

Askanas provides distorted view of Solidarity

Dear Editor:

We are deeply concerned with the article "Adviser to Walesa speaks out" published on October 7, 1983. The article gives false facts about the history and aims

of the Polish national movement "Solidarity". The ill-timed article appeared only one day after the whole free world recognized the achievements of Lech

Walesa, the leader of "Solidarity", by awarding him the Nobel Peace Prize. It is surprisingly coincidental that the article was published at the time when official propaganda in

Poland tried to discredit Lech Walesa. Many phrases and ideas in the article are exactly in the same spirit as those used by the communist part in Poland.

We do not know what motivation was had by Mr. Askanas, the newly appointed professor in Business Administration, in repeating the distorted information in the students'

newspaper. The statements such as that people in Poland enjoyed freedom like in Canada, or that Walesa stupidly challenged Brezniew, are so far from

the truth that any point-by-point discussion would be a waste of time. We feel obliged however, to give the readers a few main facts

about the creation and aims of "Solidarity".

Since 1944, when a communist government was imposed by the Soviets in Poland, an overwhelming

majority of Poles has always been against the system. Free democratic elections have never taken place. The totalitarian system, the lack of political and cultural

freedom and economical hardships led to much unrest by workers, students, and intellectuals which were always suppressed in a very brutal

way. Examples are: bloodshed in Gdansk in 1970 and workers' unrest in Warsaw and Radom in 1976. In the summer of 1980 during the wide spread wave of strikes; "Solidarity" was born at the shipyard of

Gdansk, inspiring a peaceful revolution that breathed a hope for freedom into Poland's social, political and cultural life. For the first time in history, a truly proletarian movement with a strong

support by all other social groups, was forcing an atrophied communist bureaucracy to heed the people's will. Due to the geopolitical situation, any political aims were abandoned from the 21 postulates, which were negotiated and finally ac-

cepted by the government. Among the most important postulates we read:

-to accept independent trade unions in agreement with the conventions of the

International Labour Organizations,

-to have the right to strike, -to have freedom of speech and to abolish censorship, -to free all political prisoners,

-to allow a return to work and to the universities to all of those who had participated in the human rights movements and in the events of 1970 and 1976,

-to organize a national action to overcome the economical crisis, -to abolish special privileges to police and high ranking party members.

A few months later, the fearful government reluctantly agreed to register "Solidarity" with its ten

million members, as an independent trade union, the first in the Soviet controlled block. In a free democratic election Lech Walesa became the first leader of "Solidarity", with a significant majority of votes.

Poles were jubilant about the hope for a better future. However, the government, with limitations on their absolute power, was not in the mood to honor the signed agreements with "Solidarity". After a hectic consultations with Moscow, General Jaruzelski, who had been placed on the top of both the party and the government, crushed the unarmed "Solidarity" movement with all his police and military power. Thanks to Walesa and his associates, "Solidarity" as really the

whole nation, did not allow provocation to bloodshed. They persuaded the nation to demonstrate resistance against the brutal force in a passive and peaceful way. Lech Walesa was interned for almost one year but all the government's attempts to break his moral principles as the leader of "Solidarity", had failed.

The "Solidarity", though officially banned by the government, is still alive.

All the Polish residents of Fredericton (Dr. Askanas excepted) "Solidarity Members and Sympathizers

P.S. The names of those who have signed this letter have been withheld by their request.

Brunswickan guilty of pre-judging

Dear Editor:

I refer to the editorial and Mugwump Journal commentary on the 14 October, regarding the racist remarks allegedly made by Roy Brostowski.

While I am certainly distressed by any form of racism and know that foreign students have a difficult enough time as it is, I

am extremely concerned at what appears to be a pre-judgement of the issue in the Brunswickan.

In the editorial you admit that "the Brunswickan cannot choose sides", and yet conclude with the pre-judgement: "Now it's not too dif-

icult to guess who'll come out ahead -- an administrator or a campus newspaper."

Then in the Mugump Journal, the writer first admits that "no one can really

make a judgement on either the Aquinian or

Brostowski", but then goes on to pre-judge that: "Ultimately the Aquinian can only lose" as the "cheaper and easier route" for the STU Student Union is to force a retraction.

I feel that student newspapers have a special responsibility for careful reporting on such touchy

issues, as whatever the truth of the matter, many students have been significantly influenced by

what they have read. The existence of free press is a precious civil right and I would not like to see our

belief in it threatened by the sort of prejudgements I have referred to. Surely the Aquinian can only be the loser if this freedom is lost, and not by the outcome of this particular issue.

