

Question-and-Answer Session With Reporters Following a Luncheon With Solidarity Leader Lech Walesa in Gdansk *July 11, 1989*

Q. Come this way.

Q. We can't hear you. How about coming over?

The President. He said he can't hear us. I'm not sure we want him to, do we?

Mr. Walesa. Mr. President, I am ready. I'll walk up.

The President. All right.

Q. What did you talk about?

The President. She wants to know what we talked about.

Q. And what did you decide?

Mr. Walesa. If that's what you need, I can briefly tell you. Poland has had major achievements now -- politically, but the problem centers on matching political reform with economic reform. Let's take the example of China, where the economic topics were not lined up properly with political ones. In Poland, there is a danger, too, but it's in reverse. Here the political problems have gotten ahead of the economic ones.

Meeting with the head of a superpower, a superpower in all areas -- in other words, a superpower economically and politically -- we hope that in this situation we have a chance to adjust our situation. We're not after any loans; we're after cooperation -- cooperation in which one partner would be billion. If we succeed in opening branches of Western banks which would keep billion and could strike a good deal in Poland, that would fix our economic problems. And this is what I asked Mr. President about, and that was my primary appeal and request.

Q. What about this billion, Mr. President? What about it?

The President. You heard carefully what he said. He is not asking for billion; he's asking for investment and the potential to build through the private sector to the tune of American banks being in Poland carrying billion. That could be American banks, other banks. And to me it's interesting and quite different than the interpretation that I've seen placed on this figure by other people.

We had a very good luncheon in the sense that it was -- having met Mr. Walesa before, I really rejoiced in his hospitality, he and his Danuta, giving us the hospitality of being in their home. And we talked about a wide array of issues. I clearly salute today, as I have in

the past, his contribution to the enormous political reforms that have taken place, and I have told him that I want to work with him and with Poland in every way possible on the economic reforms.

So, now I will go to the economic summit. I will take with me the detail -- he gave me a detailed paper -- the details of his proposals, and we'll see where we come out. But in terms of his emphasis on the private sector and on job opportunity through private investment and private and competitive business practice, I must say I can give strong support to that -- standing right here in his yard.

Note: The President spoke at 1:50 p.m. at the Walesa residence. A tape was not available for verification of the contents of the remarks.