their countries' instructions, informing and clarifying the political opinions or decisions of their governments to other Council members. Then, the same procedure of the events is maintained by the state authorities.

All decisions in the Council are made unanimously as well as on the principle of a common agreement. As there is not a procedure of a majority of votes, each state keeps absolute sovereignty and a responsibility for the process of decision making.

The Division of Defence Planning supervises the majority of issues concerned defence and a common defence planning[62]. The permanent representatives of all member states, excluding France, and, at least twice a year, defence ministers debate the affairs, which have been prepared by subordinated committees of different responsibilities. One of

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[60] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa...,* op. cit., p. 102.
[61] Ibidem, p. 102-106.
[62] Ibidem, p. 106.

the most significant committees is the Division of Defence Assessment, which has the Force Planning Process and the Integrated Military Structures under surveillance.

The Group of Nuclear Planning, however, comprises the defence ministers of the member countries, who gather regularly to discuss the policy of nuclear power, its placement, protection and security[63]. Moreover, the participants debate the affairs of communication systems and data transfers or the control of the nuclear armaments.

The nuclear policy remains a top level one, thus it is subjected to a constant assessment, and the decisions of its adaptation as well as modification are made on the basis of current events.

The ranges of responsibility of other lower level committees or divisions have been presented in diagram 1.

Diagram 1. Political and military structures of NATO.
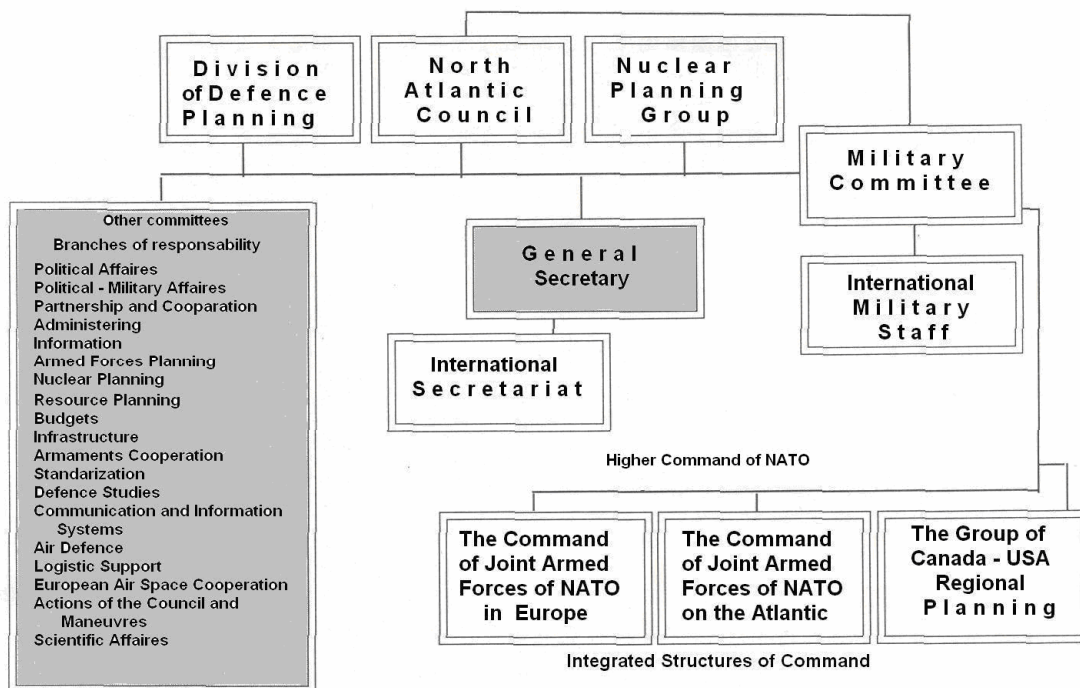
Source: *NATO-Vademecum,* Warszawa 1995.

The essential place in the civilian structure of NATO is taken by the General Secretary, being the highest official and an executive organ of the Alliance[64]. The Secretary

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[63] Ibidem, p. 107.
[64] Ibidem, p. 112-115.

chairs the North Atlantic Council, the Division of Defence Planning, the Group of Nuclear Planning, the Division of Environment Protection as well as it fulfils the function of a nominal chairman of other main divisions. Moreover, the General Secretary is a person in chair of the North Atlantic Council of Partnership and the Mediterranean Cooperation Group, as well as it co-chairs the Permanent Common NATO-Russia Council, and plays a similar role in the NATO-Ukraine Committee.

The highest official of the Alliance is obliged to promote and manage the processes of consultations and decision making within the Pact. Besides, the Secretary can propose the agenda and a course of decision as well as possesses the conciliatory initiative in case of a difference of opinions on the Alliance forum.

The General Secretary takes responsibility for the International Secretary's Office. Moreover, it is a representative of NATO outside, in the relations between the member states, and in contacts with mass-media. The General Secretary manages, among the others, the International Secretary's Office, which supports the operations of the North Atlantic Council and subordinated committees.

The International Secretariat plays a supportive role for the processes of consensus reaching between the member states and the partner countries of NATO. Furthermore, it is responsible for arranging meetings and the realization of decisions of different Alliance's divisions as well as the institutions established for bi- and multilateral relations with the states beyond the Pact, or the relations after the "cold war" period.

As it takes responsibility for the communication of information systems and a logistic support, the Secretariat stays in contact with a big number of branches and civilian organizations in various member states. A detailed organizational structures of the International Secretary's Office has been presented in the following diagram 2.

Diagram 2.   International Secretary of NATO.
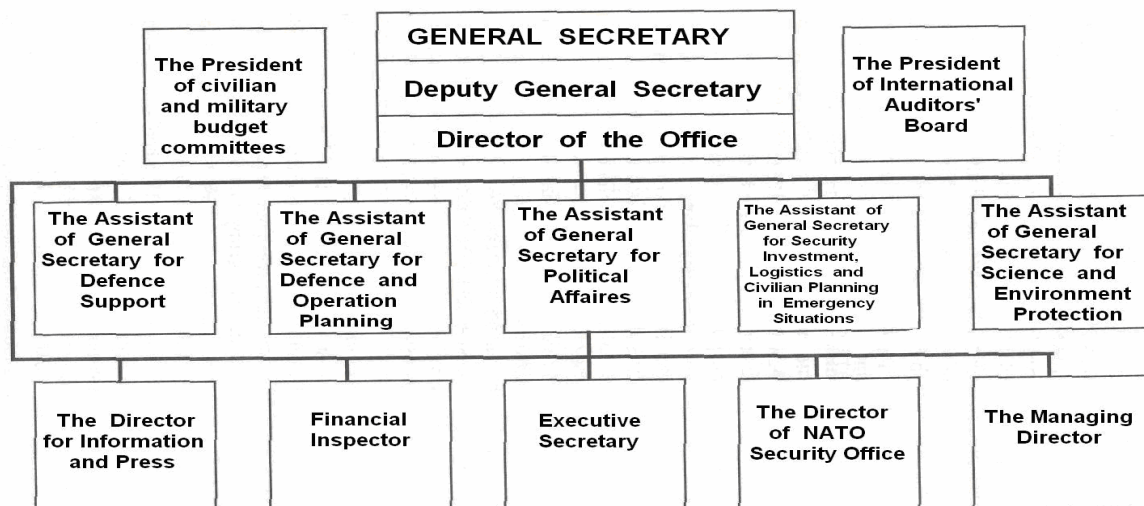
Source: *NATO-Vademecum,* Warszawa 1999.

The beginnings of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization were characterized by limited military possibilities, thus, since 1949 the Alliance has focused on the development of its armed forces, a brisk adjustment of member states to modern technological solutions as well as a constant development of command structures[65].

Therefore, NATO achieved its great success creating an efficient and integrated defence structure, whose most important organ appeared to be the Military Committee. It is a supportive body of the North Atlantic Council, the Division of Defence Planning and the Group of Nuclear Planning in military affairs, and its main task remains presenting political structures of the Alliance the sources indispensable for the common defence of the NATO territory.

The military representatives, acting on behalf of their defence ministers, are engaged in regular operations of the Military Committee, and despite their care of own interests, they are open to negotiations and compromises.

The Committee creates also strategic conceptions, preparing long-term assessments of the forces and the possibilities of states as well as areas, which are the threat for NATO. At the time of a military crisis, though, the Committee provides the North Atlantic Council and the Division of Defence Planning with information about the situation, recommends the ways of using the armed forces, introducing emergency plans and indicates the principles of engagement.

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[65] Ibidem, p. 119-123.

Extra-NATO initiatives of the Alliance, however, concern the cooperation with the Euro Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace, designed for maintaining the military cooperation.

The Chairman of the Military Committee is appointed for three years, during which manages current affairs, issues significant directives and guidelines for the directors of the International Military Staff. Moreover, the Chairman represents the Committees at the higher level sessions, providing some assistance if necessary. Furthermore, he takes responsibility for the mass-media contacts, pays official visits, receives delegations as well as represents the Military Committee in contacts with member states and the countries in cooperation with NATO.

The International Military Staff constitutes a complex structure, being an essential component part of the military organization of NATO. It is entitled to plan, assess and present the Military Committee recommendations in military matters, as well as takes responsibility for implementing the Committee's policy and decisions. Hence, its structure is supported by a lot of departments, which are presented in the following diagram in detail.

Diagram 3.   Military committee and its units.

Source: *NATO-Vademecum*, Warszawa 1999.

3.3.Poland's aspirations for NATO membership.

Poland's attempts at becoming a NATO member, for providing its country with stabilization and security resulted from the lack of such a feeling for almost three centuries. Unfortunately, the road to achieve the goal was accompanied by a lot of struggles with interior as well as exterior opponents.

One of the greatest exterior opponents turned out to be, not surprisingly, Russia. Any trial of its former alliances to approach the West was perceived to be a violation of the existing balance, and treated as a menace to its country[66]. Hence, Russia, in official statements of its then president Boris Yeltsin, did not express its objection to NATO enlargement, but on the other hand, Russia made attempts to gain the West's favour in order to offer the Eastern European countries the guarantee of security together with NATO. The fact that Russia regarded itself as an inseparable NATO's partner resulted from its fear of changing the potentials between Russia and the United States as well as between Russia and NATO.

A clear example of Russia's concerns about incorporating post-communist states into the Alliance's structures appeared to be a summit of NATO in Madrid in July 1997. The Pact's decisions about the future admission of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary into the Alliance met with maintaining Russia's opposing standpoint on NATO enlargement.

Nevertheless, the USA decision on NATO expansion into Central Europe caused a diplomatic dispute between two "cold war" superpowers – the United States and Russia[67]. When in April 1995 the U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution on NATO enlargement, Russia reacted with a threat to both the START-2 (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) and the Conventional Forces in Europe treaties. Russia suggested, at the same time, that Poland should return to its policy of maintaining equidistance between Russia and the West from the war time, instead of being admitted to the Western military alliance. President Yeltsin's determination resulted in threatening Poland to re-evaluate the bilateral treaty both countries had signed in 1992, and its agreement to cancel each state's reciprocal debt.

The Russian attitude to NATO expansion, however, seemed to be understandable, whereas the objections from the Alliance's members, although supported with some arguments, did not sound convincing[68].

One of many people who opposed NATO enlargement was a niece of the first commanding officer of the Pact and the later president of the USA, Susan Eisenhower.

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[66] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska...,* op. cit., p. 103-104.
[67] Castle M, Taras R., *Democracy...,* op. cit., p. 227.
[68] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska...,* op. cit., p. 104-106.

Taking advantage of her popular surname in the political world, she published a letter against the enlargement process, which was signed by a great number of distinguished political celebrities. Moreover, S. Eisenhower put forward proposals of admitting the Eastern European countries to the EU structures, developing Partnership for Peace, and, first and foremost, focusing on shaping NATO-Russia relations. An indestructible argument in that matter was the fear of inhibiting Russian reformers from democratic transformations, as a result of NATO enlargement. Such an opinion was obviously false.

Susan Eisenhower, however, did not stay as the only person to fight against the biggest NATO mistake. The other woman, a senator K. B. Hutchinson from Texas, could also be proud of her opposing activity. The senator, altogether with her colleagues from Senate, presented president Bill Clinton with a list of questions about the possible results of NATO enlargement. They were curious to learn whether the potential members could afford the obligatory payments, whether they were ready for the partnership or whether Europe would not be endangered with a new division line as a result of the process.

Except for these anxieties, though, the opponents of the enlargement put forward other arguments, which aimed at convincing the supporters of NATO expansion of their rights[69].

They claimed that there was not a real menace to new democracies in the world, thus it did not seem necessary to start the process right now. Besides, NATO would not be able to afford to spread the security guarantee at the time of reducing the Alliance's own armaments. Moreover, the opponents considered the enlargement to be the end of NATO, as the loss of unity, the clarity of goals, the incapability of reaching a consensus would become a result of such a broadened international body. Furthermore, there appeared some concerns about the eventual membership of Russia with a veto right, or other Commonwealth of Independent States' country, which would act on behalf of Russia. Finally, NATO would cease to arouse the USA's interest, which might withdraw their forces from Europe.

However, such fatal visions were accompanied by the supporters of a general elimination of NATO. They did not notice the necessity of such a military alliance, as the revolutionary transformations in the 1980s, especially the elimination of the Warsaw Treaty, provided Russia and other post-communist states with a democratic development, without any threat of war.

Nevertheless, except a great number of anxieties or even contraindications, there were some lively actions in favour of enlarging the North Atlantic Treaty Organization[70]. A

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[69] Ibidem, p. 194.
[70] Ibidem, p. 106-108.

lot of diplomats and politicians acted for NATO expansion into Eastern Europe, and lots of them contributed much to Poland's admission to the military alliance. Tireless attitudes were presented by Madeleine Albright, the American secretary of state, and Javier Solana, the then general secretary of NATO.

Apart from diplomatic endeavours, however, a great deal of efforts came from Poles, who lived in the West, especially Jan Nowak-Jeziorański and Polish Americans. Jeziorański, a former director of Free Europe Radio, made an appeal to Polish Americans, by the agency of his article published in Polish press. In order to reach all Poles in the United States, Jeziorański used his diplomatic skills to publish his texts in 180 most significant magazines from the Atlantic to the Pacific[71].

Undoubtedly, the whole process of Poland's admission to NATO would not have succeeded if not the endeavours of both presidents of Poland: Lech Wałęsa and Aleksander Kwaśniewski, as well as all then prime ministers, defence and foreign affairs ministers, and Polish ambassadors in NATO countries, especially in the United States.

The first clash between L. Wałęsa and B. Clinton took place in 1993, during the opening of Holocaust Museum in Washington[72]. Wałęsa expressed his frustration with long-term efforts and demanded the USA's assistance. The president of Poland assured Clinton that Polish aspirations for the Alliance were not connected with the fear of Russia; yet there was an attempt at providing Poland with security and stabilization in Europe.

In January 1994 the summit of NATO members offered Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary admission into a newly created Partnership for Peace program[73]. At first Poland did not approve of the creation of the Partnership, regarding it as a delay of extending the Alliance over the region. In the middle of 1994, the Polish defence minister attacked NATO officials for a vagueness of moving from partnership to the Pact membership. President Wałęsa presented a totally different conception of the integration at that time: he first considered joining the EU structures, then integrating economically with the West, after that accepting the Partnership for Peace, as the last but one element on the road to Western security guarantees. Polish officials thought that the economic and military integration ought to be simultaneous.

During his visit to Poland in July 1994, president Clinton encouraged partner countries form Central and Eastern Europe, announcing $100 million fund for carrying out joint military programmes[74]. Soon after this event, Poland hosted small-scale, but highly

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[71] Lis T., *Wielki Finał,* Kraków 1999, p. 143, [in:] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska...,* op. cit., p. 108.

[72] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska...,* op. cit., p. 109.

[73] Castle M., Taras R., *Democracy...,* op. cit., p. 226.

publicized exercises on its territory. The consecutive symbols of approaching the membership led to the American offer of preferential terms for purchasing U.S. arms for Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

Poland's preparations for NATO partnership resulted in the increase of the state representation in Brussels, creating the function of Permanent Representative and Military Representative[75]. Within 1998, however, Poland proved to be totally ready for its participation in the process of allied defensive planning. According to earlier declarations, the country participated actively in common undertakings with other partner states, such as international exercises CMX-98 for crisis situations or during the process of testing the procedures and mechanics of coordination and decision making in crisis situations in NATO structures.

After several months of negotiations, on 11 June 1998 the North Atlantic Council accepted the "Target Force Goals" document, which determined the tasks for Polish armed forces and their schedule, taking the needs of future cooperation in NATO into consideration. At the end of July, Poland presented the Alliance with the questionnaire of defensive planning for the second time. The document, turned in annually by all member states, finished the first stage of Poland's participation in the process of force planning, which aimed at implementing the procedures and initiating the planning process in future member states on the one hand, and a smooth admission of new partners to the Alliance, on the other.

However, it is essential to remember that the problems of security had been present in Polish foreign policy since the transformation period, and then, consequently, until the membership. The guidelines of Polish security policy from 1992, the creation of the conception of the admission in 1992-1993, the Partnership for Peace in 1994, reaching the leading position of a partner country in 1995-1997, or obtaining the invitation for the access talks in 1997 proved making gradual steps for approaching the goal.

The participation in Partnership for Peace, though, provided Poland with the possibilities of being engaged in a number of ventures. The country concentrated on the cooperation with the neighbouring states, and shared its experience with, for instance, Lithuania or Ukraine, fulfilling an effective bilateral partnership, at the same time.

On 16 December 1997 the ministerial session of NATO opened Poland a road to the Alliance by signing Accession Protocols. The Polish diplomacy made any efforts for a favourable course of ratification processes, preparing and carrying out actions, which

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[74] Ibidem, p. 227.
[75] Świetlicki B., *Stosunki Polska-NATO w przededniu uzyskania członkostwa w Sojuszu,*
www.sprawymiedzynarodowe.pl/rocznik/1999/boguslaw_swietlicki_stosunki.htm.

promoted Poland and informed official as well as social opinion about the integration and transformation achievements, the development of a country's defence system and the restructuring of armed forces. Despite the fact that the task appeared to be superficially simple, the diversity of procedures and responsibilities of legislative as well as executive organs in member states obliged Poland to adjust the promotion campaign individually for each country.

The ratification process proceeded smoothly; on 2 February 1998 Canada signed the accession protocols as a first country. Within the next several months all states fulfilled official requirements to invite Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic to the Alliance. The general secretary of NATO, Javier Solana, ended the formalities on 29 January 1999. The Polish government began a quick and effective ratification soon after the invitation by the Pact. A thorough analysis of legislative international documents for NATO membership was made in order to incorporate them into Polish legislative system and to make an indispensable correction of some internal regulations. The Cabinet accepted and sent the project of the ratification bill to the Seym on 20 October 1998. The first reading and the debate began on 20 November, and on 2 December the foreign affairs, defence and finance committees accepted the bill and passed to the Seym.

The Polish government finished the ratification process in February 1999, and on 12 March, after turning in the Act of Ratification to the government of the United States, Poland officially became the nineteenth NATO member[76]. The admission ceremony took place in Independence in Missouri, in Harry Truman's library, in order to celebrate president Truman, who announced the establishment of NATO 50 years before.

The admission of three new members met with kind attitudes of the "old states"[77]. B. Clinton expressed a conviction that the membership of Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary helped carry a vision of an undivided, democratic and secure Europe into effect, as well as made America more secure and the Alliance stronger, at the same time. A similar approach to the enlargement was presented by the British ministers of foreign affairs and defence, Robin Cook and George Robertson, who highlighted a historical step on the road to an integrated Europe, devoid of conflicts. Moreover, they both agreed for the enlargement of NATO in the future.

4. Poland as a NATO member.

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[76] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Polska…,* op. cit., p. 111.
[77] Ibidem, p. 112.

The fact of Poland's admission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1999 became a breakthrough in the reorientation of political goals and tasks of Polish diplomacy in the international arena. Since the beginning of 1990s, Poland resigned from, so called "eastern orientation" aimed at undisputed support for international initiatives of the Soviet Union, in favour of a western option, which was followed by the attempts at gaining a membership of, at least one of significant world organizations, the European Union or NATO[78].

Poland as a NATO member was obliged to accept the internal arrangements of the organization, without the possibility of negotiations. In exchange, however, the country was reassured with the military assistance of all members of the Alliance in case of an armed aggression on its territory. At the moment of signing a multilateral pact for the partnership, Poland included it in an everyday diplomatic practice. Therefore, Polish foreign and defence policy ought to not only fulfil the tasks posed by the NATO leadership, but also realize own goals and strategic actions. The participation in the Pact, though, did not change a priority aim for Poland, which remained ensuring its citizens with security, but only facilitated its realization.

4.1. Poland's political and military goals after the admission.

Poland needs to participate actively in a changing role of NATO as a guarantee of European security in order to realize its own goal. Therefore, a harmonious cooperation with allied countries contributes to ensuring the state a proper position within the Alliance. The position, which cannot be regarded as marginal, but, by virtue of a geographic location and a population potential, allows being engaged in NATO initiatives similarly to other partners.

Besides, Poland proved its readiness to ensure peace and stabilization on the globe soon after its inclusion[79]. Twelve days after Poland's official admission, NATO undertook a bombing campaign against Serbia following Yugoslav president Milosevic's intransigence on guaranteeing minority rights for Kosovo Albanians. Poland, of three new members, gave the strongest support to the air attacks, with a strong conviction to do whatever necessary to stop genocide.

However, the participation in the Alliance brought returning concerns for a state sovereignty. It is essential to underline that there are not any circumstances for a lack of autonomy, and in reverse, smaller countries gain bigger influence on shaping international

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[78] Ziółkowski A., *NATO...,* op. cit., p. 217.
[79] Castle M., Taras T., *Democracy...,* op. cit., p. 227.

affairs. The membership in a democratic community of a military nature, which makes decisions collectively, enables each state to present its opinion. Poland, by virtue of its Central European location, might affect strategic NATO decisions to a greater extent.

The presence in a new force arrangement, however, obliged Poland to pay a particular attention to relations with the United States and Canada, the states with a stabilizing role on the continent[80]. The USA have always been, for historical fondness, and still are, for the reason of a big number of Polish Americans as well as a promotion of enlarging NATO for the East, close to Polish diplomacy.

Similar circumstances have remained in the relations of Poland with Canada, which was one of the initiators of the Alliance, and has still played an important role. Canada made a meaningful gesture towards Eastern Europe states, ratifying the NATO enlargement treaty as first.

However, it is essential to bear in mind historical bonds with Italy and France, or Great Britain[81]. Yet, not only sentimental considerations recommended the care of Western European diplomacy soon after the admission, as the efforts for the European Union. The presence in a military integrated structure was, undoubtedly, Poland's advantage at that time and reinforced its position.

As a NATO member, Poland has to take care of its neighbours. The situation of northern and eastern partners seem to be diverse, as Germany, Denmark and Poland created corps with the headquarters in Szczecin, and Sweden and Finland remain neutral states. Estonia, however, for its cultural aspects, is closer to Finland, and Lithuania to Poland. The relationships with southern neighbours, though, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, have been proper for many years, and the establishment of Visegrad Group with Hungary, cemented the relations.

A separate issue, which has always aroused a concern, is a partnership with Russia, and the whole eastern border. Except for Lithuania, opting for its own development, and recently a democratic Ukraine, Russia and Belarus have become a mystery, which should be perceived as a good neighbourhood, rather than a reconciliation. Russia is still a state with a great potential of not only nuclear weapon, but also territory, population, resources, or economy.

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[80] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa...,* op. cit., p. 207.
[81] Ibidem, p. 207-208.

Taking into consideration a peaceful development of Russia, NATO has undertaken any endeavours, such as the establishment of NATO-Russia Council, which should engage Russia into creating a European security[82].

Paradoxically, however, Poland's admission to NATO was regarded as a chance for friendly relations with Russia, as all discussions, or contacts with a former superpower lost the traits of threat. The strategic problems were discussed on NATO-Russia forum, whereas Poland was enabled to speak in the Atlantic Council, without a necessity of a direct confrontation.

Obviously, it should not mean an absolute cessation of bilateral relations, as they have still existed, so direct meetings might lose touching military affairs.

Nevertheless, Poland's objectives as a NATO member have not undergone radical changes; they have still concentrated on the relations with close and distant neighbours and partners, but in the situation of a greater security comfort.

As for the role of Poland's in NATO, it was described by B. Balcerowicz as a role of "an active shareholder", rather than "a consumer", interested in a development of the organization according to its interests[83]. Moreover, the American-German-Polish team, in its report, presented the possibilities of Poland as the Alliance member in a following way:

- Poland can treat the membership as a defence and protection of a life space for its political and economic development;
- Poland can perceive its contribution in a security of Europe as a participation in undertakings for maintaining peace;
- Poland can aspire for the role of the main stabilization force in the Baltic area, and for Central Eastern Europe;
- Poland can try, as a country on the eastern outskirts of NATO, to become a link between NATO and Eastern Europe;
- Poland can treat the Alliance as frames for building special relations with main allies;
- Poland can regard the membership in this military organization as a way to achieve complete acceptance in a western family of nations;
- Poland can make attempts at appointing itself for a significant position in NATO, or at enlarging its influences in other territories, or even becoming so powerful

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[82] Ibidem, p. 210.
[83] B. Balcerowicz, *Sojusz a obrona narodowa,* Warszawa 1999, [in:] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa...,* op. cit., p.128.

that might decrease Russia's position in the Permanent Council of Russia-NATO Cooperation[84].

Regardless of the role it accepts, however, Poland's membership in NATO is supposed to contribute to developing a partner security cooperation with Russia in order to eliminate tensions. Moreover, it ought to enlarge the space of mutual security and become a continuator of the Pact openness to new members. Furthermore, or first and foremost, Poland focuses on arranging strategic conceptions of actions protecting from destabilization in its surrounding.

Soon after Poland's inclusion in NATO, the state focused also on continuing to achieve interoperation of Polish armed forces. The task of reaching interoperation and compatibility in terms of security with other NATO members, Poland had realized since the Partnership for Peace program, which began in 1994[85]. The effect of such endeavours was the establishment of Polish-German-Danish corps with the headquarters in Szczecin, or taking command by general M. Bieniek of Nordic Brigade, a part of SFOR forces.

Moreover, Poland was obliged to adapt a national defence planning and programming system to NATO principles in order to ensure the Alliance the possibility of coordination as well as harmonization of a defence effort.

K. Piątkowski, since the beginning of Poland-NATO partnership, noticed a necessity for Poland to adapt a series of national defence planning, which should enable Polish armed forces to a wide-ranging development, and also facilitate arranging the next military strategy for the Pact[86]. Furthermore, Piątkowski claimed that the acceptance of an appropriate methodology of defence programming and the standardization of the military budgets' structure ought to ensure an undisturbed participation of the state in the integrated military structure.

The achievement of interoperation from a command level up to the level of ground armies' brigade, would require, however, adapting the communication and command system, integrating the air space and air defence management systems. Moreover, Poland should focus on conforming a national procedure to receiving NATO forces on its territory.

Interoperation, according to K. Piątkowski, ought to be the first step on a long road to achieving compatibility with NATO armed forces and demand expenditures for modernizing the military equipment of Poland's army. However, a technical modernization should not only focus on the equipment, but also on the reorganization of the ranks, such as introducing

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[84] Ibidem, p. 128.
[85] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa...,* op. cit., p. 214-215.
[86] Piątkowski K, *Polska w przededniu rozszerzenia,* Biuro Prasy i Informacji MON, Warszawa 1998, [in:] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa...,* op. cit., p. 214.

a new model of military service, which would lead to reaching European standards in a number of fields.

4.2. Extra-political circumstances of the membership.

The fifth article of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland from 2 April 1997 defines the role of a state as a structure, which guards the independence and sanctity of its territory; the freedom and the rights of a human and a citizen; national heritage as well as environmental protection[87]. While admitting to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, however, Poland reinforced considerably its role for citizens in the field of defence, but not without a connection with other aspects of its nationality.

NATO remains a political-military organization, yet it is not possible to consider it without its relation to science, economy, human activities, and many more, which are inevitably the parts of defence and security. The experts, therefore, tend to describe the Alliance as "a third dimension of European integration", which contributed to the establishment of numerous committees taking care of the "third dimension" interests[88]. The other fields of NATO responsibility have been presented on graph 1.

An economic dimension of NATO, however, is connected with a war industry, which takes advantage of the latest solutions contributing to the improvement of compatibility of Polish army. On the other hand, though, modernizing the production with new technologies not only shows a lack of delays, but also reinforces and develops Polish economy.

The next field of cooperation refers to the elimination of, so called, non-military threats; the threats for natural environment as well as the ones resulted from natural disasters for people and properties, during a peace or war time. Undoubtedly, such a state activity realizes the idea of citizens' security and the care for natural environment. A good example of a non-military action is the efforts undertaken for the elimination of flood in 1997 on the territory of Poland, which engaged civilian and military units from Poland, Germany and the Czech Republic, with the assistance of other nations.

The present information era requires a widespread scientific-research cooperation, with the use of recent solutions of information and telecommunication technologies. The significance of such a cooperation has been reinforced by the problem of interoperation and

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[87] *Artykuł 5 Konstytucji Rzeczpospolitej Polskiej z 2 kwietnia* 1997, Dz. U. no. 78, poz 483, [in:] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa…,* op. cit., p. 222.
[88] Kaczmarek J., *NATO-Europa…,* op. cit., p. 219.

compatibility of Polish army, which involves mutual financing of research programmes, foreign assistance of scientists as well as research institutes for building security.

The literature presents the following cooperation programmes realized in diverse fields[89]:

– multinational study, research-development and practice programmes for armaments, military equipment and defence;

– information exchange and consultations;

– mutual norms and operation principles in the field of economic security;

– taking responsibility by professional civilian institutions for managing national rescue systems, human and property protection;

– implementing compatible systems of monitoring contamination, transport of dangerous cargoes;

– compatibility of commercial communications elements used by state institutions and public services, or armed forces.

The last, not least, essential area of the Alliance activity has been a social dimension. Poland's membership in NATO applied to, and will, all citizens, in terms of social as well as individual consciousness.

A social dimension, however, is associated with the increase of soldiers' awareness about the security of a state, continent and globe. This aspect concerns the whole society, whose opinion about Poland's presence in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization shows the next subchapter in detail.

4.3. Poland's public opinion about NATO membership.

Poland's admission to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization met with a considerable response of the whole society. The efforts, which Polish government made since the beginning of the transformation period, for providing the state with the sense of security were followed by the majority of Poles and gained their favour.

The results of the public opinion poll, carried out on the eve of Poland's admission, proved the support of not only main political parties, but also a great majority of citizens[90]. It appeared, however, that more than 50% of respondents expressed a personal attitude towards this event, whereas only 6% perceived it as bad news. Almost two years earlier, though, 73%

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[89] Ibidem, p. 220.
[90] CBOS, *W przededniu włączenia do NATO,* research report, February1999, Warszawa 1999, Internet: http//www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/1999/KOM028/KOM028.htm.

of Poles considered aspirations for the membership to be the most favourable policy in terms of the state security, with 80% declaring the approval of the inclusion in the future referendum[91]. Obviously, presumptions in a confrontation with a fact turned out to fail.

Nevertheless, a positive attitude to the membership soon before the admission to NATO differed among various social groups. The representatives of people with higher education (70%), students (69%), skilled workers (66%) and respondents with own business (64%) assessed positively the fact of Poland's accession to the Alliance. More sceptical, though, turned out to be farmers, who expressed a negative approach to any forms of integration with the West.

Moreover, the emotional stance appeared to be under a slight influence of political views. The then electorates of the Right-oriented parties claimed that a final admission to the Pact would satisfy them, whereas the supporters of the Left or Centre parties were a bit more reserved. It should be underlined, however, that there were no differences between declared unwilling attitudes among these groups.

In comparison to 1998, the results of 1999 opinion poll showed the decrease of the significance of NATO inclusion in the society[92]. A year earlier, 44% of the respondents were convinced of a critical historical meaning of this event, a year after, however, people tended to perceive the admission as an essential, but not crucial Polish political achievement. Generally, Poles seemed to get accustomed to the state membership, hence attributed less significance to it than a year before, although still 45% regarded the event as meaningful.

The next social aspect, observed by all Polish citizens, was security and independence about NATO membership. Within the year leading to the accession, the issues of peace and stabilization in Europe, as well as the country's security faced some critical opinions[93]. Despite the fact that respondents had been convinced of a stabilizing role of the Pact in Europe for several years before, the year 1999 brought pessimism. Such a doubting attitude resulted from greater knowledge about NATO operations. The Poles began to be more aware that their country would face the possibility of being engaged in military conflicts. This anxiety was caused by a probable NATO armed intervention in Kosovo.

Furthermore, the society started to believe that the North Atlantic Pact might become a kind of threat of being subordinated to a superpower. As Poland and its citizens had not managed to forget the period of the bloc countries, such a concern resulted in the increase of

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[91] CBOS, *Polacy wobec NATO,* July 1997 [in:] CBOS, *W przededniu...,* op. cit.
[92] CBOS, *W przededniu...,* op. cit.
[93] Ibidem.

a more reserved approach: from 30% at the beginning of 1998 to 42% on the eve of the inclusion.

Moreover, the next fear, influencing the change of the survey, concerned the equality of rights for Poland as a NATO member. Surprisingly, 62% of the respondents were of the opinion that the country would be treated equally to "old" members of the Alliance, whereas only 22% feared being regarded as "a second category" member.

The public opinion in Poland on the eve of becoming a NATO member did not sound too optimistic. Actually, there were critical views about the consequences of this event, which, to some extent, could be justified with a significant decision of the military intervention in Kosovo at that time. Nevertheless, the society became anxious facing the political-military integration, a first stage of the unity process with the West. As there had been some signs of "Euro-scepticism" observed before among, for instance, farmers, this tendency turned into "NATO-scepticism". However, it did not change the fact that almost every second Pole expressed personal satisfaction from NATO admission.

According to the results of the public opinion poll a year after the admission, however, Poland's approach to the participation in the Alliance did not undergo any remarkable changes[94]. Similarly to 1999 survey, 63% of Poles approved their country's membership in the Alliance, which showed slight increase in the number of supporters, in favour of the decrease of the respondents declaring indifference in this field.

The matter of subordination, however, underwent a significant change. The former year survey presented Poles' opinion divided into two equal camps: the same number of people claimed that NATO membership was a guarantee of independence as those who regarded it as a new type of subordination. After a year experience, though, the first view won in the eyes of 56%.

The author of the report perceived such a shift to result from Russia's policy. The majority of Poles were convinced that Russia would aim at rebuilding its influences in this part of Europe, which contributed to a greater faith in NATO as a guarantee of peace and security.

Within a long accession road to the Alliance, there were some anxieties about equality of rights after the admission. It appeared that a year experience reinforced that conviction twice; 40%, instead of 22% in the former year, considered the Pact to treat Poland according to different principles.

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[94] CBOS, *Polacy, Czesi i Węgrzy wobec NATO,* research report, Warszawa, February 2000, Internet: http://www.cbos.pl/SPISKOM.POL/2000/KOM045/KOM045.htm.

In spite of some fears, however, Poland turned out to be the biggest supporter of NATO enlargement. This aspect did not meet with such an enthusiastic approach in other member states, which might result from Polish aspirations for shaping the architecture of peace and stabilization on the globe.

Nevertheless, the fact of reinforcing a positive attitude of Poles towards various aspects of the state membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization proved a gradual overcoming Polish prejudices to the integration with the West, at least of political-military nature, and building a sense of identity with European security space.