

NEWS

SOLIDARNOŚĆ

DATE: 15 January 1984

B.D.I.C

No: 15

THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP OF NSZZ "SOLIDARNOSC" favors the lifting of western sanctions against Poland. The union leadership believes that most of the sanctions are symbolic and have served their purpose. In a press conference on 5 December, Lech Walesa stated that, in view of the worsening crisis, Poland requires massive financial help from the West. At present, the authorities are using the sanctions to justify price increases and the deterioration in living standards. Though Poland needs billions of dollars in new loans, western aid will only be effective if genuine socio-economic reform is implemented. Furthermore, some form of control over the distribution of foreign aid is necessary so that it will not be wasted as it was in the 1970's. "Solidarnosc" economic experts contend that the Polish economy and that living standards have regressed to a level attained in the early '70s. However, they note that Poland must now also cope with a 27 billion dollar foreign debt, a situation which did not exist ten years ago.

JANUSZ PALUBICKI is reported to be in extremely poor health as a result of a hunger strike which he and other political prisoners undertook in Strzelin prison at the beginning of December. Palubicki has already had two heart attacks, one on 26 November. At the Strzelin center, Palubicki and the other political prisoners work in a quarry. From the beginning of August 1980, Palubicki, educated as an art historian, contributed to the organisation of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" at the Poznan University. On 13 December '81, he was interned at Gebarzewie, and from 18 January '82, he was hospitalised. He was released from internment on 8 March, and left hospital at the end of that month. He joined the underground in late July and was a member of the TTK until his arrest in December '82. Palubicki was sentenced to four years in prison for trade union work. His sentence was reduced to two years under the terms of the July '83 amnesty.

THE SOCIAL RESISTANCE COMMITTEE (KOS), the Polish Helsinki Committee, the Cultural Council, and the Independent Education Movement have designated 1984 as the Year of Prisoners of Conscience. In this way, the four independent organisations which engage in a variety of educational and publishing activities, wish to pay tribute to the former Workers' Defense Committee (KOR), created in 1976 to help workers repressed by the state apparatus.

KOS, No. 44/45

RATIONING OF MEAT and other foodstuffs in 1984 will remain at the same level as in 1983, according to a government announcement of 16 December. Meat and meat products, butter, lard, animal and vegetable fats (excluding oil), sugar, chocolate products, wheat flour, grain products, semolina, powdered milk for children up to one year old, cotton, wool - will still be rationed. The government also said that the new trade unions' call for rationing of vegetable fats to be lifted was rejected, as stocks are insufficient.

- Uncensored Poland News Bulletin, No. 24/83

AFTER POSTPONING FOOD PRICE RISES slated for January, the authorities are now planning to implement a modified plan that would raise the cost of better-quality foods more sharply than for staples. The increases, which met with public opposition when they were first announced in November, are expected to affect such items as higher-grade meat products and whole grain bread. In other developments, the Ministry of the Interior in November issued instructions for internment forms to be filled out with names and other data so as to be ready for immediate use. Also, security agents (SB) received a large salary increase. "Solidarnosc" sources in Poland report that SB agents now regularly cover Church services as part of their duties. The same sources also report joint army and security police exercises with special emphasis placed on mass arrest and evacuation techniques. This is all part of the authorities' attempt to intimidate the population and to create an atmosphere of tension and insecurity.

LECH WALESA's name has been eliminated from the newest edition of the Popular Encyclopedia issued by the state publishing house, PWN.

- Independent Information Agency (NAI), No. 33

THE WARSAW SECTION of the official Polish Writers' Union (ZLP) has a membership of 69. Before the former independent union was dissolved in August '83, it had a membership of 600 writers in the capital city alone.

- KOS, No. 43

APPROXIMATELY 1000 PERSONS of a total labor force of 9300 have joined the new official trade union at the Warsaw Steel Works. Of this number, approximately half are retired workers. Members of the new union visit retired workers in their homes, bringing them food packages with staples such as oil, sugar and flour. A membership form is slipped in together with the package receipt for signature.

-Tygodnik Mazowsze, No.72

THE "SOLIDARNOSC" ENTERPRISE COMMISSION at the Lenin steel plant outside Krakow issued a statement in early December demanding the release of the seven imprisoned "Solidarnosc" leaders and the four members of the former Workers' Defense Committee (KOR) indicted for making preparations to overthrow the state by force.

- Hutnik, No. 66

THE AUTHORITIES ARE CONCEALING the state of health of political prisoners, claims Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 72. The paper reports that two French physicians who visited Poland in early December were refused access to the 11 "Solidarnosc" leaders and advisers that are awaiting trial in Rakowiecka prison. The French doctors were not even allowed to meet with the prison medical staff. They were also refused a meeting with the Minister of Internal Affairs. The Polish Red Cross said it had no information about the accused, explaining that it had received no inquiries on this matter.

4° P. 12007

PRISON AUTHORITIES AT BARCZEWO are attempting to back down from the concessions won by political prisoners as a result of a hunger strike in November. A new director was named in December and conditions have deteriorated since his appointment. Daily walks have been shortened and prisoners are often maltreated. In protest, the prisoners which include several leading "Solidarnosc" activists initiated a rotating hunger strike on 9 December. They also hold a hunger strike on the 13th of each month to demand recognition for the status of political prisoner.

- Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 72

"MOST OF US refused to ask for clemency; we are ordinary people, rank and file union members. Our names are not well-known and we receive no packages from the outside. There are 20 of us in Strzelin prison". So writes one of the political prisoners in a letter smuggled out of the detention center. Despite the so-called amnesty, many union members and activists still remain in prison, sentenced by virtue of the state of war decree.

- Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 70

A PETITION for the immediate release of all political prisoners and the abolition of so-called political crimes was circulated in the PAFAWAG factory in Wroclaw in November. More than 5,000 signatures were collected. The petition is also being circulated in other factories throughout Wroclaw and Krakow.

- Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 71

68 WORKERS of the moulding department at the Urusus tractor factory outside Warsaw signed a protest on 14 November against management's refusal to reinstate workers released from prison. The plant director threatened to dismiss the entire department but refrained from doing so when he was told that the workers were highly-skilled and would be difficult to replace. However, all those who signed the petition were called in for questioning by the department chief in the presence of representatives of the Party and of the new trade unions.

- Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 70

THE LETTERS "UWP" are painted on walls throughout the city of Wroclaw. The letters stand for the Polish equivalent of "freedom for political prisoners".

- Z Dnia Na Dzień, No. 36

EMPLOYEES OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM in Warsaw have set up a fund for needy artists. A monthly grant of 5,000 zł. is being channeled through the "Solidarnosc" Commission for Culture. The project was initiated in December.

- Tygodnik Mazowsze, No. 70

OVER 100 PERSONS were stopped and searched or detained for 48 hours in the southwestern region of Podbeskidzie during the months of November and December. 16 persons were reportedly arrested and charged with disseminating false information in the independent press and with active participation in underground "Solidarnosc" structures.

- AIS, No. 15

SECRET ENTERPRISE COMMISSIONS (TKZ) are responsible for the distribution of the underground press, says the head of the enterprise information network of the regional "Solidarnosc" weekly Tygodnik Mazowsze. He says every issue is shared by several people and that between 30 and 50% of the work force in each factory reads the underground press. He also reports that most enterprises in the Warsaw area publish their own bulletin but that medium-sized or small factories may team up to produce their own publication.

LECH WALESA was questioned for 2 hours on 29 December at the Gdansk police headquarters concerning his meeting with TKK leaders on 19/20 November (see News No. 12 for text of joint statement issued after the meeting). Later, Walesa told correspondents that he refused to answer questions, and that the police

refused to accept a letter Walesa had written to Gen. Jaruzelski.

- Uncensored Poland News Bulletin, No.24/83

A SERIES OF ARRESTS were reported by the official media in early December. It appears however, that some that the arrests reported in fact took place earlier but the authorities deliberately withheld the information in order to intensify the atmosphere of uncertainty during the month of December.

- Uncensored Poland News Bulletin, No. 24/83

REPRESSION AGAINST all forms of independent thought and activities is being stepped up, according to the underground press and western news agencies. At the beginning of January, "Solidarnosc" advisors, T. Mazowiecki and B. Geremek were detained for questioning. In Wroclaw, more than 60 employees of higher learning institutions were arrested for signing an open letter to the authorities. Also arrested was M. Bednarkiewicz, the lawyer who represents the mother of Grzegorz Przemyski, the 19 year old student who died of severe internal injuries last May after being picked up by the police.

IRENA PTASZEK, aged 36, the mother of a 12 year old son, was arrested on 11 December along with several other workers in Gorzow Wielkopolski, western Poland. She was reportedly charged with the distribution of illegal publications. Ptaszek is a textile worker at the Silvana silk factory; she had been a member of the Presidium of the Factory Committee of "Solidarnosc". In January '82, she was dismissed from her job after refusing to sign the declaration of loyalty to the Polish authorities following the imposition of martial law. In August '82, she was arrested at her home. She was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and two years' loss of civil rights. She was released from prison after having her sentence suspended under the terms of the July '83 amnesty law. Ptaszek's case has been taken up by Amnesty International with an 'urgent action' appeal issued on 22 December recommending that telegrams and letters be sent to the Polish authorities expressing concern about Ptaszek's arrest assembly, and urging her immediate release on the grounds that she is a prisoner of conscience.

THE JUSTICE MINISTER, Lech Domeradzki, was asked in a 14 December interview for the government daily Rzeczpospolita to comment on the 150 judges who quit their jobs in the first nine months of martial law. The Minister denied that the cause was "the conflict of conscience" and said the reason was the search for higher earnings. "The judges proved their political maturity and only a small number quit their jobs as a result of a conflict of conscience". Solidarnosc sources, however, indicate that the number of judges who resigned after the imposition of martial law may be as high as 900.

- Uncensored Poland News Bulletin No. 24/83

"THE POLISH AUTHORITIES, it seems, are preparing a new attack on society and on independent trade union activities. It may be that this is only an attempt to intimidate those who will not cease to resist. The authorities still have no intention of releasing "Solidarnosc" leaders or the union's advisors from prison". So writes Bogdan Lis on behalf of the Temporary Coordinating Commission to John Vanderveken, Secretary General of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions. In a letter dated 13 December 1983, Lis says there is no reason to anticipate an improvement in the human and trade union rights situation in Poland. He notes that 50 persons were killed since the introduction of the state of war, adding that only time will reveal the full scope of other forms of repression. He says that victims of workplace accidents must be included among the casualties, adding that over 200 victims have been registered in the mining industry alone. To conclude, Lis says that political and financial support as well as practical aid from free trade unions have strengthened and have helped "Solidarnosc" in difficult times.