


On the Direction of Critical Policy

O kierunek polityki krytycznej

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Abstract: Politics needs not only internal rationality and orderliness of law, which should be characterised by coherence of argumentation, but also – as urgently as ever – ethos, this carrier of values that bring order to human communication, so much underestimated today, yet influencing political phenomena and processes, objective theory. Rationality and morality are rooted in society as a whole. The pursuit of full political power, its maximisation by the winning parties, cannot be the main goal. Politicians should also take into account the dignity of human beings and society. The way to reconcile the two goals is shown by systemic personalism. This is a different approach in the understanding of politics and the science of politics as acting in the interests of a common society. Nowadays, there is no agreement on the essence of politics, there is no recognition of its ethical dimension. Fashionable relativism and the increasing fragmentation of political science make it impossible to understand the increasingly dynamic and vast field of politics.

Keywords: politics, society, personalism

Streszczenie: Polityka potrzebuje nie tylko wewnętrznej racjonalności i uporządkowania prawa, które winno odznaczać się spójnością argumentacji, ale także – jakże pilnie – etosu, tego nośnika wartości, które wprowadzają ład w ludzką komunikację, tak bardzo dzisiaj niedocenianego, a przecież wpływającego na zjawiska i procesy polityczne, na obiektywną teorię. Racjonalność i moralność stanowią zakorzenioną w społeczeństwie całość. Sama pogoń za pełnią władzy politycznej, jej maksymalizacją przez zwycięskie partie nie może stanowić głównego celu. Politycy powinni uwzględniać także godność człowieka i społeczeństwa. Drogę do pogodzenia obu celów ukazuje personalizm systemowy. Jest to inne podejście w rozumieniu polityki i nauki o polityce jako działania na rzecz interesu wspólnego społeczeństwa. Dzisiaj nie ma zgody co do istoty polityki, brakuje uznania dla jej wymiaru etycznego. Modny relatywizm i postępująca fragmentaryzacja politologii uniemożliwiają poznanie coraz bardziej dynamicznego i rozległego pola polityki.

Słowa kluczowe: polityka, społeczeństwo, personalizm

We are experiencing times in which the crisis is deepening not only political, legal, economic, but also ideological and spiritual, which is especially easy to see in the space of political journalism, where a fierce struggle for the truth is taking place. In these disputes, not only the direction of critical policy is lost, but also the atmosphere of rational dialogue indicating the prospects, opportunities, and difficulties of the development of society and the state. What is missing is a concept acceptable to the majority of the population that reforms the system and functioning of the state, the economy and even the justice system. Our social, political, and economic life should be based on truth and strive for the common good of the people. Truth, in the sense of personalism as the conformity of the person to reality, is the basis of existence and at the same time the main task of man of all times and places. However, the truth has always been and is incomplete, violated in the field of knowledge, ideas, speech, social life and all action. Thus, although Man lives from truth and strives for truth, he nevertheless creates a lot of untruth, not only because of lack of adequate knowledge, error, but also because he wants to change reality to a more favourable one by words alone, or he also consciously distorts the truth with his mind, will, feelings, behaviour, actions (Bartnik 2005: 11; Hallowell 1993; Król 1996; Łagowski 1997; Mocek 1997; Sobczak 2005: 135–158; Stróżewski 1992; Sztompka 1999). Today, the truth is denied by the so-called political correctness, inversion of concepts, concealment of reality, verbal aggression, which prevents the elementary description of reality. Political correctness arises from the powerlessness of society and state authorities, it appears when people feel that their personal resourcefulness finds space for creative striving for existence and accept many shortcomings of the system, especially the deliberately vague “top-down policy” of tolerance for the past, to which a significant part of society succumbs, creating their own rules of relations with the system, allowing theft, corruption, illegal business deals, contesting God, the church, religion. Man loses his sense of peace, beauty, and truth (Zybertowicz 16–22.04.2012: 28; Wójcik 2023: 163–165). In Poland, where public life is dominated by atheism and liberalism, there is a profound untruth in politics, media, education, and visions of the future. Democracy is based on truth, but when there is no truth, manipulation, demoralisation occurs, society and power become radicalised.

The aim of the publication is to demonstrate the need to complement the political debate, social communication in the spirit of personalism as a carrier of values that bring order into interpersonal relations, into human

communication. The theses are as follows: there is a weak Christian stratum at the core of politics and the media; liberalism has gained wide recognition, which carries certain values but is also seen as a great threat; the egoism of elites vying for full power in the state clashes with a society lacking sufficient experience and knowledge amid ongoing disputes over a fully democratic rule of law; systemic personalism, which creates a whole system of reality correlated with the phenomenon of the human person, can lead us out of this anthropological crisis.

In the analysis of the deepening political, economic, social crisis, the loss of rational dialogue, I use critical political science in conjunction with economics and a personalist and liberal axiological perspective, which allow us to follow the directions of critical politics, disputes between ruling and opposition parties and their media for a new system, the functioning of the state and society.

1. Poland Before the Challenge

For centuries, and this is also confirmed by the period of recent history, Poland has been and is doomed to associate its cultural identity with the ideas of freedom, the dignity of the human person and independence. Today, new challenges face our nation as it tries to rebuild its identity, the value of freedom, justice, the right to property, decent work and wages, and to facilitate socio-occupational advancement. We observe how social, cultural, scientific life begins to take place spontaneously on an economic basis, without the need for special intervention. The importance of the state is decreasing, the role of political parties, the media and large corporations is growing. In the political and sociological literature on the creation of conditions for an information or knowledge society in Poland, it is written that the beginning of the 21st century, due to the dynamic progress of technology and the sciences, will be a period of a new revolution involving radical changes in the organisation of industrial societies. The Polish information society is still treated as an abstract, which represents a rather distant goal of restructuring society. This is because we are not yet experiencing the shocking upheaval of our existence, we have not created a new language to describe this new reality, and as a civil society we are in the process of creating organizations and associations that fill the space between the individual and

the family and the state. Certainly, it will be necessary to take into account such threats as, e.g., getting lost in artificial reality, in information terror, or in political, doctrinal or press dictate. But one can also hope that this new technology, this new language will help to show the emerging opportunities for development more quickly, to arouse hope for a more effective fight against unemployment or inflation, for raising the standard of living. Great hope must be placed in the pluralism of the media, universities and elites, and in the authority of the Catholic Church.

2. Dogmas of Liberal Ideology – Opportunities and Threats

This important topic of the new quality of life of Polish society in the context of social, political, economic and cultural modernization is being implemented under the dominant influence of liberal-left politicians supported by partners from the European Union (EU). The new system is being built and civil society is still not coping with many issues, especially ethical ones. For us Poles, trying to catch up with the technologically advanced west of Europe, it will be important whether we will achieve lasting economic and political success, paying for it the high price of reducing the personality of the individual. Will it be a success at all? And what about the concept of a full man, spiritually enriched and responsible for his destiny? It cannot be ruled out that the concentration of capital and knowledge in the negative aspect can lead to the re-slavery of people without capital and knowledge.

For a long time, the idea of a united Europe, which has been well received by Poles and which brings hope for a better tomorrow, is currently experiencing a crisis. More and more people are wondering what mistakes were made, because everything was supposed to be good, and in general it starts to be bad and gets worse. In fact, it is very good only for a narrow group that has become rich and has gained leading positions in the state and the EU. According to Czesław S. Bartnik, an important answer is given by the set of dogmas of liberal doctrine, which assimilates the ideological dogmas of the New Left, which destructively affect life in Poland. The basic components of this ideological hybrid, which concern politics, economy and culture, are: (1) the disappearance of states (their place is to be taken by globalism, in which there will be a multitude of geographical and ecological regions, i.e. gardens of paradise for the rich); (2) a new global and

regional order (to be based on elite democracy, without universal democracy); (3) a free market (to replace power, governance and the system of law, to ensure the omnipotence of money); (4) the aid system (to prevent major rebellions and riots); (5) the “Guatemalanisation” of Eastern European countries (90% of the land and capital in Guatemala is owned by a few rich people, Americans, Germans, Jews, and Guatemalans are already slaves of the wealthy families); (6) the depopulation policy (is to be served respectively by: sex education, sexualism, contraception, abortion, euthanasia, obstruction of medical care, denial of assistance to large families, legalisation of LGBT marriage and adoption of children by them); (7) the lowering of the cultural rate of the masses (this includes limiting the access of the lower classes to the benefits of higher civilisation, pushing them away from higher education, keeping them out of the public media, reducing investment in science and the arts); (8) the lack of a functioning state and universal democracy are supposed to cover up local governments (they are increasingly bogus); (9) the dishonouring of the military and public services (the army must be small in number, under-armed and ridiculed, as it can nevertheless resist this ideology, the plundering of the homeland, cheating at elections and false pro-EU propaganda). In the conclusion, C.S. Bartnik notices:

Certain centres, difficult to identify, want to use the unification process to gain power over us, to possess our goods and to impose on us an ideology not much different from the Bolshevik one. While the Western countries have united fairly and in open cards, the Eastern countries are wanted to be won by force, deception and on worse terms. [...] Poles are currently less divided by their attitude to the Union than by their attitude to this conquering ideology, which does not coincide with the matter of unification as a historical process, but is a kind of heist of the richer countries of the Union “on the banks of the eastern countries” (Bartnik 2003a: 40).

Further in-depth analyses of the EU’s evolution are needed in order to recognise and neutralise the many risks alongside the expected benefits. It is about those decisions of the Union that liquidate entire branches of Polish industry, causing mass layoffs, block economic and technological development, spread anti-family propaganda, break up the Polish Church, and raise fears about the liquidation of the state.

3. Destruction of the State and Law

Months have passed since the parliamentary elections of October 15, 2023, when the opposition political formation consisting of politicians from the Civic Platform (PO), the Polish People's Party (PSL), Poland 2050 (Polska 2050) and The New Left (Nowa Lewica) took almost full power in Poland (legislative, executive, judicial). Beyond its reach remains presidential power, the takeover of which is currently being fiercely fought with the opposition in a climate of talk, destruction, and destruction of the rival's reputation. The new parliament and government are conducting a series of incomprehensible actions that disturb the public. The parliament adopts resolutions without regard to the relevant provisions of the constitution and laws, announces withdrawals and withdraws immunities from opposition MPs, appoints investigative committees to account the rule of Law and Justice (PiS), which deny the interrogated the right to free expression, arrests, as if this government intended to liquidate the legitimate opposition. Half of Polish adults (approx. 7.5 million) is not in favour of federalisation, the construction of a European superstate. But they are not "Eurosceptic," they are the supporters of the union of sovereign states (confederation). An even greater part of Poles do not want to continue the communist project of building a new Poland, which deprives us of patriotism, religion, tradition, and national identity. Strong social unrest is caused by the intentions of the government, which is attempting to implement

[...] an innovative idea of a limited state of emergency aimed at suspending the constitutional prerogatives of the head of state – unknown in the horizon of the entire European political and legal thought, questions the legal power of key political institutions of the Polish state (the National Bank of Poland), as well as courts described as non-courts [...] (the Constitutional Tribunal, the Supreme Court) (Rokita 20.01.2024: 2).

The courts accept the unlawful actions of the politicised prosecutor's office, some judges try to exclude another judge (appointed by the National Court Register) from the ruling, the judgments of judges appointed in recent years are being challenged. This political chaos and deepening lawlessness is seriously weakening our state. It is often referred to as the PO-PiS party state and is treated as the subject of a political game.

The scale of the attack on the state system, on the rule of law are dangerous developments. The evolution of the state system towards full democracy

is under threat. Socialism has collapsed, and neoliberal, chaotic capitalism is developing in Poland, absolutising the importance of the economy, the role of elites and atheism. The current government represents influential interest groups emerging from the Polish People's Republic (PRL): the appropriated nomenclature, bureaucracy, business of the Third Republic, originating from these backgrounds. Under strong pressure from the EU, said government also initiated cooperation with Soviet (Belarusian) communism, which is rapidly turning into state capitalism, which the global oligarchs of Western and Eastern Europe want to use today. Will the emerging resistance of society (demonstrations, strikes) stop the authoritarian aspirations of the new government? The constitution ceases to apply not only to the central executive but also to the local administration, the judiciary. This apparent chaos in the state must be overcome by building elementary political unity and proper judicial control.

We are still dealing with the roundtable system. While in power (2015–2023), PiS politicians, statisticians, state-appointeds, wanted to amend the 1997 constitution and destroy the round-table institutions. Politicians and pro-PO supporters – as opposition – protested that PiS was destroying the state, but which one? Today, this dispute is no longer understood. PO, on the other hand, however verbally, advocated maintaining the *status quo* of Poland's system, "so that everything will be as it used to be," while now it has put forward the slogan of "fighting democracy" in the interests of the oligarchs and its political-administrative base. Some of its politicians, speaking to young Poles on so-called campuses, have spoken out to arouse their hostility to the state, considering themselves anti-state. The Platform takes power with the slogan of "fighting democracy" – is it to decree the abolition of the state? Focusing on the idea of uniting Poland with the EU, PO does not know how to defend Poland's inalienable interests, while PiS, the opposition, did not know how to do it well, but is trying (for discussion see: Ziemkiewicz 6.10.2024: 15–19).

4. Difficulties with Development Policy

What is the future of Poland in the social and economic aspects? The media are sounding the alarm about the deepening divisions and rifts in society, the continuing hostility of the political elite (government – opposition).

For a year now, investment has stopped, and there has even been a flight of foreign investors, a stagnation, accompanied by the pessimism of entrepreneurs who not only do not feel protected by the state but are actually fought against, while they are the ones who largely contribute to making society richer and maintaining job security. Particularly dangerous for the Polish economy will be the radical increase in energy prices announced by the government, which we are already seeing, and the withdrawal of Western entrepreneurs due to the expected drastic production costs. It will also cause a sharp decline in the competitiveness of the Polish economy on world markets.

Economists warn that from 2023 onwards, the consumption-based development of the Polish economy, i.e. carried out by an increase in the population's income, is over. The Polish economy currently needs a dynamic growth of investment. The outgoing government (PiS) had ambitious investment plans: the construction of the Central Communication Port (CPK), nuclear power plants, digitalisation of offices... but the new government will not continue them. Why the decision to sell part of the port of Szczecin to a foreign business is not surprising. The prime minister explains that he is introducing a system of deregulation of the Polish economy, that the government is moving away from interventionism, giving "free rein" to large investors, entrepreneurs as a fully liberal government. At the same time, he believes that this change is in the interests of Poles, and the government media are silent, but most often ostentatiously praise. Another incomprehensible announcement by the government is the introduction of a cadastral tax, i.e. a tax on the value of the land, building or flat owned, which could lead to expropriation, especially of small and medium-sized owners. It is the dynamics of the economic class developing investments that will determine the growth of national income, the state budget, the scale of social policy. The current budget is threatened, inflation and prices are expected to rise. The income of the population will not increase, there will be an increase in taxes, the debt will rise. Will the indicated tax-free amount of 60 thousand be implemented? There is a growing belief that governments are ruining fiscal and monetary policy. All this will lead to the impoverishment of society. As it should be assumed, the incomes from the so-called National Recovery Plan is a financial injection from the EU for the energy transition, but it will only have an effect in five to six years (it will not reduce inflation) and that is provided it is the right economic investment, especially as there are serious doubts about, among other things, whether it will ensure energy

continuity. But the pro-government media hide these assessments of economists, and opposition politicians and their media criticise the closure of mines, the lack of effective economic protection for agriculture, small and medium-sized businesses, the propensity of radical neoliberals (politicians) to sell everything they can, even strategic enterprises, as well as banks, the media, agricultural land, forests..., there will be nothing to be reborn from. Economists warn of a return to poverty.

We are in a difficult period of economic transformation. As the system changes, our society also changes, it becomes more independent, complex, requires new ways of managing and taking into account the actual participation in power, but the importance of political parties still remains. An important indicator of these changes, the growing activity of society, has become a grassroots, mass cross-party movement defending the CPK, treating it not only as an important development institution, but a project of dignity, a manifestation of new aspirations of society. There is a need to find answers, ideas on how to counter threats leading to impoverishment. So far, the prescriptions of the classical economists to use borrowing, spending reductions and no government regulation of the market have not worked. Reductionist is the position of the PO, rejecting the idea of modernisation supported by the centre (ruling party), opposing its universal privatization, local development, supported by EU funds. The pro-government media is dominated by enthusiastic support for all EU decisions and attacks on the opposition for criticizing the EU authorities and their reform plans.

The presence of the state in socio-economic life is due to the fact that it must replace private initiative wherever there is a lack of private initiative and capital resources. The necessary state intervention must also be carried out in terms of efficiency, stability of the entire economy and social justice. In a chaotic, free market economy, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs, the world of work and young people entering the labour market will not be protected by the state, and the future of local communities and the whole of Poland will depend on them. This liberal point of view does not take sufficient account of our native human capital. It is considered a secondary factor in development. This capital is the only Polish capital today. It requires investment and support from the state. Leaders must have an educational vision for young Poles, based on a strong historical and political awareness, strong national character and qualifications in the field of economy, finance, and law. Today, the low education of young people must be overcome by creating an adequate educational vision. The educational system

should promote a professionally well-prepared individual with official, managerial, political, but also ethical qualifications. And this aspect was strongly emphasised by John Paul II. In his opinion, a correct conception of the human being requires the promotion of individuals through education and formation in the spirit of true ideals, as well as the subjectivity of society, through the creation of structures of participation and co-responsibility (John Paul II, 1991: No. 13).

The political class (ruling and opposition) must accept responsibility for the challenges ahead. Today we have a devastating dispute between its fragments and the need for a fair look and assessments. These disputes will destroy the most emotionally charged politicians and political theorists in the long run. The discussion should be conducted in good faith because so far there is no rapprochement between the new government and the strong opposition. Also, the law, interpreted differently, often violated, does not unite the parties to the dispute. Politicians must seek peace because that is the main aim of politics. Laws made by parties “for themselves” and not for the public, for the so-called ruling from behind the curtain owners of large multinational and national corporations, do not solve the problems of the Polish people but should provide understanding and solutions. In order: the euro or the zloty – the latter is an attribute of the sovereignty of Poles, or the issue of the Polish state’s blending into the EU. After all, our ancestors reworked it as victims of partitions – the invaders explained it by the fact that Poles do not know how to govern themselves. Other issues are the question of programmes: to have them or to act *ad hoc* – the latter risks chaos in the state that is difficult to imagine. The program gives us a sense of sovereignty, that we are guided by the interests of the Polish state, social state (Wójcik 2015: 74–77).

The European Parliament elections on June 9, 2024 showed that we have a minority gripped by ideological hatred of the conservative Law and Justice party and 40% of non-voting Poles. This majority strongly dislikes the successive decisions imposed on Poland by the EU (more broadly on the EU Member States), the so-called green transition, the migration pact and, most recently, the announced EU free trade agreement with the Mercosur countries (Latin America). The need to defend Polish territory against “Belarusian aggression” is already becoming obvious to the vast majority of Poles. The current Polish authorities and so-called Euro-enthusiasts are embracing environmentalism as the new idea that will point Poland towards modern development. So far, they do not want to talk to society, they reject

the opinion of economists, from which it follows that its implementation will be completely unprofitable, it will not be able to self-invest, that it will even lead to expropriation, to impoverishment of society, to poverty. Similarly, the third issue, the implementation of which will flood the European markets with agricultural production of these countries, making European agriculture even unprofitable. At a meeting between Prime Minister Donald Tusk and representatives of the protesting farmers on March 20, 2024, he declared that there would be no negotiations, but would only present his position, which turned out to be an EU directive for agriculture, meaning that the national interests, today of farmers and before that of miners, teachers, health care and others, would not be taken into account. We are dealing here with the categorical interventionism of the EU's agricultural policy towards Poland and several other European countries, which is being implemented without opposition by our current government. These decisions of a strong EU against its weaker, new members reveal the source of conflicting, selfish interests of states. EU Commission directives imposed on member states are undermining the free market economy of small and medium-sized countries. The interventional decisions of EU politicians and officials are discretionary and long-lasting, e.g., the decision to close coal mines in Poland, which did not apply to mining in Germany, the decision to limit the area of sugar beet cultivation in Poland, which was repealed when beet cultivation areas were taken over by German companies, the Polish government was previously forced to close shipyards. The dominant liberal-left ideology of the EU serves the interests of the big corporations of the strongest EU states. Free-market rationalism is losing out to the EU's arbitrary ideological interventionism.

It is necessary to develop a common position of the authorities and the people, to gain conviction, what is good and what is false, a myth. Now is the moment to finally reject the way of power-society relations consisting of dictate, imposing decisions on society, as it was in the times of the People's Republic of Poland, and to move on to treating man, society as an active subject of politics, economy, culture, building consensual and creative relations, gaining the trust of the nation. Poles give evidence that they are able to resist challenges, ideas that contradict the national and state right of the state. We have a strong awareness of ownership, i.e. looking after our own, creating a common good, and a strong work ethos. We want to get rich, we consider it the duty of everyone and the meaning of life. With this realism of society, the authorities must reckon. We all recognise

the importance of the EU, after which Poles expect a fundamental improvement in living conditions, but do not accept the liquidation of a number of sectors of the economy, which were felt by miners, farmers, they do not accept sawing off the rights of Catholics. We do not want to be an economically weak country, exploited by the EU authorities, but co-creators and intermediaries in the development of all member states.

5. Individualism or Personalism – A Fundamental Dispute

Poles need not only competent but also ethical discussion, which will determine the direction of critical policy. I do not agree with the views of the authors, who believe that it is unnecessary and even harmful to involve ethical and ideological topics in these discussions. I believe that in the public debate about the state, about political power, worldview positions are fundamental in order to bring about an alignment of individual and societal interests. To belittle ethics in this debate, to deny it, is a misunderstanding. It leads to hiding the bad deeds of politicians towards the nation. The rejection of universal and higher religious ethics breaks up our entire social and national life. Is it possible for the current authorities (government and opposition) to reach an agreement with the people? So far, the liberal authorities and their elites represent an emotional anti-state, anti-religious, and anti-national attitude based on cultural codes alien to the Polish nation (totalitarianism and atheism) and a liberal philosophy that is in deep crisis. It carries certain values, but it is also seen as a great threat. It is generally thought, – writes C.S. Bartnik – that liberalism is merely economic freedom from the directives of the ruling political party, freedom from socio-political compulsions. But it's not like this. Liberalism is a trend that today wants to embrace the whole of human life – individual and collective, and it is becoming a coercive worldview. Liberalism today is a new, huge wave, following nationalism, fascism, socialism, Marxism, neo-capitalism. It is multifaceted and ambiguous... Today's liberalism goes far beyond the economic and political sphere, it wants to free itself from the entire classical tradition in all areas, from all social discipline, and finally from the determinism of truth and from higher ethics (Bartnik 28–29.01.2006: 12; Kowalczyk 1995: 119–120). John Paul II warned against the generalised consequences of full liberalism: the absolutisation of freedom, individualism, utilitarianism, and

the ruthless struggle for existence instead of Christian love. Liberalism also creates a fertile ground for such phenomena as: extreme egoism, spiritual chaos, moral disorder, the growth of law-breaking. As a result, liberalism radically deepens the still existing post-Marxist chaos. In Poland, it is understood as the freedom to plunder others, steal and cheat with impunity. Opposed to religion, it is also opposed to ethics, higher values and fundamental social rights (Bartnik 24.07.2002: 11; 2003c: 48–55).

Different personalism – it recognizes the principle of the inherent dignity of the human person, that is, that the human person must be respected, affirmed. Society exists for the person and because of them. Man as a person in social life has priority and relative autonomy because he is the basic subject of the state community, but he has to interact with it secondarily, to seek new forms of social and state life. Under liberalism, neither society nor the state can harm the rights of the individual – the full sovereign. In collectivist Marxism, the individual is subject to the collective. This domination of the individual over society and the state, as well as its subordination to collectives (political power), is a great mistake of both these theories. The functioning of society is best in the realisation of the personalistic concept of man, that is, society through and for the person. The dignity of the human person requires the construction of social life in accordance with the principles of the common good, subsidiarity, solidarity, justice and truth. These principles regulate the democratic system and the functioning of the state according to the needs of man as a person, since they make it possible to create social structures (family, nation, Church), as well as forms of state life (decentralisation, self-government, political, economic and ideological pluralism) that will contribute to the way out of the current political crisis, in which a person is ensured respect for their dignity and the chance of full integral development.

In order for Polish democracy not to turn – nobody knows when – into an oligarchy, in many respects it must be reformed in the spirit of political personalism, i.e. increase individual and social spiritual and material discipline, with the reference of all public life to the idea of God. Social life without God greatly degrades any society. The main weakness of any transformation, modernisation is that a significant part of the people then have no orientation and are manipulated by the elites. At the same time, Poles are still undecided on what doctrinal basis to base their further development. How should the place of the citizen in politics be determined? The Pole is not convinced that he should actively enter into both local and

central politics. Moreover, the most important politicians of the country tell young people not to study sociology and political science, and yet without socio-political knowledge, these young people, even the most responsible, are already distancing themselves from politics. The quality and direction of polemics between Poles becomes important in these conditions. It is not necessary to argue *ad personam*, but to demonstrate the evil committed by politicians, economists, ideologues, lawyers, doctors, teachers among themselves and to convince each other to do good – not to become victims of evil. It is necessary to bring about a situation in which there will be an open exchange of views, which should protect Polish democracy from the dominance of liberal legal procedures. A good discussion should have a clearly defined theoretical framework and lead to a solution of the problem posed. So far, the political advantage, the decisive one is on the side of neoliberals, who put everything on the card of technological and material enrichment. The view that wealth is not everything and that technical and spiritual development should be reconciled is silenced in the policies of our authorities and also isolated in the media. What is needed is an offensive of competent and ethical discussion. There is no shortage of personalists in Poland, but they do not actively participate in political life.

6. For Truth in the Media

So far, Poland has met the threshold standards of democracy, recognised democratic procedures (freedom to form parties, the right to vote, to compete for votes, to run for office). It is impossible not to note that the society has created tens of thousands of associations and foundations that have developed well, and local government is currently experiencing a sharp crisis. However, recently the government has attacked pillars of democracy, such as alternative sources of information (it is enough to observe the fierce attacks on TV Republika, wPolsce24, TV Trwam, Radio Maryja and personally the editors: Fr. Tadeusz Rydzyk, Tomasz Sakiewicz and others), the problem is still free and fair elections, the dependence of the government on the vote of the electorate (it is rather the opposite), there are extensive reserved areas, not subject to the control of constitutional subjects of power, mutual blocking of authorities. Before our eyes, there is a turning point in the functioning of the state. The prime minister assures that the direction of

change is in the public interest, but he does not want to meet with the opposition media and even announces restrictions on the emission of their social – civil voice. Political scientists assess ambiguously that the change is moving towards an apparent democracy, that it will rather be a deepening of anarchy, that it is in the interests of foreign and domestic oligarchs (Wójcik 2007: 167–168; Staniszkis 2001; Wildstein 11–17.06.2012: 58–59). Pro-government and opposition media are arguing about the truth, about the proper assessment of the government's policy.

In the mutual contacts of politicians, as well as their relations with society, the role of the media is difficult to overestimate. There is a need to develop sound critical political journalism. A large part of the media is involved in manipulating public opinion. Standing uncritically on the side of the government (PO and the coalition), they hide the rise in prices and taxes, the reasons for the decline in gold, the overpricing. They silence the situation in the army, block information about the withdrawal of many important investments, support anti-family activities, hide mega-corruption at the highest levels of government. Moreover, they try (with the active participation of contemporary literature, art, theatre) to deliberately degrade man. His dignity, greatness, nobility, kindness are ridiculed. Morality is considered obsolete, hypocritical, the pursuit of happiness for deceiving oneself, denying the personal dimension of man. The importance and role of the media has been highlighted by many researchers. I agree with C.S. Bartnik, who explains this situation and draws a model of "journalist of conscience." In his view, in Poland covered in public life by state atheism, Sovietism and liberalism, deep untruths have nested in social life, politics, the media, education, and visions of the future. At the present cultural stage, evil is more perfidious. Today there is often a struggle for truths, a foreign truth is fought by one's own truth, a truth is attacked by a deliberate untruth, proper truths are often hidden, ideologies are created without reference to truth and are guided only by the principle of useful truth. Through the media, there is a great deal of struggle against the higher truth on a general and global scale. And there is no way out of this until the media is taken away from the teachers of untruth and until they are subjected to a strict morality of truth. With the technique of falsifying the truth and the omnipotence of the immoral media, the power of deception and the danger of being deceived are increasing. It is a trap of democracy that the citizen has to decide for himself which media and their programs to choose because in order to do this, he would first have to be brought up outside the current media and

outside propaganda. In the formation of mental attitudes, terrible things happen. Some media spread complete demoralisation with impunity... the tendency to deceive and be deceived is experienced by many people in Poland who renounce socio-political truth and national-state freedom (Bartnik 2005: 111–112). We often do not realise the effect that words of hostility to the church expressed by the media have on society.

To this picture of the state of the media in Poland, C.S. Bartnik contrasts the model of a journalist faithful in conscience, which, however, encounters enormous difficulties.

A journalist today in Poland is like a prophet of God who has to see our reality inside out and predict the ways for the future. He faces the task of building or co-building a new human Poland. [Such journalists – S.W.] are worth their weight in gold. They are witnesses of Poland, [...] and heroes. We admire them and give them the deepest respect. The church owes them support. The most honest and noble have no understanding from the ruling elites. [...] freedom of the media and democracy of speech are often empty slogans. To live, most workers of the word must remain silent, tell half-truths, or at least lie a little, especially in public, economic, and ideological matters. It's a disgraceful tradition. The Gospel and the Church are of great help here. It seems that atheists of journalism alone will not be able to free themselves from the addiction to long-term lies. They take comfort in the fact that lying is a "light drug." But there must be an end to a civilisation of lies. Who is going to do it? How to do it? And when to start? (Bartnik 2003b: 230–231; see also Bartnik 2011: 199–206).

Conclusions

Is it possible, on the basis of the conditions presented, to return to a personalistic, ethical dimension of politics? We are dealing with deep destruction in all matters, and it seems that with the attempt to liquidate the legal opposition, that it is impossible to put all this in order. If we want to restore the right classical sense and moral order to politics, it is through politicians who have not only thorough knowledge, experience, perseverance, imagination, but also do not accept evil. Indifferent politicians, rejecting morality, believe that a Christian politician, a personalist, is ineffective. However, the effectiveness of using immoral means introduces states of frustration, threats, the desire for revenge. Social stability (splits, divisions) is collapsing – a key guarantee of peace. It is impossible not to mention the concern

and appeal of John Paul II (22.05.1995): "Poland cries out today above all for people of conscience!" and the statements of the Vice President of the United States, James David Vance, at the Munich conference on February 16, 2025, that the EU should not be afraid of its own citizens.

Of great importance will be a new approach to policy science that develops systemic personalism. Personalists try to convince that the science of politics is worth supplementing with a personalist axiology. Politics is changing, it requires setting new goals for political action and taking into account higher ethics in conflict resolution, building consensus, forming an active and responsible person in politics (Wójcik 2002: 194–196; 2015: 7–93; 2021: 9–31; 2023: 149–168). Political science does not arise from apersonalism, as is generally believed in theory, where politics is treated as a material, impersonal phenomenon, but in relation to the person. Man is the only being who has the capacity for reflective-symbolic thinking and the ability to freely choose values. His political activity cannot be only a language of violence, of inversion of concepts, of concealment of reality, which would prevent an elementary description of reality. Although in the short run it can be an effective language. Man is not a commodity and a consumer, as liberalism sees him, without a ballast of values. In personalism, a person has their own interests and a formed value system that strengthens a sense of responsibility for the social and political world. This current unfavourable state is temporary, it will change when responsible and competent politicians with a personalistic attitude begin to shape political life.

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