Register of the Mieczysław F. Rakowski papers

Finding aid prepared by Malgosia Szudelski and Hoover Institution Archives Staff
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Title: Mieczyslaw F. Rakowski papers  
Date (inclusive): 1958-1996  
Collection Number: 90111  
Contributing Institution: Hoover Institution Archives  
Language of Material: Polish  
Physical Description: 95 manuscript boxes, 1 oversize box (39.1 linear feet)  
Abstract: Diaries, writings, correspondence, printed matter, photographs, and video tapes relating to political conditions in Poland during the 1980s, and to the Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza.  
Physical Location: Hoover Institution Archives  
Creator: Rakowski, Mieczyslaw F.  
Access  
Box 96 closed.  
The remainder of the collection is open for research; materials must be requested at least two business days in advance of intended use.  
Publication Rights  
For copyright status, please contact the Hoover Institution Archives.  
Preferred Citation  
[Identification of item], Mieczyslaw F. Rakowski papers, [Box no., Folder no. or title], Hoover Institution Archives.  
Acquisition Information  
Acquired by the Hoover Institution Archives in 1990.  
Accruals  
Materials may have been added to the collection since this finding aid was prepared. To determine if this has occurred, find the collection in Stanford University's online catalog at https://searchworks.stanford.edu. Materials have been added to the collection if the number of boxes listed in the online catalog is larger than the number of boxes listed in this finding aid.  
Biographical Note  
Mieczyslaw Rakowski (1926-2008), a journalist and politician, was Poland's top communist intellectual. From 1958 to 1982, he was the editor-in-chief of the Polish United Workers' Party (PUWP) organ Polityka, perhaps the most open and sophisticated weekly in all the Soviet Bloc. He was deputy prime minister from 1981 to 1985, and the vice-marshall of Sejm, from 1985 to 1988. Rakowski was prime minister from 1988 to 1989, the last year of the communist regime in Poland before the takeover of the government by the Solidarity opposition. After the PUWP suffered a resounding defeat in the first semi-free elections in the Soviet Bloc in June 1989, Rakowski tried, unsuccessfully, to salvage the future of his party, becoming its last first secretary. During the remaining eighteen years of his life, he tried to present himself as a Social Democrat and continued to write and offer occasional political commentary on Polish politics. He visited the Hoover Institution in 1998 and gave a lecture on Poland and the collapse of the Soviet Bloc titled, "Ushering Out Communism: A View from the Other Side."  
Scope and Content of Collection  
The materials include some thirty-eight years of political diaries, writings, printed matter, photographs, and sound and video recordings. Of particular importance are Rakowski's diaries, including the original texts, showing redactions and revisions made before their subsequent partial publication in 1998 to 1999. The diaries, covering the period from 1958 through 1996, are an invaluable source on Polish and former Soviet bloc politics as seen by an astute observer and participant. Comparing the originals with the published version provides an interesting record of the author's intellectual and political meanderings and evolution and, for students of the ancillary disciplines of history, an excellent case study of how diaries are turned into memoirs.  
Subjects and Indexing Terms  
Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza.  
Statesmen--Poland.
Box 96

Noose

Scope and Contents note

Box closed. Access images available in Box 95.

Materials originally housed in Box 95, Folder 5, as described in container list.