

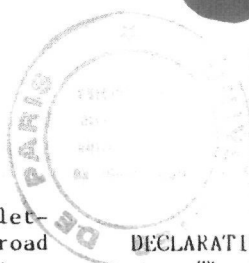
NEWS

SOLIDARNOSC

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B.D.I.C

No. 1



WELCOME TO SOLIDARNOSC NEWS! This newsletter, published by the Coordinating Office Abroad of NSZZ "Solidarnosc", aims to keep trade unionists around the world up to date on events connected with the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarnosc" in Poland.

Despite the delegalization of our Union decreed by the Polish authorities on October 8 1982, union structures at the factory, regional and national levels are constantly being fortified. This Office has been mandated by the Temporary Coordinating Commission, the underground union leadership, to represent the national leadership outside Poland, and to serve as its international department.

Solidarnosc News is intended as a complement for trade unionists to our bi-monthly Information Bulletin published in French and Polish by our office in Paris. The objective of Solidarnosc News is to inform unionists the world over about the activities of our Union, now in the underground, as well as to outline the activities of this Office and other "Solidarnosc" groups in different countries. In this way, we hope to promote a better understanding of the ongoing struggle for workers' rights currently being waged in Poland.

THE GOVERNMENT DAILY, Rzeczpospolita, said on 18 May that the new trade unions now number 2.7 million members. Where the figure comes from, we don't know; only on 14 May the Army daily Zolnierz Wolnosci said that the membership was "a bit more than 2 million."

The unofficial figures paint a very different picture. The following data is taken from the underground publication Solidarnosc Gdansk, no. 20/83 of 5 March, and lists enterprises, the total number of employed in each and the membership of the new unions (We cite here only the largest figures and final total, ed.). Teachers in Gdynia: about 5,000 employees, no new trade union members. 'Lenin' Shipyard, Gdansk: about 14,500 employees, 88 new trade union members (figure most frequently given), 200, 300, 450 from other sources; membership is hidden from the workforce. 'Pilsudski' Shipyard, Gdansk: about 5,000 employees, about 300 new trade union members (qualified as above). Gdynia Ports Authority: 6,500 employees, about 200 or under 100 new trade union members. Total (of entire table): approximately 71,480 employees, 4,500 (highest estimate) new trade union members - about 6% of the workforce.

MARTIAL LAW could remain in force "a few more years" said Mr. Mieczyslaw Rakowski in an interview given to the Japanese daily Asahi Shimbun. The vice-premier added that Poland "will need internal peace for some years to come. The country must have the assurance of being able to pursue her development without any strikes or demonstrations. In other words, we have no intention at this time of returning to the situation prevailing before December 13, 1981."

-Reuter and le Monde, 25.5.83.

DECLARATION BY BRUSSELS OFFICE

The Coordinating Office Abroad of NSZZ "Solidarnosc", representing the national leadership of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" in Poland, is perturbed by reports of increased emigration to South Africa by Polish workers as a result of recruitment campaigns by South African agents in Polish refugee camps in Vienna. The Office has approached the Austrian national trade union centre, the Osterreichischer Gewerkschaftsbund, to carry out information campaigns among Polish refugees outlining the true nature of apartheid, and the fact that emigration to South Africa is tantamount to the denial of livelihood to a black worker and therefore contrary to the basic precepts of trade union solidarity embodied in the very name of Poland's independent, self-governing trade union, "Solidarnosc".

The Coordinating Office expresses its fullest solidarity with the black majority workers of South Africa and their independent trade union, which - like "Solidarnosc" - constitutes a trade union and a grass roots social movement struggling for the respect of trade union rights, basic human rights and democratic freedoms for society.

We renew the irrevocable commitment of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" to continue the struggle for democracy, freedom and social justice, so that Polish workers - and indeed all workers suffering under totalitarian/communist dictatorships and colonial regimes - may exercise their legitimate right to live in their native land enjoying basic trade union and civil rights.

In the meantime, we reiterate our appeal to democratic trade unions to encourage their governments to give refuge to displaced Poles, facilitating the obtaining of necessary entry, residence and work permits, while maintaining pressure on the Polish authorities to re-establish trade union and human rights, thus making it possible for displaced Poles to return to their home country.

Brussels, 18.4.83

Jerzy Milewski, Director

HUMAN RIGHTS IN POLAND UNDER MARTIAL LAW is a report numbering 200 pages with 500 pages of annexes (in the original Polish version) on violations of the Helsinki Accords from December 13 1981 to December 31 1982. This report was prepared by the Helsinki Committee in Poland with the authorization of the members of the "Solidarnosc" Temporary Coordinating Commission. A French version of the document has just been published by this Office and is available for distribution. A donation of \$5 US is suggested to cover printing and mailing costs. To obtain a copy, please contact the Office in Brussels. The text has just been translated into the English language, and will be made available in the near future.

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CONFERENCES AND ORGANIZATIONS

-Two representatives of "Solidarnosc" Abroad attended the annual conference of Pax Christi held in Switzerland May 12-15. Pax Christi is a Christian organization created to promote peace in the world. The representatives participated in the working group on Poland within the workshop on East-West relations. Working papers were presented on the human rights situation in Poland and the constraints on the operations of "Solidarnosc" in that country. It was understood from the discussion that Poland remains a key in the resolution of the East-West conflict.

-The Coordinating Office Abroad of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" was given observer status at the Second European Conference on Nuclear Disarmament, held in Berlin May 9-15. The Office was represented by its Director and two aides. Although no final communique was adopted, the themes that emerged from the Conference demonstrated that the Peace movement has matured greatly in the last few years, and that close links between the movement in democratic, western countries and authentic popular organizations with pacifist programmes in the East, can serve the attainment of peace and nuclear disarmament in Europe. It is to be noted that trade unions are also increasing their activities in this sphere. There was a working group of 250 trade union delegates present at the Conference, compared with only 36 the year before in Brussels. Finally, the discussions confirmed that the question of human rights is intimately tied to the disarmament issue, for the violation of the rights of man is the first, and most important, threat to peaceful existence.

-The Governing Body of the International Labour Organization met before the annual Conference being held in Geneva June 1-22. On May 26, the Body decided by a vote of 44 to 6 with 5 abstentions, to appoint a commission of inquiry to examine the problem of freedom of association in Poland. The ILO had received complaints from two representatives in the Workers' Group that Poland was violating Conventions no. 87 on the Freedom of Association and no. 98 on the Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining. Noting that its requests for a visit to Poland by the Director-General's representative and for additional information had not been fully satisfied by Polish authorities, the Governing Body felt it had no choice but to recommend that the matter be referred to a commission of inquiry. The Director-General is to submit to the Governing Body recommendations for appointments to the commission at the next sitting of the Body, to be held immediately after the ILO conference ends.

IN A SPEECH TO THE POLISH PARLIAMENT on May 22nd, General Kiszczak, Minister of the Interior, stated: "In the last few years, the police force has gone through an extremely difficult period; it has defended the cause of socialism at the cost of sacrifice. Deeply attached to the socialist state, to the working class and to working people, it has withstood antagonistic pressures and slander..."

The brutal murder of Grzegorz Przymyk was well-documented in the Western press. We would like to reprint here an excerpt from a less famous, but equally moving, case of repression in Poland. On May 11, the underground paper KOS edited a letter by a coal miner in which he describes the interrogation, by policemen "deeply attached to the working class", about his activities in the underground "Solidarnosc".

".. At about 11:00 am, two SB (political police) agents came into my apartment. My son let them in as I was sleeping after having worked the night shift at the mine. They ordered me to follow them to the district police station. Four

men were waiting for me in one of the rooms there. They started accusing me of organizing in the NSZZ "Solidarnosc" underground. They told me I had been denounced by three persons and that if I confessed I would get only three years; if not, I would get 10. They accused me of printing illegal publications; I denied everything. Then they got angry and started to swear. They said I would be begging them to listen to me. They brought out a device "for telling the truth" (a kind of electric high voltage inductor, but of low amperage). I was forced to hold the ends of the wires, while they gradually increased the voltage. But I am a hard working man and have thick skin. I withstood the highest voltage, which surprised and irritated them. I was forced to lean with my back against the wall and my knees bent. Then they beat my outstretched arms with an 80cm long truncheon. Later they put a gas mask over my head. Two of them twisted my arms behind my back, while a third closed the air intake. I lost consciousness..."

"LET US BE JUST TO THE JUDGES": An article under this title appeared in the underground publication Tygodnik Mazowsze no. 44 of 10 March 1983. What follows is a brief summary.

Public opinion is largely unaware of the true situation in the judiciary. The press publicizes only the most severe sentences in order to create the impression that the judiciary is an impregnable bastion of the regime. But there are many verdicts of 'not guilty' and of mild or suspended sentences. There are cases that labour courts have ordered the re-employment of workers dismissed for political reasons.

After August 1980, out of a total of some 3000 judges - 900 joined Solidarity, and roughly 50% of all employees of the judiciary belong, either to Solidarity or to the smaller 'autonomous' union. Solidarity was particularly strong at the level of the Supreme Court where it was represented by Judge Stanislaw Rudnicki.

Under martial law Judge Rudnicki was one of the first to be dismissed from his post by the Council of State. He was followed by some 40 others. Several judges were interned, one high ranking judge (in Swiebodzin) was himself sentenced to 3,5 years imprisonment, and many others were subjected to pressures in the form of house-searches, threats, even threats to life. Some, in sheer disgust, resigned voluntarily. There were a number of cases of disciplinary proceedings against judges for having passed too mild sentences. The Minister of Justice, Sylwester Zawadzki, is quoted as having said in October 1982: "It is not a question of being a specialist in criminal law; every sentence is presented to the public as a weapon in a struggle, and mild sentences are seen as acts of defiance against the authorities."

The struggle for integrity is going on. There are a number of 'reliable' judges who are hand-picked to conduct such famous cases as that of the KPN (Confederation of Independent Poland) leaders or of the upcoming KOR (Workers' Defence Committee) trials. But it happens that even reliable judges are a disappointment to the authorities. In fact, there are too many such 'reliable' judges who are overworked, and occasionally therefore, even a quite important defendant may be lucky to face a relatively decent judge. However, one can be sure that in the forthcoming trial of the members of KSS-KOR nothing will be left to chance. Sentences that are too mild are often 'improved' by the Supreme Court. The real watchdog over the judiciary is the Military Commissar, a Col. Kostrzewa.

It is possible that a general purge of the judiciary is being planned.