

# POLAND:

## The Making and Unmaking of the News



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# Introduction

In modern society, our view of the world is shaped by information and images we receive from the news media. But the information we receive often bears little resemblance to what the sources of this information had intended us to receive. In fact, the term *news-maker* is more aptly applied to those in the journalism profession than to the sources featured in the news.

The events taking place in Poland over the past three years offer an excellent example of this. The Polish people have been striving to make monumental changes in their lives, yet we see their complex struggle reduced to simple *anti-communism*. The two following essays cover both sides of the communications coin. The first discusses the real Polish *news-makers* and their search for communications devices that would distort their story as little as possible. The second essay shows how our news media participates in this distorting process.

In *How Polish Workers Made the News* we relate our observations in the Gdansk shipyard in August of 1980, where the Solidarnosc movement began. This piece shows how the Polish workers, distrusting traditional communications channels, experimented with their own devices to spread information in a new and interesting way, as free as possible from distortion. Written in the early days of the Solidarnosc movement, this article was originally published in *Journal of Community Communications*.

*Poland in Black and White* (starting on page 10) shows how the American news media has changed events in Poland from what the Polish people wanted to get across, to what the U. S. media thought Americans were able to understand. This was written in the months following the martial law crackdown.

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Howard Besser  
Terry Downs

*August 18, 1983*



Erazm Ciotek

making the news

# How Polish Workers Made the News

## Background

On July 1, 1980 the Polish government raised the price of meat. Immediately a strike broke out in Lublin where workers demanded higher wages to pay for the hike in food prices. The strike was quickly settled when the government granted wage concessions. But for several weeks afterwards, as word of government concessions spread to other towns, workers elsewhere walked off their jobs, making demands similar to those won in Lublin.

News about the strikes got around by word of mouth and the underground press, which had been formed mainly by intellectual dissidents in the wake of the uprisings in 1976 for the expressed purpose of informing people of labor unrest in Poland.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of July, this massive wave of rebellion had receded somewhat. But on August 14, workers occupied the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk.<sup>2</sup> The government, recognizing that the publication of news about successful strike actions had contributed to other workers' boldness, did its best to suppress the news of this.

As the strike grew to encompass the entire Gdansk area, the authorities did everything they could to cut off communications with the strike area. For most of the two and a half-week strike the government allowed no telephone, telegraph or mail service between the Gdansk area and the rest of the country. For the first week,

1. For a more complete account of the recent history of the Polish underground press and its role in the summer 1980 strikes, see Tadeusz Walendowski's "The Polish Summer of 1980" in *Columbia Journalism Review*, Nov/Dec 1980, pages 31-35.

2. This occupation was not demanding wage concessions as most strikes before then had (Gdansk shipyard workers had already won those), but was in reaction to the firing of a union militant.

none of the traditional forms of mass communications (Polish newspapers, radio or television) published any mention of the strike. But word did get out through the workers' own efforts and eventually the government found that it could no longer ignore the situation. So on August 22 it began covering the strike (in negative terms, of course) on its own broadcast media. Though the news blackout was lifted, the interruption of two-way communication (telephone, telegraph, postal service) was maintained.

The two and a half-week occupation of the Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk Poland in August of 1980 is widely recognized as a turning point in the liberalization of the Polish government and the opening up of Polish society. Most analyses of this liberalization have dealt with the impact of the workers' struggle on the government. Here I will discuss how the workers' organization of communication during the shipyard occupation altered their social relationships.

As a traveler on a two-week visit to Poland in August, 1980, several days of it in Gdansk, I noticed a number of rather unconventional structures and uses of communication. Many of them tended to make communication less hierarchical and more personal.



## How did news spread during a news blackout?

Though the government had cut off telephone and telegraph service leading to the Gdansk area, it didn't tamper with communications within the Gdansk area itself, or with communications throughout the rest of the country. Only trunk lines leading to Gdansk were cut. Thus, local telephone and telegraph service operated normally within the Gdansk region, and all facilities operated normally throughout the rest of the country, as long as people didn't try to contact Gdansk.

No attempt was made to physically quarantine the Gdansk area. There was a significant movement across the paths of the broken communication wires of people who gathered information (using various means to collect it) on one side of the barrier and carried it to the other side (distributing it by various means).

Another method that helped to bridge the communication gap was the Western press. Journalists already in Poland when the occupation began had access into and out of the Gdansk area. Most news services would make daily runs from Gdansk to Warsaw, where they could transmit reports to their main offices which in turn could broadcast them over the airwaves back into Poland. Though the

Soviets tried to jam Western news broadcasts entering the USSR, the Poles made no such attempt. Thus, it was possible for people both in Gdansk and the rest of Poland to hear news of what was going on in Gdansk from Western broadcasting stations. Significantly, this was also information that had been *physically* carried over the barrier of cut lines.

The strikers quickly saw the advantage of the presence of the foreign press and literally catered to the hundred or so journalists in the shipyard. While strikers often had to wait in line an hour for a meal, journalists were served finger sandwiches with cheese (and even meats) fifteen hours per day. Only press, delegates and a few other privileged people were allowed access to the central building where the Inter-Factory Strike Committee (MKS) met.

The desire to have the press there and happy was not based solely on getting news of the strike into the broadcast media. The workers also felt that the presence of a large press corps might act as a deterrent to a suppression of the shipyard occupation that would certainly have been bloody had it occurred. As one delegate confessed to us softly very late one night, "We're glad that **they** know all of you foreigners are here."



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## Inside the Shipyard

Soon after the takeover of the Lenin Shipyards by those supporting other workers on strike, workers in even more enterprises throughout the Gdansk area began to strike in solidarity. Within a few weeks, work had stopped at over 500 enterprises.



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To coordinate the strikes and factory occupations the workers formed the Inter-Factory Strike Committee (MKS) to take on all major coordinative functions, from feeding and clothing the 16,000 workers occupying the Lenin Shipyards to formulating demands and negotiating with the government. But the major function of the MKS was to help facilitate the flow of opinions among those involved in the strike.

The MKS, composed of representatives of all striking enterprises in the greater Gdansk area, met daily in a central building in the Gdansk Lenin Shipyards. Debates on how to manage their struggle went on all day and into the evening hours.

Probably because distrust of the party and the government was so high, there was a concerted effort to insure as wide a dissemination of as much information as possible, and as much participation as possible in the decision-making process. Proposals were brought to the floor of the MKS meeting room and debated among the delegates. All these proceedings, even the negotiations with the government, were broadcast over loudspeakers that the workers had hooked up and placed at the factory's gates. This system allowed almost all the workers occupying the shipyards and anyone from the surrounding area who cared to come to the shipyard gates to hear the entire proceedings.

Most people gathered at the gate areas, the occupying workers on the inside and others on the outside. (Only very limited travel was allowed through the gates.) When the general MKS sessions recessed, a microphone was hooked into the speaker system at each gate. This *open mike* allowed the people around each gate to debate among themselves what the MKS had just been discussing or other subjects of their own choosing.

Of course, wires couldn't be strung to all the struck and occupied workplaces, so other methods of communication had to be found. Many of the enterprises instituted a system of *rotation of delegates*. Each delegate would serve for several days and go back to discuss the MKS proceedings and questions with his or her co-workers. Then a new delegate to MKS would be chosen.

The number of tape-recorders on the floor of the MKS was absolutely astounding. Even though a large bulk-recording area had been set up to encourage delegates to record the proceedings for the people they represented, it was not large enough.



Although the workers had no printing technology at all at the start of the shipyard occupation, the MKS tried to print a daily bulletin. Several days after the strike began, intellectual dissidents brought their press to the shipyards and showed the workers how to operate it. It was a very old hand-operated machine (one cannot just go to a store and buy a press in Poland, nor easily import one from abroad), and each sheet had to be waved in the air for several minutes to dry before being read. The quality of the image was very poor by American standards. But it was all they had, and it was basically readable.



Printing the strike bulletin



When the bulletins were printed, shipyard workers grabbed them up before they had even dried. Some would take them to the gates of the shipyard and fling them over to the waiting crowd where they were snatched up and read aloud. The bulletins would be posted every 50 yards or so along the wall of the shipyard, and we constantly saw people gathered around them copying down information to take back to their homes, towns and workplaces.

For the first few days of the strike, negotiations between the government and the strikers' representatives were broadcast live to the entire shipyard area. It was probably one of the few times in history that people had the opportunity to actually hear both their government and their labor representatives negotiating over the future of their lives. They were able to get a much more accurate picture of what was happening in the negotiation room than would have been possible from accounts handed from person to person -- many of whom would have had a vested interest in changing the story. This form of information flow made it difficult for either the government or the representatives to distort the *truth*.

Everyone seemed to distrust the government. When an offer was made for free elections within the existing government-controlled unions (as an alternative to the *Free Unions* the MKS was demanding), a gigantic roar of laughter, quickly followed by cat-calls, swept the crowd of about 500 where we were standing. Not surprisingly, the government demanded that the negotiations be returned to private. Several days later, they were.

The only traditional broadcast communications received on a large scale in

the Gdansk area were the nightly BBC and Radio Free Europe news programs. Every night people gathered around the few radios that had been brought to the MKS floor. Since these Western stations were fairly accurate in reporting the daily events the people in Gdansk had participated in, and since they knew that the Polish and Russian stations were telling lies (or saying nothing at all) about the same events, the workers tended to regard **everything** that these Western sources said with much less skepticism than they would the Eastern sources.



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### One-way or Two-way

In developed countries, most news is received either directly or indirectly from a one-way communications system, generally via broadcast or print media. Though a one-way communications system is a convenient method for getting information distributed quickly, it is controlled by the very few **transmitters** (the broadcast media) and is not responsive to questions from the **receivers** (the general populace).

In Poland, for example, when the government finally decided to send out information on the strike, it reported that the Gdansk workers were "malicious hooligans and anarchists" who wanted to terrorize the rest of the country and turn it into a capitalist state. Food was rotting in ships in the harbor, the government broadcasts said, and the masses were starving in Gdansk. Despite the ubiquitous distrust of the government, many Poles swallowed at least part of this, and warned us not to go to Gdansk. We went anyway and found food more plentiful and the atmosphere more pleasant than Warsaw.

Hans Magnus Enzensberger would go

so far as to say that one-way systems do not really constitute communication at all. "In its present form, equipment like television or film does not serve communication but prevents it. It allows no reciprocal action between transmitter and receiver; technically speaking, it reduces feedback to the lowest point compatible with the system."<sup>3</sup> In fact, he finds them to be the mirror of power relationships in society. "The technical distinction between receivers and transmitters reflects the social division of labor into producers and consumers, which in the consciousness industry becomes of particular political importance. It is based, in the last analysis, on the basic contradiction between the ruling class and the ruled class -- that is to say, between monopoly capital or monopolistic bureaucracy on the one hand and the dependent masses on the other."<sup>4</sup>

3. Enzensberger, Hans Magnus. "Constituents of a theory of the media" in *The Consciousness Industry: on literature, politics and the media*. New York: Seabury Press, 1974, page 97.

4. *ibid.*

Both the low-participation media (one-way) and the high-participation media (two-way) have their functions. Wilbur Schramm, citing Cantril's and Allport's findings, concludes that, "Low-participation media would seem to commend themselves for swift and widespread communication of information to individuals -- for example, as newspapers and radio communicate latest information on the environment." "Higher degrees of social participation tend to create a sense of involvement, a group bond, a circular pattern of influence and decision making. They provide maximum feedback. Thinking back to the social functions of mass communications, . . . the high-participation media would seem to commend themselves particularly for the task of correlating society's response, for the process of exchanging and sharpening opinion."<sup>5</sup>

The communications channels used by the Gdansk workers certainly follow this pattern. Denied access to the commonplace one-way communication channels, (newspapers, radio, television), they formed new channels based on a much higher degree of participation. Very few *gatekeepers* (those who filter information between the transmitter and receivers, like reporters, editors, and camera-people) were involved.

The people in the Gdansk area who came to the shipyard gates to receive information about the progress of the strike weren't satisfied to passively listen to reports from the MKS in the center of the shipyard. Not only were they constantly interacting and commenting to each other, they also had the opportunity to become broadcast transmitters themselves on the open mike. They sent their opinions to

the people surrounding them and also back to MKS members, completing the second half of the two-way communications.

When delegates brought audio tapes of the MKS proceedings back to their enterprises, their fellow workers were able to go far beyond passively receiving these messages. They could ask for further, more detailed information. Or they could ask that their comments and opinions be transmitted back to the MKS through their delegate. Those with strong opinions were likely to become delegates themselves, reducing the possibility that their messages would be confounded by someone else. Though the delegates did play the role of gatekeepers, they made every possible attempt to minimize the gatekeeper's function of paring down information. And most importantly, these gatekeepers met face-to-face with the information receivers, and were subject to question or even replacement by them.

The daily bulletin was distributed primarily to the people inside the shipyards and to those just outside the gate. Though the print media is a strongly one-way form of communication, in this case it engendered two-way communication. When the bulletins were thrown into the crowd outside the gate, the first person to snatch up a bulletin would begin to read it aloud,



5. Schramm, Wilbur (ed), "The nature of channels" in *The Process and Effects of Mass Communication*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1954, page 89.

becoming a receiver and a transmitter at the same time. The discussions of the bulletin that followed, some of them over the open mike, had a good chance of eventually getting back to the bulletin editors. Reading the leaflets became a social activity.

Posting bulletins on the walls outside the shipyards was another one-way channel that engendered two-way communication. Instead of being read in isolation (as print media usually is), these posted bulletins attracted groups of people that discussed their contents. Strong reactions could be transmitted over the open mike. Many people came from other parts of Poland to read these bulletins and participate in the discussions around the gates of the shipyards. In Gdansk they would sometimes act as transmitters, but would generally receive information. Back at their homes and workplaces, these people would transmit the information they had received

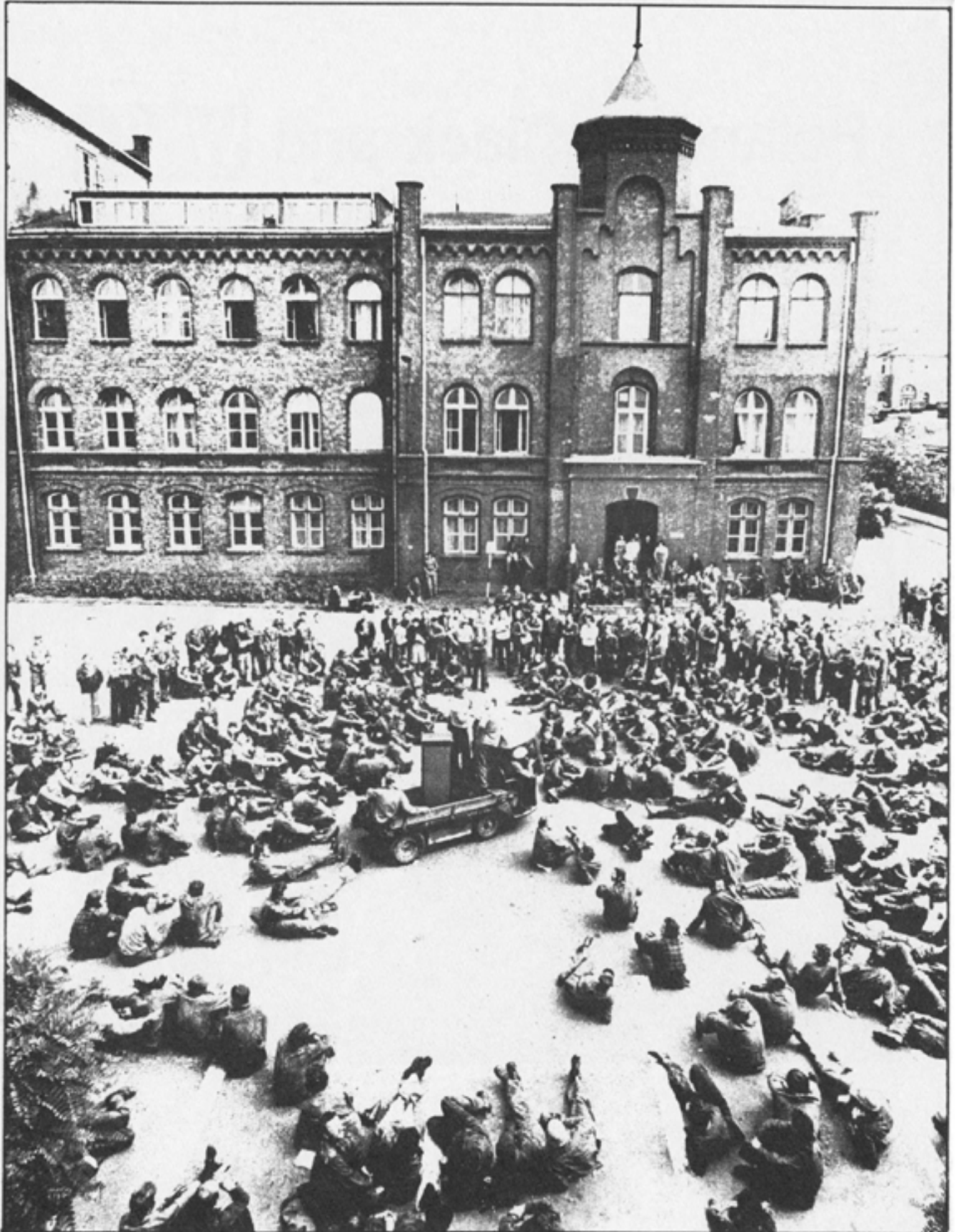
in Gdansk to their friends and acquaintances. These transmissions were also two-way, since the person who had visited Gdansk could be questioned about information s/he neglected, and someone else could even be sent to Gdansk for more information. Here again is a very libertarian form of gatekeeper.

## Conclusion

The Polish government's efforts to sever normal channels of communications during the Gdansk strike led to new forms of communication, many of which developed as two-way rather than one-way channels. The number and function of gatekeepers that separate people from information was minimized, and participation was maximized. In short, the Polish people began to explore new channels leading to a democratization of communication.



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# Poland in Black and White



## Introduction

The following is a *partial draft* of an analysis of selected aspects of US media coverage of the situation in Poland from the summer of 1980 until the spring of 1982. It is neither an analysis of the new methods of communication the Poles developed for themselves,<sup>1</sup> nor is it an analysis of the Eastern European official press.<sup>2</sup> It is based upon: a daily review of the *San Francisco Chronicle* since summer of 1980; a frequent review of the *East Bay Today*, the *San Francisco Examiner*, and the *New York Times* over the same period; a daily review of the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the *Oakland Tribune* since the declaration of martial law on December 13, 1981; and a nightly review of the *CBS Evening News* and *ABC News Nightline* for the two weeks immediately following declaration of martial law.

I will often use the term **press** to apply to all the news media. I have lumped most of these news media together into what may seem like a monolithic whole, not distinguishing one from another. The reason, quite frankly, is that in viewing this voluminous material, I really was unable to distinguish between the various news organizations (with the single exception that the *NY Times* and *Christian Science Monitor* pieces tended to be longer and somewhat more detailed than the others).

This similarity is due to several factors. The most obvious is that most of these organizations simply re-organize (or just reprint) news from a larger news-gathering organization (UPI, AP, *NY Times*). Less obvious is the fact that all the news-gathering organizations have similar sources for news (government bulletins, press conferences, etc.). Less obvious is the fact that most of the reporters for the news-gathering organizations stay in the same Warsaw hotels, eat together, and share information together. Least obvious (though most important), most of these reporters, as well as all the editors who come between what they write and what we read, share a similar view of what the world is like and **should be** like and what is important and newsworthy, and **how** it is newsworthy.

I have compared these news accounts to translations of primary source materials I have gathered, to each other, as well as to news accounts of other incidents, in an effort to better see how the press was handling the news from Poland.

The specific examples I use are chosen because they occurred at the time I was composing that particular segment of this paper, rather than because they were some kind of *ideal* example. For most examples I have cited, there were literally dozens of others that could have been used in their place.

I will show how the media framed the popular movement in Poland as *anti-socialist*, and how they framed other similar movements in other countries differently. In a future section I will show how they framed Lech Walesa as a strong leader who wielded considerable influence, when in actuality his role was more like that of a movie star (or other celebrity). And in another forthcoming section I hope to demonstrate how they framed the events in Poland as being a Catholic rebellion against Communism, when that also was not the case.

In all sections I will point out how these frames are often frames that were placed there originally by the Eastern European news media. I will show the contradictions in these frames and, using primary source materials, will show that they are inaccurate. Finally, I will try to explain the misframing in terms of a hegemonic *world view*.<sup>3</sup>

1 For a first-hand account of the decentralized, two-way communications systems developed during the August 1980 strike, see my article "How Polish Workers Made the News" in *Journal of Community Communications* 11: 2, Spring, 1981.

2 Though I believe that if I were to analyze the Soviet media I would discover it to be very similar (even in terminology), though often with opposite underlying meaning.

3 I borrow the term *world view* from the Sociology of Knowledge. It is similar to a combination of several of the *values* articulated by sociologist Herbert Gans, and is closely related to *ideology* (but without a deliberate bias).

It is also closely related to terms used by philosophers of science such as Kuhn (*paradigm*) and Popper (*tradition*). Many of the ideas put forward by this field can be extrapolated to become directly relevant to my thesis. These include: that the way theories (or in our case opinions) are accepted or rejected is determined by the way which we've been taught to look at things (including our very language); that reality is not independent of the way in which one describes it; and that the principles of the paradigm determine the meaning of the terms (the *world view* of the media defines terms like *good*, *bad*, *free* and *democratic*).





This graffiti from the Polish underground reads: "We will move off the walls when we get access to the media."

## Solidarity & Socialism

I believe that it is a socially observable fact that most Americans think the Solidarity movement<sup>4</sup> is anti-communist, and that the source for this misconception is the news media. One needs only to look at the various proclamations by American officials and labor leaders stating their support for Solidarity at the same time that they decry the "Communism" that Solidarity "is valiantly struggling against". It is interesting to see that there is a lot more coverage of western leaders claiming that Solidarity is "fighting communism" than there is coverage of Solidarity leaders supporting socialism, even though Solidarity's devotion to socialism is mentioned in almost every major Solidarity speech. And when coverage is given to a Solidarity spokesperson supporting socialism, it is usually linked in the press with some kind

of implication that the spokesperson was only saying it to placate the Soviets and thus avoid possible invasion.

This kind of coverage leads the average reader/listener/viewer to a conclusion that the Poles hate socialism and want a return to capitalism. This is distinctly not

<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this article I will often use the name **Solidarity** to refer to the entire revolutionary movement taking place in Poland from August, 1980 onward. Use of this term is not meant to imply that the Polish movement was strictly trade-union based. Rather, it is a convenient term used by the media as well as by revolutionaries aiming for far broader changes than unionism could ever bring. (Perhaps one of the defects in strategy of those who wanted more revolutionary changes was to continue to refer to themselves as part of the Solidarity movement.) At any rate, I wish to make clear to the reader that my constant reference to Solidarity does **not** mean that I think that the most important things happening in Poland over the period were happening within the union. Au contraire!

the case, and it is stated time and time again by Solidarity leaders and their associates that it is the PUWP (Polish United Workers' Party -- the party that governs Poland) that has turned away from and perverted socialism. In fact, if one were to read only translations of Solidarity documents (and not either the western or the eastern press), one is likely to come to the conclusion that it was the Party that was capitalist, and Solidarity that was socialist.

According to a shipyard worker in Szczecin by the name of Jacek, the goal of the Polish workers is to really own the means of production. "The television says that we are the owners. And, in fact, we merely want to make these words a reality."<sup>5</sup>

So where does this *anti-communist* frame come from? Most directly it comes from the Soviet-based press who label any deviation from the strict party line *anti-socialist*. In fact, the term *anti-socialist elements* crops up time and again in American

press reports about Poland, almost always quoting official Polish or Soviet press. But why does the American media quote the eastern media unquestioning<sup>6</sup> about this, when they are so skeptical of most other statements the eastern press makes? I believe it boils down to the fact that both the Soviet and the American *world views* can see the world only as it exists today. People must live under a variant of *communism* as practiced in the USSR or *capitalism* as practiced in the US. According to both of these *world views*, these two models (and their variants and aberrations) are the only choices. When something comes along that does not fit into the

5 Interview in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, 4:4-6, Winter-Spring, 1981, page 17.

6 The quotes have somewhat of a mocking tone, pointing out the obvious ideological bias of the Eastern press (a bias that is assumed not to exist in the American press). But at the same time there is total acceptance of the frames provided by the eastern media.



model (such as the kind of decentralized democracy where people controlled all facets of their lives -- that many of the people in Poland were seeking), it is made to fit the model by shoving it into an existing slot and trying to make it fit, or rather telling everyone that it fits (even if it doesn't). Thus, it was the fact that the news media really couldn't conceptualize anything different, that led to this misframing.

At last fall's Solidarity Congress, Professor Lipinski, a life-long socialist and founder of KOR, <sup>7</sup> received thunderous applause when he said, "There are no significant forces in Poland which desire the reprivatization of the means of production." <sup>8</sup>

He went on to criticize the Polish government's censorship, police, prisons, and economic policy. Talking about the party, Lipinski again received thunderous

applause when he claimed "It is **their** socialism that is anti-socialist and anti-revolutionary." <sup>9</sup> Yet the *NY Times* wire-service article <sup>10</sup> took the bite out of his speech by failing to include his quote about no one in Poland desiring a return to private enterprise. The way his speech was phrased in the *Times* piece gave the

7 Committee for Workers' Self-Defense (later the Committee for Social Self-Defense), a group of (mainly) socialist intellectuals that has defended workers and other dissidents since 1976. KOR's paper *Robotnik*, an informational bulletin, was a key factor in spreading the strikes in the summer of 1980.

8 Solidarity National Congress, Sept. 29, 1981, as quoted in *Solidarity Support Campaign Bulletin* #1, March, 1982.

9 Celt, Ewa and Sabbat, Anna, "KSS 'KOR' Disbands: Five years in retrospect," *Radio Free Europe Research Background Report* #284, Oct 6, 1981.

10 as reprinted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Sept 29, 1981.



Wojna z Narodem

The Warsaw headquarters of Solidarity on Dec 13, 1981

impression that Lipinski had been a socialist, but had become disillusioned by Poland's implementation of socialism, and that he found the Polish leaders full of contradictions. Someone reading the *Times* story could very easily believe that Lipinski was now in favor of capitalism, which simply is not true at all.

Lipinski was not using the terms "anti-socialist" and "anti-revolutionary" simply to throw contradictions into the face of the Polish authorities. He and many other socialists in Solidarity sincerely believe that Poland is just a "state-capitalist" society, not considerably different from "monopoly-capitalist" societies in the west. The following recommendations concerning Party changes were written by a Party member in Lodz:

*It (the Party) must therefore take action with a view to redistributing personal income and privately-owned goods: those who are too rich should quite simply lose a significant part of their wealth for the benefit of the poor. Unless it lowers the highest incomes and taxes the possessions of the best-off groups, the government will only fuel inflation and the 'black market' through the wage rises it has introduced. And in that case it is the poor who will pay the costs of the crisis.<sup>11</sup>*

Except for the reference to the 'black market', the above sounds like critiques that socialists have been applying to the USA's capitalist economy for many years.

Perhaps the clearest insight into a major viewpoint in Solidarity can be seen in selections from the Solidarity newspapers. The following excerpt is from an official declaration by the body that links together the staff of Szczecin's five col-

leges of Higher Education. It was printed both in *Jednosc* (Unity), the Solidarity newspaper of the Szczecin area, and in *Kommunikat*, the Warski shipyard workers bulletin.

*What is involved in this (Solidarity's) struggle? If we reply that it involves true socialism, undistorted socialism, we will not be explaining very much. We will therefore try to explain the essence of this struggle.*

*The right to private property in the means of production was abolished in our country when production was put under state ownership. These facts are commonly accepted in Poland. The argument begins when official propaganda tells the entire nation that in Poland the means of production are socially owned. Theoretically, under socialism the means of production should be held in common ownership by those who actually use them, that is, the working class. But if the social ownership of the means of productions is to be a true fact and not simply a propaganda statement then it involves control over one's own labour power, control and the full right to decide on the social subject of that labor; it means a structure of legal and political norms in harmony with the needs of the world of labor.*

*State ownership and social ownership of the means of production are two completely different concepts which should never be confused. The means of production may be owned by the state but this does not mean that they are thereby the social property of the working class.*

*We will now attempt to reply to the question mentioned earlier about the logic of working class demands.*

<sup>11</sup> "What is to be done?", *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, op. cit., page 53.

*This class, acting in a framework within which private ownership of the means of production has been legally (and only legally) abolished, is carrying on a definite struggle to socially control the state-owned means of production, of which the events of 1956, 1970, 1976, and 1980 are examples and are external manifestations of the process of working-class liberation. If this is the essence of the workers struggle, then the trade union movement Solidarity is a socialist movement in the purest sense of the term.*<sup>12</sup>



*Solidarity poster in Wrocław painted over. Solidarity sticker explains 'That's the regime's only argument'*

## Socialist in word and Indeed

Even if it is not readily apparent from the previous quotes from primary sources that Solidarity's opposition to the Polish government was basically socialist, actions speak louder than words, and a careful examination of Solidarity's actions over the past year-and-a-half leads one to a definitive conclusion that Solidarity was indeed a *socialist* opposition force (even though a superficial reading of the media would lead one to the exact opposite conclusion). Their militancy, their constant shows of solidarity, their insistence on internal democracy, their push for self-management and control over the workplace, all are marks of a militant socialist workers' movement.

According to Solidarity's National Vice-President, Andrzej Gwiazda, the Polish workers view a strike as meaning that someone was wronged, rather than in terms of its inconvenience to the public.<sup>13</sup>

When activists were beaten in Bydgoszcz in March of 1981, workers threatened a nationwide general strike to protest. In August of 1980 when Walesa declared the Gdansk shipyard strike over because local demands were met, he was heckled and overruled by the full strike committee, who declared that the shipyard would remain on strike until the demands of the entire movement were met.<sup>14</sup> In Swidnik, female workers in the local health clinic who thought they would be ignored and patients would suffer if they went on strike themselves, took their demands to a nearby helicopter factory, and those factory workers went on strike with the demands

<sup>13</sup> Interview in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, *op. cit.*, page 10.

<sup>14</sup> This is only one of numerous instances where Walesa (contrary to his role of *militant* as portrayed by the media) played a very conservative and conciliatory role, in opposition to the more militant populace.

<sup>12</sup> Inter-College Coordinating Committee of Solidarity, Szczecin region, as printed in *Jednosc*, #14 as reprinted in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, *op. cit.*, page 27.

of the health workers.<sup>15</sup> Solidarity was not just the name of an organization, it was a way of life.

Not only did Solidarity insist on the right of workers to fire their bosses, but they insisted on organizing production themselves. "Local self-management councils would take charge of the plants during Saturday work, organizing the process of production and insuring that goods produced were delivered to areas of greatest need."<sup>16</sup> "Solidarity organized self-help institutions to aid the elderly, the sick, and working families in meeting daily needs under increasingly difficult conditions."<sup>17</sup>

And inside Solidarity itself there was an widespread insistence on internal democracy. "It became a national obsession to prevent manipulation or arbitrary decisions. No matter how long discussions in search of consensus dragged on, they were universally acknowledged as preferable to top-down directives."<sup>18</sup>

### The Radical Demands of the Polish Workers

Let's take a look at some of the key demands made by Solidarity which were almost never mentioned in the American press. From the very beginning of the August 1980 strike wage demands were designed not as greediness, but to decrease the differences between the salaries of various groups of workers. In the very first Solidarity strike bulletin the workers wrote, "It is better to ask for an increase of

<sup>15</sup> cited in Urszula Wislanka's "Polish Women's Defiance Broadens Revolt", *Solidarity Support Campaign Bulletin #1*, *op. cit.*

<sup>16</sup> Tymowski, Andrzej, "Who are the workers i Solidarity -- and what do they want?", *Solidari. Support Campaign Bulletin #1*, *op. cit.*

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *ibid.*

a definite amount, say 1000 zlotys and not for a percentage increase, which would benefit most those who already earn more."<sup>19</sup> And written into the final agreement ending the August 1980 strike: "These wage increases ... will apply to all types of workers and employees *and in particular to those who receive the lowest wages.*"<sup>20</sup>

And the Gdansk Accords included a large number of concessions to the workers which would be labeled *radical* if they were demanded here, few of which were even briefly mentioned by the American press. This included: full pay for the strike period to all strikers, increased health-care services, day-care for children of all working women, one year of fully-paid maternity leave and another year at half-pay (with a 2,000 zloty/month minimum), public access to government documents and the mass media, workers' councils participation in management, and workers' participation in all levels of national economic planning (including such things as deciding how much of an item to produce, how much of it to consume, how much of it to save, and how much of it to export).<sup>21</sup>

It's clear that demands like these coming from US workers would be either scoffed at or directly repressed. Imagine Reagan using the term *freedom fighters* to describe workers who demand the right to fire their own bosses, the right to participate as equal partner in national economic planning, the right to strike whenever they disagree with governmental policies at any level, etc. Imagine Reagan supporting the same people who blocked the major inter-

<sup>19</sup> Solidarity Strike Bulletin #1, Aug 23, 1980.

<sup>20</sup> Gdansk Agreement signed on Aug 31, 1980 as quoted in *Labour Focus on Eastern Europe*, 4:1-3, Winter, 1981. (my emphasis)

<sup>21</sup> Gdansk Agreement, *op. cit.*

sections of the nation's capital,<sup>22</sup> or those who shut down all the major press in the country.<sup>23</sup> And imagine the press covering such demands by US workers in as positive a light as was shed on the Polish workers!

It is interesting that a visit to UC Berkeley and Stanford two weeks ago by Tadeusz Kowalik, one of the six *experts* who negotiated the original Gdansk accords on behalf of Solidarity, was not covered by any of the major bay area press except the small *Peninsula Times Tribune*.

*He said he wanted to set the record straight about two major elements of the crisis in Poland that western journalists have not reported accurately. One myth is that members of Solidarity seek to create a capitalist society in Poland, but Kowalik denied this . . . public ownership is preferred for moderate to large-sized industry and trade, he said. "This is not understood by the great majority of mass media in the western countries."*

<sup>24</sup>

### Coverage of events similar to those in Poland

The militant unionism of Solidarity at first makes one wonder how the press let Reagan get away with calling the jailing of Polish strikers an "attack on freedom", considering Reagan's stand on the air traffic controllers strike. Reagan told PATCO that, as public employees, they had no right to strike, even if their strike was over concern for the safety of the public. He threatened to jail union leaders. Yet, when the Polish government jailed leaders of Solidarity for holding illegal public employee strikes, Reagan acted as if this was an outrage to humanity.

<sup>22</sup> Warsaw, August 3, 1981

<sup>23</sup> Poland, August 19 & 20, 1981

<sup>24</sup> March 6, 1982



The Polish Militia (or is it Salvadoran? ... or Chadian? ... or French? ...)

And this inconsistency in the media's approach is not an isolated exception, but more the rule. As Herbert Gans found in his rather monumental study of newsmagazines and network news, news from communist countries "is concerned almost entirely with these governments' problems and failures . . . Political unrest in the Communist countries is news, whereas similar kinds of unrest in other countries is not.<sup>25</sup> Yet, as far as domestic news goes, "strikes are frequently judged negatively, especially if they inconvenience the 'public'".<sup>26</sup>

So why does the press handle news from communist countries differently and, particularly, why did the press handle the PATCO strike so radically differently than it handled the Solidarity strikes, for the most part following Reagan's line of thought? Some media critics argue that the structure of newsgathering organizations and processes drastically affect the news we get. In *News From Nowhere*, Edward Jay Epstein details how expectations of what editors, producers, and network affiliates might want governs the reporters' approach to a network news story. Todd Gitlin argues that reporters, "by going about their business in a professional way, . . . systematically frame the news to be compatible with the main institutional arrangements of the society. Journalists thus sustain the dominant frames through the banal, everyday momentum of their routines."<sup>27</sup>

Media critics often argue that the routine set of sources from which reporters

habitually get their news unduly effects the way the news is reported. Reporters become close to these sources, and tend to believe them, often reflecting their viewpoints in a more positive light.

Other critics argue that the media is caught in the *objectivity* trap as they were in the McCarthy era when, if someone held up a list and said that he had the names of 300 communists in the State department, they *objectively* reported exactly what he said, avoiding commentary.

I think that all of these views have *some* merit. Most of those editors, producers, and station managers are "inconvenienced" by an airline strike, and not likely to react well to a story that fails to demonstrate that inconvenience. Reporters *are* close to US government sources, and they were obviously better-suited to get their point across than PATCO was.<sup>28</sup> Likewise, Solidarity *supporters* in both the US government and labor unions had better long-standing channels of communication open with the press than the Polish authorities had. And because our government was (in both cases) producing press releases and briefings on a regular basis, it became easy to just *objectively* report these.

But these explanations, though accurate, only explain a part of what was happening. I believe that the real reason the press treated these similar cases differently, and ended up supporting Reagan's position in both cases was because they adhere to a common ideology. Terms like "illegal strike" were constantly cropping up in regards to PATCO, but never in regards to Solidarity. This comes back to a basic American value (imbedded in our culture) that our government, its set of laws, in fact the whole social fabric is basically good and fair, while those of *communist*

25 Gans, Herbert. *Deciding What's News: A study of CBS Evening News, NBC Nightly News, Newsweek & Time*, New York: Vintage, 1980, page 33.

26 *ibid*, page 46.

27 Gitlin, Todd. *The Whole World is Watching: The media in the making and the unmaking of the New Left*, Berkeley: UC Press, 1980, page 269.

28 In fact PATCO has admitted that one of its basic strategic mistakes was in not getting their message out well enough to the press.



societies are not. Therefore, to violate a law made in a society that does not make *fair* laws is not labeled "illegal" whereas violation of laws in our society is.<sup>29</sup> This makes it all the more clear that if American workers were doing what the Polish workers have been doing for the past year-and-a-half, (going on strike, demanding to run their offices and factories and to fire their bosses), the press is not likely to present them in nearly as positive a light as they have the Polish workers. In fact, if the same sorts of incidents were to happen here, the press is bound to (at first) view them as "communist-inspired" and "agitations from abroad" in much the same way that the Eastern European press viewed the situation in Poland as "CIA inspired" and "anti-socialist".<sup>30</sup>

Thus, the press finds no contradiction between Reagan's remarks on Poland, ("Nor do we declare martial law to prevent our people from voting for the kind of government they want")<sup>31</sup> and his support for martial law to end free elections in the Philippines. In fact, they even quote him in the same article castigating "those (who) would export terrorism and subversion in the Caribbean and elsewhere, especially Cuba",<sup>32</sup> without any thought at all to the similarity of what he is attacking to the US role in El Salvador, or to what the Soviets claim is the US role in Poland.

One could list hundreds of contradictions in Reagan's position, with the press handling the coverage of each one taking the government's side. A military junta has taken over Turkey and arrested 30,000

workers and democrats,<sup>33</sup> yet the US government is aiding and supporting the Turkish junta, and both the government and the press are silent about the imprisoned unionists. But the Turkish junta is staunchly anti-communist, and certainly better fits into an *American world view* than the Polish martial law government.

But there is an example much more similar to that of Poland's martial law crackdown, which occurred one month later than in Poland. In an effort to prevent a threatened January 19 nationwide strike, the Indian government arrested over 6,000 labor leaders<sup>34</sup> the day before a scheduled strike and forced many more into hiding. Over 50% of the labor force (numbering 20 million people) actually struck, and 25,000 of them were jailed, a dozen people died, and 160 were injured.<sup>35</sup> In some states the strike was 90% effective. And, according to India's largest-circulation English-language newspaper, the government-run media had "indulged in unwarranted distortion" by reporting normal conditions during the strike.<sup>36</sup>

33 For a very interesting article comparing the Soviet press' handling of Turkey versus its handling of Poland, see Paul Henze's "The Differences Between Turkey and Poland" in the *Wall Street Journal*, March 12, 1982. Mr. Henze, a former member of the National Security Council, tries to show that *Pravda* distorts both situations when it claims that the Turkish junta is exploitative and the Polish government is fair. Henze believes the opposite -- that the Polish junta is exploitative and that the Turkish government is fair. At the root of his argument is the ideology that communism is bad and capitalism is good. Both he and *Pravda* banter around the same terms (ie. "terrorism"), but insist that they're only applicable to the other side, not to the side that they support.

34 According to early reports in the *San Francisco Examiner*, Jan 19, 1982.

35 *San Francisco Examiner*, Jan 20, 1982.

36 *San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan. 22, 1982.

29 This is a rather gross over-simplification of what is really happening, but sufficient for here.

30 Of course, after a time, if such a mass movement was to build, it is likely that the media would adjust somewhat along with it.

31 AP report published in *Oakland Tribune*, Jan 27, 1982.

32 *ibid.*



## The Differences Between Turkey and Poland

By PAUL B. HENZE

"Under the barbaric pressure of the military junta . . . the exploitation of the oppressed workers has intensified. The workers are resisting, however, with powerful strikes. Over 30,000 democrats and progressive citizens are being detained under inhumane conditions."

*Pravda on Turkey*

"The support of the workers for the military council is growing. The pace of work in industry has, in general, increased. A few counterrevolutionaries, however, are trying to create tension and provoke strikes. The forces of public order are successfully blocking these actions."

*Pravda on Poland*

Pravda's misrepresentations of conditions in Turkey and Poland are easy to dismiss as typical of a newspaper whose content continually negates its name. It is more difficult to excuse European press commentators, and occasional officials, for equating Turkey with Poland. Military leadership has produced no parallelism between the two. Turkey is the opposite of Poland in every respect.

The Moscow-inspired and aided military takeover in Poland reveals the economic, political and moral bankruptcy of the Communist system. Military rule in Poland has brought no benefits to her people. It is not even clear whether it will result in permanent benefits to her rulers. It has worsened prospects for improvement of an economic situation that was already desperate. The Polish people can have no doubt whose interests military rule aims to serve: not theirs, but those of the old men in the Kremlin.

Military rule was imposed in Poland to throttle democracy, which was struggling

to be born, not to advance it. Turkey's military leaders took control of their country's government to preserve democracy, not to destroy it. They weren't urged by, nor did they consult with, any outside power before they acted. The country's democratic order had come under massive terrorist assault. Terrorism was financed and supplied with weapons by Moscow and its surrogates.

But even when terrorism was at its height, a parliamentary-based government in Turkey had been able to launch a major economic reform with OECD and IMF backing. That reform went into effect in January 1980. When military leaders intervened more than eight months later, it was to protect these economic reforms and keep terrorism from undermining them.

Except for terrorists and their immediate supporters, military intervention in Turkey was welcomed by the entire population. Turks of all classes and in all parts of the country cooperated in restoring civil order. Economic recovery has gained steady momentum during 17 months of military leadership. The country registered over 4% net growth in 1981. Turkey feeds its population well and has large food surpluses for export. Export targets for both agricultural and industrial products are being met ahead of schedule. Debts are being paid and new foreign investment is flowing in. It would be hard to find a greater contrast than with Poland.

In the political sphere the differences are equally sharp. General Evren of Turkey confidently set in motion a political process to produce a more effective democratic system. He has announced a timetable for restoration of parliamentary democracy. What vision of the future has General Jaruzelski yet offered Poles? Who trusts his word?

Basic freedoms have not been restricted in Turkey beyond measures necessary to apprehend and punish terrorists and curb foreign support for them. Religion has not been interfered with. News flows freely in and out of the country. All Turkey's links with the wider world are broadening. People come and go in all directions.

Military rule in Poland is a makeshift formula for reimposing tight Communist control without Soviet military intervention. It may not succeed even in this. It is a measure of the growing systemic crisis of the Soviet Empire. What has happened in Turkey underscores the basic strength of the Western Alliance and the democratic principles on which it is based. Turkey has committed itself to a free-market economy which provides the basis for more productive democracy and improved quality of life for the entire population.

Turks and Poles share a long history of close relations based in large part on opposition to Russian aggrandizement. The Ottoman Empire was one of the few that refused to recognize the partition of Poland. Polish patriots found refuge in Turkey in the 19th Century. All these links are being recalled in articles in the Turkish press today. Turkish media report voluminous developments in Poland. The Turk in the street knows who Lech Walesa is and admires him. If Poles hear honest reporting on Turkey, it is only from Western broadcasts, which Moscow jammers work hard to keep from penetrating the new Iron Curtain they are trying to lower over the country.

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

All this sounds *very* similar to the martial law situation in Poland, but the news coverage was markedly different. For several weeks after martial law, the situation in Poland was front-page news every day in virtually every newspaper I looked at (until it was displaced by news of Northern California flooding), and usually the subject of at least several articles. The news from India was *never* front-page news, almost always relegated to obscure places,<sup>37</sup> was never the subject of more than one article, and only stayed in the news for a handful of days (even though the last reports indicated that 50,000 people were still in jail).

More people went out on strike in India than were ever members of Solidarity. There were about the same number of injuries in India as in martial law clashes in Poland. There were more people killed in Poland, but infinitely more people jailed in India. Yet the amount of coverage was so radically different. How can this be explained? I would offer an answer similar to the answers I've given to similar previous questions. The Gandhi government is looked upon as a democracy that basically shares American ideals, one that is basically fair. If they are jailing strikers, they must have a reason, and it is not such a spectacular horrible event. The Polish government, on the other hand, is a "communist dictatorship" that does not share our ideals, and therefore is not basically fair. If they jail strikers, it *is* a horrible (but somewhat expected -- eventually) event. According to the *American world view*, what Gandhi does that seems negative will always have another side (because she holds to the same basic ideals of freedom and democracy that we do), while

what Jaruzelski does may not have another side (because there's an expectation that someone who embraces "communism" rejects our ideals of freedom and democracy and is likely to do something dastardly). This does not mean that the press will totally ignore social transgressions by Gandhi, but rather that they will treat them more lightly and give them less importance (ie. less prominence and less space).<sup>38</sup>

## Handling Poland and Central America differently:

### A Case Study

I would like to make one final comparison between a story on Poland and another on Central America both of which appeared in the news media during the first quarter of this year.

On January 13 Polish authorities took a small group of western journalists on their first trip outside of Warsaw since the martial law crack-down exactly one month before. They were taken to Poznan specifically to hear Zdzislaw Rozwalak, the chairman of Solidarity's local branch, publicly repeat an allegation that, since Solidarity had become too radical, martial law was necessary to suppress it. This was to have been the first public "proof" that Solidarity members believed that it had gotten out of control, and that Solidarity leadership favored martial law.

Almost exactly two months later American officials brought a group of five reporters into a State Department official's office to hear Orlando Jose Tardencillas Espinosa, a Nicaraguan soldier captured in El Salvador, tell how he was trained in

37 Jan 19 -- *Examiner*, p A3, *Chronicle*, p 12  
 Jan 20 -- *Examiner*, p B13, *Chronicle*, p 14,  
*Christian Science Monitor*, p 14  
 Jan 21 -- *Chronicle*, p 17  
 Jan 22 -- *Chronicle*, p 21

38 At least until such a time as she steps over the barrier and does something that *really* doesn't jive with our current ideals -- whatever they may be at the time.

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guerrilla tactics in Cuba. This was to have been the first public "proof" of Cuban involvement in El Salvador.

In both cases, the person put on display to the press denied the allegations he was brought there to confirm, and claimed that he was coerced into saying this by the authorities. In each case he was an embarrassment to the government who had brought him there to bolster its case in the eyes of the people through the press. Though the press recognized the embarrassment to the government in both cases, they did *not* treat the cases in the same way.

The western press approached the Polish case with the assumption that all contacts that the government makes with the press are purely for propaganda purposes. In fact, the UPI lead<sup>39</sup> began: "The first propaganda effort by Poland's 'news management machine' backfired badly..." Words like "news management" and "propaganda" are used in reference to the government's motivations.

In the Central America case, however, words with negative connotations only appear in reference to the recanter Tardencillas, not in relation to the government. What is "propaganda" and "news management" when the Polish government does it is labeled "the administration's effort to convince the public"<sup>40</sup> when done by the American government.

Furthermore, the reports of the Central American item raise the possibility that Tardencillas had purposely duped and led on the poor innocent State Department.<sup>41</sup> The Pole, Rozwalak, on the other hand, is seen as a heroic rebel who refused attempts to bully him into telling a lie. News reports don't doubt his integrity, and

39 as printed in the *San Francisco Examiner*, Jan 15, 1982.

40 *L A Times* story on Tardencillas recanting reprinted in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 13, 1982.

41 Quotations in articles include such words as "lied" and "conned"

## Attack on Solidarity made under duress, says Pole

By Michael Dobbs  
Washington Post

WARSAW, Poland — A leader of Poland's independent trade union federation, Solidarity, Wednesday publicly recanted a statement supporting the declaration of martial law and attacking alleged political extremism in the union.

Zdzislaw Rozwalak, chairman of Solidarity's branch in the western city of Poznan, told a surprised group of Western journalists that his earlier statement had been made under duress. The journalists were visiting Poznan on the first organized trip outside Warsaw by the Foreign Ministry press center since the military crackdown Dec. 13.

Rozwalak's public disavowal will severely embarrass Poland's military authorities as they have been attempting to present a picture of rank-and-file Solidarity activists enthusiastically themselves from the excesses of the leadership. Extensive publicity was given to Rozwalak's original statement alleging that Solidari-

## Polish propaganda attempt backfires

LONDON (UPI) — The first propaganda effort by Poland's "news management machine" backfired badly, giving Western journalists a picture in opposition to the official line, a British newswoman wrote today.

Roger Bevan of the London Times said the trip to Poznan, Poland's fifth largest city, organized the week for foreign correspondents in Warsaw, produced "a picture of resistance, not open but determined, and of a consciousness of strength."

Bevan wrote that Polish authorities decided to show 30 foreign reporters a city that "was one of the most tranquil, normal, peaceful spots in the country," which "would positively illustrate the virtues of military rule."

"Instead, the military council's news management machine received a nasty jolt," he said.

## Reagan Calls Guerrilla a Liar

Washington

President Reagan said yesterday that the young Nicaraguan guerrilla who first claimed and later denied that Cubans trained him to fight in El Salvador is "a liar," and he suggested the whole incident may have been "a setup."

Reagan also appeared dubious about comments by a "senior official" who told reporters at the State Department on Saturday the United States will deal with El Salvador as part of a global problem originating in Moscow and Havana.

"I've been reading all about that I haven't got anything to say," Reagan told reporters. "I always have trouble about wondering who those senior officials are. I haven't met any of them yet."

stress how previous statements he made were "under duress".<sup>42</sup>

Finally, articles on the Central American incident give the State Department a chance to refute the embarrassment, claim that they were "duped" by a "liar", and that this incident does nothing to harm their case. American officials were given a chance to raise doubts about the Nicaraguan's honesty within the very same article.<sup>43</sup> And the *San Francisco Chronicle* ran a front-page story headlined "Reagan Calls Guerrilla a Liar"<sup>44</sup> in which Reagan claimed that the US had been "set-up" by Tardencillas. (This article contained no commentary refuting Reagan's claims.) Yet *Washington Post* and UPI accounts I read of the Polish incident contained *not one* commentary from a Polish government official as to how such an event (the recanting) could occur. And I can't possibly imagine that the western press would have given much credence to statements by General Jaruzelski about Rozwalak being a "liar" who "set-up" the Polish government. And if such accounts had been published (and I couldn't find any), they certainly wouldn't have been allowed to stand alone unaccompanied by comments questioning Jaruzelski's veracity.

Why were these two similar events covered differently? Basically because the press has a set of assumptions about how the world is. Western press thinks that communist government officials use them to "propagandize" whereas American government officials use it to "convince". With that as an underlying assumption, of course we view most American officials as

well-meaning, and bend over backwards to apply the journalistic notion of *objectivity*, allowing them to comment even on cases when it looks like they have egg on their faces. But having this world-view of the Polish government *not* being well-meaning, why provide them a chance to respond? For the Poles the story is that they were trying to use propaganda and they blew it. END OF STORY. For the US the story is that they were trying to convince us, but they were duped (through no fault of their own), and deserve a chance to respond.

### Since Martial Law

With the declaration of martial law in Poland, the American government quickly became very vocal about the Polish workers they had been extremely quiet about up until then. But all commentary stripped the Polish workers of what they were fighting *for* and substituted for this what they were fighting *against*. Virtually every quote by US officials, and almost every article published about the Polish situation since martial law was declared refers to the fear of an actual Russian invasion or places the blame for martial law on the Russians.<sup>45</sup>

Space devoted to the "Russian connection" has constantly dwarfed mention of what was actually going on in Poland, and there was almost no space at all devoted to what the Polish people had actually wanted. When space *was* devoted to what the Poles wanted, it was watered down to become what we in America are supposed to already have, as when Reagan called them "a people who ask for nothing more

42 The *Washington Post* article reprinted in *East Bay Today*, Jan 14, 1982 is even headlined "Attack on Solidarity made under duress, says Pole".

43 The *L A Times* account mentioned earlier actually devotes about half the article to State Department refutations, but this is just an extreme case.

44 March 15, 1982

45 In fact, in the week immediately following the martial law crackdown, almost all the headlines concerning Poland dealt with either speculation about a Russian invasion (including the banner headlines "Soviets Land in Warsaw" in the Dec 12 *East Bay Today*), US-Soviet relations, or the possibility of a default on western loans to Poland.



**Somewhere in Poland, 1982**

than the right to lead their own lives in freedom and dignity."<sup>46</sup> And statements like this are usually put in terms of the Poles fighting *for* freedom by fighting *against* the Russians, with comparisons made to other "similar" incidents such as in Afganistan.<sup>47</sup> And when Haig "scoffed at contentions that 'excesses' of the Solidarity movement brought on the Polish government crackdown", what he meant was that the Russian and Polish authorities had already planned the crackdown and that the workers' demands were irrelevant.<sup>48</sup>

The Polish workers and their demand for a better world where they would have control over their lives and socially control the means of production was reduced to a global conflict between east and west.

46 *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec 24, 1981

47 As in the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan 2, 1982.

48 *San Francisco Chronicle*, Dec 30, 1981

## Summary

In summary, I would like to refer to two statements that Alexander Haig made recently in San Francisco. When a British journalist asked him if there was a 'double-standard' between criticizing military rule in Poland but not in pro-Western states, Haig 'exploded' with the following response:

*Isn't it time that our Western critics stop their double standard and isn't it time to give greater weight to the precious freedoms and values, with all their failings, and stop this masochistic tearing down of our values?*<sup>49</sup>

Haig clearly sees the link between an ideologically-based *world view* and the necessity of the press to uphold that view.

And at a San Francisco Commonwealth Club talk on Poland recently,

49 *San Francisco Chronicle*, Jan 13, 1982

when questioned about the El Salvador demonstrators outside Haig responded that they "have a funny fetish. They are trying to put a template of American ideals and standards on top of other societies."<sup>50</sup> This is precisely what the Soviet media does, what the American media does, and what Mr. Haig does. It is because the world is only viewed through this template that everything we see will only fit the framework of our *world view*; anything else will be covered up so that we cannot see it, or converted to something familiar. It is because of this *world view*, and particularly because of the people who provide the template (the news media) that we fail to see the struggle of the Polish people for what that struggle really is. And even if we were to receive news of the precise nature of the Polish struggle, it would still be difficult to understand because it is something that just does not fit into any of the categories we have been exposed to.

"Mass media specify the limits of legitimate thought."<sup>51</sup> "Controversy takes place, for the most part, within the narrow limits of a set of patriotic premises."<sup>52</sup> The media not only choose what facts we know about the world, but they certify what are valid oppositions to existing institutions.

*Of all the institutions of daily life, the media specialize in orchestrating everyday consciousness -- by virtue of their pervasiveness, their accessibility, their centralized symbolic capacity. They name the world's parts, they certify reality as reality -- and when their certifications are doubted and opposed, as they surely are, it is those same*

*certifications that limit the terms of effective opposition. To put it simply, the mass media have become core systems for the distribution of ideology.*<sup>53</sup>

Thus, our view of the world is shaped by the media, even to the extent of limiting our ideas of what kinds of change are even possible. This is why most Americans see the struggle of the Polish people against the Party as a struggle of "capitalist freedom" against "communism". Most people cannot see that there may be some other alternatives to this dichotomy.

Chomsky and Herman call the media agents of propaganda and of thought control.

*The beauty of the democratic systems of thought control, as contrasted with their clumsy totalitarian counterparts, is that they operate by subtly establishing on a voluntary basis . . . presuppositions that set the limits of debate, rather than by imposing beliefs with a bludgeon. Then let the debate rage; the more lively and vigorous it is, the better the propaganda system is served, since the presuppositions . . . are more firmly established. Those who do not accept the fundamental principles of state propaganda are simply excluded from the debate (or if noticed, dismissed as "emotional", "irresponsible", etc.).*<sup>54</sup>

Not only do the media shape our views about that the world around us is like, but at the same time they reinforce the notion that they themselves are a free, democratic, fair institution; an agent of truth. Of course they *are*, but only if we accept their definitions of 'free', 'democratic' and 'truth', which are part of the *world view* that they produce for us.

<sup>50</sup> *Oakland Tribune*, Dec 30, 1981

<sup>51</sup> Gitlin, Todd, "On Business and the Mass Media," mimeographed paper, 1981.

<sup>52</sup> Chomsky, Noam and Herman, Edward. *After the Cataclysm: Postwar Indochina & the reconstruction of imperial ideology*. Boston: South End Press, 1979.

<sup>53</sup> Gitlin, Todd, *The Whole World is Watching*, op. cit., page 2.

<sup>54</sup> Chomsky and Herman, op. cit., page 30.



when questioned about the El Salvador demonstrators outside Haig responded that they "have a funny fetish. They are trying to put a template of American ideals and standards on top of other societies."<sup>50</sup> This is precisely what the Soviet media does, what the American media does, and what Mr. Haig does. It is because the world is only viewed through this template that everything we see will only fit the framework of our *world view*; anything else will be covered up so that we cannot see it, or converted to something familiar. It is because of this *world view*, and particularly because of the people who provide the template (the news media) that we fail to see the struggle of the Polish people for what that struggle really is. And even if we were to receive news of the precise nature of the Polish struggle, it would still be difficult to understand because it is something that just does not fit into any of the categories we have been exposed to.

"Mass media specify the limits of legitimate thought."<sup>51</sup> "Controversy takes place, for the most part, within the narrow limits of a set of patriotic premises."<sup>52</sup> The media not only choose what facts we know about the world, but they certify what are valid oppositions to existing institutions.

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NOSC!!!  
LECHA!

WOLNOSC  
INTERNOWANYM

# OBWIESZCZENIE

## o wprowadzeniu stanu wojennego ze względu na bezpieczeństwo państwa

Kierując się potrzebą zapewnienia wzmożonej **obrony państwowych** interesów państwa i obywateli, w celu stworzenia warunków skutecznej ochrony spokoju, **ładu i porządku publicznego** oraz przywrócenia naruszonej dyscypliny społecznej, a także mając na względzie **zabezpieczenie** możliwości sprawnego funkcjonowania władzy i administracji państwowej oraz **gospodarki narodowej** — działając na podstawie art. 33 ust. 2 Konstytucji Polskiej Rzeczypospolitej Ludowej — **Rada Państwa** wprowadziła stan wojenny.

W związku z tym obywateli i jednostki, w szczególności, ze na czas obowiązywania stanu wojennego w szczególności:

- 1) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także wzięcia udziału w strajkach, demonstracjach, pikietach, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji, a w przypadku naruszenia tych przepisów — obywateli i jednostek — obywateli i jednostek — w szczególności, do: a) udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji, b) udziału w strajkach, demonstracjach, pikietach, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 2) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 3) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 4) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 5) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;

- 6) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 7) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 8) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 9) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;
- 10) **zakazano** im udziału w imprezach i innych formach masowego zgromadzeń, protestów, manifestacji, a także w imprezach artystycznych, masowych i sportowych bez zezwolenia zarządcy i zezwolenia właściwego terenowego organu państwowej policji;

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