

NEWS



24 August, 1983



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Belgium

TEMPORARY COORDINATING COMMISSION (TKK) STATEMENTS

ON 28 JULY 1983, the Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK) of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" issued three statements, reproduced below. The three documents are signed by:

- Zbigniew Bujak, Mazowsze Region
- Wladyslaw Hardek, Malopolska Region
- Tadeusz Jedynak, Slask-Dambrowski Region
- Bogdan Lis, Gdansk Region
- Eugeniusz Szumiejko, member of the National Commission Presidium

note: Witold, Chairman of the Lower Silesian Regional Strike Committee, took part in the meeting.

STATEMENT ON THE LIFTING OF MARTIAL LAW

The prolongation of the state of war became politically unprofitable for the authorities. This compelled them to lift it formally. It is, however, a mere propaganda ploy, an attempt to deceive the Polish society and international public opinion. By lifting martial law, the authorities hope to obtain easier credit terms from, and a lifting of sanctions by, the West. However, the restrictions on civil and workers' rights remain essentially unchanged, while new legislation, by destroying self-governing structures, the right to free thought and all independent activity, gives the authorities complete control over all spheres of social life. Evidently, the state has adopted a policy of maintaining society in a state of permanent trusteeship.

The drastic limitation of autonomy and self-management in enterprises, and the tightened centralisation of economic planning, signal a drastic departure from announced plans for economic reform. Mandatory work regulations have been made more severe, longer work days and the loss of free Saturdays have been announced. The monopoly of the new trade unions organized by the authorities has been consolidated. Independent thought and independent social and union activity have been classified as offenses threatening national and state security. The autonomous and self-governing character of associations and institutions of higher learning has been virtually eliminated, education and science have been subordinated to the authorities; this has dealt a great blow to educational, scientific and artistic circles. The competence of the Ministry of the Interior has been drastically enlarged. Its functionaries, absolved by virtue of an amnesty from responsibility for crimes committed during the state of war, have recently been given the additional right to arbitrarily apply coercion and force.

The amnesty bill does not alter the situation. We joyfully welcome back our illegally imprisoned colleagues who have been released. However, many activists and leaders of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" and of other democratic movements remain in prison.

STATEMENT ON THE FURTHER FUNCTIONING OF THE UNION

1. The war against society continues. We enter its next stage with much greater socio-political awareness than before August '80, enriched by the experiences drawn from 16 months of "Solidarnosc" legal activity, and hardened by the repressions of the state of war. Millions of Poles have come out in defence of the ideals of "Solidarnosc".

2. The authorities have failed to break the spirit of social resistance, as evidenced by independent marches and demonstrations, the widespread Front of Refusal, the boycott of new trade unions, the unbending stance of writers, actors, artists, educators and scientists, and the support provided to the imprisoned and those dismissed from work. Activists deeply dedicated to our cause lead thousands of secret union cells, fulfilling their duties under the union statutes. We have hundreds of independent publications, along with many centers of independent education, science and culture.

3. The main task of all NSZZ "Solidarnosc" secret structures remains to organize and coordinate the struggle for civil and workers' rights, as well as to represent the Polish trade union movement before trade unions outside Poland, and before international organisations.

4. We exist and our struggle continues. The tasks formulated in the "Solidarnosc - Today" program remain valid in the present situation. The TKK calls upon all union cells and "Solidarnosc" members to vigorously and consistently pursue activities so as to secure the release of all political prisoners, to achieve trade union pluralism, to counteract political manipulations on the part of the authorities, to draw up guidelines for action in view of the 1984 elections to the Sejm, and to defend the economic interests of society. Above-ground activities can also be carried out on all these fronts.

5. The defence of the economic interests of working people warrants our particular attention. When imposing draconian price-hikes in the past year, the authorities claimed to be curing the economy, assuring us that our sacrifices would not be in vain. Meanwhile, society, increasingly impoverished, keeps on bearing the costs of the government's erroneous decisions. The situation is deteriorating. Prices of goods and services are still rising faster than wages. A growing part of society is being pushed to the brink of poverty. Defending the standard of living of working people is an obligation under our union statutes. Today, all professional groups and all workers have the right and the duty to demand a cost of living adjustment.

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STATEMENT
ON THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE POLISH AUGUST

August 31, the day marking the end of the general strike in 1980, has become a "Solidarnosc" holiday. Three years after the signing of the Gdansk Agreements with the authorities, the Polish nation continues to struggle for the implementation of the 21 point programme: independent trade unions and the right to strike; freedom for political prisoners; decent living and working conditions; freedom of speech and an end to abuse of authority by the police.

Blood has been shed during this struggle, and people have died at the hands of the authorities. On this "Solidarnosc" holiday, let us commemorate the dead, let there be no shortage of flowers on their graves.

On August 31 we will display our faithfulness to the ideals of August 1980; let us demonstrate that "Solidarnosc" lives. The Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK) of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" calls on all "Solidarnosc" cells and on all social groups to organize "Solidarnosc" celebrations according to their own experiences and traditions.

A nationwide boycott of municipal transportation will serve as a common element. Let all buses, trams and trolleys ride empty between 1400 and 1600 hours on August 31. Let the streets be ours, like it was when the transit workers went on strike in solidarity with the Gdansk shipyard workers. Let us once again recall the atmosphere of those days.

THE REGIONAL COORDINATING COMMISSION, (RKK) Gdansk Region, issued a statement on 6 August 1983 regarding the approaching anniversary of the August Agreements. The RKK asserts that by introducing martial law, the authorities tried to destroy "Solidarnosc" and all the liberties and socio-economic gains achieved in the Agreements. Further, despite the formal lifting of martial law, leaders of the union and of the democratic opposition are still in prison; the political course initiated on 13 December 1981 has not been altered. It is impossible, according to the RKS, to resolve the present economic crisis without returning to the spirit of the 1980 Agreements. Finally, the Commission declares the struggle for free unions, truth, freedom and justice endures and that the boycott of public transportation and press in the region, planned for 31 August 1983, will be testimony to the people's faithfulness to the August Agreements.

THE REGIONAL STRIKE COMMITTEE OF NSZZ "SOLIDARNOSC", (RKS) Lower Silesia Region, has called on all working people of the region to celebrate the "Solidarnosc" holiday on 31 August. The celebrations are to last from 14 August to 31 August. In a statement dated 3 August 1983, the RKS asks all union cells and activists to:

1. intensify information activities (pamphlets, banners, posters, etc.) demanding the release of all detained activists, the reinstatement of all workers dismissed for their political activities, the full implementation of the Gdansk Agreements, the defense of the working people's economic interests.

2. abstinence during the indicated period.

The Committee reiterated the TKK's call for a boycott of all public transportation between 1400 and 1600 hours on 31 August. Also, instead of a demonstration on that day, the RKS asked that in Wroclaw people place flowers on the grave of Kazimierz Michalczyk, who gave his life for union ideals.

IN REFERENCE TO THE TKK's call for a nationwide boycott of public transportation on 31 August, the Confederation Francaise Democratique du Travail (CFDT) weekly Syndicalisme of 11 August writes that "this is a very clever choice of action. On the one hand, this type of action carries minimum risk; on the other hand, it recalls the strike by transport workers in August '80, in solidarity with the Gdansk shipyards. Further, it clearly symbolizes the strength of the Polish Independent Union: the streets will belong to the people of Poland."

THE INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE TRADE UNIONS has requested affiliated organisations to undertake "all actions deemed appropriate to express the international free trade union solidarity with "Solidarnosc" on the occasion of the third anniversary of the signature of the Gdansk Agreements" on 31 August. Citing the resolution on Poland adopted by the XIII World Congress recently held in Oslo, the ICFTU states that special emphasis should be placed on its "demand for the immediate and unconditional release of ALL unjustly detained "Solidarnosc" leaders, advisers and activists". The ICFTU appeal was taken up in a similar circular to affiliated organisations issued by the Postal, Telegraph and Telephone International (PTTI).

THE AFL-CIO EXECUTIVE COUNCIL remains opposed to the lifting of economic sanctions by the U.S. Administration and to U.S. participation in the rescheduling of Poland's debt payments "unless the Polish government abides by the Gdansk Agreement, restores free trade union rights, and releases all political prisoners". In a statement adopted on 9 August 1983 reiterating the position previously expressed by AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland (see "Solidarnosc" News No. 5), the Executive Council states that "to relax even the feeble sanctions now in place would make a mockery of the (U.S.) President's rhetoric in support of Poland's 'freedom fighters'. It would betray and demoralise those who have sacrificed so much for the cause of human rights behind the iron curtain". The statement further notes that the "AFL-CIO, in cooperation with the ICFTU, will continue to base its policies toward Poland on the expressed wishes of Solidarnosc, which is still the authentic representative of the Polish workers. As the workers of Poland prepare to mark the August 31 anniversary of the Gdansk Agreement with boycotts and demonstrations, the American labor movement stands behind them."

THE POLISH WRITERS' UNION (ZLP) was formally dissolved on 19 August. The official news agency PAP said that the decision was due to the Union Executive Committee's "hostile" attitude toward the authorities. The Writers' Union was initially suspended on 13 December 1981, the measure being subsequently extended on two occasions. During this time, the Union Executive was repeatedly and virulently attacked for refusing to "cooperate" with the authorities, and to purge from Union ranks writers having "political ties with centers of subversion inside the country and abroad", according to PAP. Attempts are now being made to replace the prestigious ZLP with a new, more docile though less representative, organisation.

A PETITION IN SUPPORT OF GRZEGORZ CIECIURA was signed by 130 participants of the International Congress of Mathematicians meeting in Warsaw. Cieciora, assistant professor of mathematics and physics at the University of Warsaw, was arrested on 11 August and charged with "defamation of the PPR, participation in underground "Solidarnosc" structures and inciting to commit illegal acts". He faces a prison term of up to 8 years.

24.08.83, Le Monde

No 6

In our last issue, we published two letters from the Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK) to the XIII World Congress of the International Confederation of Trade Unions (ICFTU) and to John Vanderveken, General Secretary of the ICFTU. Below we reproduce Mr. Vanderveken's replies of 3 August 1983 to Lech Walesa and to the TKK.

REPLY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE TEMPORARY COORDINATING COMMISSION of NSZZ "Solidarnosc"

Dear Brother Lis, Dear Friends,

On behalf of all member organisations of the ICFTU, let me thank you for the letters which you addressed both to our 13th World Congress and to myself. Although they reached us, unfortunately, too late to be read out at Congress, we are circulating them to all our affiliates.

As regards the situation in your country, please be assured that the so-called suspension of Martial Law has not fooled workers of the world; the ICFTU considers that the replacement of the state of war by new regulations, which severely curtail basic human and trade union rights, amounts to nothing more than a mere institutionalization of abnormality. While deeply comforted by the liberation of many trade union and political prisoners we will pursue to strive for the liberation of all detained activists, including top leaders of Solidarity's National Commission and TKK, and members of the former KSS "KOR".

Today as before, we remain deeply convinced that the continuation of Solidarity's peaceful struggle is indispensable to the full implementation of fundamental trade union and human rights, to the finding of badly needed solutions to Poland's economic crisis. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to commend the peaceful but determined posture of NSZZ "Solidarnosc", which has succeeded, under the leadership of Lech Walesa and the TKK, to remain a well organised trade union, in spite of the state of war, formal delegalisation, and ruthless repression against its members.

The ICFTU has always supported workers' efforts to establish and join free and independent trade union organisations, as the best means to secure social justice, respect for human rights and peace. This applies in particular to our support of repressed trade unions, as is the case in Chile and South Africa, for instance.

Therefore, and as we reaffirmed recently during our Oslo Congress, the ICFTU, together with its affiliates and the International Trade Secretariats, will further support NSZZ "Solidarnosc" morally and materially, notably by cooperating with its elected leadership in Poland and its representation abroad, the Brussels-based Coordinating Office Abroad of NSZZ "Solidarnosc". We will also continue to press, through the ILO and other appropriate UN agencies, for the complete restoration of trade union and human rights in Poland, until such time that the authorities abide fully by their obligations stemming from the ILO Conventions, UN Declaration of Human Rights, Helsinki and Madrid Agreements, and other international covenants ratified by Poland. In particular, we will persistently denounce the regressive and anti-democratic legislation imposed on the Polish people.

May I end by extending to you and to all our brothers and sisters of "Solidarnosc" our best wishes of success and victory.

Yours sincerely,
/ - /
John Vanderveken,
General Secretary

REPLY TO LECH WALESZA, Chairman of the Independent Self-Governing Trade Union "Solidarnosc"

B.D.I.C.

Dear Brother Chairman,

Further to your letter dated 16 June 1983, the contents of which were read out to the delegates of our 13th World Congress in Oslo, I am pleased to send you enclosed the text of our delegates' reply to your message.

I would also like to take this opportunity to assure you that the formal lifting of martial law in Poland has not in the least convinced the international free trade union movement that the situation in your country has improved.

While deeply satisfied by the liberation of many activists, we will continue to press for the release of all trade union and political prisoners, including top leaders and advisers of your organisation. We will also persistently condemn the regressive and anti-democratic legislation imposed on the Polish people and workers.

As in the past, and as was reaffirmed recently in the Resolution on Poland adopted in Oslo by our Congress (a copy of which is enclosed), the ICFTU will continue to help NSZZ "Solidarnosc" morally and materially, notably by cooperating with its elected leadership in Poland, and with its representation abroad, the Coordinating Office Abroad of NSZZ "Solidarnosc" directed by Brother Jerzy Milewski. (In this respect, we also enclose a copy of the letter which we address today to the TKK NSZZ "Solidarnosc").

Let me end by extending to you, as Chairman of NSZZ "Solidarnosc", and to all activists and members of your organisation, my very best wishes of success in your peaceful struggle for full trade union rights and human dignity.

Yours sincerely,
/ - /
John Vanderveken
General Secretary

A RADIO "SOLIDARNOSC" BROADCAST WAS REPORTED in Gdansk on 23 August urging people to respond to the Temporary Coordinating Commission's (TKK) call for action in support of "Solidarnosc" on 31 August.

La Libre Belgique

THE OFFICIAL POLISH MEDIA reported on 23 August that Wladyslaw Hardek, member of the underground Temporary Coordinating Commission (TKK) for the Malopolska region (Krakow), had given himself up to the authorities on 22 August. He is said to have appeared on television and to have read out a statement explaining his reason for coming out of hiding. Responding to these events, Lech Walesa and Zbigniew Bujak expressed disbelief and astonishment. In Walesa's opinion, Hardek had been captured and forced into making the declaration. For his part, Bujak, member of the TKK Mazowsze region, stated that Hardek participated in a TKK meeting on 22 August, the day he allegedly turned himself in. Bujak added that at the meeting, Hardek gave no indication that he intended to come out of hiding.