

Moscow moves to crush Solidarity

by Konstantin George

Polish Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski began the implementation of Moscow's plan to crush the Polish opposition with his Oct. 31 announcement that the government would close the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk by Dec. 1. The Lenin Shipyard has been the bastion of Solidarity and its leader, Lech Walesa. Its workforce has been in the forefront of every major confrontation with the quisling regimes in Warsaw, in 1970, 1980-81, and again this year.

The announcement closing the shipyard, which employs 11,000, was timed to coincide with the Nov. 1 All Souls' Day national holiday, thus preventing immediate counter-moves, and came on the eve of British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's Polish visit, which began on Nov. 2. Polish leader Wojciech Jaruzelski's interview with BBC-TV Oct. 30 perversely hailed Thatcher for her successful crackdown on "troublesome trade unions," and "welcomed advice" from her on how to dispense with such problems. Rakowski himself, during his press conference on the shipyard closure,

joined the chorus praising Thatcher: "Maybe there will be trouble. But you know, Mrs. Thatcher had a lot of trouble when she started to close factories and coal mines."

Rakowski's move, the first step in shutting down large enterprises which are Solidarity strongholds, was planned months ago in coordination with Moscow. Rakowski declared that this was "the first of many such closures necessary for the restructuring of the economy," while his industry minister, in a companion press conference, Oct. 31, predicted a "series of closures," of 150 of "the largest loss-making enterprises."

The Oct. 14 issue of *EIR* predicted that Rakowski might move to destroy Solidarity in precisely this way. We warned that all talk of so-called "roundtable" negotiations with the opposition was nothing but a Moscow maneuver to buy time, stave off trouble during the autumn, and then strike in earnest once the cold weather sets in, as it now has in Poland.

The simmering confrontation

The closing of Walesa's Gdansk stronghold followed a campaign of threats by the regime against Solidarity during October. A full-scale confrontation was under way as of Oct. 21. On that day, Walesa warned that a new strike wave could erupt any time. According to reports from Polish underground sources, the coalminers of Upper Silesia are again planning strikes, this time for early November, which would launch the third big strike wave of 1988.

The confrontation, however, has been planned from the beginning by the new government of Prime Minister Mieczyslaw Rakowski, under orders from Moscow. Rakowski was in Moscow Oct. 20-21 for sessions announced only two days before with Mikhail Gorbachov on the Polish crisis. One week earlier, Polish Politburo member and ideology boss Marian Orzechowski had been hastily summoned to Moscow for a similar round of crisis strategy-planning.

The correlation between the Moscow visits and the Polish regime's confrontation policy emerged during Orzechowski's stay in the Soviet capital.

On Oct. 21, Polish party boss Jaruzelski followed Moscow's instructions and issued a threat, broadcast on Polish TV and radio, to use violence against any new strikes: "The use of force is the last resort, but my hand will not tremble to use it. . . . The leadership will not hesitate to use force, should attempts emerge to destabilize or overthrow the Socialist State." In the days before the Orzechowski visit, the Polish media began a campaign labeling Solidarity members "extremists."

Then, on Oct. 17, the Polish leadership issued a statement announcing that the "roundtable talks" with Solidarity that had been scheduled for that day had been indefinitely postponed. The Polish regime's behavior demonstrated that the September promise of "negotiations" with Solidarity was merely a maneuver intended to buy more time. The regime also went out of its way to declare that any legalization of

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Solidarity was "not possible."

Only after all this, did Lech Walesa denounce the government's behavior, calling it "unacceptable." As a result, he said, he "no longer excludes a new strike wave."

Open threat of Soviet intervention

The key to the Polish regime dropping its mask was the Orzechowski visit to Moscow. In an Oct. 19 article in *Pravda*, he reassured Moscow that the Polish situation is under control. The "initiative remains unswervingly in the hands of the party," and "organized and responsible forces are controlling events."

Moscow is not so sure, as other passages in Orzechowski's article indicate. He showed "understanding for certain doubts and concerns . . . among Poland's *allies*," which are "only natural and understandable." Orzechowski reiterated that any legalization of Solidarity is out of the question. On the same day, Rakowski arrived in Moscow.

Moscow is committed to a policy of wiping out the Polish opposition and crippling the power of the Catholic Church. Its tool for this strategy, Rakowski, was appointed prime minister on Sept. 19. Soon after, the independent Polish press leaked the news that Rakowski had authored a secret report in December 1987, outlining a program of savage austerity, and the goal of eliminating the Church and Solidarity as political factors in Poland.

Behind Rakowski is Interior Minister Czeslaw Kiszczak and Defense Minister Florian Siwicki, both, like Rakowski, Politburo members. It is noteworthy that when Rakowski was named prime minister, nearly all of the cabinet ministers of the old government of Zbigniew Messner were removed. Only four ministers, including the posts of interior and defense held by Kiszczak and Siwicki, were not changed.

The Soviets' stamp of approval for Rakowski was exhibited during his Moscow visit. *Izvestia* Oct. 21 carried a front-page biography of Rakowski. The coverage stressed that his visit "will enable further development and strengthening of friendship and multi-level cooperation" between the two countries.

Return to martial law?

Many Western observers fear that Poland is moving inexorably back toward martial law. The only question is when. It could happen very soon, should government force be deployed against the next strike wave, triggering a social explosion. Unlike 1981, however, even martial law cannot keep the lid on for long. Poland's devastating economic crisis ensures that.

In the closing days of October, the regime resumed its gambit to buy time, by again raising the prospect of "round-table talks" by mid-November, if Walesa would agree first to hold yet another meeting with Interior Minister Kiszczak, the fourth since August. In short, the regime was seeking to contain unrest until cold weather arrived.

Soviets rip up Afghanistan accord

by Lydia Cherry

The Soviet Union has all but officially ripped up the Geneva Accords on Afghanistan, signed with Pakistan in March 1988. On Nov. 4, it was announced that the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan "is being suspended for the time being."

Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Bessmertnykh told a Moscow news conference, "What is important is not when it will be continued, but when it will be completed." He also reported, "More powerful means of destruction are now being additionally supplied by the Soviet Union to the armed forces of Afghanistan."

The announcement was Moscow's official admission of a rapid escalation of its military deployment to Afghanistan in the final week of October. On Oct. 31, the U.S. State Department reported that the Soviet Union had sent at least 30 Soviet MiG-27 Flogger-D aircraft into Afghanistan.

The fighter-planes, it was announced, were deployed to the Shindand airfield near the city of Herat, close to the Iranian border, within range of operations into both Iran and Pakistan. Reports of the planes' deployment originated with Afghan guerrillas in the region, and were subsequently confirmed by satellite. Only Soviet pilots will fly the planes.

On Nov. 1, the State Department announced that the Soviet Union had also deployed SS-1 Scud missiles, which have "a range which puts the western frontier of Pakistan and much of Afghanistan itself within striking distance."

The Soviets themselves have publicly stated that their aim is the annihilation of what they call "irreconcilable" elements of the Afghan Mujahideen, the guerrillas who refuse to negotiate a coalition government with Moscow's puppets in Kabul. On Nov. 1, Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman Gennadi Gerassimov announced that the "Afghan Army" had received long-range rockets to enable it to retaliate against rebel missile attacks.

TASS stated that the Scud missiles—which went on public view in Kabul—have "great destructive power." "Strong blows" will be dealt to the Mujahideen, proclaimed another Tass commentary Nov. 1, "unless their leadership comes to its senses and stops pointless fratricide."

Taking the pose of the victim, a Moscow commentator justified the military deployment, "How much longer do you think we could sit back and watch the other side making fools of us?"