

The second alternative was more serious. Although the IXth Extraordinary Congress of the PUWP, held in July 1981, did not yet bring about such changes, they would have been undoubtedly carried out sooner or later, were it not for the introduction of the 'state of war'.

Personally, I counted very much on the transformation of the PUWP into a Socialist or Socialist-Democratic Party. This would have been a further step towards the democratization of Poland. For years now, I didn't believe in any marxism-leninism / but then, can I say that I ever believed in it? /. I knew, however, that there could not be any brusque transition from one state to another. It had to be some kind of 'soft landing' - a view I publicly expressed.

Moreover, I continued to believe that Poland will not be able to get out of the crisis without great assistance of the West. Part of the debt would have had to be written off by the creditors, another part transformed into ^{private} longterm foreign ^{direct} assets in our economy. New credits and even grants would have had to flow in. When already in Tokyo, I have even presented a special memorandum on this subject. Fortunately, I have taken it with me when we left our Residence last December.

All this was however possible only in the case of a true democratization of Poland. To speak crudely, it would have been worthwhile for the West to finance this. Proof of such a democratization of Poland would be given by the sole democratization of the ruling party.

For these reasons, I truly wanted to live in the Poland undergoing such processes. I didn't think about going abroad. About a year earlier there was an occasion for us to return to Geneva, to the U.N., but finally nothing came out of it. And I must admit that I was not at all worried. As the renewal was becoming reality, I was in no hurry to leave. I refused proposals for various diplomatic posts - that of the Ambassador of the PPR to Angola included. My life in Poland was interesting and I was beginning to think very seriously about resigning from my job in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

I don't know what would have happened were it not for my discussion with the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Józef Czyrek. It was the beginning of the month of November and I have just returned from lectures in Copenhagen, Goteborg and Uppsala, where I have been invited by the Danes and the Swedes. The subject of my lecture was 'The New ^{International} Economic Order', but the discussions immediately deviated to the Polish affairs, on which the world was focused.

Minister Czyrek, for whom I had much respect and with whom I have sometimes spoken openly, proposed me the post of the Ambassador of the PPR to Japan. He added on that occasion that there is something to learn there - something we could use back in Poland.

I have been always fascinated with Japan. The proposition suited me then. Moreover, Japan is no Angola! I decided to go there and demonstrate that I am the Ambassador of Poland and not of the PPR.

However, before it came to this, other events took place. At that very moment I was working on a study for the UNCTAD. It concerned the relations between the CMEA countries and Africa. I didn't have any special faith in these relations, but I do admit that the honorary proposed for the study did play a role. When signing the contract with the UNCTAD I didn't know yet that I would be leaving for Japan. On the other hand, I did take into account my departure from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which would bring to an end my trips abroad. The maintenance and the conservation of our house entailed big expenses. Slowly, our Western car was absorbing big sums in foreign currency for the purchase of spare parts. And then, the most important of all was that Ewa was still in Geneva. She had ended there her studies in Psychology and thought of definitely returning to Poland. In the meantime, however, she received a proposition of preparing her Ph.D. thesis and of working simultaneously as assistant. The proposition was alluring, so she stayed, although she had previously shipped her belongings back to Warsaw. My contract, I thought, would help her in case of financial need.

And so, in relation with the contract, I flew to Geneva at the end of November 1980, to hold discussions at the UNCTAD Secretariat. It was exactly at this time that the Polish affairs returned to the headlines. This time, it was in relation with the armed Soviet intervention in Poland which was supposed to be under preparation. The number of Soviet divisions concentrated to the East of the Dug line was even given...

Despite all this, I did not believe in a Soviet intervention if Kania and Jaruzelski would not want one. However, I knew fully well that the USSR would not be above using such a solution in case it would think it necessary. But then, the Soviets would not be in such a hurry, having to count on an organized resistance of the Polish Army.

It is true that I was well aware of the very poor supply in munitions of our Army, just as I was aware of their disadvantageous deployment, generally in Western Poland, of their lack of fuel and obsolete air force, as well as of the unequal numbers on both sides in the case of an intervention. But the price would be too high for the Red Army. Afterwards, there could be guemilla warfare, tensions in Europe and throughout the world and maybe even repercussions in the countries of the "socialist community" themselves.

Nevertheless, I was troubled by the news and returned to Poland practically on the eve of the famous Moscow meeting of the "Warsaw Pact Summit"

which took place on December 5, 1980. The fact that on the Polish side there were, besides Kania, Jaruzelski and Pińkowski, also Olszowski and Milewski, the Minister of Internal Affairs, and that on the Soviet side there was also Andropov, did not presage anything good. The pressure on Poland was rising and it was ominous. There were even rumors about an "intervention by osmosis", that is about the infiltration of Poland by Soviet forces.

The people however, did not show any signs of hysteria. Somehow, they still didn't believe in the intervention. Solidarity was already registered and tensions, which could justify the Soviet anxiety, were absent in the country. But it was this normalization of the situation which did not suit the Soviets. I shall yet return to this topic.

With time, there were rumors that the Soviet leadership was divided on the Polish issue. Suslov, Andropov and Yepishev, the Red Army's main "politruk" / political commissar /, were supposed to be the main ones urging for the intervention. Brezhnev, Tikhonov, Gromyko and Ustinov, on the other hand, were ready to wait and see the further developments. Was all this true? I don't know.

What troubled me the most was the Polish government's visible indolence. Pińkowski was completely lost. It was not known whether this was done on purpose or whether it was the result of an innate disability of adapting the behavior to a crisis situation. When appearing on the TV and the radio I took the liberty of criticizing the government - something that Pińkowski reproached me when I paid him my farewell visit before leaving for Japan.

Another reason for anxiety was the activity of T. Grabski who acted as Secretary of the CC for Economic Affairs, as well as that of S. Olszowski, the main ideologist and propagandist in the Party and the government. I was also greatly disturbed by the almost forced reintroduction to the post of First Secretary of the Warsaw Voivodship Committee of the PUPP, of S. Kociołek, a notorious hardliner and a man who was already lost his face in the past.

Putting aside the declarations of Grabski and Olszowski, concerning the "threat of counter-revolution" in Poland - insinuations which faithfully echoed the Soviet position - I have also been informed, by people from Olszowski's entourage, that, when getting up in the morning and not seeing Soviet troops in the streets of Warsaw, he considered his night to be lost.

This was not encouraging in a situation where there was a struggle going on for the loosening of the censorship and where Solidarity, in conformity with the signed accords, demanded access to mass media. Olszowski restlessly harped on one string, by repeating that those who have the mass media ha-

ve the power. Later, when Solidarity demanded information concerning the distribution of food, it has been refused access to the data, on the grounds that, who has control over the food distribution, has the power...

Christmas approached in this atmosphere. Ewa came to Warsaw from Geneva. We bought an enormous Christmas tree and, in spite of all, we hoped for the best. After all, something was going on in Poland and the country was changing for the better. The market supplies worsened but the country was like free...

Just before New Year I flew to Geneva. In connection with my study for the UNCTAD I was to go from there to Africa, and more precisely to Ethiopia, Zaire and Nigeria. I had to hurry, for the initial date fixed for our departure to Japan was somewhere in mid-February. The Pope was to visit Japan on February 23, 1981 and the Polish authorities wanted me to be accredited at that date. There was no Polish Ambassador to Japan for quite some time already, since my predecessor, Amb. Stefan Perkowicz, left Japan already in July 1980.

I arrived in Geneva and stayed in Ewa's small apartment at the Dumas Ave. very near the 45, Champel Ave. where we lived 10 years earlier...

On New Year's Eve I called Niunia and Ewa who were in Warsaw. We exchanged New Year's greetings... We did not know then what the coming year was to bring.

On January 4, 1980 I flew to Addis Ababa via Rome. I was greeted at the airport by Amb. Bogusław Ludwikowski, whom I knew for years. In Addis, I had several discussions in the Secretariat of the African Economic Commission, with representatives of the Ethiopian government and even with some members of the Soviet Embassy. On that occasion, I visited Addis Ababa, Sodero and its hot water springs and Nazareth. The Ethiopians are a beautiful race of people and the children are particularly charming. The weather was absolutely gorgeous during the period of my visit. I was, moreover, very lucky to have chanced upon the Coptic New Year. I was amazed to see great numbers of people carrying sheep on their backs. Some time later, there were feasts under the open sky and innumerable bloody sheepskins lay scattered on the ground...

During that visit I listened to various stories about "socialism" in Ethiopia and about its cruelties of the first period...

From Addis I flew to Kinshasa. There, I was met at the airport by Amb. Mieczysław Dedo who was also a long-time acquaintance of mine. There, I paid visits to members of the government and, among them, to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I also had interesting meetings with some members of the field of science. Just as in Addis, I met numerous Polish experts who worked

here on contract. I visited the capital Kinshasa and one day, we went way out into the jungle...

The last stage of my African trip was Lagos. And once again, a friend awaited me at the airport. This time, it was Ambassador Witold Jurasz. We have worked together in Washington, D.C., in the 60's. Many years ago, I have been his guest in Caracas, Venezuela, where he was also ambassador. And now, we were meeting in Lagos. He was in some trouble at that time, for several days prior to my arrival, he was robbed during the night while fast asleep in his bed. He didn't hear a thing. However, when telling the story to his Bulgarian counterpart, the latter supplied him with... a gun...

As during the previous stages of my trip, I held several conversations necessary for my study. And again, just as in Addis Ababa and Kinshasa, the discussions deviated to the Polish affairs. I was very much astonished to see how well the Polish affairs were known. Particularly in Nigeria. Poland absorbed the attention even of far-away Africa.

I returned to Warsaw via Geneva. Ewa was at the airport - my hat and winter coat on her arm. After all, I was returning to the European winter from the hot African weather.

I was back in Warsaw on January 20, I think. This time, together with Niunia, we worked at high pressure to prepare our departure. My appointment as Ambassador of the PPR to Japan was officially communicated in the beginning of February. Several months later, I was also to be appointed Ambassador to the Philippines. I was supposed to present my credentials to President F. Marcos in the second half of January 1982. However, other events took place in the meantime...

The days preceding our departure for Tokyo were the most trying. Niunia and I were dead tired of exhaustion. Our greatest problem, as I have already mentioned, was with Toofy. We knew that the separation will be a big shock for him, but there was no other solution.

I began paying various farewell visits, beginning with the Ambassador of Japan to Poland Mr. Hara and various ministers, and ending with S. Kania, H. Jabłoński and J. Pińkowski. When paying my visit to the latter, I already knew that he was to leave his post and that W. Jaruzelski was to replace him. Therefore, there was no official communiqué from my visit. There were, instead, some quarrels...

We fixed the date of our departure for February 11 at 9p.m. by LOT via Bangkok. We said good-bye to Niunia's mother and longly caressed Toofy who was crying, as if he understood that we were leaving him.

The VIP room at the Warsaw airport was full with our friends coming to bid us farewell. Niunia's brother Marek, also came. Ambassador Hara and his

wife appeared unexpectedly. While waiting in the room we even watched the televised resumé presented by Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski to the Sejm. Somehow, we all thought it was maybe good. However, besides his position as Premier, he kept his portofolio of Minister of National Defense. I wanted to believe that this was a good thing.

We were brought to the airplane. Once again we said good-bye to all those present. Our hope, which did fulfill itself, was to return to Warsaw in the summer.

The Ilyushin 62 took off and we were on our way to Kuwait. The flight attendant brought us some whiskey offered us by... my ex-student, now a flight-attendant herself, who learned that we were on the same flight. Slowly, we dosed off...

The skies were still dark when we landed in Kuwait. We found the air terminal just big and white. There were many traditionally dressed Arabs, but otherwise, there was nothing exotic. Everything had this feeling of extreme modernism about it.

The airport at Sharjah, one of the Persian Gulf sheikdoms, offered a marvelous contrast to the previous one. It resembled a palace of the Arabian Nights, a fine jewel thrust in the midst of the desert... In spite of its modern character and recent erection, it was the most wonderful continuation of the Arab traditional architecture. Those who built it have revealed an extraordinarily good taste.

After this short incursion into a different world, we continued on our long flight to Bangkok. We landed there, somewhere around 5p.m. We were awaited by Amb. Jan Majewski and also by my close friend Prof. Maciek Perczyński, who works in Bangkok for the U.N. He was standing among others who were waiting for us. We went to our hotel and soon afterwards, together with Maciek, we left for dinner. The weather was hot and sultry. We talked a lot about Poland and her problems.

What a pleasure it was to see Maciek. Where haven't I been with him! There, in Bangkok, we promised ourselves that we shall soon see each other, for it was impossible to talk things over in such a short time.

It was already late and we were both horribly tired. The next morning we were to wake up at 4a.m. in order to catch our plane to Tokyo. And, of course, as it should happen in such situations, my alarm clock did not ring! It already happened several times, so why not in this situation? We almost missed our plane, but somehow we managed to get to the airport before the departure of the plane. When arriving there, we met some Polish Catholic journalists who were going to the Philippines to cover the Pope's visit there and to meet Him. Then, they were to come to Japan. I invited them to

stay in the Embassy in Tokyo, for I knew very well that they were short on foreign currency.

We boarded the JAL flight and flew non-stop to Tokyo. The food was excellent, the flight attendants nice and tidy and the flight itself very calm.

Somewhere around 4p.m. we landed on Tokyo's Narita International Airport. This was the first time I have ever been to this huge airport. When landing in Japan 22 years earlier, it was still at the Haneda Airport in the very heart of Tokyo. The representative of the Diplomatic Protocol greeted me. Because of the distance separating the airport from the city, there is no custom of greeting the newly-arriving ambassadors and heads of state or of government by the diplomatic corps or even by the Chief of Protocol. There was also Mr. Stanisław Skowron, the Polish Chargé d'Affaires, a man very experienced in the foreign service, educated in the USSR, current in the Japanese and many other languages and who was, I think, on his third appointment to Japan.

In the VIP room, we were awaited by nearly the entire staff of the Polish Embassy and of the Office of the Commercial Counsellor. I successively greeted all of them. I knew certain of them since years... When leaving the arrival room, I have met other Poles from the joint Polono-Japanese company.

We were ushered to the official black Mercedes - the same one which was to bring us to the American Embassy. It was then that I met my Japanese driver, Mr. Minoru Nakamura - the best driver I have ever met.

We left for the Embassy and our Residence. This trip could have lasted one to four hours depending on the intensity of the traffic. This time, it took only one hour. I knew the Residence and the Embassy only thanks to the pictures I have been shown. They were not yet built when I was in Tokyo in 1959. The whole complex didn't look that bad from the exterior, although I knew that, in case of a quake of more than 5 degrees in the Richter scale, the building was threatened with complete collapse. A quake which took place in September, 1980, left big fissures in the walls and caused the panic of the staff's families. I was also aware of the building's bad air-conditioning system and the small functionality in spite of the transformations done by one of the former Ambassadors, Zdzisław Reguński, a friend of mine, who was the first to use the building. The six apartments provided for the staff members were particularly criticized. They were extremely small, badly planned and poorly furnished.

But when standing in front of the building on that very day, I didn't have such a bad impression. From the outside it all looked much better. Afterwards, of course, I came to the conviction that, the information received

before our arrival in Tokyo, was true.

Our Residence consisted of two drawing rooms and a big dining room, all located on the ground floor, which was elevated high enough to be considered as the first floor. They were passably well furnished - a characteristic which sharply contrasted with the rest of our rooms situated on the floor above. There were, in all, three rooms, a kitchen and a bathroom, all of which were absolutely hopelessly arranged... So it is there that we arrived and just after changing our clothes and refreshing ourselves we went downstairs to the reception room for a glass of champagne with the staff members of the Embassy and of the other establishments of the PPR, such as the Office of the Commercial Counsellor, the joint Polono-Japanese Company Agropol, the representation of LOT-Orbis /Polish Airlines and Travel Agency/ and of the Polish Ocean Lines. In all, these establishments employed over 20 Poles on the full time basis and several more Polish personnel on the part time basis. Moreover, there were, in the Embassy alone, three Japanese secretaries and two Japanese drivers.

We entered the room. I was greeted by Counsellor Skowron who made a brief speech. My response was not long either. I mentioned the difficulties Poland was going through at that time, but I expressed my optimism as to the perspectives for their solution.

' ' There is no such fortress which the Poles cannot conquer ' ' - I ended paraphrasing Lenin.

I proposed a toast to our future cooperation. Afterwards, Niunia and I talked a little bit with everyone and finally we retired after a very long and tiring day.

The next day was Saturday. We decided to take the subway and go to the downtown. Counsellor Skowron gave us a lift to the Fbisu subway station from where we continued on our own to the famous Ginza section of Tokyo. I still remembered it from my 1959 visit to Tokyo somewhere at the end of October. I have then attended the XVth GATT Session. It was then that was approved the Declaration about the Relations of the PPR with the Contracting Parties to the General Agreement. At that time, I spent 6 weeks in Tokyo where I stayed some time at the Imperial Hotel and later at the Shiba Park.

My, how changed Tokyo was from what I remembered! Even then, Ginza had the looks of a metropolis, but now, it is probably one of the most elegant quarters of all the capitals in the world. There are so many beautifully and richly decorated shop windows, innumerable cafés and restaurants and, above all, the people- extremely elegantly and fashionably dressed. Niunia, who up to then thought that the Italian men were the best dressed, admitted that the Japanese were probably a cut above...

And the cars, thousands of cars. Modern-looking, slim, impeccably clean and moving along without any nervousness. The Tokyo I remembered was filled with noisy three-wheeled vehicles which have now completely disappeared.

We went to see 'my' Imperial Hotel. We found it but I couldn't recognize it, for it was completely remodelled. Personally, I preferred the way it was before - it just seemed more 'Japanese'. We walked towards the Imperial Palace. Here, almost nothing had changed. Just that in the vicinity beautiful buildings which I have not seen before, arose. And, of course, I recognized the Tokyo Tower raising above the city. In 1959 I lived not far from it.

We ate something in one of Ginza's charming restaurants and we decided to return back home.

On Sunday, we explored the vicinity of our Embassy - a nice, quiet sector. And, of course, we called Ewa back in Geneva. The weather didn't have anything of a winter to it, despite the fact that February is regarded as the most 'winterish' month in Tokyo. There wasn't even a snowflake and the temperature was well above 0 degrees Centigrade.

February 16, that is on Monday, I went to Gaimusho, that is the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where I paid a visit to the Chief of Diplomatic Protocol, Ambassador Nishida. He received me warmly. His English is excellent. In accordance to the custom I handed ^{the copy of} the credentials over to him. During that visit I officially presented my request, which was already previously known to the Japanese - I wished to begin fulfilling my functions as Ambassador of the PPR before the arrival of the Pope to Japan. It does not happen in this country that an Ambassador should present his credentials to the Emperor just a few days after his arrival. But in this case, the Japanese promised to make an exception and they kept their word.

In the coming days, I paid unofficial visits to other high functionaries of the Gaimusho - General Directors Muto and Donowaki and the Deputy of the former, Takashima. I was accompanied everywhere by Mrs. Shiraishi, whom I have mentioned earlier.

On Tuesday, February 17, I decided to meet in my Residence, the Ambassadors of the 'socialist countries' together with their wives. They all appeared at 10a.m. Those Ambassadors who could not come for reasons of absence from Tokyo, were represented by their Chargés d'Affaires. There were present, among them, the already mentioned D. Polanski, K. Houska from Czechoslovakia, H. Erie from the GDR, D. Kos from Hungary, R. Bogdan from Rumunia and others. They all came with their wives. Only the Ambassador of South Yemen came alone. It is maybe worth adding that in Tokyo, besides the 'socialist' ambassadors mentioned above, there were also

those from Bulgaria, Cuba, Vietnam, Laos and Ethiopia. There was also one from Afghanistan, although he did not officially figure on the diplomatic list, since he was not recognized by the Japanese government. Still, he was physically there.

I presented myself and Niunia when raising the toast and then, I greeted them, using on that occasion the usual courtesy formulas. I spoke English since it was the official language of the mentioned ambassadors. Therefore, Polanski had to come with his interpreter, for he doesn't speak any other language than Russian.

However, from the start, Polanski asked me out loud so that the others could hear, what was it that was going on back there in Poland? And will Jaruzelski be capable of dominating the situation?

I answered that nothing great was going on in Poland and that all proceeded peacefully and in the spirit of understanding. After all, I added, these things have a different aspect when seen from a close distance and when seen from far away. My answer was probably far from being enough for him, but I didn't care less.

Afterwards, we had a short talk with every person and, as always, cognac, vodka and coffee were served.

It must have been already the next day that Mr. Yamashita came to our Residence. He is the Vice Director of the Protocol of the Imperial Palace - a very charming man, fluent in English and French and, what is rather rare for a Japanese, a Catholic. He was to instruct us about the entire course of the ceremony in the Imperial Palace. It was scheduled to take place on February 23, 1981 at 3p.m. It must be mentioned that women were absent during the ceremony of the presentation of the credentials to the Emperor. Niunia was to pay a visit only to the Empress but only after I have completed my visit to the Emperor, since I was to accompany her.

Besides myself, there were six of my co-diplomats whom I had to choose and who were to accompany me at the ceremony.

And so came the day of February 23. It was raining cats and dogs. Mr. Yamashita came to the Embassy to accompany me on my way to the Palace. Dressed in my 'morning coat', just as Mr. Yamashita and the Polish diplomats who were accompanying me, in white gloves and a top hat in my hand, I got, together with Mr. Yamashita, into the official car and we drove away to the Ambassador Hotel near the Imperial Palace. This halt was necessary in order to change 'vehicles'. For the custom in Japan wants that an ambassador, presenting his credentials, drives to the Palace in a horse driven carriage. So do the accompanying persons. The carriage is assisted by guardsmen on horseback. Such a cavalcade through the streets of huge Tokyo would be out

of question, for all the traffic must be stopped. Therefore, it takes place on the short distance separating the hotel from the Palace. Here, it can be realized without greater problems.

So, we drove to the hotel. Niunia followed in another car, driven by our second Japanese driver, Mr. Yamamoto. She was to enter the Palace grounds through a different gate.

Accompanied by Mr. Yamashita, I took place in the first carriage, My staff members got into the next carriages. And the cavalcade moved forward... Well, I must admit I was proud. This was one of the most exciting moments of my life and of Niunia's life, even though she could not accompany me.

Honorary guards were posted in front of the Palace. As I was getting out of the carriage, orders were given and they saluted me.

I entered a small room where I was greeted by the Court's Chief of Protocol, Ambassador Abe who was known to me from the New York and Geneva sessions of the U.N., where he acted as the Ambassador of Japan. There were also two other Ministers - of the Internal Affairs and of Agriculture. They were to accompany me during the ceremony, the Minister of Foreign Affairs being absent, since he was greeting the Pope...

After a short while we left for the hall where I was to present my credentials. Through the huge windows I could see the superb Imperial Gardens. In 1959 I was invited here for a banquet, but not only was it in another section of the Palace, but moreover, it was in the evening and so, I didn't see a thing. But on that February day, I was spell-bound with the beauty of what I saw.

And then a heavy door opened. I entered together with Ambassador Abe and the two Ministers. My diplomats remained in the corridor. I could see the Emperor in the far end of the hall. He too was dressed in a 'morning coat'. I distinguished his metal rimmed spectacles. We approached... The Emperor is not a man of big posture and he gives the impression of a very kind-hearted person.

He stopped and I bowed deeply. Only after this we walked up to him and he shook hands with me. During the whole ceremony, everyone was to remain standing, even the Emperor.

The Emperor inquired about my health and my impression of Tokyo. Knowing that I have already been in Tokyo, he asked me whether I noticed any changes. He was also interested in the health of Henryk Jabłoński, the Chairman of the State Council and, of course, he asked questions about Poland.

I answered that the present Japan and that of 1959 are two different countries. The Emperor, I could see it, smiled even before the interpreter translated my response. When talking about Poland I said that we resolve our

problems in the spirit of compromise and tolerance so deeply rooted in the Polish traditions. The Emperor almost invisibly nodded his head in approval. I admitted that we were going through a difficult period, but that we shall overcome the obstacles - that in this matter we were counting on the understanding and assistance of Japan, a great democracy...

When saying that, I could hardly believe that I was in front of the man who was the last great actor of the World War II drama. At the moment he ordered the capitulation, he had more than 5 million soldiers who were up in arms. He probably didn't have any influence on the decision to attack Pearl Harbor. The same certainly concerned the operations of his armies whose superior he formally was. If he ever took any decision, it was the one to capitulate. The Americans duly appreciated this move and did not call on Emperor Hirohito to account for the aggression against the U.S. They only forced him into resigning his title of 'divinity'. The others hung on gallows.

There was the man, in front of whom I was standing, who was once a god to the Japanese, even though, in reality, he did not have any power. It was he who had to humiliate himself before General MacArthur whom he personally went to see with the proposition of an unconditional capitulation. After the atom bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, after the destruction of 70 per cent of Tokyo, he was saving his country... What did this man think then?

His thoughts must have certainly been good ones. He saved many human lives and Japan raised herself from ruins to become the world's second industrial power, even though she is deprived of natural riches and of a sufficient amount of cultivable land. Moreover, she is constantly exposed to hostile elements.

I was standing before the man who represents the ^{world's} oldest, 1,500 year-old, dynasty, as well as one of the oldest existing Nations.

Our discussion was to officially last 7 minutes and finally it was twice as long. This was the will of the Emperor and not my will. The Court noted this as a sign of regard towards Poland... That very day another Pole arrived in Japan - the Pope. And maybe they wanted to find out the difference between us?

So then, how could I, after the imposition of the 'state of war', attend the New Year's lunch with the Emperor? Didn't I tell him that we were solving our problems in the spirit of tolerance and compromise, so traditional in Poland? And what kind of compromise and tolerance was the 'state of war'? No, I couldn't show my face at the Palace. I would look like a miserable liar...

After our discussion, I handed my credentials to a person from the Imperial Suite. And then, I moved to the side and presented the members of my Embassy to the Emperor. They came in one by one, came closer towards the Emperor, who gave them his hand and then, they took three steps backwards, turned around and left normally. After them, I took my leave in a similar way.

I was ushered through corridors to another wing of the Palace. Niunia was already there, waiting for me in the company of the Empress' Master of Ceremonies, a lady, and other persons. We left to see the Empress. The ceremony was to consist of shaking hands with the Empress who was to say several words of wellcome. And so it happened. The Empress is an elderly and sympathetically looking lady and seemed to us to be very kind.

And once again we separated ourselves. I returned to the hotel by carriage and Niunia by car.

There were many tourists in the hotel's lobby and they observed me with amazement as I was hastily putting my overcoat on my long-tail coat. With the same amazement they watched us jump into the car with a white and red flag on the hood. They couldn't figure out where we were going in such a haste...

Well, we were in such a hurry to meet the Pope who, at that moment, was to meet with the Poles of Japan in one of Tokyo's cathedrals.

We drove as fast as we only could. The small flag fluttered on the hood - a sign that now, I was Ambassador of the PPR /for hardly an hour.../.

There were crowds of people in front of the cathedral and there was a forest of umbrellas covering the heads. The rain was coming down in torrents. The Pope was there somewhere, but I couldn't see Him. Brother Roman, a Polish Dominican who is a missionary in Japan, recognized us and with the help of other Polish priests, he pushed us towards the Pope.

" In the name of the PPR I heartily greet Your Holiness, here on Japanese soil, with the old Polish "Praised be Jesus Christ" / "Niech będzie pochwalony" /" - I recited all in one breath.

The Pope, who was wearing His characteristic hat, warmly greeted me and longly held my hands in His... I told Him all about how I rushed to Japan so that I could wellcome Him, how the Japanese facilitated the presentation of my credentials...

Smiling, the Pope listened to what I was saying and then, talked about the necessity for unision among the Poles. And how could I have deceived Him? I had to be one with true Poles!

I have a picture from this meeting with the Pope. It was taken by a Polish Catholic journalist who was staying as a host in the Embassy.

That same evening, we went with Niunia to a reception at the Soviet Embas-

sy on the occasion of the Red Army's Day. The press immediately published a picture on which I was being greeted by Polanski.

February 23, 1981, constituted no mean mosaic for us...

The next day, we went to the Residence of the Pronuncio, Archbishop M. Gaspari, who was later to become close to us. He organized a meeting of the diplomatic corps with the Pope. We found ourselves in the same room as John Paul II. The other ambassadors were in the next room. The Pope made a speech in English. He spoke about the role of diplomacy in the preservation of peace. Afterwards there was the presentation of the diplomatic corps. The Pope recognized us without any presentation.

That day was exactly my 51st birthday. I mentioned it to the Pope saying that this was the day of my patron Maciej / Polish form of Matthew /. He warmly wished me all the best. And it is then that the photographer took his shot, immortalizing somehow this moment. On the picture, one can see Cardinal Casaroli, Archbishop Gaspari and the Egyptian Ambassador who was standing behind me. Unfortunately, I covered Niunia who is to be seen only a little bit. Fortunately, she is to be seen some more on another photograph... And the first one is framed now and I often look at it...

I must however note that the Pope didn't talk with anybody. There were only presentations and that was all. If he did exchange some words with anybody it was with myself and even this lasted only a moment.

However, Polanski thought otherwise. Later, he would often tell me, and this in the presence of others, that the Pope told him that Marx wrote about the necessity of working. And there is Solidarity who does not want to work!

I don't have anything against human imagination, but in this case it was at the least out of place...

That was how I began my career as Ambassador. From then on I started paying an enormous quantity of visits. I have paid one to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Masayoshi Ito, whom I have once again informed of our difficulties, our tolerance and compromise and I told him about Poland's necessity of receiving Japan's assistance. I knew that this made a good impression. Ito expressed his esteem for the process of democratization in Poland. The press and the television picked up his positive attitude towards the possible assistance for Poland.

I repeated the same thing everywhere I went to pay the visits - to the business, the press and TV syndicates, the members of Parliament. I really believed what I was saying. How proud I was to represent a country which was peacefully becoming democratic!

I liked those visits. Depending on the person to whom I paid it, I was accompanied by a person from one or the other section of the Embassy. If I

was going to see some representative of the business world, or to the economic departments, I was accompanied by the Commercial Counsellor, S. Janiszewski, whom I knew since a long time. If I called on politicians or members of Parliament, I would go with Counsellor S. Skowron. And finally, if I was to pay a visit to press or television syndicates, I was accompanied by the First Secretary of the Embassy, A. Nierubiec.

When going for such meetings, I was always ushered through corridors and rooms, where pretty receptionists would always stand, their heads deeply bowed. I would then be shown to a room where I would sit down in a deep armchair with a low and square table in front of it. These rooms were almost always the same. And so were the reception halls. In the case of the business, the latter were normally situated on one of the last floors of a skyscraper, from where one could have a beautiful view on Tokyo.

Then the main host would come and reciprocal presentations would take place. We would exchange our visiting-cards. As a matter of fact, it is not correct to talk about 'the' main host, for there were never less than 6 of them. I have never, of course, seen any woman among them. They did work but as receptionists bringing us the slightly bitterish Japanese green tea. As soon as they would bring it in, they would vanish. My conversations always took place through an interpreter even if the main host did speak English.

All my Japanese interlocutors showed great interest in the Polish affairs and some of them even in Poland as a country, having been there on various occasions and at various periods. All of them ^{admired} the peaceful progress of the changes.

Poland really did enjoy a good opinion in spite of the economic difficulties and the dangerous murmurs from behind the Bug. In comparison with the excesses in Iran and other places in the world, Poland appeared to my hosts as a civilized country. I did all to confirm them in their view of my Homeland...

Only one of my interlocutors, the Vice Minister of Finances, Mr. Sagami, with whom I spoke in a tête-à-tête, for he ^{was} fluent in English, asked me whether I really believed that there would be no Soviet intervention and that all would end well in Poland. My answer was that I wanted very much to believe it, although as General Clausewitz put it once 'the politicians are the group No. 4 - stupid but very active'. I said this in German, for I knew that Mr. Sagami spoke it.

'And the problem is in the hands of politicians' - I concluded. Mr. Sagami became thoughtful and when I was leaving, he gave my hand a strong squeeze.

The visits I was paying to the political organizations also deserve attention.

The ones particularly worth of being mentioned are those I paid to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Japan. The Party has, for years now, very tense relations with the Soviet Communist Party, and lately even with the Chinese Communist Party. However, it assumed a very sympathetic attitude towards Solidarity and the movement of renewal in Poland. It even wrote an "open letter", concerning this problem, to the Soviet Communist Party and this gave rise to new quarrels between them both.

My first visit took place in the absence of the Party's Chairman, Mr. Miyamoto, who was at the hospital. I was received by the Secretary General of the Party, Mr. Fuwa, who acted in Miyamoto's name. He was accompanied by other members of the Politburo, Mr. Nishizawa and Mr. Tachiki, and by other members and functionaries of the Central Committee.

I held the talks in Russian, as I have always done later on, since the interpreter of the Communist Party of Japan knew this language perfectly well. I must admit that this astonished me somewhat, for I did not exclude a possible penetration by the Soviet intelligence services. This could have been a possible channel. Therefore, I decided to be cautious with what I would say.

Nevertheless, at the very beginning, I emphasized the fact that the Polish Communist and workers' movement had long traditions and that it is capable of resolving its problems by itself. I also said that the revolt of the Polish workers was fully justifiable, for the errors in the development strategy are evident. I concluded my whole argument in such a manner that I neither backed the Japanese-Soviet dispute, nor condemned it. Fuwa probably understood this that way. The discussion was long and cordial.

Later, at his speech delivered at the Festival of Akahata, the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Japan, for which I was invited together with other ambassadors from the "socialist countries", Fuwa very strongly warned the USSR against any interference in the Polish affairs.

There is yet another fact worth of being mentioned. That very spring, Erich Honecker, the "leader" of the GDR, paid a visit to Japan. On that occasion he met with the Chairman of the of the Japanese Communist Party, Miyamoto. Afterwards, at a meeting of the ambassadors of the "socialist countries" /these meetings were held approximately once a month/, the East German Ambassador Erie, informed those gathered that Miyamoto expressed himself sharply about Solidarity, calling it "counter-revolution".

Somehow, this was out of character with what I knew about the Japanese

Party's position on that issue. I then announced my willingness to pay a visit to Miyamoto, whom I have not yet met personally, but about whose stormy life I have already heard. He received me almost immediately and when I arrived for the visit, he greeted me in the presence of other Politburo members. Our encounter was a warm one. Miyamoto who in spite of his age looked very healthy, was very much disquieted by the activity of the 'Communist clubs' in Poland, and particularly with the Katowice one. He absolutely rightly suspected their manipulation from the exterior. I shared somewhat his fears, but on the other hand, I reassured him that those clubs are no problem from the numerical point of view.

And at that moment I decided to check whether Erie was telling the truth. Very delicately, but clearly enough, I asked him about his talk with Honecker concerning the Polish affairs... Miyamoto's face turned grey. Very calmly he answered that the members of his Politburo, who were then present can confirm his words, for they have also assisted him during his meeting with Honecker. Slowly, he told me what he said. Nothing fitted Erie's account. I believed Miyamoto. Upon my return to the Embassy, I sent a cable to Warsaw informing about the discrepancies between both informations.

I should also mention that Miyamoto asked me for help in the accreditation to Poland of a permanent correspondent of Akahata. I shall yet return to this problem in another Chapter. All I can say now is that there has been no consent to this request from Warsaw.

The relations between the PUMP and the Japanese Socialist Party were in a better state. I also paid a visit to its leadership with Asukata at its head. The conversation was a pleasant one but I could not detect any evident taking of sides with regard to the Polish conflict. My hosts were mainly interested in the economic situation in Poland. I renewed the PUMP's CC's invitation for a visit to Poland. It was accepted but no possible date was discussed. There was no similar invitation for the Japanese Communist Party...

I also called on the leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party - the governing party of Japan - Mr. Sakurauchi, who was later to become the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Our meeting was long and agreeable. My host was visibly interested in Poland and expressed his approbation for her peaceful process of democratization. I even invited him to pay a visit to Poland, but we did not yet discuss its dates. Later, already as Minister of Foreign Affairs, and after my departure from Japan, Mr. Sakurauchi expressed himself warmly about this meeting.

And so I continued my round of other political parties and organizations and above all the Parliament and its individual members. Later came other visits,

including even the Union of Koreans. It is worth mentioning that there is, in Japan, a group of several hundred thousands of Koreans, organized, for various historical reasons, into an union maintaining very close contacts with North Korea and fighting tooth and nail against South Korea. The discussion with the leadership of the union was, on my hosts' side, one long attack on the U.S., South Korea and the ''Japanese capital''. There was, hanging on the wall of the reception hall, an enormous portrait of Kim-I-I-Sung I also received an invitation for the reception organized on the occasion of, I think, the 69th birthday of the ''beloved'' leader. The Koreans in Japan are financially speaking well off, inspite of a certain discrimination.

The reception was fabulous. The huge portrait of the ''leader'', who looked as if he was 30 at the very most, was hanging in the room. It was decorated with flowers and illuminated in such a way that it did not give the impression of a portrait, but of an altar. And this is no exaggeration! The ambassadors of the ''socialist countries'' and other officials who were present at the ''birthday party'' were asked to step before the portrait. A cantata began flowing from the loudspeakers. The leaders of the Union bent in a deep bow. It was exactly like the Elevation during the church mass...

From other worthy events, I must mention our visits paid to the members of the Imperial Family and the diplomatic corps.

We have been in the Imperial Palace to pay a visit to the Crown Prince Akihito and the Princess Michiko, his wife. Both of them, and especially the Princess, speak fluent English. One could detect, on the face of Princess Michiko, a still young and very beautiful woman, signs of a recently suffered illness, which caused much anxiety in Japan. The discussion concerned Poland, the world affairs and personal ones. The Princess especially was intereted in Ewa and even Toofy...

The visit we paid the successive Heir to the Throne, Prince Hitachi and his wife, was also extremely pleasant. They too speak English and that of the Princess is absolutely excellent. When some time later, in October, the Polish National Ensemble ''Mazowsze'' came to Japan, I invited both the Prince and the Princess for the gala performance. They both came and this was some kind of sensation in itself.

We also participated in other Imperial events - beginning with a ''bungaku'' dance ceremony in the courtyard of the palace, a reception in Kamakura and at the Imperial farm, and ending with the Emperor's birthday. At the reception for the 80th birthday of the Emperor the entire diplomatic corps was presented to the Emperor and his family. An amusing incident took place here. It was the first time Niunia saw the Emperor. Everyone shook

hands with him only once. Something came over me and I thought Niunia did not yet shake hands with the Emperor, so I whispered to her :''Give your hand''. Being a bit confused by this, she did it. The Emperor smiled pleasantly and, for the second time, gave his hand with good grace.

Our visits paid to to the ambassadors who were, generally speaking, accredited earlier than myself, are worthy of a separate description. There were tens of such visits and even a brief mentioning of them would take up too much time. On the other hand, we ourselves received the visits of the ambassadors and their wives who came to Tokyo after our own arrival. However, I should like to make a few remarks. Niunia, who held a detailed diary of our stay in Japan, will maybe one day describe this period more fully, for it is an interesting one.

First of all, we began with the ''socialist'' ambassadors. The Czechs were the first. They have a very nice and modern residence where they gracefully received us. We then went to the Polanskis, the East Germans, the Hungarians, etc. without excluding the Ethiopian and Afghan ambassadors. The most undiplomatic-like were the South Yemenites and the Laotian ambassador, who was without his family, gave us the impression of being the saddest of all...

Then came the turn of all the other ambassadors. This time we began with Turkey. I knew Amb.Cuhruk from Geneva and, therefore, our meeting with him and his wife was particularly warm. We almost immediately became friends. We were also very much charmed by their beautiful Embassy. As I have already mentioned, our visit to Ambassador and Mrs.M.Mansfield was also a very pleasant one. We also became quite close with Ambassador and Mrs.Cortazzi, from Great Britain.

We had excellent relations with Ambassador and Mrs.Kaufmann from the Netherlands. I knew Ambassador Kaufmann earlier and we even addressed ourselves by our Christian names. Very good relations developed between ourselves and the Ambassador from Belgium, Mr.Dehenin and his wife. The same concerned our relations with Ambassador and Mrs.Madeiro from Portugal, the Pronuncio Archbishop Gaspari, Ambassador Oliva and his wife from Argentina, Ambassador Costa from Brazil and Ambassador Valdes from the Philippines. It is impossible to mention all those with whom we had friendly relations. I already knew many of them from my various trips around the world, whereas with others, I became acquainted in Tokyo.

There were, in Tokyo, more than 100 ambassadors and they were all giving receptions the whole time. And so did the Emperor, the government, the business, the Parliamnet, the various political parties, the press and the TV, the religious and scientific organizations and God only knows who.

there were hundreds of occasions of meeting people. The Polish affairs interested everyone and I could not complain about not having interlocutors. My mouth never closed... When Poland was threatened with various armed invasions, people would come up to us and express their sympathy. These were not ''socialist'' ambassadors of course...

And so ,my life and Niunia's was filled with various events from early morning to late evening, I also gave lectures and together we attended various performances and visited exhibits. We have also been to an exhibit of Polish graphic artists and went to a concert directed by the Polish conductor Jan Krenz. Several days later we hosted him and his wife in our Residence. We had a very pleasant discussion. We often went to Yokohama where we visited Polish ships and there were innumerable receptions which I mostly attended alone, for the Japanese business and various other organizations give exclusively masculine receptions.

I also read a lot about Japan. I collected probably all the accessible literature on this subject - all in English of course. I didn't even attempt to learn the Japanese. Not only I didn't have the time to do it, but somehow, I wasn't certain how long I will remain in Japan.

In the meanwhile, the news from Poland was disquieting. As mentioned, the news of the Bydgoszcz provocation came as suddenly as a bomb-shell. There was the threat of a general strike and of a Soviet intervention. I gave many interviews and, all along, I just didn't believe that the latter could be possible - officially at least I wasn't. But to tell the truth, we were both very alarmed. We even called Ewa to prepare her for our eventual signal. It was already then that we counted on the possibility of seeking political asylum. But in case the Polish government would have opposed a possible Soviet intervention, then I would have faithfully served it!

The statement issued by Brezhnev at the XXVith Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, which took place in February 1981, worried me. What did it mean that ''... we shall not permit any harm to be done to Poland''?

Therefore, I agreed to participate in a ''scientific seminar'' about the XXVith Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. It was, of course, to take place in the Soviet Embassy. I had to give a lecture on the situation in Poland. My role was that of the main speaker. All the Soviet Embassy staff members came together with their wives. The other embassies of the ''socialist'' countries were also represented. This whole ''seminar'' took place on April 22, 1981. The Soviets wanted me to deliver to them the text of my speech prior to this date. But I told them that I was going to speak without any text at all and in Russian, of course. And so,

I delivered the speech! I defended Solidarity in the Soviet Embassy! I unequivocally accused the system, and not the Polish workers, for being responsible for all what was going on in Poland. Later, Polanski probably got his right deserts for all this...

Still, all this was nothing in comparison with the arrival to Japan of the delegation of Solidarity with, at its head, Lech Wałęsa.

I knew about the coming visit since long. Warsaw, however, remained completely silent in this matter. Until, one day, the already mentioned Mr. Tomizuka, Secretary General of ''Sohyo'', the organization which invited Solidarity's delegation, paid me a visit. Mr. Tomizuka was preparing the plan of the delegation's visit and wanted to know whether I was going to greet it and see it off at the airport and whether I was going to participate in the receptions and other events organized for it. By doing so, he placed me in a rather difficult position...

I answered however that yes, of course, I shall give a reception and I shall participate in all the other ones, but that I will probably not take part in the rallies. As far as the greeting and the seeing off of the delegation is concerned, I said, I shall yet think it over.

With a cable, I immediately informed Warsaw about this discussion. The first answer I received was... a long silence. Anyway, this was nothing new to me. I never received answers to some of the cables. It would be interesting to make a digression at this point.

At one time, when the world was awaiting the possibility of yet another armed Soviet intervention in Poland, which was being prepared during the spring under the pretext of joint Polish-Soviet maneuvers, I received news from Warsaw that the maneuvers were ended. Delighted with the news I left to attend a meeting with the President of Tanzania, J. Nyerere. The latter, visibly worried, asked me directly what was going on in Poland. I responded that nothing probably, for the maneuvers were ended. The President was visibly relieved. But, as it later turned out, the maneuvers went on. In that case, I dispatched a cable to Warsaw asking them whether the previous cable was true or not, for I was constantly beset with questions on the subject. And the answer never came. Meanwhile, the maneuvers went on and on and on...

So it was this time - the silence lasted. Seeing this, I decided to proceed with the preparations for the reception of Wałęsa and his delegation. Since I was afraid that covering the cost of the reception from my representative funds only, would be severely criticized in Warsaw, I therefore decided to ask our Polono-Japanese Company ''Agropol'' and LOT-Orbis, for some financial assistance. They both agreed. First of all, I plan-

ned the reception, which was to take place in the Residence, for the delegation and some of the staff members of the Embassy and their families, as well as for the Director of Agropol and the Chief of the LOT-Orbis bureau. And then, according to my plan, we would invite all the other Poles and the Japanese to the reception hall. I decided not to invite anybody from any foreign embassy. I had the invitations written out and, among them there were some for certain Ministers. My assessment was that such a reception would help me in my activities. I wanted to show that Poland is one and that I recognize the officially existing Solidarity. It must be said here that this visit to Japan was to be the first official one, paid by Solidarity with Lech Wałęsa at its head, to a foreign country. The one they paid to the Vatican, at the turn of the year, did not have an official character.

And then, several days before the arrival of the delegation, I received, from Warsaw, a cable forbidding me to greet the delegation at the airport... I didn't even ask for the permission to give the reception, but I could guess that I would never receive it...

So I decided not to go to the airport and to send there, in my name, Counsellor Skowron. However, I did not cancel the reception!

The delegation of Solidarity landed in Tokyo on May 10, 1981 at 3:30p.m. They were greeted at the airport by Counsellor Skowron.

The next day, a rally with Solidarity took place in Tokyo. I myself did not attend it, but I sent there some members of my Embassy, since I knew that they would certainly go there anyway...

That evening I listened to the account of the rally. I was told that at least 6 members of the Soviet Embassy were seen in the hall and that it was possible that there could have been more of them. During the rally, Jan Rulewski held a speech in which he attacked the USSR and Communism. They even had a tape of his address! The situation was troublesome. I had to inform Warsaw about this fact, for the whole affair would be much worse if Warsaw received the information via Moscow. I somehow minimized the affair, but I had to announce that the tape would be sent, for it was bound to arrive in Warsaw anyway.

The next day, that is May 12, at 7p.m., Lech Wałęsa and the delegation of Solidarity were to arrive at the Residence. The general reception was to take place at 8:30p.m.

I decided that, together with Niunia, we shall greet Lech Wałęsa in front of our Residence, just by the entrance to the garage. The bus with the delegation drove over. Before they arrived, plainclothes policemen guarded all the possible spots...

After a few seconds Wałęsa came out of the bus - he was wearing his leather jacket, the collar of his shirt was unbuttoned, the likeness of the Black Madonna of Częstochowa was pinned in his lapel and in his hand, he was holding the inseparable pipe.

' In the name of the Embassy of the PPR I greet you, Mr.Chairman, on this patch of Polish soil - I greeted him. We cordially shook our hands. Then Niunia greeted Wałęsa who, according to the Polish tradition, kissed her hand. Fortunately, we have the pictures taken during this welcome - we have also sent them to Lech Wałęsa. Afterwards I greeted the remaining members of the delegation : Messrs.Bujak, Rulewski, Frasyniuk, Mazowiecki, Drzymcinski, Beksiak and two ladies whose names I have unfortunately forgotten, as well as the interpreter into the Japanese, Mr.Lipszyc and Mr.Kudo , a Japanese with Polish citizenship. I don't think I have omitted anyone, although I do not have the list of the delegation with me.

When walking towards the Residence, we were drowning in the glare of photographic flashes and sun lamps...

Further greeting took place inside the Residence. This time the members of my Embassy were greeting the delegation.

The champagne glasses were ready. I proposed the toast :

' I warmly greet the Delegation of Solidarity with its Chairman Lech Wałęsa. I believe that this visit to Japan will be instrumental in intensifying the Polish-Japanese relations, that it will enable the delegation to familiarize itself with the successes of this country, which can be made useful in Poland. In the world, the Japanese are being called ''workaholics''. Indeed, they work 47 hours a week and even up to 56 hours in the small business... Please feel at home...' - I concluded.

Lech Wałęsa answered shortly and warmly. The cameras caught the moment of the toasts.

A very warm atmosphere was then created. Our hosts could finally eat some Polish dishes. Nobody refused a glass of vodka... I spoke with all the members of the delegation. My impression was as good as it could be. Rulewski seemed very pleasant to me, although I mentioned to Wałęsa that he should be more careful about his speeches. He agreed with me. I asked them both whether they knew who had beaten the activists of Solidarity in Bydgoszcz. They both just waved their hands with resignation, hinting that, unfortunately, they only knew it too well...

Bujak and Frasyniuk behaved in a very unassuming way and now, in the USSR, they are being called ''fascists''.

The discussions I had with Wałęsa were sometimes of a polemic character and I was very surprised that he did not stick unquestionably to anything.

He would agree with me when not finding arguments for his viewpoint. Therefore, I find it hard to believe that it was absolutely impossible to come to terms with him and with Solidarity.

Finally, we had to begin the general reception earlier than planned, for the Japanese arrived before time. The Minister of Labor was already present. Together with Lech Wałęsa we moved over to the entrance door where we began meeting the arriving guests. I did not permit any television or journalist inside, but they filmed and photographed us standing in the door. Even Moscow television broadcast some scenes and criticized me for the whole thing...

The guests rushed into the room. Everyone of them wanted to see Lech Wałęsa and his Delegation. They could not believe they could do it in the Embassy of the PPR.

The room was rapidly filled with people. I didn't propose any more toasts, but invited everyone over to the table. And it was just impossible to keep away from discussions, photos and private toasts... On one of the pictures, both Lech Wałęsa and I look as if we had one drink too many...

That evening of May 12, 1981 shall long remain in Niunia's and my memories. This was Free Poland! As Lech Wałęsa himself said: "A Pole will always come to terms with a Pole." And it is so that we came to an understanding without any difficulty.

Today, there stands on our desk, beside the big picture with the Pope, another one - our picture with Lech Wałęsa. We are all authentically laughing! My, we thought this would always last...

I also had a short tête-à-tête with Lech Wałęsa. It was captured by a camera. There was concern hidden beneath his external joy. He was prepared for the worst...

The next day, that is May 14, after midnight, I was woke by a phone call from Mr. Andrzej Nierubiec. The Pope was wounded! I found out Lech Wałęsa in a hotel in Nagasaki, where he already was. He knew about the tragedy in Rome.

"Mr. Ambassador!" - he cried into the phone, "I didn't kill a fly in my life, but I would like to lay my hands on that crumb who shot our Pope!"

I treated this news as one of the worst I ever received in my life. My suspicion was immediately turned towards a very known direction, although I did not rule out the deed of a maniac. After all, the maniac Hinckley almost killed President Reagan shortly before the assassination attempt in Saint Peter's Square in Rome.

I called the Pronuncio, but nobody picked the phone. So I called the Ambassador Andrade of Portugal, for I knew he was the Archbishop's friend.

When learning the news, Ambassador Andrade almost collapsed. He promised to go immediately to the Pronuncio.

Fortunately, after long hours in the operating room, the Pope's life was saved. Our happiness, however, faded away. Bad things, in connection with Poland, were beginning to take place.

I have met Lech Wałęsa and his delegation two more times - once at the reception at the Imperial Hotel and then on the evening of May 16 at the Narita Airport, when they were leaving.

Even then, Wałęsa told me that he felt tired and that he would willingly resign. I advised him against such a thing. I sincerely believed that Solidarity would find nobody better to replace him. When walking with him to the waiting room where he was to await his flight, I saw, in one of the other waiting rooms, Aurelio Peccei, the father of the Club of Rome. We have once participated in an international seminar and therefore we knew each other. I waved to him and he came out to us. I explained to Wałęsa who Peccei was and then, as they started talking, I took on the role of interpreter. Peccei said that Wałęsa was the bravest man in the world and kissed him with a smack on both cheeks...

As we continued on our way people applauded Wałęsa and his delegation. I bid them farewell. Jan Rulewski's voice was visibly moved. They probably didn't expect that somebody from the PPR would receive them...

When will we see each other again? As I write these words, that is on October 5, 1982, Lech Wałęsa is still interned in Arłamów, in complete isolation from others. Jan Rulewski and Tadeusz Mazowiecki are arrested. I do not know the sort of Andrzej Drzycimski, Lipszyc and Beksiak. What about Kudo and the two ladies?

Zbigniew Bujak and Władysław Frasyniuk are in the underground where they bravely operate. /1/

Just a while ago, the radio informed that Solidarity may be officially disbanded by the Sejm already on the 8th of this month.

I do not know what will happen next, but as I was seeing off Lech Wałęsa and his delegation, I felt that strong bonds linked us - no, not of friendship, but of the community of our Polish interests. It was then that I told myself that never in my life will I abandon these people if they are in need. And I did not.

/1/ As I have finished writing this, I learned that Władysław Frasyniuk has been arrested on October 5, 1982, in Wrocław. He was returning from a secret meeting in Warsaw or in its vicinity. In this case, only Zbigniew Bujak remains in the underground.