

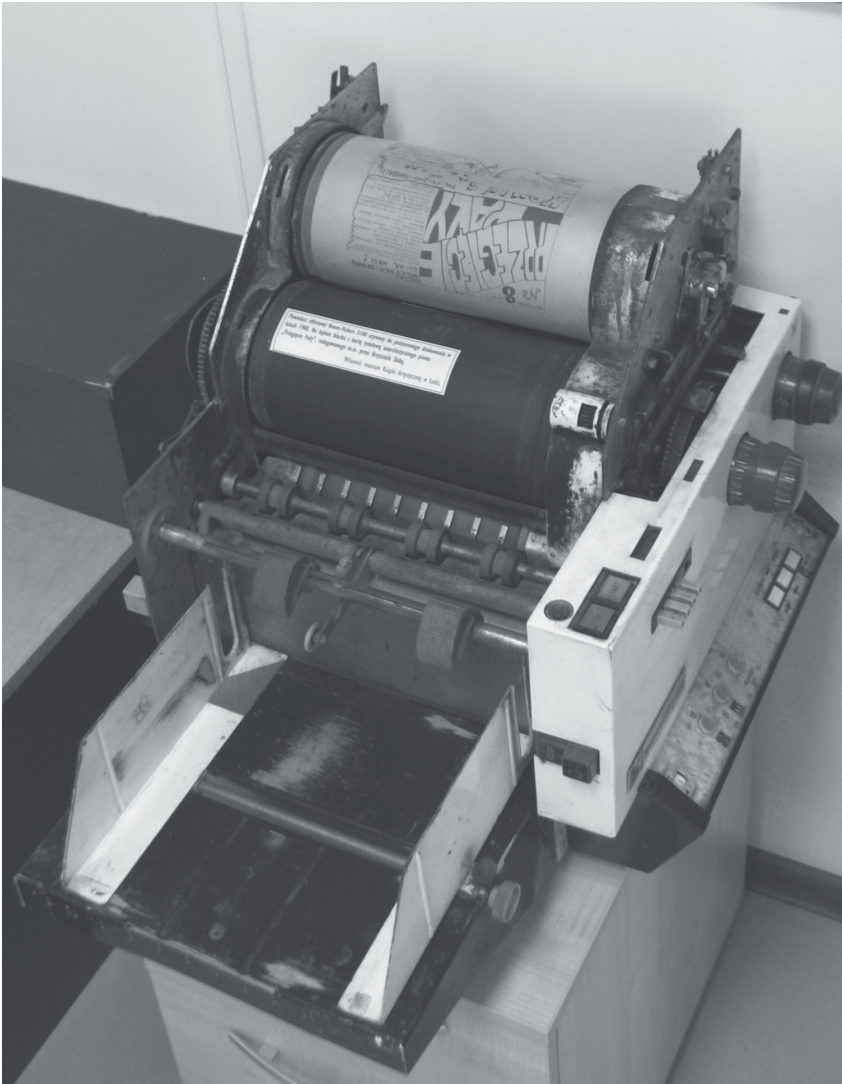
INTRODUCTION

On June 4, 1989, millions of Poles did something no one in the Soviet bloc had done for decades; they voted in a national, semifree political election. Even more revolutionary were the results of that election and its follow-up on June 18, 1989. Of the hundred seats in the Senate, opposition candidates from the Solidarity Citizens' Committee won ninety-nine seats while an independent candidate won the hundredth seat. The state-sponsored Polish United Workers' Party (PZPR, Polska Zjednoczona Partia Robotnicza) did not achieve a single seat in the Senate. In the Sejm, Poland's main legislative body, only 161 seats (35 percent of all seats) were to be freely contested; Solidarity Citizens' Committee candidates won every seat for which they were allowed to compete.¹ The PZPR had been trounced and popular support for the regime shown to be a sham. With the June 1989 elections, the Polish populace took an irrevocable step toward political pluralism and laid the groundwork for a democratic and independent Poland. These elections led directly to the overthrow of Poland's Soviet-sponsored communist regime.

Despite the wonderful electioneering materials produced by the Polish opposition, including an iconic poster with Gary Cooper from *High Noon*, emblazoned with Solidarity in red, the June 1989 elections were not as visually spectacular as were the images from November 1989 of Germans celebrating atop the Berlin Wall or of three hundred thousand Czechoslovak citizens demanding freedom on the picturesque streets of Prague. Amid the wave of revolutions that cascaded across Central and Eastern Europe in 1989, it is thus easy to neglect events in Poland. In July 1989 George

Bush visited Hungary and Poland. Bush enjoyed a “rapturous welcome in Budapest,” where Hungarians turned out en masse to cheer for the new US president. In Poland Bush received a comparatively cold popular response.² But by the time Bush arrived, the time for Polish mass protests had passed. A warrior need not flex his muscles and roar once the battle is over, and though the world may not have understood it yet, the Polish opposition had won before Air Force One alit on Polish soil and Berliners dared near the Brandenburg Gate. After thirteen years of unceasing struggle, the Polish opposition had transformed from a coterie of dissidents into an independent society with a massive trade union and finally into a civil society, which in 1988 forced the authorities to negotiate with the Polish opposition’s internationally recognized leaders and, in 1989, to agree to semifree elections. These elections resulted in a landslide victory for the Solidarity-led opposition due to the votes of millions of citizens. The secret to the success of the Polish revolution lay in an improbable and inconspicuous corner: the Polish independent press.

In the 1970s the active opposition in Poland, like that in neighboring countries, consisted of little more than scatterings of urban-based intellectual dissidents. Admirable though men like Andrei Sakharov, Václav Havel, and Jacek Kuroń were, they were isolated from society at large, which across the bloc was deeply fractured and atomized. In 1976 in Poland, a dramatic change occurred. For many Polish historians, 1976 is most associated with the June workers’ protests and the founding of the Committee for the Defense of Workers (KOR, Komitet Obrony Robotników) by intellectuals who provided aid to the workers who faced political repression due to their participation in the June protests.³ Undeniably important as these developments were, mention must also be made of two groups of young people, unrelated to each other and to the founders of KOR, who in 1976 smuggled mimeograph machines into Poland. In so doing, these individuals implicitly rejected the samizdat printing mechanisms employed in neighboring countries, which required that each recipient of a text retype it and pass it on.⁴ By using printing machines rather than typewriters, Polish publishers could produce longer texts with higher print runs and thus reach people across geographic and social divides; already in 1977 Polish independent publications were made specifically for workers and farmers. Jacek Bocheński, a writer, argued that the very “idea of using duplicating machines was a revolution in scale within the entire bloc.”⁵ The use of printing machines is why in Poland, the publishing movement is referred to as a “second circulation” (*drugi obieg*) or “independent press” rather than “samizdat.”⁶



Duplicator that was used for independent printing. Photograph from Gwido Zlatkes.

The use of printing machines and the high print runs that they made possible provided Poland with a flexible, dynamic, and ongoing oppositional network rather than a linear chain of regime dissidents. Similar to contemporary social media networks, which employ Internet blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and so on to geometrically connect likeminded individuals across spatial divides, the press enabled the engendering of an opposition

network, which extended far beyond personal contacts. The basic printing technologies used prevented proliferation on the same scale as social media. However, this apparent technological disadvantage carried the seeds of a potential, and realized, advantage. Unlike Internet media, independent publishing necessitated the creation of a physical product; this in turn required that key regime opponents met on a regular basis, allocated time and monies for the production of publications, printed and collated publications outside the privacy of their homes (since the security services regularly sought out printing supplies and searched the homes of known regime opponents), and made international contacts for the smuggling of supplies and the garnering of financial support. The production of publications thus necessitated connections across geographic and social expanses and helped create coteries of dedicated opposition activists, many of which merged despite ideological differences. Distribution linked these groupings with the population at large, enabling the diffusion of ideas, the expansion of opposition networks, and the widespread financing of opposition. Because publishers charged for their wares, their readership (which grew from thousands in the 1970s to millions in the 1980s) formed a national network of financiers for the active opposition. Finally, the creation of a product necessitated an organization; this ultimately facilitated negotiation with the state authorities.

By the late 1980s a decade had passed since the first printing machines were smuggled into Poland. By this time the readership became more demanding, and the influence of recipients on producers resulted in the creation of a protomarket. The press shifted into new political, cultural, and social directions. It was in this period that Polish streets teemed with diverse protesters, some of whom focused on the overtly political while others staged absurdist happenings without any explicit political goal. With publications aimed not only specifically at those engaged in the struggle for independence and democracy but also at monarchists, anarchists, punks, avant-garde artists, vegetarians, and more, the plurality of the press in the late 1980s demonstrates that an active civil society then arose.

There is an extensive literature on the concept of civil society, especially in reference to Central and Eastern Europe in the 1970s and 1980s; it is even possible to talk of a vogue for civil society in reference to Poland and Solidarity in scholarly circles in the 1980s and 1990s.⁷ In recent years the focus on civil society has come under attack. It is undoubtedly true that the term has been used in so many ways and contexts as to make it problematic. At the same time, with a clear definition it is not only useful; it is necessary for understanding the overthrow of communist rule in Poland.

Andrew Arato has been particularly influential in using a civil society

construct to explain Polish developments. Arato argued that in 1980 civil society emerged with Solidarity.⁸ However, Arato and Jean L. Cohen posited that the “constantly predicted pluralization of civil society never really developed beyond its beginnings” in Poland after Solidarity’s triumph in 1980–1981.⁹ While Arato is correct in appreciating the importance of civil society as a concept for understanding Poland, he is erroneous in his depiction of Poland in the late 1980s and overemphasizes Solidarity and the period from August 1980 to December 1981, when Solidarity was legal and open. In this he is not alone. Elżbieta Matynia, in writing on the emergence of Polish civil society, argued that Poland in 1980 embodied Hannah Arendt’s ideal of the New England town hall meeting. Matynia’s assessment all but ceased after 1981.¹⁰ I depart from Matynia and Arato by rejecting the claims that a civil society arose in Poland in 1980–1981, that this civil society was lost thereafter, and that pluralism did not occur in the 1980s. Through a focus on the independent press, I instead posit that a pluralistic civil society came into being in Poland in the late 1980s. Furthermore, I agree with but revise Matynia’s reliance on Arendt’s depiction of civil society.

Hannah Arendt predicated her political theories on her understanding of the ancient polis, which she described as “the organization of the people as it arises out of acting and speaking together.”¹¹ She argued that “the *raison d’être* of politics is freedom and its field of experience is in action.”¹² Jean L. Cohen aptly expressed Arendt’s description of action as self-disclosure “through the medium of speech, possible only in the presence of others who see and hear.”¹³ Arendt’s reiterated critique of modernity casts bureaucratic governance and consumerism as enemies to political energy. The disappearance of that energy, according to Arendt, results in vulnerability to totalitarianism. Rescuing political vibrancy entails appreciating but going beyond the example of the Greek polis, acting in the interval “between past and future.” Insofar as Arendt theorizes a politically healthy civil society, it is as the home of a praxis that both parallels and energizes politics.¹⁴ Arendt’s civil society is therefore held together by its own dynamics and requires neither supervisory bureaucratic regulation nor broader constitutional embeddedness.¹⁵

In Arendt’s civil society construct, power derives from individuals freely working in concert. According to Arendt, power “is actualized only where word and deed have not parted company.”¹⁶ Arendt therefore emphasized public free and honest speech, political action, pluralism, and voluntary cooperation by individuals. She perceived this ideal as having existed to a degree in the workers’ movement between 1848 and 1956, which Arendt believed had “written one of the most glorious and probably the most prominent chapter in recent history.” However, Arendt also argued that “the trades

unions were never revolutionary in the sense that they desired a transformation of society together with a transformation of the political institutions in which this society was represented.”¹⁷ But Arendt did not live to see the Solidarity movement and the Polish independent society with which it associated. The revolutionary civil society, which arose in Poland by 1989 to overthrow the regime, was that described by Arendt. Disputes over civil society theory dovetail with explanations for the end of communist rule in Central and Eastern Europe.

Numerous historians and journalists have weighed in on the reasons for the transformations of 1989.¹⁸ They have tended to focus on two major arguments: collapse and overthrow. According to the first line of reasoning, the Soviet bloc came to an end as a result of factors from the top, which resulted in breakdown and then ruin. The second line of reasoning posits that the regimes were toppled due to the actions of the popular masses.

Stephen Kotkin, in *Uncivil Society*, made the first argument. He contended that no civil society existed in Central Europe prior to 1989 and that the communist regimes fell as a result of global economic pressures and the failure of the regimes to gain legitimacy, so that when the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev removed support, they crumbled. Although Kotkin acknowledged the importance of the Polish opposition and its broad social basis, he still insisted that in Poland in 1989 “the exact causes as elsewhere in the bloc—a debt spiral that was unfixable because of the political bankruptcy—pushed the uncivil society to invite the opposition to a roundtable.”¹⁹ By concentrating on developments in Poland from 1976 to 1989, and specifically the independent press, this book demonstrates that the primary reason that the Polish authorities agreed to meet with society’s representatives in 1988–1989 was because Polish civil society forced it to do so.

In the summer of 1988 Polish regime elites conceded to round table negotiations with Solidarity due to broad-based, nationwide, pluralistic, aboveground activism by a civil society that was buttressed by publishing networks that had spent years magnifying the state’s political bankruptcy and economic failures. Even so, had the populace not voted against the regime so universally, history would have unfolded differently. The unexpected results of the 1989 elections, which were the consequence of widespread grassroots opposition, the existence of a respected and viable alternative power source, and an effective press campaign by the opposition were the nail in the regime’s coffin.

The independent press is crucial for understanding the Polish opposition and its overthrow of the Polish People’s Republic (PRL, Polska Rzeczpospolita Ludowa). The press was the main ongoing oppositional activity in

Poland from 1976 to 1989, so that publishing complexes alternately mirrored, paralleled, created, and served as the structure for the active opposition. Furthermore, the press conjoined two of the interrelated elements that made Polish opposition so unique and successful: its widespread nature, invigorated by Polish historical traditions, and an effective and flexible plan of action predicated on open, pluralistic endeavors. Andrzej Braun, in an article in the independent press, asserted in 1978 that “the fate of the father decides the uprising of the son, the experience, tragedies, errors . . . [he makes] depend on a spiritual chain.”²⁰

Poles have a remarkable history of staging national uprisings and creating independent publications. Prior to the Second World War, there had been Polish national uprisings in 1794, 1830, 1863, and 1905. In addition, at the turn of the twentieth century, Poles had established broad-based underground education initiatives and publications; notable was the Polish Socialist Party (PPS, *Polska Partia Socjalistyczna*) newspaper, *Worker*, which was coedited by Józef Piłsudski, who later became independent Poland’s first chief of state. When Poland lost its independence during the Second World War, the Polish population created an incomparably large underground state complete with Europe’s largest underground military (the Home Army [AK, *Armia Krajowa*]), schools, theaters, and publishing networks which produced fifteen hundred books as well as numerous serials including the underground’s main newspaper, *Information Bulletin*, which in 1944 had a print run of forty-four thousand.²¹

Poland’s history of active opposition, helps explain why Joseph Stalin stated in 1944 that forcing communism on Poland was like putting a saddle on a cow.²² The task was made more difficult because of Poland’s acrimonious history with Russia and then the Soviet Union, because Stalin had five thousand Polish communists, including most of the party leadership, murdered in 1938, and because of the distinctive nature of Soviet relations with Poland during the Second World War.²³ Poland lost its independence in 1939 to the Nazis as well as their allies, the Soviets, who in April 1940 murdered over twenty thousand Polish prisoners of war, most notoriously in the Katyń Forest.²⁴ As the Red Army again marched into Poland in 1944, they rounded up, disarmed, arrested, and sometimes murdered the underground fighters against Nazism who they encountered. When the Red Army approached the outskirts of Warsaw, an uprising broke out against the Nazis, which the Soviets encouraged. It lasted two months and resulted in the city being deliberately flattened; approximately 150,000 noncombatants were murdered by the Nazis during the uprising. The Red Army not only refused aid to the fighters in Warsaw but also stymied help from the West.²⁵

Although there are debates among historians over whether the Red Army's halt at the gates of Warsaw was due to military necessity, this was not the popular impression in Poland, and historical memory is key in understanding Polish responses to the Soviet-imposed regime after 1945. Finally, at the end of the Second World War the Soviet Union annexed what had been independent Poland's eastern borderlands and deported over one million Poles from their homes; most were sent to the formerly east German territories that were awarded to Poland after the war.²⁶

Poland was noteworthy in Central Europe, not only in its history of popular uprisings and contentious history with Russia and then the Soviet Union prior to 1945, but also in the ongoing nature of opposition to its Soviet-imposed regime. In 1945 disbanded members of the AK formed Freedom and Independence (WiN, *Wolność i Niezawisłość*), which waged armed struggle against the new authorities and established underground publishing ventures until early 1947.²⁷ Only in Poland did large-scale collectivization fail; at its height merely 10 percent of Poland's arable land was collectivized. This was because numerous Polish farmers, despite physical and economic repression, waged a successful and broad-based opposition to collectivization in the 1940s and 1950s. Even more pervasive and enduring than the struggle against collectivization was the endeavor to maintain the public practice of religion. The constant pressure of Catholic believers and Poland's primate, Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński, won the Catholic Church a degree of tolerated independence, which ultimately made possible the existence of the Catholic University of Lublin (the only semi-independent university in the bloc to enroll lay students), Clubs of Catholic Intellectuals, and the Catholic serials *Bond* and *Universal Weekly*. Pope John Paul II's impact on events in Poland in the 1970s and 1980s was even more profound.²⁸ Finally, Poland was alone in the bloc in experiencing repeated popular uprisings (1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, and 1980), in uprisings not triggering Soviet invasion, and at times achieving immediate, sought-after changes.²⁹

In part because of Poland's singular history in relation to Russia and the Soviet Union, as well as Poland's history of opposition, a wide-reaching falsification of history was enforced in postwar Poland. In 1946 the Censorship Office (GUKPiW, Główny Urząd Kontroli Prasy, Publikacji i Widowisk) was legally established along with new censorship laws. The Soviet-backed authorities not only instituted preventative censorship but also took control of the sale and distribution of paper and printing supplies, emptied libraries of select books, and demanded that publishers obtain state licenses. All printing—from obituaries to advertisements, from literature to history—henceforth underwent censorship. State subsidies meant that the

state rather than the market determined what was printed. Truth about government repression, particularly in the wake of popular uprisings, was not to be found in the state media.³⁰

Censorship encouraged the creation of an émigré press. In 1947 Jerzy Giedroyc, who had fought in the Polish army in Italy, founded the monthly journal *Culture* in Rome. Giedroyc soon after moved to Paris where the Literary Institute, which published *Culture*, came to be based. *Culture* was the most important voice of free Poland prior to the establishment of the independent press in 1976; it carried extensive historical information as well as literary works and sociopolitical articles that would have been censored in Poland. In 1953 the Literary Institute began producing books.³¹

Despite the exceptional nature of Polish opposition, both inside and outside the PRL, the authorities retained the support of a not insignificant portion of the population. These were not simply opportunists but often individuals who sympathized with the Marxism of the regime as well as those who appreciated the social programs provided, the political equality promised, and postwar rebuilding. With time, conscientious backing of the regime dwindled.

In the 1960s a small group of revisionist communist intellectuals challenged the ruling communist authorities. In 1964 Jacek Kuroń and Karol Modzelewski, instructors in history at Warsaw University, wrote an open letter that used Marxist analysis to critique the regime in the name of true workers' democracy. They were both expelled from the PZPR and imprisoned. Kuroń, a former leader in the communist scouting movement, had already attracted a coterie of young people to him through his charisma and perspicacity. That same magnetism would help propel Kuroń to the forefront of the Polish democratic opposition when it formed in the 1970s and later of Solidarity in the 1980s. In 1966 Leszek Kołakowski, Poland's leading Marxist theorist, was expelled from the PZPR for his Marxist interpretation of the state's failures; twenty-two intellectuals wrote a letter in protest.³²

For many revisionist communists the 1968 student protests, ensuing state repression, and the crushing of the Prague Spring led to an irrevocable break with the state and communism. After the state authorities canceled the performance at the National Theater of *Forefather's Eve* by Poland's national bard, Adam Mickiewicz, student protests erupted at Warsaw University in 1968. As the protests escalated, students produced samizdat publications. The student protests dovetailed with an intraparty dispute within the PZPR. In the wake of the protests, the state waged an anti-intellectual and anti-Semitic campaign; many of Poland's remaining Jews were coerced into emigrating. In addition, in August 1968 the Polish Army participated in the Warsaw

Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia, crushing the Prague Spring and (for many) faith in the possibility of reform from above.³³

A number of future activists in the independent press participated in the 1968 student protests. Adam Michnik was at the vanguard of the protests. He was already a known regime opponent, having been suspended from university and arrested in 1965 for distributing the open letter by his former scout leader, Jacek Kuroń. Michnik's central role in the protests compiled with his Jewish heritage guaranteed that he would be a focus for repression; he was expelled from Warsaw University and sentenced to three years in prison. He was released in a government amnesty in 1969 but forbidden from continuing his studies.³⁴ Antoni Macierewicz, a history student at Warsaw University, took part in the protests. Macierewicz hailed from a very different background from Michnik. While Michnik had been raised in a communist family and joined communist scout groups and student associations, Macierewicz came from a vigorously anticommunist family and had previously been active in the nationalistic Black Number One scout group. Macierewicz was expelled from university for several months and briefly imprisoned for his role in the 1968 protests; however, he was allowed to return to Warsaw University thereafter.³⁵ Both Michnik and Macierewicz played vital roles within the independent press in the 1970s and 1980s.

Contemporaneous with the student protests, Movement emerged (in Łódź and Warsaw) as an oppositional milieu, the main ideological impetus of which was a drive for state independence. At the forefront of Movement were Andrzej Czuma, Benedykt Czuma, Emil Morgiewicz, and Stefan Niesiołowski. In 1969 Movement supporters stole mimeographs from government institutions to produce an underground serial. They printed several issues, which were avowedly anti-Soviet and anticommunist, before the arrest in June 1970 of a number of Movement activists for planning to blow up a monument to Lenin.³⁶

Despite such opposition efforts, by the early 1970s the Polish state authorities had proven successful in advancing social atomization and quieting open active opposition. When opposition did occur, it tended to be through spontaneous eruptions of ire (the 1970 public protests on the coast), covert actions by a few individuals (the 1971 bombing of a college in Opole by Ryszard and Jerzy Kowalczyk), or letter writing campaigns by intellectuals related to specific foci (several thousand names were collected in support of commuting the death sentence passed on Jerzy Kowalczyk), not concerted struggles by a network of activists.³⁷

The 1970s did, however, witness a growing number of Polish "dissident" intellectuals who gathered in small groups, often to discuss émigré

publications such as *Culture* and the quarterly journal *Appendix*, which began publication in 1973. Many of these individuals were left-leaning or had at some point had an affiliation with the PZPR, as those who had not were likely to have had their educations and careers sidelined.³⁸ Such intellectual gatherings existed across the bloc, making Polish opposition akin to that in neighboring countries in the early 1970s.

Initially limited to clusters of friends, by 1975–1976 various independent discussion groups, which sought democratic change, began connecting with one another; their members came to collectively be referred to as the “democratic opposition.” The democratic opposition coalesced more openly in response to proposed changes to the Polish Constitution in 1975.³⁹ Intellectuals signed letters of protest to the changes. The collection of signatures helped link various groups within the democratic opposition, as signing protest letters gained a certain cachet since the mere act of signing could lead to loss of jobs, the right to publish, and the ability to travel abroad. The language of the amendments to the Polish Constitution was moderated, but they were passed into law in February 1976.⁴⁰ Soon afterward Antoni Macierewicz, who had helped in the campaign against the changes to the Constitution, unsuccessfully proposed to Jacek Kuroń that they found a committee for the defense of man and citizens as had Andrei Sakharov in Moscow.⁴¹

The decisive change for Poland’s opposition came with the creation of the independent press, which not only became the means for extending activism and healing society’s fractures but also made Poland’s opposition irrevocably distinct from others in the Soviet bloc. Between 1976 and 1980 independent publications encouraged the creation of open, independent, social institutions (trade unions, student societies, farming cooperatives, educational structures, etc.); connected various social groups (intellectuals, students, workers, and farmers); provided a rudimentary network to independent society across geographic divides; and supplied a medium for free speech. The press also gave rise to publishing houses, which created a narrow economic zone that was independent of the state.

A breakthrough came in August 1980 with the legalization of the Solidarity trade union. From August 1980 to December 1981 the press exploded as society (through Solidarity, Rural Solidarity, and the Independent Students’ Association) created the types of institutions previously endorsed by the democratic opposition. The independent press leaped from the purview of a committed cadre of a few thousand regular readers to reach hundreds of thousands and even millions. Independent publications not only aired Solidarity’s debates but also, for the first time, provided numerous Poles with

H O M E K

Elity nie chcą prawdziwej reformy! Władza, kościół i opozycja chcą rozmów przy "okrągłym stole", bo tylko tam się liczą. W FABRYCE, czy to w czasie strajku, czy - po reformie - w samorządzie pracowniczym władza należy do robotników. Obecne zawieszanie akcji strajkowej pozwala pomyśleć - dla kogo i o co walczyć ?!

1/czy ma sens walka o legalizację związku "S"? Przecież nie zmieni to w najmniejszym stopniu sytuacji społeczno-gospodarczej Polski. Mówi się, że legalny związek będzie wymuszał na władzy reformy. Jak? Przecież jedyną realną formą nacisku jest strajk, a legalne związki zawodowe w PRL są go praktycznie pozbawione - zanim wyzerpie się ustawowe środki rozwiązywania konfliktów - wiele spraw ulega deaktualizacji. To dlatego władze nie liczą się z OPZZ a boją się "garatki ekstremistów" i jej "nielegalnych strajków". Związek kom legalnym pozostaje/wymarzony przez L. Wałęsę i jego doradców/stół rozmów i podpisywanie kolejnych porozumień, których nie traktuje się serio, albo łamie się. Znamy to z czasów legalnej "S".

2/inna rzecz, to totalność strajków. Strajki są na całym świecie i jest to normalna forma wymuszania na pracodawcach przestrzegania praw robotników. Tylko u nas strajk zmienia się od razu w narodowe powstanie. Na świecie strajkują o konkretne postulaty i przeciw określonym decyzjom pracodawców - u nas strajkuje się o wszystko i przeciw systemowi w ogóle /strajk jest rewolucją, po której - w wyniku podpisanego porozumienia - ma nastać raj na ziemi, nie trzeba będzie już myśleć, pracować ani walczyć, bo pobita WŁADZA DA WSZYSTKO/. Może jest to skutek braku niepodległości, a przede wszystkim - totalności systemu, który przez niemal pół wieku odczytywał nas wszelkiej samodzielności /i dziś umiemy tylko prosić/ oraz tego, że w komunie "wszystko jest polityką", więc każdy protest - bez wz-

ględu na przyczynę - musi godzić w system.

3/ skoro tak jest - to róbmy to z głową! Żądamy rzeczy realnych pozwalających w sposób odpowiedzialny kształtować nasz los a nie prosić o wszystko rząd! Takim postulatem jest żądanie oddania zakładów pracy ich załogom. Pozwoliłoby to uzależnić od decyzji rad pracowniczych takie sprawy jak płace, warunki pracy, produkcja, ceny i to wszystko, co wiąże się z reformą gospodarki. Aktywność gospodarcza pobudzałaby aktywność społeczną i polityczną ludzi, a koncentracja własności i pracy w jednym ręku umożliwiłoby eliminację znacznej części konfliktów społecznych oraz uczciwą i wydajną pracę - nikt nie pracuje lepiej niż, na swoim", czego najlepszym przykładem są /mimo przeszkód ze strony władz/ polscy rolnicy, którzy sami decydują o produkcji, robią ją i korzystają z jej owoców. Odmowa władz byłaby oczywistą kompromitacją ich "reformy" - przyznaniem, że nie chodzi im o to by ludzie dobrze pracowali i współodpowiadali za kraj, lecz o korzyść/a wtedy to możemy już tylko "podpalić komitety"/.

Pozostaje jeszcze pytanie - czy chcemy odpowiedzialności i uczciwej pracy, czy też wolimy czekać na to, co da nam komuna, lub "S" ?!

Ruch Społeczeństwa Alternatywnego

o nic nie prosź sam sobie weź!

II ETAP REFORMY

Obywatele, czas zakasać rękawy!



A kogo będziemy bili ?!



Kooperatywa wyd. MARGINES

Homek, no. 34 (1988). Photograph by the author.

uncensored information about the nation's present and past, enabling open and honest public discourse. The independent press was so ubiquitous by 1981 that martial law did not destroy it.

After the imposition of martial law, publishing networks furnished the

underground opposition with its structure. Although the number of publications produced between 1982 and 1986 steadily decreased, an increased diversification occurred. The centrifugal forces, which had been constrained by Solidarity's legality in 1980–1981, were released within both the independent press and society. New Solidarity groupings as well as new political, social, and cultural milieus gathered and produced their own publications. When in the late 1980s open activism was again pursued and independent society reconsolidated (as conveyed through a rise in the transparency and quantity of independent publications) the state authorities were confronted with neither a narrow democratic opposition nor a self-limiting trade union but a pluralistic civil society.

The importance of the press lay not only in its physical and material existence and production but also in its content. In the context of the Polish People's Republic, the effort to "speak in truth" was a political act that contested the states' control of the language and intellectual commerce.⁴² Moreover, in their content, independent publications were often calls to action. This is why it is necessary when analyzing the press to focus not only on its physical production and distribution but also on the substance of its narratives.⁴³ Production and the ideas conveyed were intertwined; opposition tactics developed flexibly in response to independent society's perceived achievements and defeats. Publishing activities were therefore multilayered actions. Not only were the production, distribution, purchase, and reading of independent publications political acts, but their content was as well; that content encouraged further action in specific ways that often, due to Poland's history of armed uprisings, seemed innocuous.

Although those who worked in the press between 1976 and 1989 were conscious of joining a historical chain of Polish opposition, Polish activists from 1976 to 1989 did not act as their forefathers had. The iconic imagery of the opposition in the 1970s and 1980s is not that of a dazzling mustachioed nobleman on a horse, sword raised high, elegantly charging into the abyss. It is not secret gatherings of cloaked individuals. It is the vision of (admittedly, still mustachioed) striking workers behind factory walls festooned with images of Pope John Paul II, raising their hands in a V for victory for the entire world to see. They were not violent, and they were not covert. Although Polish history and the tradition of opposition played a decisive role in activating Polish opposition, serving at times as a motor for independent action, activists learned from and adapted to past failures and successes. As Polish historical traditions were reinvented and reinterpreted in a variety of ways, new methods of opposition were devised, which focused largely on civil resistance. These proposals were broadcast through the press.

The achievements of the Polish independent press were only possible due to the existence of a sympathetic population. Adam Michnik insisted in 1978 that the opposition in Poland “feel strong and are strong because we enjoy the moral and material support of a broad strata of our society.” He noted that without such support “it would be difficult to conceive of independent publishing.”⁴⁴ In turn, independent publications provided diffuse social disaffection with a focus, a voice, and a means to publicize plans of action; it was these plans that were carried out. When strikes or any other protest manifestation erupted (most of which after 1976 were sparked or at least encouraged by independent publications), it was independent publishers who prevented these from being isolated or ignored by producing strike bulletins, flyers, and papers as well as reporting to Radio Free Europe and other Western news sources to enable other regions to know what was happening and to have the opportunity to show solidarity. The history of the press therefore is in many ways the concrete history of Poland’s successful revolution of 1989.