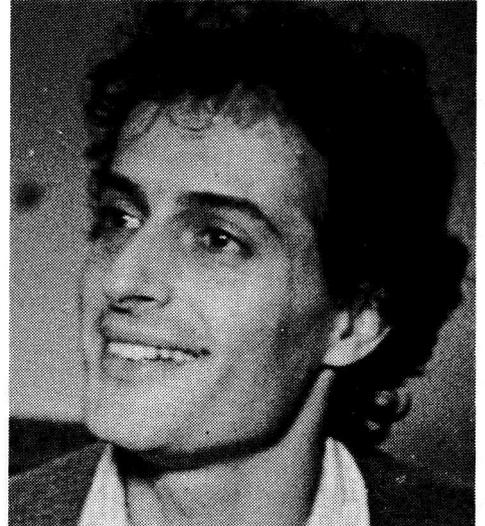
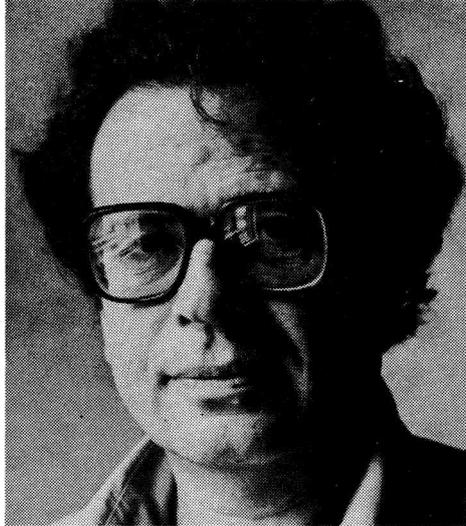
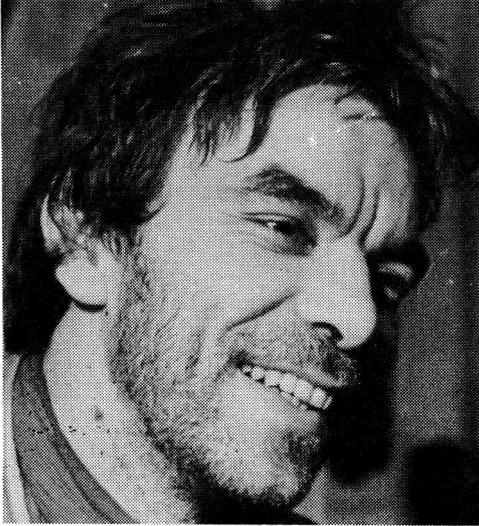
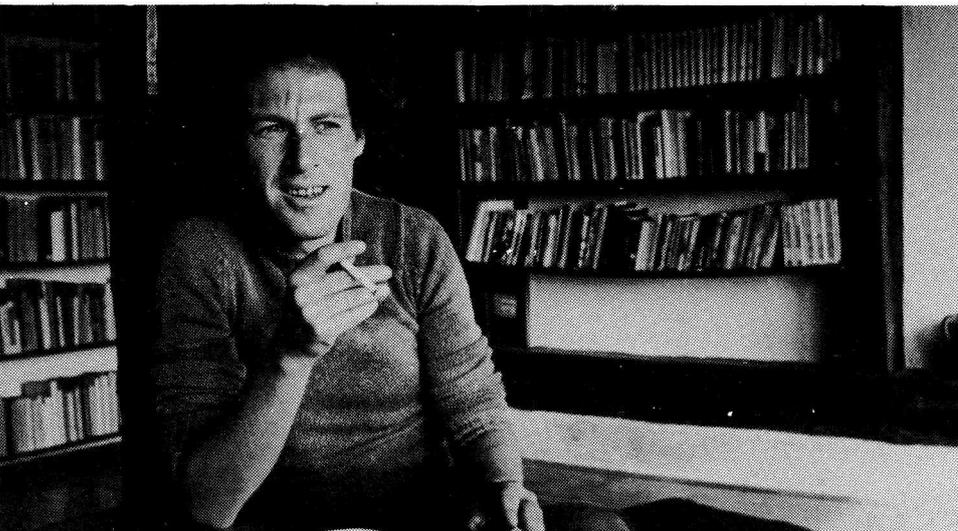


LABOUR FOCUS ON EASTERN EUROPE

A Socialist Defence Bulletin on Eastern Europe and the USSR



HUNGARY'S DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT



PEACE MOVEMENTS

East Germany
Hungary
U S S R
Czechoslovakia

POLAND:

Leaders of
Solidarity
debate strategy
after martial law

Solidarity and
Self-Management

HUNGARY:

New Light on
Hungary '56

Statement of Aims

A growing number of socialists and communists are taking a stand against the suppression of democratic rights in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. The labour movement has international responsibilities in this field as well as in the field of solidarity action with those struggling against oppression in Chile or Southern Africa or Northern Ireland.

But up to now socialists have lacked a source of frequent and reliable information about events in Eastern Europe. Coverage in the papers of the Left remains scanty, while reports in the bourgeois press are selective and slanted. The first aim of **Labour Focus on Eastern Europe** is to help fill this gap by providing a more comprehensive and regular source of information about events in that part of the world.

The mass media give ample space to Tory politicians and to some from the Labour Party who seek to use protests against repression in Eastern Europe as a cover for their own support for social inequality in Britain and for witch-hunts against those who oppose it. At the same time campaigns run by socialists in the labour and trade union movement for many years concerning victims of repression in Eastern Europe are largely ignored by the media. The second aim of this bulletin therefore is to provide comprehensive information about the activities of socialists and labour movement organisations that are taking up this issue.

Labour Focus is a completely independent bulletin whose editorial collective includes various trends of socialist and Marxist opinion. It is not a bulletin for debate on the nature of the East European states, nor is its purpose to recommend a strategy for socialists in Eastern Europe: there are other journals on the Left that take up these questions. Our purpose is to provide a comprehensive coverage of these societies with a special emphasis on significant currents campaigning for working class, democratic and national rights.

Whenever possible we will quote the sources of our information. Unless otherwise stated, all the material in **Labour Focus** may be reproduced, with acknowledgement. Signed articles do not necessarily represent the views of the editorial collective.

In these ways we hope to strengthen campaigns to mobilise the considerable influence that the British labour movement can have in the struggles to end repression in the USSR and Eastern Europe.

SPONSORS: Tariq Ali, Edmund Baluka, Vladimir Derer, Ivan Hartel, Jan Kavan, Nicholas Krasso, Leonid Plyushch, Hillel Ticktin.

EDITORS: Vladimir Derer, Quintin Hoare, Jan Kavan, Oliver MacDonald, Anna Paczuska, Claude Vancour.

MANAGING EDITOR: Oliver MacDonald

EDITORIAL COLLECTIVE: Barbara Brown, Patrick Camiller, Susannah Fry, Ivan Hartel, Victor Haynes, Alix Holt, Mark Jackson, Helen Jamieson, Pawel Jankowski, Michele Lee, Anca Mihailescu, Günter Minnerup, Joe Singleton, Laura Strong.

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Box 23,
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Pictures on front cover: (Top left to right) — Laszlo Rajk, György Konrád, Miklos Haraszti; (bottom) — János Kenedi.

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Special issue on Women in Eastern Europe.

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Only a limited number of the two triple issues on Poland (Vol. 4, nos. 1-3 and nos. 4-6) are still available.

One set of Vol. 1 to Vol. 3 (including the special issues on Charter 77 and Women in Eastern Europe): £20.00 (US\$ 40.00).

In Quebec **Labour Focus** is also obtainable from Peter Solonysznyj, 1276a St Zotique, Montreal and in Western Canada from Marcela Pap, Gabriel Dumont Books, Box 263, SUB 11, Edmonton.

EDITORIAL

Poland: A Compromise?

After half a year of martial law in Poland, the intentions and policy of General Jaruzelski's ruling military council remain obscure — perhaps even to themselves.

Poland's Primate, Archbishop Glemp, evidently believes that some sort of national agreement between Jaruzelski and Lech Walesa as well as the Church itself is possible and desirable, and members of Jaruzelski's own entourage have been touring Western capitals suggesting that some such 'national reconciliation' may be near at hand, bringing a new dawn of hope to the Polish people. Some see the Pope's projected visit to Poland at the end of August as a possible occasion for a dramatic initiative. There has also been talk of a large-scale amnesty on the Polish Republic's national holiday, 22 July.

Such rumours of an approaching breakthrough have been spread about on a number of occasions during the last months by both the Church hierarchy and the circles around Jaruzelski without bearing any fruit. And in any case the government will never settle for a full restoration of Solidarity's rights and for a genuine return to independent working class organisations. The truth is that the leaders of Poland's Catholic Church do not see such an authentic restoration as the irreducible precondition for 'national reconciliation'. In this, Archbishop Glemp is undoubtedly supported by wide circles of Poland's established intelligentsia. They are exerting pressure on Solidarity leaders to accept whatever the government can realistically be expected to grant in the way of concessions.

This attitude on the part of the Church authorities, though hardly unexpected — the attitude of the central Church bureaucracy towards Solidarity has always been ambivalent — places the leaders and activists of Solidarity in an acute dilemma. A deal on the lines that Jaruzelski's entourage might find attractive would almost certainly involve turning Solidarity into a safety-valve for the party authorities in their efforts to win workers' acceptance of long years of austerity. Those Solidarity leaders able to resume their functions would certainly not be allowed to use their authority to exert pressure for a genuine democratisation of Poland's political and social life.

In both Hungary and Czechoslovakia the post-invasion regimes used the rhetoric of seeking compromise for many months to weaken and divide the resistance and ease the passage of those who wish to make their peace with the new order. All such rhetoric did not stop the Hungarian executions and the Czech purges and trials from running their course for years.

The task of socialists in the West is to demand unequivocally the full restoration of Solidarity's rights along with the release of all the jailed and interned, and a complete end to the martial law regime. The pressures and constraints on the Solidarity leaders do not limit *our* ability to campaign for complete freedom for Solidarity. It is not our job to pose as Lech Walesa's armchair tacticians.

In this issue of *Labour Focus* we publish part of the debate that has been carried in the pages of Solidarity's underground bulletins over the last few months, a debate about the movement's aims and methods and one whose outcome may have far-reaching consequences for the future of the country.

The crackdown in Poland has left Hungary as the one country in the Soviet bloc where a considerable measure of freedom for independent discussion and initiative remains. We devote much of this issue of *Labour Focus* to the unofficial political culture of Budapest, beginning with Bill Lomax's unique account of the development of the democratic movement there. One of the critical questions in Eastern Europe over the next year will be whether the Soviet authorities will seek to drag down the shaky edifice of liberal concessions granted in Hungary under Kadar. There are some signs, as we go to press, that new administrative pressure is being brought to bear on the democratic movement there.

An enormous amount of spade work still needs to be done to bring the experience of Solidarity into the hands of the Western left and labour movements. One of the most central of these experiences was that of the movement for workers' self-management. Jean-Yves Potel's detailed study of Solidarity and Self-Management in this issue is the first of what we hope will be a series of analyses of major aspects of the Polish upsurge.

Despite the fears of many on the left, including *Labour Focus*, the Polish coup has not weakened the European peace movement (and neither has Thatcher's military adventure in the South Atlantic). Indeed there are growing signs of the movement spreading to Eastern Europe. In this issue we follow our coverage in Vol. 5 Nos. 1-2, with further coverage of the movement in Eastern Europe.

Finally, we wish to draw our readers' attention to the continuing grave crisis in Kosovo, where the crushing of last year's insurrection has totally failed to halt the strong movement of popular discontent. The Kosovo crisis will undoubtedly play a major role in the politics of the Balkans in the 1980s and so far it has attracted extraordinarily little attention from the Left in Western Europe. We are therefore following up Michelle Lee's account in our last issue with an interview with the Albanian socialist Arshi Pipa, exploring the complexities of Albanian society, politics and culture in Kosovo and in Albania itself.

Palach Press Appeal

The independent Czech news agency, Palach Press, is appealing to the Left for financial help in order to be able to continue its work. Named after the young Prague student, Jan Palach, who burned himself to death in protest at the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Palach Press has performed an absolutely indispensable service both for the Left here and for such movements as Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia. Since we began publication five years ago, *Labour Focus* has depended on the Agency for our entire Czechoslovak coverage.

We urge our readers to contribute what they can towards Palach Press's survival. Cheques should be made out to Palach Press Ltd., and sent to the Agency at 19 Earham House, 35 Mercer St., London WC2H 9QS.

HUNGARY

The Rise of the Democratic Opposition

By Bill Lomax

(The following article is the first attempt that we know of to provide a systematic account of the unofficial political culture of Budapest during the last five years. Bill Lomax, author of the standard work on the Hungarian revolution of 1956 (Hungary 1956, Allison and Busby, has also supplied the translations of the documents following this article.)

It used to be said of Hungary that it was one of the few countries in Eastern Europe that did not have an opposition. Today, after the imprisonment of the Chartists in Czechoslovakia and the repression of Solidarity in Poland, it is almost the sole remaining country in the Eastern bloc where an opposition movement still functions at all. Moreover it has been in the very months since the Polish coup that the Hungarian opposition has stepped up its activity, and greatly expanded the range and volume of *samizdat* publications, which now appear — for the first time in several decades — in printed form.

The present opposition really dates from January 1977 when 34 Hungarian intellectuals signed a letter of solidarity with Charter 77 in Czechoslovakia in which they declared 'the defence of human and civil rights is a common concern of all Eastern Europe'. The signatories represented a wide spectrum of the Hungarian intelligentsia, including not only members of the 'Budapest school' of critical philosophers like Mihály Vajda and Agnes Heller and other noted dissidents like Miklós Haraszti, but also more established writers like Miklós Mészöly and Sándor Csoóri, as well as some veterans of 1956 like István Eörsi and Ferenc Donáth. Perhaps more significantly, a good half of the signatories were younger intellectuals who had grown up since 1956 and had little or no previous political involvement, but who were shortly to provide the shocktroops of the emerging *samizdat* movement.

1977 — 1978: The Birth of Hungarian Samizdat

The first *samizdat* groups arose spontaneously on the initiative not of former dissidents but of a younger generation seeking both to obtain and to propagate ideas and information that were denied them by the official media. The first manuscripts produced were often retranslations of writings by Hungarian dissidents that had appeared in the West, amongst them György Bence and János Kis' essay on *Marxism and Soviet-type Societies* (published under the pseudonym Marc Rakovski) and István Szelényi's article on *Regional Management and Social Class*.¹ They also discovered and reproduced the essays of Hungary's most original twentieth century political thinker, István Bibó, about the

short-lived democratic coalition period of 1945-48 before the Communist assumption of total power. István Bibó had been a minister in Imre Nagy's Government during the 1956 revolution, then imprisoned until 1963, and even after his release his views were silenced by the regime. By the time of his death in 1979, at the age of 67, Bibó had become a symbol of democratic and independent thought for the emerging opposition movement.

It is perhaps significant that by 1977-78 most of the members of the older generation of oppositionists who had been identified with the neo-Marxist 'Budapest school' had left Hungary, either temporarily or permanently, for the West, amongst them the philosophers Agnes Heller and Mihály Vajda, Ferenc Fehér and György Márkus, and the sociologists Mária Márkus, István Szelényi and István Kemény. The younger generation who now emerged had largely moved away from Marxism and broken with the neo-Leninism of the disciples of György Lukács. They had little interest in theoretical speculations about the nature of 'true socialism', and were more concerned with the existential problems of freedom and repression under the 'actually existing socialism' in which they lived. They rejected the compromises made by the intelligentsia after 1956, and the cultural conformism of the older generation, and defended the right 'to think and behave in a different way' — to express alternative ideas, dissident thought or minority interests. It was thus natural that some of the first issues they took up concerned the persecution of dissident Methodists and the Hungarian minority in Romania.



Mihaly Hamburger (left) and Andras Kovacs, philosophers, and activists in the early *samizdat* days, both excluded from employment in their professional fields.

By the end of 1977 the different groups producing *samizdat* began to work more closely together, and a number of more organised, collective projects were born. The first of these was based on a questionnaire sent out by the young philosopher András Kovács to a wide range of dissident intellectuals asking

about their present attitudes towards Marxism and, in particular, towards its contemporary relevance in East European societies. All of the respondents expressed an increasing disillusionment with the utility of Marxism, and the 21 replies were published in a volume entitled *Marx in the Fourth Decade* (referring to both the socialist regimes and most of the dissidents now being in their fourth decade). One of the most influential replies was that of György Bence and János Kis entitled *On Being a Marxist* in which they explained their break with the older Marxists of the Budapest school and advocated a political strategy of 'radical reformism' that had much in common with the ideas of Adam Michnik and Jacek Kuron in Poland.²

A second volume entitled *Profile*, a collection of 34 essays that had been refused publication in official journals — including literary essays, sociological and sociographic studies, film reviews and poetry — was edited by János Kenedi, a young writer who had himself been sacked from his job as a publisher's editor and blacklisted from further intellectual employment. In his introduction to the volume, Kenedi provided a valuable critique of the methods of censorship and self-censorship practised in Hungary.³

At the beginning of 1978, at the request of the Polish Social Self-Defence Committee (KOR), an edited selection from *Marx in the Fourth Decade* and *Profile*, together with other representative pieces of Hungarian *samizdat*, and with an introduction by Miklós Haraszti, was prepared for publication in Polish *samizdat* under the title *0.1%*.⁴

In an attempt to establish an interchange of ideas between different members of the opposition, small groups met informally in private flats to discuss the *samizdat* texts, and soon some of these discussions turned into regular seminars. A particularly long and lively debate took place around György Konrád and Iván Szelényi's book *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*.⁵ Other debates remained at the level of written exchanges within *samizdat*. One of these, between András Hegedüs on the one side and Bence and Kis on the other, concerned the possibilities for democratisation in Eastern Europe, and the desirability of a multi-party system.⁶ Another, between János Kenedi and Sándor Radnóti, debated the value and purpose of *samizdat*, and the possibilities for the emergence of a broader political opposition.

Another project initiated at this time was a *Diary* which circulates amongst members of the opposition who take it in turn to write an entry which may vary from an account of the day's events, to a literary essay or obser-

vations on political developments. The *Diary* continues to circulate to the present day, and provides an important channel of communication and a constant interchange of ideas amongst the opposition.

In September 1978 the unofficial flat seminars took on a more organised form with the institution of a Monday evening *Free University* — after the model of the Czech and Polish ‘flying universities’. (With typical self-sarcasm the Hungarian students dubbed their version the ‘flying kindergarten’.) The first two lecture courses, run in parallel on alternate Mondays by the historian Miklós Szabó on the history of the Soviet Communist party and the writer György Dalos on Hungarian literary policy since 1945, attracted large numbers and proved extremely popular.

Autumn 1978 also saw the first steps to establish a central ‘library’ to collect samizdat and co-ordinate its re-typing and further distribution. News of the movement was now also spreading outside Hungary, and in Paris a new Hungarian journal was launched entitled *Magyar Füzetek* (Hungarian Notebooks), under the editorship of the former 1956 political oppositionist Péter Kende, which saw its major function as the republication of samizdat writings for further distribution both in the West and inside Hungary.

The Regime’s Response

From the very start the samizdat movement had rejected conspiratorial or clandestine forms of organisation, seeking to carry on its activity freely and openly. If the regime should wish to repress it, it would have to make the first move and thus demonstrate — not only to its own citizens but to Western public opinion as well — that it was not prepared to tolerate even marginal exercises of freedom of expression and association. But at this very point in time the Kádár regime was most concerned to maintain its ‘liberal’ image in the West. Hungary’s economy, highly dependent on foreign trade, had been severely hit by the oil price rises of 1973-74 and by 1978 had attained a record deficit of almost 60,000 million forints, of which over two-thirds lay in the dollar area. Hungary’s political leaders were desperate for Western governments and bankers to give them preferential treatment in trade agreements and loans. The last thing they wanted was reports in the Western press of Hungarian writers arrested and put on trial for their beliefs.

Thus although the regime did all it could to circumscribe and limit the influence and extent of the opposition — sacking its leaders from their jobs, placing them on blacklists and under *berufsverbot*, and denying them passports to travel abroad, in an attempt to harass and intimidate potential and future supporters — they stopped short at the prospect of police actions or arrests that would attract far more attention abroad.⁷

The opposition thus found themselves in front of a door that stood already open. The next step was up to them. The following years would see several new initiatives but it would be some time before the Hungarian

opposition would step forward with a clear and overall strategy of its own.

1979 — 1980: The Time of New Initiatives

At the beginning of 1979 most members of the opposition continued to see their role as cultural rather than political. As the writer György Dalos put it: ‘We are a cultural opposition ... whose function in today’s Hungarian society is not to wage a political struggle against the established order but to build up an unofficial culture’. Within this perspective the activities launched in the preceding years were now continued, building up alternative sources of information and alternative forums of debate.

At the *Free University* a promise course of lectures by Miklós Szabó on the history of the Hungarian Communist Party was cancelled after the historian was threatened with the loss of his job if he continued. But in solidarity with him, several others now came forward, amongst them two more historians — Péter Hanák who lectured on Hungarian social history from 1848 to 1945, and Tibor Hajdu on the revolutions of 1918 and 1919. Further lecturers in 1980 included the philosopher Gáspár Miklós Tamás on the situation of the Hungarian minority in Romania, and the economist Ferenc Jánosy on the economic crises in both East and West.

Samizdat continued to grow with translations of Robert Conquest’s *The Great Terror* and Arthur Koestler’s *Darkness at Noon*, as well as Jiri Pelikan’s account of the Czech political trials of 1950-54, and documents on the 1968 reform period in Czechoslovakia. The writings of András Hegedüs, Iván Szelényi, István Kemény, Mihály Vajda, György Bence and János Kis, and Zoltán Zsille, all blacklisted from official publication, were now made available in samizdat. Of new Hungarian writings the most interesting were to be *Hungary 1984?* by Libertarius, a study of contemporary Hungarian politics in the light of historical experience, and János Kenedi’s *Do It Yourself*, a light-hearted satire on the second economy in Hungary.⁸

The idea for another major samizdat project arose following the death and funeral of István Bibó in May 1979. His friends had already been thinking of preparing a collection of essays in his honour for his 70th birthday, and the project was now transformed into a memorial volume, edited under the supervision of a 10-member editorial committee headed by Bibó’s old friend, the former Communist politician and close colleague of Imre Nagy in 1956, Ferenc Donáth. The volume *In Memoriam István Bibó* was finally completed by September 1980 — 1001 pages in length, comprising articles from 76 different contributors drawn from the widest possible range of Hungarian cultural life and including many leading intellectuals who had not contributed to samizdat before.⁹

The more enterprising initiatives, however, were taken by younger, less experienced members of the movement. In 1978 two young sociologists, Péter Farkas and Gábor

Németh, had sent a questionnaire to over 100 intellectuals as the basis for discussion-type interviews over a range of issues concerning publication and censorship. While some 70 refused to cooperate, 36 agreed. The interviews were recorded and published in samizdat in 1979 under the title *From the Other Shore*. Selections were also rearranged around the main themes of the discussion and published separately in the form of a *Round Table Discussion*. Many of the respondents stressed the importance of establishing the right to the free expression of ideas, and argued that the time had come for the Communist authorities to accept the public expression of independent and dissident viewpoints.

Similar demands for a greater freedom of expression were also being expressed by many young writers and artists outside the mainstream of the opposition who felt stifled by the limits and restrictions of official cultural channels. Their pressure had already led to the creation, under the auspices of the Writers’ Union, of a *Young Writers Attila József Circle* in 1973, and the launching of an ‘avant-garde’ literary journal *Mozgó Világ* (The World in Motion) in 1975 which over the following years published some of the most controversial articles, sociographic studies and risqué and irreverent photographs and criticism to appear in Hungary. Many of its contributors were connected with the opposition, and the journal soon became very popular amongst the younger generation. *Mozgó Világ* circles were established in high schools and university faculties to debate articles appearing in the journal, and these became forums at which increasingly controversial topics were aired. In the Karl Marx University of Economics an openly political *Polvax* discussion club was formed which attracted several hundred students to its debates on questions of international and domestic politics, economic reform, human rights and Eurocommunism.

Political Initiatives

Some of the more radical members of the opposition now felt the time ripe to become more directly political. In a number of private meetings, amongst the instigators of which were the sociologists Tamás Földvári and Zoltán Zsille and the physicist György Göndör, the idea was raised of creating a *National Democratic Opposition* with a clear political programme that would seek to participate in both local and parliamentary elections. The proposal met with considerable scepticism, but nevertheless the following spring some opposition activists intervened in pre-election meetings for the June 1980 local elections and tried, though without success, to enter their own candidates. Later, leaflets were issued calling for a boycott of the elections.

Once again, however, it was oppression in Czechoslovakia that attracted the most committed response. When vicious prison sentences were passed in Prague on five members of the Committee to Defend the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS) on 23 October 1979, it took the Hungarian opposition less than a week to assemble 252 signatures to

open letters addressed to the Hungarian President Pál Losonczi and to the Communist Party secretary János Kádár calling upon them to intervene on behalf of the convicted and secure their release. The concern for human rights and the freedom of expression was central to the protest, in which they declared: 'We are all filled with deep concern when people are jailed for their convictions and the expression of their opinions, wherever in the world this may happen'.¹⁰

Poverty

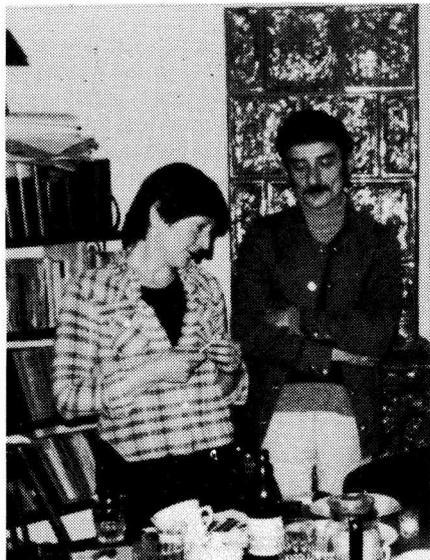
Many members of the opposition were just as concerned with social problems as intellectual liberties, and for several years sociologists had been involved in research studies into poverty in Hungary which had shown that at least one fifth of the population was living in or below the poverty line, with one tenth (or almost one million people) in conditions of extreme poverty. In November 1979 a group of young sociologists, feeling it was not sufficient just to study poverty, got together to co-ordinate their efforts and take positive action to help the poor. In March 1980 they decided to call themselves the *Foundation to Assist the Poor* (or SZETA as it is known by its Hungarian initials) and issued an appeal for public support. This was the first voluntary and autonomous organisation to have been formed in Hungary for almost a quarter of a century.

Between November 1979 and the end of August 1980 some 96,000 forints (about £1,600) and 300 kilograms of clothing and other articles were collected and distributed amongst the poor. SZETA also provided legal, health and educational advice, aid in obtaining social assistance, and help in repairing and improving accommodation. Increasingly recognising the need to mobilise public opinion to a greater awareness and concern for the plight of the poor, they planned a programme of cultural events to extend their public recognition and raise further funds.

The first of these events, a charity concert to be given by the pianist Zoltán Kocsis on 11 September 1980, was prevented from taking place when the authorities banned the use of the meeting hall of a large firm that had been hired for the occasion. SZETA, however, continued with its programme by holding further events in private flats. A poetry-reading by the poet István Eörsi in October was followed by a literary evening in November when the writer György Konrád read excerpts from his latest novel, *The Accomplice*. Both events were highly successful.

The authorities, meanwhile, continued with their efforts to harass and intimidate the organisers. In October, the architect Bálint Nagy was detained by the police and SZETA documents in his bag were confiscated. In November, nearly all the original sponsors of SZETA were summoned for questioning and issued with police warnings — the first time this had happened in Hungary for many years. SZETA's organisers, however, refused to be intimidated and continued with their activities.

For the end of the year SZETA was preparing to hold an auction of works of art to raise more funds, but so much interest was expressed, and so many artists came forward to donate their works, that it soon became clear the event could not be held in a private flat. The organisers then approached the authorities who finally agreed to provide a public hall for the function so long as it was not officially held in the name of SZETA. When the auction took place on 11-14 December 150 artists had donated their works and 500 people attended the opening by the writer Miklós Mészöly. Over the next three days the auction was visited by several thousand people and over 150,000 forints (£2,500) was raised.



Ottila Solt and Andras Nagy, SZETA activists.

Samizdat Journals

Another new venture in 1980 was the establishment of samizdat journals as regular forums of information and discussion. The first *Kelet Európai Figyelő* (East European Observer) appeared in March 1980 with a collection of eye-witness reports of the 1956 revolution written at the time by East European journalists — these were the first texts to appear in Hungarian samizdat about 1956. Subsequent issues produced over the spring and summer of 1980 provided documentation on opposition movements in other East European countries. Number 2 was a dossier about the Romanian dissident writer Paul Goma; number 3 carried Zhores Medvedev's essay on the rights to privacy in postal correspondence and number 4 was composed of documents on the trial of Petr Uhl and his comrades in Czechoslovakia.

A second journal, appearing in September 1980, was a literary journal called *Sféra* (Sphere) which sought to provide a forum for young writers who could not get their works published officially, and for open discussions of their problems with the cultural bureaucracy. Planned as a monthly, *Sféra* was produced in 80 typewritten copies.

Poland

The Polish dockworkers' strike at Gdansk in August 1980 and the birth of the indepen-

dent trade union *Solidarity* occasioned great interest in Hungary, particularly amid the ranks of the opposition. At the height of the Gdansk strike, seven leading opposition activists — among them György Bence, György Göndör, Bálint Nagy, László Rajk and Miklós Sulyok — went to Budapest airport in an attempt to fly to Gdansk to express their solidarity with the strikers. All seven were prevented from travelling and had their passports confiscated. Others, however, some travelling by road, some by rail, succeeded in reaching Gdansk and placing a wreath on the memorial to the workers killed in 1970.

The Polish events were also reflected in stirrings amongst the working class in Hungary. A year earlier, at the time of food price rises in the summer of 1979, workers at the Csepel iron and steel works had placed a piece of bread and dripping in the hands of the Lenin statue outside their factory. At the time of the Gdansk strike in 1980, there were reports of disturbances amongst the workers in Csepel too. A month later planned price rises were withdrawn at the last moment — the authorities obviously fearing a Polish-type reaction in Hungary.¹¹

Over the following 16 months, many young Hungarians visited Poland to see for themselves what was happening, and often made contacts with *Solidarity*. As a result several were forcibly expelled from Poland, and some had their passports withdrawn on returning to Hungary. At least one, Bálint Magyar, was sacked from his job as well.

Interest in the Polish events was also reflected in samizdat. A collection of documents was produced on the Polish opposition before 1980, while the fifth issue of the *East European Observer* was a special number with reports and texts from 'the Polish Summer'. 1981 would see far more such documents produced, translated into Hungarian as soon as they became available, amongst them interviews in the international press with figures like Lech Walesa, Jacek Kuron and Karol Modzelewski.

While the events in Poland encouraged the Hungarian opposition to step up their activity, they also occasioned a certain caution, a 'wait and see' approach, for the fate of the Polish movement would obviously have vital consequences for the future of the opposition in Hungary too.

1981 — 1982: The Establishment of the 'Second Public Opinion'

By the turn of 1980-81 the democratisation movement in Poland was having a slow but certain influence on almost all aspects of Hungarian social and political life. Dissatisfactions were increasingly openly expressed, while the authorities themselves became ever more edgy — fearing the growth of a more widely-based opposition movement. The problems presented by the opposition became a topic of serious concern at meetings of the Politburo, which at one point considered action against contributors to the Bibó Memorial volume.

That 1981 would see the 25th anniversary of the 1956 revolution also gave the authorities added reason to be nervous.

Growing Tensions

1980 had seen rising discontent within the universities with the official *Communist Youth League* (KISZ), membership of which stood at an all-time low, in some institutions comprising less than 50% of the students. Budapest students had expressed their dissatisfaction with the existing system of representation at an unusually well-attended meeting of the Arts Faculty student parliament in December 1980, while similar feelings were also strong within the University of Economics.

In the first weeks of 1981 demands were raised in universities throughout Hungary for either a greater democratisation of the KISZ or the establishment of a more representative student organisation. By the time of the *Budapest University and High School Students Colloquium* of 19-22 March the idea was already in the air to set up an independent student organisation on similar lines to that recently authorised in Poland. The meeting was alive with expectations, with 1,200 students attending, but they had come poorly prepared for the contest and were easily outmanoeuvred by the KISZ leadership who took firm control of the proceedings and refused to allow either resolutions or votes.

Meanwhile the *Young Writers Attila József Circle* had also become more strident in its demands. In May 1979 they had elected a new leadership and called for a more radical cultural democratisation, while at their conference at Szentendre in October 1980 they had demanded the right to issue their own journal, publish books themselves, and dispose of funds for scholarships and other means of support to young writers. Such calls for autonomy went well beyond the limits of toleration of the regime's cultural policy, and in March 1981 the activities of the circle were officially suspended.

For a time it looked as if the avant-garde journal *Mozgó Világ* had also bitten the dust, when its issue for March 1981 failed to appear, following repeated criticisms of its alleged lack of taste and respect. The journal finally reappeared, after a 3 month break, in June but without the two offending articles that had caused the dispute — one on the growing drug-culture in Hungary, the other describing a summer trip to Poland. Although the editor-in-chief was also replaced, the editorial board had resisted demands for the removal of their more radical members, and the journal continued with its previous irreverent and critical editorial policies.

'Samizdat Boutique'

While the authorities had tried to curb movements for independence within official spheres, they remained at a loss as to how to deal with the opposition which now took major steps forward in the establishment of the 'second public opinion' (by analogy with the 'second economy'). In mid-February a catalogue appeared for a new bookshop in

Budapest — open to the public every Tuesday evening for the sale of samizdat literature. The proprietor of this 'samizdat boutique', as it rapidly came to be known, was László Rajk, son of the Communist leader executed in the Stalinist purges in 1949, not exactly the first person János Kádár would wish to arrest.

April 1981 saw the appearance of the first ever printed samizdat (with the exception of a booklet of cartoons on sex by Agnes Hay produced in 1978, samizdat had till now appeared only in typewritten or carbon copies, rarely produced in more than 50 examples), with the publication of a new political journal *Magyar Figyelő* (Hungarian Observer) containing articles on the perspectives for a democratic development in Hungary. Later issues (6 appeared in 1981) dealt with official restrictions on cultural activities, and with the problems of the Hungarian minorities in Romania and Czechoslovakia, but above all the *Hungarian Observer* turned its attention to events in Poland, and two entire issues were devoted to reports and documents from Poland.

The Free University — now in its third year — also continued its activities, with lecture courses by Mihály Vajda (returned to Hungary after teaching for two years in West Germany) on philosophy and the prospects for creating a more democratic society, and by the Methodist priest Gábor Iványi on the lack of freedom in the Hungarian churches, followed by András Hegedűs on the structure of the East European social systems, and by János Kis on the attempts of Western political and social scientists to analyse the nature of Soviet-type societies. Kis' lectures continued into the 1981-82 session, alternating with tape recordings made by István Bibó in 1971-72 as to his views on the nature of a truly democratic and socialist society.

Solidarity with Solidarity

SZETA, the Foundation to Assist the Poor, continued its fund-raising activities in 1981 with a poetry-reading by György Dalos in February and a musical concert in March to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of Béla Bartók. But they also sought to direct their activities towards Poland and, following the rebuttal of an approach for co-operation with the Hungarian Red Cross, they decided to act on proposals already in the air to provide a summer holiday in Hungary for children from poor Polish families.

Two initiators of the action, György Krassó and Gábor Demszky, visited Poland and sought the collaboration of the Mazowsze regional organisation of Solidarity, while collections in Budapest quickly raised the 80,000 forints (£1,333) needed. The 24 children, sporting Solidarity caps and sweat-shirts, arrived at Budapest airport on 10 July and spent two weeks at Lake Balaton where they were looked after and entertained by members of the opposition, warmly received by the local villagers, and also received more than their fair share of attention from the Hungarian police.

Suggestions for more directly political ac-

tions of solidarity, however, met with little response, and proposals to create a 'Solidarity Committee with the Polish Workers', or to collect signatures in support of the independent trade union Solidarity, never got off the ground. Nevertheless, the wearing of Solidarity badges became increasingly common, as did the instances of their confiscation by the police, and even of people being sent home for wearing them at work. More serious incidents concerned individuals who travelled to Poland, made contacts with Solidarity, and had their passports confiscated on their return, amongst them one of the organisers of the SZETA action, Gábor Demszky. Others were prevented from travelling and their passports confiscated on the border, amongst them Pál Szalai, Agnes Hay and György Krassó — the latter after he had already been allowed onto Czechoslovak territory.



György Krassó, left, a veteran from 1956.

Attempts at Repression

The authorities had not dared to prevent the summer camp for Polish children, but on 17 July they had forcibly expelled from the country the camp's interpreter, a Polish student of Hungarian at Budapest University. Wojciech Maziarski.

The end of the summer also saw the first direct intervention against the opposition. On 1 September, while László Rajk was visiting his seriously ill mother in hospital, his place in the bookshop was taken by a young historian Sándor Szilágyi, who was stopped by the police after closing and leaving the flat and held overnight for questioning. While the police did not enter the 'boutique', and refused to accept any statement from Szilágyi referring to Rajk, they did raid two other flats where samizdat stocks were stored and confiscated a large amount of material. Another five people were also called in for questioning, and Szilágyi subsequently received a police caution, but no further action was taken and the samizdat shop has since continued to conduct business as usual.¹²

On 4 October another passport confiscation occurred when the 57-year-old Tibor Pákh, a veteran campaigner for human rights, was prevented from travelling to Poland. (Pákh had received a 15-year sentence in 1960 for publicising a list of names of Hungarian minors executed after 1956, and was detained again, after his release in 1963, for pro-

testing against the continued detention of political prisoners. In spring 1980 he had joined the hunger strikers in the Podkowa Lesna church in Poland protesting against the imprisonment of the leader of the Polish independent publishing house NOWA.) On 6 October Tibor Pákh started a hunger strike in the University church in the centre of Budapest. On 9 October he was removed by the police to the National Hospital for Mental and Nervous Illness where he was forcibly fed and given drugs affecting the central nervous system.

On 15 October 12 intellectuals issued an appeal to save Tibor Pákh, subsequently signed by a further 45 Hungarians, and the case was also taken up by Amnesty International. As a result of these protests Tibor Pákh was released on 26 October. Although little noted in the West, his hunger strike and compulsory hospitalisation had taken place on the very 25th anniversary of the 1956 revolution.

1956 Commemorations

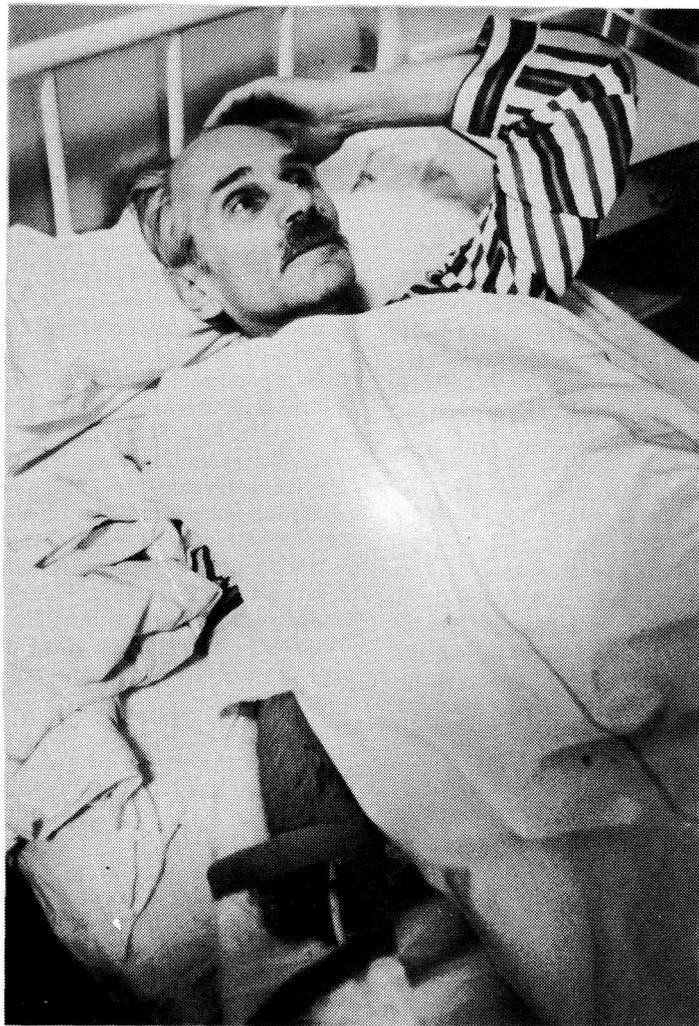
On Monday 19 October the regular Free University lecture was followed by the first ever public commemoration of the 1956 revolution. An introductory address by György Krassó, who also read out Gyula Illyes' poem *One Sentence on Tyranny*, was followed by tape recordings of radio broadcasts during the revolution, a short speech by Miklós Szabó on the significance of 1956 for Hungary today, and a poem by György Petri dedicated to the revolution.

The authorities reacted immediately in an attempt to prevent any further commemorations, and over the following days some twenty people were called in for police questioning. Despite this, small gatherings still took place on 23 October at the grave of István Bibó, around the graves of those killed during the revolution, and at the Bem statue, one of the meeting points of 23 October 1956.

These actions were not the only commemorations of 1956. A samizdat version of Bill Lomax's study *Hungary 1956* had appeared earlier in the year with many additions and corrections contributed by the translator György Krassó. The *Hungaricus* pamphlet, possibly the very first Hungarian samizdat produced clandestinely in December 1956, was also now republished. Finally, the sixth issue of *Magyar Figyelő* appeared in October, composed of a detailed chronology of the events of 1956.

New Journals

The year of the 25th anniversary of 1956 also saw the Hungarian opposition stepping forward with its own mouthpiece — a 120-page duplicated journal entitled *Beszélő* (News from Inside) produced in over 1,000 copies. The editors — Miklós Haraszti, János Kis, Ferenc Köszeg, Bálint Nagy and György Petri, representing a wide range of tendencies within the opposition — declared in their editorial that their purpose was to refute the everyday belief that nothing of any note really happens in Hungary. On the contrary, they declared, it does and the purpose of *Beszélő* will be to report it. Many



Tibor Pákh on hunger strike in a locked psychiatric ward.

things go on about which people hear only rumours; the purpose of *Beszélő* will be to establish the facts.

Beszélő Number 1 appeared early in December 1981 with reports on dissent within the Catholic church, incidents of strikes, the use of psychiatry for political repression, the struggles to create an independent student organisation, and the SZETA camp for Polish children at Lake Balaton. It also carried information on the Hungarian minority in Czechoslovakia, debates within Solidarity in Poland, and original documents from 1956.

At almost the same time yet another duplicated journal appeared under the title *Kisúgó* (Outformer — as opposed to Informer) which is uncompromising and strident tones sought to expose the liberal rhetoric of the Kádár regime and called on the opposition to step out more openly and fearlessly. Other items included texts of the Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta, and excerpts from Kuron and Modzelewski's revolutionary manifesto of 1964 — their *Open Letter to the Polish Communist Party*.

The Polish Coup

Hardly had these new steps forward been taken when the democratisation movement in Poland was brought to a sudden halt by the military coup of 13 December 1981. The Hungarian opposition, however, found no way of reacting constructively to the Polish

coup. (Indeed, András Hegedüs even expressed his guarded support for Jaruzelski.) No organised action of protest was made, though on 17 December Tibor Pákh issued his own personal statement of continuing support for Solidarity.

It was left to the intellectuals and SZETA activists who had instigated the Polish children's summer camp to express their fellow-feeling in an *Appeal for Aid to the Polish people* in which they called for contributions to finance a similar action to invite the children of interned and imprisoned workers' families for holidays in Hungary. Samizdat translators also set to work, and early in February 1982 issued a volume entitled *Solidarity: Documents of Repression and Resistance*, a notable collection of documentation on the days and weeks following the coup and the continuing resistance to the military junta.

When the second issue of *Beszélő* appeared in April 1982 it bore a picture of the monument to the Polish workers killed in 1956 erected by Solidarity at Poznan in June 1981, and was dedicated to the memory of the Polish workers who lost their lives in the military repression following 13 December 1981.

Despite earlier fears the Polish coup did not result in any immediate tightening up in Hungary. Indeed, the regime now became even more concerned to maintain its liberal image in the West, in the hope of remaining

outside any trade boycott, and of being treated differently from the rest of the Eastern bloc by Western banks and trading companies. Hungary's borrowing in the West now reached 8 billion dollars and represented a higher per capita indebtedness than that of Poland. She was also currently applying for membership of the IMF and the World Bank.

Any worsening of economic relations with the West would not only make it more difficult for Hungary to generate repayment of her debts, it would also undermine her ability to maintain domestic living standards — the main plank of the regime's legitimacy and the assurance of internal stability. In this situation it might even be of benefit to the Hungarian Government if it could point to the unhindered activity of dissident groups as evidence of the tolerance and liberalism of the regime.

Hungary's problems of foreign trade also led to a resuscitation of the policies of economic reform partially abandoned in the mid-1970s, as the only hope of improving the country's export performance on world markets. The need for reform was now accepted without any inhibitions or reservations as the Government set about dismantling the large and inefficient trusts, reestablishing a wide range of medium and small enterprises, and allowing a considerable reprivatization particularly in the catering, retail and service sectors. The Government was now prepared to listen to anybody, and even such a maverick and unorthodox economist as Tibor Liska with his ideas for a self-regulating market economy of independent commodity producers got a hearing in the official press, while his weekly seminars at the University of Economics began to draw audiences of over 1,000 people.

The Opposition at the Crossroads

A distinct uncertainty characterises the opposition at the beginning of 1982. Many have an intangible feeling that the Polish coup marks a significant turning point, if not the end of an epoch, in the history of East European societies. As the editorial of *Beszélő* No. 2 argues, the Polish crisis will not be solved so easily as were the earlier crises of 1956 and 1968. But there is far less clarity as to exactly what the future holds in store. At the same time, the opposition is more active and more productive than it has ever been.

The beginning of the year saw the initiation of an independent publishing house, along the lines of the Polish NOWA, under the name *AB: Independent Publishers*. Directed by Gábor Demszky, its expressed aim is to publish those authors who are 'persona non grata' for official publishers. *AB's* first publications were duplicated essays some 20 or 30 pages long, amongst them György Konrád's *The State and Censorship* and Miklós Haraszti's *Belated Introduction to Kádárism*, as well as reprints of previous samizdat essays like the Lázár report on the Hungarian minority in Transylvania, and Marc Rakovsky's analysis of *Human Rights in Hungary*.

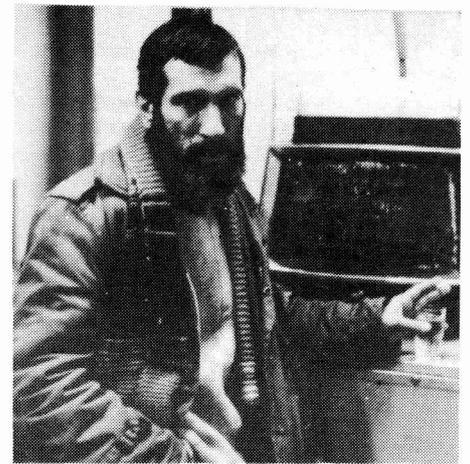
Other works have been produced in book format, beginning with László Németh's *Hungarians in Romania* and István Bibó's study of *The Jewish Question in Hungary*. The most ambitious and original publication so far, however, is a book of poetry entitled *Eternal Monday* by the popular poet György Petri who has for several years been blacklisted from official publications, and many of whose poems have an explicit political content.

Another issue that has come to be raised amongst the opposition is the European peace movement, and the 'second public opinion' has sought to provide information on independent peace initiatives within the Communist bloc, such as the Christian peace movement in East Germany. Within Hungary itself, increasing opposition has been expressed to the 18 months' military service compulsory for all young people, and there have been several cases of imprisonment for refusing military service on conscientious grounds. Feelings of anti-militarism have also been reflected within the Catholic Church, and in 1981 two Catholic priests, László Kovács and András Gromon, who delivered pacifist sermons and spoke out in defence of the right to refuse military service, were suspended by the Primate of the Hungarian Catholic Church, Cardinal László Lécai. These incidents have been reported in *Beszélő* No.2. Finally, one of the most recent samizdat publications is a translation of E.P. Thompson's 'not the Dimpleby lecture' *Beyond the Cold War*.

So far the opposition has distinctly failed to respond to the new commitment of the regime to economic reform, though some individuals have once again suggested that, in view of the Government's lack of any ideological direction or overall strategy, the time has come for the opposition to step forward with a clear reform programme of its own. The prospects for the future, however, as one of the opposition's leading theorists has recently remarked, really depend on whether Hungary will manage to weather the present economic storms and thus retain the relatively liberal regime of the last 15 years, or whether she will be pulled down into the same economic ruin as has befallen neighbouring countries like Poland and Romania and have to resort to more authoritarian and repressive policies: 'The dilemma of the Hungarian opposition is that it has to prepare itself for both eventualities at the same time.'

Notes:

1. Marc Rakovsky, 'Marxism and the Analysis of Soviet Societies', in *Capital and Class*, No.1, 1977.
2. György Bence and János Kis, 'On Being a Marxist: A Hungarian View', in the *Socialist Register* 1980. A selection of abridged excerpts from *Marx in the Fourth Decade* has been published in F. Silnitsky, L. Silnitsky & K. Reyman (ed.), *Communism and Eastern Europe*, Harvester Press, 1979.
3. See: Balász Rab, 'New Hungarian Samizdat', in *Index on Censorship*, Vol.7, No.4, July-August 1978.
4. Miklós Haraszti, 'The Willing Intellectuals', in *Index on Censorship*, Vol.9, No.2, April 1980.



The poet György Petri, whose poetry has been very popular in an unofficial edition.

5. György Konrád and Iván Szelényi, *The Intellectuals on the Road to Class Power*, Harvester Press, 1979.
6. András Hegedüs, 'Democracy and Socialism, East and West', in Ken Coates & Fred Singleton (ed.), *The Just Society*, Spokesman Books, 1977.
7. Balász Rab, 'Samizdat Sackings', in *Index on Censorship*, Vol.9, No.2, April 1980.
8. János Kenedi, *Do It Yourself*, Pluto Press, 1981.
9. The contribution by Ferenc Donáth, 'István Bibó and the Fundamental Issue of Hungarian Democracy', appeared in the *Socialist Register* 1981.
10. 'Hungary: Hundreds protest Prague trial', in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, Vol.3, No.5, November 1979 — January 1980.
11. See: Miklós Haraszti, 'Voices from Hungary', in *Index on Censorship*, Vol.10, No.3, June 1981; also in *Telos*, Summer 1981.
12. See: Jessie Jones, 'Active Seed', in *City Limits*, 29 January — 4 February 1982.



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What Sort of Strikes Take Place in Hungary?

(During the Solidarity Congress last autumn, Solidarity indicated its readiness to make contact with the official trade union federations in other East European countries. Only the Hungarian official unions gave a positive response to Solidarity's initiative. We

publish below two accounts of strikes that took place recently in Hungary. They are both taken from the unofficial journal Beszélő (News from Inside), No. 1, samizdat, Budapest, December 1981 and No. 2 April 1982.

On the Kispest Building Site

What sort of strikes take place in Hungary? If you were to ask a hundred people this question ninety-nine of them would reply: none at all. The hundredth, the exception, is Sándor Gáspár, the General Secretary of the National Council of Trade Unions. The question was put by *Népszabadság*. Gáspár's answer was as follows:

'In our country the right to strike is not guaranteed by law, but nor does the law prohibit strikes. The trade unions, however, have a very wide range of rights, as a consequence of which the state and economic management have to take account of trade union opinion in all questions concerning the workers ... Thus in the final analysis we are able to settle everything without strikes. And what we can't settle without strikes, we wouldn't achieve by strikes either. The strike is not a means of building socialism.

Despite all this, even in our country there have occasionally been short suspensions of work for a few hours in some factory sections, work stoppages or, if you like, strikes. When this has happened, it has been found to have been because neither the party organisation nor the trade union had prevented certain improper behaviour and incorrect measures of the company management. If our representatives had carried out their duties properly, they would have prevented the conflicts from arising.'

(Népszabadság, 19 October 1980)

This statement provides us with much valuable information. We can see from it that, in general, strikes in Hungary don't involve the whole factory but tend to occur within smaller sections. We can see that the conflicts are usually resolved very quickly — most often within a few hours. We can see that the workers go on strike over grievances that the General Secretary of the National Council of Trade Unions considers can be remedied. Finally, it is also clear from the text that the strikers come into conflict not only with the factory management but with the party organisation and the trade union too.

Of course there are quite a few other things we would be glad to know about that Gáspár does not mention. How frequent are the work stoppages? In which sections, in which occupations, do they occur most often? In what size of companies? How long do they generally last for, and on average how many workers take part? And even more interesting than these questions, how are the strikes brought to an end? How is a settlement reached? Who represents the strikers to the factory management? Do they negotiate, and if so, in what forms? How do the workers in the parts of the factory that are not on strike react? Do the police put in an appearance? Are there any later reprisals ...

We do not know whether the National Council of Trade Unions (or the party centre, or the interior ministry) carries out comprehensive investigations of the instances of strikes. Certainly ordinary citizens can't carry this out. But let us aim at something slightly less. Let us collect information on individual cases, and record them in as much detail as possible.

In the following pages we present one case that would give even Sándor Gáspár cause to stop and think. We know a lot about it that will be of interest to our readers, but not everything. We hope we can be excused if our account is in places a little incomplete.

MONDAY 3 NOVEMBER 1980

On this day it was snowing throughout the country. Vehicles were skidding in all directions on the slippery roads and bumping into one another. The next day's papers reported masses of small accidents. 'There was a seven-car pile up on the Elizabeth Bridge; on

the Soroksári Street flyover five cars crashed into one another. Already by noon 160 accidents had been reported to the State Insurance claims office in Hamzsabegi Street.' (*Népszabadság*, Tuesday 4 November 1980)

Our story also begins with an accident. True, it wasn't the fault of the weather. But the accident and the bad weather together did their bit. That evening the oil stove in one of the changing rooms on the Kispest building site of the Heves County National Construction Company blew up. 34 workers were unable to dry out their soaking wet work clothes.

The place couldn't be properly heated anyway. There was neither a washbasin nor a toilet in it. The only possibility for washing was provided by an iron water pipe, and that was to be found outside the building, in the open air. The workers had already been grumbling for ages about these shocking conditions. But now they had really had enough. They decided that the next day they would stop work, and they would not go back to work until they got a proper changing room.

About 190 men worked on the site. We don't know whether the 34 tried to draw the others into the strike. If they did try, it was without success; none of the others joined them. Maybe it was because the other changing rooms were more usable. A part may also have been played by the fact that the 34 were from Hatvan; the others were not. On the other hand we do know that the members of the four striking workteams took part in the action with complete solidarity. They were already going to leave the site anyway, they were getting ready to go back to Hatvan.

TUESDAY 4 NOVEMBER

In the morning the 34 didn't get changed into their workclothes. Their leaders went to the office and told the manager that the four workteams would not start work until they got a proper changing room. They then telephoned to the trade union committee in the company's centre at Eger and informed them of their decision. Then they returned to the others in the unheated changing room. There they remained the whole day, chatting and waiting to see what would happen. Someone mentioned that there had already been a strike on this site, in the summer.

Then it had been the men from Eger who had stopped work; rumour had it they had demanded a wage rise. It was said they had been granted the higher wages very quickly. No-one knew about it for sure; those workers had left for other sites long ago. The 34 from Hatvan had only come here later. They also speculated over how the management would be able to secure a new changing room for them. As to whether they might call in the police, or hit back at them in some other way — these possibilities weren't talked about.

Meanwhile the strikers were looked in on by the site foremen, the engineers (more out of curiosity than anything else) and the manager. The latter person was very nervous; he shouted at them, got quarrelsome and made threats. And no wonder. In his office the telephone was ringing ceaselessly. One minute it was the centre at Eger; the next minute it was the subcentre at Gyöngyös, where someone from the county party committee was enquiring whether there really was a strike, what the men wanted, and what the management was doing to get them back to work. In the early afternoon a delegation arrived from the subcentre at Gyöngyös. They didn't question the validity of the men's grievance. They immediately promised to provide a new oil stove. They recognised that the old changing room was of no use but that, they said, was

no problem. There was an unassembled wooden shed on the site. They could use that. (It remained a mystery why no-one had ever thought of this possibility before.) But they should go back to work with as little delay as possible. No-one would be victimised.

The workers heard them out, and then they answered: no. As far as we know they didn't have any objection to making use of the wooden shed. They would also have been quite happy with the new oil stove. It was their negotiating partner that they weren't satisfied with. It wasn't enough that the delegation from the subcentre had come to talk with them. The only promise that was worth anything was one made by the main centre. So the delegation from Gyöngyös went back with their mission unaccomplished. The 34 continued to wait patiently.

WEDNESDAY 5 NOVEMBER

The second day began just as the first. The four workteams didn't leave the changing room. The others didn't stay with them. The comings and goings were also the same as the previous day: there were those who came out of curiosity, and there was the manager who came to shout at them. If only they could have known that a delegation of negotiators had already set out from the centre at Eger.

In the afternoon the four team leaders and the union representative were called into the office. The chief engineer of the company had arrived, together with the trade union secretary and several other representatives (the company party secretary was not with them). The chief engineer energetically got down to work. He had the men sit down in a row — he himself remaining standing — then, without wasting a second, he immediately turned to the first of them:

'What is your complaint?'

He was told.

'And yours? ... And yours?'

He left no-one in any doubt that he wanted to finish the whole business as quickly as possible.

'Look here, men. It will be best for you, and for me as well, if we can settle the matter among ourselves. Do you realise what will happen, if we don't sort it out. It could turn into a national scandal. You wouldn't want that.'

What was he thinking of? The Heves county party committee had in all probability by now informed the Central Committee apparatus. Maybe the interior ministry's organisations had also been alerted. One could not know where the chief engineer had received

the instructions to come to Budapest and make the workers see reason ... But just what sort of anxieties had moved him, and those who had sent him, became clear from what he had to say:

'Listen here. We don't pay wages in zlotys here, but in forints. You can't go on strike here.'

(No other allusions were made to the then already four-month-old Polish workers' movement.)

But the chief engineer had other arguments as well against the work stoppage:

'What need was there for this? Why didn't you come to me, if there was something wrong? You can come and see me at any time.'

'That's not so,' someone answered, accompanied by the noisy asent of the rest. 'If we hadn't stopped work we would never have seen the comrade chief engineer. And then what guarantee would we have had, that we would really get what we'd been promised?'

Meanwhile the room was gradually filling up. News of the chief engineer's arrival had slowly attracted the representatives of the other work teams. At first they just listened, then they too began to list their grievances. Soon it was like a general complaints day.

Finally the chief engineer put the following proposal to the strikers. By Monday they would turn one of the already completed flats into a changing room (as Friday 7 November was a public holiday they wouldn't be working on the site from Thursday to Sunday in any case). He would meanwhile look into the other complaints. One condition: on Monday morning everybody should return to work. They agreed on that.

Let us note that to the very end the police kept away from the area of the building site, and we don't know of any other form of retaliatory measures having taken place.

ANOTHER WORK STOPPAGE

It has come to our knowledge that in October 1980 there was a strike for higher wages in a section employing several hundred workers of the Hódmezővásárhelyi porcelain factory. The work stoppage was initiated by the afternoon shift, and the night shift also joined them. Late at night officials from the Budapest company centre arrived — in the company of a large number of police. The police at once surrounded the factory and the administration building, while the officials urgently handed out 1,000 forint notes to the strikers. That's all that we know. If any of our readers have more detailed information, we urge them to get in touch with us.

Women don't chicken out

In this issue we report a case that was also discussed on the radio and in a provincial newspaper. However, they left out a few important details.

SOLIDARITY MEANS SUCCESS

'During the last twenty years — in totally exceptional cases — there have occurred a few work stoppages worthy of attention. ... And who has pacified them with fine words? Well who? The trade union secretary.'

Elet és Irodalom (Life and Literature),
6 September 1980.

It was on *168 hours*, the radio's political magazine, in its programme of 27 June 1981 that the public first heard of the short work stoppage that took place on 6 March in Kisvárdá at the Hunniacoop Szabolcs poultry processing and marketing company.

On this day in an explosion of long festering tensions 52 women workers of the disembowelling section refused to work overtime that they had not been informed of in advance. Four of them — the alleged 'instigators' — were sacked by the manager. One of the women wrote a letter of complaint to the radio, following which

the already mentioned report was prepared. From this we were able to learn a few other things about the women's earlier grievances: about the unfair and undemocratic way the bonuses were shared out, about the unpaid overtime that had been going on for years, and finally about how they always 'forgot' to invite the manual workers to the women's day festivities.

The manager of the company tried to give reassuring answers to the reporter's awkward questions. The essence of his confused attempt at an explanation was that the management was in no way at fault, after all there had been a lot of problems with work discipline, and the 'defence of social property' was something very important, while some of the workers didn't even shrink from stealing. For the programme director, however, the main lesson to be learned was that the workers should be more regularly consulted — something which, so it appeared, was for him the same thing as workers' democracy.

It was only in passing that the radio report mentioned that the matter also came before the courts. *Kelet-Magyarország* (Eastern Hungary) in its issue of 4 July gave a detailed report on the proceedings in the Nyiregyháza County Labour Court in an article entitled 'Disputed Overtime — Overhasty Decision'. The report con-

firmed what had been said by two of the dismissed women in the radio programme. On 18 July the manager protested against the article's publication, and offered his own side of the argument as well. He tried to argue that the overtime was unavoidable. Then he closed his explanation with a quite untrue assertion: 'in that month too, every bit of overtime was accounted for and paid'.

What then is the truth in the case of the Kisvárda work stoppage?

On 6 March, in an embittered mood occasioned by the uneven celebrations of women's day, the women of the disembowelling section carried out the threat they had made the previous day: at the end of normal working hours they switched off the conveyor belt and went into the changing room. On this occasion they were no longer willing to do that which they'd always — if grumblingly — done before. They weren't going to work overtime for nothing. *Kelet-Magyarország* referred to the one high-level witness, the county committee secretary of the food workers union, who:

'before 6 March had visited the factory and heard from the workers that the arrangements for overtime were not satisfactory. He officially requested the manager and the union secretary to see that matters were put to rights. A couple of weeks later he visited the factory again, and in reply to his enquiries the manager and the union leader both assured him that "we've put matters right". The county committee secretary accepted the assurances of the two leaders, and considered the matter closed. He has since regretted it.'

Up to the time of the stoppage in question the company never took account of the time worked overtime, but due to the irregular deliveries overtime often had to be done. According to the manager this was not really 'overtime', for on most occasions it was just a matter of working an extra 10 or 20 minutes.

The radio report and the newspaper article also informed us that the women shortly returned to the conveyor belt, and in about half an hour they completed the work that remained to be done. But they didn't tell us that the resumption of work only took place because the foreman gave a firm promise that the manager would

come down to the shopfloor to discuss their grievance. Nothing came of the promise. The manager did not put in an appearance, nor did he receive the women's delegation, in just the same way as he had earlier failed to respond to the union representative's letter of complaint. Nor do the reporters tell us that, in their hot tempers, the women now continued their work singing the *Internationale*. Later, in the course of 'enquiries', it was exactly this that was presented as one of their greatest crimes, and a fifth woman also almost received a reprimand for having led the spontaneous militants' choir.

The next day the individual 'talks' began (in the course of which it was repeatedly emphasised that 'We are not in Poland'), and then followed the reprisals: Jónás, Mrs. László Magyar and Mrs. Ferenc Molnár — were, with immediate effect, summarily dismissed. According to the manager they were the ones who had organised the action, they were the 'instigators'.

The Labour Court — after its proceedings had been postponed several times — brought a judgment on 27 September. The witnesses had unanimously defended the four dismissed women, and they had asserted that the refusal to work overtime was a collective decision of all of them. It was in no small measure this solidarity that was responsible for the court's ruling that the four women should be reinstated in their jobs, and be paid their wages for the period of their suspension.

Following the work stoppage — at least until last autumn — there had not been any overtime working in the Kisvárda poultry processing plant. As to what has happened since then, we have no information. We do not know whether there were any further consequences for the four women. The declarations of the manager in his already cited statement certainly did not bode well: he repeatedly alluded to the 'instigators' earlier insubordination', and to the fact that 'one of them has had so many entries in her work record book that she is already using her second one.'

We hope that, in the next issue of *Beszélő*, we will be able to report that the participants in the successful Kisvárda work stoppage are prospering.

A Hungarian Perspective on the Polish Coup

(The following was the editorial of Beszélő, No. 2, April 1982, under the title 'On the Deck of the Titanic?'. Its assessment of the significance of the Polish coup will be of great interest to Western socialists, not least for the way in which it discusses the possibilities of drawing analogies between Janos Kadar after 1956 and General Jaruzelski in Poland. The translation is by Bill Lomax.)

'I have come across people who say that we remind them of the orchestra playing on the deck of the Titanic.'

Jan Jozef Szczepanski,
Zycie Warszawy, 12 December 1981

We could breathe a sigh of relief — so we were assured after 13 December by the official Hungarian news media. We could breathe a sigh of relief — we had in the end avoided the worst. Poland had escaped from chaos — saved by the Polish army, and without any foreign intervention. It's not going to be all that easy to restore order — particularly, in people's heads — but at the end of it all Poland will get what we've got. They will remove the extremist elements of Solidarity from public life, and replace the Party leaders who were responsible for the faults of the past. Then, with a renewed Party leadership, a more tranquil and calm society will be able to set out on the road of prosperity and of socialist national unity.

We had a narrow escape from the Polish crisis, like so many other close shaves in the past decade.



The Stalin statue in Budapest being toppled by the crowds at the start of the Hungarian Revolution.

We should be pleased to see with what manifest relief our propagandists reiterate that there had been no invasion, and we did not have to take part. We should be pleased that they are in no hurry to take a lead in the campaign of denunciation of the organised Polish workers movement. We should be pleased that when they mention the parallel with 1956, it's not the months of reckoning, and not the years of reprisals to which they refer, but the decade of reconciliation. All this is indeed something to be pleased about. But is it not self-deception? They are promising that the Polish



Hungarian insurrectionists holding a seized Soviet tank in Budapest.

people will receive the Hungarian style of consolidation as a gift from the soldiers. But surely we Hungarians, we only received it after three years of severe repression!

Three such years for the Poles. Who can guarantee that in the fourth year too everything will go according to the textbooks — that the prison doors will be opened, and the benumbed public will be tickled back to life by the anti-government jokes of political cabarets? For our part, we have our doubts. There are serious reasons for thinking that it will not be possible to repeat even the first three years — either there will be return to the search for a compromise between the Government, the Church and the independent trade union movement, or Poland will find herself stuck in the mud. Meanwhile, the dragging on of the Polish crisis threatens our peace as well. No, by no means have we escaped it.

Let us explain why.

HUNGARY IN 1957

In October 1956 the three main pillars of the old state power came crashing down. The army fell apart, the security police — the AVH — were abolished, and the Party disbanded itself. Then after the armed resistance and organised political protest had been crushed, everything had to be started again from the beginning. This meant an enormous amount of organisational work for the leadership, but it also gave them a free hand. It would have been in vain for the members of the new security forces to try to impose a policy of their own; the government was not dependent on them, but directly subordinate to the Soviet leaders. Nor were the faction struggles within the Party able to spread to an uncontrollable degree; the two extreme factions had already by the end of 1956 lost their national leaders. And finally, there was no need to carry out a purge of Party workers — whoever wanted to was free to join the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party; those who didn't want to, were free to remain outside.

A political void gaped on the other side as well. The democratic organs that had arisen spontaneously in the days of October and November didn't survive the blows struck against them. In the spring of 1957 the Government was facing a defeated people, who had nothing to fall back on. They didn't have any leaders to whom they could remain loyal, nor any organisational traditions or symbols to which they could remain faithful. It was thus relatively easy for the authorities to isolate their remaining active opponents from the larger part of the population.

It was even easier for them since, besides the terror, they also had more 'positive inducements' to bring into play. Of course they would punish the slightest murmur of discontent. But those who kept quiet would not get into any trouble. They were not forced to make public repentance, nor to sign professions of allegiance. They did not have to display enthusiasm at meetings, or to voluntarily undertake unpaid work. Conditions noticeably improved and wage levels rose. The assistance received from the Soviet Union, China and Eastern Europe was sufficient to make up for the two months' loss of production, sufficient indeed to give a new start to the economy as well. Anyone who had managed to avoid imprisonment or worse, could now feel he was living better than before. This came as a pleasant surprise since everybody had believed that the defeat of the revolution would lead to a return to Stalinism, to the indiscriminate terror, the ceaseless political mobilisation and the economy of starvation.

So the majority soon came to acquiesce in the inevitable, and to turn their attention to their private lives. As for the minority, they had to slowly recognise the fact that they didn't represent anyone. In 1960 it was purely and simply up to the state leadership, to what extent they would slacken the reins. Everybody knew that concessions were not being made from weakness, but from magnanimity.



A crowd in Budapest at the start of the Revolution: the placard on the left says, 'We won't tolerate provocateurs within our ranks', the one on the right says, 'Polish-Hungarian Friendship', the picture below is a portrait of Imre Nagy.

POLAND AT THE START OF 1982

Anyone who remembers the winter of 1956, will be surprised at the speed with which order has been restored in Poland. In the course of three hours almost the entire staff of Solidarity was interned — at least five thousand people. Within three weeks the larger strikes and street disturbances were brought to an end. This is certainly true. But it only goes to show just how much more efficient the machinery of repression can be, when it acts on home ground and according to a carefully prepared operational plan.

At the same time there is a high price to be paid for this initial advantage. Once an army intervenes in politics, it is not so easy for it to return to its narrower profession. And it was not at the civil regime's command that the Polish officer corps brought in the state of emergency. It seized the 'leading role' from a Party apparatus that had proved itself incapable of governing, and it is now, it that has the last word even in internal Party struggles. It decides what sort of people will be expelled, dismissed or forced to resign, and what sort will be advanced. It is hard to imagine that the Party that is being reorganised under the supervision of army officers will be able in the foreseeable future to free itself from the tutelage of the military.

On the other hand, the army will not find it so easy to free itself from the Party that is wearing itself out in factional struggles. Unless it accepts the responsibility of disbanding the party, it will have to carry the burden of its continuing existence — assuming the tasks of purging the Party membership and dealing with the internal struggles that are ravaging the apparatus. And then comes the second burden — the security organs. Every source of information is unanimous that the repression of the strikes and demonstrations was carried out by special security forces and not by regular troops. Those on whom the maintenance of order at work and in public places depends, are a very powerful force in the state.

It is nevertheless our opinion that the greatest problems for the ruling military council are created not by its partners but by its opponents — the workers. We are not deluding ourselves. We know that the authorities hold some very strong cards in their hands. They can count on the masses becoming exhausted. Already towards the end of the summer it was common knowledge that many people had grown weary of the ceaselessly recurring and apparently pointless trials of force. They can count on the psychological shock effect of the state of emergency. Up until mid-December the workers believed they were invincible. Now they have found out that the state is the stronger, as it dares to deploy the instruments of coercion against them. Until now they had taken it for granted that once having straightened their backs, they could never again be brought down. But now they have forced to yield by the dozen to the harsh threat — either abandon Solidarity or find yourself out in the street!

But is it sufficient for a repeat of the Hungarian 1957 to make use of people's weaknesses, uncertainties and despair? One thing is certain — in 1957 they did not make use only of them. But the other means that the Hungarian Government then had at its disposal are not now available to the Polish military council. They don't have the means of arranging a pleasant surprise for the population that is braced for the worst.

Firstly, because today 'the worst' means something different than it did then. Stalinism is a thing of the distant past. People now make their comparisons with the 1970s, when there were scarcely any political prisoners in Poland and when they didn't fire on the workers. It's improbable that anyone would now feel relieved just by the fact that they haven't been interned, even though they haven't done anything. On the other hand it's not enough not to have done anything to avoid being expelled from the Party (if one was a Party member) or to avoid being blackmailed into repudiating Solidarity (whether or not one was a member of Solidarity). Secondly, living conditions far from improving are, according to official forecasts, going to get even worse. They have frozen the savings of the population, they promise substantial price rises, are trying to restore the six-day week and introduce a general duty to public work. At the same time they prepare people for a further deterioration in food supplies and for large scale unemployment.

All this is all the more cause for concern to the authorities as today's Polish society feels itself nowhere near so morally abandoned as did Hungarian society in 1957. It's no small thing that day after day in the churches the worshippers hear sermons condemning the repressive measures — but that's not what we're thinking of now. It's rather the fact that Solidarity can't be removed from the body of society by a single and well-aimed blow, in the way in which it was possible for the Central Workers Council of Greater Budapest to be defeated in December 1956. Almost ten million Poles feel themselves linked to Solidarity by their memory of a year and a half of common struggles. Solidarity's members have had the opportunity to train themselves in the practice of united action, and to put to the test their loyalty to the organisation. They have their own emblems, songs and even memorials. They have leaders.

The best chance for the military regime would have been if on 13 December Walesa had appeared on the TV screens to enjoin the workers to keep calm, and to inform them that he was negotiating with the authorities. But Walesa would not negotiate without his colleagues, with guards standing at his back. The workers loyal to Solidarity understood — there's no deal, we must hold out.

No, the authorities have not defeated their opponents, but they have most certainly and finally secured their own isolation. They have forced themselves into the role of occupiers, and their supporters into the role of collaborators.

BRAZILIAN MODEL?

But maybe this is all one and the same to the generals. This way or that, they are compelled to bring in unpopular measures. Everybody knows that the key to consolidation is to get the economy back on its feet, and only the most relentless shock therapy could shake up the deranged Polish economy. This, however, would require either a very stable political consensus or the strictest restraining of dissatisfactions. Until the living stan-



Artillery in the hands of the Hungarian revolutionaries in Budapest; the Hungarian flag has the symbol of the Stalinist state in the middle cut out.

dards of the mid-1970s are reached once again, there is no way that the restraints could be relaxed. But once these standards are restored, then there is every reason to believe that the population will acquiesce in the regime.

The mistake is an understandable one, and one that occurs to many people. But it has one flaw. To give a new start to the Polish economy it won't be enough to raise prices, to reduce the amount of money in circulation, to tighten up the discipline of production, to create temporary unemployment. At least two further conditions have to be fulfilled, and both of them would require at least the appearance of social harmony.

The first condition is the introduction of far-reaching decentralising reforms, to ensure that over the long term economic growth will correspond better both to domestic and foreign economic realities. But the legal embodiments of enterprise autonomy, the councils of self-management, have already been suspended because their members were chosen under the influence of Solidarity. If Solidarity is finally forced underground, then they will either have to abandon the entire system of self-management, or operate it by means of puppet bodies directed from above. Whichever solution comes to prevail, the autonomy of the enterprises will have been totally destroyed, though this would have been difficult to avoid in any case owing to the disastrous shortages of materials and parts.

The second, more short-term condition for an economic upswing is for Poland to be granted a rescheduling of her debt repayments, and also substantial further credits from her western partners. It seems that those who planned the state of emergency seriously counted on the foreign exchange prospects of the Polish state, far from getting worse, clearly improving in the new situation. Their expectations were not entirely without foundation. The western world of finance had in the final months been calling ever more impatiently for a return to order, and for a tightening of the reins over the economic forces that had been released. Leading politicians — such as Kreisky and Brandt — clearly laid the blame for the Polish economic decline on the workers, and they couldn't ex-

press loudly enough their fear that the thoughtless demands of Solidarity were endangering European security. Let us leave aside for the moment the question whether this charge was valid — we shouldn't expect people like this to see anything other than dangerous anarchy in the class struggles of the Polish workers. But

they certainly should have reckoned that the partisans of a military solution would take encouragement from their declarations.

They must have reckoned on it. It is our impression that, sometime towards the end of the summer, the majority of western governments came to believe that there was no chance for co-existence between the Party and Solidarity, while they feared that a possible victory by Solidarity would catastrophically upset the world balance of power and endanger the stability of the international monetary system. They themselves drew the sad conclusion — the most the west could do was to choose in what form it was going to swallow the destruction of the Polish social movement. The military takeover of power appeared the lesser evil — presuming, of course, that it could succeed in maintaining the appearance that the army had saved the Poles from a Soviet invasion, and that the aim was to salvage as much as was possible, in a country living in the shadow of the Soviet Union, from the reforms.

It was the misfortune of the practitioners of *realpolitik* that the electrician from Gdansk and his colleagues were not possessed with quite so much statesmanlike wisdom as them. Their inflexible behaviour forced the military regime to openly assume its real mission — the smashing of Solidarity. And this is a role it will not be able to gracefully mask with the offer of superficial concessions. Perhaps the outward normalisation of life will be sufficient to bring about a lifting of the — primarily American — economic sanctions, sanctions which would not in any case be particularly successful.

It is possible that in the end the western banks, concerned for their money, will grant the requested rescheduling of debt repayments. The regime may also succeed in securing further small trade credits. But it will now require a very real change before the western governments will go so far as to dig deep into the pockets of their electors to produce the vast sum that would be required to restore order to the Polish economy. And the reserved behaviour of the governments can only influence the private banks to act with caution.

LET US THINK OVER THE CONSEQUENCES!

The largest country in Eastern Europe seems doomed to a long drawn-out recession. Amid the economic ruins an illegal workers movement struggles for survival with an illegitimate regime. Can we really expect Hungarian domestic policies to remain isolated from these events? Might we not expect the Polish experience to have a wider impact, and the political influence of the armed forces to be on the increase elsewhere too? What would happen if for instance, under the influence of the Polish crisis, there should be a further decline in East-West trade? And where might it lead if the Comecon countries were to find themselves forced, to one extent or another, to stand in for Poland's western suppliers and creditors? Don't let us forget that this burden would fall on countries that are themselves struggling with serious economic difficulties. The pace of growth is falling dangerously everywhere, and the trade in goods between the Comecon countries themselves is seriously declining, while their foreign indebtedness weakens their position in Western markets. Several countries have seen a return to rationing and permanent queuing, and in almost all of them inflation has speeded up.

If we were lovers of the old-time slogans of the Communist International, we could now triumphantly announce that the proclamation of the state of emergency marks not the end of the Polish crisis, but the beginning of the generalised crisis of the East European system. But we don't take pleasure in such rejoicing. The Polish renewal process held out the promise that the threatening crisis could be avoided. We were living in hope of a compromise solution, and the model began to take shape before our eyes — the Party would accept a necessary restriction on its leading role, while in return the society would consciously practise self-restraint and accept the leading role of the Party. Within the parameters of the deal a common agreement would be reached on a strategy to pro-

mote the economy, one that the population would accept as its own, voluntarily accepting the temporary restraint implied by it. We are still not far enough removed from the events. We are not yet able to judge just where the attempt went wrong, but we have to face up to the fact that it failed. And it is no consolation to know that the Hungarian-style consolidation is itself also doomed to failure. How could we take pleasure in the afflictions that await the Polish people, and the others who will share their fate in Eastern Europe? Even if we knew that from their sufferings 'a

more beautiful world' would be born, even then we wouldn't have any cause to rejoice. But we don't know that, and we don't even know whether we may not once more have to start out from the very beginning, as after 1956 and after 1968, or whether after 1981 something will remain on which it will be possible to build and continue to move forward.

For us who started this paper before December 1981, we will each have much to think over.

25 Years Later — New Light on 1956

By Bill Lomax

(While the bitter struggle continues in Poland, many are looking to previous crackdowns in Eastern Europe in order to clarify their assessment of what may happen in Poland. We are thus publishing two pieces below comparing the fate of the Hungarian revolution with the situation in Poland after the coup. They provide new information on the 1956 events and re-examine key aspects of the repression in Hungary in the light of the recent Polish crackdown.)

For almost a quarter of a century the subject of 1956 was a taboo in Hungary. Finally in 1981, the year of its 25th anniversary, the Hungarian media for the first time spoke publicly of the revolution — with a series of articles in the Party daily *Népszabadság* and documentary programmes on radio and television. Yet far from presenting a more balanced view of the events, the official interpretation remained that of 25 years ago — the revolution was presented as a counter-revolutionary conspiracy dominated by reactionary forces. In truth the media coverage was not really about 1956 at all, but about 1981 — a warning to the Hungarian people against following the Polish example which, it was implied, could only result in a similar tragedy to that which had befallen them in 1956. Since then, it is suggested, under the wise and benevolent rule of János Kádár, the Hungarians have learned the art of compromise, and won a degree of affluence and relative liberty which they would be rash to abandon for the sake of broader political ideals.

Since the military takeover of December 1981 in Poland the Western press too has made repeated comparisons with Hungary after 1956, expressing the hope that Jaruzelski may become 'a second Kádár', able to teach the Poles to live with the realities of their geo-political situation. Jaruzelski and Rakowski, they would have us believe, are well-meaning and liberal politicians committed to reform — it is only the hotheadedness of the Poles and the stubbornness of Solidarity's leaders that prevents the attainment of a settlement that would enable the most important achievements of 1980-81 to be maintained.

After 1956 too, Kádár had expressed his commitment to the aims of the revolution, and his willingness to work together with its popular leader Imre Nagy. Kádár however double-crossed Imre Nagy, connived in his kidnapping from the Yugoslav Embassy, and though he had publicly declared that no

action would be taken against Nagy for his part in the revolution, he finally acquiesced in his trial and execution too.

Moreover Kádár's 'consolidation' was bought at the price of over 2,000 Hungarian insurgents executed, and tens of thousands more imprisoned and interned. The prospect of Poland following the example of Kádár's Hungary after 1956 is thus not as attractive as many Western journalists would have us believe.

Nevertheless, new information that has recently come to light concerning the course of the Hungarian revolution and its suppression points to a number of interesting comparisons with the present Polish situation.

THE SOVIETS SEEK RAKOSI'S ADVICE

During the course of the Hungarian revolution the Soviet authorities asked Mátyás Rákosi, the former Stalinist leader of Hungary who had gone into exile in the Soviet Union after his fall from power in June 1956, for his opinion of János Kádár as the possible new leader of Hungary.

Rákosi replied that Kádár was indeed the most suitable person.

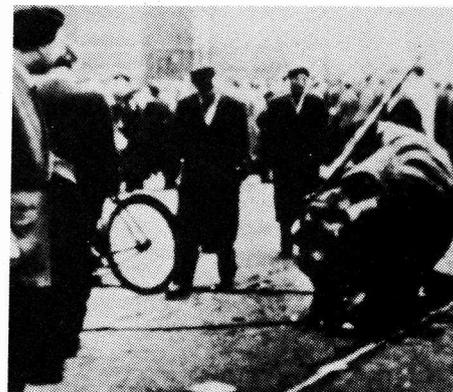
The Soviets, however, had misgivings — pointing out that Kádár was still a member of the Imre Nagy Government.

To this Rákosi replied that that was no problem. They should simply ask Kádár what he would rather be: the leader of a victorious revolution, or the head of a defeated counter-revolution? There would be no doubt as to his answer.

HUNGARY 1956 — POLAND 1981

When martial law was proclaimed in Poland on 13 December 1981 this was almost 25 years to the day since the Kádár regime in Hungary had declared martial law and introduced measures of internment and summary jurisdiction. Even earlier, however, the Communist Party authorities in Hungary had taken initiatives to act against the revolution by force of arms and to install a military regime.

The Hungarian revolution broke out on 23



Stalin mingling with the populace.

October 1956. The next morning the former Stalinist András Hegedüs was replaced as Prime Minister by Imre Nagy, and the following day 25 October the party leader Ernő Gerö was replaced by János Kádár, a former leader of the Party who had himself been imprisoned under the Stalinist Rákosi regime. But despite these changes, up until 28 October the Party line remained that a counter-revolution had broken out that must be put down by force.

When Imre Nagy agreed to become Prime Minister, most of his former followers regarded this as a capitulation. His closest supporters, Géza Losonczy and Ferenc Donáth, refusing to accept their appointment to the Central Committee, went to the Party headquarters only on 25 October, and then only to hand in their resignations. It was in fact János Kádár, just elected First Party Secretary, who persuaded them to withhold their resignations and remain to represent their point of view in the Central Committee. This they did at its session on 26 October where they argued that what had occurred was not a counter-revolution but a democratic uprising of the Hungarian people. In a near lynch-atmosphere they were condemned as traitors in heated speeches by Gerö, Hegedüs, György Marosán and István Kovács. Their only support came from the former editor of the Party daily *Szabad Nép*, Marton Horváth. (Imre Nagy was not present; János Kádár did not express any opinion.) The prevalent view condemned the uprising as a counter-revolution, and though Gerö and Hegedüs had relinquished their positions as Party Secretary and Prime Minister, they continued to dominate the proceedings. In this situation Losonczy and Donáth saw no point in taking further part in the Central Committee meetings, and left the Party headquarters at noon the following day, 27 October.¹

Meanwhile, preparations were going ahead for a joint Soviet-Hungarian military action to defeat the revolution by force of arms. Already on the night of 23 October the Central Committee had set up a special Military Committee presided over by Antal Apró, and including Ferenc Münnich, Fehér Lajos, Imre Mezö and László Földes.² The Committee was based in the Ministry of Defence (where Kádár also spent considerable time during these days) but closely coordinated its activities with both the Ministry of Interior (from 25 October headed by Ferenc Münnich) and the Budapest City Party Headquarters (headed in practice by Imre Mezö) in the endeavour to organise a force to act against the insurgents. To this end a group of political officers and state security officials who had been undergoing special training in Moscow returned to Budapest on 27 October under the command of General Gyula Uszta.³ That night the Military Committee drew up plans for a joint Soviet-Hungarian action to be made against the main insurgent strongholds at dawn on 28 October. These plans, however, involved more than just a wiping-out of the main insurgent centres. As the present head of the Central Committee's foreign affairs section, János Berecz, has recorded, 'According to the plan: the military would temporarily assume power, military commissars would take command of the regiments. After order had been established and the insurgent groups liquidated, a new government would be formed.'⁴

This initial plan to establish a military junta was brought to an end when Imre Nagy got wind of it and threatened to resign as Prime Minister if the action against the insurgent strongholds was carried out. 28 October also saw a fundamental political change within the Central Committee. The Soviets now decided to back Imre Nagy and Kádár and withdrew their support from Gerö and Hegedüs who, along with other hard-line Stalinists like the former Interior Minister László Pires and the Minister of Defence István Bata, were by nightfall aboard a Soviet plane bound for Moscow.

Even despite this apparent political turn-about the plans for military action against the revolution were still not finally shelved. Preparations were continuing in the Budapest City Party headquarters for a regrouping of forces loyal to the old regime, and Imre Mezö had further talks towards this end with Dezsö Nemes on 28 October and with Kádár on 29 October.⁵ Finally on the evening of 29 October, according to the recent testimony of one of its members, the Military Committee made a last attempt to bring its efforts to fruition and presented the Politburo with 'a plan for the proclamation of a military dictatorship' as the last chance for saving socialism.⁶ By now, however, the new leadership had even less time for such ideas, and Imre Nagy did not even receive the delegation.

At this point the prospect of a 'Jaruzelski-style' solution to the Hungarian situation seems to have been abandoned. The revolution was still to be repressed — but by the Soviet intervention of 4 November 1956.

THE FATE OF IMRE NAGY

When Soviet military forces returned to crush the revolution on 4 November 1956, Imre Nagy and his closest colleagues took refuge in the Yugoslav Embassy. They had not, however, asked for asylum; they had been offered it, and in rather unusual circumstances.

We now know from Khrushchev's memoirs, and from those of Veljko Micunovic, Tito's ambassador in Moscow, that Khrushchev and Malenkov flew to Yugoslavia on 2 November 1956 where they held secret talks on the island of Brioni with Tito, Kardelj and Rankovic throughout that night.⁷ The Soviets informed the Yugoslav leaders of their plans to invade Hungary and crush the revolution, and also discussed with them who should be the new Hungarian leader. (While Khrushchev's first choice would have been Münnich, Tito prevailed upon him to accept Kádár.) The following night, on the eve of the Soviet intervention, the Yugoslav ambassador in Budapest, Dalibor Soldatic, received a telegram in Tito's name, but signed by Rankovic, instructing him to encourage Imre Nagy and his entourage to take refuge without delay in the Yugoslav Embassy.

The Imre Nagy group accepted the offer of asylum, but at noon on 4 November a second telegram arrived from Rankovic, asking them to formally resign their ministerial posts and recognise the new government formed by János Kádár. Soldatic also asked Imre Nagy to sign a letter of resignation predated to 3 November, which would have helped legitimise the Kádár Government formed on 4 November. Imre Nagy categorically rejected these requests, declaring that if they were the condition of his asylum he would leave the Embassy immediately. After further consultation with Belgrade the Yugoslavs assured Nagy that there were no such conditions to his asylum, but over the following days they continued to put pressure on him to collaborate with the new regime.

Approaches were first made through Yugoslav journalists on behalf of the Hungarian Government representative József Sándor; then in mid-November Dobrivoje Vidic, the Yugoslav deputy Foreign Minister and former ambassador in Moscow, came to Budapest in an effort to negotiate between Nagy and Kádár. The proposals put to the Nagy group were for them to formally resign their posts and leave the Yugoslav Embassy of their own free will, to recognise the Kádár Government and accept posts within it (Imre Nagy it was suggested should become Minister of Agriculture). Nagy and his closest colleagues continued to reject these proposals, but this appears to have led to a conflict between them and the three veteran Hungarian Communists, Zoltán Vas, Zoltán Szántó and Georg Lukács, who were more amenable to reaching an understanding with the new regime. Consequently, on 18 November Vas, Szántó and Lukács, together with their wives, accepted Kádár's verbal offer of safe-conduct and left the Embassy of their own free will — only to be seized on the street by Soviet forces and

taken direct to the Soviet military headquarters at Mátyásföld. The very same night they received a visit from Kádár's minister of interior Ferenc Münnich — who expressed his surprise to find them there!⁸

Back at the Yugoslav Embassy, Nagy and his colleagues were assured by the Yugoslavs that Lukács and Szántó had safely returned to their homes, that Zoltán Vas was already at work on ministerial duties in the Parliament. On 21 November Kádár repeated his verbal offer of safe-conduct to the Nagy group in a written note to the Yugoslav Government. The next day 22 November Nagy and his colleagues accompanied by their wives and children left their asylum in the Embassy and boarded a bus provided by the Hungarian authorities to take them to their homes. The bus, however, took them straight to the Soviet headquarters at Mátyásföld from where the following day, together with Vas, Szántó and Lukács, they were flown to Romania. Subsequently the Yugoslavs protested indignantly against this breaking of their agreement with the Hungarians, while Kádár's supporters suggested that he too had acted in good faith and without prior knowledge of the abduction. The circumstances of the earlier abduction of Vas, Szántó and Lukács on 18 November, however, make it clear beyond question that both the Yugoslav and the Hungarian authorities were fully aware of the fate awaiting the Nagy group when they abandoned their asylum.

22 November also saw the arrival in Budapest of a high-ranking Romanian delegation headed by the Party leader Georgiu Dej and the prime minister Chiva Stoica. Following their negotiations with Kádár, a further member of the delegation Walter Roman, who had known Imre Nagy from the Moscow emigration, visited Nagy at Mátyásföld and appealed to him to make a public statement of support for the Kádár Government, and to accept temporary asylum in Romania — both of which requests Nagy categorically refused. The next morning, 23 November, Ferenc Münnich held separate meetings with individual members of Nagy's entourage, asking them to break with Nagy and join forces with Kádár — appeals which they also firmly rejected. Following the failure of these approaches Nagy and his colleagues, together with their families, were flown that night — against their will — to Romania.

In Romania the Nagy group was held in the custody of Romanian guards at the Communist Party holiday resort (a former royal palace) by the side of Lake Snagov outside Bucharest: Nagv. Donáth and Losonczy being held in separate villas separate from the rest of the company.⁹ On their second day there they were called together by Romanian party officials to discuss their opinions but, with the sole exception of Zoltán Szántó who from the start denounced the rest as "counter-revolutionaries", they insisted that what had happened in Hungary had been a popular revolution, they opposed the Soviet intervention and protested against their forcible removal to Romania. Szántó, Vas and finally Lukács were taken away, though Lukács was the only one permitted to return to Budapest early in 1957.

Subsequently the former Romanian ambassador to Budapest, Malnaseanu, made further efforts to persuade several of Nagy's colleagues to recognise the Kádár regime and return to public life in Hungary but — apart from Szántó, Vas and Lukács — all adamantly rejected such approaches. Finally, in late January or early February 1957, Kádár's close henchman, Gyula Kallai, made a personal visit to Imre Nagy to ask him once again to make a public statement declaring that he had resigned on 3 November 1956 — a request which Nagy again refused.

During these months in Romania, Imre Nagy worked incessantly on writing his memoirs and his personal account of the events of 1956 — writings which the Hungarian authorities admit to exist but have never dared to release. He also wrote strong letters of protest to the Central Committees of the French and Italian Communist Parties, letters which he asked the Romanian party authorities to convey to them, but which never reached their destinations.

From the beginning of February 1957 the conditions in which the prisoners were held gradually worsened. At first they had been treated almost as VIPs, provided with good food, alcohol and cigarettes, even taken out yachting on the lake. Now these privileges were gradually withdrawn, and finally on 14 April 1957 they were arrested by Hungarian state security police and taken back to Budapest in preparation for their subsequent trial.

The trial of Imre Nagy and his comrades was held in Budapest in June 1958. Imre Nagy, his minister of defence Pál Maléter, and his colleagues József Szilágyi and Miklós Gimes were condemned to death and executed. Geza Losonczy had already died in prison. The former Budapest chief of police, Sándor Kopácsi, received a life sentence. Ferenc Donáth was sentenced to

12, Ferenc Jánosi to 8, Zoltán Tildy to 6, and Miklós Vásárhelyi to 5 years' imprisonment. The executions were carried out at dawn on 16 June 1958.

THE LENGTH OF MARTIAL LAW

The Hungarian Revolution was repressed not by the internal armed forces of the Hungarian state, but by a Soviet military invasion. It was at the point when the Soviet troops were withdrawn from action and returned to their barracks — in mid-December 1956 — that a martial law regime was introduced in Hungary.

The Kádár Government declared a state of emergency on 11 December 1956, following the banning of the Central Workers Council on 9 December. The further provisions of martial law, bringing in internment without trial and establishing special courts of summary jurisdiction, were introduced on 13 December 1956 — exactly 25 years to the day before the declaration of martial law in Poland in 1981. On 15 December the Soviet tank forces were withdrawn from Budapest's streets.

The dismantling of these extraordinary measures was a very long and slow process. The curfew was lifted on 1 May 1957, but summary judicial procedures remained in force for another six months and were abolished only on 3 November 1957. Internment, however, continued for over three years, and the last internment camps were only dissolved on 30 June 1960.

Following the defeat of the revolution, some tens of thousands of Hungarians were imprisoned or interned, and at least 2,000 insurgents executed. Death sentences for actions during the revolution were officially ended on 1 January 1960, but in fact some executions were still carried out after that

date, eg. that of the insurgent leader László Nickelsburg in 1961.

Partial amnesties were announced in 1959 and 1960, but these affected only small numbers of prisoners. Even the so-called 'general amnesty' of 1963 excluded several categories of prisoners from its terms, eg. all those convicted for murder (which included many of the street fighters), treason or espionage, and all those with any previous convictions. Thus several hundred remained in prison after 1963 and were released only towards the end of the 1960s or, in some cases, only at the beginning of the 1970s.

Notes.

1. This account of the Central Committee meeting is based on personal conversations in Budapest with Ferenc Donáth.
 2. László Földes, 'Ahogy én láttam 1956-ot' (1956 as I saw it), *História, Budapest, 1982, no.1, pp.22-23.*
 3. Péter Gosztonyi, *1956: A magyar forradalom története* (1956: The history of the Hungarian revolution), Munich, 1981, p.109.
 4. János Berecz, *Ellenforradalom tollal és fegyverrel* (Counterrevolution with the pen and the sword), Budapest, 1969, 1981, p. 104.
 5. Iván Szenes, *A Kommunista Párt Újjászervezése Magyarországon* (The reorganisation of the Communist Party in Hungary), Budapest, 1976, 1981, p. 31.
 6. Földes, op. cit.
 7. *Khrushchev Remembers*, London, 1971, pp.378-392; Veljko Micunovic, *Moscow Diary*, London, 1980, pp.123-142.
 8. The fact that Vas, Szántó and Lukács left before the others on 18 November is recorded in the Yugoslav Government communiqué issued on 22 November and reported in the Hungarian press on 23 November 1956. The fact that they were seized immediately by the Soviets has been established in the course of personal interviews conducted in Budapest.
 9. Zoltán Vas, *Viszontagságos életem* (My eventful life), Budapest, 1980, pp. 496, 527 and 547.
- Other information about the course of events both in the Yugoslav Embassy and in Romania is based on conversations held in Budapest with survivors from the Imre Nagy group.

Imre Nagy's Last Directive

(Imre Nagy, the leader of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956, executed by the Soviet authorities in Romania in June 1958, refused to repudiate the revolution or acquiesce in the Soviet invasion. Dramatic proof of his courage is now given in the remarkable letter which we publish here for the first time in English. We also publish a note by Ferenc Donath, one of Nagy's closest collaborators in the Hungarian Communist Party and a leading figure in the Hungarian Revolution. Donath was also seized by the Soviet military, but was not executed and was eventually amnestied in March 1960. Both the Nagy letter and the note by Donath first appeared in Beszelo (News from Inside) No. 2, samizdat, Budapest, April 1982. Translation by Bill Lomax. See the article by Bill Lomax above on the fate of Imre Nagy.)

FERENC DONATH

Excerpt from a letter to the historian Miklós Molnár, 20 June 1978.

I would like to mention a few little-known facts.

On 24 November 1956* at Mátyásföld where we were held in the custody of the Soviet army, but kept separated from one another, I and others were brought one at a time to talk to Ferenc Münnich.

Münnich, the number two in the new leadership, was the number one trustee and confidante of the Soviet Government. He appealed to me to break ranks with Imre Nagy, to support the new government and take part in the leadership. The members of the so-called Imre Nagy group, those who were later put on trial, rejected Münnich's offer, despite the fact that they had to take into consideration not only their own most uncertain future, but that of their wives and small children who were also held in custody.



Ferenc Donáth, pictured this year in Budapest.

In Romania I was also visited several times by Malnaseanu (the former Romanian ambassador to Budapest) who came with the authority of the Hungarian leadership and appealed to me to return to Hungarian public life. He obviously made the same approach to others as well. No-one, no-one amongst those who were later brought to trial, accepted the offer, even though they can have been in no doubt that a trial was being prepared against them.

*I think this date is mistaken, and should be 23 November, the day after the Nagy group were abducted from the Yugoslav Embassy. (B.L.)

23 November 1956

I am in agreement with the reply you gave to Münnich. Late last night I received a visit from Walter Roman from Bucharest. He had flown to Budapest yesterday. He came to see me on the authority of both Georgiu Dej and János Kádár. We had a heated discussion for some 1½-2 hours about the nature of the Hungarian events, in the course of which I informed him about the happenings of the last few days, among other things about the Yugoslav-Hungarian agreement, which he did not know about.

The purpose of his visit was, in brief, as follows: the situation in Hungary is exceptionally serious. I should do all I can to help in sorting it out. The Romanian and Hungarian Party leaders, Dej and Kádár, want me

to withdraw from Hungarian political and social life for 3-4 months, and to leave the country for this period of time. G. Dej suggested I should go to Romania, where they would do everything to make life comfortable for me. In my detailed reply, which I asked to be conveyed to G. Dej and Kádár, I declared that I will not leave Hungary of my own free will, that they will have to take me by force, and that I am not prepared to make any form of public statement. I protested most strongly about the events of yesterday, and I declared that I will not make any public political statement until I can do so as a free and independent person.

(Convey this message to the other comrades!!)

POLAND

Solidarity Debates Strategy

(Since the coup last December, the rebuilding of Solidarity has gone hand in hand with an intense debate within the movement on the whole range of political problems thrown up by the drastically new conditions. Amongst the most important issues we could mention the following: a) the scope of Solidarity's defeat: is it a strategic, long-term set back involving a slow rebuilding of the self-confidence of the working class, or was it purely a tactical set-back, as was implied by the slogan, "The Winter is Yours but the Spring will be Ours"? b) Will the impact of the deepening economic crisis be to force the workers back into a desperate individual struggle for existence, or will it be to produce a new upsurge of collective action against the government? c) What is the character of the present regime? d) Should Solidarity adopt a strategy geared to a national uprising, or should its strategy involve a gradual build-up of independent centres of social initiative that will eventually force the regime to engage in a political interplay and dialogue with various social groups? e) should Solidarity seek to build a strongly centralised underground movement or should co-ordination remain very loose? f) what should be Solidarity's minimum programme of aims: should it be release of internees, an amnesty for those jailed for political opposition to martial law, an end to martial law and the relegalisation of Solidarity in a more restricted framework? Or should it be the full restoration of the right to form independent social organisations of all kinds, as existed de facto before 13 December? g) what stance should Solidarity adopt towards the negotiations now taking place between the government and the Church over the future shape of Poland's unions and the relaxation of martial law?

The following documents put most of these questions into sharp focus.

Jacek Kuron was a central inspirer of the KOR (Workers Defence Committee) and as early as 1976 he launched the idea of independent social movements on the lines of Solidarity and Rural Solidarity. He became an adviser to Solidarity's National Commission after August 1980. Zbigniew Bujak, a young worker from the Ursus Tractor factory on the outskirts of Warsaw whose workers played a central role in the protests against price increases in June 1976, became a leader of an unofficial group of activists in the plant in the late 1970s. When Solidarity was formed Bujak became the chairperson of the Warsaw regional organisation, known as the Masowsze region. He became one of the most authoritative national leaders of Solidarity during its period of open existence. Wiktor Kulerski became deputy chairperson of the Masowsze region. Zbigniew Kowalewski was the inspirer of the tactic of the 'active strike' which became a very popular idea in the last months of Solidarity's open existence, and was a leader of Solidarity in Lodz. Kuron is now in internment, Bujak and Kulerski are living in clandestinity and playing a leading role in the Solidarity resistance movement, Zbigniew Kowalewski is playing a leading role amongst Solidarity exiles in the West.

The first three texts were made available to Labour Focus in English translation by the Information Centre for Polish Affairs; the English translation of Kuron's reply was taken from International Viewpoint, Vol. 1 No. 9, 21 June 1982, which also contains a very informative article by Jacqueline Allio on the wider debate within Solidarity. Zbigniew Kowalewski's article was made available by the author and translated by Patrick Camiller.)

Propositions on Solving an Insoluble Situation

By Jacek Kuron

1. THE ECONOMY

Anyone can see what condition it's in. If we were to accept that the war was started to save the economy, as we are assured by those who started it, then it is a case of saying the operation was successful but nevertheless the patient died. According to the *official* publication of GUS (the Main Office of Statistics) in January, which was the first quiet month of our war, production fell by 13.6 per cent in comparison with the 'strikers' January of 1981, and by 17.5 per cent when matched with production in December 1981. This is when we have had forced labour on six 'free' Saturdays since martial law. If this trend continues then in five months there will be drastic results. The GUS reports can easily be improved in the future but can we say the same for production? Can its decline be halted? This can be answered by stating the reasons for the economic disaster.

There is much talk of the depression of the workers, the blockade on information due to the war, and the impact of the West's sanctions. The communication clamp-down has been breached and partially lifted, and Western sanctions are only just beginning to bite. These reasons for the economic crisis are so obvious that they overshadow the most important one, which is that the economic crisis didn't start in December 1981, nor in August 1980. Those brave enough to speak out foresaw its inevitability in 1976. After August 1980 all interested sides agreed that social and economic life was being crippled by enforced centralised planning and administration. The source of the whole illness can be attributed to the fact

that those most involved in social cooperation had no influence on either its aims or directions. The projected reforms of the state and the economy were to alter this.

Meanwhile 13 December saw the introduction of militarisation of all levels of administration, no matter what the declarations or even intentions of the initiators of the coup. It meant the subordination of all areas of social and economic life to orders issuing from the central HQ. All levels of society are supposed to take orders, execute them, and report back on the situation. This may be good tactics in war but is fatal as regards social existence. The basic causes of the illness are consequently being exacerbated and threaten eventual death. Even if miracles happened, and Polish production became competitive and the West restored credits, we would merely arrive at a position similar to that of Gierek's era. Everything will be rapidly wasted, the faster the more militarised our life becomes.

2. SOCIETY

Society is at war. Those who declared war don't try to mystify the situation and pretend this is *not* a war against society. Thanks to the extraordinary self-discipline of the people we avoided bloodshed. But now we have a classical occupation with all its ingredients — censorship of mail, a curfew, massive raids, house searches, arrests, military tribunals, and the attitude that society bears common responsibility for what particular people do.

The only language the authorities use when speaking to the nation is that of violence, threats, and despairing appeals for calm. What have they achieved and what might they achieve? The despair and hatred of all people. The fear and submission of some. The determination and struggle of others. The authorities cannot depend on those who are terrorised since their submissiveness ends with the end of violence used against them. Those who are determined will fight, and the more energetically and cruelly they are repressed the more they will struggle. A ruined economy will bring poverty and starvation, and the greater will be the numbness of people determined to resist. The occupation forces should not have the illusion that any partition of Poland can succeed. Partitions do not destroy social and economic life, but occupation does.

Immediately after the last war the communists drew up and partially implemented a programme of complete Polish democracy, including that of the Polish Peasants' Party. The country was being rebuilt and the regained territories were being administered. These reasons explain why there was no state of war in Poland then, despite the existence of an armed underground movement against the new state. On the contrary, there was considerable evidence of democratic freedoms. If we consider Hungary after 1956 we see how ominous the situation is. There was considerable bloodshed, and those authorities in charge of social life lost control of the situation, and responsibility for what happened was taken from them.

Violence breeds violence. Those with little patience and less balanced views will resort to using what cuts both ways — terror. Terror ushers in further terror, and its growth cannot be halted by terror. He who sows the wind shall reap the whirlwind.

3. THE WHOLE SOVIET BLOC

The whole Soviet bloc was deeply shocked by the Polish events. The deadly illness of Poland's economy is most advanced here but similar symptoms show themselves throughout the bloc. Modernisation of the economy results in a natural growth in social expectations and increased participation in the international division of labour. Modernisation of the bloc's economies is essentially due to the emphasis on military growth. In weak economic conditions modernisation entails violent expenditure growth to achieve increased competitive efficiency, which constantly diminishes, as marginal returns become smaller. This is the basic reason for the increased dependence on Western finance and the consequent growth in social upheavals.

We know that the war in Poland started under pressure from the Soviet Union. Its leaders have good reason to fear that the Polish illness could be contagious. Clearly they have miscalculated. The sanctions imposed by the West have limited the possibilities of cooperation, without which the bloc's enemies cannot properly function. The burden of military expenditure, the increasingly expensive weapons, is too much.

Besides this, the ruin of Poland's economy has broken a vital link in the bloc's economic structure. The bloc's countries have to shoulder the burden of such policies, along with that of a growing crisis. The end of people's patience is already in sight. The empire is dying although it is still strong enough for a bloody encounter with Poland.

4. SHOULD POLAND WAIT FOR THE DEATH THROES OF THE EMPIRE?

With the previous empire in Eastern Europe, under the German occupation, the Czechs virtually waited for the end. However, that war was going on a foreign territory (with the considerable participation of the Czechs), and they all knew what they waited for. If there is a war now, it's in Poland, and the end of the empire is only a prophecy.

No appeals for calm will divert the young and hot-headed. They can only force them into terrorism if they are prevented from other forms of struggle. Appeals cannot diminish the bitter anger and despair, and this explosive tension could become a conflagration at any time. Poverty and violence are results of a war situation, and a health society will always reply to violence and violently imposed poverty by fighting against it. The only issue is what battlefield the fight will occur on. There are no other battlefields at present, other than Poland, and history teaches us that here an oppressor has gained peace only at the price of blood and ashes, and even then for one generation only.

Appeals even from the highest moral authorities, to desist from some types of resistance, will be heard only if they can also indicate some other forms of action which may lead to solutions of the problem. But the occupation eliminated all forms of peaceful activity, including efficient work. No-one can bring peace to Poland before the end of the occupation. It may be ended by the authorities coming to terms with the nation or by the nation abolishing the authorities. The latter will lead to our directly facing Soviet military power.



5. NATIONAL AGREEMENT

National agreement is a necessary condition for a peaceful life, and has to be based on an acceptance by all citizens of at least some fundamental values and aims. After August 1980 the Polish nation became unified as never before. The problems came when the Soviet threat was realised and the nation understood it had to relinquish some essential parts of its aspirations. We argued about what these had to be, or should be, and we attempted to reach a compromise with those in Poland who represented Soviet interests. For the sake of compromise Poles generally accepted the decisive role of such people. We asked only for social control over their actions, and for genuine representation of the Polish nation whenever vital decisions were made. Those people did not wish to compromise.

Instead of building a state with only a very slight democracy they destroyed the economy and civil administration with their anarchy. They fulfilled their ambitions when on 13 December 1981 they smashed any hopes of social compromise, a compromise between society and the ruling class, which is now unimaginable. Prolonging the occupation impels the rulers towards disaster. The Polish nation has a right to give the occupiers exactly what they deserve. However, the Church is opting for a compromise, and the Church is the highest moral authority in Poland. The attitude of the Church will be supported by the majority of Solidarity's leadership and intellectuals. Compromise is risky for the people in power but to continue the occupation is suicidal.

6. THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT

The resistance movement, well organised and widely based, is the only chance for Poles. Only such a movement can be party to a compromise, and only such a movement can hope to quell terrorism. If people in government refuse to support compromise, only a resistance movement can diminish the risk of Soviet intervention, an intervention which now would be the reply to any major social eruption. The occupying force's strength lies in the extent to which it can spread disinformation in society, and its ability to rapidly shift 'pacification' troops from one place to another. That is why we now should organise one central structure, and submit to it fully, with discipline. We must organise and build a competent system for the dispersal of information. But we must take into account the possibility that at any moment it can be neutralised, and this is why the concrete united aims of the movement and the methods to attain them must be generally known.

7. THE MOVEMENT'S ACTIVITY

The movement's activity, excluding publishing, is now limited to demonstrations and verbal resistance. It ranges from leafleting to painted wall slogans, through various collective manifestations of resistance, even strikes of varying lengths. Everything is significant since it adds morale to the nation as well as exerting continuous pressure on those in power who might possibly support moves towards compromise. The final means of such pressure, and the final chance for compromise, will be a general strike. We must state that such activities that are now happening are indications of the nation's will displayed to those who, with premeditation, acted against it.

But if we stay put with such activities and the government compromisers keep silent, we then face a disaster. In several weeks, perhaps a little earlier, the first, second, third or whichever local event will erupt from its limited nature into a national revolt. The occupation forces will probably be finished but at the cost of a threatened Soviet invasion. That is why the movement's leaders must prepare the nation for the most extreme concessions in seeking to compromise with the rulers, and for the rapid cessation

of the occupation through a common demonstration against it. I think such a demonstration may take the form of a simultaneous attack against all ruling and information centres in the country. It is necessary to make the authorities understand that they have a limited time to reach a settlement.

Bearing the worst possibilities in mind we must do our utmost now to make the Soviet leadership realise that with some small goodwill on their part a national accord in Poland (perhaps even constructed without the participation of the present leadership in Poland) would not disturb their

Positional Struggle

By Zbigniew Bujak

The key idea in Jacek Kuron's pronouncement is, in my view, expressed in this statement: 'If you don't want war, get ready for war'. This pronouncement is an important contribution to the discussion on the programme of action. Jacek Kuron is an outstanding pedagogue, an expert on social phenomena, who can accurately predict their outcome. Yet I disagree both with his assumptions and his conclusions.

His whole reasoning is based on the assumption that social outburst is inevitable — due to poverty, violence and lack of successful methods of action other than open confrontation. In my opinion people are generally aware of the fact that such an outburst would not solve any of the problems we are facing; on the contrary: it would create a very serious threat of a most brutal use of internal forces as well as of external intervention. Thus the high degree of self-awareness, discipline and social organisation offer at least a chance of avoiding an outburst.

The society responds to terror used by the authorities with other methods of resistance than violence. This should be our direction in working out a programme of action, we have to try all other lines of action before resorting to the ultimate option.

Therefore I think that it is futile to organise a resistance movement 'capable of destroying the occupation by means of an organised mass action'. Moreover, I think that such an enterprise is unrealistic: first of all because of the police and military state structure, well adapted to dealing with such organisations and liquidating them. Besides, the occupier speaks the same language and operates on his 'home ground' and this makes infiltration very easy for him. Moreover, we are surrounded by states with the same political system.

I would also like to question the argument that only a centrally organised resistance movement is able to stop the wave of terrorism. I think the opposite might in fact be true: once the movement is centralised, it needs tasks and if they are not numerous or attractive enough, the organisation might choose the path of terrorism. Within such a structure, once a spiral of terror is set in motion, it will quickly accelerate.

I support a decidedly decentralised movement, adopting different methods of action. Only such a diffuse and varied movement will be elusive and difficult to suppress. Its unity will be guaranteed by the common objectives: lifting of martial law, release of the interned and the arrested, restoration of the rights of unions and associations. I do not agree that a centralised underground organisation would — by means of the threat of a general strike or of an attack on power centres — be able to exert enough pressure on the advocates of compromise within the government to force them to work effectively towards an agreement. I believe that such a powerful threat would unite the government camp in its attempt to crush the movement completely. Only that section of the authorities would profit which would like to see an external intervention. And Moscow might be interested in an intervention if it meant a chance of eliminating all the 'trouble-makers' and 'enemies of socialism'. Such a chance would increase with the existence of a centralised movement of active resistance in Poland.

Now for the final argument against the idea of a centralised underground:

The Third Possibility

By Wiktor Kulerski

What will happen if the authorities decide that economic backwardness and unrest are less costly than a compromise? If local incidents do not lead to a national revolt which would overthrow the government? If the occupation becomes less spectacular, but lasts a long while yet?

History abounds in examples of long-lasting decay of authority and extreme social endurance, perhaps even greater in times of poverty and hunger. Therefore we should perhaps get ready for such a possibility: evolution and not revolution. But in what direction? This also depends on the society. Thus it is not the question of Jacek Kuron's alternative: com-

military interests, and would even encourage financial profit for the bloc. We also have to make it clear that their military intervention in Poland would be the Soviet Union's final act.

I don't claim that an organised demonstration, including a declaration of goodwill towards the USSR, would guarantee safety from that area, only that continuation of the occupation creates considerable dangers. For many years in my activity in the opposition I argued against all kinds of violence. It's my duty now to say that I consider preparation to eliminate the occupation through mass demonstrations is a minor necessary evil.

it would be very difficult to protect it and if it was to be smashed, such a defeat would mean yet another major blow to Solidarity and the hopes of our society. We cannot risk it.

To sum up: to build up the Solidarity movement as a monolithic organisation ready for a decisive and final struggle might create the danger of another attempt by the authorities to crush the nation with external forces. And even if we managed to avoid this, an external intervention would await us. Therefore I believe that we should adopt the principle of avoiding head-on clashes with the authorities, because the dangers are too great and our chances of success — as I have been trying to show — negligible.

I believe that — to use a military expression — positional struggle would be both efficient and safe. This is the form of resistance I would like to advocate.

Various social groups and circles must build up a resistance mechanism against the monopoly of the authorities in different spheres of life. Thanks to the existence of such a mass organisation as Solidarity', as well as independent rural, artisan and student unions, resistance might become so widespread that it would offer a chance of evolving an independent structure of social life.

In factories and other places of work this is first of all tantamount to the fight for the right to continue union activities. The only way is simply to continue such activity, that is to defend workers' rights by all means, including strikes (without strike-leaders). One of the most important aims in the present economic situation must be a guarantee of pay rises and family benefits in relation to the growing costs of living. This type of union activity will only be possible when the workforce will defend the activists from repression by means of various protest actions.

There would exist such important elements of independent social life as Committees of Social Aid, formed in parishes in order to help the most needy and provide for people dismissed from work (this would deprive the authorities of the means to blackmail them economically); independent press and publications (every larger enterprise should have its own paper, every larger town — its own publishing house); councils of National Education, of Culture and Science — set up by intellectuals, teachers and scholars — would offer access to independent knowledge and experience; a network of centres of the Association of Workers' Universities whose graduates would become union activists as well as founders and activists of regional and workers' self-governments. Other elements of this structure of independent social life will surely be worked out in the course of action.

It is not the path of fast and spectacular successes but of long and strenuous work, demanding the participation of a large section of society. But Solidarity — a many-million strong union with nearly a million activists — exists and is active despite martial law. Its achievements allow one to believe that the plan suggested here is feasible. And an uprising — if it became inevitable — would be the last resort in the struggle for the national programme to reconstruct the economy, culture, science, education, and independence.

promise or revolution, but of a third possibility: a slow disintegration of the system and gradual changes leading towards greater influence of the people on their own fate.

To ensure development in this direction we need not so much an underground State as an underground Society. Not a centralised organisation with complete allegiance towards it but a multi-centred movement, decentralised, informal, consisting of mutually independent and loosely connected groups, circles, committees etc., with a large scope for independent decision-making. They would have to provide constant

and effective aid for all the people persecuted by the authorities, develop circulation of independent information and free thought, create a network of social communications, ensure the possibility of self-education and additional schooling, provide moral and psychological support.

Such a movement should lead to a situation where the authorities control empty shops but not the market, workers' employment but not their livelihood, state-owned mass media but not the circulation of information, printing houses but not publishing, the post and telephones but not communications, the schools but not education. This kind of social independence could in due time lead to the situation when the rulers would control only the police and a handful of sworn collaborators. No third possibility would then be open: either the government will fall or — instead of a spectacular compromise — the barriers between the authorities and the people will gradually collapse and restraints will be lifted: civil rights restored, self-government and finally participation in decisions concerning, above all, economic, cultural and social life assured. The scope of restored freedoms must be greater than the risks involved in participation in the underground social life. Only then will its attraction diminish to such an extent that some measure of control over the life of society as such will be at all possible. The price of this restoration of influence in society would be a gradual liberalisation and democratisation.

In a modern police state surrounded by similar states which are also supervised by a neighbouring superpower, a long-term nationwide secret organisation is not possible. Its formation would create the danger of a

premature outburst or a premature breaking up of the organisation, that is a sort of defeat which we cannot afford any more. That is why only a relatively small group of people can risk the formation of a rudimentary 'centre' and, at most, regional centres. An embryonic underground State would constitute only an additional potential threat to the authorities. Its influence could spread within the underground Society in such a way that — when necessary — a central organisation could quickly be formed.

Thus only in the last resort would the underground State find its extension and support in the underground Society. Until then the underground Society should remain independent and avoid any closer ties with a centralised structure. It enables that structure itself to avoid premature destruction and at the same time protects Society from defeat. Then even the destruction of the underground State would be no more than just a setback. The underground Society would survive and be capable of making good the loss.

The third possibility is all the more worthy of consideration because of one more danger. Empires torn by internal conflicts, crisis-ridden and threatened from the outside, have more than once resorted to aggression. Aggression allows for fast increase of military potential, irrespective of the costs, for consolidation of the masses around central authority and for distracting the society from its tragic plight. This perspective must not be overlooked. It is a very doubtful consolation in our situation to say that a 'military intervention in Poland would be the last action of the USSR'.

'You have an historic chance'

Reply by Jacek Kuron to Debate

As we saw in the polemic published in *Tygodnik Mazowsze* No. 8, between Zbigniew Bujak and Wiktor Kulerski on the one side, and myself on the other, there are important differences in our appreciation of the political situation, and which methods of activity to choose. This is not in itself a bad thing. But, if as we hope, the discussion is to be useful, then we must understand each other's arguments fully.

If I have understood properly, your proposal is to build a movement in the image of what we called the 'social self-defence' movement before August 1980. That is, a movement based on the organisation of people in different milieus which allows them to come together to resolve the problems that they face. This self-organisation can serve as a basis for the development of more general activities, publishing, education circles, programmatic discussions. In my article *Reflections on a programme of action* in 1976, I insisted that this type of movement must be based on the full autonomy of local and sectoral action groups. Forgive me for this self-advertisement, but I want to emphasise how close your ideas are to mine. The truth of this was demonstrated in the lead-up to the August 1980 victory, which is already an irreversible victory. Thus, I am not surprised that this idea is now meeting with wide support. In searching for historical analogies we look at everything, and try to base ourselves on experience. But we must not forget that we are discussing methods of action, and these are dependent above all on the conditions of struggle, and these are very different today from August 1980.

What are the indispensable conditions for the development of a self-defence movement? I see three:

- each person must be able to act;
- this activity must be able to reach success;
- the social system within which we are building the movement must have resources, even minimal, to allow it to develop.

The system existing under Edward Gierek, from 1970, fulfilled the first two conditions. That team wanted to govern by basing itself on the social consensus. This is why it forced the apparatus to concede to pressure.

Today, the generals and the secretaries have decided not only to bypass the consensus of opinion but even to govern against it. The basis of their power is their ability to break up demonstrations, to smash strikes, to arrest, to intern, to beat up, to shoot ... The generals and secretaries are so strong in this sense that they will not move an inch under pressure. All this has already been said and shown in practice. We should not be under any illusions. We should also point out that they cannot move under pressure because they do not have any room for manoeuvre.

They cannot lower wages, sack workers nor reduce food rations. And as you know, any social movement — at least one that considers itself the co-manager of the country — cannot give up economic demands. We cannot stop the growing economic agony of our country without a true national reconciliation. My *Theses...* begins with a justification of this assertion, which unfortunately you overlook in your polemic.

Thus, in these conditions of a state of war, we can only hope that a self-

defence movement, would be able to bring about gradual change, by the sole fact of its existence.

There is a mass movement developing underground, within which it is possible to organise publishing, educational, and — most importantly — other forms of activities which express the aspirations of society. Is this why people take part in the movement, despite the risks? I do not think so. *A mass social movement is always a response to great aspirations which can be achieved through united action, and can only be achieved in this way.*

Education is possible without such a movement. Publishing activity, as an end in itself, only involves a tiny minority of society. Demonstrations cannot lead to any immediate success. They are, of course, very important for morale, inasmuch as they show the strength of the movement. But, if this strength is used only to raise morale, it will eventually become powerless.

At the moment a number of people are absorbed in organisational tasks. They are building mass organisations which tend to take on tasks linked to the realisation of the desired aims. The most limited, and most popular, aim today is to get conditions which will allow people to live normally. The tasks that you put first cannot, any more than any other local or sectoral activity, bring us more than a millimetre nearer this aim. No clandestine activity alone can get there. Because clandestine activity is always a preparation for something. If you do not explain practically what you are preparing for then there will be an organisation without aims, but with deception, discontent, and hate ... From this hate, terrorism is born.

An organisation with a central leadership could, within certain limits, prevent unproductive acts of aggression and despair, if it exists effectively and is able to reach all layers of the movement. But such a leadership will lose all its influence if it does not seem to have a programme for getting out of the present situation. Let us note, by the way, that organisational activity at the moment will naturally lead on to centralising the movement. If the leaders of Solidarity, or only one section of them, try to slow down the movement then several centres will appear, which, among other conflicts, would produce ideal conditions for a provocation.

You say that the people can hold on longer, and you refer to historical experience. On that we disagree on the facts. Last year national revenue dropped by 13 per cent. This year, if we obtain significant aid from the East, and some Western credits, then the national revenue will drop by 17-22 per cent *more*, according to the officially published experts' forecasts. Leaving aside the fact that there will not be significant aid from the East, and that to obtain Western credits at least requires some guarantee.

Let us take only this new reduction of 20 per cent. This is a catastrophe unknown in Western society. No one is able to predict the political, social and psychological effects.

On what precisely do you base your belief that the Polish people will be able to calmly support such a catastrophe? In a situation, moreover, where

the government continues to provoke them by its arrogance and by the terror it exercises? On the fact that they have been patient from January up till now? Let us leave on one side the fact that life is going to get worse in the future. On the contrary, let us note that the maturity of Polish society, on which we all agree, is nothing less than the confidence that they have in Solidarity. That is to say, in you and in the resistance movement.

The people are keeping their despair, their anger and their rage to themselves because they have thrown themselves into activity, to which you have called them (or which they think you have called them). They think that you know the way, and will lead them to victory. But, they will realise very quickly that the slogan 'stay underground' is the most costly way to defeat.

Then what will happen? Perhaps the government will be able to prevent a national explosion. Perhaps there will be a whole number of explosions, more or less local, put down in a more or less bloody manner. Let us add to this the social and political effects, and effects on morale, of an economic catastrophe. Even without a foreign intervention we might witness the destruction of the nation. I do not know if Solidarity can allow itself another defeat. But I do know that we cannot escape defeat by refusing to fight.

As its leaders we have taken a tremendous responsibility upon ourselves by organising Solidarity. We cannot run away from it today by refusing to put forward answers to the central questions. I am ready to announce maximum concessions from society, in order to avoid the catastrophe which this state of war is bringing to Poland. But these concessions cannot be counterposed to the essential condition for a social compromise. The creation of a situation where the regime will make an agreement with society, and not with the State, even under different names and represented by different personalities. In other words, the indispensable precondition for compromise is that society is organised independently from the state power.

We cannot base our programme on the hope that the generals and secretaries will willingly accept a compromise. We have to acknowledge that violence only retreats in front of violence. And to openly state that the movement itself will not refuse to use force. For me it is necessary to make this statement more precise, by saying, for example, 'in the summer', or 'in the autumn'. This is the best way to prevent acts of desperation or aggression. From that moment on all the demonstrations of mass feeling in the country — lighted candles, minute's silences, hunger strikes, common articles of clothing, work stoppages — would recall the threat, and show that the movement is ready.

I imagine that the movement will start agitation among the soldiers and police militia immediately. We have to call on them to co-ordinate their activities among themselves, and keep in contact with their co-ordinations. In my opinion, this is the principal task of the movement.

The uprising thus announced could well take the form of an indefinite general strike. But in doing that we would give the generals and the

secretaries the ability to attack in places of their choosing, and thus concentrate their superiority of men and materials in a given place. Therefore, if we are not sure that the majority of the soldiers and police militia will cooperate with us, it would be necessary to combine the strike with attacks on specific centres of information and power. In agreement with those soldiers who declare themselves ready to come over to our side. We could equally well announce that such an attack will take place where factories on strike are threatened.

The belief that the attitude of the secretaries and generals is hardened by fear of an uprising could be well founded, if one thinks that anything else other than fear leads to concessions. You deceive them by declaring that the movement will not use violence. They think that they are safe and will not give up.

The authorities have undoubtedly had discussions with the Church hierarchy, on national conciliation and social agreement. But they have only done that to give a cover to a practice that is quite contrary to that. From the moment that it becomes a real danger the Church will cease to be a spokesperson and become a mediator. You have seen how the moderate proposals of the Social Council of the Polish primate are now considered as extremist because they are the only alternative to the official ones. When you are considered as spokespersons these proposals could be a real platform for compromise. It is true that if such a compromise was made those who terrorise would be on the margins of social life. Too bad.

I do not ask you to proclaim the offensive. On the contrary, I ask you to organise the centre of the movement, and an effective information network. It is important to emphasise that this will not undermine the authority of different sections of the movement. But it will limit the danger of provocations, and thoughtless actions. Because certain actions should be the exclusive responsibility of the centre.

I call on you to declare that, if the authorities do not listen to society; if they refuse to comply with its will, expressed in different ways; if they do not take action to save the country from catastrophe; if they do not accept conciliation with society; the movement will be obliged to use violence.

Lastly, I call on you to undertake agitation among the soldiers and police militia. You will find a good reception among them, and that alone would be a mortal danger for the regime. And, above all, it is necessary to have a programme which is agreed by all the principal leaders of the resistance.

Forgive me for this lecturing tone. I know that you work hard, and you have had important successes. But we find ourselves in a situation from which there appears no way out. Although we are not prepared we have to confront it. It is up to us to indicate a way out from this situation which appears to be an impasse.

You would not have chosen such a burden, but you could not shirk it. You have an historic chance ...

Tygodnik Mazowsze No.13
Warsaw, 12 May 1982

War of Position and War of Movement: On the Strategy of of Solidarity

By Zbigniew Kowalewski

'The eighteen months of Solidarity's existence are one of our great national uprisings,' Zbigniew Bujak, chairman of Warsaw Region Solidarity, argued in a recent article.¹ Another union leader in this region, Zbigniew Romaszewski believes that *'the night of 12-13 December does not spell a definitive defeat of the national uprising, but only one lost battle'.* *'There is no reason for us to capitulate,'* he continues, *'on the contrary, we must prepare for a fresh battle which, this time, will be decisive and victorious.'*² The period of national uprising — or, in other words, the revolutionary situation — is therefore continuing. The mass demonstrations by underground Solidarity, held in Warsaw and many other towns on 1 and 3 May, speak in favour of this assessment.

In this light, Solidarity's present debate on the strategy of the social movement against the military dictatorship is an event of considerable importance. The debate was opened by Jacek Kuron's 'Proposals to solve an insoluble situation', which appeared in *Tygodnik Mazowsze* on 31 March, alongside replies by Zbigniew Bujak

and the vice-chairperson of Warsaw Regional Solidarity, Wiktor Kulerski. Kuron in turn replied to these articles in the 12 May issue of the same underground weekly.³

The debate very quickly polarised around the question of whether Solidarity strategy should be based upon a war of position or a war of movement. These concepts, derived from military thinking, were introduced into the social movement (mainly the workers' movement) by Antonio Gramsci. Writing in his *Prison Notebooks* in the late twenties and early thirties, he came out against the policy then pursued by the Comintern within the western labour movement. Earlier, in his 1910 polemic with Rosa Luxemburg concerning the strategy of German social democracy, Karl Kautsky had also drawn on military terminology to introduce the strategic concepts of attrition and overthrow. It is worth recalling these facts, since echoes of these old debates within the western labour movement may be found in the present debates of Solidarity.

The Positions of Kuron, Bujak and Kulerski

Jacek Kuron's main strategic idea is as follows: *'The resistance leadership must prepare society both for major concessions directed at a compromise with the regime, and for liquidation of the occupation through an organised mass uprising.'* *'Such an uprising,'* he explains, *'may take the form of a simultaneous offensive against all the centres of power and information in the country.'* It ought to take place *'in concert with those soldiers and militiamen who declare their readiness to join our side.'* If the resistance manages to secure the cooperation of a majority of soldiers and militiamen — an unlikely event, in Kuron's view — it will be able to limit itself to a general strike. Otherwise, *'the movement will be obliged to use violence'*.

Kuron's idea, then, explicitly involves a war of movement based on a strategy of overthrow. After the overthrow of the military dictatorship (*'liquidation of the occupation'*), however, the Polish revolution will once again have to limit

itself and refrain from overthrowing bureaucratic rule. Its aim should be to force the regime into a compromise with civil society.

In my opinion, there can be no doubt that revolutionary mass action is alone capable of bringing down the military dictatorship. It seems equally clear that compromises with the bureaucratic regime are an extremely important element in Solidarity's tactical arsenal. The problem is that Kuron speaks of a strategic (or historic) compromise — an illusion when the regime can only have a totalitarian character. If it reaches a compromise, this will only be to gain time and accumulate sufficient strength to crush the working class and the whole of society.

In the long term, moreover, the working class can only preserve even its limited gains if it uses compromise to gain time and accumulate the strength to solve the question of power in its own favour. Thus when Kuron suggests using an extreme form of struggle (mass uprising) to attain a limited objective (historic compromise), he subordinates revolutionary methods of struggle to reformist illusions. Here lies the main contradiction in Kuron's strategy. In addition, he hopes that if Solidarity's underground leadership merely threatens a mass uprising and the use of violence, this will be enough to force the regime into a compromise.

In his polemic with Kuron, Zbigniew Bujak writes: *'I am in favour of a war of position — allow me to use this military formula — which, in my view, offers the advantage of both effectiveness and safeness.'* Bujak, then, does not think in terms of revolutionary mass action to attain the final objective (the seizure of power), nor simply to secure a compromise with the regime. As Wiktor Kulerski points out, he has in mind *'a third possibility: slow disintegration of the system, together with progressive changes that may allow society to regain some influence over its destiny'*.

Bujak describes the main structural features of 'underground Solidarity' that are immediately applicable within the framework of a war of position. The totalitarian regime would still control the apparatuses of domination over society, but that domination would become even more eroded or limited, if not formal in character. In Kulerski's conception of a developing 'underground society', *'the regime would control the state mass media but not the circulation of information; the printshops but not the publishing houses; the post and telephones but not communications; the schools but not education; ... empty shops but not the market; workers' employment but not their means of subsistence.'* This seems rather utopian, since it would be better to speak of workers' control over distribution, production and the conditions of work and play. But that is only possible in an advanced situation of dual power.

Zbigniew Bujak also thinks that at some distant point in the future, it may be possible to move from positional war and a strategy of attrition to war of movement and a strategy of overthrow. *'As for the insurrection,'* he writes, *'if it proves to be necessary, it will be the last phase in a struggle to achieve the national reconstruction programme.'* The strategic project of the Warsaw Regional Solidarity leaders therefore separates the conquest and defence of fixed positions from the use of movement (manoeuvre), at least on a large scale.

Military Strategy Applied to Political Struggle

Now, in his analysis of the strategy of positional war, Perry Anderson rightly mentions those thinkers who 'criticised any strategic theory that fetishised either manoeuvre or position into an

immutable or absolute principle', whether in an army at war or a social movement. *'All wars would combine position and manoeuvre, and any strategy that excluded one or the other was suicidal ... Position and manoeuvre had a necessarily complementary relationship in any military strategy.'*⁴

Bujak and Kulerski do not take into account other types of action, which cannot be included either under positional war or under war of movement. As Gramsci pointed out, there are other forms in political struggle. *'Comparisons between military art and politics, if made, should always be taken cum grano salis (with a pinch of salt) ... quite apart from the fact that the line-up of political forces is not even remotely comparable to the line-up of military forces.'*⁵

The struggle of Indian society against British colonial domination, Gramsci argues, corresponded to three types of warfare. *'Gandhi's passive resistance is a war of position, which at certain moments becomes a war of movement, and at others underground warfare. Boycotts are a form of war of position, strikes a war of movement, the secret preparation of weapons and combat troops belongs to underground warfare.'*⁶

Gramsci reaffirms this characteristic of strikes when he says that Rosa Luxemburg's famous pamphlet on the Russian mass strike of 1905 'is one of the most significant documents theorising the war of manoeuvre in relation to political science'.⁷ Bujak does admit that, even today, the strike should be used in various enterprises to defend workers' rights, to free trade union activists from internment, and so on. He also sees the need for general strikes — for example, in the struggle to re-establish trade-union rights.⁸ Solidarity, not only as a union but also as a social movement, has its main support in the working class; and the strike is and will remain the principal form of struggle of the working class in Poland. In this sense, the use of war of movement is inevitable.

Despite what Kuron says, war of movement cannot be mechanically related to a frontal attack on all the centres of power, nor to continuous offensive action. It also has the capacity for tactical or even strategic retreat. *'If strategic retreat is excluded from manoeuvre,'* Trotsky wrote, *'then the strategy has an extremely unilinear character; in other words, it ceases to be manoeuvre.'*⁹

The military dictatorship may mobilise its forces more rapidly than the social movement. But the fact that it is able to strike first does not assure it of victory. A withdrawal manoeuvre may give the social movement enough time to group its forces and then resume the initiative in a well-conducted attack. *'Having space and numbers on our side, we shall calmly and precisely draw the line at which, thanks to our elastic defence, the mobilisation will allow us to concentrate our forces and pass on to the counter-offensive.'*¹⁰

In a war of movement, the difference between retreat and offensive tends to vanish more and more. Its essential features are initiative and activity.

The social movement Solidarity must prepare for such a war of movement. At the same time, however — and here Bujak and Kulerski are absolutely right — it has to conduct a very large-scale war of position, developing the underground self-organisation of civil society and creating various institutions. *'The superstructures of civil society are like the trench-systems of modern warfare.'*¹¹ When the dictatorship mounts a new, large-scale repressive operation, only a complex and developed system of trenches and strongpoints will prevent the wholesale destruction of the underground society. The surface may be destroyed, but the attack

will then falter at new lines of defence.

Is it likely, however, that in the struggle against the military dictatorship, the social movement will essentially conduct a positional war and relegate movement to a tactical rather than strategic role? I do not think so.

The Military Dictatorship and the Question of Power

It is impossible that, as Solidarity's advocates of positional war imagine, a linear process will lead to the democratisation of the totalitarian regime through 'the gradual lowering of the barriers that separate society'. It is not only a state of war but a military dictatorship that has been imposed — that is to say, a particular state form. As Nicos Poulantzas has rightly argued, no form of emergency state can rise or disappear in a linear manner, through successive and somehow imperceptible gradations. The Polish experience shows that this is not only true of the transition to or from the state of parliamentary democracy in capitalist society. In post-capitalist society, too, the passage from the classical form of bureaucratic rule to military dictatorship requires an act of political counter-revolution, a coup d'état. The reverse can only take place through a democratic break of a revolutionary kind, even if it does not yet involve wresting power from the hands of the totalitarian bureaucracy. Power is abandoned in the same way that it is taken.

The emergency state is distinguished by the fact that the dominant class or layer materialises its political organisation within the state apparatus or, in the case of military dictatorship, within the only dominant branch of that apparatus, the army. The summits of the state military apparatus thus not only become the hegemonic fraction of the dominant class or layer, but also form the de facto apparatus of the 'political party' of that whole class or layer.

The military apparatus in Poland is now in strong rivalry with the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) to determine which of these two apparatuses will materialise the political organisation of the bureaucracy. If, as seems likely, the military apparatus succeeds in bringing the PUWP apparatus under its sway, then all the contradictions undermining the bureaucracy, as well as the contradictions between the bureaucracy and the working class supported by the other oppressed social groups, will become concentrated within the military apparatus.

The outcome is familiar from other countries that have undergone military dictatorship. *'The specific characteristics of the exceptional state are the source both of its strength and of its fragility, by virtue of their extraordinary rigidity. The slightest genuine "opening" risks the collapse of the whole edifice. Both its skeleton and its internal cement, ideological and repressive, are based on a very delicate division between clans and factions, between branches and apparatuses that are interlocked, duplicated and hierarchically ordered to an amazing degree, in their functions and their spheres of competence. Any reorganisation, even the most simple, directly affects the state as a whole, taking into account its permanent disequilibrium.'*¹²

The situation was similar in Poland even before the state of war. The characteristics of the bureaucracy — not as an autonomous class but as a parasitic layer on the body of society — together with the necessarily totalitarian nature of its rule, ensured that changes in the relationship of forces between various factions of the regime appeared not through 'the organic circulation of hegemony' but through acute political crises and upheavals within the state apparatus. Now, however, bureaucratic rule is becoming more fragile as a result of its much greater rigidity. The

bureaucratic centralism of the PUWP is being replaced by the still more intense centralisation of a strictly hierarchical and disciplined military apparatus. It is likely, then, that the permanent disequilibrium of the ruling bureaucratic apparatus will be stronger than ever under the military dictatorship, and that, as in the West European dictatorships, whole sections of the army, from top to bottom, will follow the various ruling clans that crystallise the contradictions within the power bloc. These contradictions will probably express themselves through oppositions and even divisions within the army.

The obvious conclusion is that advances which the social movement Solidarity makes in the war of position will heighten the internal contradictions of the bureaucratic regime, and that these will be concentrated in a military apparatus whose extreme rigidity does not allow it to resist. This will cause huge upheavals at the very centre of power and major political crises. The workers and other groups will take the opportunity to intervene in the crises. For we should not imagine that, by creating a system of defence of the underground society through positional war, it is possible to keep the working class within the defensive positions of that system at the point when it becomes possible to begin manoeuvre and attack. The passage from war of position to war of movement is inevitable.

As I have tried to show in the footsteps of Poulantzas, the fact that the army becomes the dominant apparatus of the bureaucracy can only intensify each crisis within the regime and its relationship to the underground society. However, this is but one aspect of the problem. Once the army changes from the hard core to the whole inner mass of the ruling apparatus, every crisis of power carries risks of divisions within the army. The conscript nature of the army, drawn from the working masses of town and country, can only heighten such divisions. Solidarity should therefore base itself on future cracks to do what it refused to do before December 1981. It should set itself the task of winning to the people's side the

greatest possible number of soldiers in this internally divided army.

The constitution of a military dictatorship has enormous consequences for the social movement Solidarity. War of position and war of movement, which are today only concepts to be used in the development of a strategy of political struggle, will become material realities since the struggle will probably acquire certain features of a military conflict. We must not close our eyes to what seems to be an objective inevitability. We cannot, for example, remain passive at the prospect of divisions within the army; yet such divisions will be of no use to us unless we are prepared for them. In conducting a war of position and preparing for a war of movement, we should already be engaging in what Antonio Gramsci called underground warfare. Under present conditions, that means to prepare the forces of underground society that would be capable of fighting to win over a major part of the army as a combat force on the side of the workers.

The leadership of Solidarity's Provisional Coordinating Committee declared in one of its founding statements on 22 April: 'In the event that the Solidarity union is dissolved, we shall not hesitate to call for a general strike and active defence of the workplaces'.¹³ Such defence would precisely be the first action whereby the workers would appear as a fighting force.

However, the threat of Soviet military intervention hangs over Poland. For Kuron, a strategic compromise between civil society and the bureaucratic regime is the only possible solution in the current relationship of forces. 'The death agony of imperialism is only a prognosis,' he said with reference to the domination of the Kremlin bureaucracy. 'The empire has already started to wither away, but it is still capable of settling accounts with Poland in a bloody manner.' Bujak is convinced that this danger can be warded off, not through compromise but through a protracted war of position.

As I have tried to show, neither of these two solutions is feasible. Thus, if we allow ourselves to be intimidated by the threat of Soviet military intervention, there will be nothing left for us but to give up the struggle. I believe that there is another solution: to accept that foreign military intervention is not inevitable; to neutralise the Kremlin through compromises with the Polish bureaucratic regime, but only insofar as they allow us (rather than our enemy) to accumulate our forces; and to give an example of struggle to the workers of other East European satellites and the USSR itself, so that they may follow our path and understand that we can only win through common struggle.

With all the above points in mind, it will be possible to work out a political strategy corresponding to the objective dynamic of the struggle of civil society against totalitarian rule, never allowing ourselves to be paralysed by the fact that, whether we like it or not, risks will have to be faced.

Paris
20 May 1982

Notes

1. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 2, 11 February 1982.
2. Zbigniew Romaszewski, 'Sierpień 1980—Grudzień 1981: Co dalej' (duplicated), Warsaw, 15 March 1982.
3. Jacek Kuron, 'Tezy o wyjściu z sytuacji bez wyjścia'; Zbigniew Bujak, 'Walka pozycyjna'; Wiktor Kulerski, 'Trzecia mozliwość', *Tygodnik Mazowsze* No. 8, 31 March 1982; Jacek Kuron, 'Macie teraz złoty rog', *Tygodnik Mazowsze* No. 13, 12 May 1982.
4. Perry Anderson, 'The Antinomies of Antonio Gramsci', *New Left Review* No. 100, p. 74.
5. Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*, London 1971, p. 231.
6. *Ibid.*, pp. 229-30.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 233.
8. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 2, 11 February 1982.
9. Leon Trotsky, *L'Art de la guerre et le marxisme*, Paris 1975, p. 94.
10. *Ibid.*, pp. 138-9.
11. Gramsci, p. 235.
12. Nicos Poulantzas, *The Crisis of the Dictatorships*, London 1975, p. 93.
13. *Tygodnik Mazowsze*, No. 11, 26 April 1982.

THE EXPERIENCE OF SOLIDARITY

Solidarity and Self-Management

By Jean-Yves Potel

(One of the most important features of the Polish revolution for socialists everywhere was Solidarity's efforts to establish a system of workers' self-management in Poland. Here, Jean-Yves Potel analyses the experiment in detail, for the first time in English. Jean-Yves has played a major role in interpreting Poland's labour movement for the Western left, both through his work on our French sister journal, L'Alternative, and through his books, notably: Poland: Summer Before the Frost (Pluto, £2.25) and 'Gdansk, La Memoire Ouvriere'. This article, translated for Labour Focus by John Weal, will appear in French in the journal Sociologie de Travail in the autumn.)

Although independent and self-managed internally, Solidarity did not at once include the call for self-management in its programme. From the 21 points of the Lenin shipyard workers (August 1980) to the programme for a self-managed Republic (October 1981) months of struggle, economic

crisis and discussions were required for the movement to fully embrace this formula for political and economic democracy. Its reserve towards taking on responsibility for economic management diverted it from this preoccupation for a long time.

However, when it entered down that road, when, starting from the spring of 1981, it placed self-management at the centre of its demands, the result was to furnish an essential contribution to our whole outlook on self-management. It benefited from the mistakes of previous movements. Compared with the experience of the 1956 workers' councils in Poland or even with the movement for self-management in Czechoslovakia during the winter of 1968-69, Solidarity's contribution is by far the most enriching: its institutional proposals were far more radical and its struggle was for the first time conceived as part and parcel of a political strategy, i.e. as a fight for a democratic form of political power.

The confrontation provoked by the military apparatus of the Communist Party has unfortunately not allowed Solidarity the time to take this conception through to the end. Today, however, it remains a gain for the resistance movement which is going on under Jaruzelski's dictatorship.

How is it that the first independent trade union in a 'people's democracy' came to struggle for self-management? How did the idea get elaborated? In what way did this demand contribute to the outcome of the first sixteen months of the revolution? These are the kinds of questions that we would like to introduce in this article.

RESERVATIONS DURING THE FIRST MONTHS

Right from the beginning, the Gdansk Agreement, signed on 31 August 1980, tried to balance between two pretty contradictory demands. On the one hand, the new unions

were defined as *control bodies*: they 'are intended to defend the social and material interests of the workers and not to play the role of a political party ... Their aim is to ensure for the workers the necessary means for the determination, expression and defence of their interests.'¹ On the other hand, they gave themselves prerogatives that went far beyond mere control:

*'The new trade unions should be able to participate in decisions affecting the workers' living conditions in such matters as the division of national income between consumption and accumulation, the division of the social consumption fund (health, education, culture), the wages policy, with particular regard to an automatic increase of wages in line with inflation, the long-term economic plan, the direction of investment and prices policy. The government undertakes to ensure the conditions necessary for the carrying out of these functions.'*²

For the founders of Solidarity 'independence' and 'control' implied an absence of responsibility for the economic policy that the government was meant to undertake, while the union's participation in decision-making was aimed at influencing the outcome and thus involved the union's responsibility somewhat.

Opinion polls carried out just after the August agreement indicated how much such a system ought to have rapidly improved the situation for the Polish workers.³ In reality, after a few months it became abundantly clear that the government was not applying the Agreement, that it was not undertaking any significant economic reform and that the workers' living conditions were worsening by the day. And this forced trade unionists to reflect on their political and economic actions. For they found themselves squeezed between the growing discontent of the population and the incapacity (or unwillingness) of those in power to stimulate any real economic reorientation. How could one defend the right not to work Saturdays when the government was utilising arguments about the catastrophic decline in GNP unless one were to set out alternative economic choices and a different form of labour management? How could one support the demands of the peasantry without putting into question the entire agricultural policy?⁴ Given what was at stake and the nature of the demands, the control and defence of working-class interests had to broaden out into an overall challenge to governmental policy and take up the proposals for reform.

It was within this framework that the debate on self-management got under way. And not without problems. Reservations were considerable, and could well be understood from many factors stemming from recent historical experience. First there was the memory of what happened to the workers' councils founded in October 1956. The law of 1958 on the Conferences of workers' autonomy (KSR) had reduced them to simple appendages of the Party, to transmission belts subject to the rules of the Nomenklatura. Moreover, since 1978 the presidency of these KSR was automatically

reserved for the Party secretary in an enterprise. One can understand that the word 'self-management' had an unpleasant ring to it. As a result the setting up of a trade union in the autumn of 1980 proved to be a delicate business. One recalls that it was necessary to wait until 11 November before Solidarity was recognised and registered legally, and this only after many weeks of struggle in the plants and at national level. Its internal organisation was cumbersome, despite all the enthusiasm and mobilisations, due to the state of permanent tension between it and the powers that be. Numerous trade-union militants considered the organisation too weak to shoulder real national responsibility. And lastly, people were mistrustful of economic involvement; for them it spelled Corruption with a big 'C'. The old unions had given good proof of that.

People were afraid that by taking responsibility at either plant or national level, Solidarity would get its fingers trapped in the machinery for co-managing the crisis. They didn't have the confidence. A leading Warsaw delegate expressed this point of view in October thus:

*'People are appealing to us now for co-management and co-responsibility. We've seen what they meant with the old unions. We do not want to act, through our participation, as a cover for the faults of the leadership ... The lack of confidence between Solidarity and the authorities is a fact ... What we need are institutional guarantees; we must be certain that honest and intelligent individuals will be able to oppose others that are stupid and dishonest.'*⁵

This hostility did not imply a lack of awareness of the extent of the crisis. Since October and November many voices — and not the least important — were insisting on the urgent need to take a position on the whole problem. One of the leadership's (KKP) experts, T. Mazowiecki, declared in October in Warsaw: *'The union must give its opinion on the country's general affairs, such as the plan, the way the consumption budget should be allocated, etc. Now at present it's only just beginning to function and it's got to prepare itself for this role.'*⁶

As can be seen, then, people were casting around in different directions. Certain experts envisaged above anything else an institutionalisation of control. This was the drift of Father S. Kurowski's proposals at a seminar in Gdansk on 4 November. He suggested that the union should participate in the workings of the institute of statistics, the price commission and planning reform. Others preferred to reactivate an authentic form of self-management. In an article published in October 1980, W. Kurczynski demanded for example: *'a serious debureaucratisation of the economy and a reduction in the influence of the bureaucracy on economic decisions...and a return to the idea of workers self-management, an enduring idea amongst us since 1956. However, for that to happen one would have to do away with the legislation that had plunged this idea into a kind of lethargy for a quarter of a century: the law*

*on the KSR of 1958.'*⁸

Nevertheless, he did not clarify the content of such self-management. More detailed, a project for a union programme was going the rounds at Gdansk from October onwards. Written by Jacek Kuron, it was not retained as a basis for further discussion. He explained:

*'Thus we must elect, at the earliest date possible, self-management councils for each enterprise which, as was the case immediately after the war, must become the representative workers' bodies independent of the unions and free from all tutelage. Every worker has the right to elect and to be elected. These elections should be held on the basis of proportional representation.... The scope of the councils would comprise the management of social funds (holidays, camps...) and housing funds, the control of the workings of the mutual-aid savings deposits and loans as well as all the powers set out in the labour code.'*⁹

Limited tasks these, which did not, for example, come to grips with economic power in the workplaces and the problem of management. All the same, this proposal had the advantage of launching the idea of a democratically elected workers' representation. Its content was taken up by the current affairs committee of the Gdansk MKZ in a January 1981 circular devoted to the methods of electing councils.¹⁰

Thus during the first months of its existence, the union maintained considerable reservations vis-à-vis self-management. The limited workplace experiences in Lodz during October and November remained marginal, and when, at Christmas, the government decided to ration meat, Solidarity responded in the manner of a set-piece example of workers' control.¹¹

A RESPONSE TO THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

It was not until March and April of 1981 that the situation began to change. Many sections within the union changed their approach. Self-management committees sprang up in the workplaces; a more systematic elaboration began to see the light of day. There were several reasons for this sudden turn: the economic crisis first of all. It was deepening and taking on catastrophic dimensions. Industrial and agricultural production fell dangerously while the internal market worsened. The generalisation of rationing as of 1 April improved matters only slightly. As a rule the ration tickets were only partially honoured. The disorganisation of the economic apparatus, the incessant lobbying, the struggles between different factions, and, of course, corruption made a complete farce of the whole rationing attempt. Solidarity was thus faced with a dilemma: either it could have steered clear of economic questions in which case the population might well have reproached it and turned their back on it, or else it could have sought to take upon itself responsibilities, but then it would have had to find a means of avoiding the risks dealt with earlier. To exit from this impasse it had to

invent a formula for the democratic management of the economy through which the workers, *fully aware of the facts*, could defend their point of view and influence the decisions taken.

This change in the way the trade union was looking at things was also encouraged by the government's own proposals. A bill on self-management was presented in December 1980 and the PUWP (Polish United Workers Party) ceaselessly reproached Solidarity for its irresponsibility. Its refrain boiled down to this: it was necessary for all Poles to link arms (and tighten their belts) in order to steer the country out of the catastrophe, and to this end we, the Party, are proposing genuine self-management. However, the union leadership was fully aware that this 'bill' was merely a device aimed at revamping the old and discredited KSR. They were thus forced to refine their own proposals.

In the end the sections of Solidarity were faced with this problem in the workplaces. Management, after it had first tried to hinder the formation of the union, now sought to integrate it into co-management of the enterprises. They suggested that the union should take its place in the KSRs which still remained or, if not, to found new 'more democratic' ones. The militants had to know how to fight each proposal.

An enquiry carried out at the beginning of March 1981 by the union's centre for social research, however partial, points up the tendencies at work at this time. The interviewees were all Solidarity militants.¹² The study covered 178 enterprises, in 47% of which the KSR still existed. How did the union react? Often the KSR was only a shell and Solidarity didn't participate in it. It took part only in 11% of the KSRs as an observer and in 8% in order to approve the plan. Faced, however, with this institutional void, people increasingly felt that new self-management bodies were needed and this was indeed what was proposed in 68% of the sample. Proposed by whom? The initiative came most often from Solidarity (68%), from management (43%), from the old union branch (18%), from the local Party organisation (7%) and from unorganised workers (13%). (The sum of the percentages comes to more than 100 because the same initiative could emanate from several groups at once.) One can see that the daily experience of trade union militants pushed them into taking a position on this question. What was their opinion as to the usefulness of a new self-management? The table of replies gives the following results according to size of enterprise:

Number of workers in an enterprise	Self-management is:			
	necessary	useless	no reply	%
0-300	82%	18%	0%	100
300-1000	93%	4%	3%	100
1000+	95%	4%	1%	100

The enquiry also showed that in directly

productive enterprises 94% of people questioned thought that self-management was necessary. This percentage fell by 10% in non-productive enterprises.

What sort of scope did the Solidarity militants envisage for the self-management organs? Here points of view are divided. The questionnaire asked those interviewed to make a choice between three possible replies — to decide; to express an opinion; not to be bothered with it — with respect to any particular issue. Thus, 75% of those questioned considered that a self-management council was competent to decide on matters concerning the choice of the director and the distribution of profits between wages and investment. 74% felt the same way with respect to information, 68% for taking on workers, 64% for the enterprise's plan, 60% for wages and 61% for bonuses. The right of a (self-management) council to give its opinion was mentioned for four cases in particular: nominating a foreman (44%), work organisation (49%), stock supervision (50%) and investments (50%). Lastly, the reply 'ought not to be concerned with this' was mentioned in only one instance: allocation of holiday vouchers (37%).

'However', remarks the person who conducted this survey, 'the fact that 36% of people questioned considered that self-management bodies ought to decide on how these vouchers should be allocated and that 48% thought they should decide on matters of hygiene and work security seems to indicate that the separation of decision-making powers between self-management bodies and the trade unions was not clear in the minds of those questioned.'

Thus, even if this questionnaire cannot be considered as representative of the entire Polish working class at this time, it nonetheless points to a certain change of attitude towards self-management. The last question in the survey underlines this perfectly: 68% thought that Solidarity should at once start to build workers' self-management bodies. 13% felt that Solidarity should play a role in these bodies once they got off the ground; 4% said that the union shouldn't bother itself with self-management and only two replies (1%) thought that the union should be opposed to such a project (the rest were without an opinion).

THE NETWORK AND THE LUBLIN GROUP

This new awareness was concretised in the spring of 1981 by the setting up of a structure for the discussion of economic reform and self-management at the heart of Solidarity. On the initiative of militants from the Gdansk shipyard and the Rzeszow public transport system the 'Network of large-scale enterprises' was set up on 17 March and brought together delegates from the seventeen largest enterprises in the country, one network for each province.¹³

Each enterprise had been selected on the twin bases of its relationship to the total na-

tional productive system and of the number of union members within its workforce. The delegates met once or twice a month (on 14 and 15 April with L. Walesa in attendance) in order to *'encourage the setting up of workplace self-management committees which would act as the base for all actions leading to the reform of the national economy. The Network's programme also includes the introduction of a system of socialist democracy in the country. Each of these proposals is supported by 208,000 Solidarity militants, which makes the Network a genuine consultative body within the union.'*¹⁴

The enterprises that were members of the Network could set up similar structures at the regional level, organise meetings with Sejm Deputies or members of the union's National Commission, and study different reform projects (starting out from the needs of the workers). But they could also *'act in times of danger for the region or the country'*.

The Network *'is not one of the union's instances of power. It is merely a consultative structure. It does not have its own executive body, such as a praesidium. It can only present projects to the National Commission.'*

Moreover, on 28 May it was recognised as having this sort of function by the National Commission. A resolution made clear that it was *'one of the consultative bodies of the KKP concerned with work on socio-economic reform'*.¹⁵ Not a very satisfactory formula so far as the founders of the Network were concerned!

At the Poznan meeting held on 1 June 1981, *'the majority of participants were critical of this motion, finding that it did not guarantee that the projects worked out by the Network would form the basis for discussion with the government.'*¹⁶ In fact, as the meetings progressed, the general change of mood within the union ensured that these projects were indeed regarded as reference points. On 19 June the praesidium of the National Commission (KKP) published a communiqué (criticising the government's bill) which took up the substance of the Network's positions. This declaration,¹⁷ it should be emphasised, signalled the union's fundamental turn on the subject of self-management, a turn that the KKP was to confirm in full session at the end of July.

From that date Solidarity placed the demand for self-management right at the centre of its programme.

Another nerve centre for reflection on this subject came into being in July 1981 after the first experiments in self-management in the workplaces of Lodz and Lublin since the previous autumn. It was in contact with the Network. On the 12th and 13th of July an inter-regional meeting was held in Lublin between constitutive committees for self-management, workers' councils, regional leaderships, and Solidarity enterprise committees. The theme was workers' self-management.

The conference decided to set up a 'working

group for inter-regional co-operation between self-management committees', otherwise known as the 'Lublin Group'. It set itself the task of mobilising for a national conference of council delegates and the coordination of regional links. It adopted an immediate action programme and supported and distributed the Network's founding documents.¹⁸ But its aims were far more enterprising than those of the Network. It started out *'from the necessity of formulating and presenting to workers' self-management bodies a project for an integrated plan of short-term actions.... Our view is that in the course of the next month self-management bodies will not be up to taking over the management of the enterprises unless certain prior conditions have been met.'* Among these conditions were the adoption of a law by the Sejm, the formation of close regional links and the setting up of a national information centre.¹⁹

Although apparently complementary, the Network and the Lublin Group in fact found collaboration difficult. Their differing backgrounds and experiences fed a series of disagreements which, little by little, turned them into competing political poles. This became very clear at the Solidarity Congress and in the months that were to follow. It would, however, be wrong to reduce the debate which criss-crossed the union merely to this opposition. Diverse positions were put forward, and if, in order to facilitate our task, we tend to refer essentially to these two groups, it should not be forgotten that every position was present within each pole.

WHAT WERE THE CONTENDING CONCEPTIONS OF SELF-MANAGEMENT?

The programme adopted by the first national congress of Solidarity limited itself to general formulae but did not make explicit reference to a parliamentary bill and to the legal regulations worked out by the Network. The union's self-management project can be studied by looking at three principal questions: the notion of the *social enterprise*, which was common to all the proposals under discussion; *co-operation between councils, planning and the market*; and, finally, the *relations of all these with the central political power*. We shall tackle each of them successively.

a) The Social Enterprise

The proposal of the Network which had made the most rapid headway within the union was condensed into a bill comprising 63 articles, published in September 1981.²⁰ The social enterprise was there defined as the basic unit of the national economy. Abolition of private property in the means of production was not put into question. Quite the contrary: it was proposed to move from 'statisation' to 'socialisation'. To do this, the social enterprise *'manages its affairs in an autonomous fashion on the basis of an economic calculation. It is endowed with a juridical personality that embraces all its employees. The latter manage that portion of the national wealth which has been entrusted to them, and administers it through their self-management body.'* (Art.1)

'Members of these self-management organs are responsible to those who elected them.' (Art.10,Para.3) *'The entire body of self-managing employees dispose over the property of the enterprise, lay down the general lines of its activity and development and decide on how profits should be distributed.'* (Art.10,Para.5)

These three general provisions were directly opposed to the conceptions defended by the PUWP and taken up by the Sejm in September²¹, where the personnel and their self-management organs merely had 'the right and duty ... to express their opinion' on the key problems facing the enterprise.²² Thus one difference surfaced right away: for Solidarity, the self-management council is an *instance of power* in the enterprise, while for the government it was an *avenue of consultation*. This is made all the more clear when one examines the powers that the Network would have attributed to the councils.

The self-management councils were to be elected for a term of four years *'by a general vote, at once equal, direct and secret'*. (Art.16, Para.6) *'Every employee in the enterprise has the right to vote'*, but — *'only those with more than two years employment in an enterprise are eligible. This rule does not apply to new enterprises'*. (Art.16, Paras.4 and 5) To this first characteristic — representativity — is added a second: independence. The council must be totally independent of parties, unions and the enterprise administration. The most important members of management in an establishment (director, accountant, personnel manager, etc.) would not be eligible as members, nor would people occupying *'positions of leadership in the social and political organisations'*. (Art.16, Paras.16 and 17)

This principle went against the Nomenklatura system of the Party, according to which management and the members of the old KSR were responsible not to those who had elected them but to the commission of local Party leaders.²³ Its aim, expressed in the first thesis of Solidarity's programme, was *'to suppress the authoritarian economic system. In this system, enormous economic power is concentrated in the hands of the Party apparatus and the bureaucracy. (That part of) the structure of economic organisation which comprises the chain of command must be dismantled. It is indispensable to separate the economic administrative apparatus from political power.'*²⁴ This is why one of the principal provisions of this bill gave the council the power to elect and dismiss the managing director of an enterprise (Art.42). The latter's function was reduced to that of *'carrying out the decisions taken by the self-management organs'* (Art.36) The manager was responsible for *'the day-to-day management of the enterprise'* (Art.37) He/She could nevertheless exercise a right of veto on council decisions *'when these ran contrary to the law'*. (Art.41)

Despite an attempt at mediation by the Sejm throughout the autumn of 1981, these rules came to express the unbridgeable gap bet-

ween Solidarity and the PUWP. Let it be noted that these rules were far more radical than those included in the law of 19 November, 1956 on the subject of workers' councils. That law, which had given the green light to the blossoming of the great movement of councils, limited the power of a self-management structure to that of an advisor to the director. Article 13 stipulated: the director *'and the most senior colleague are to be nominated and recalled by an appropriate organ of the State, after agreement with the workers' council'*.²⁵ In an irony of history we find the PUWP leadership one revolution behind in defending positions close to those of 1956 while Solidarity had gone far further.

The other important novelty compared to 1956 was the clear distinction between councils and trade unions. While the latter had the job of defending the interests of the workers as producers, the council represented the wishes of the personnel as employers.²⁶ It defined the total economic strategy of the enterprise: organisation, plan, distribution of profits, co-operation, choice of management, supervision of work, commercial contracts, etc... (Art.19) These decisions were to be taken on the basis of majority votes, provided that at least two-thirds of the members were present. (Art.25) Sometimes consultation with the unions would be necessary: when decisions have a direct bearing on *'matters relevant to union affairs, enterprise committees are required, before voting on their decision, to permit the union to express its opinion in accordance with the law on trade unions and the labour code.'* (Art.58)

b) Self-management and Co-operation

If the opinion of Solidarity militants came rapidly to agree with this definition of the social enterprise, it still left unanswered one substantial question: how were economic choices to be coordinated between the enterprises? The reply had polarised numerous discussions within the union. These discussions can best be set out around several key themes: planning; the market and enterprise autonomy; co-ordination of the councils; the political system.

On planning, the union's experts oscillated in their approach between two traditional points of view within Polish economic thought. For some, who saw themselves following in the footsteps of O. Lange and W. Brus, it was a question of marrying a flexible and decentralised form of planning with the free play of the laws of the market. This idea, defended by R. Bugaj and W. Kurczynski, had finally won out at the congress. For others, more attached to economic liberalism, such as S. Kurowski, the independence of the self-managed enterprise and the market ought to rule out everything else. Planning, for them, would have been limited to a few general indicators. This purely theoretical debate was, all the same, limited to an exchange between experts. It could only be concretised around economic choices concerning reform (prices, employment, investment, etc.). And these choices had not been definitively made at the Congress.²⁷

Nevertheless, it was indeed this general question that underlay all the debates about the social consequences of enterprise autonomy. And this, too, was why people insisted on the union's and the council's mutual independence. K. Modzelewski, one of the main leaders of Solidarity, referred to the Yugoslav experience over this point: *'Even Solidarity must be independent from self-management and this in order that the system of self-management, if there is to be one, if we succeed in winning it as we all desire, might avoid the dangers that no one has known how to avoid in Yugoslavia. And besides, these social dangers constitute the one and only rational argument put forward by the official propaganda against the Network's projects. Their argument is based on the fact that the Network's proposals imply a new social equality. For the enterprises, benefiting from better investment and equipped with the most modern machines, would command a very strong, quasi-monopolistic position in the market. They could use these attributes to satisfy the particular interests of their own branch (of production) to the detriment of enterprises and regions that were weaker from an economic point of view.'*²⁸ Thus, too great a freedom of the market would risk reproducing the very social inequalities that were already so great in Polish society. As defender of the most unprivileged layers the trade union would take on a decisive importance. Besides, its programme of social demands was very clear on this point: it refused to permit unemployment, rash price rises and inequalities.

These principles did not, however, constitute sufficient guarantees. So the trade union enunciated an institutional formula which would assure a system of self-management for the whole of society: 'a self-managing Republic'. After much groping around and at the end of long discussion, two opposing positions remained: that of the Network (which furnished the gist of the programme passed by Congress) and that of the Lublin Group. Both of them tried to combine enterprise self-management, flexible planning and a democratic formula for political power.

The Network's document embraced the entire economic structure (including the bank system). It proposed first of all to reduce considerably the size of the administration, abolish the requirement to affiliate to industrial or combine unions, and to set up a flexible planning structure.

'The plan', announced the document, *'cannot be an end in itself. It has instead to be a process of interest to all circles in society who, through this means, express their desire to fashion the future of their country ... Planning should be reduced to essentials, leaving the rest to the natural mechanisms of control ... The socialisation of the plan requires the autonomous planning of the self-managing enterprises, and territorial as well as central self-management ... At the centre, the only initiator of the plan, the only place where priorities and fundamental economic choices would be discussed ought to be the Sejm.'*²⁹

Each level would direct what was within its province and leave the rest to others. This principle, that we will find again in the proposals of the Lublin Group, is set forth here with respect to the traditional political institutions being reshaped (people's councils, Sejm). Territorial self-management would have been in the hands of the old people's councils (*rada narodowe*) the election procedures of which would have been modified. The *voivodie* council, for example, would have had half of its members elected by direct suffrage (with the number of places proportional to the number of inhabitants) and the other half coming from local councillors. The latter would similarly have been elected by direct and proportional suffrage with free candidates. The Sejm would be made up of deputies elected along the same lines and no longer coming from a single list controlled by the PUWP.

The economic links between the social enterprise (or associations of free enterprises) and these political structures would come about, within the framework of an indicative plan, purely by way of economic instruments such as taxes, subsidies or various financial advantages. As one can see, this project borrowed freely from the principles of indicative planning as practised in Western Europe. The only difference — but what a difference! — was that it was based not on privately owned enterprises, each capped by 'good managers', but on social enterprises managed by the people who worked in them. Over and above all this, the project finished by putting into question the political monopoly of the PUWP and its satellites at the level of electoral representation. This 'detail' went beyond the simple problem of economic reform and raised the central question of the Polish revolution.

The second conception, which was defended above all by those who were behind the Lublin Group, envisaged a flexible coordination of the self-management councils at all levels (local, regional, national) allied to planning 'from below'. Less institutionally oriented than the opposing project, this one was based on the workers' control of production and distribution and on direct competition between enterprises.

The 'Ten commandments for workers' councils' set forth at the Lublin conference of 6 August 1981 did not try to dream up an ideal scheme for a system of self-management.³⁰ They defined the concrete conditions necessary for the construction of self-management at the local, regional and national levels. Thus, in the workplace:

'Don't take part in active management if you are not in possession of complete information that can be trusted and understood by the workers. Demand that management prepares a report on the state of the enterprise and check that report with your own experts. If management ignores this demand then get down to the task yourselves and bring out your own report. Do not encourage the workers to make extra efforts in production if this implies any violation of the Agreements of August and September 1980 or an absence of control on the part of the workers' council over how the produc-

tive capacity of the enterprise is to be employed.'

And further: *'Organise in your region a regional commission for co-operation on self-management. Remember that to find a way out of the crisis and to succeed in establishing an economic reform based on self-management, it's not enough to have some good laws for which we are fighting today, but it all depends on your ability to win over all the workers in your enterprise to the ideas of self-management. Remember that co-operation between the workers' councils, Solidarity and all the authentic bodies of self-management is the condition for creating, side by side with the Sejm and the people's councils, a second economic chamber (the Chamber for self-management), which will decide on the orientations for socio-economic development for the country and its regions.'*

The suggestion of a second Chamber³¹ was intended as a more prudent political solution (by not formally putting into question the leading role of the PUWP in the Sejm) and also more representative of the self-management movement. It had been advanced since the first meeting of the Network and then been rejected by it at Poznan.³² This Chamber would have brought together *'the democratically elected representatives of self-management bodies, the consumer and the environmental protection federations, the people's councils and the trade unions. Above this Chamber would sit the Chamber of Deputies, representing the political interests of the country. This self-management Chamber would have to play a central mediating role ... It would in effect be the authentic social proprietor of the entire country's means of production.'*³³ It would establish the key choices for planning and economic policy for the country.

Thus the two alternative sets of proposals present within Solidarity, by setting out the inevitable problem of co-operation between self-managing enterprises, also raised the strategic problem of the central state power.

c) Self-management and Power

It would be to go beyond the limits of this article to deal with the array of political questions which, from the moment of the Solidarity Congress, got grafted on the perilous gamble for self-management. The union was to find itself confronted with a central power which, with every passing day, refused to play the role of partner which it was pretending to be. The law on self-management, adopted in September 1981 by the Sejm, marked to be sure a certain retreat on the initial proposals of the PUWP. But at bottom it remained in contradiction with the project of Solidarity. And the Solidarity Congress judged it such. In the end, faced with a worsening of the economic crisis, the idea of an agreement of national unity between the Party, the Church and Solidarity polarised every political debate. This idea came to an end, after deadlock in the negotiations, with General Jaruzelski's *coup de force* on 13

December 1981.

The militants and leaders of Solidarity debated a range of strategic options within this period. In relation to the subject that concerns us here, the two conceptions that we have described above gave birth to two coherent orientations. These dominated the discussions of the last weeks of November and early December.³⁴

For supporters of the Network's project, it was first of all necessary to end up with an agreement with the government and the Church, if needs be by means of a general strike, and afterwards, on the basis of laws and of the Network's project, to start the process of economic reform and the construction of a self-management system. For the others (the Lublin Group), self-management bodies were above all 'organisations of struggle for self-management and instances of control over production'³⁴. One had to adopt a policy of *fait accompli* and if the administration or the PUWP were opposed to it then one would have to organise an *active strike*, which meant a strike where one would continue to work but under the direction of the self-management councils. According to the supporters of this position, it would be in this way that the relationship of forces making possible an agreement with the government could actually be realised. Any agreement with it 'from a cold start' was simply illusory.

The union's national leadership was not given the time to decide between these two orientations. Taken by surprise by the coup d'état, its members were, in their majority, arrested in the course of the night of 13 December 1981.

Notes

1. Extract from point 2 of the Gdansk Agreement, 31 August 1980, in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe (LFEE)* Vol. 4 Nos. 1-3, p.38.
2. Point 5, *Ibid*.
3. See the article by J. Kurczewski in *Kultura*, Warsaw, 1 March 1981. On 2 September 1980, 70% of those questioned by the Institute for the study of public opinion expected a rapid amelioration in their standard of living. Only 20% thought the same way in July of the same year.
4. See the struggles over free Saturdays in January and February 1981, and the peasant strikes in February of the same year.
5. *Zycie Warszawy* of 29 October 1980.
6. The article appeared in *Glos*; see *Le dossier de Solidarité*, numéro special de *l'Alternative*, Maspero 1982, p.81.
7. Cf J-Y Touvais, 'L'hiver terrible', in *Le dossier ...*, op. cit., p.62.
8. See *Autogestions*, No. 5, Privat 1981, p.65.
9. The French text can be found in *Inprecor (F)**, October 1980.
10. See the text of this circular in *Le dossier ...*, p. 136.
11. See the report by J. Allio, 'Les développements du contrôle ouvrier', in *Inprecor (F)*, No. 93, 20 January 1981. It cites these words of Z. Bujak, leader of Solidarity in Warsaw: 'We are not yet strong enough to impose everywhere directors of our own choice at the head of the enterprises, but we are strong enough to show the door to those directors that we don't want.'
12. Roneo-stencilled note of the Centre for social research of Mazowsze Solidarity, for internal use, 16 March 1981; four pages. The author of the enquiry, Jerzy Strzelecki, comments, 'The results of this enquiry should be seen only as indications of an orientation for future policies in the region.' (personal archive)
13. Among those enterprises represented one should note: the Lenin shipyard in Gdansk, the Warski shipyard in Szczecin, the Wujek mine in Katowice, the Cegielski factory in Poznan, the Ursus factory in Warsaw, etc.
14. Communiqué No. 7 of the Network (*Siec*) in *A.S.*, No. 22.
15. See *A.S.* No. 18, p.303.
16. See *A.S.* No. 19.
17. See *A.S.* No. 21.
18. The delegates present at this meeting came from the following regions: Lublin, Lodz, Katowice, Warsaw, Poznan, Wroclaw and Plock.

19. See the text of this immediate action programme for workers' councils in *Inprecor (F)* No. 108, September 1981.
20. See the special number of *Solidarnosc-Gdansk* of 5 September 1981, which brought together all the documents of the Network dealing with economic reform and self-management.
21. The PUWP decided on its position at the September 1981 Plenum of the Central Committee. The Sejm, after negotiating with the Solidarity praesidium, slightly modified the PUWP's position as far as the methods for electing directors was concerned. But generally speaking the law that was passed followed the Party's orientation.
22. See extracts from this law in *Que faire aujourd'hui?*, December 1981.
23. See the circulars of the Nomenklatura of the PUWP issued in 1972 in *L'Alternative* No. 8, November 1980.
24. See *Le dossier ...* p. 183-4.
25. See A. Babeau, *Les conseils ouvriers en Pologne*, A. Colin, 1960, p. 298.
26. This distinction was already visible in the workers' councils movement in Czechoslovakia in 1968-9. See in this respect the book by V.C. Fisera, *La révolution des conseils ouvriers*, Seghers/Laffont 1978.
27. See our articles: 'Le congrès de Solidarité' in *Le dossier ...*, pp.158-170, and 'La controverse sur les projets de réforme économique' in *Le Monde Diplomatique*, October 1981. The congress finally decided to assign the three contributions by experts on short-term reform to an annex of the programme.
28. Intervention at the KKP during 24-26 July 1981, in *Tygodnik solidarnosc*, No. 19, p.10.
29. See *Solidarnosc-Gdansk*, p.4.
30. See *Inprecor(F)* No. 110, October 1981.
31. The idea for this second Chamber goes back in fact to some proposals of O. Lange in 1956.
32. The 1 June 1981. See the minutes of this meeting in *A.S.* No. 19.
33. The first draft theses of the Network, published in *A.S.* No. 16, May 1981.
34. See on this matter the contributions of Z. Kowalewski, member of the Solidarity leadership in Lodz and one of the initiators of the Lublin Group. The most complete account of his experience has appeared in a Swedish weekly, *ETC....* The English translation is in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, Vol. 5 Nos. 1-2.
35. The expression is that of Z. Kowalewski.

* (F) signifies the French edition of *Inprecor*.

EASTERN EUROPE'S CND

For a Free Peace Movement in the GDR, too

By Robert Havemann

(The following text is the last public statement by Professor Robert Havemann, the veteran German communist and most prominent political dissident in the GDR, who died on 9 April this year. It was first published by the West German daily Frankfurter Rundschau on 25th March 1982. Readers should note that Havemann mistakes the date of the Polish coup as the 12th rather than the 13th December 1981. The translation is by Günter Minnerup. See his obituary of Robert Havemann on p. 32 of this issue.)

'In Europe today war can only be nuclear war. The weaponry accumulated in East and West will not protect, but destroy us. We shall all long be dead when the soldiers in the tanks and missile bases and the generals and politicians in the protective shelters, on whose protection we are relying, will still live and continue to destroy what is left.'

The first thesis of the Berlin Appeal initiated by Pastor Eppelmann. Pastor Eppelmann has been well known in the GDR for some time for the 'Blues services' organised by him and other church workers. Thousands of young people from all over the

GDR have for two years now regularly come to Berlin in order to take part in them. These youth services, because in them the desire for peace and the anti-militarism of the young could be articulated free from manipulation by the state organs and party organisations, were the first important step towards a free peace movement in the GDR.

After initial attempts by the state to prevent these services and strong pressures on the Church leadership of Berlin-Brandenburg, they were finally tolerated. It is simply impossible to give fulsome praise in the everyday media coverage in the GDR for the great successes of the many peace initiatives in Western countries and especially in West Germany, and to simultaneously forcibly suppress any sign of a peace movement in one's own country. The state's concessions were sensible and indicated a real willingness to take responsibility for the development and strengthening of the forces of peace in Germany.

The holding of the international peace meeting of writers in East Berlin organised by Stephan Hermlin, too, allowing the participation of some emigré authors and even some of those still living in

the GDR but regarded as 'dissident' and therefore expelled from the Writers' Union, also fits in with such an attitude.

But one should remember what happened then within 24 hours between the 11th and 12th of December: the meeting had only just been opened on 11 December, when on the 12th the depressing news arrived of the declaration of martial law in Poland and the mass arrest of writers and functionaries and members of the Solidarity trade union.

It is astonishing how weakly — with some exceptions — the writers reacted to this event. They must have realised that the installation of a military regime in Poland dealt a heavy blow to the peace movement in Western Europe and especially the Federal Republic of Germany. Anyway, one continued to discuss and even talked about the possibilities for a free and independent peace movement in the GDR. The GDR conformists among the participants thought it would be superfluous and misplaced here, since the government's policies were pure peace policies. But Hermann Kant, chairman of the GDR Writers Union, declared that a free and independent peace movement was possible in the GDR, whereupon Stefan Heym called for such a rally in Berlin's *Alexanderplatz* (a large square in the centre of East Berlin - trans.) with Eric Honecker's participation.

On the evening of that memorable 12 December Chancellor Helmut Schmidt said good-bye to Eric Honecker in Güstrow, the circumstances of this farewell — spread all over the GDR the very same evening by West German television — giving the name of this small Mecklenburg town political connotations which will not be forgotten too soon.

Even if that was not intended, however, the writers' meeting has had one result: the demand for an independent peace movement, analogous to the West German one, in the GDR was now on the agenda. Pastor Eppelmann's 'Berlin Appeal', in a sense the counterpart of the West German 'Krefeld Appeal', was the logical next step. Today one can say that the free peace movement in the GDR has indeed become reality. It has started its, hopefully, inexorable course. The collection of signatures asked for by Pastor Eppelmann continues all over the GDR.

The first reaction of the GDR authorities to the 'Berlin Appeal' was — as in the case of the 'blues services' — acutely hostile. Rainer Eppelmann was arrested, a detention order signed after 24 hours and legal proceedings initiated. Already before Eppelmann's arrest the comrades in the ministries had been informed of the steps taken against Eppelmann by a personal telegram from Eric Honecker — an event without precedent in the GDR. It said it was to inform the comrades before they heard of it in the Western mass media.

But as soon as the next day, before any Western media had learned anything about Eppelmann's arrest, the state prosecutor ordered the suspension of proceedings and the first Western news of Eppelmann's temporary arrest appeared after he had already been released and was celebrating the sudden turn of events with his family and friends. His surprising release was not tied to any conditions or obligations. But the Church leadership of Berlin-

Brandenburg was put under very strong pressure to not only avoid identifying itself with the Appeal, but to issue a circular counselling against the collection of signatures.

The Church circular starts off with a sympathetic attitude to the Appeal. *'The Appeal raises a number of questions that have a place in a consideration of the Christian responsibility for peace. All of our synods have taken a stand on many of these questions. Many statements in the Appeal belong to such a dialogue.'* But then it continues: *'The political and military constellation must be considered with more precision than in the Appeal. It also gives a distorted picture of those in political responsibility. It employs insinuations for which there must be no place in the tradition of Jesus Christ. The church leadership strongly advises against the collection of signatures,'* because, as one reads further on, *because that provokes misunderstandings and dangers which are not beneficial to the necessary sober dialogue.'*

On reading these sentences, which have been phrased without any concrete reasoning in a language the harshness of which is more than just a question of style, one could almost be frightened.

But I think that these formulations were drawn up before all those involved realised that one cannot deal with the 'Berlin Appeal' in this way without losing all credibility in the international arena of the peace movement.

The 'Berlin Appeal' is no anti-state agitation, it is no 'platform' for the preparation of political revolution. It is — one is tempted to say — the opposite of all this. It is simply an expression of the fact recalled in Thesis One of the Appeal, that we are already close to the edge of the precipice because there is nothing that we prepare with more eagerness and perfection than our own annihilation in the inferno of a nuclear war. For long we believed that the nuclear stalemate could save us peace. But, as Rainer Eppelmann argues in his accompanying letter to the 'Berlin Appeal', *'the balance of terror has only avoided nuclear war up to now by continuously postponing it until tomorrow. It is this approaching Morning of Terror that the nations are fearful of. They are looking for new ways to give peace a better foundation.'*

What is to be done?

Speed up the collection of signatures for the Berlin Appeal. Get the state organs of the GDR to not obstruct the collection, to admit its incontrovertible legality and permit the printing of official signature lists. The GDR's international reputation and the credibility of its peace policy will thus be enormously enhanced.

We address ourselves to our friends of peace in the West, to writers, scientists, representatives of the Christian churches and generally all those who have understood that a free peace movement in the GDR will provide a strong international impulse to help the forces of peace to victory and save us all from annihilation. Use all your opportunities to provide the population of the GDR with the information essential to our peace movement via the radio and television of West Germany. Publicise this article in radio broadcasts and arrange television interviews on the Berlin Appeal with writers, scientists, politicians and theologians.

Open Letter to Peace Movements

By Charter 77

The Charter 77 spokespersons are continuing to receive from citizens, and particularly from signatories of Charter 77, a whole number of ideas about the burning issue of the threat to peace in Europe and the world. Similarly, the peace movements of other countries have approached Charter 77 in recent months inquiring about its position on the defence of peace. Charter 77's document of 16 November 1981 expresses a positive attitude towards the peace movement. We wish to reiterate that we appreciate the gravity of the international situation and the importance of the peace

efforts of ordinary citizens. As signatories of a document that calls for the observance of human rights, we are aware that without peaceful coexistence, one of the fundamental human rights, namely, the right to life, is jeopardised. Nonetheless we are of the view that peace is indivisible. To guarantee peace it is necessary to eliminate violence and injustice within states and guarantee respect by the state authorities in all countries of human and civil rights, namely: human freedoms and dignity in the matter of political conviction and religious belief, the right of assembly, freedom of

speech, etc. This is in line with the UN Charter and the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. Hence both these campaigns, working, like Charter 77, for the implementation of the UN-drafted International Pact on Human Rights which have been signed and ratified by many states and solemnly confirmed by the Helsinki Final Act, constitute a real and valid contribution to efforts at achieving peace and cooperation.

Allow us to recall that there are values for which human life is sacrificed (and has been sacrificed often). We feel we cannot believe the genuineness of peace efforts where fundamental human and civil rights are suppressed, or where such suppression is ignored or even condoned. Let us not forget that improper acts have frequently been committed in the name of peace. In 1938, for instance, Daladier and Chamberlain gave way to Hitler and Mussolini's pressure, permitting a further expansion of the totalitarian regimes and contributing thereby to the outbreak of the Second World War — all in the name of safeguarding peace in Europe, as they claimed and as they were glorified by almost all the press and a considerable portion of the public opinion of their countries.

We are acquainted with many documents of the large peace movement which is currently growing in many European and other countries with the aim of saving humanity from the catastrophe of nuclear war. We are pleased to note that many of them speak of the indivisibility of peace in the same sense that we ourselves understand it. Furthermore, among the signatories to those documents we find those known for their attachment to such a view of peace who also continue to speak out courageously in support of human rights and their defenders throughout the globe — north, south, east and west, and in the First, Second and Third Worlds.

Like them, we are convinced that the only way to guarantee lasting peace is to maintain such a close link and interdependence bet-

ween, on the one hand, peaceful coexistence and cooperation, and on the other, consistent observance of the norms of human coexistence, fundamental rights and freedoms, human dignity and moral values. We believe that the present peace movement will stand firmly by these aims and put them into practice. Such aims we support and are ready to cooperate in furthering.

Therefore:

While fully appreciating the exceptional nature of the present threat (insofar as formerly there was hope of some sort of survival after war, now there is none) it is solely in relation to all other human rights that peace is not what it can become, namely, a temporary strategy of the powerful or a naive demand of those who wish to protect life at all cost, regardless of human responsibility to the values which surpass life itself. Not only as signatories of Charter 77 but also as citizens of Europe whose civilisation, from Ancient Greece and early Christianity has, despite its many faults, been distinguished by its attachment to such an idea of human responsibility and concern, we maintain an unbreakable commitment to the basic demands of human rights to which in this sense, and only in this sense, does the right to peace, and by extension the fight for peace, belong. Since the threat to peace in Europe is such an urgent issue and since official social structures may be suspect in the matter of peace because of too close a tie between them and political groups or state authorities, we believe that these questions should everywhere be the province of unofficial action by ordinary citizens. We have already had the opportunity of exchanging views with representatives of peace movements of different countries and persuasions and would welcome further meetings on this basis and on similar lines.

Prague, 29 March 1982

Dr Radim Palous, Prague 1, Vsehrdova 14
Anna Narvanova, Prague 3, Jeronymova 3
Ladislav Lis, Prague 10, Benesovska 33.
(Charter 77 spokespeople)

Pacifist Movement Within the Hungarian Catholic Church

By Bill Lomax*

'IT troubles me to see that some of our priests and believers should be encouraging young people of military age to refuse military service. Moreover, they do this by citing the teachings of the Bible and the Church in such a way as to lead our young people straight from their Catholic beliefs to a decisive rejection of military service. I am astonished to hear that there are people who respond to their words.'

Contrary to what one might at first assume, these remarks are not the sentiments of a Hungarian Communist Party official rebuking the Catholic Church for supporting the individual's right to refuse to act against his beliefs and conscience. They are the words of the Primate of Hungary, the head of the Catholic Church, cardinal László Lékai, justifying his suspension of a Catholic priest for, in the Cardinal's own words, *'publicly criticising the existing political system's decree on compulsory military service'* and expressing *'the opinion that military service should be entrusted the private conscience of every individual'*.

Compulsory military service has long been a highly detested obligation imposed on the younger generation in Hungary, and one that stands in sharp contrast to the regime's strident condemnation of the idea of reintroducing conscription in America or Britain as evidence of the warmongering stance of Western imperialism. Moreover, in Hungary there is in right to refuse military service on conscientious grounds, and no non-military alternative. According to paragraph 347 of the Hungarian Criminal Code, anyone who refuses military service is committing an offence punishable by a prison sentence of from 1 to 5 years, or in times of war of from 10 years to life imprisonment or the death sentence.

In 1979, at the age of 47, a mathematician of long-standing pacifist convictions, Dr. József Merza, was called up to the army — in an obvious attempt to undermine the influence of his ideas amongst younger people. After six months in military detention for refusing service, Dr. Merza was diagnosed as suffering from 'paranoid psychosis' and transferred to the local mental hospital, from which he was subsequently released. His son, however, József Merza jr., who

likewise refused military service, received a two-year prison sentence.

In December 1981, in Kaposvár, Imre Besze received a 30-month prison sentence for refusing military service. In another instance, in Székesfehérvár, István Pinter, who had been detained for some time for refusing military service finally agreed, under strong pressures, according to his family, to serve. Despite this he was still sentenced to 33 months in a special punishment detachment.

All of these objectors were Catholics who refused military service on religious grounds, under the influence of a growing pacifist movement amongst the 'base groups' or 'local communities' of Catholic believers that exist at the level of neighbourhood or locality, and are looked on as unfavourably by the Church hierarchy as by the Communist state itself. About a hundred of these groups follow the teaching of György Bulányi, a priest imprisoned under the stalinist Rákosi regime, who preaches a return to the behaviour of the early Christians, and to the values of poverty, humility and non-violence. They are

pacifists who defend the right of believers to refuse military service on grounds of conscience.

In 1979 a group of Catholic priests approached the Hungarian Episcopate, urging them to intervene with the authorities in favour of the introduction of a non-military form of social-work service for conscientious objectors. Since then partly reflecting the European-wide peace movement, partly as a result of increasing cases of imprisonment, the movement has become more organised and vocal, attracting ever-growing support amongst young people who have flocked to places of pilgrimage to attend evangelical services and religious festivals.

It was at one of these festivals, at Hajós in Southern Hungary in August 1981, that the first attempt was made to repress the movement. A popular Budapest priest, László Kovács, who had been invited to preach, arrived only to be told that his appearance had been prohibited by the State Office for Church Affairs. Protesting against the ban, Kovács took a vote amongst the 20 priests and 500 young people present and, with their agreement, delivered his sermon, in which he declared that it was wrong for Christians to take an oath attesting their readiness to kill, and that for those believers who did not follow Jesus's practice of non-violence, religion was indeed, as Marx had

argued, no more than opium.

Two weeks later, on 9 October 1981, László Kovács was suspended from the priesthood for six months, banished from Budapest and exiled to the parish of Márianosztra in Northern Hungary, by the Hungarian Primate, László Lékai. Three days earlier, in a homily at Esztergom, Cardinal Lékai had outspokenly attacked Catholic priests who called on the authority of the scriptures in defence of the right to refuse military service, and declared that the church approved the use of force for the defence of the nation, even quoting Saint Paul against the arguments of the pacifists.

Both the Primate's actions and his words called forth a storm of protest from both Catholic priests and believers throughout the country. 114 of László Kovács' parishioners signed a petition against his suspension, and the Cardinal received several hundred letters, many of them accusing the church leaders of paying greater attention to the demands of the state than to the commands of God. One of these came from András Gromon, a priest in the parish of Pomáz, who at the same time delivered a sermon in his church declaring his pacifist convictions, his fellowship with Kovács, and his dissent from the views of the Primate. Not long after this, in mid-October, András Gromon too was suspended from the

priesthood by Cardinal Lékai.

The conflict — essentially one concerning the rights of the individual and the powers of the state — has thus developed into a struggle between the radical pacifist believers among the base movement and the conservative church hierarchy. Unlike Poland where the Catholic church has occasionally felt obliged to come to the aid of the popular movement, and unlike East Germany where the Protestant church is presently defending its pacifist youth movement, the Hungarian Catholic Church has allowed itself to be clearly identified with the interests of the state and the establishment. The Hungarian regime, meanwhile, is able to stand back and wash its hands of the entire matter, declaring in the words of Imre Miklós, head of the State Office for Church Affairs, that 'this is an internal affair of the church'.

As in so many other respects, the Kádár regime is once again able to display its 'liberal face' to the outside world, while delegating responsibility for the repression of individual rights and the demands of conscience to its ever willing servants.

**This was based on an article by Miklós Haraszti in the second issue of the Hungarian samizdat journal Beszélő (News from Inside), April 1982.*

Soviet Peace Group Crushed

An attempt to establish an unofficial Soviet peace movement seems to have been stamped out, for the moment, by the Soviet authorities.

On 4 June, 11 founding members of the Independent Soviet Peace Movement launched their group at a Moscow press conference. They applied for registration as an authorised group to the Moscow City Council and also asked permission to hold a peace demonstration at the Lev Tolstoy monument. Amongst the slogans they put forward for the demonstration were a call on the US to ratify the SALT 2 Treaty, 'Peace Through Trust Not Fear' and 'Peace-Trust Not Disarmament'.

The eleven founding members all claimed that they had never previously been involved in any political or dissident activity, denied that they wished to oppose the aims of the official Soviet peace movement, but argued

that the official body was an instrument of Soviet government policy while they wished to mobilise 'the enormous creative potential' of ordinary Soviet people in the cause of peace.

The aim of the group was to establish trust between the Soviet and the American people in order to lay a firm basis for moves by their governments towards disarmament. The group has demanded that an uncensored bulletin be published jointly in both countries giving information about the state of disarmament negotiations. The group also urged that the week of 20-27 June be made a joint peace week in the USA and USSR.

The movement's founding statement collected more than 60 signatories before the KGB moved to wind up its activities. Those considered to be leaders were placed under house arrest and other signatories of the statement were invited to withdraw their

names or face severe penalties. One signatory, Oleg Radzinski, a 23-year-old philosophy student at Moscow University told Western journalists that he has been warned he could forfeit his chance to study.

Four of the eleven founding members, including the spokesperson, Sergei Batrovin, a 25-year-old artist and son of a Soviet diplomat who had worked in New York, had earlier applied to emigrate from the USSR.

A Soviet police official stationed outside Batrovin's flat told the *Financial Times* correspondent, Anthony Robinson, that they were not serious people and had formed the group 'merely in order to emigrate'. But members of the movement said they had hoped to link up with similar peace movements in the GDR and Hungary.

By Oliver MacDonald

EAST GERMANY

Robert Havemann 1910 — 1982 By Günter Minnerup

'I told the priest what I had read in Schopenhauer: that death is the only thing one does not experience, so one should not be sad about the time which one is not going to live through. One is, after all, not sad about the time one has not lived through

before birth and which certainly was very long, while the time after death will have to begin before it can become long. With this attitude I overcame all fear of death.'

That was in 1943: Robert Havemann had

just been sentenced to death by the Nazis for his anti-fascist activities, and was to survive only because his research was considered essential to the German war effort. A laboratory was installed in his cell in Brandenburg prison, and he was granted

regular stays of execution. Until his liberation by the Red Army in 1945 Havemann lived on 'borrowed time', under the ever-present threat of the guillotine or the firing squad, but it did not prevent him from installing a miniature radio receiver concealed among his laboratory equipment to secretly monitor foreign broadcasts and circulate the news through the prison's clandestine communist newspaper.

Havemann was to have a long life after his death sentence. Having returned to his career in scientific research in West Berlin after liberation, he soon found himself in conflict with the American authorities over his public opposition to the U.S. nuclear armament programme and was forced to settle in East Berlin, where he quickly rose to prominence as a Professor of Physical Chemistry at the Humboldt University, a member of the East German Academy of Science, and a deputy in the People's Chamber of the German Democratic Republic. A member of the German Communist Party since 1932, he unequivocally defended Soviet policies and the new East German regime in countless theoretical articles and polemics. His Stalinist world view was shaken to its foundations, however, by Khrushchev's 'secret speech' at the XXth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party in 1956 and the 'de-Stalinisation' that followed.

'The entire edifice of my beliefs collapsed under the tremors of this earthquake' ('Yes, I was wrong. Why I had been a Stalinist and became an anti-Stalinist', February 1965). Havemann became an advocate of free scientific debate, without, however, publicly breaking with the regime as yet. By 1964, however, such a break became unavoidable: his philosophy lectures had become too openly political and, more importantly, too popular with students who attended in their hundreds, to be allowed to continue. He lost first his teaching post, then his employment and his membership of the Academy of

Sciences and, of course, his Party membership.

The following eighteen years were spent in tireless opposition activity. Together with his close friend Wolf Biermann, he became a central figure in a circle of dissidents that was almost unique in Eastern Europe for its continued and public commitment to Marxism and communism. Both Havemann and Biermann used their privilege of international fame — which prevented the authorities from arresting and jailing them — effectively through frequent interviews, articles, books and — in Biermann's case — records published in West Germany which they knew would find widespread unofficial circulation in the GDR. Their public denunciation of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in August 1968 was a small, but important contribution to defending the good name of socialism against the barbarous practices of Ulbricht and Brezhnev.

The expulsion of Wolf Biermann from the GDR during a concert tour of West Germany in autumn 1976 provoked an outcry among not only a large number of East German writers, artists and intellectuals who signed an Open Letter protest, but also among unknown working-class and student youth who signed petitions circulating in factories and colleges. The myth that Havemann and Biermann were just isolated dissidents with no sympathy for their views beyond their immediate circle of personal friends was exposed for all to see.

The SED reacted by arresting and expelling many of the protesters, and while they still did not feel confident enough to gaoil or expel Havemann himself, they decided to isolate him by placing him under closely guarded house arrest. But despite rapidly failing health, police guards at the front door, the back garden and even patrol boats on the lake behind his house, and the telephone having been cut off, Havemann beat the quarantine with all the technical and conspiratorial ingenuity acquired in the years of anti-Nazi resistance and finally

forced the regime to abandon its tactics and lift the house arrest.

His death on 9 April this year went unreported in the media of the state which he had, despite all criticisms, loyally defended and refused to leave until the end. Perhaps the permission given to Wolf Biermann to visit him on his death bed (their first meeting since 1976) represents a small token of recognition by Party leader Eric Honecker, whom Havemann knew well ever since they were imprisoned together in Brandenburg, and whom he had frequently appealed to — sometimes successfully — on behalf of lesser-known political prisoners. He may have lost his personal fear of death in 1943, but in the last two years he became increasingly preoccupied with the danger of mankind's collective annihilation through nuclear war, and dedicated his remaining energies to the growing German peace movement — in the Federal Republic as well as the GDR. In an Open Letter to Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev he demanded the withdrawal of all nuclear weapons and foreign troops from German territory and raised the possibility of a German re-unification outside the two military blocs, and he was one of the original signatories to the 'Berlin Appeal' initiated by Pastor Rainer Eppelmann which has become the focus of the East German peace movement.

Wolf Biermann was not allowed to attend Havemann's funeral, nor were many others of his friends and comrades. But despite the close police surveillance many well-known, as well as many unknown and especially young, people turned the occasion in suburban Grünheide into a dignified demonstration. There were clenched fists to symbolise the tradition of the Marxist German workers movement that Havemann was rooted in, there were the 'Swords into Ploughshares' badges of the young peace movement that he had attached his hopes of a future to. Having survived a death sentence, Robert Havemann will survive his death in the ideas and actions of a new generation.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Pro-Solidarity Group Continues Despite Arrests and Provocations

By Jan Kavan

A group of young workers, who distributed large numbers of leaflets in December and January supporting the Polish labour movement, is continuing to function despite the arrest of people accused of being members of the organisation.

The Group for Revolutionary Action, as the organisation is called, first appeared with a leaflet issued on 15 December last year, denouncing the military coup in Poland and urging Czechs to give support to Solidarity. (See the last issue of *Labour Focus* for the text of the leaflet.)

On 21 January and 2 February the police ar-

rested a number of young workers from the Prague area accusing them of being responsible for the leaflets. They have remained in Ruzyně prison ever since, while further investigations are being carried on by the Czech security police (STB) and counter-intelligence. Dozens of other young workers have been interrogated in Prague, Hradec and other towns in central Bohemia during the last six months, in connection with the group.

The official Czech press has made no mention whatsoever of either the leaflets or the arrest and detention of the young workers.

All news has come from a body called the Committee Against Dictatorship, evidently linked to the GRA. A Committee press release of 24 April gives a detailed account of the police investigation. It says the police regard Jan Wunsch as the initiator of the leafletting campaign, but he has consistently refused to give any testimony, thus prompting STB interrogator Lieutenant Grulich to propose that he be sent for psychiatric examination. He has proposed the same fate for Vaclav Soukup, another of the detained workers. The original charge of incitement under Article 100 of the criminal code has been altered to the more serious charge of subversion of the Republic, under Article

98, section 2, which carries 3 to 10 years' imprisonment.

At the end of April Jan Wunsch and his wife Vera Novotna were additionally charged with stealing socialist property under Article 132 for allegedly stealing the duplicator used for the leaflets from Vera's place of work. The duplicator was found in the flat of Milan Vorlik, another of the detained workers.

Further arrests are expected as the police attempt to prove a link between the GRA and organisations in other East European countries, notably Solidarity, the Polish Catholic Church and KOR (Workers' Defence Committee that disbanded last autumn in Poland). Under pressure from the security police (STB) a student, Vladyna Glivicka, made a confession and is now the sole prosecution witness against the accused. Others interrogated have refused to give evidence useful to the police. The investigation is likely to continue until the end of June and the trial is expected in September.

The Committee Against Dictatorship says that the group's leafletting campaign has had the support of other opposition groups inside Czechoslovakia and has also gained a fair amount of support amongst workers who would not involve themselves in the oppositional activities of other groups. Such working class support is said to have been drawn especially from the industrial areas of central Bohemia, which include Prague itself and the mining area of Kladno.

In an effort to discredit the group and weaken support for it, the STB has apparently engaged in a new type of provocation. Forged letters claiming to come from the GRA have been sent to Charter 77

spokesperson Ladislav Lis and his family. The letters demand payment of a ransom of 150,000 Czech crowns if Lis wishes to prevent the murder of his two daughters. This extraordinarily crude fabrication was denounced by the GRA itself in a letter dated 8 June, signed in the name of the GRA's coordinating committee. As well as denouncing the forgery, the GRA affirms: *'We fully identify ourselves with Charter 77 activity and support all groups attempting to achieve the renewal of democracy by political means. We repudiate gangster methods typical of supporters of anarchy and terrorism'*, the letter states.

Ladislav Lis and his wife simultaneously sent a letter to the Ministry of the Interior denouncing the provocation, and a few days later he wrote to Gustav Husak, President of the Republic, reminding Husak of a statement he made back in the 1960s when Husak declared that the then President of Czechoslovakia, Novotny, was, by virtue of his office, responsible for all the crime carried out by the state authorities of the day.

Lis also lists some of the brutalities perpetrated against Charter 77 in recent years: the beating up of Zdena Tominova, a Charter 77 spokesperson at the time, in 1979; the night attack on Zina Freundova in her flat last autumn; the attempt to throw current Charter spokesperson, Anna Narvanova onto the tracks of the Prague Underground; the recent night attack on Charter 77 signatory Stanislav Adamek who was abducted to a forest near Prague and beaten up; the threats against others of suffering car 'accidents' or of being thrown into the Mazocha cave near Brno, where a Catholic student was found murdered last year — many believe an STB crime; the setting on fire of the car of Charter 77 spokesperson, Maria Hromadkova, etc.

This appalling list of brutalities, which grew in intensity with the rise of Solidarity in Poland, leads Lis to state that Charter 77 will have to seriously consider organising its own self-defence. There will be no alternative, he states, if the police continue to show themselves unable to protect citizens.

HELP FOR FAMILIES OF THE ARRESTED

Those who would like to send financial assistance, however small, to the families of the accused should send their donations to: the EESC, c/o Vladimir Derer, 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Cheques payable to: EESC.

Prague Admits Illegal Sackings

In an unprecedented move, the official Czechoslovak representatives at the International Labour Organisation in Geneva, have admitted that some of the Czech citizens sacked from their jobs for signing the civil rights declaration Charter 77 were fired illegally.

The admission was revealed on 16 June when the head of the Czechoslovak delegation, Milos Masek, accepted a statement by the ILO's committee on standards which said the Czechoslovak authorities recognised 'that certain persons were dismissed without justification'.

The issue of illegal sackings of Charter 77 supporters went to the ILO after a vigorous international campaign in 1977 in which *Labour Focus* and the Committee in Defence of Czechoslovak Socialists issued a special number of *Labour Focus* containing details of victimised Charter 77 supporters.

— By Oliver MacDonald

YUGOSLAVIA

Kosovo between Yugoslavia and Albania

Interview with Arshi Pipa

(The gigantic scope of the national uprising in Kosovo last year is only now becoming apparent with the publication of large quantities of material about the events in the Yugoslav press. Despite the very scanty attention paid to the Kosovo upheaval in the Left press there is no doubt that the crisis there will continue for a very long time and exert a major influence on political developments both in Yugoslavia and Albania.)

We are therefore publishing an interview with the distinguished Albanian literary scholar, Arshi Pipa, who went into exile from Albania in the late 1950s and now lives in the United States. The interview for Labour Focus was carried out by Michele Lee.)

What would you say are the affinities and differences between Kosovo and Albania today?

The Albanians feel very strongly about Kosovo

being part of Albania. Not only because of historical elements, but I would say for political reasons too. There is no Albanian who does not feel that Kosovo should be an integral part of Albania.

Do you think this is also true for the younger generation which has grown up and gone through Yugoslav schools? Do you think they also feel themselves closer to Albania than to Yugoslavia?

That I really don't know, because I have not visited Kosovo. But I would say that in general there is a great attraction towards Albania: the Kosovars feel they are part of Albania and would like to join it. But this is more a kind of nostalgic or emotional approach, and when one comes to the leadership they certainly view things differently?

The Albanian leadership in Kosovo?

Yes. I am quite sure of that. They feel differently because they know that if Kosovo joined Albania they would be just eliminated. There is no doubt about that. They are officially the representatives

of revisionism, Titoism, etc. People in key positions, who were instrumental in creating the existing situation, would be eliminated. Therefore it goes without saying that they don't want just to join Albania, I mean an Albania ruled by the kind of leadership which exists there today.

You think there is a difference between the leadership and the population — that the population does not have these fears?

That's correct. My feeling is that the population, especially those who don't know exactly the situation in Albania, have a nostalgic desire to join Albania. Those who are more educated and know the differences between the two kinds of socialism are of course much more reserved. I would say that these are in general the educated people who can make out the differences, ideological differences in particular. And when it comes to the leadership then there is no doubt that they are against that. But the affinities are there: the common history, common language, common customs. And this constitutes the basis for a union.

You say that they have a common history, and this is of course largely true. Nevertheless Kosovo has been outside Albania for about seventy years now, with the exception of the very short period of Italian occupation. As 70 years in the 20th century is considerably more than 70 years at any other time, do you think this has created some basis for separate development?

In my view, this has to be considered in relation to specific problems. For instance, regionalism — the question of Geg and Tosk, to begin with — and the economic situation. But there can be no doubt that there is an affective element involved. If, for instance, a referendum were to be held today in Kosovo, then I am sure that a great deal of the population would vote for union with Albania just because of these affective ties. Speaking of affinities, we should also include the important folklore elements. However, the differences are also very relevant. To begin with, Kosovars are nearly all Geg. The distinction between Gegs and Tosks has some importance in Albanian history, dating back to the time when the dividing-line between the Roman and Byzantine empires passed through the country. This, more than the religious difference, explains why there has always been some friction between the Gegs and Tosks. Just to give you an example, when Albania became a kingdom, the king was a Geg Northener, and there was a great deal of resistance to him on the part of the Tosk Southerners. At least three insurrections started in the South: one in Vlorë, another in Fier, a third in Kurvelesh. The people who led these uprisings were almost all Tosk. Sometimes they were chieftains from Northern Albania who, for tribal reasons, did not like Zog but the main trouble always came from the South.

Now, since the Kosovars and an awful lot of Albanians in Macedonia are Geg, then a unification — I will come to this problem later — would immediately change the more or less equal balance of Gegs and Tosks in Albania. Also, in Albania they have learned how to live together. And of course, there is a question of religion. In Albania today there are three or four religions (if we include the Bektashi) and the Moslems form a majority of 75-80%. The Moslem element in Albania is not generally of a fanatical character — religion has never been important to the Albanians, as you know, and to the Moslems even less than to the others. The Catholics are somewhat more religious, but even then only in Shkodër not in the Highlands. Because of their cultural links with Italy and the Vatican, they are more conscious of their religious identity.

But it is also interesting to know that these are also the most patriotic people in Albania. There is a whole line of Albanian patriotism which has its greatest champions in the Albanian Franciscans. The doctrine of their founder is only loosely binding on these Franciscan friars, who have at times taken a gun and fought the enemy. Now, since the Albanians in Yugoslavia are 95% Moslem, the union would completely change the balance in this respect too.

Surely if the Albanian population is 80% Moslem today and 95% tomorrow, this is only a matter of degree. Yet you feel there is more to this than numbers. Is it to do with the Moslem schools and the practice of Islam which is free in Kosovo while that organising aspect is completely absent in Albania?

Yes, the Kosovars are religious. I would not say they are fanatics, but they do feel religious. And I think that religion to them comes mostly as a kind of differentiating element towards the Slavs in general.

How about the younger generation? More than half of the Kosovar population is under the age of twenty.

No doubt this is important. But I would say that since religion has been left free in Yugoslavia,

there is still a kind of religious feeling that could be considered mostly traditional and customary. It is still there, whereas in Albania it is now almost eliminated. So, in the event of a union there would be some friction on this score.

Kosovo enjoys a large degree of autonomy in Yugoslavia, and its position in the Federation is very similar to that of the other republics and Vojvodina. What do you think of Kosovo's status in Yugoslavia?

What exactly does it mean to say that Kosovo is an Autonomous Province? Politically speaking, the Kosovars do have a great degree of autonomy: they have a territorial army, for instance, and their own security forces; and the chief administrative positions are held by them as well. But the question is how this political autonomy works at the economic level. I am not an economist and I do not know the situation there very well, but from the little information I have been able to gather, it would seem that the situation could be best described by the word 'semi-colony'. The Federation has given them a lot of money, a quarter of a million dollars even goes to Kosovo from the World Bank to redress the economy, and there are the loans with low interest from the Federation.

Yet things are clearly in bad shape there. Compare the monthly industrial wage. In Kosovo it is \$180, compared with the Yugoslav average of \$230. Then there is the fact that Kosovo is still to a large extent an agricultural region: 51% of the population lives off the land, compared with 38% in Yugoslavia as a whole. Some heavy industry has been developed, especially mining and the electrical industry, but the money which goes into these industries does not produce marketable items which bring money and also jobs. So they have to buy everything from the other states in the Federation. Also, the unemployment rate there is quite fantastic. In 1981 there were 178,000 unemployed and only 67,000 in employment. Even these are mostly administrative employees, so that employment has the nature of bureaucracy, it is unproductive. And you have this enormous number of students — 51,000, but maybe the figure is a little exaggerated. Where is this nascent intellectual proletariat going to go? A number of Kosovars are now travelling around trying to find jobs in other states of the Federation, or even going to West Germany and other countries abroad.

This is a general problem in which Kosovo has been caught particularly badly because of the nature of its industry. But throughout Yugoslavia certain branches of industry, primary industry, have always felt underprivileged as a cheap basis for further industrialisation. And throughout Yugoslavia, not just in Kosovo, youth unemployment is very high. Kosovo, of course, feels all this much more strongly because it has no secondary industry.

So, there has to be absolute improvement in the economic situation of the Kosovars, because political economy combined with a semi-colonial situation calls into question the meaning of political economy itself. I don't know how this could be improved. One could say *a priori* that the Yugoslav government must have tried to solve this problem, because it is in the interest of Yugoslavia as a whole to have a healthy Kosovo. But I don't know what the reasons are which have made economic recovery impossible in Kosovo. For example, I have read that decentralisation has not only not advanced the situation there, but actually worsened it, and I would like to know why. I would like to hear an explanation from people competent in this field, for the fact is that the situation in the economy is very bad.

How about the culture?

Here we have the other anomaly. The culture in Kosovo is not really Kosovar but Albanian, so that if the situation from the economic point of view is

semi-colonial, in culture we have a quasi-colonial situation. This may be connected with the fact that scholarship has not yet developed as far as in Albania. But the point is that they have only been absorbing what they get from Albania, and even then without discrimination. So you have all these books from Albania which are simply reproduced. Consider the fact that they have adopted the so-called standard literary Albanian. One understands the political reasons for this: having been called 'Shiftars' for a long time, and having in a way been second-class citizens, it was in their interest to identify with Albania by all means. And since Albanians identify not with religious or political frameworks — I would say even less with ideology — but with their language, they immediately adopted the standard language and have been using it ever since. This forcefully demonstrates their complete cultural dependence on Albania. So I don't know what is going to happen now that the cultural convention between Albania and Yugoslavia has been suspended.

The cultural convention?

They have had a cultural agreement with Tirana, and it was working pretty well in the sense that they received a great deal of educational material, especially literature, and tried to absorb as much as they could. So, what are they going to do now that the agreement has been suspended? I have heard that they might reconsider the question of the literary language, and this they may very well do if the situation continues. I expect they will try to develop their own literary dialect. Now that the convention has been suspended they won't have textbooks for instance, so they will have to produce their own textbooks and that will take time. It is not so easy. Also from the cultural point of view autonomy has meant very little.

Perhaps at this point it might be relevant to ask how you think a change of status from Province to Republic might alter the situation.

We must look at the question of leadership first in the new situation. If Kosovo received the status of a republic, the first effect would be a rise in the morale of the population, a real mood of elation. The friction would subside, and the economic situation might also improve since Kosovo would have more say in the Federation. That would be almost a necessary consequence of republican status, because it may produce more initiative on the part of the Kosovar leadership, an impulse to start making the reforms for which they have not previously had sufficient power and legitimacy. I expect that in a new situation the leaders would be in a position to have more influence on the population: for example, to start some reforms in the agriculture, to try to correct its primitive situation — I am not saying to collectivise or anything of that sort. Yet there are ways of correcting the situation perhaps from a technological point of view, and this could bring some improvement in the economy of Kosovo. In culture, too, they would certainly become more positive and develop greater cultural autonomy from Albania.

So, they will be writing their history from a less dependent point of view. There is something else also. If I am not mistaken, the university there has emphasised the humanities; the departments of technology and agriculture are not very strong. They have been specialising in history, literature, foreign languages, but they lack people with special knowledge of the economy who are able to manage industries. The point is to redress the Kosovo economy, and unless they can create leaders and specialists for this purpose, they will always be in an inferior situation. And if they became a republic, I think they could do it. A change in status would also create an element of stability because, feeling real citizens of the country, they would start to work out more constructive projects. Also from a cultural point of view. So I think that the Yugoslav Federation has

almost everything to gain from this and almost nothing to lose. This would be a kind of legal recognition of what they have in practice, and as for the secession problem, I don't think it is real.

Did you not say earlier that if one held a referendum tomorrow in Kosovo the Kosovars would vote in great part to join Albania? This is what the Yugoslav government, the Yugoslav leadership say they are worried about.

In the present situation this may very well be the case. But with the granting of republican status comes also the incentive. First of all because they would become more conscious of the political situation, and the great deal of ignorance which exists would gradually vanish as people came to understand the difference between the two systems. Once they understood that, the kind of nostalgic, affective attachment to Albania would also diminish. They would start realising that although there is an Albania there, there is also an Albania here, in a certain sense. So we have the language, we have some freedoms which do not exist there. It is by no means certain that under such conditions a referendum would automatically resolve into the option to join Albania.

You know that after last year's events in Kosovo, Stane Dolanc, a member of the Yugoslav Party Presidency, told foreign journalists at a press conference that republican status for Kosovo would mean creating two Albanias, and that it would be wrong to do this. Do you think there would be two Albanias?

There will be two Albanias because there will be something called Kosovo which speaks the Albanian language, which develops Albanian culture within the framework of the Yugoslav Federation. But what does this mean in practice? There are a million and a half Albanians in Kosovo, and nearly another three in Albania, so there would be a smaller Albania here and a larger Albania there. But there is no doubt that this would benefit the Federation. I don't think the Yugoslavs have anything to lose because secession seems to me quite improbable.

I don't think the Albanians really have their sights on union with Kosovo. As we were saying earlier, the political systems are so different that I don't see how they could amalgamate. A conquest of one side by the other would just create immense problems. It is difficult to see that just joining them together would bring any improvement. The Albanians, and I think they are sincere here, say they don't have any territorial claims. This, I believe, is because of the problems that would be involved.

There would immediately be a problem arising from the still largely private character of Kosovo agriculture. So they would have to impose collectivisation, and the Kosovars perhaps just wouldn't take it after living in an atmosphere of freedom from that point of view. There would also be the problem of regionalism all over again. Either there would be a greater Geg participation in the government and Politbureau — which would very much weaken and practically dissolve the kind of leadership existing in Albania today — or the leadership coming from Kosovo would be simply eliminated, and hostility created as a result. The Albanian leadership now — I am not speaking of the future — really doesn't want reunion with Kosovo. So, if neither the Albanians from Albania nor the Kosovo leadership want union (this is just looking at the political differences), there is no basis for the fear of secession and union. I hope the Yugoslav leadership will come to this conclusion, since it is for the benefit of the Yugoslav Federation as a whole and not only of Kosovo.

Before we carry on, do you want to say anything more on Kosovo from the Albanian perspective?

I think that the Albanian leadership feel more secure having Kosovo there, as a stake in Yugoslavia, in case of an invasion. They feel it to be a kind of buffer zone, and they are very much afraid of an invasion from the Soviet Union. When they go so far as to say that if Yugoslavia were attacked they would come to its aid, then this explains a great deal about the situation. They feel physically more protected by having Kosovo there.

Is the Kosovo issue perceived differently by the Gëgs and the Tosks in Albania? I mean, you suggested that in a certain sense it is also a Geg-Tosk problem. Does the population in the north have stronger ties to Kosovo?

For historical reasons, the Northern Albanians would feel more strongly for union with Kosovo than the Southerners. The dialect, as well as religion, also bring them together. The old tribal relations may still be alive, because I don't think they can be extirpated so easily. For instance, when I speak to Dukagjin people from Albania, they have a feeling that the Kosovars are just the same, that they are Dukagjin mountaineers who have gone down to the plains. So they feel that they are their own tribe in a sense, which is not the case, of course, with Southern Albanians.

What is the cultural scene in Kosovo today?

Illiteracy is still very high in Kosovo, around 31%. This leads to a disproportion between university students and uneducated people. That, of course, is connected with differences between the urban and rural population, which in Albania, as you know, has been corrected. It was never a real problem in Albania because the cities have always had a close relation with the countryside, but anyhow it has been the policy in Albania to close that gap. And therefore this difference exists between Albania and Kosovo.

Do you think that this gap in Kosovo is a result of the private nature of agriculture, or that perhaps it has been also historically determined by the bigger size of towns, say, their more autonomous development?

I am not competent to speak about these problems. But it is true that Kosovars have had a pastoral kind of economy — raising animals and particularly sheep — as well as the custom of transhumance which also applies to Northern Albanians. The economy is influenced by physical and geographical factors which make them somewhat different from the rest of the population in Yugoslavia. The point I am trying to make is that there is a great imbalance: on the one hand, there is the intelligentsia, some good scholars being produced there now; and on the other hand, you have just ignorance and illiteracy. And with ignorance comes fanaticism. This situation can be corrected, will be corrected, particularly through developing technology, through travel between Kosovo and Albania and, hopefully, vice versa, but also through the development of a Kosovo culture. The Kosovars do have a certain tradition which, to some extent, distinguishes them from the rest of Albania. And in order to develop further their national culture, they will have to use these characteristics and return to the literature produced in Kosovo — they will have to develop their own literary dialect. To me this kind of copying of the language does not seem very productive.

First of all, it creates a great problem. I have read a communique of one of the meetings of the executive studying the situation of the language, and they were very despondent about how slowly the standard literary language has been absorbed. This is to be expected because of the differences in dialect. Now, if instead they would work out a kind of literary standard based on the Kosovar dialect, then I think education would be improved and the population would absorb it better. This brings us to the question of literature, which is important from a cultural and political

point of view. I have noticed myself, and here I can speak with some confidence, that they were doing some good work in literature before adopting the literary standard, because of course they could express themselves easily. There was a great deal of eclecticism or groping — all manner of currents amalgamated without any discrimination — but these were the trails, these were passes being opened. I am sure that they have produced some good work. And sure, the people are there, as well as the intelligence and capacity for creation — Kosovars have a good deal of imagination. And this has come almost to a stop now. Geg and Tosk are the same language, no doubt about that, but they have some differences. It is not easy to write in another dialect unless you have been trained very well. So, my reading now is that what they have produced since then is rather disappointing. There used to be some real literary potential, but that has gone. It may well recover but I don't know exactly how.

Is this felt by some in Kosovo?

I don't know if they feel it or not, but the problem is there. Because when you write literature, you create from the subconscious. The phraseology is very important, and they have sacrificed this to some extent. So, when I speak about this problem, it is because I think that they should really be a bit on their own, they should try to do something that better reflects their own cultural situation. I would also like to mention that if they have not yet produced great scholars or great writers, this is understandable in terms of their past situation. But I have also seen them progressing and they have some good people, especially in linguistics and folklore, musical folklore in particular. The publications I have been following speak of real progress, the scholarly standards have improved and have been improving. They have produced a really important scholar, Hasan Kaleshi, who also knew the oriental languages, Turkish and Arabic. That is extremely important, I think, for Kosovo, indeed for the whole of Albania — the Albanians, very strangely, have not given sufficient importance to oriental studies. For instance there is a book that has just come out, by Zef Mirdita, on the problem of Dardania, which is a scholarly book. There is Ali Hadri, who is a very good historian. So it is not that they lack people but they will have to get more accustomed to ways of scholarship and to have more contact with the outside world. They don't have the problem they have in Albania of not being able to travel abroad, although in Albania as well things have started to change. I hear that they now send students to France and Italy. But the Kosovars are more favoured from this point of view: their greater freedom allows them to develop more contacts and better literature. In the arts they have been doing some good work, especially in music and dance. And there is a young actor, Bekim Fehmiu, who has acted in some good films and has recently been working in the United States. So I think they can produce their own culture. I don't mean to say that they should differentiate themselves absolutely from Tirana, definitely not, but it would be in the interests of Albanian culture generally if they are able to develop their own brand of Albanian culture.

What effect do you think a future Albanian unification would have on the Balkans?

I would say that it would have a very positive effect on peace in the Balkans. The Albanians have always felt that injustice was done to them when parts of their territories were left in other states. Since they are also a small nation, they feel that by being able to unite they would play a major role in the politics of the Balkans. The feeling that they are one nation is very strong, despite differences in dialect and other areas. If the existing situation is not corrected, the Albanian problem will always be a major source of friction and one more destabilising element in the Balkans. The question is, *how* this unification is to be effected.

There are, of course, two ways of approaching the problem: the incorporation of Kosovo into a 'Greater Albania', and the federation of Albania with Yugoslavia. The Albanians have a very strong wish to be independent, and I would say that ideology here is really secondary. If you talk to an Albanian, be he rightist or leftist, he will always be for an independent Albania. So federating with Yugoslavia seems to me quite an improbable solution. The other alternative, that Kosovo joins Albania, seems for the moment also very difficult and improbable. For although the two systems of government both go under the name of socialism, they are actually very different. It will be some time before union becomes a real possibility.

What I see happening for the moment, however, is a rapprochement between Kosovo and Albania, and this will certainly be easier if a

change in Albania were to take place so that the Yugoslavs would not be viewed with hostility from the ideological point of view. Such a rapprochement would certainly be in the interests of both Kosovo and Albania. As you know, Yugoslavia is already Albania's major trading partner. This suggests that the ideological differences are to some extent artificial and involve a great deal of rhetoric. For if you trade with another country, and this country becomes your major trading partner, then of course there is a *de facto* rapprochement taking place. Particularly as the two systems, though in many ways very different, are also basically socialistic, and this makes it all very much easier than if it was a question of a capitalist country.

Both Albania and Yugoslavia are also outside the Eastern bloc.

This is an important element in common, because in the Balkans today only Yugoslavia and Albania do not belong to one of the blocs. The fact that Albania and Yugoslavia both have a strong sense of a Soviet threat necessarily brings them together. Therefore their rapprochement would also be very important in bringing other Balkan nations together and establishing the contacts which could later lead to a Balkan federation. When I speak of a Balkan federation I do not, of course, mean just Albania and Yugoslavia. But things have to start somewhere, and a rapprochement between Albania and Yugoslavia holds most promise for a future Balkan federation. Considering what happened in the past, and looking at the present situation, this is the best solution for all of us to live in peace. The question of leadership to one side, the population of the Balkans would certainly benefit by that. And the sooner it happens, the better it will be.

USSR

The Opposition in Ukraine

By John-Paul Himka

Just last fall, five Ukrainians in the Soviet Union were sentenced to death by firing squad for acts allegedly committed over thirty years ago. These were former members of the nationalist Ukrainian Insurgent Army (UPA), which emerged in 1942 as an anti-Nazi and subsequently also anti-Soviet resistance force. This is becoming a regular tradition in the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic: every few years the authorities arrest aging veterans of the Ukrainian nationalist underground, put them on a carefully orchestrated show trial and then shoot them. The purposes of this ritual performance are partly to intimidate the Ukrainian population and to slander all Ukrainian national aspirations as 'fascist'. But like all ritual, it also has the purpose of acting out certain fantasies. By executing men in their sixties, the Soviet authorities hope to lay to rest the Ukrainian opposition as a whole.

But such voodoo doesn't work well in Ukraine, which has re-emerged as a major centre of social and national unrest and progressive ideological ferment in the Soviet Union. Almost at the same time as the UPA veterans were sentenced, workers at the Kiev motorcycle factory went on strike to demand the payment of bonuses and a revision of the norms for piece work. (In order to contain the strike movement, the authorities met the workers' demands within two days.) This was only the latest in a series of strikes reported in Ukrainian *samizdat*. To the south, in the industrial Donbas region, workers' unrest is chronic and the region is the main base of support for the illegal free trade union movement.

The universities are also becoming infected with oppositional ideas. In January 1981 the Kiev militia arrested five youths for posting the city with leaflets saying: 'Fellow countryman! Today, 12 January, is the Day of the Ukrainian Political Prisoner. Let us

commemorate it.'¹ Four of the youths were brought to trial in June and sentenced to three years in labour camps. A number of their friends were given stern warnings by the KGB to refrain from political activity. The four accused ranged in age from 26 to 30 years old; they included two women and two men, three Ukrainians and one nationally conscious Jew. At the trial they were also accused of, and would not deny, condemning the Soviet invasions of Czechoslovakia and Afghanistan and supporting the struggle of the Polish trade union Solidarity. (Later on, in the summer of 1981, another 23-year-old woman in Kiev was arrested in a separate leafletting incident.)

The old KGB tactic of labelling all Ukrainian opposition 'bourgeois nationalist' or 'fascist' is becoming ever more difficult to apply. Yuri Badzyo, author of the 'Open Letter' recently published in German translation, had defined himself in that work as a socialist by conviction, close to the Eurocommunists. In a new letter, addressed to Brezhnev (22 April 1981), he has defined his political views in more detail. In an interesting parallel to the convictions of the left wing of Solidarity, Badzyo argues that in the conditions of so-called 'real existing socialism', it is necessary to reject unequivocally the concept of the leading role of the Communist Party. '*The central idea of my social and civic-political conception,*' writes Badzyo, '*is a renunciation of the leading role of the CP as a principle incompatible with a democratically organised society*'. Badzyo also points out the tragic absurdity of a situation in which a socialist theorist must be imprisoned in a nominally socialist country like the Soviet Union.

'My critique of the politics of the party and state not only does not go beyond the boundaries of the socialist ideal, but is in fact aimed at its defence ... It is the theoretical

defence of the socialist idea, especially from the negative experience of real socialism. In repressing me, the authorities have broken their own laws, have displayed a brutal contempt for the ideal of socialism, for the socialist teaching of Marx and Engels, because it is from this position ... that I criticise the programme and policies of the CPSU and the political status of the CP in Soviet society.'

In another samizdat document that has recently reached the West ('Dissidentism: Some Remarks on a Social Phenomenon'), the pseudonymous author, Stepan Hoverlyia, argues that the potential social base of the opposition movement in the Soviet Union is much larger than most dissidents imagine. In fact almost all Soviet citizens are potential or passive dissidents, with the obvious exception of the several million who belong to the privileged caste of party functionaries, the political gendarmerie and the administrative and economic elite. Hoverlyia sees five major groups comprising the social base for dissent:

- 1) tens of millions of religious believers;
- 2) tens of millions of people who do not belong the ruling (Russian) nation;
- 3) tens of millions of 'dissatisfied and cheated workers';
- 4) tens of millions of peasants, who live under conditions even worse than those of the workers; and
- 5) the greater part of the intelligentsia, which is economically exploited and deprived of the opportunity to organise itself. Hoverlyia points out that many people fall into more than one group simultaneously and are doubly or even triply disaffected.

He already sees historically unprecedented forms of passive resistance to the regime: '*the wholesale stealing of state property by the entire population and the mass shirking of productive work*'.

Worried by the potential expansion of dissent as envisioned by Hoverlya, by the sophistication of ideological opposition as represented by Badzyo, by the penetration of progressive ideas among young people as evidenced by the case of the leaflets and by growing unrest in the working class, the KGB has responded by mounting a massive campaign of repression against Ukrainian activists. The campaign is marked by two new tactics (new, at least, in their systematic character): charging dissidents with ordinary crimes to deprive them of the moral stature of political imprisonment;² and re-arresting known activists soon after their release from imprisonment or even just prior to their release. Typical are the cases of Jaroslaw Lesiw and Wasyl Sitschko, both members of the Ukrainian Helsinki Group, who were arrested in 1981 on charges of

possession of narcotics shortly before each was scheduled to be released from a concentration camp. Charges brought against other re-arrested Ukrainian dissidents include homosexuality (Mykola Plakhotniuk) and speculation in Western currency (Sergei Paradzhanov).³ Unfortunately, the list of arrests is too long to continue here.

Notes

1. On 12 January 1972 the KGB launched a mass arrest of Ukrainian dissidents. The date has since been commemorated by the Ukrainian opposition.
2. The head of the Ukrainian KGB, W. W. Fedorchuk, told members of the Felix Dzerzhinsky KGB club in April 1981: 'In the past year greater efforts were made and forty Ukrainian nationalists were thwarted. To avoid unnecessary international friction, most were sentenced on criminal charges.' (The citation comes from an

anonymous samizdat article written at the end of 1981, 'The Situation in Ukraine'.)

3. Paradzhanov was arrested 11 February 1982 in Tbilisi, Georgia. He was the director of the film masterpiece 'Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors' which won 16 international prizes and brought the director world renown. The authorities began persecuting him in 1965, accusing him of 'Ukrainian nationalism' (he had refused to dub 'Shadows of Forgotten Ancestors' into Russian, for purely artistic reasons); but he was not at this time formally charged. In 1966 his film 'Kievan Frescoes' was destroyed; it had included a frank treatment of the destruction of frescoes in Ukraine after 1917. Paradzhanov was arrested on 17 December 1973 and charged with speculation in Western currency and homosexuality. He was sentenced to five years in labour camps, but thanks to an international campaign on his behalf, he was released on 30 December 1977. Until his new arrest he lived with his sister in Tbilisi. He has written a number of screenplays and stories that remain unpublished. He is of Armenian nationality.

National Labour Movement Conference Solidarity with Solidarnosc

Dear Brother/Sister,

We are writing to ask you to sponsor the National Labour Movement Conference in Solidarity with Solidarnosc that is being organised by our campaign. The conference has already been sponsored by Labour MPs Eric Heffer, Michael Meacher, George Morton, Frank Allaun, Roger Stott and Ken Livingstone, leader of the Greater London Council.

We believe that it is vital that the labour movement comes to the aid of our Polish brothers and sisters at this time of need. Millions of trade unionists throughout the world have been inspired by the struggle of the Polish workers for genuine democratic socialism. The declaration of martial law of 13 December last year has undoubtedly set back that struggle but it is by no means all over. The resistance is growing. They need our solidarity now. Moreover, we cannot allow the likes of Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher to parade unchallenged as friends of the Polish workers. They support dictatorial regimes from Turkey to El Salvador. They are no friends of the workers in Poland or any other country. It is time for the labour movement to speak out for an end to martial law, for the release of the interned/arrested trade unionists and for the restoration of the democratic and trade union rights won by the Polish workers through struggle since August 1980; and against the hypocritical boycott campaign of Reagan, Thatcher and Co. We hope you will sponsor the conference and help build such a labour movement campaign.

Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Campaign
Hon President: Bob Litherland MP
Chairperson: Councillor Eddie Newman

(For further information write to the Campaign Secretary, Jon Silberman, 51 Montrose House, Crete Street, Oldham, Lancashire.)

Solidarity Committees with Solidarnosc

Birmingham Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Roger Murray, 28 Blackford Road, Birmingham 11. Ring 021-773 5396.

Glasgow Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Ian McCalman, 18 Mossiel Rd, Glasgow G43. Ring 041-632 1839.

Greater Manchester Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Jon Silberman, 51 Montrose House, Crete St, Oldham, Lancs. Ring 061-620 2885.

Oxford Labour Committee on Poland, 468 Banbury Rd, Oxford. Ring 0865 58238.

Nottingham Labour Movement Solidarity with Solidarnosc, c/o 3 Elm Close, Nottingham.

South Yorks Polish Solidarity Committee, c/o Rab Bird, 279 Ellesmere Road, Sheffield, S4 7DP. Tel 0742 617174.

Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign, 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Ring 01-458 1501.

Polish Solidarity Campaign, 69 Edinburch Rd, London E13.

Solidarnosc Trade Union Working Group in UK, 64 Philbeach Gardens, Earls Court, London SW5. Ring 01-373 3492.

Labour Poland Solidarity Fund, c/o Co-operative Bank, 110 Leman St, London E1.

RESOLUTION PASSED AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF LABOUR WOMEN JUNE 1982

This Conference condemns the military takeover in Poland and the crushing of workers' rights.

It does not share, however, the crocodile tears of Reagan, Thatcher and the capitalist press who condemn free trade unions here. It applauds the Polish workers' heroic struggle, which could have successfully carried a political revolution to establish a democratic workers' state.

It calls on all working people — especially trade unionists — to press their total opposition to the coup, to demand the end of martial law, the release of all who have been arrested and the end of bans on meetings, and to support all the demands of Solidarity, both in Poland and internationally.

Conference believes that, although defeated, the Polish workers will rise again to demand an end to special privileges, the election of officials on the average wage of a skilled worker, the right to free trade unions, the end of the one-party state and freedom for political parties.

*Moved: Liverpool Women's Council
 Seconded: Manchester Women's Council*

RESOLUTIONS FOR LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

Has your CLP or trade union branch passed a resolution on Poland or Eastern Europe for this year's annual conference?

If so, please send a copy to the Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign, c/o Vladimir Derer, 10 Park Drive, London NW11.

If you would like a speaker on Eastern Europe, contact the EESC at the above address.

EESC Meeting At Labour Party Conference

The Eastern Europe Solidarity Campaign is organising a public meeting, entitled 'Solidarity and Working Class Rights in Eastern Europe', during the Labour Party Conference. It will take place on Monday, 27 September at 8.00pm at the Opera House Foyer, Winter Gardens, Blackpool.

Speakers include: Eric Heffer MP, Reg Race MP, Philip Whitehead MP, Ron Keating (NUPE), Piotr Kozlowski (Solidarity), Polish Solidarity Campaign speaker.

EASTERN EUROPE SOLIDARITY CAMPAIGN

President: Philip Whitehead MP
Hon Treasurer: Reg Race MP
Activities Sec: Oliver MacDonald
Convenor: Vladimir Derer

Hon Chair: Eric Heffer MP
Vice Chair: Ron Keating
Editor, EESC News: Joe Singleton

Join/Affiliate to the EESC. Individuals and organisations, £5. National organisations, £25.

The EESC publishes a newsletter concerning campaign activities and information about repression. It also holds monthly meetings.

For further information contact:
Vladimir Derer, 10 Park Drive, London NW11. Tel: 01-458 1501.

Solidarity with Poland in the British student movement

By Chris Serge

Solidarity with Polish workers and students became a major issue in the British student movement, with sharp debate at the conferences of both the National Union of Students (NUS) and of its dominant fraction, the National Organisation of Labour Students (NOLS).

Representatives of the NZS in Britain, who work with the Solidarity Trade Union Working Group and through the Committee to Defend Polish Students (CDPS), have argued for the breaking of all links with the state-sponsored student union, SZSP, in Poland. The NUS, although committed to a solidarity campaign with NZS, has chosen to maintain links with the SZSP. A call by representation of the NZS and by the CDPS

for a boycott of the conference of European Student Unions in Minsk, to be attended by the SZSP, was rejected by NUS conference after stormy scenes involving a walkout of about one-third of delegates. The issue flared again at NOLS conference with the breaking of links being narrowly rejected by conference which instead adopted a position of continued dialogue with the regime whilst regretting the military clampdown.

The CDPS has been active organising fund-raising events for the NZS, meetings in colleges with Polish students and has been involved in pickets of the Polish embassy. It will shortly be producing a bulletin containing documents from the NZS and reports on solidarity activities in Britain. For more in-

formation write to:
Committee to Defend Polish Students,
c/o Thames Polytechnic Students Union
Wellington St.,
London SE18.

The NUS has been involved in supplying information on the NZS and raising money. It has established a fund for Polish students, which stands at £435 and has adopted Jaroslaw Guzy, President of the National Co-ordinating Committee of NZS, at present in Bialoleka detention camp. NUS has committed itself to raise the question of NZS detainees at the European Students Unions meeting in Minsk. To contact NUS about solidarity with Polish students ring Alan Watson on 01-387-1277 or write to NUS, 3 Endsleigh St., London WC1.

LETTER

Dear Editor,

I have been an admirer and avid reader of your periodical on Eastern Europe for some time, and I greatly appreciate your meticulous translations and reproductions of crucial documents from Poland. Your three recent issues on Solidarity were excellent and I would like above all to congratulate you on being the first to publish the full text of the Solidarity Programme in English.

However, as Chairman of the Polish Solidarity Campaign, I must register my opposition to your description of the

leadership of our organisation as 'quite hostile to the Marxist left'. Though circumstances naturally make us quite opposed to the ideas of the Stalinist left, as a Solidarity support group we take no stand on Marxism and Marxists in the broader sense of the term. Solidarity cut across such definitions and qualifications in its approach both membership and to policy, and included both Marxists and non-Marxists among its ranks. So does the Polish Solidarity Campaign. This does not mean that we just accept every Tom, Dick and Harry as members. All our members must accept the support the concept of in-

dependent non-state-control trade unions, whether East or West, and be ready to campaign for democratic rights and for severing links with state-controlled unions and parties in the Warsaw Pact countries.

I hope that this clarifies the stand taken by our organisation, though I should also add that we remain in the close contact with the Solidarity Trade Union Working Group in the UK and cooperate with them in our activities.

Many thanks,
Wiktor Moszczynski
P.S. For further details about the PSC, write to: 107 Grange Road, London W5.