

WORKERS VIEWPOINT

End the Criminal Rule
of the U.S. Monopoly Capitalist Class.
Fight for Socialism!

The Proletariat and Oppressed People
and Nations of the World, Unite!

POLITICAL ORGAN OF THE COMMUNIST WORKERS PARTY, U.S.A.

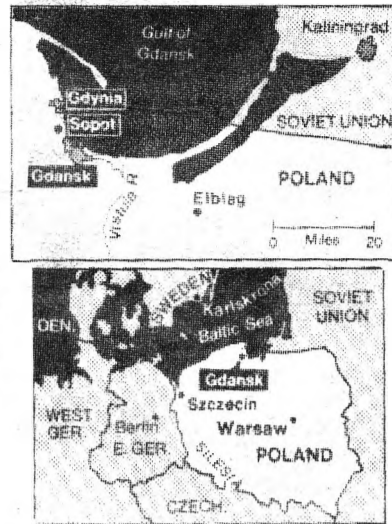
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"If we ran the country, we wouldn't be so bad off."

FIGHT ON, POLISH WORKERS!



The rebellion began in the northern port city of Gdansk with the Lenin Shipyard workers and has spread to the nearby Gdynia and Sopot, as well as the coal region of Silesia in southern Poland.

Polish workers are showing who are the real masters of society. The rebellion, with workers singing the Internationale, the song of Communists the world over, is like a knife in the heart of the scab revisionist leadership of Edward Gierek and his Soviet imperialist masters. It is also sending chills through the spine of the U.S. government, who prefer the goulash-brand of "Communism" to a genuinely independent Poland under workers' rule.

Polish Workers Wide Open to Revolutionary Socialism

Ten years ago, a rebellion led by the workers at the Lenin shipyard in the northern Polish city of Gdansk spread and shut down the whole country. Workers demonstrated at all government offices, including those of the phoney "Communist" Party of Poland. At the heart of the revolt was the massive hike in food prices, caused mainly by the large shipment of food to the Soviet Union. The heroic rebellion was crushed as Wladyslaw Gomulka, head of the country, ordered the murder of more than 55 workers' leaders. Post-rebellion shockwaves eventually toppled

Gomulka, and he was replaced by Gierek, who agreed to the workers' demands. But Poland's fundamental problem — domination by the Soviet Union and the scab policies of the Polish revisionist Party — was not solved.

And now, ten years later, the Polish workers at the Lenin shipyards are leading workers around the country in a renewed rebellion, using the strike weapon that is illegal in Poland. Their blows are aimed straight at the revisionist Communist Party that rules Poland on behalf of their Soviet masters. And while both the U.S., Polish and Soviet media are trying to portray the rebellion as being anti-socialist, in fact the opposite is true: by their action and words Polish workers show their wide-openness and spontaneous inclination toward real workers' rule. Living in so-called socialist Poland, the people can see the hypocrisy of the scab Communist Party. People are beginning to see through the appearance of workers' rule to the fact that the revisionist leadership has turned it upside down. "They say this country is run by workers. Up to now the workers have had no say at

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Armed workers guard the entrance to the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk.

Eggshot Damns Local 2 Contract Sellout

SAN FRANCISCO, Ca. — WHAM! Local 2 chief negotiator and International hack Vincent Sirabella got a black eye right in the midst of a press conference after the ratification vote on the sellout contract settlement. Sirabella at first thought that he had been shot. Only when he covered his eyes with his handkerchief did he find egg yolk flowing down his face.

"Lamb Chop and Eggs For Breakfast"

With their coattails caught between their legs, Sirabella and Local 2 President Charles Lamb didn't dare press any charges on the Communist Workers Party supporters who got a warm cheer from fellow workers. "Good shot - Fried Lamb chop and egg for breakfast!" Scared and shaken, they scurried back inside the hall as people shouted, "Come out and face the rank and file."

Earlier, Charles Lamb and Co. also got served notice by the CWP, United Hotel and Restaurant Workers (a rank and file caucus in Local 2) and progressive Local 2 workers who sent egg after egg at them, denouncing the sellout contract.

Three days before the ratification, Lamb and the International hacks made a backroom deal away from the pressure of the rank and file workers who had

been busting their ass walking the picket-line for a decent contract. Neither the membership nor the negotiating committee have been involved in the secret negotiations in Los Angeles. The negotiating committee, after hearing a verbal report from Lamb, voted 16 to 8 to reject the contract proposal. Lamb did not even have the respect for the committee or the rank and file to have a full written report outlining exactly what we're getting and not getting, while he hurriedly called together a ratification meeting. This backroom maneuvering, the main activity of all labor aristocrats across the country, was necessary for the Local 2 bureaucrats to push their real goal from the beginning of the strike — how to keep the rank and file under control.

"How Do We Take Back Local 2 And Build A Fighting Union?"

The contract proposal that he put forward to be ratified is no better than the one we rejected a few weeks ago when Mayor Feinstein tried to intervene. But all along the union hacks were the ones who actively disorganized the strike by not supporting any action against the Teamsters leadership when they sent workers back into the hotels. By not organizing the lines to shut the

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all. Maybe if we had we wouldn't be so hotels down, and demoralizing some workers who stopped picketing, and others from sticking it out, they hoped to pit those workers who wanted to stay out against those who were forced to work bad off economically and owe all that money overseas," said one Lenin shipyard fighter.

Meat Shortage Immediate Spark of Rebellion

On July 1, the Polish government drained the public supply of meat by raising the meat quota for special stores catering to party and government officials, thus sending already-high meat prices soaring. The same day, workers at plants throughout Poland walked off their jobs in protest. Strikes quickly spread with bus drivers and other dockworkers joining in. The government at first tried to bribe the workers by granting wage hikes to match the rise in meat prices. But it was too late — the demands of the workers went beyond economic issues to hit directly at the fascist Polish government.

Over the next few weeks, the militancy of the workers grew, with more and more joining in. From Gdansk the strike has spread not only to the surrounding cities, but also the coal-mining regions of southern Poland. By the middle of August, some 100,000 workers were out, and as of August 23, the number had grown to at least 150,000 with some 347 factories and businesses shut down.

Workers Hit Fascist Government, Demand Right to Strike

Last week, the striking workers issued a list of 16 demands (later expanded to 25) that spoke for all Poles. Put out by the Inter-Factory Strike Committee, the coalition body representing all the rebellious workers, the list includes the demand that all censorship end — in particular the censorship of news of the rebellion. The government-controlled media did not publish a word of the workers' action for more than a month after the initial strikes had begun and in fact cut all telephone communications. In addition, the workers are demanding that the media carry news of the strike and the strike committee.

But the most important demands of the Polish workers hit directly at the fascist government and its bondage to the Soviet Union. The Committee has insisted on the right to strike for all workers, as well as the rank and file's right to decide who runs the trade unions. Under genuine workers' rule, as in China under Mao's leadership, workers have these basic rights that ensure supervision of the leadership by the people. That Polish workers, as well as workers in all the Eastern European countries and the Soviet Union, cannot legally strike points to the fascist essence of these countries' regimes. While squeezing workers, the governments run the trade unions with a small gang of labor bureaucrats at the top who squelch all protest and who receive privileges in exchange for scabbing. These bureaucrats are part of a whole strata of Party and government officials that make up the new state monopoly capitalist class in Poland.

Blasting at this new class of oppressors, Polish workers have also demanded that the special stores that serve only Party and government bigshots be abolished. Along with this, the workers want meat rationed and an end to the system where bigshots always get all the meat they want while the people starve.

Religious Distress Shows Workers' Real Distress Church—Tool of U.S.

Another demand is the call for freedom from religious persecution. Many Polish workers consider themselves Catholics.

Bankrupt goulash communism — that man's aim in life is material comfort — cannot compete with the moral appeal of religion. Without genuine Marxism and blanketed by the spiritual vacuum and barrenness of revisionism, people will drift toward whatever they think helps them fight. Historically, Catholicism has been a major expression of Polish sentiment against national oppression and foreign domination, and this is one form resistance takes in Poland much as Islam served to clothe the Iranian revolution. Thus it is no accident that the fascist Polish government has to persecute religion.

This persecution of religion allows the U.S. and other imperialists to use it to infiltrate Polish society politically and ideologically. The Polish Pope, John Paul II is a spokesman for U.S. imperialism. The campaign for his nomination to the papacy was led by American, German and other European liberal heads of the church because of his familiarity with Eastern Europe and his rabid anti-communism.

The U.S. has succeeded in penetrating Poland to some degree, shown by the fact that pictures of the Pope have appeared on plant gates during the rebellion. But neither the U.S. government nor the Pope really stand with the interest of the workers, and Poles are getting clearer on this. The U.S. State Department has issued only cream puff statements about the rebellion. The revolt is "a matter for the Polish people and Polish authorities to work out," said David Passage, Department spokesman. This is a far cry from the 1950's theme of President-to-be Dwight Eisenhower and John Foster Dulles (later Ike's Secretary of State) of "rolling back the Iron Curtain."

U.S. Prefers Goulash Gierek Regime to Workers' Rule

The fact is the U.S. would like nothing better than for the Soviets to invade Poland. This would discredit the U.S.S.R. further and most important safeguard the goulash communist Gierek regime. As an August 19 *New York Times* editorial states, "Mr. Gierek has shown pragmatic skill in fashioning a Polish model of Communism that affords a measure of national freedom without unduly alarming his Soviet patrons. Americans and Soviets alike have a shared interest in his succeeding again." In other words, the U.S. ruling class and the Soviet new Czars both have a common stake in keeping Poland a tender piece of meat for both superpowers to chew on. Better a scab Gierek regime which the imperialists "understand" (since both capitalists and revisionists speak the same profit-is-the-motive-force language) than workers' rule or any staunchly anti-superpower, "Khomeini-type" Polish government.

This is why the Roman Catholic Church came out on August 22 saying that while it "understands" the workers' grievances, "prolonged stoppages, possible disturbances and fraternal bloodshedding are against the good of the society". From Warsaw, Poland's capital, the church also issued a statement in the name of the Bishop of Gdansk warning workers to "act reasonably and prudently". The Gierek regime and his Soviet backers are drooling for the least sign of hesitation and weakness on the part of the rebelling workers so they can crack down. 30,000 Soviet troops and two armored divisions occupy Poland. Additional soldiers have been amassed on the Polish border. Twenty leaders of the rebellion have already been arrested by the Gierek government. This is the situation in which the church's treachery plays into. The church took the same position in the 1970 and 1976 uprisings and is partly responsible for the massacring of Polish workers.

Rebellion Hits Brezhnev Doctrine Of Robbery

The tip of the uprising is aimed straight at the Soviet Union and its stranglehold on the Polish economy. Workers have demanded "realistic steps toward leading the country out of the recent crisis by informing the public fully about the socio-economic situation of the country and making it possible for all classes and sections of the Polish community to discuss the program of reforms." Tied to this demand is one that calls for *only surplus goods being exported*.

This gets to the heart of the economic crisis crushing Polish life. Because of the revisionist leadership and policies, Poland's economy is at the mercy of both superpowers, especially the Soviet Union. Since the new Czars' invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, Poland and the rest of Eastern Europe has been held in bondage by the "Brezhnev Doctrine." This theory of "limited sovereignty," "international division of labor, economic integration, specialization of production" and so on is the justification for Soviet imperialism. Under this system, Eastern Europe and other countries dominated by the Soviets are restricted to producing only certain



Hundreds of Polish-Americans showed their solidarity with the Polish strikers by demonstrating outside the Polish Embassy in New York City. Some criticized Washington for not taking a strong stand of support.

goods or raw materials. Then they are forced to exchange them unequally for Soviet manufactured goods. For example, the bulk of Poland's pork, beef, and poultry goes to the Soviet Union, while Poles starve. For this Poland gets pennies in return, forcing the country to borrow heavily from the Western imperialists, mainly the U.S. and West Germany, so it can buy foreign foodstuffs. Poland has a foreign debt of over \$30 billion. On August 22, a number of American banks helped put together another \$325 million loan to the country. Poles are caught with food shortages, a stunted economy and huge foreign debts. While Poland gets poorer, the imperialists—especially the Soviet Union, the main enemy of the Polish and Eastern European peoples—get richer. The Soviet Union is doing the same thing to Cuba with its sugar and Ethiopia with its coffee, following in the same wretched footsteps of U.S. imperialism.

New Czars No Different From Old Russian Czars

The Polish people's resistance to foreign, especially Russian domination is nothing new. Dating back to the 1500's Poles have had to fight for their independent existence. In the late 1770's, Czarist Russia ganged up with Austria and Prussia (now Germany) to divide Poland among themselves. At the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the Czar grabbed even more Polish territory and set up a puppet "Kingdom of Poland."

With the Bolshevik Revolution under Lenin in 1917, the newborn workers' government renounced all imperialist treaties. For the first time in history, Russia established equal relations with Poland. But with the degeneration of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union under the scab Khrushchev and the restoration of capitalism, the Polish Communist Party sold out workers' rule. Poland once again became a victim of imperial robbery and oppression. The only difference between the new Soviet Czars and the Czars of Imperial Russia is that the Soviet imperialists call themselves "socialist."

For the second time in the last five years, workers have brought Poland to a standstill, cutting railway and shipping lines. Their heroic fight proves once again that the working class, concentrated at the key points of production and services, alone has the power and organization needed to lead the struggle to abolish all classes and exploitation of man by man.

The steel-like unity and determination of the Polish workers forced the largest shakeup in the Polish revisionist Party in a decade. On August 24, in an emergency session of the Party Central Committee, Prime Minister Edward Babuch, three other full Politburo (the Party's top ruling clique) members and two deputy members were fired. Included were Jerzy Lukaszewicz, head of propaganda and ideology, and Jan Szydzik, head of Poland's Central Trade Union Council.

The workers' revolt has grown to at least 200,000 strong with 400 factories and businesses in Gdansk alone shut down and 100 more closed in the city of Szczecin in the west. In the South, Nowa Huta steelworkers near Cracow are also joining in. The workers made the government eat its lie that the 19-member Inter-factory Strike Committee "does not truly represent the workers" and on August 23 the Gierek regime had to negotiate with the Committee. When talks broke down, the shakeup came.

Lech Walesa, a 37-year old electrician and chairman of the Committee, commented on the government changes, "It's a patching up of holes. We want something new." □

Local 2...

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because they had families to feed, bills to pay, etc.—then the hacks would get off the hook. As it turned out, the vote was 1,800 yes against 500 no, while over 2/3 of the hotel workers didn't even vote. Those who voted yes admitted later that they had no other choice but to go back to work even though they knew it was a sellout.

After the ratification meeting, workers came up to the United Hotel and Restaurant Workers and CWP members: "It's clear throughout this strike that we not only have to fight the hotel bosses, cops and the Mayor, but the union hacks as well. How do we get ourselves organized to take back Local 2 and build a real fighting democratic union?" □