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| No.3. September 1981.                   |

**POLISH SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN NEWSLETTER**

# Solidarity's First Year

For the first time this year, Poles took to the streets in July and August to protest against food shortages. The hunger marches were carried through peacefully, but they signalled the mounting frustration of Poles at continual food shortages. Despite promises of 'renewal', Kania and Jaruzelski have failed to even maintain existing food supplies (food stocks fell by 43% in the first six months of this year compared with the same period in 1980.) and have so far been unable to come up with any genuine economic reform.

We print, below, an analysis by Wiktor Moszczyński of the main issues facing Solidarity, one year after the strikes in Gdansk.

### FOOD SHORTAGES

The causes of the present shortages are many in number - deliberate attempts by the previous administration to impoverish the private peasant through crippling taxes and discrimination in the supply of fuel and machinery; inefficient state farm production; insufficient state purchase prices for agricultural produce; shortage of spares for agricultural machinery; shortage of nitrates, fertilisers and pesticides; obligations to export scarce food products to East and West; inefficient distribution of food through state shops and interference in the distribution process by the black market.

The effects are immense shortages which result in day long queuing for basic commodities such as meat or bread, and a rapid deterioration in the family's health. All kinds of meat, as well as butter, sugar, groats, flour, rice, cigarettes and alcohol are now heavily rationed. Chocolate is only available for children once a month. Milk is often distributed sour. Second class meat not subject to health inspection is available for housewives willing to take a risk, while coffee, and many fruit and vegetables have disappeared. Ration quotas for meat are to be decreased for October. In certain towns, notably Lodz and Kutno, basic food items were not available for weeks at a time even for ration cards.

In July spontaneous hunger protests threatened to erupt all over Poland. Solidarity tried to streamline the protests along peaceful lines, but on August 3rd an orderly hunger march in Warsaw choked up the traffic in the city centre for three days when police tried to prevent the march. Afterwards Solidarity appealed to call off further marches as they could get out of hand and it was felt that the government had got the message.

The government in turn accused Solidarity of fomenting unrest over the shortages. It has tried to impose



Hunger marches block Warsaw city centre.

price increases, notably a 300% increase in bread and cereal prices, which Solidarity considered excessive.

Solidarity has set up commissions to monitor food distribution because of increasing evidence of mass wastage, but the government refuses to recognise these commissions and refused to give them access to state warehouses.

Solidarity also agreed with the government in June that high quality food could be exported to the West for exchangeable currency, provided twice as much lower quality food would be imported in exchange. This government promise is breaking down. In August, frustrated dockers in Gdynia tried to prevent containers with meat from leaving Poland, and the local Prosecutor's office is issuing a writ against them.

Solidarity has also encouraged workers whose factories are at a standstill to help peasants bring in the harvest.

Continued on page 11.

# P.S.C. Diary

This is the third issue of PSC News. It contains even more material from original Polish sources than previous issues, as well as our own views and comments. Our circulation is expanding rapidly and we have reached an agreement with PDC, a publishing and distribution cooperative, which will distribute 200 copies to alternative bookshops in England. Copies of PSC News have found their way to many parts of the world, including of course Poland-the Solidarity Press Agency in Gdansk now send us their own newsbulletin(BIPS).

PSC's activities and membership have been expanding too. In May we had our AGM which was very well attended. It was chaired by Robin Blick, the retiring Chairperson, and a new committee was elected. The following are now committee members of PSC: Robin Blick, Steve Murray, Wiktor Moszczynski, Karen Blick, Giles Hart, Julia Kellet, Piotr Iglkowski, John Taylor and Anna Lubelska. New affiliations to PSC include an ever increasing number of trade union branches, and some trade councils. The latter include the Gateshead Trades Council and most recently the Ballymena Trade Council from N. Ireland.

Over the last two months there have been numerous trade union conferences in various parts of the country. We wrote to all conference organisers offering our assistance in providing contacts with Poland, selling Solidarity badges, and also offering an exhibition of photographs of the events of last summer at Gdansk. In particular, we helped the NALGO conference to make contact with Solidarity in Poland, and for Mieczyslaw Kukula, an official delegate from Solidarity, to attend the conference. Similarly, we assisted the GMWU to obtain speakers from Solidarity for their conference.

Bronislaw Sliwinski from Szczecinek and Adam Krakowiak from Stalowa Wola came to the GMWU conference and were rapturously received. PSC has also sent details of conference resolutions on Poland to the Solidarity headquarters in Gdansk. The following unions made resolutions which we passed on to Poland: USDAW, APEX, CPSA, the Bakers' Union, NALGO and the GMWU. We sent our photographic exhibition to the NUR, ISTC and NALGO.

In July, Bogdan Lis of the Central Coordinating Committee of Solidarity visited one of our committee members, Wiktor Moszczynski to thank him and PSC for their assistance and support. He confirmed that PSC was an organisation with which Solidarity wished to cooperate, and that we should continue to have open contacts with Solidarity's international department. This does not mean, of course, that PSC has in any sense the authority to represent Solidarity in Great Britain. He said that Solidarity was particularly keen on receiving information on British trade union affairs and more material assistance. Bogdan Lis requested us on the spot to buy a set of Polish-English dictionaries for him to take back with him to Poland, and we, of course, obliged.

In early August, PSC had the opportunity to meet another prominent member of Solidarity, Anna Walentynowicz who agreed to speak at a small informal meeting in a committee member's house (see article in this issue of PSC News). We will continue to send material and information to Poland, and would welcome contributions from all our members on current union affairs in Britain. We also repeat our offer to provide speakers at local union branch meetings to discuss the new Polish unions and how best we in Britain can help them.

We continue to hold our monthly meetings on Poland and also arrange large scale public meetings. The last of these was on June 13th of June in the Conway Hall. Our platform speakers were Mike Cooley from the Lucas Aerospace Combine Committee, Professor E.P. Thompson, Labour MP Ken Weetch and Wiktor Moszczynski. Well over a hundred people came to the meeting, and a lively debate followed the main speeches. We hope to arrange another public meeting in central London in the near future.

Other fringe activities of PSC include attending meetings of other organisations which are interested in Solidarity. Recently, in August we sent a speaker to the World Congress of Latvian Youth held at Catthorpe near Rugby. We managed to raise £250 by selling Solidarity badges to the enthusiastic Latvians who gave our speaker a standing ovation. We are also sending delegates to the forthcoming Birmingham conference on Poland in early September as well as the SERA conference on Polish Worker Autonomy in October at Ruskin College Oxford.

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Solidarity will be holding its first national conference in Gdansk in September this year. The Conference will be in two parts - the first from the 5th to the 8th September, and the second from 26th September to 1st October. Representatives from the main international trade union confederations and from union federations in many countries have been invited to attend the second part of the conference. From Britain the TUC should be represented by Len Murray and Geoffrey Drain of NALGO.

Representatives of Solidarity have also been invited to attend the coming TUC Conference. At the same time, Jacek Kuron of KOR has been invited to attend the Labour Party Conference.

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## P.S.C. NEWS

PSC News is the bi-monthly news bulletin of the Polish Solidarity Campaign. Its aim is to provide accurate information on current developments in Poland concerning Solidarity and the independent union movement. It relies principally on material translated from Solidarity's official publications. We also aim to provide a forum for the exchange of views and opinions on matters concerning Polish and British trade unionism. Views expressed in individual articles are not necessarily the views of the Polish Solidarity Campaign. We welcome contributions from all our readers (articles, letters, individual views etc).

PSC News Editorial Board : Piotr Iglkowski, Steve Murray, Wiktor Moszczynski, David Rees, John Taylor, Naomi Hyamson, Chris Cieszkowski, Anna Tomlinson.

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# BRITISH LABOUR AND POLAND

By Walter Kendall

When Poland's population rose against Russian tyranny more than one hundred years ago British workers were amongst the first to render aid. Marx himself was present at a meeting organised by the Liberal leaders of the British craft unions to express support for the Polish struggle held in St. Martin's Hall, London, on the 28th. September 1864. The International Working Mens' Association, otherwise the First International, direct forerunner of the present Socialist International, was a direct result.

Solidarity has now been in existence rather more than a year. The TUC, however reluctantly, has responded to rank and file pressure, given formal recognition to Solidarity, received its leaders and made plans for giving material aid.

By comparison, the National Executive of the Labour Party, the British section of the Socialist International, has done little or nothing. Liberal workers leaders a century or more ago spoke up loudly in the cause of Polish freedom. By contrast, one hundred years later, socialist workers' leaders, left and right alike, remain shamefully silent.

## DOUBLE STANDARDS

Everyone recognises that Poland's present status is that of a Russian satellite, one with a great deal less national autonomy than that enjoyed by Mexico in regard to the United States. Latin America is subject to Washington's Monroe doctrine. In much the same way, Eastern Europe under the Brezhnev doctrine, Poland included, is nothing more than a series of Banana Republics under the Red Flag.

British socialists oppose the Monroe doctrine and support the claims of Latin American states to full and unflawed independence. How then can our leaders accept the Brezhnev Doctrine which denies full and unflawed autonomy to Poland and no less than six other states in Central and Eastern Europe?

In the past the United States has invaded Mexico, more recently it has sponsored the Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba, landed troops in Dominica, and destabilised the Allende regime in Chile. Russia invaded Hungary to restore Communist rule in 1956 and invaded Czechoslovakia for the same reason in 1968. The threat of a similar Soviet invasion of Poland is ever present, accepted by all, even as I write these words.

We do not invite the representatives of Pinochet's Chile as fraternal 'observers' to the Labour Party Conference. Nor do we invite delegates from the Democratic or Republican Party in the United States. Yet this year specially invited 'observers' from the ruling Communist Party of Russia will be present at Brighton. There seem to be double standards at work here. I wonder why?

## SOCIALISM BANNED

The Socialist Party of Poland was forcibly disbanded in 1948, many of its members jailed and its organisation compulsorily merged into that of the so-called "Polish United Workers Party", in fact the Communist Party of Poland masquerading under another name. The Socialist Party of Poland still exists in exile. In Poland it still remains an illegal organisation. In Poland the Socialist Party's press is banned. Socialist Party members are denied the right to organise. If socialists seek to hold public meetings they are liable to be clapped in jail. Socialists cannot run candidates for elections either at local or national level in Poland, nor are they allowed to hold office on any public body.



Will they be welcome at Labour's Conference?

Those responsible for this ban are the leaders of the Polish United Workers Party (read Communist Party of Poland). Labour's NEC has invited these men, who as individuals are directly responsible for the imprisonment, torture and murder of numberless Polish socialists, to be officially represented at this year's Labour Party Conference. How can this be?

## COOPERATION

Labour's leaders have stumbled into this situation as much by accident as design. Labour has no proper thought out programme for Eastern Europe, no policy to promote the introduction of democratic socialism in the countries for the time being under communist one-party rule. Such a programme is urgently required. Otherwise the present errors are likely to be repeated in the future and on a much more shameful scale.

Will such moves endanger 'detente'? I think not.

On the contrary such a policy will strengthen the forces working for peace and for international disarmament a great deal. 'Hard-liners in the West point out, not without reason, that there is no independent 'peace' lobby in Eastern Europe, no popular democratic equivalent of CND and END, the Campaign for European Nuclear Disarmament, headed by Edward Thompson. No single step could do more to help the movement for disarmament in the West than the appearance of comparable movements, independent of communist control, in Poland especially, but also in Russia and throughout Eastern Europe. The Labour Party and Labour's NEC should seek to bring this about.

What should Labour's policy be towards Poland? The following proposals merit the most serious consideration.

## FUTURE POLICY

1. Labour, as a democratic socialist party, must stand for democratic socialism in Poland just as much as elsewhere. As a result we must work towards the dismantling of Communist one-party rule and the establishment of democratic socialism in its place.
2. As a first step in this direction Labour's NEC should directly approach the Polish Communist delegation to this year's Party Conference and subsequently the Polish Government calling for the legalisation of the Socialist Party in Poland and the removal of all those restrictions on freedom of assembly and publication which currently make impossible its open organisation, equally that of such bodies as the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament - CND and END.
3. Poland's problems today spring not only from thirty years of gross economic mismanagement, but also from the total lack of public support for the communist government imposed from above on the Polish people. It is precisely the absence of any legitimised opposition which to a degree forces a political role on Solidarity, even against its will. This situation must be brought to an end. As a start 35% of the seats of the Polish Sejm should forthwith be open for free contest by the workers and peasants opposition. Meantime the balance of the seats, a large majority, could remain in the gift of the ruling oligarchy as at the present time. Labour should urgently press on both the Polish Communist Party and the Polish government the necessity for such a measure.
4. Labour should make it plain to the Russians that whilst openly working to establish democratic socialism in Poland, we have no wish to move that country either into NATO or the western orbit. Finland stands outside NATO, voluntarily gives Russia important guarantees regarding its foreign policy, yet enjoys a large measure of political independence just the same. An independent, democratic socialist Poland can and should do no less. If required Poland's new status can be mutually guaranteed by both 'East' and 'West'. Brezhnev and the USSR should properly be satisfied with this.

Official delegations from the Russian and Polish Communist Parties, that is to say the governments of the USSR and Poland respectively, will be attending this year's Labour Party Conference. It is to be hoped that Labour MP's Constituency and trade union delegates, as well as Labour's NEC, will press these views home.

Interest in Solidarity in the western republics of the Soviet union is large and growing, at least to judge by recent reports. Rumour has it that local black-marketeers are selling Solidarity badges like hot-cakes. And the going price for a copy of Solidarity's weekly newspaper has now reached 150 roubles - more than the average monthly wage. Perhaps this is a way for the Polish government to solve its foreign exchange problems!

## CONFERENCE CALLED ON POLISH EXPERIENCE

The Socialist Environment and Resources Association and the Eastern European Solidarity Campaign have organised a one-day conference entitled "Trade Unions, Self-Management and Socialism - the Polish Experience". The conference will take place at Ruskin College, Oxford on Saturday October 17th. Speakers include, Mike Cooley (Lucas Aerospace Combine), Walter Kendall, and Oliver MacDonald (editor, Labour Focus on Eastern Europe), as well as representatives of Solidarity. There will also be individual workshops on Workers' Self Management, Economic Planning, Environment and Health and Safety, and Trade Unions and Socialism.

Tickets ( £3.50, waged, £1.50 unwaged) and further information are available from:  
Mike Johnson, SERA, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG.  
Tel: 01-439-3749.

# GOVERNMENT OBSTRUCTION

*A principal reason for the recent 'press strike' in Poland is Solidarity's exasperation at continual misrepresentation and exclusion of its views from the government controlled press. A similar problem arises from the government's attempts to boost the Branch Unions, formed by the government last year from the disbanded state union federation, at the expense of Solidarity. Unrepresentative and unpopular, the Branch Unions are little more than tools in the government's strategy to bring down Solidarity.*

*We reproduce below a statement from the KKP, the Coordinating committee of Solidarity, complaining about the government giving preferential treatment to the Branch Unions. It is the exclusion of such statements from the national press which has led to Solidarity's protests over bias in the media.*

The KKP wishes to protest against the use of trade union negotiations as a political weapon to lower the authority of Solidarity.

I. Conscious of its social responsibilities, the KKP, in November 1980, suspended the implementation of the wage agreements reached with the Government. Recently, the Government has signed a new wage agreement exclusively with the branch unions of the metal workers and agricultural workers; in so doing the Government is aggravating the disequilibrium of the market, devaluing people's savings, and lowering the credibility of its own statements regarding its lack of ready funds. We declare that if the Government has financial reserves at its disposal, it should use them to fulfill its obligations under the Gdansk Agreements, and in particular to solve the problem of poverty in Poland, where there are 6 million people whose wages are below the social minimum.

2. The KKP maintains the stand it took last November, and demands that the country's monetary situation, including all expenditure, wage limits, supply and retail prices, be brought completely under control.

3. The KKP believes that it is more important now to provide financial assurances for those workers who have voluntarily agreed to change jobs, and for the Government to meet its financial obligations to those people who are out of work; unemployment being an increasingly urgent problem in our times.

If no action is taken by the Government in response to our protest over these wage agreements, we will have no option but to demand from our side the resolution of the numerous problems arising out of our agreements with the Government. This would make our role in the programme for economic stabilisation even more problematic.

Kania talks of "renewal", but attacks Solidarity



# Founding Member Of Solidarity Visits P.S.C.

On the third of August in a small house in Wimbledon, Anna Walentynowicz addressed a small gathering of PSC members. She was introduced by Wiktor Moszczynski, who acted as translator, as one of the most well known and beloved figures in Poland. It was her reinstatement which the striking workers demanded last summer at Gdansk. She has spent all her life fighting for better conditions and democratic rights for workers and was until recently a member of the Central Coordinating Committee of Solidarity. She declined to make a formal speech, and instead asked the meeting to put questions to her. All I can offer in the short space of this article is a summary of the views she expressed on some of the major issues.

Not unexpectedly she was asked about her criticism of Lech Walesa's handling of the strike over the Bydgoszcz incident. She dismissed fears in Poland at the time that there was a split in Solidarity, and stressed that strong open criticism of its leaders can only be of benefit to Solidarity. If there were no criticism or debate then Solidarity would be in danger of resembling the Party. Lech Walesa failed to inform the other members of the KKP of the decision to revoke the strike. This was unacceptable. All members of the union from the highest to the lowest ranks must be kept fully informed of all important decisions and such decisions must be reached democratically.

## SOLIDARITY AND THE PARTY

Several questions were put to her on the nature of Solidarity's relationship with the Party, and in particular the fact that there was a Solidarity member in the polit-bureau. She thought that the latter was of no significance whatsoever. Even if Miss Grzyb (the Solidarity polit-bureau member - of whom Anna W knew absolutely nothing) wanted to represent the genuine interests of Solidarity she would be voted down on all but the most trivial issues. It was an empty token ges-

ture on the part of the Party. The Party has since Solidarity's inception prevented any form of reasonable cooperation with the union, and Solidarity must seek to protect its interests by exerting pressure on the Party. In 1970 Anna W was among those who were taken in by the Government's slogan-appeal - 'We must all work together'. In 1980, the Polish workers decided that they would stop listening to promises and take action. From then onwards the Polish workers have active and they will continue to act without fear.

## OTHER UNIONS

There were a large number of questions on the issue of Solidarity's attitude to similar worker movements in the Soviet bloc. Anna W wished to make it clear that Solidarity could not export itself, although of course the workers in those countries themselves could set about forming their own unions. Solidarity has far too many problems of its own in Poland which it can barely cope with. It cannot extend its influence outside Poland. The Polish workers themselves fought hard and long for their rights. They broke through the barrier of fear in 1980. It is for each of the other nations to overcome its own fears. Solidarity cannot do this for them. Solidarity has published articles about the plight of Soviet and Czech dissidents and will continue to do so. Anna W was moved by the messages of support from workers and democratic activists in the other Soviet bloc countries.

## WESTERN SUPPORT

Finally, how can we in the West best help Solidarity? Most important of all is the sending of printing equipment, paper, ink etc., to Poland. Anna W affirmed that every MKZ in Poland now has at least some rudimentary printing machinery, although still very inadequate. This is largely due to support from outside Poland. Equally important is moral support. It is crucial for us to know the truth and disseminate that truth here in the West. Anna W said that the KKP learnt that vice-premier Rakowski had contacted an MP in England and urged him to refrain from raising the Polish issue before Parliament because it might provoke the Soviet Union. Rakowski was condemned by the KKP for this initiative. The Polish workers have overcome their fears and are not moved by threats. Such threats cause more fear in the West than in Poland and it is a tactic of the Party to frighten people in the West who in turn will attempt to restrain or curb the workers' movement in Poland. Poland's interests are best served by free and open discussion.

Anna Walentynowicz thanked PSC for their aid and support, and we in turn thanked her for a fascinating and inspiring evening.

## POLITICAL PRISONERS

Many hunger vigils and other acts of protest are being held throughout Poland on behalf of political prisoners, and Solidarity is constantly urging the release of such persons and a general amnesty for all 'crimes' of a political nature prior to 1980, and a blanket freedom of persecution and victimisation of individuals engaged in genuine union activity.

Many political dissidents and some Solidarity activists are still facing charges for illegal activities that have been temporarily suspended for an indeterminate period but which could be brought out again at a moment more opportune to the authorities. Some like Mirosław Chojecki, Edmund Zdrozinski, Jan Kozłowski have had charges pending for over a year, others like Jan Narozniak face possible prosecution for actions on behalf of Solidarity last November.



Anna Walentynowicz addressing shipyard workers in Gdansk

Article 1.

The Public Enterprise is the basic unit of organisation in the national economy conducting an independent activity on the basis of economic accountability, endowed with being a legal entity consisting of an organised workforce, encompassing a part of the national common wealth and administered by the organs of employees self-management.

Article 2.

§1. The Public Enterprise conducts its economic activity with the aim of achieving intended economic and social effects by the rational use of resources.

Article 9.

§1. The workforce of an enterprise establishes the statute of the enterprise by means of a referendum.

Article 10.

§1. The enterprise is administered by the workforce by means of the organs of employees self-management.

§2. The employees self-management consists of all employees of the enterprise.

§3. All organs of self-management, with the exception of the general assembly of the workforce, are elective posts. Members of the organs of self-management are responsible to their electors and can be recalled only by them.

§4. The highest form of expression of the will of self-management is a referendum of the workforce, which is conducted on the basis of a resolution by the employees council, or a resolution signed by not less than 10% of members of the self-management.

§5. Self-management disposes of the estate of the enterprise and lays down general directions of activity and development for the enterprise and decides on the distribution of income.

§6. The rightful organs of self-management can draw up contracts and agreements with the organs of the state authorities and administration.

§7. The director of the enterprise as the executor of the decisions of self-management administers the operation of the enterprise on the principle of a one-person management board.

Article 11.

Organs of the public enterprise are: 1. General Assembly of the workforce (or delegates), 2. Employees Council, 3. Council Praesidium, 4. Auxiliary Organs of Self-Management, 5. Director of the enterprise.

Article 12.

§1. The responsibility of the general assembly of the workforce includes: 1. Annual evaluation of the activity of the Council and the Director of the enterprise. 2. Revocation in justified circumstances of the decisions of the Council.

Article 14.

§1. Resolutions of the general assembly are passed by a simple majority of votes where at least 50% of the workforce are present.

Article 15.

Decisions about merging, dividing or shutting down the enterprise are taken by way of a referendum of the workforce.

Article 19.

- The employees councils are entitled to:-
1. Resolve on the basic direction of economic activity and development of the enterprise.
  2. Approve the plans for the activities of the enterprise.
  3. Confirm the organisational structure of the enterprise.
  4. Resolve on the distribution of income.
  5. Appoint and recall the director of the enterprise.
  6. Express its opinion of candidates for deputy director and chief accountant of the enterprise.
  7. Resolve on matters concerning changes in the profile of production or services.
  8. Pass resolutions accepting the annual balance and statement of accounts and approve the annual report of the director.

continued on page 10.



WITH FOOD QUEUES GROWING, AND HARDLINERS, GRABSK

# SELF-MAN

The most dramatic initiatives from Solidarity management - that of employee self-management from intellectuals, but following the collapse find new incentives and new management structures enthusiastically endorsed by workers themselves.

The chief pressure for this vital reform has come from Major Factories, which represents the workforce of Poland. They have held a series of conferences to discuss the legislation required (see the extract below) and hostility, the Network urged employees to support the appeal for this action was made in a series of Conferences by the journalist Jozef Kusmierk, Agency.

After some hesitation, the KKP (National Council) approved the activities of the Network in the Resolution on

## EMPLOYEES SELF-MANAGEMENT - WHY NOW?

(Speech made Jozef Kusmierk at the Network Conference in Katowice on June 23rd 1981.)

Whether the present collapse of authority is a pre-arranged game, or whether it results from lack of purpose and lack of ideas is not the important thing to consider now.

It is the effects which are important, and they are tragic.

All our factories are threatened by a serious short-fall in production, even by closure. In many factories production has actually ceased, and with the majority this will happen in a few days, a few months. Of course, if management had carried out their statutory duties, at least to a minimum degree, at least to their barest essentials, then the consequences would not have been so tragic.

## EXCUSES

The management excuses themselves by the lack of decisions from their superiors, by lack of regulations, lack of authority. It requires no deep philosophy to understand that the foundation of our existence is the factory and its rhythmic functioning. It is not in the associations or in the ministries that the national wealth is produced, but here on the shop floor.

The crowning principle of law is that it cannot be contrary to the public good. If it is contrary then that law becomes illegal.

Management hide their indecisiveness behind the lack of relevant regulations and lack of relevant authorization. If that is the reason that production in our factory is to be frozen, and we are to lose our jobs and be transferred to the humiliating status of receiving unemployment benefit, then those regulations are illegal.

In four months time the heating season begins, and



... AND OLSZOWSKI PLOTTING, SOLIDARITY PREPARES FOR

# AGEMENT

... concern the emergence of a new form of economic... The chief pressure for this came firstly... this year of Poland's economy and the need to... to revive production, the ideas have been en-

... come from the Network of Solidarity Committees... of the seventeen largest enterprises in... in which they proposed detailed blueprints for... . In view of the governments intransigence... et up their councils unilaterally. The most ar-... beech (printed below) at one of the National... who was then asked to run the Networks own Press

... (ordinating Committee) of Solidarity endorsed the... Employees Councils.

our existence will become menacingly complicated. For nine months now the nominal authorities have proved that they cannot cope with even the simplest tasks. The lack of success in negotiations with Western banks was partly caused by the fact that our negotiators were incapable of presenting a trustworthy report about the state of our economy. Nobody with any common sense would believe that such a report could not be produced in two weeks, let alone a month. In a planned centralized economy, even at the moment of disintegration, such a report could have been drawn up in a few hours.

Either the authorities do not want to prepare such a report, or they are simply afraid to. We on the shop floor should be strangers to such fears and apprehensions from our nominal authorities. We must look truth in the face and accept it as it is. And that truth is that we are vegetating below the poverty line and below subsistence level. That truth tells us that if our factories come to a standstill, then individually each of us faces catastrophe.

## SELF-MANAGEMENT

Our only safeguard is self-management in our plants.

Self-management, i.e. management of the factory by its own employees, is not something new in this country. It is only those who have assumed the right to state that it is thanks to them and only them that we were able to lift ourselves up out of post-war destruction, who do not want to remember that the great task of reconstruction was begun on the basis of various forms of self-management. Self-management, and only self-management, could face the tests at the most difficult moments. That is a truth that has been borne out many times in our post-war history. Just remember 1956, when many factories, even whole regions, were bereft of their nominal bosses, who had simply fled.

The establishment of self-management is in accordance with working class traditions, and also in accor-

## KKP RESOLUTION ON EMPLOYEE'S COUNCILS

1. The collapse of the ration card system for commodities of primary use and the threat of stagnation in production places the whole country in a dramatic situation. The causes of the crisis had built up a long time before August 1980 and are connected with the preservation of a system of management which has long been ripe for reform, though demands for such a reform had been unsuccessful. In present conditions the administration of the economy has lost its ability to act both at enterprise level and in the country at large. Its reform must be based on the principles of authentic employees self-management, as only this would be capable of acting such a way as to overcome the crisis.

2. The KKP gives its full support to the social movement for self-management which has been given expression by the establishment of Employees Councils or Founding Committees for such councils. Such initiatives have been taken up by several Regional Executive Committees of our union, as well as by the Network of Solidarity Committees of Major Enterprises. It is a movement for the public management of national common property, which is expressed for instance in the project for a "Public Enterprise" Bill.

3. The projects put forward by the government for a bill on Employees self-management and the public enterprises are not in accordance with the principles of authentic employees self management for they do not allocate to the employees councils sufficient powers to manage the enterprise. In particular they deny them the right to appoint and recall the enterprise's directors, which results in their official subordination to the state administration.

4. The KKP demands that Parliament should pass an Act on the Enterprise and Employees Self-Management which would ensure the establishment of the principles of authentic self-management as formulated above. Simultaneously all legal Acts that guarantee economic independence to the enterprise should be enforced as the basis for employees self-management.

5. The KKP maintains that the union cannot agree to any change in retail prices without not only a just compensatory wage scheme, but also a tight linkage of the price changes to economic reform based on employees self-management councils and on their guaranteed right to control its implementation.

6. We appeal to all sections of the union to render all possible assistance and support in the establishment of employees councils as the basic element in the struggle for economic reform. The KKP urges Regional Executive Committees to support initiatives to establish territorial agreements between employees councils.

In rendering support to self-management the KKP stresses that employees councils must be independent of the state administration, political organisations and trade unions, including Solidarity; while at the same time union enterprise committees must remain independent of employees councils.

Gdansk 26.7.81

dance with the doctrine of our state, which is based on the social ownership of the means of production. To all those with short memories, who declare to-day or may declare tomorrow, that the establishment of self-management is an outright challenge to authority, I would like to address this reminder. There never was a speech by Giermek, Jaroszewicz, Babiuch, Pinkowski or any of the people now in power, I repeat, never such a speech, in which a sentence could not be found about the necessity of strengthening and developing self-management. That these speeches were accompanied by legal acts which killed self-management, which disappropriated self-management of its ownership in, say, housing cooperatives, well that is another matter.

Self-management fills in the gaps in the exercise of power, where it pauses, where it operates against the public interest, or where it shies from fulfilling its duties. We must establish self-management in order to

continued on page 10.

# And in the East too...

In past issues PSC News has pointed out the growing support for Solidarity from workers and trade unions in Western Europe. No such support could be expected from the state-run puppet unions of Eastern Europe. Yet despite all the efforts of Brezhnev and his allies to stifle and distort all news of Polish event (the East Germans even refused recently to admit a Polish train on the grounds that it was plastered with Solidarity posters) there are signs of support for Solidarity spreading throughout the Russian empire and as far afield as China. The scale and depth of support for Solidarity in the communist states cannot be easily measured, but what news does filter out indicates widespread sympathy with the new Polish union.

As early as December last year, ten leading Russian dissidents including Andrei Sakharov and Anatoly Marchenko sent the following message of support to the Inter-Factory Strike Committee.

*Dear Polish Friends!*

*We are following with sympathy your courageous fight for civil and political rights in Poland. Your steadfast, calm and fraternal unity is a token of strength and promises a successful outcome for your struggle. Your reliance on non-violent means as a matter of principle creates the only possible foundation for the future democratic development of Poland.*

*Your struggle reaffirms the honour of the working class and is a model for the cooperation of workers and intelligentsia.*

*We declare our solidarity with you, brothers!*

According to reports, Marchenko, a Russian worker and signatory of this letter was arrested on March 17th on charges of "anti-soviet agitation and propaganda".

For its part the Russian free trade union movement, S.M.O.T., has declared its solidarity with the Polish strikers and has called for cooperation between the free trade unions in Eastern Europe.

Unfortunately details of trials remain the most plentiful source of information about support for Solidarity in the Warsaw Pact countries. In Riga in May this year, a 63 year old Latvian engineer and fisheries expert, Burmeisters, was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment with hard labour. As well as the preposterous charge of giving the CIA a detailed map of the Bay of Riga, he was accused of spreading information about the activities of Solidarity in Poland and of maintaining links with the exiled Latvian Social-Democratic Party. Support for Solidarity laid him open to charges of "spreading information harmful to the Soviet state".

Support for Solidarity in the East is not confined to the USSR. According to a West German human rights group, East German security police have recently arrested several trade union activists and intellectuals who have been active in supporting Solidarity. Seven workers from four big industrial enterprises in different parts of the country have been arrested for discussing ways of democratising the communist Free German Trade Union Federation along the lines taken by Solidarity.

And last January Dr. Wilhelm Koch, a Weimar medical consultant, was arrested and sentenced to 4 years jail for contributing 10,000 marks (£2,000) to the Polish unions.

The Polish events have evoked a reaction even in China. At first the official Chinese press gave rather full reports of the strike waves and occupations in Poland in the late summer of 1980. The government of Deng Xiaoping evidently calculated that any news which



Taken from L'Alternative, May-August 1981.

embarrassed the Soviet Union was good news. But reporting is now far more cautious. The effect on the Chinese was not so much to stiffen their anti-Sovietism as to kindle enthusiasm for democracy and free trade unions.

The reticence of the official press has been matched by active comment in the 'unofficial' press which flourished before the crackdown in Spring 1981, and still continues, despite repression, in parts of China. For example, the following declaration was printed in the Peking paper Tribune of the Fifth of April.

*Dear Polish brother workers,*

*You have by your struggles, by your strikes, achieved a great victory which has made you the focus of the entire world. This victory has shown the power of working class unity as well as a new self-consciousness of this class; it has shown that the bureaucratic revisionist class, greedy of its privileges, is, like hegemonism, only a paper tiger in the face of people's revolution. It shows that the democratic working class revolution is an inevitable tendency of historical development. It has crossed national frontiers, taking on a broad, international meaning. We, the young generation of the Chinese working class, send you our warmest wishes and greetings.*

*May your work progress without interruption and your contribution to the realisation of democratic socialism be even greater!*

*Workers of the world unite!*

*The Editorial Board  
Peking, September 1980*

Responses have not been limited to declarations. Official newspapers have themselves admitted that in a number of towns, including Shanghai and Wuhan, workers have demanded independent unions "as in Poland".

There are also reports of strikes by metalworkers in Shansi province, which not only raised economic demands and a call for free trade unions, but also called for a coalition government and the end of the one-party system. But according to the government press, "this counter-revolutionary clique has been crushed; its leaders will be put on trial shortly".

All the signs are that there is massive submerged support for Solidarity and for its aims throughout the communist bloc. Despite severe repression workers and intellectuals in all these countries have had the courage to stand in solidarity with their Polish brothers and sisters. We, in Britain, must surely attempt to equal the efforts of these courageous fighters.



# SOLIDARITY AND THE WEST

Solidarity during the past few months has sent delegations to unions in Western Europe and Japan in response to the enormous interest shown by these unions in Solidarity. We print below our own translation of a fascinating discussion by Solidarity officials on their attitudes to unions in the West, and the impact of Solidarity's visits on these countries. It is a full transcript of a debate by the Central Coordinating Committee ( KKP ) of Solidarity on the results of these visits abroad, and the aims of future contacts with foreign unions. Our source is the news bulletin of the Press Agency of Solidarity in Gdansk ( no.5 of 2 June 1981 ).

R. Kalinowski gave a summary of the Solidarity delegation's visit to Belgium, France and Italy. It was purely a working trip. The aim was to reach agreement on a basis for collaboration and inter-union exchanges with the unions in these countries. On the 25th April we were in Brussels with representatives of the W.L.O. We also met a delegation from the Christian Trade Union (SCS) which was going out to Poland. On the 26th April, there was a meeting with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). On the 27th April, we met again with the heads of the ICFTU and later with the SCS. We had discussions with all the main unions from Belgium, France and Italy, and also with representatives from the headquarters of the international union organisations.

Contacts with the Christian unions in Belgium would be most useful to us (they have lots of Polish members). So too would contacts with the French CFDT, a socialist union. As for Italy, their unions are in a rather chaotic state at the moment and our discussion with the Federation of Italian Unions produced no concrete results; our discussions with the individual union heads on the other hand were constructive.

We were generally asked about three issues: the role of the church in our union, Soviet intervention in Poland, and our union Congress. Something which is causing us concern is that in the West there are people who claim to represent our union without our authority. They include all sorts of organisations e.g. trade union bodies like Trotskyites in France and Belgium who use our Solidarity badges. Sums of money are being raised "for Solidarity" which we have no idea what is done with.

The question of material aid for Solidarity or for Poland from Western trade unions has become a political issue between certain unions; the money is provided out of union funds, which is a cause for dissatisfaction among grass-roots members. A far more important issue is, for example, aid for unions in third world countries which operate illegally and have no means of raising funds.

Palka (Jastrzebie): There seems to be a monopoly in the union when it comes to representing the union abroad. We have received personal invitations from Western unions and have still not received the consent of the International Bureau, which declared that it could not give its consent. Invitations sent to particular regions or to individual enterprises must be honoured by the union.

Bogdan Lis: The union's foreign policy must be shaped and developed by one organ. The only official delegations will be those sent out as representatives of the KKP. The KKP cannot take charge of the supervision of delegates from work enterprises; that must be the responsibility of regional branches. Individual invitations cannot be honoured because it is for the union to decide in each individual case who would be best suited to the task. There can be no question of our repaying Western unions for their help, morally or financially; we simply cannot take on such obligations. Similarly we cannot allocate money sent to the union to finance agriculture, etc.



Gdynia workers return after warning strike.

Sawicki (Lubin): We ought to distinguish between two types of visits - visits of representatives where the delegates will be put forward by the KKP, and visits for the purpose of training in which case the KKP should invite the regional branches to select competent individuals for the visit.

R Kalinowski: In the near future we will issue a report on the results of the various discussions our delegation undertook. In June there will be a meeting of representatives from the foreign bureaux from all over the country. There we will decide the basis on which delegates for visits should be selected.

L.Dymarski (Poznan): We must form a council to discuss the foreign policy of the Union. Up until now our approach has been rather chaotic, we know very little about what goes on in world union politics. We lack information about particular union bodies and federations or their stance on the international political scene. At the present time there is great interest in the West in our Union. People there have ceased to look upon it as a temporary phenomenon. The trade unions in the West are political and it is inevitable that some unions will try to gain prestige out of the fact that they have contacts with us.

We too should try to profit from our contacts with these unions. With a consistent foreign policy, Solidarity could have a real influence on the world trade union scene. The most powerful force in the trade union world at the moment is the International confederations of Free Trade Unions in Brussels, the second force are the Christian Democrat unions, the third the communist union head offices in Prague.

The authorities are prepared to allow us to have contacts with the Christian Democrat unions, but advise us against having contacts with the Brussels International Confederation. We cannot be guided by the authorities proposals, we must maintain contacts with all the union centres without selecting any one union for privileged status. With this aim in mind we should form the council mentioned above. International exchanges with other unions need not form part of the Union's politics. A journalist from the Union should accompany every official union delegations so that the union's publications can give a full account of the visit.

Karczewski (Kutno): Our union has a big centralised power structure, decisions over visits by regional representatives cannot be taken by the Presidium, we should form a council as suggested by brother Dymarski which would include members from outside the Presidium.

Krupinski(Olszyn): The Union should pay the travelling costs of its delegations. We cannot put ourselves into the position of begging for material aid all the time, we ought to be more concerned with exchanges of experience, and political and moral support for our activities. We cannot have contacts with every union, certain of their political programmes may not suit us.

Rulewski: An account of the visit to Japan, the aim of the visit was to publicize Poland's problems, disseminate the truth about Poland and our union, and to promote understanding of Poland's material difficulties. We had a meeting with representatives of the Japanese Parliament to discuss the last mentioned problems. The SOHYO Union which invited us operates under the sponsorship of the social democratic party; it is the largest union body, and comprises workers from the public sector, education, health etc.

During the course of our discussions we stressed that the basis of cooperation between our two unions should be contacts at grass-roots level between work-plants, branches. We also proposed that a delegation from Rural Solidarity be invited to Japan and this was met with rapturous approval. Both sides stressed the need to have exchanges of teams of experts in such fields as protection of the environment, safety and work hygiene, the organisation of labour and consumer quality control. The Japanese offered material assistance and educational equipment for neglected children in Poland.

With regard to suggestions that the Polish government was not interested in promoting further contacts with Japan, both sides undertook that they would try to persuade their respective governments of the need for further cooperation. The Japanese showed great interest in the activities of our Union, and they stressed that our example has brought their own union back to life, after a long period of inactivity and stagnation; they often expressed admiration for our achievements, claiming that we had performed a miracle in forming such a powerful and independent union in our political situation. The Japanese also spoke to us about their own labour problems, like for instance: housing, environmental problems, health standards, private education, essential training.

Coming to resolutions we must the need for us to set up some form of agency to represent Solidarity in the West which would provide reliable information and inform public opinion there, and also obtain information for Poland about the activities of Western unions as well as preparing for visits from our delegations. The visit was a great success, and above all gained us considerable publicity. The material aid given to Solidarity amounts to 100,000 dollars, this includes 30 tape recorders, 40 calculators, a big xerox machine and four Minolta machines. The interest in Poland is huge. Let us see if our Union, which has already made a great contribution to the life of Poland, cannot also make some contribution to the rest of the world.

Walesa: A fully documented account of the visit has been produced and is available to any KKP member. Our visit has given the Japanese unions the impetus to set about their own 'renewal'; their meetings have witnessed an increasing number of lively discussions as in Poland and this is reflected in their press. Our delegation is to meet with the government to discuss continued contacts with the Japanese in the future.

During my stay in Sweden I collected some prize money which I have given to the Union, we have done the same with the more valuable presents which we received from the Japanese.

continued from page 7.

defend our constitutional right and duty to work. We now know, and it is obvious to all, that the authorities are in no position to fulfil the duties required of them. They can allocate pensions to their worthies, they can allocate honorary posts on themselves, but for going to our stagnant factories they pay us with paper currency which in the circumstances is a passport to dire poverty.

We must set up self-managing bodies because they are the one thing that can save us and our workplaces.

Self-management yes, but not at any price. It cannot be a screen or a last ditch rescue for the powerless men in power who are trying to survive the worst moments at our expense.

## REFORMS

Self-management is the one legal and effective way to a profound and fundamental economic reform which will insure us once and for all against sliding into crises, against the threat of losing independence, earned always with our poverty.

Until now all attempts to set up workers self-managing councils have ended in our defeat despite undoubted initial successes.

Self-management without the support of authentic trade unions, must always lose its contest with the administration. The administration manipulated self-governing councils in such a way that they eventually became an anti-worker force. Let us remember how base and treacherous was the role of the National Association of Self-Management in June 1956, and the behaviour of so called self-managing bodies in July and August 1980. Now establishing itself on the initiative of Solidarity and basing itself on the union's cooperation, self-management has the opportunity to become an authentic owner-manager of the workplace. This is not just an opportunity, it is a duty, and the only way out of the situation, because without self-management each of us, along with his family and closest friends, will descend into such hunger and poverty, such servility and humiliation, as has not been experienced by us throughout our thousand years of history.

Continued from page 6.

9. Resolve on economic agreements and contracts of cooperation with other enterprises.
10. Conclude agreements with the organs of the state authority and administration about mutual cooperation.
11. Lay down principles of employment policy.
12. Control the overall activity of the enterprise.
13. Lay down working regulations.
14. Elect the chairman and praesidium of the council.
15. Resolve on the purchase, mortgaging and disposal of the estate and other permanent fixtures.
16. Resolve on the social conditions and cultural needs of the workforce of the enterprise.
17. Resolve on import and export contracts.
18. Confirm nominations for state honours and medals.
19. Take responsibility for the channels of information in the enterprise.

### \*Article 20.

The council can require of the director and employees of the enterprise any reports, information and explanations and examine the books of the enterprise. In matters requiring specialised knowledge, the council may call on experts.

### \*Article 22.

Council sittings should take place at least once a quarter.

### Article 25.

Resolutions of the council are passed with an absolute majority with at least two thirds of the council members present.

### Article 36.

The director of the enterprise is the executor of decisions made by the organs of employees self-management.

## ECONOMIC REFORM

The administration's inability this year to manage the economy has concentrated the minds of both Party and Solidarity about the need for austere economic measures and fundamental economic reforms.

The government and the union agree that investment that financial investment, fuel and raw materials must be diverted from heavy industry to agriculture, farm machinery, consumer and export orientated industries, and that mining should be given top priority.

The government also wants a pay freeze, a drastic increase in retail prices, particularly food, a cut in social spending and in housebuilding, and a closure immediately of less productive factories. It admits the need for considerable decentralization in economic planning, with greater autonomy given to government-appointed directors in the individual enterprises co-operating with the workforce organized in a self-management structure.

The union accepts that a pay freeze, price rises and mass redundancies will be necessary, but they want the costs of the crisis to be borne by all in proportion to their earning power. Consequently they want to protect those with low income against price rises by compensatory wage increases and by increasing the 'social wage' through greater investment in education, health and pensions, and by a pay freeze and a progressive income tax against those in the middle and upper income brackets.

Solidarity are for greater decentralization in the economy but they wish to stress the independence of enterprises as legal entities which are self-financing and which are entitled to manage the enterprise stock as a portion of "common national property" (as distinct from state property). Consequently Solidarity believe that self-management in the form of employees councils and assemblies should be the sovereign body in the independent public enterprise with powers to appoint and dismiss directors, shape production and employment policies, apportion investment and bonuses from enterprise profits, and negotiate with state authorities independently. Such self-managing bodies should be independent of state, party and union.

Solidarity insists that all aspects of economic reform be introduced along with austerity measures as one indivisible package. Otherwise they feel obliged to oppose any price rises and factory closures. Faced with the breakdown of the present rigidly managed economy, Solidarity has encouraged workforces to set up their own workers councils unilaterally and sack recalcitrant, corrupt and inefficient managers and directors. In particular, the Network of Solidarity Committees of Major Factories, which has acted as a pressure group and stalking horse within Solidarity and represents the 17 largest and most radical enterprise shop floors in Poland, has acted as a key pioneer for economic reform and workers self-management.

The government has accused Solidarity, and specifically the Network, of challenging the authority of the state. It has consistently declined to recognise directors appointed by workers councils, and threatened to close down enterprises that interpret their self-managing powers too radically. It wants all moves to self-management to be suspended until the government has passed its new bill on the status of enterprises and their own timid measures for worker participation.

The Network in turn has held several conferences at which it has developed its ideas. It is urging self-management councils and founding committees for employees councils to set up regional, and even a national, structure with the aim of becoming a separate force that would take a key role in managing the national economy and negotiating with the central economic planners. To the Party, with its doctrine of a 'leading role', such views are anathema.

# PROVOCATION

*Few observers of events in Poland over the past few months will have failed to notice the increased attention given by the Press to unrest and disorder in Poland. Although there were numerous reports in the Polish official media of various "incidents" (paint daubed on Soviet monuments etc) such incidents were generally isolated acts and often occurred in highly dubious circumstances - suggesting they were deliberate acts of provocation by groups hostile to Solidarity. From the very beginning of the strikes last summer one of the hallmarks of the Solidarity movement has been an insistence on peaceful orderly conduct and the condemnation of any form of violence. We print below a statement issued by the Central Coordinating Committee of Solidarity in response to provocative allegations made in the official Polish Press.*

Statement by the Central Coordinating Committee on disorder and unrest in Poland.

Amidst increasing public concern sown by the official media over the increased outbreaks of lawlessness and disorder in Poland, the KKP wishes to make the following declaration:

It is not in Solidarity's interests nor in the interests of any other progressive forces to provoke social unrest through thoughtless acts of hooliganism or other provocative behaviour. At such an important time as the electoral campaign of the Union and of the United Workers Party, we all believe that only the outcome of elections which have been conducted peacefully and democratically can help Poland.

The creation of a general state of public alarm can only be in the interests of those people who, at this decisive moment in time, are deliberately trying to provoke conflict, and whose aim is to reverse the process of renewal and usher back the old methods which they used to hide their own misdeeds and corruption.

We also condemn the biased and contemptuous attitude taken by the Government Commission in Radom investigating the Bydgoszcz incident. This too is a form of provocation.

There are countless examples of acts whose aim is to inflame public opinion, and they can only be interpreted as an attempt by certain groups to cause unrest and conflict on the eve of events of great importance to the nation. The KKP, appeals to all members of Solidarity and to all peace-loving citizens to remain calm and not to give way to provocation, and to resist any attempt to bring about public unrest.

In the event of any violation of any civil rights, we appeal to everyone first of all to exhaust all the formal legal remedies, and should these prove to be of no assistance to call upon the Union to exercise its influence either through negotiations or protests.

The KKP believes that the present process of renewal and the democratisation of all aspects of Society will in the future provide a basis for the peaceful resolution of the difficult problems facing the nation, in accordance with Society's expectations.

## SUPPORT IN LENINGRAD

USSR News Brief of the 15th August carried the following report - "At the end of March 1981 in Moscow, according to unconfirmed reports, searches were conducted in connection with the circulation of an appeal by the "Russian Committee for the Assistance of Polish Workers". In mid-March leaflets supporting the Polish workers also appeared in the Leningrad Technological Institute. At the same time a packet of leaflets was scattered at the "Technological Institute" metro station in Leningrad.

## WHAT IS P.S.C.?

The Polish Solidarity Campaign is a broad non-sectarian solidarity campaign with members from a wide variety of organisations, including trade union branches, individual trade union activists, Labour Party wards and various other affiliated bodies.

The aims and objectives of PSC adopted at a General Meeting in September 1980 are to:-

- 1/ Support and defend the struggle for all working class and democratic rights in Poland.
- 2/ To gain recognition in Britain for Polish working class and democratic organisations, and for the withdrawal of support and recognition from state-employer run puppet organisations.
- 3/ To encourage and assist all forms of contact between working class and democratic organisations in Britain and Poland.

Since last summer Polish workers have won a historic struggle to gain representation by genuine independent unions and not sham Government-run unions. Since then, Solidarity, the independent self-governing union has grown to over 8 million members. But it still desperately needs financial and moral support from the labour movement. It urgently needs the most basic printing and office equipment which they cannot obtain in Poland even with ready cash.

Solidarity has been subjected to repeated slanderous attacks from the Kremlin and Poland's Warsaw Pact neighbours, and lives under the threat of possible military intervention. In their fight for basic democratic rights the Polish workers need the full support and backing of the international labour movement.

### WHAT PSC DOES.

Since its formation PSC has directed its efforts to gaining support and recognition for Solidarity from the British labour movement. In August last year, PSC picketed the TUC Conference at Brighton, demanding that the TUC recognises the new unions and withdraws support from the state-run 'company-unions'. The TUC has since recognised Solidarity and begun an appeal fund for Polish workers. Before this, as early as November last year, PSC launched the Polish Trade Union Appeal Fund sponsored by five Labour MP's and prominent union activists to raise money for printing equipment for Solidarity. We are continuing this fund to supply Solidarity with equipment they need and cannot obtain from other sources.

PSC has established regular contact with Solidarity both at national, regional and at local level. We have sent speakers to union conferences and helped to arrange for Solidarity representatives to visit them.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- \* Join PSC, or affiliate your organisation to it. (Membership £5 - includes subscription to PSC News - application form below.)
- \* Invite a speaker from PSC to next meeting of your branch.
- \* Send a donation to the Polish Trade Union Appeal Fund - c/o W. Moszczyński, 107 Grange Road, London W5.

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

I/We ..... (Name/organisation)  
..... (Address)

.....  
wish to affiliate to the Polish Solidarity Campaign and enclose £5 membership fee. (Make cheques/P.O.'s payable to P.S.C.)

Return to - PSC, 69 Edinburgh Road, London E13.

# Birmingham visit stopped

Obstruction by the Polish government prevented a long-planned visit by Solidarity representatives to the West Midlands last week. The visit planned by the Birmingham Poland Solidarity Committee for the first week in September would have included meetings with workers in many Midlands factories, including Rover's Solihull, and a civic reception at the town hall; but it had to be cancelled when Polish authorities failed to grant passports to the Solidarity representatives.

But the Polish authorities could not prevent a well-attended public meeting being held in Digbeth Civic Hall in support of Solidarity. The meeting chaired by Paul McNee, Chairperson of Birmingham Trades Council who had sponsored the meeting, was addressed by Wiktor Moszczyński of the Polish Solidarity Campaign and John Cywinski of BIPS (The Office of Press Information, Solidarity) who outlined the development of Solidarity since August last year and the current problems facing the union.

Phil Bayer of the Birmingham 12 branch of UCATT opened the meeting declaring that "anyone who supports socialism or democracy should support the main thrust of the activities in Poland last year." Phil, the Secretary of the Birmingham Poland Solidarity Committee explained that the committee was very much a rank and file initiative. They had been surprised at the silence of many trade unionists, particularly at leadership level.

Roger Murray, Chairman of the committee, explained that they regarded the cancelling of the visit as only a temporary setback and would be re-arranging the visit for later in the year.

The meeting ended by endorsing the following resolution condemning the obstructive actions of the Polish government.

"This meeting sends greetings to the first National Solidarity Conference.

"It declares its support for the Solidarity movement in Poland and pledges to improve two-way contact between them and the British people and labour movement.

"It condemns the actions of the Polish government in frustrating the free movement of Polish workers, in particular the visit by the two Solidarity representatives to this meeting.

"We dissociate ourselves completely from the hypocritical statements of Thatcher and Reagan giving so-called support for Solidarity whilst conducting anti-trade union activities in their own countries and abroad."

### P.S.C. PUBLIC MEETING

THURSDAY 17th SEPTEMBER, 7.30pm

FRIENDS MEETING HOUSE,  
EUSTON ROAD.

Speakers include:

ERIC HEFFER, M.P.  
DENIS MACSHANE (provisional)

Published by P.S.C.

Printed by Community Press, 2a St Pauls Road, Islington.

Solidarity Congress, Gdansk, September 5-10

The British press has provided quite inadequate detail on the momentous work of the first session of the Solidarity congress, at Gdansk, 5-10 September. Only during the congress itself did it become clear what strength of support there was for radical policies. On Monday September 7 a Gdansk delegate (Mr. Sobieszek, a worker) roundly declared:

We've had enough, after thirty-six years, of the dictatorship of the proletariat. We must strike out of the Gdansk agreement the paragraph on recognising the leading role of the Party (Applause).

The chairman of Bydgoszcz Solidarity supported him, adding that it was necessary to 'resolve' the problem of Solidarity militants who are also Party members: in conflicts they should 'take a position'.

On Tuesday 8 September inhibitions and 'self-censorship' crumbled. The resolution on self-management accused the government and its legislation of 'smothering self-management by depriving it of the control of enterprises, especially electing and recalling directors. This is being done in the name of defending state property - in fact, in the egotistical interests of the bureaucratic apparatus of the Party-state.' 'Official propaganda', the resolution continued, 'says that the government's proposed legislation is accepted with understanding by the majority of society', and challenged the government, therefore, to submit it to referendum. Otherwise Solidarity would 'boycott' laws not reflecting workers' interests. On police violence in Bydgoszcz (which the official enquiry whitewashed) the congress called for the Council of State to ensure the legal authorities complied with the law, and to fire the procurator-general, Mr. Czubinski.

A general resolution:

A new Poland is being built on the banks of the Vistula. Solidarity is not just a trade union, but also a social movement of aware citizens, wanting to work for Polish independence.

The 'Address to all workers of eastern Europe':

The delegates... send greetings to the workers of Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, GDR and all the nations (sic!) of the Soviet Union. As the first independent trade union of our post-war history we feel, profoundly, that we hold our aspirations in common. Despite the fabricated news circulated in your countries, we assure you we are an authentic representative body of workers, with ten million members, born out of workers' strikes. Our aim is the struggle to improve all workers' conditions of life. We support those among you who have chosen the difficult struggle for a free trade union movement. We believe that, in the not-too-distant future, our representative will be able to meet and exchange trade union experiences.

Congress also called for free elections to State bodies. It did not, however, (contra the Soviet bloc press) formally reject its recognition of the 'leading role of the Party'.

Indignation over access to broadcasting, the main issue with the regime just before the congress, came to a head when the official television (excluded from the proceedings) showed footage shot by BBC crews and sold through Eurovision. After the congress Lech Wales announced that if Solidarity continued to be denied their own programmes, they would set up and use a transmitter of their own!

Reactions

Solidarity's support for free trade unions in the Soviet bloc brought a Kremlin response indicating that Russia's rulers are well aware of the favourable reaction the call can evoke amongst the workers of Poland's neighbours. Beginning on Friday September 11, the state and party controlled 'trade unions' convened, in Moscow and Leningrad, mass meetings of workers to adopt the (customarily unanimous) resolutions condemning Solidarity.

Similar resolutions were organised on the eve of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Judged in this context, they constitute as serious a threat to Solidarity as the recurring Army - and now Navy - Warsaw Pact 'exercises' in and around Poland over the last year.

Solidarity, we can be sure, will assess the worth of such resolutions in the light of its

own experience of Polish state 'trade unionism', when for more than three decades, similar displays of unanimity and outward compliance were secured with the same methods of state compulsion.

In fact, Solidarity had already received, from among these same dragooned Russian workers, a message of support, and a pledge that Russia will follow in Poland's path of independent trade unionism. Such a prospect, exhilarating not only for Solidarity, but for all its supporters in the West, has met with scant enthusiasm in the media establishment. Contrary to the claims of Solidarity's leftist critics, British press response to the Solidarity congress has been lukewarm at best. In its leader of September 12, 'The Guardian' scolded Solidarity for its 'superfluous and unnecessary provocation' in supporting Russian free trade unions. 'Banging on about free elections, a free press' (which the author of this attack on Solidarity enjoys and abuses) 'freedom for political prisoners and an end to oppression' it deemed 'entirely unnecessary'. Unnecessary for the readers - and writers - of the Guardian, perhaps. But for Poland? Surely Poles should be the judge of that.

'The Guardian' is not alone. The 'Sunday Times' of September 13 likewise considered that Solidarity had 'carried enthusiasm beyond the bounds of practical good sense'. From a point of view which does not see dictatorship as permanent, is it not eminently practical and sensible for Solidarity to support a cause whose victory would liberate it once and for all from the external threats and pressure which it had to endure throughout the first year of its existence?