

POLAND: ROUND II

Poland--no longer front page news. Sure, there's the occasional news item about a strike in one factory, about someone being arrested and someone else getting out of jail, even an occasional battle between workers and police in some obscure town. But, if you took the news media at face value, you would believe that the military junta had for the most part succeeded in bringing order to an unruly country. In this sense the Jaruzelski regime has won a major victory, by taking away for the Polish workers' movement one of its most important allies, the working people of the Western bloc. On the other side of the world, the Soviet rulers have already made absolutely sure that the contagion of revolt did not spread in the Eastern bloc.

But the militarists' Order does not yet reign supreme. First and foremost, the struggle in Poland continues. Underground groups of militants still agitate and diffuse information for workers, students, peasants, intellectuals and others. Resistance groups are still active in the workplaces and non-cooperation with the authorities is still the order of the day. Even in the prisons, political detainees organize themselves and keep up contact with the outside world.

So do not be misled by the misinformation of the media. The struggles that broke out in October did not fail because the workers were resigned or broken. In fact, clashes broke out in Gdansk, Warsaw, Nowa Huta, Wroclaw and other cities before the appointed November 10 strike date. It was the failure of the Solidarnosc leadership to pick up on the workers' spontaneous actions that helped isolate them.

The future role of Solidarnosc as a mass organization is unclear. It is very possible that the authorities will try to revive Solidarnosc as a captive movement, robbed of the militancy and rebelliousness that it embodied for 15 months. Even if not, it is unlikely that it can function as an underground organization indefinitely.

Yet whatever happens, the Polish workers will certainly create new forms of self-expression as time goes on. While there may be no returning to the days before December 1981, there is certainly no returning to the days before August 1980 either. The ideas of workers' control, direct democracy, and genuine equality will not be crushed simply by the ZOMO's clubs or even the Soviet Army's tanks.

That is why we of the Libertarian Workers Group are sponsoring this picket line today. Not only to show our support for Polish workers, to protest martial law and repression, to demand freedom for political prisoners, and freedom of speech and organization for Polish workers; we are also out to remind the American workers that the Polish struggle continues. For we are anarchist workers, which is to say, enemies of all exploitation and oppression, both by capitalism and by the State, both East and West. We believe that the best way to support the Polish workers movement is to build one like it here--a workers' movement based on direct, rank and file control, fighting not only for immediate demands but for a world without Jaruzelskis or Reagans. Join us.

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