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POLAND: An Editorial Article

Counter-revolution drives the revolution underground; the resistance continues

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The counter-revolution that drove the revolution underground is meeting with resistance throughout Poland, though it is by no means a civil war. The most horrifying feature of the Dec. 13, 1981 military onslaught calling itself "Military Council of National Salvation" was that it came from within, not from the outside—though Russia left no doubt that if the Polish rulers did not put down the spontaneous, 18-month, deepening revolt, Russia would.

Thus, the nationalistic, state capitalist Polish militarists and production exploiters have made outright invasion by Russia unnecessary, for the moment. And thus, for the first time since a totally new world epoch began in East Berlin on June 17, 1953 — with the first East European revolt from under Russian imperialist state-capitalism that called itself Communism — national state-capitalism revealed that it was no different from private capitalism. It was spelled out in the most fundamental law of the class struggle: the main enemy is at home.

The tragedy is that the counter-revolution had learned that lesson well. Knowing the overwhelming force of the proletariat at the point of production, and that the factories could become fortresses, the militarist hierarchy planned its takeover for a weekend — when the workers would not be in the plants, and when their leaders would be at a Solidarnosc Congress.

IN THE STEALTH OF THE NIGHT

Nevertheless, it wasn't the stealth of that grim Dec. 13 night that was shocking; counter-revolutions always begin in the stealth of the night. What was shocking was the great illusion that blinded Solidarity — the illusion that the Polish Army would not fire on Poles. The barbaric counter-revolution was in no way confused by the struggle for national liberation, which was on its way to social revolution. Quite the contrary. While viciously stamping on the revolution, it took full advantage of nationalist rhetoric in an attempt to cover over its militarist suppression.

Thus, the First Secretary of the Communist Party, General Wojciech Jaruzelski, pictured himself a "soldier" dedicated to "national salvation." With that, he unleashed his hordes, cordoned off key production centers — the mines, steel mills, shipyards and textile factories — and raided the hotels and homes where Solidarity members lived. Thousands were rounded up and sent to jail. The most militant activists — especially socialists like Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik, Jan Litynski and Karol

Modzelewski — were beaten and some tortured. Conditions in the camps for those rounded up differed little from concentration camps. The imposition of martial law thus spelled out the real truth of state-capitalist "national salvation." Its "law and order" has brought nothing but disorder, unleashed a reign of terror, and caused greater and greater hunger.

Whether or not General Jaruzelski thinks that the military can rule alone, without Communist Party ideologues, makes no difference whatsoever to the masses. Though many analysts are ready to conclude that the Polish Military Council signifies that the "Polish Army Replaces Party in Power Structure" (see *Le Monde* section of the *Guardian*, Jan. 10, 1982), historically that has never been true in a state-capitalist state. Perhaps Lin Biao, as head of the army in China, thought he could succeed. But Mao proved that the one-party state rests on the Party and its ideologues. Insofar as Poland is concerned, the article that appeared in *Le Monde* under the above headline, with a Warsaw dateline, is among the most serious that have come out of Poland. It reveals that it was a Communist hardliner like Kazimierz Barcikowski, who was entrusted with the job of waking up the primate of Poland, Cardinal Glemp, on the night of Dec. 12/13, and informing him of the new situation the country was in. Neither from that statement, nor from what we know of the power play in China, does it flow that the situation in Warsaw is the "first attempt to break the continuity of power in a Communist country."

Solidarity had no less than 10 million members at the moment of the crackdown. Nor is it only those members on whom Jaruzelski has stomped. Women trying to protect the occupied steel mill in Katowice had their arms broken. In Gdansk, 3,000 women fought to protect the barricaded workers there.

When the daring Silesian miners — including 1,742 in the Piast mine and 1,154 in the Ziemowot mine — barricaded themselves in those hell holes for two weeks, they were stormed with tanks. The Polish rulers admit to having killed 17 dissidents since martial law was declared (eight in Gdansk; nine at the Wujek mine in Silesia); Solidarity has accounted for at least 200 dead and considers 700 more probable. More than 2,000 have been wounded.

The great illusion of the counter-revolution is that they can raise productivity by forcing workers into their factories at gunpoint. Low productivity, as we pointed out when state-capitalism was established in Russia in the 1930s, is not a sign of the "backwardness

of the workers," but the exact measure of their revolt. As one Solidarity courier for the resistance movement put it: "Little work is going on anywhere."

The new monstrosity, militarized state-capitalism, cannot destroy the revolutionary spirit which, once unleashed, had developed like a tidal wave for 18 long months.

THE MANY VOICES OF REVOLUTION

The dialectic of revolution that emerged in August, 1980 established many firsts in the struggle for freedom. In all the great revolts over a 30-year span, this was the first time that East European workers succeeded in establishing an independent union, Solidarnosc — Solidarity. Moreover, this union had a most unique form, since it limited itself neither to a single trade or skill or factory but encompassed the whole nation.

Furthermore, Solidarity — again, for the first time from under Communist totalitarianism — extended itself to the farmers. Rural Solidarity joined with the proletariat and the intellectuals in that all-encompassing form of organization. Its head, Jan Kulaj, was rounded up and arrested along with Lech Walesa.

Another first for Solidarity was the way true internationalism was manifested when, in the present situation of fighting the counter-revolution, the Solidarity leader, Jan Litynski, penned an Appeal to the Workers of the East. Nor was Solidarity, though definitely the most massive organization, the only expression of the many voices of revolt. In the same period several small political parties who considered themselves true Marxists emerged with their own press.

What is exciting about Solidarity is that, as a spontaneous, mass outpouring, urban and rural, it stood on the ground which had been established directly after the 1978 revolt was suppressed. It was then that a few intellectuals, who knew how to listen to the workers, united with them to establish KOR, the Workers' Social Self-Defense Committee.

Less attention has been paid to the crucial part women played in the unfolding revolution. (For more

on this, see "Woman as Reason," p. 2). It is seen not only in a woman like Anna Walentynowicz, a crane operator in Gdansk who had been a leader of the workers' movement ever since 1970 and whose firing triggered the great August, 1980 strike. It is seen in the thousands of textile workers who occupied their factory for four long weeks in Zyrardow; and in the women of Lodz who extended the banner of "Bread and Freedom," first raised in East Germany in 1953, to "Hungry of the World Unite." Yet the 18-man Presidium of Solidarity is all men.

One important development concerned the serious split within the Communist Party (CP) itself. The CP leadership has admitted to losing no less than 415,000 members out of a total of 2.7 million. There was no doubt that many who dropped out joined Solidarity and became active in one of the 14,000 workers' committees that made up Solidarity. All this happened before the outright counter-revolution of Dec. 13. Thousands more have thrown their membership cards away since Dec. 13. Many, no doubt, are now in jail.

The attitude of the Polish masses is revealed clearly at the trials that are now being held against those who continued their resistance after martial law was declared. The ruling militarist clique thought they could show

their "even-handedness" by holding trials of some corrupt CP leaders simultaneously with those of the real revolutionaries. The courtrooms for the former trials are empty; those where the revolutionaries are on trial are filled to overflowing.

THE FANGS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION: IMPERIALISM AND ANTI-SEMITISM

It is important to stress that just as in Poland itself, the Support Committees for Solidarity in the West, especially in the U.S., have nothing in common with Reagan's pretense of sympathy for Solidarity, U.S. imperialism is propping up a genocidal junta in El Salvador while Reagan wages retrogression at home against the Blacks, the women, and labor — indeed, has actually destroyed the PATCO union. He cannot get away with pretending sympathy for the Polish masses, while he is helping to starve the Poles by claiming that it hurts Russia. Nor can U.S. imperialism hide its own global imperialist fangs.

In Poland, there is no end to the junta's debasement, its deprivation of all freedoms for the Polish masses, its reign of terror, its fake and narrow nationalism, and its digging deep into the mire of anti-Semitism. The Christmas issue of the official Communist Party paper in Szczecin, *Glos Szczeciński*, carried a lengthy article, which not only blamed all of Poland's ills on the machinations of the Jews but rolled back that accusation to the mid-1940s.

This, mind you, was the period when the first great resistance movement against the Nazis emerged from the Warsaw Ghetto and inspired the whole of occupied Europe.² Indeed, the Jewish uprising was followed the next year by the uprising of the entire Polish nation. It was then that Stalin's Red Army stood outside the gates of Warsaw and let the nation bleed to death.

Glos Szczeciński carried through their rewriting of history by singling out dissidents as Jews whether or not they were Jewish. In singling out Karol Modzelewski, they claimed that while he carried a "fine Polish name" the truth is that his mother was Jewish, and he was adopted by his father.

The national voice of the Party, *Trybuna Ludu*, carried an article on Dec. 18 attacking the historian-adviser to Lech Walesa, Bronislaw Geremek, for his alleged "connections with revisionist and Zionist centers." With anti-Semitic graffiti and large Stars of David smearing the walls along Nowy Swiat, the main street of Warsaw, one writer has concluded: "It doesn't matter if someone is really Jewish or not, Jew means enemy. And a Jew will be whoever the authorities call a Jew."³

Lech Walesa was sufficiently worried about how anti-Semitism was being used to attack KOR and Solidarity that he repeatedly warned about its dangers. The day before martial law was declared he had called a special press conference to denounce and expose it.

LODZ AND WARSAW—MOVEMENT FROM BELOW, PLANNING FROM ABOVE

It is necessary at this point to look more deeply at the rank-and-file, rather than just at the leadership. In Lodz, as early as October, local unions had won some

2. We hailed this critical event as "Poland—Where All Roads Meet." See the Raya Dunayevskaya Collection, *Marxist Humanism: From 1941 to Today* (available on microfilm from Wayne State University Archives of Labor History and Urban Affairs, Detroit, Vol. II, Section I, D 4).

3. In the Jan. 15 *New York Times* Flora Lewis' article adds further information to a NYT Jan. 9 report about how the Russians have used anti-Semitism in the Polish situation, by citing two facts: 1) that in 1955, the Soviet ambassador himself was caught distributing unsigned anti-Semitic leaflets; and 2) that in the 1952-58 period, the leader of the purges against the Jews in Poland, Mieczyslaw Moczar, was a close associate of Stefan Olszowski, who is now the Politburo member in charge of all Polish media.

1. See my *Marxism and Freedom*, Chapter XIII, "Russian State Capitalism vs. Workers' Revolt," pp. 215-219. Consult especially the section on crises and purges which ends: "Purges are not due to a state of mind but to a state of production. They have never ceased in Russia and never will because the crises never cease. The crises never cease because the revolt of the working class is continuous."

control over food rationing. They followed this in November and December with the concept of the "active strike," in which workers would take over enterprises and run them. The plan was considered "ultra-leftist" by some of the leaders, but six members of the regional leadership, on Dec. 9, did agree with the concept and even considered that by Dec. 1 they should establish workers' guards. The key issue was working class control over food distribution. Andrzej Slowik, a former bus driver and union leader in Lodz, went to Gdanak to propose this to the national leadership on Dec. 12.

This was preceded by the appearance of an article by one of the Solidarity leaders, Zbigniew Kowaleski, in the Lodz edition of the CP paper on Dec. 10, which argued for an active strike and the establishment of workers' guards. Indeed, Kowaleski escaped the Dec. 13 dragnet only because he had left for France to win support from the international labor movement. (See *Le Monde*, Jan. 7, 1982.)

It is also important to see how much earlier than Dec. 13 the counter-revolution had begun its offensive—and to contrast how the Solidarity leadership and the rank-and-file acted in these confrontations. Thus, when the vicious beating of three union activists in Bydgoszcz in March, 1981 was not answered at once with a call for a general strike, it was interpreted by the counter-revolutionaries as a test that Solidarity did not pass.

As Jacek Kuron has openly stated, the rank-and-file have constantly been to the left of the Solidarity leadership, and nearly every strike and political action for more freedom has originated from the grass roots. Indeed, all talk of confrontation has been sparked from that movement from practice.

It was Jacek Kuron who, with Karol Modzelewski, had penned a magnificent critique of the Communist Party (their "Open Letter to the Party") as far back as the 1960s, in which they called the regime capitalist, and for which they were thrown in jail. Kuron became one of the original founders of KOR but when Solidarity became a mass organization, he suddenly lost his voice. That is to say, KOR was disbanded though he knew that a trade union, no matter how great, could not, without a political organization, achieve the transformation of reality.

Because he had departed from Marxism and had no philosophy of revolution, he came up with the self-paralyzing concept of a "self-limiting revolution." But he never departed from fighting together with the workers against the existing society. Once again, he finds himself in jail and singled out for torture.

WHAT NOW? VOICES FROM UNDERGROUND

We must listen carefully to the voices of those who escaped the round-up and are continuing the resistance underground. They include some of the original organizers of the 1980 strike — Alina Pienkowska, Zbigniew Bujak, Bogdan Lis, Bohdan Borusewicz. And when the *Le Monde* correspondent, Bernard Guetta, got into the occupied Lenin Shipyard in Gdanak, he found there Anna Walentynowicz, Jan Waszkiewicz (a member of Solidarity's National Committee), and delegates from many other strikebound factories. He also reported (see *Le Monde*, Dec. 18, 1981) that the farmers had sent them greetings and a promise they would not be allowed to die of hunger.

"Solidarnosc has not fallen apart from the stomping" of General Jaruzelski's boots, 27-year-old Wladyslaw Frasyniuk has declared. He is the head of the Wroclaw Regional Branch, and a member of the 18-man Presidium, upon whose head the price of \$3,000 has been put. Another voice — that of Zbigniew Janas, head of the militant Ursus tractor plant — called for preparing "in deep conspiracy" for a General Strike if Walesa

was not released. Calling for "new forms of resistance," he warned: "Remember that the authorities are murderers. They are indifferent to the number of people they will shoot if it suits their interest."

The most detailed information from the underground comes from Zbigniew Bujak, the highest-ranking Solidarity leader still free. While still calling for "passive resistance" he is not excluding the possibility of armed resistance, writing that "to continue and to remain independent, the union must fight for democracy and become its guardian." He writes also of the need to defend "Polish culture and the Church."

Walesa's close relationship to the Church is well-known. Yet nothing could be more opposite than the attitudes to the extreme pressures being exerted by the junta that are displayed by Walesa, who has insisted on the presence of the whole 18-man Presidium before he will consider even talking to the junta, and by Archbishop Glemp, who has been talking with the authorities despite his earlier insistence that he would not do so without Walesa's presence.

It is all the more important to remember that Walesa, though a religious man who has accepted advice from the Church, has insisted from the beginning that decisions for the union can be made by Solidarity alone. In an interview with Oriana Fallaci, published in the *Washington Post*, March 8, 1981, he stressed that he would allow no one to use him, "not even somebody with a black skirt (a priest's cassock)." As for assimilation with the powers-that-be, he concluded: "I'd rather shoot myself in the head."

Archbishop Glemp's behavior in the immediate context of martial law is seen in the way he first urged "calm" at the very moment when some Solidarity leaders who had not been caught were calling for a General Strike. Then (on Jan. 7), after the Polish masses showed their resistance, he did criticize martial law and the brutal conditions to which the internees were subjected, "demanding" that Walesa be present at his meeting with the Polish hierarchy. We know what happened to that "demand."

The duality of the Church is seen in its ability to peacefully co-exist, at one and the same time, with the state-capitalist society calling itself Communism and with Western imperialism. The Pope's encouragement of Reagan cannot but increase the global competition between two nuclear powers who are planning the unthinkable war; and can only bring about divisions instead of unity of the Polish masses, who hunger for totally new human relations.

What is needed now? First, foremost and unequivocally, we need to practice active support for Solidarity. Just as persistently, we must totally oppose both Russia and the U.S., as well as the national state-capitalism now ruling Poland.

That does not mean that we do not engage in criticism, not for criticism's sake, but with an eye to deepening the next upsurge. Without deluding ourselves that the unarmed Polish masses can start an immediate civil war, we must also not be deluded about the ability of the present regime to establish so-called "law and order."

There is nothing more cogent for today than the very last words from the pen of Rosa Luxemburg, the great Polish revolutionary internationalist, when she was confronted with the counter-revolution that murdered her this very day, 63 years ago, in Germany:

"Order reigns in Berlin! You stupid lackeys! Your 'order' is built on sand. Tomorrow the revolution will rear its head once again, and, to your horror, will proclaim, with trumpets blaring: I was, I am, I will be!" —January 15, 1982