

Government. While it is true that some have been released, those that have been set free have, in most cases, paid a price for their liberty. They have had to sign statements, which in many cases involve renouncing their membership in what is still a legally recognized institution, even if its activities have been suspended under the terms of the martial law decrees. It is not only those who have been interned who are being forced to sign such statements, however; thousands of ordinary Polish citizens, under the threat of losing their jobs, are being similarly coerced, as the tentacles of the verification process spread their way through the entire fabric of Polish society. These people are not being permitted to exercise their free will, nor the freedoms of thought and conscience which their country's signature of the Helsinki Final Act ought to have assured them. We have, in fact, a situation in which the governing authorities of a country which has advocated "the right to life in peace" has interned its own people in an extended "state of war".

Principle VII of the Helsinki Final Act states that the participating states will respect the equal rights of peoples and their right to self-determination, acting at all times in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the relevant norms of international law, including those relating to territorial integrity of states. By virtue of this principle, all people always have the right, in full freedom, to determine, when and as they wish, their internal and external political status, without external interference, and to pursue as they wish their political economic, social and cultural development.

At the time of the imposition of martial law in Poland, nearly ten million of the country's work force of some 14 million belonged to "Solidarity". They were supported in their efforts to improve the economic and social conditions prevailing in Poland by their families and friends, by the million strong membership of Rural Solidarity and by millions of sympathizers and admirers around the world. Their valiant efforts to exercise their right to self-determination gave us all hope in the power of the individual to take his life in his own hands, to join together with other like-minded individuals, and together to build a better future. These hopes were quashed on December 13, 1981. The present Polish authorities have not, despite all their efforts, been able to explain to our satisfaction why they acted as they did, where the threat of civil war and anarchy came from.