

Poland embarks on a “go-it-alone” policy and retains the zloty as its currency. ▲

NOTES

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- [2] “Economic and Financial indicators,” *Economist*, 11 August 2012, p. 80.
- [3] World Bank figures for 2011, as reported by BBC’s Country Profiles ([bbc.co.uk/search/?q=Country profiles](http://bbc.co.uk/search/?q=Country+profiles)).
- [4] IMF report released 9 October 2012, as reported by <http://www.thenews.pl/1/12/Artykul/114690,IMF-forecasts-slowdown-in-growth-for-Poland>, accessed 10 October 2012.
- [5] Marek Sawicki, “50 Years of the CAP,” *Warsaw Voice*, May 2012, p. 19.
- [6] Mariusz Majewski and Piotr Pałka, “Przypadki prezydenta Gdańska,” *Uwazamrze*, 14 October 2012 (<http://www.uwazamrze.pl/artykul/941953-Przypadki-prezydenta-Gdanska.html>), accessed 14 October 2012.
- [7] Jack Ewing, “Poland Skirts Euro Zone Woes, for Now,” *New York Times*, 15 December 2011, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/15/business/global/15iht-poland.html>.
- [8] *Polish News Bulletin*, 10 December, 2008, quoting *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 9 December 2008.
- [9] Richard J. Hunter, Jr. and Leo V. Ryan, C.S.V., “Poland and the Euro,” *Sarmatian Review*, vol. 29, no. 3 (2009), 1491–92.
- [10] Andrzej Ratajczyk, “Poland in the EU: The Talley Eight Years On,” *Warsaw Voice*, May 2012, p. 11.
- [11] “Augustinian Delay,” *Economist*, 18 August 2012, at <http://www.economist.com/node/21560598>.

Poland on the Geopolitical Map

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I would like to share some reflections about Poland’s geostrategic position and how it might be strengthened for the sake of Poland’s independence, security, and prosperity, thus strengthening Europe’s security. A country’s access to natural resources is a major factor in determining its geostrategic position. Poland’s dependence on Russian natural gas and oil, coupled with underdevelopment of her own natural resource extraction, translates into weakness. This weakness is aggravated by Poland’s geographic location between Russia and Germany and the continued tendency of these two neighbors to cooperate with each other on various economic and strategic projects, as well as by Poland’s decision to seek both security and greater prosperity by joining the European Union when the EU has shown inability to develop a

united energy policy, especially one that relies less on Russia. Given these weaknesses and vulnerabilities, Poland and her vital interests are seen by both Russia and the West as irrelevant and dispensable on the international stage. Poland’s ability to maintain some economic growth amidst the rest of Europe’s stagnation and fiscal crises mitigates this perception of weakness and dispensability, but only marginally.

A bright spot on this geopolitical map is KGHM Polska Miedź Corporation and its emergence as a global leader in mining and natural resource extraction. Its presence in the international corporate landscape illuminates a path to elevating Poland’s geostrategic position in a key dimension and suggests a number of policies that Poland should consider that could reverse its tenuous geostrategic status and make it an increasingly respected power in Europe. While these policies could be implemented individually, they would be much more effective if pursued in an integrated strategic fashion.

The first is the policy of weaning the country off dependence on Russian gas and oil by purchasing as much as possible from other exporters. Russia behaves like a virtual monopolist. It has regularly used energy embargoes and blackmail as strategic weapons. The fact that more powerful countries like Germany have little problem with dependence on Russia is strange and disconcerting, but for Poland to tolerate such dependence on Russia is the height of imprudence bordering on recklessness. Poland has no reason whatsoever to be willfully blind toward Russia. Poland should thus seek to import energy resources from as many suppliers as possible, particularly from friendly states. The more business Poland gives to such states, the more it can positively influence their policies toward it. Similarly, if such states cease to be friendly, Poland can take its business elsewhere. Poland’s strategic position and geographic attributes can be made into an advantage if she were to make a concerted effort to become an energy hub and a source of natural resources. This would mean maximizing the capability of receiving liquefied natural gas (LNG) at its ports and to “re-gasify” the LNG. This way LNG could be imported from various foreign suppliers, even from as far away as Qatar.

Poland could also develop major gas and oil facilities to harbor strategic reserves in case of a Russian embargo or other crisis. Where Russia’s strategy is building pipelines to Western Europe that bypass Poland and other “troublesome” East Central European countries that are much more sober about Russia’s

hegemonic goals, Poland should encourage pipelines that will rival Nord Stream and South Stream. Such rivals could include pipelines from Ukraine (Odessa-Brody), from Norway, and from the Caucasus (Nabucco). Poland's future contingency plans should include importing from a changed regime in Iran. With rival pipelines converging throughout Poland, the country's position as an energy hub would raise its geostrategic position and influence throughout Europe. All of Europe would then be less dependent on Russia.

The next and obvious policy is for Poland to maximize the exploitation of its own natural resources and those abroad to which it is gaining access: shale gas, geothermal springs, atomic power, coal (including coal liquefaction), and other strategic materials including rare earth metals. The full development of the country's shale gas is utterly strategic. A report from April 2011 by the U.S. government's Energy Information Agency states that Poland has the largest shale gas deposits in Europe and the ninth largest in the world. These deposits could cover Poland's needs at current usage rates for the next 380 years. The cost of extracting this gas, using the cost in the United States, is two and a half times cheaper than what Poland pays Gazprom.

Geothermal energy is another possibility for Poland but little has been done to exploit this, which is surprising considering that this is a "green" source and much more promising than the windmills I saw near Poznań last year. Coal frightens some environmentalists, but the fact is that coal technology has been improving for years. With its vast coal supplies Poland should be at the forefront in the development of the best technologies to exploit this resource. This includes clean coal, coal liquefaction, and gasification.

Then there is nuclear power. Companies like General Atomics in the United States have developed small, modular, portable reactors that do not melt down, are cooled by helium, are less vulnerable to weapons proliferation, and can convert waste to power. Poland should work with such companies and develop its own nuclear power industry.

The extraordinary rise of KGHM provides a new model for Poland to enhance its geostrategic position in this regard. As you all know, KGHM's acquisition of Quadrant and its resources in the Western Hemisphere offers Poland new strategic opportunities and strength that include access to various natural resources, including strategic materials; influence in Canada, the United States, and Chile. In the United

States alone there are now economic interests, jobs, and tax revenues at stake in at least two states; these two states not only have congressmen, they have two senators each who have great actual and potential influence. New possible joint ventures between KGHM and major foreign companies could harness the influence those companies have over their host governments and assuming that KGHM's acquisition and joint ventures are good investments, they will yield ever greater income for Poland. Exploiting all these opportunities means that Poland can become a significant power in natural resources on whom others can become dependent. If you doubt the strategic importance of this issue, look at China's successful strategy of focusing on developing and securing vital natural resources such as rare earth metals at home and throughout the world. To fail to exploit these opportunities would be akin to your ancestors failing to develop Poland's famous salt mines.

Doing all of this is mostly a question of national will. It requires overcoming both external and internal resistance. First, Russia will oppose all this. It can be expected to develop and, I strongly suspect, continue existing covert influence operations in Poland to prevent these policies. It will do the same elsewhere in the EU. It can be expected to perpetrate economic blackmail through its SVR-controlled companies or organized crime syndicates. Some EU countries and officials can be expected to oppose Polish energy initiatives. Some of this will come under the pretext of preventing allegedly anthropogenic global warming, although this theory is far from having been proven. Of course there is climate change, but there was massive climate change millions of years before sport utility vehicles were roaming the earth. Some Polish corporate executives and politicians will oppose some of these policies so as not to threaten commercial or political relations with Russia, Germany, and the European Union. I do not accuse or condemn such figures, especially for pursuing rational commercial self-interest. But here is a classic problem of a free society: it should be recognized that not all private interests are congruent with the national interest. It should also be recognized that republican, representative government is especially vulnerable to foreign influence.

Resistance to all these forms of opposition to Polish independence in energy and natural resources is absolutely necessary. It will require a serious counterintelligence effort to expose, diminish, and defeat Russian overt and covert influence in Poland,

and diminish the ill effects of certain German influences. Poland has one of the world's greatest counterintelligence traditions. Counterintelligence is one of the most important arts of statecraft. It is not just counter-espionage; it also involves counterinfluence operations and counterdeception. This could arguably be Poland's highest national security priority. Also needed is an effort to resist EU attempts to restrict Poland's domestic natural resources and energy production on environmental grounds as well as German, Russian, and Chinese attempts to acquire Polish companies either for their own resource needs or to enhance those powers' influence in Poland. Such resistance requires preserving and vigilantly protecting Polish national identity and sovereignty.

For all the attempts to create a "European" identity, the entire project should be recognized as a utopian attempt to pretend that the habits, customs, and traditions developed over centuries do not exist. If a pan-European identity that could supersede national identities ever develops, it will only be based on the very foundation of European civilization: on Christendom. Those who deny the Christian roots of Europe may no longer be believing Christians, but they are living off the fumes of values and principles that brought about the distinctions between Western civilization and those cultures that deny the dignity of the human person (including the dignity of women), and the human rights that derive from that dignity with its transcendent source. A sense of realism dictates that Polish culture is Polish, and that wearing a new funny-colored hat does not make its wearer any less Polish. Poland's national interest will be optimally protected if Polish companies remain truly Polish. In America it is fashionable among some companies to style themselves now as "global companies," but as Thomas Friedman has derisively argued, what will one of these companies do when it runs into major trouble abroad — make an emergency call to the Microsoft navy? The serious protection of a country's national identity, sovereignty, and civilization requires recognition of the importance of strengthening what I call the "national immune system." This has to do with the moral-cultural health of the nation. It represents a collective strength of conviction in the values and principles that make the best things about a nation's way of life possible. A strong national immune system requires people to believe in a cause higher than themselves and their own pleasures, a people ready to make sacrifices for such values and principles as freedom, human rights, and respect for the dignity of others. It necessarily rejects

the moral and cultural relativism that denies that one culture and way of life is morally superior to another. Of all the countries in Europe, it can be argued that Poland has the strongest national immune system, but like other countries on the continent there are signs that this system is weakening.

Successful resistance to Russian and EU opposition to Polish energy and resources independence will also require an information and political influence campaign both inside the country, in the EU, and even in Russia. It will have to make many arguments supporting a strong Polish energy and natural resources sector. Some of this influence campaign could very well be done through covert intelligence channels. Information and strategic influence operations are decidedly not reserved for superpowers. Poland may not be able to afford an aircraft carrier battle group, but it can afford to utilize the various instruments of strategic influence.

What should a Polish information and influence campaign convey?

First, that Polish national sovereignty and the strength to maintain national independence is in the long-term interest of European peace and stability. Indeed, Polish weakness translates into a "provocative weakness" that produces hegemonism on the part of Poland's neighbors and, as history has repeatedly demonstrated, the possibility of war. Second, that Polish energy independence and the creation in Poland of an alternative energy hub will help Europe avoid vulnerability to Russian energy blackmail. Third, that Poland's policies are not harmful to Russia (this would be part of a public diplomacy campaign directly targeting the Russian people). Fourth, that science has not proven that climate change is anthropogenic, and that any precipitous action that restricts the use of fossil fuels to such an extent that it harms economic growth can only jeopardize the very technological development on which the health of people and the environment depend. Fifth, that it is environmentally safe to extract shale gas, a process that takes place in regions deep below the water table. Sixth, that modern nuclear reactors, particularly small modular and portable ones, are extraordinarily environmentally safe and can be buried or evacuated in the rare case of system failure.

Poland will need to develop greater military capabilities to overcome its weak national security posture that renders it vulnerable to energy blackmail and other external pressures. Without a credible military deterrent, such vulnerability will persist to one degree or another. Beyond the standard elements of military and naval power, the deterrent forces that Poland must

develop should particularly include asymmetric military capabilities such as a serious cyberwarfare capability (Poland's tradition of excellence in mathematics makes this a natural strategic attribute that must not be neglected); electronic weapons capable of disrupting the command, control, communications, computers, and technical intelligence capabilities of enemies; missile defenses; laser weapons capable of blinding enemy satellites; and various guerrilla warfare capabilities. The development of a domestic nuclear energy industry has implied potential capabilities as well. Poland will need domestic economic policies that provide incentives for domestic energy production and entrepreneurial growth in general. In practice, this means low tax rates, low levels of regulation (excessive regulation acts as a major incentive for corruption), the protection and proper legal identification of private property, the rule of law (including the enforcement of robust anticorruption laws), and a stable currency.

Poland has the opportunity and the potential to become an economic powerhouse. Its ability to grow in the midst of EU stagnation and fiscal crises in Greece, Portugal, Spain, and Italy demonstrates this possibility. Economic policies that promise true economic growth will facilitate the development of small business and not favor the attempts of big business to stifle competition from upstart companies. So long as small business can thrive jobs will be created in Poland and the youthful Polish workforce will not need to flee to the West to find opportunity.

Finally, the Polish government should pursue the policy of encouraging demographic growth among the Polish population. Demography is destiny. Countries with large populations are strong; those with small populations are weak. Poland does not have high population density. One cannot have a growing economy without a growing workforce. If Europeans persist in their civilizational fatigue, relativism, demographic suicide, and the hosting of burgeoning non-Western populations, Poland can choose between being Poland or a country half-filled with people from non-Western cultures who do not share the values, principles, habits and traditions that make possible a society of morally ordered liberty, self-government, tolerance, trust, and prosperity and who, given the patterns of intercultural relations in recent decades, are not likely to assimilate.

In the United States patriotism is the central pillar of our national security. It requires the will to serve a cause higher than oneself. Ultimately, true security does not come from nuclear umbrellas or other material things;

as Solzhenitsyn observed, it comes from stout hearts and steadfast men. It comes from strength of conviction. When you have this, there is the will to acquire the necessary material things. In the cold war—which was not just between the East and the West, but within the East and within the West, between those who recognized the existence of a natural moral law and those who asserted that law and morals come from the barrel of a gun—security and ultimately freedom came from spiritual strength, courage, and faith. Poland understood this and, by virtue of its culture, history, and traditions, should continue to understand this better than anyone else. ▲

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Unvanquished

Joseph Piłsudski, Resurrected Poland and the Struggle for Eastern Europe

by **Peter Hetherington**. 2d ed. Houston, TX: Pingora Press, 2012. 752 pages. Photographs, timeline, bibliography. ISBN-10: 0983656312; ISBN-13: 978-0983656319. Hardcover. \$21.95 on Amazon.com.

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In the 1980s chemical engineer Richard Watt published a beautiful Piłsudskiite tale of interwar Poland. In 2012 geologist Peter Hetherington has gifted us with a lyrically gripping biography of the man himself: Józef Piłsudski. *Unvanquished* is a fantastically unbelievable story of a scion of landed nobility; a *Kresowiak* of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania; a nationalist socialist revolutionary; a romantic; a spy, a fighter, a train robber; a self-taught military man; free Poland's first marshal; a self-anointed savior of the Commonwealth with a mass following; a charismatic leader turned nocturnal solitaire-playing misanthrope; a successful putschist; a cranky but mild dictator; a serial husband and lover and tender, if largely absentee father; a scathing hater of party politics and parliamentarism; a dabbler turned serious foreign policy expert; and a leftist neopagan agnostic enamored with Our Lady of the Sharp Gate. But first and foremost, after grueling travails and disappointments, years of imprisonment and underground, and fifteen