

in Poland on December 13, 1981 and the regulations made under it have, as the Prime Minister of my country stated on December 30, further defaced the already battered vision of a European order based on respect for the obligations assumed voluntarily by governments under the Final Act of Helsinki. The situation in Poland calls into particular question the commitment of Polish authorities to the principle governing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to that of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. Although, as I said in November 1980, human rights are open to varying interpretations, the Final Act does require agreement on certain concepts and on the inherent dignity of the human person.

As signatories to the Helsinki Final Act we agreed, pursuant to Principle VII, to "respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion". We also agreed to "promote and encourage the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person and are essential for his free and full development".

#### **Helsinki commitment forgotten**

The commitment of the Polish government to fulfil its obligations under Principle VII has clearly been abandoned in the events which have transpired in Poland since December 13, 1981. Thousands of people have been interned, simply for having been active in an organization duly recognized by the Polish courts. They have been charged with no criminal offences. They are simply being held, being allowed minimal contacts with their families and friends, at the pleasure of the 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, or 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 VIII 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 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.

I also wish to denounce other restrictions imposed following the declaration of martial law. Prior to December 13, the Polish government had undertaken a number of measures, specifically a liberalization of passport regulations which enabled more Polish citizens to travel abroad, many for the first time. We commended these steps on the part of the Polish government which clearly facilitated the freer movements and contacts, individually and collectively agreed to in the Human Contacts section of the Hel-

sinki Final Act. This encouraging development was effectively guillotined on December 13, and now even private travel to Poland is virtually impossible. Family meetings, except in cases of grave illness or death, have been virtually halted.

#### **Information dissemination**

As signatories to the Helsinki Final Act, we agreed to facilitate the freer and wider dissemination of information of all kinds. With the imposition of martial law, the jamming of certain radio stations broadcasting into Poland began, some of it from another country. This action directly contravenes the obligations undertaken by Poland in the Third Basket of the Final Act, and is therefore entirely unacceptable.

Canada has stated on numerous occasions that Poland must be left to resolve its political and social difficulties without outside intervention. We believe firmly that only the Poles themselves have the right to determine their national destiny — but it must be all Poles, not just a small ruling class.

In his statement on December 30, 1981 the Prime Minister of Canada called for national reconciliation in Poland. As he put it, "Now is the time to begin the movement towards compromise and renewal. Military rule cannot be a permanent answer in Poland or in any other country. Armies may command the streets, but they cannot command the confidence of the people; that can only be earned through actions which engender political assent. The earnest desire of the Canadian government is that the spirit of reform will be allowed to revive among all those forces in the society that can contribute to a peaceful and constructive solution of Poland's problems."

But time is moving on and patience wears thin. I therefore call for an immediate amelioration of the situation which, in addition to a genuine and visible movement towards reconciliation, would include the lifting of martial law and the release of those now held in detention. Early movement in regard to these considerations will create an environment in which the interest of all of us will be to help Poland to overcome the grave problems which it faces, resume its obligations as a signatory of the Helsinki Final Act, and take its proper place in the concept of Europe.

The Soviet Union evidently considers that it has the privilege of playing a role in influencing the internal affairs of

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