

14 August 2006

By: Ruxandra Adam, News Editor



## [Walesa Wants Grass to Give Up Polish Citizenship](#)

*Following the latter's recent confessions of serving in the Nazi elite force*

According to German newspaper Bild's report on Sunday, former Polish President Lech Walesa issued an official statement in which he demands famous Nobel Prize laureate German author Gunter Grass renounce his honorary citizenship, the BBC news service reports. The statement comes shortly after the author confessed that he served with Hitler's Waffen SS, the Nazi elite force, when he was young, as part of the war memoirs that are going to feature his latest book, due out next month. The German people, one of Grass's supporters and fans, were terribly shocked when they found out on Saturday, that the author acknowledged the fact that he had been recruited by the Waffen SS when he was 17 into a Frundsberg Panzer Division in Dresden. The only things the Germans, as well as others, knew about Grass, the renowned author whose career was boosted with the publishing of the famous novel "The Tin Drum", were that he had served as a soldier in the Second World War, that he was wounded and that he was taken prisoner by the US forces later on. The same reaction was displayed by Lech Walesa, who commented upon this aspect during an interview with Bild: "The best thing would be for him to give up the honor. An uncomfortable situation has developed. I do not feel comfortable in that company. I do not know whether one should consider revoking the title. If it had been known he was in the SS, he would never have received the honor". Just like Walesa, Grass is an honorary citizen of Gdansk, then known as Danzig, where he was actually born in 1927. The Polish city is also the location where Walesa's anti-communist Solidarity Movement took place.