

RAY O. LIGHT NEWSLETTER

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THE POLISH WORKERS UPRISING AND THE QUESTION OF THE MAIN ENEMY

"Finance capital is such a great, it may be said, such a decisive force in all economic and international relations, that it is capable of subordinating to itself, and actually does subordinate to itself, even states enjoying complete political independence." (p. 81, *Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism*, V. I. Lenin)

On July 1, 1980 the Polish government increased meat prices. On July 2, some workers struck factories in Warsaw protesting the higher meat prices and demanding pay increases. Within two months upwards of 500,000 industrial and transport workers had gone on strike largely around bread and butter issues. But they ultimately fought as well around the demands for "independent" trade unions and the right to strike and *won* these demands from the Polish revisionist regime.

The fact that the increase in meat prices precipitated the strike wave is universally acknowledged. What is *little* known are the conditions that led to the Polish government's price increase. Dr. Penelope Hartland-Thunberg, director of research at the Georgetown Center for Strategic and International Studies, suggested in the *New York Times* that "...it could have been pressure from the Western banks in the latest credit negotiations that led to the Polish decision to increase meat prices which in turn triggered the strikes." ("*Strikes in Poland: The Risk for Western Banks*," *New York Times*, Section 3, page 1, 8/31/80)

The *Guardian* in an extremely informative article pointed out the following:

"In January 1978, in connection with a \$250 million loan in which Chase Manhattan Bank played a central role, the banks were given 'an unusual amount' of information and on-site inspection rights on the copper mining project involved.

"Later in the year, when the banks played hard to get and let it be known that detailed data on Poland's debt would mellow them, the Polish deputy finance minister signalled capitulation and came up with enough to satisfy the curiosity of the banks. They were so delighted by what they were told that they oversubscribed the \$500 million loan.

"Speaking of those negotiations, a U.S. banker was quoted in the New York Times as saying, 'We didn't have a blueprint for the Polish economy...but we made it clear that belt-tightening was a prerequisite for any new credits.' The meetings with Polish officials, the banker said, 'give Western capitalists a certain say in how the Poles proceed.'

"The bankers reportedly forced a 10% cut in the investment program last year...

"Then last April, Edward Babiuch, installed as prime minister in February and bounced in the August politburo shakeup, announced a further pullback in development, indicating that the main priority was paying off the foreign debt. He seemed to echo the bankers' call for belt-tightening..." (*"Behind the Polish Bank Connection"*, *Guardian*, p. 16, 9/10/80)

Following the December 1970 Polish workers revolt against price increases, the Polish United Workers Party (PUWP) had decided to improve the national living standard by importing technology, a move which has *thoroughly* enmeshed Poland in the web of international finance capital, i.e. imperialism. As a result, "...Poland's net hard-currency debt had risen from \$760 million in 1971 to \$20 Billion in 1979..." according to a C.I.A. report. "On the basis of the C.I.A. calculations, Poland's debt service ratio of 92% is far higher not only than the Soviet Union but also than all other countries in Eastern Europe and most countries of the third world...In effect 85 percent of every dollar borrowed went into servicing debt in 1979 - and not acquiring real resources - compared with roughly 35% in 1973-76." (*"Strikes in Poland: The Risk for Western Banks," New York Times*, 8/31/80)

In June 1979, while discussing precisely the question of the political impact of the international debt of the "Soviet Bloc" Comecon countries to Western European, Japanese and U.S. banks, we said the following:

"When the government of the U.S. owes billions to U.S. banks this represents merely a cementing of the servant relationship occupied by the U.S. imperialist state apparatus in relation to its imperialist bourgeois masters. But when such indebtedness is incurred by *sovereign* (not to mention 'socialist') states and they are forced to submit to the dictates

of foreign imperialist masters, this involves violation of their sovereignty. The constitution of *Socialist Albania* outlaws such indebtedness!" (*Ray O. Light Newsletter*, Volume 1, Number 2, June 1979, footnote page 6)

It is the question of the enslaving power of finance capital and imperialist domination, as Lenin taught, which is the key to understanding the Polish workers' uprising from a proletarian revolutionary standpoint. Indeed nothing else can explain the large number of seemingly strange and remarkable facts which emerge from the Polish political-economic crisis brought on by the workers' insurgency.

"REMARKABLE" FACTS

What are these "remarkable" facts? (1) *In the midst of "communist" Poland's political crisis, imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism openly supported the revisionist regime:* During the height of the crisis, rather than striking out at the so-called "communist" regime in Poland, with West German government prodding, a syndicate of 25 West German banks agreed to lend Poland approximately \$675 million. A syndicated credit of Eurodollars, led by Bank of America, was signed in London providing an additional \$320 million. Finally, President Carter announced on U.S. television on September 12 that the U.S. was increasing food credits by \$120 million for a total of \$670 million next year.* By contrast new Soviet economic aid was nowhere near as large.

(2) *Western bankers did not oppose Soviet intervention in Poland but actually called for it!*: While pushing anti-Sovietism on the U.S. masses and world public opinion during this crisis, Western bankers expressed such views as "if the Russians actually did intervene in Poland, the nation's creditworthiness might actually increase." An important *New York Times* article concluded: "the bankers seem far less worried over Poland's creditworthiness than they are over such countries as Zaire, Jamaica or even Brazil. For they see a greater political security in Poland and, as one international banker

*While the soft-line imperialist strategists have operated on the international front in conformity with the floating of new loans to the Polish regime itself, the hardliners have had a field day operating in the U.S. domestic situation. For example, while Secretary of State Muskie called for no direct support of the new Polish unions, AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland pushed the organized labor movement within the U.S.A. to send financial aid to the new "independent" unions in Poland. Through this means, a new wave of anti-communist hysteria is being launched within the U.S. working class movement in the face of U.S. monopoly capital and consequently will lead to greater profits for the U.S. imperialists at home.

put it, 'the full faith and credit of the Soviet Union are behind the loans!' " (*Strikes in Poland: The Risk for Western Banks*", *New York Times*, 8/31/80)

In discussing the relations between the U.S.A. and the USSR in June 1979, we stated,

"In comparing the economies of U.S. imperialism and Soviet social-imperialism, the tremendous and increasing indebtedness of the USSR to Western European, Japanese and U.S. banking interests is most noteworthy. Far from developing hegemony and 'superpower' status in the capitalist world, the Soviet revisionists are leading the USSR more and more into the position of a second rate, debtor imperialist power...

"In relation to the Comecon countries in general, western and especially U.S. imperialism is gaining an ever greater economic and political foothold at the expense of the USSR ... At this rate it is clearly only a matter of time before the 'Soviet Bloc' will be only a memory." (*Ray O. Light Newsletter*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 6, 7)

A year and one half later, under the impetus of the Polish workers' uprising, western bankers are already describing the USSR as a strong arm enforcer for the Western imperialists' international loan shark ring.*

(3) *The Catholic Church acted in open collusion with the Polish revisionist regime:* "In an unprecedented action, the regime broadcast and published excerpts from a homily by Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, the Roman Catholic primate," in which the Cardinal pushed the strikers to return to work. When the aroused Polish working class resisted the Church's influence as well as the regime, the Wall Street Imperialists warned the Church that "to maintain its considerable moral authority over the people, it must move more in step with some of the aspirations for freedom expressed by the strikers." (*New York Times*, section 4, page 1, 8/31/80)

Not only does the Catholic church in Poland represent cultural backwardness, ignorance and submission among the masses but there it has been the most powerful and organized influence of Western

*In June 1979, we pointed out that the two most frequently raised examples of Soviet hegemony in relation to U.S. imperialism were Angola and Eritrea. Certainly today proponents of the three worlds theory and other revisionist and imperialist theoreticians will use Poland as an example of the USSR's brutal political "hegemony". Yet here too, as in the cases of Angola and Eritrea, Marxist-Leninist analysis reveals that Poland is an example *not* of Soviet hegemony but of Soviet revisionist subservience to U.S. imperialism!

imperialism within Polish society. How "strange" then that at the moment of greatest political crisis for the "communist" regime, the Church would come to the regime's aid. But the mystery of the church's conduct is cleared up when we realize that the regime's suppression of the workers' strikes and their wage and price demands in particular directly benefited the Church's master, Western Imperialism.*

(4) *The spokesmen for the two contending forces in Poland, the workers and the regime, agreed on one important point, namely that they should tighten their belts so that their foreign debt could be paid:*

In classic servant-like fashion, "Deputy Premier Henryk Kiesiel, head of the government's economic planning commission ... praised a consortium of American, British and Japanese banks for their 'clever and courageous decision' to grant Poland a \$325 million loan during the strikes." He continued, "We shall fulfill our obligations to foreign countries completely ... we always pay our debts on time with the precision of a Swiss watch." (A.P., 9/9/80)

What is more surprising, however, is that Lech Walesa, the worker who emerged from the Gdansk shipyard as the key leader of the strike, *agreed* with the revisionist bureaucrats he had been fighting *against*.

"Asked how the Polish economy could afford to lower meat prices as the workers have asked, he [Walesa] made it clear that his own priorities are more political than economic. 'We don't want to drown Poland. We want to rebuild her. I am willing to work for a plate of soup a day, but I feel that I have the right to say something about the situation.'" (*Time*, 9/8/80, p. 33)

(5) *The ouster of Edward Gierek and his replacement by Stanislaw Kania represents not a move that strengthens the role of the USSR in Poland, as widely projected, but rather strengthens U.S. imperialism:*

Initial media projections of Kania as a pro-Soviet hard liner turned out to be inaccurate, and U.S. Secretary of State Muskie almost immediately "endorsed" Kania. What is unmistakable, however, is that Gierek's fall was a tremendous blow to efforts at East and West European unity vis-a-vis the USSR and U.S. imperialism. A front

*The choice of a Polish Pope in 1978 was partly based on Western imperialism's recognition that they were already becoming dominant in Poland economically that same year and partly in order to accelerate that process.

page *New York Times* headline announced that "Gierek Fall Seen Hurting Detente *Within Europe* - Pole was a key figure in Effort by Bonn and Paris." West Germany's Schmidt and France's Giscard-d'Estaing considered Gierek "their Eastern connection". Meetings between East Germany's Honecker and Schmidt were put off and a visit to Poland by a British Trades Union Congress was canceled in the wake of Gierek's removal. Since western imperialism has already become dominant in Poland, with France and particularly West Germany as its major creditors along with U.S. imperialism, the removal of Gierek, French and German imperialism's "Eastern Connection", represents a step forward for U.S. imperialism at the expense of its French and West German competition.

* * * * *

Quite clearly the Western imperialists, like ravenous beasts of prey, are clawing and devouring Poland. Yet remarkably, there has been no hue and cry in the international arena condemning Western imperialism. Quite the contrary, it is the USSR that has been roundly condemned not only by the imperialists but also by almost all sections of the "socialist camp" for seemingly being on the verge of "invading" Poland.

THE ILLUSION OF SOVIET DOMINATION AND THE REALITY OF WESTERN IMPERIALIST DOMINATION

"It was with precisely this Leninist focus on *imperialism, headed by U.S. imperialism*, that the anti-revisionists were able to expose the opportunist betrayal of the oppressed peoples and the proletarian revolutionary cause being committed by the Russian revisionists and their ilk. It was precisely on this basis that the emerging Marxist-Leninist movement led by the PLA and CPC were able to provide direction and inspiration to the rising struggles of the oppressed peoples against feudalism and imperialism, *headed by U.S. imperialism*, during the early 1960's." (*Ray O. Light Newsletter*, June 1979, Vol. 1, No. 2, page 2)

The bourgeois press in the USA has trumpeted repeated warnings about the danger of Soviet intervention in Poland if the strikes continued or became openly anti-socialist, etc. And the Chinese revisionists and their international camp which at least in the USA still describes itself as "anti-revisionist" has taken its cue from *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines, TV news, et al. Remarkably, even the Soviet "satellite" Polish revisionist regime played the Western imperialists' game of "Soviet danger", while even more remarkably the USSR played along as the "heavy" !

- Chinese Revisionism -

In an otherwise low key article on Poland, Fang Xuan writing in *Beijing Review* (9/15/80, p. 12) states that, "These remarks [of *Pravda* and *Tass*] are very reminiscent of those preceding the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968." The *Call*, the organ of the U.S. Communist Party officially recognized by the Chinese revisionists at this time, carried a lead editorial (9/8-21/80) entitled "Soviet Union - Hands Off Poland!" After raising the spectre of Soviet military action, this so-called Communist Party - Marxist-Leninist in the U.S.A. calls for "continued international opposition built to the threat of Soviet intervention."

In the same issue of the *Call*, in an article entitled "Poland: 'A bitter cup overflows'" the CP-ML more blatantly reveals their anti-Sovietism and its essentially pro-imperialist content. The *Call* writer, Anna Schultz quotes U.S. correspondent Anna Louise Strong describing Poland right after WWII:

"For the ordinary Polish citizen the meaning of democracy was that Nazi race slavery is over ... so that every citizen must pitch in. It meant energetic peasants going home to divide the land. It meant workers in factories organizing trade unions, sending delegates to city councils. It meant all kinds of people shouting and organizing new ideas."

Schultz then draws the incredible conclusion that,

"What the Polish strikes have shown is a growing awareness among the workers that ultimately economic and political power can rest in their hands again as it did in the early days of socialist Poland, before the Soviet rulers consolidated their domination of this country."

What a rewrite of history! For the "domination" of Poland by "Soviet rulers" has never again been as great as it was *precisely* at the end of WWII, the period of democratic flowering which Anna Louise Strong is describing (!) and which the Soviet Red Army and Soviet people under Stalin and CPSU leadership largely made possible by their heroic sacrifices in the anti-fascist war.

The political and economic basis for this anti-Sovietism emerges as the *Call* article continues. Schultz supports the openly anti-communist "Polish-American rallies ... and the longshoremen's boycott of cargo coming from and going to Poland," as well as President Carter who "expressed support for the Polish workers' struggle."

As an open apologist for U.S. imperialism, Schultz bemoans the fact that "Because Poland must pay for its oil and other commodities

from the USSR with goods, it has been less able to rely on exporting goods to the West to obtain badly needed capital to repay its debts."

In other words the Chinese revisionist supported CP-ML openly takes the side of opposition to Polish indebtedness to the Soviet Union in favor of Polish indebtedness to U.S. Imperialism! *

-“Independent” Marxism-

The “independent” *Guardian* newspaper has carried at least one major article and a major editorial on Poland in which it focuses attention on the question of foreign debt. On the surface this is quite positive. Yet once again on this question as in dealing with China’s relations with the U.S.A. a year or two ago, the *Guardian* plays the role of raising this fundamental question of the economic essence of imperialism in such a way as to bury it.

In his classic work, *Imperialism, The Highest State of Capitalism*, Lenin polemicizes against the international petty bourgeois trend of Kautskyism. He states that “Kautsky detaches the politics of imperialism from its economics”. He continues “The result is a slurring-over and a blunting of the most profound contradictions of the latest stage of capitalism, instead of an exposure of their depth; the result is bourgeois reformism instead of Marxism.” (pp. 92, 93)

The 9/3/80 *Guardian* editorial discusses the fact that “Poland’s economy is under the heel of Western banking interests ...” Yet by refusing to connect politics and economics, a la Kautsky, the *Guardian* attributes no political significance to the enslaving power of finance capital. Instead it falls into line with the anti-Sovietism of all the other revisionist forces in the world who collaborate with imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism. In its conclusion, the

*This is in line with the CP-ML’s role as bridge builder of the U.S. - China Alliance. In June 1979 commenting on this alliance we stated,

“There are those who while opposing Chinese revisionism and its theory of three worlds nevertheless support ideologically the proposition put forth by the Chinese revisionists themselves that through the normalization of relations with U.S. imperialism China is in the process of achieving the status of a “superpower”. Lenin’s teachings on the nature of imperialism, however, expose the economic ‘facts of life’ involving the massive export of international and especially U.S. imperialist capital to economically underdeveloped China. Hence the Leninist conclusion that the present normalization of relations between China and U.S. imperialism represents a big step toward the re-enslavement of the Chinese people to international capital headed by U.S. imperialism.” (*Ray O. Light Newsletter*, June 1979, Vol. 1, No. 2, page 4)

(cont.)

Guardian editorial raises the spectre of Soviet aggression divorced from Western imperialism. The basis of its conclusion is “the country is still in the grips of a revisionist party tied body and soul to the USSR.”

The *Guardian*’s “independence”, then, turns out to be merely petty-bourgeois individualism, petty bourgeois democracy and ultimately social chauvinism.

-Poland and the USSR-

The Polish workers’ strike wave has exposed the real relation of forces between and among Eastern Europe, the USSR, Western Europe and the U.S.A. The remarkable fact that neither the Polish revisionist regime nor even the Soviet revisionists would direct the justified anger and frustration and the strength of the Polish working class from themselves onto Western imperialism and particularly the international banks demonstrates the tremendous extent to which the revisionists in state power are mere lackeys of the imperialists, front men, a buffer behind which international imperialism increasingly exploits and oppresses their peoples.

For almost two months, almost the entire length of the massive Polish workers’ strikes, during which time the Soviet Union was portrayed as the aggressive enemy behind the scene, the Soviet revisionist regime through *Tass* and *Pravda* remained silent! Then finally, they began making a little noise against sections of the Polish workers - making the Soviet Union a little easier target or “fall guy”.

The basis for the Soviet Union’s complicity in making itself the “bad guy” target of the Polish workers’ wrath can be understood

Ironically, in the same issue of the *New York Times* with the coverage of the Polish strikes appeared a report on the Chinese National Peoples Congress. The message of the article “China Opens Trade Doors to Taiwan - Delicately: Peking Hopes Someone Will Tell Reagan” is that Wall Street Imperialism is telling Ronald Reagan to keep his mouth shut about Taiwan or he’ll mess up the good thing they have going in China. Noteworthy is the chauvinistic arrogance of the *Times* writer, who states, “That China is a poor, backward, and weak nation ... is being amply acknowledged by a new generation of Peking pragmatists...” In the early 1960’s when Marxism-Leninism was a leading factor in China no U.S. imperialist spokesman would have dared to describe China in this way. What an illustration of the enslaving character of finance capital and imperialism. In addition, *Newsweek* has just carried an article on China entitled “Labor For Export,” which ends with the words, “the biggest pool of cheap labor anywhere in the world.” (9/22/80)

No wonder Chinese revisionism as well as its U.S. supporters in the CP-ML are playing the imperialist’s game regarding Poland.

in light of Soviet indebtedness to the West. The USSR's debt service ratio is already 18%.

The banks do not like to exceed a 25% debt service to exports ratio. All the more understandable that the Polish revisionists, with their 92% debt service ratio, are virtual *slaves* of the western imperialist banks.

All the other Eastern European regimes and such "supporters" of the USSR as the CPUSA also did nothing to expose the western imperialist banks and finance capital as the principal oppressor of the Polish working class.

The CPUSA has been a key bridge-builder between the USSR and U.S. imperialism and with its petty bourgeois and labor aristocrat base would not dream of exposing imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism. The Eastern European regimes are heavily indebted to western banks just as are China, Poland and the USSR.

"The total \$64 billion net debt to the West of the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union combined...has risen tenfold from 6 billion in 1971...the debt of Poland and all Communist countries in fact has risen much faster than that of the non oil developing countries as a group..."
("Strikes in Poland: The Risk for Western Banks," *New York Times*, 8/31/80)

GENERAL CONCLUSION: THE EMPEROR WITHOUT CLOTHES

At the outbreak of WWI, the Parties of the Second International with their parliament members, large trade union treasuries and other "proofs" of wisdom "forgot" their oaths of proletarian internationalism and found ways to mislead their national proletariat into support for their own bourgeoisie against the proletariat of other countries. This damnable betrayal of the communist cause was thoroughly exposed by Lenin in particular, who taught us classic lessons on the nature of imperialism out of this horrible and tragic experience of the international proletariat.

Yet prior to the Russian Revolution, Lenin and the Russian Bolsheviks (and the relatively few others scattered throughout Europe and the U.S.A. who opposed their own imperialists in the First World War and denounced the bloody imperialist system) must have seemed like the boy in the anti-feudal fairy tale, "The Emperor Without Clothes." All the socialists who were "in the know" and had "con-

nections" (with the imperialist bourgeoisie, that is) just "knew" that their "nation" was right in the situation and the other nations were wrong.

In the fairy tale all the people of the Kingdom "knew" that the Emperor supposedly had on the "finest suit of clothes they had ever seen." So these loyal subjects did not trust their own eyes which clearly told them that the Emperor was as naked as the day he was born. It took a young boy in the crowd on the day of the grand parade who was not "in the know" to tell the *truth* that "the Emperor is Naked!" Then everyone could see the naked truth for themselves.

Well, today all the revisionists even have the teachings of Lenin on imperialism to help them see the naked truth. But as Lenin taught, "There are none so blind as those who will not see."

It is no wonder that none of the revisionist forces could expose and focus their attacks against Western imperialism. For the very factor which has enslaved Poland to Western imperialism has already enslaved to one extent or another all the revisionist regimes in state power as well as their international "supporters" to the money power of *imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism*

The proletarian revolutionaries, on the other hand, have nothing to lose but their chains and the world to win! They can see the naked truth with their own clear eyes and unsullied minds.

Revisionist hacks and other sold-out elements and those who make only a surface analysis of this summer's massive Polish workers revolt may point to this event as proof that the USSR is the "most dangerous superpower", "the hegemonic superpower", etc. The facts on Poland as understood from a proletarian internationalist standpoint, a Leninist standpoint, reveal, however, that *the largest country in Eastern Europe and the 10th most industrial country in the world, economically the most important country in the so-called "Soviet Bloc" outside of the USSR itself - is now firmly in the clutches of Western imperialism!*

Given all the above, "... the formulation of the main enemy of the world's peoples remains valid today as when projected by the anti-revisionist movement of the early 1960's led by the PLA and CPC; namely, *the main enemy is imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism,*" as we concluded in our June 1979 *Ray O. Light Newsletter*.

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However, all is not negative in the Polish situation.

THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE POLISH WORKERS REVOLT

The massive and rapidly spreading strikes of the Polish working class constituted a largely spontaneous resistance to the exploitation and oppression which these workers have been experiencing in Polish society during the past number of years. Widespread demands for pay increases, price reductions and safer working conditions dramatize this point. Also clear is the fact that the Polish Workers United Party had lost touch with the workers as is characteristic of the bourgeois degeneration which revisionist leadership represents over an extended period.

One conclusion from this is that the Polish workers' strikes have a large positive aspect, viz. at least to some extent they represent the classical struggle of labor vs capital. To this extent of course, the creation of workers organizations, "the independent" trade unions, is a *positive* development.

Secondly, beyond the bread and butter demands and the demand for union recognition from their employer, a mass sentiment of the strikers was for making the system of "socialism" function more efficiently and more equitably. According to the *New York Times*,

"Foreign journalists in the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk noticed a curious change as the strikes went on. Speaker after speaker rose to denounce Government mismanagement. They cited examples from their own working lives, of equipment lying unused, of raw materials not being ordered in time. The movement took on an almost messianic tone and the message became clear: Poland got into economic trouble, because the workers were not listened to, they said, and now only the workers could rescue it." (8/31/80, Section 4, page 1)

Furthermore as the *Guardian* pointed out, "The strikers' demands attacking secrecy and privileges for the party and police represent the long-range interests of the working class in building genuine, mass-supported socialism." (9/10/80, p. 16) This, too, constitutes a significant positive revolutionary aspect of the Polish workers revolt.*

*In order to appease the demands of the workers, one high government official, Maciej Szczepanski, head of Polish Radio and Television, as well as occasional Gierk speechwriter, was placed under house arrest. He not only had privileges like "...ten lavish residences in Poland, including a forest lodge furnished with antiques valued at \$1 million, a 32 acre sheep farm...a forty bedroom Warsaw palace...and a five room villa outside Warsaw with a glass walled swimming pool and four prostitutes in residence..." but he also maintained several businesses including "...an apartment complex in Warsaw from which he derived a handsome income, a Greek Island hideaway, a pig-breeding farm and a slaughterhouse." (*Newsweek*, 9/15/80, p. 49)

A third positive feature of the Polish strike wave was the workers' resistance to the Catholic church as well as the regime when the church leadership pushed the strikers to return to work.

Given (1) the significant element of class struggle by the proletariat against capital, (2) the workers' effort to attack privilege and develop socialist efficiency, and (3) the resistance of the workers' strike wave to the Catholic Church as well as the regime, the Polish workers' strike wave was a positive development for the Polish proletariat and a source of strength for the international proletariat in its struggle against international capital.

At the same time, however, there were several negative features of the strike wave in Poland which if not successfully overcome could turn the essentially positive development into a negative, counter-revolutionary one.

What are these negative features?

First, despite the workers' resistance to Cardinal Wyszynski's call for them to return to work, the issue of religious "freedom" remained an apparently widespread workers demand. In fact, one of the demands won by the strikers was "access to the state press and broadcast services by the Roman Catholic Church." (*Newsweek*, 9/15/80, p. 47) And "...in Mielec strikers extracted a promise that religion can be taught once again in state schools." (*Newsweek*, 9/22/80, p. 61) Furthermore Lech Walesa, the strike spokesman from the Lenin Shipyard who signed the agreement with the regime was flanked by "six economic and legal specialists from a Catholic think tank." (*Newsweek*, 9/15/80, p. 34) And,

"Again and again over the last two weeks the Gdansk strike leader burst out of his office to cheers from the workers, rushed into the courtyard and at a trot began tossing small pictures of the Virgin Mary, Queen of Poland, into the air." (*New York Times*, 8/31/80, p. 16)

A few days after the workers' victory, Walesa met with Cardinal Wyszynski to help prop up the Church's influence once again among the workers. He is also scheduled to meet with the Pope later on this fall. Thus, despite the role of the Catholic hierarchy in collusion with the revisionist regime against the strike wave, the strikers have strengthened the role of Catholicism in Poland (and therefore of Western Imperialism) at least for the short run.

A second negative demand was the "freedom of jailed dissidents" among them, the most anti-socialist and openly pro-imperialist elements in Polish society, the Polish "Solzhenitsyns."

A third negative feature of the strike wave and clearly the most notable was the apparent absence of any focus by the strikers on the Western imperialist banks which have become an increasingly dominant factor in the Polish economy! The strikers with all their Polish "patriotism" failed to focus significant attention on the domination of Western Banks over Polish sovereignty.

A fourth and related negative feature of the strike wave is the commitment of at least the strike *leadership* (along with the new revisionist leadership of the regime) to pay off the debts owed to the Western banks. As Walesa said, "I am willing to work for a plate of soup a day." (*Time*, 9/8/80, p. 33) In the U.S.A., we evaluate the effectiveness of a union in large part by how well it organizes and leads the workers in battles against the monopoly capitalist corporations. Even from the narrow trade union point of view, it is clear that the Walesa type of leadership has got to go.

PROSPECTS FOR THE FUTURE

"The working class of the revisionist countries is now faced with the historic necessity of coming out again on the battlefield, of hurling itself into a merciless and consistent fight to the finish to overthrow and smash the treacherous cliques, to carry out the proletarian revolution once again and to re-establish the dictatorship of the proletariat." (*Speeches, Conversations and Articles (1967-1968)*, Enver Hoxha, p. 267)

Certainly if the new "independent" unions in Poland are to become vehicles of the proletarian revolution in Poland rather than vehicles of the Western imperialist counter-revolution which is the political direction they are headed in now, the real main enemy of the Polish working class must be exposed and targeted. And that enemy is imperialism headed by U.S. imperialism.

Under the impetus of the genuine anti-revisionist polemics of the Party of Labor of Albania and the Communist Party of China in the mid-1960's, a Polish Marxist-Leninist leadership began to emerge. In their greetings to the Fifth Congress of the PLA, the Provisional Central Committee of the Communist Party of Poland stated in October of 1966:

"The present revisionist leaders of our country maintain that U.S. imperialism threatens Vietnam, whereas Poland is menaced by the German Federal Republic supported only by 'certain aggressive circles of the Pentagon'. This is one example of the action of the U.S. policy of 'bridges', of the so-called economic aid and cultural collaboration

between East and West, within the framework of the imperialist theory of 'peaceful evolution' towards capitalism. For U.S. discounts and credits to liquidate debts already incurred as well as for hopes of any further alms from the hands of the U.S. imperialists, the murderers of the Vietnamese people, the modern revisionists whitewash the aggressive policy of the U.S. imperialists and lull to sleep the vigilance of their own people before the menace threatening them." (*Communist and Workers' Parties Greet the Fifth Congress of the Party of Labor of Albania*, 1966, p. 72)

Out of the 1980 Polish Workers Revolt, a mass proletarian political-economic strike wave, a proletarian revolutionary leadership needs to emerge armed with a Marxist-Leninist understanding of the main enemy and willing to fight not only that imperialist enemy but revisionism ideologically, politically and ultimately even militarily as well.

**LONG LIVE THE POLISH WORKING CLASS
IN ITS FIGHT FOR A SOCIALIST WORLD!**

**DOWN WITH THE POLISH AND SOVIET REVISIONISTS
AND ALL COLLABORATORS WITH IMPERIALISM!**

DOWN WITH IMPERIALISM HEADED BY U.S. IMPERIALISM!

**FIGHT FOR PROLETARIAN HEGEMONY AND
SMASH U.S. IMPERIALIST HEGEMONY!**

**PROLETARIANS OF THE WORLD AND
OPPRESSED PEOPLES UNITE!**