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In mid-2023, experts from the **Institute of Meteorology and Water Management** recorded a **new visibility record of 10.38 meters** in Lake Powidzkie, making it the **clearest lake in Poland**. The largest lake in **Greater Poland**, it is a **protected quiet zone**, rich in flora and fauna, and has been a popular **recreation and leisure** destination for decades.

For many locals, including myself, **Lake Powidzkie** is associated with **carefree childhood, learning to swim, first camping trips, sailing, relaxation, and a safe haven**.

However, just a few kilometers from the lake, a **parallel reality unfolds**.

In **1953**, during the Cold War, the **Soviets** began constructing a **military air base**, which remains today the **largest Polish military airfield**.

A few years ago, the **Pentagon declassified** a **top-secret document** titled "*Strategic Air Command Nuclear Weapons Requirements Study for 1959.*" Among approximately **2,300 targets** across the



Eastern Bloc and China, planned for **nuclear bombing** in the event of a **Third World War**, was **Powidz Airfield**—listed under the target number **0169-8629 5223-01750**.

Today, the **33rd Powidz Air Transport Base** houses **large C-130 Hercules transport aircraft**, and at least **1,000 U.S. soldiers** are stationed there.

In **2023**, a new **logistics and equipment complex (LTESM-C)** was opened near the base, designed for the **long-term storage and maintenance of U.S. Army equipment**.

Additional facilities under construction include:

- **MSA (munitions storage areas)**
- **DABS (deployable airbase system warehouses)**
- **BFS (bulk fuel storage)**

At least **100 hectares of forest** have already been **cleared** to make way for military structures, including areas that were once part of the **Natura 2000 protected zone** and **Powidz Landscape Park**.

Where there were once only **dirt roads**, wide **highways and roundabouts** now accommodate **heavy military equipment**.

Near the base, **entertainment spots for soldiers** have emerged, often **caricaturing American culture**. Meanwhile, along the **lake's shores**, **new vacation homes and resorts** are **densely expanding**.

At the same time, **Lake Powidzkie's water levels** have been **declining**, primarily due to the **nearby open-pit mine** but also as a result of **climate change**, causing **low annual rainfall and rising temperatures**.

As a result of these **military investments**, Powidz is transforming into a **major aviation-logistics complex** and one of NATO's **most strategic European bases**—undoubtedly now **on a new list of strategic targets**, though from **different global powers than before**.

The **airfield, base, forests, villages, and lake** have all been assigned a new number.