

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?”

Resistance sources in Islamabad, reported the *Washington Times* Oct. 31, say the Soviets have been using the MiG-27s and helicopters to attack guerrilla positions near Kandahar. In mid-October, the rebels had cut the road linking the fortified airport in Kabul to Kandahar in the south, Afghanistan's second-largest city.

A convoy of more than 1,000 vehicles, including tanks, armored cars, and trucks, broke the rebel cordon by Oct. 31, with heavy losses to the guerrillas.

The State Department announced Nov. 2 that through the last week of October, Soviet Backfire bombers, which have a range of nearly 2,500 miles and can carry 12 to 18 bombs, flew from an airbase at Mariy in Turkmenistan to bomb the rebel positions around Kandahar. The Backfires are capable of flying well above the 3.5-mile range of the guerrillas' Stinger anti-aircraft missiles.

On Nov. 2, TASS reported that new missiles had been put into action against a rebel base close to the Pakistani border. "A powerful missile strike shook a base of the irreconcilable opposition in the area of Marulgad in Nangarhar province which borders on Pakistan," the Soviet news agency announced.

The Soviet Union has also redeployed Su-24 bombers close to the Afghan border.

The Soviet escalation, however, has not been limited to Afghanistan. On Nov. 3, Pakistan shot down an intruding Afghan warplane several miles inside northwest Pakistan. A Pakistani F-16 intercepted the Soviet-built MiG-23 about 160 miles west of the capital city of Islamabad.

### **All that meets the eye?**

The Soviets preceeded their military moves with a massive October purge of supposed "hardliners" in Kabul who, they indicated, might oppose a negotiated coalition government with the Mujahideen. They also sent emissaries to Rome to meet with former King Zahir Shah. But all diplomatic displays aside, Moscow's renewal of the war in Afghanistan—in an effort to control the political combination that emerges in Kabul—highlights the original bankruptcy of the Geneva Accords.

Without a political settlement, the Soviet withdrawal of troops has functioned only to escalate the Afghan war as a civil war, and to increase the pressure on Pakistan.

There are two possible consequences of current Soviet actions. One is that the nation of Afghanistan will be obliterated from the map—a perpetual war zone, with the Soviets retaining overall control of its cities and functioning economy, and iron control over the northern areas, while a few areas are controlled by the guerrillas.

But the Soviet military deployment in the week of Oct. 31 raises other questions. The MiG-27s, in particular, are a weapon with an offensive capability, whose range cover Pakistan and Iran. Are the Soviets making preparations for a military move into either of those two countries?

# The countdown to Pakistan's elections

by Ramtanu Maitra

As Pakistan braces for its first party-based elections in 11 years on Nov. 16, recent events have further charged the tense campaign atmosphere. At this writing, the election outcome is too close to call, but the deeper issue worrying observers is: Can the politicians live up to the responsibility of leadership, or will chaos and lawlessness bring the Army into the picture once again?

In the space of 24 hours, on Oct. 23, two bombs went off in the capital city of Islamabad. Two days later, another bomb went off in Lahore, killing two people and injuring dozens of others. Prior to this bombing wave, the two major cities of Sind province, Karachi and Hyderabad, had witnessed rioting and the macabre killing of more than 300 people late last month.

On Oct. 26, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Mirza Aslam Baig intervened with a serious note of caution. Speaking in Quetta, the Army chief reminded politicians that political dissension was a most serious matter, one which had directly affected the integrity and unity of the country in the past. General Baig's pointed allusion was to the disaster that befell Pakistan in 1970-71, and again in 1977 following the elections.

### **The specter of lawlessness**

In 1970-71, coming out of a 10-year-old military rule under President Ayub Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, founder and leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), rejected the poll verdict that had given the East Pakistan-based Awami League a clear majority. Bhutto's intransigence and manipulations led to a violent confrontation between West and East Pakistan which, after a bloody massacre of Bengalis in East Pakistan by the Pakistan Army, resulted in the tearing away of the eastern wing of Pakistan and formation of a new nation, Bangladesh.

In 1977, Bhutto was in the center stage again, as prime minister. Refusing to respond to accusations by the combined opposition to the ruling PPP of mass rigging in that year's elections, Bhutto resorted to backroom maneuvering. When the opposition took to the streets, bringing the administration to a standstill. Bhutto's effort to bring the Army in to secure his position ended with Gen. Zia ul-Haq, then the Army chief of staff, assuming power and putting Bhutto behind bars.

In 1988, the chaos potential surrounding the elections is no less. The continuing violence and lawlessness is a clear challenge to the military. As General Baig said in referring