

NEWS ANALYSIS

Martial law transcends East-West

by Rich Watts

"Criticizing the action of the Soviet Union is not popular amongst politically inclined students. However, the oppression of Solidarity and the plight of the Polish People is not a question of East versus West but of Humanitarian Ideals which transcend Cold War politics."

So said Phil Soper S.U. president last Thursday at a rally held on campus by the Friends of Solidarity.

This time Soper is right; Solidarity is not a popular issue amongst the political ideologues on campus.

Coverage given Poland is seen as an attempt to re-route the public's anger from instances where the U.S. is failing in its role as the self-appointed bastion of freedom.

Solidarity and Poland are being used by the U.S. to raise Western World's mistrust of the Soviet Union. Presumably this is so the Americans can consolidate control over their sphere of influence.

The military junta in Poland is preferable to civil war and is an internal matter. We in the West have no reason to protest the oppression in Poland.

But the Polish Peoples' Republic, would not exist as it were if not for the Soviet Union. This internal matter was imposed on the Poles from outside.

Ignoring the situation because it happens in the Soviet bloc is precisely the attitude which allows El Salvador, Chile and Poland to occur.

Gordon Wright, lawyer, New Democrat, and a founding member of the Friends of Solidarity said at Thursday's rally; "Those who support military dictatorships in El Salvador can never be true friends of Solidarity."

"To truly be a friend of Solidarity one must make commitments to humanitarian ideals which allow no compromises," said Wright.

Honoring, applauding, and helping the efforts of all peoples struggling against

oppression is our only hope for a peaceful, co-existing globalism.

The main speaker at Thursday's rally (which was given little publicity and was poorly attended) was Zygmunt Przetakiewicz, who has spent the last year organizing support for Solidarity in North America.

"Solidarity is a real reaction of workers, intellectuals, and students against a totalitarian regime," said Przetakiewicz.

He called Solidarity a peoples' movement, claiming the principal opposition comes from the government bureaucracy and the police. This stands to reason, they are the ones who stand the most to lose if Solidarity were successful.

"Solidarity can clear the way for the first real Socialist state in the world with a respect for workers' rights and Human

rights providing a good example of Socialism all over the world," said Przetakiewicz.

This would probably involve some private ownership but not of such things as banks or transport. Poland will not become another Yugoslavia because Yugoslavia has neither free trade unions nor free elections.

Such comments and the fact that Solidarity is primarily a workers' trade union make the Soviet accusations about "enemies of Socialism" look ridiculous.

For Przetakiewicz, Poland is currently under Soviet occupation and this is why Solidarity is being crushed.

"But Solidarity does exist in the underground, and in the will and the hearts of the Polish People," said Przetakiewicz. He feels that the economic situation in

Poland is untenable and the military junta is destined for collapse. He claims that it is only through the money of Western banks that the government still exists in Poland.

The principal question is whether the Soviets will be invited into Poland.

Przetakiewicz wonders at the reactions of the West should the Soviets move into Poland.

"I hope the Western countries will not be as naive as in the past and will stop the invasion of my country, my Poland," said Przetakiewicz.

He hopes that the Western countries can impose trade embargos on the Soviet Bloc. These embargos should start with technology. Grain and other foodstuffs should only be used as a last resort but should not be discounted.

Przetakiewicz emphasized that all the Western nations should stand together in boycotting the Soviet Bloc.

"It is most important that all the Western countries do this to make the Soviets let up," he said.

Przetakiewicz claimed that their support in the military itself is uncertain. He said that the Polish is largely standing by and most of the soldiers are in fact police dressed up in army uniforms.

This sounds fantastic except when I think of a Polish friend who left Poland about two years ago. She claimed the government had a frequent habit of blaming the country's economic ills on 'rich Jews in the West.'

Another Pole I knew never talked about Poland or the Soviet Union in terms of Communism versus Capitalism; he talked about Communism versus Freedom. This struck me at the time as naive, but no longer.

There is some frightening weirdness coming down in Poland as well as other parts of the World. Solidarity is a testament to the Human Spirit that refuses to condone it.



photo Ken Tsai

Soviet hegemony is enough to give you a headache.

Tory critic slams federal Liberal hypocrites

VANCOUVER (CUP) — Canada's Liberal government is hypocritical in its attitude to human rights violations by other countries, Conservative external affairs critic John Crosbie said at Simon Fraser University recently.

Crosbie criticized the federal government for condoning military repression in Poland and El Salvador while opposing the apartheid government of South Africa. He called for a strong opposition to the U.S. for their endorsement of the El Salvador

regime. "I don't think we've taken a strong enough position in connection with El Salvador and the barbaric kinds of actions that are being taken there by the government," he said.

Crosbie said Canada lacked sufficient military strength to intervene directly in El Salvador, but maintained that Canada should be more adamant in opposing violations of human rights and political repression by El Salvador's U.S.-supported

military government. "We should be putting stronger arguments to the U.S. that their approach is the wrong one," he said.

But Crosbie absolved Canadian external affairs minister Mark MacGuigan of responsibility for the direction of Canada's foreign policy, claiming MacGuigan is "just a messenger" for Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau.

"MacGuigan doesn't know what our policies are until he

reads the newspapers and sees what Trudeau said," Crosbie said, citing Trudeau's recent endorsement of the imposition of martial law in Poland.

"Trudeau is the organ grinder and MacGuigan is the monkey," said Crosbie. "Trudeau plays the tune and MacGuigan dances to it." Crosbie blasted Trudeau for supporting the Polish government's declaration of martial law December 13.

"All he's done is give comfort to the imposition of a Stalinist

kind of repression in Poland. He's been quoted in Poland and Russia," he said.

Trudeau should reverse his stand on Poland, Crosbie said, and apologize for ever supporting the military regime.

"If you're a believer, as he is supposed to be, in the charters of human rights and freedoms, then how can you so casually ignore the crushing of human rights and freedoms in Poland or anywhere else," he said.

BAZ



Olivia Butti's Diary

February 15

Dear Diary:
This bus strike is an outrage and council has to do something about it now.
I mean really diary, the traffic today was unbearable. I was late for lunch with the girls, I hardly had any time to shop and I was late for my hair appointment. And you know diary, Mr. Gregory does not like to be kept waiting.
The worst thing though is that there were these disgusting hitchhikers everywhere, all looking so cold and pitiful when I pass by or glaring at me when I'm stopped in traffic. Well, I don't care, I'm not picking anyone up. After all, I just had the seat covers cleaned, furthermore, all the heat escapes when you open the big doors of these Oldsmobiles. And who really knows how many of these innocent looking hitchhikers are really robbers and murderers?
I hear whole welfare families are taking to the streets and if some unsuspecting person gives them a ride the children ransack the car while the parent holds a knife to your throat.
Well something has to be done to get these criminals off our streets and back into their doorways on 95th street.
If those hitch-hikers are decent people, why

don't they rent a car or something?
After all, this strike isn't going to last too much longer, I'll see to that. Not that we're going to give into these ridiculous demands. Parity with Calgary, what an absurd idea. Of course you have to pay people more to live in a sinkhole like Calgary. What about all the benefits the bus drivers get just for living in Edmonton? There's the symphony and the opera and half a dozen theatres. Edmonton bus drivers should be grateful that they can work in such a splendid city and drive to such wonderful cultural events.
I think we can replace those whining ingrates without missing a beat. First of all we bring in the airforce to run the buses for now. If those boys can fly a jet fighter plane at 2,000 mph they can learn to drive a bus down Groat Road. After that, we can train new bus drivers. And diary, I think this is a splendid idea: we'll train all those Vietnamese refugees to be bus drivers. After all diary, they all work so hard, they don't need to speak English to drive a bus around in a circle, and they're so polite, not like the old bus drivers.
In the meantime I'm going to ask the city police to start rounding up these crazed hitchhikers. We just can't put up with this sort of crime on our streets.