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DID SOLIDARNOSC STOP BEING A CONTRADICTIONARY MOVEMENT

I. Preface

Despite its length this document is not completed yet. The following important chapters will hopefully appear before the Conference starts:

- 1) How SL changed the Defense of the Workers' State to the Defense of Stalinism.
- 2) Stalinism and the Church.
- 3) The No State theory and Poland--the Pabloite connection.
- 4) Gorbachev's Reforms, Solidarnosc and Stalinism--A theoretical evaluation.

II. INTRODUCTION

This document will create a lot of anxiety within the BT. Life is very complicated and unpredictable within a revolutionary organization. Some Comrades feel that they have had enough with the Polish question—that the question was fully discussed in the fusion process, and that a serious new discussion will just open a big can of worms and resolve nothing.

Unfortunately the exact opposite is the truth. The Polish discussion took place in a very compact period of time (two or three weeks before the congress). There was no serious research, reading and thought given to the question. This was mainly due to the fact that there was a false understanding, until the eve of the Congress, that the LTT and the BT agreed on Poland.

The consequences were that the discussion was confused and emotional and without a single serious document written on such an important question. After the long months of discussions in which the two organizations came very close to each other on important principled questions, there were strong feelings within the two groups to proceed with the fusion. The result of all this, in my opinion, was an unprincipled compromise on the Polish question.

While neither of the groups REALLY changed its position, we agreed on bad theses with hazy formulations that could be interpreted in almost opposite ways by each group. Later discussions with the RWL and other groups have proved it.

On the most important questions, the gap remained unbridgeable. The theses completely ignored the most crucial questions of martial law and the defense of Solidarnosc against the Stalinists. The fused group adopted a resolution (not to be published) that the BT is not for or against martial law. A very strange resolution on the most crucial question! The theses dealt with these questions by stating that: "it [became] necessary to suppress the restorationist leadership and its counterrevolutionary followers" (Theses on Solidarnosc, 1917 spr 1987 page 11). The comrades of the ex-LTT interpreted this thesis as meaning that it was necessary to suppress the leadership (the restorationist sector)—and perhaps a small section of the membership that was ready to follow such leadership, and take power in order to restore capitalism—but not the entire union! The ex-SL comrades interpreted it as an expression of support for the suppression of the entire leadership of Solidarnosc and the destruction of the union. This, of course, makes perfect sense, because the majority of the ex-SL comrades still stand for support for the 'necessary means' to suppress Solidarnosc. (Of course, they admit that the Stalinists used 'excesses' that they do not support.)

The truth of the matter is that if one stands for support for 'necessary means' to suppress Solidarnosc, one really stands for critical support for martial law. Such a position cannot be reconciled with the LTT position of open and resolute denunciation of martial law as a crime by the Stalinists against the working class. Those who come against martial law will defend the call of the union and the Polish working class to end martial law, and will defend the right of Solidarnosc to function, as a gain for the Polish working class against the Stalinist bureaucracy. Thus, with their different positions, the ex-LTTers and the ex-SLers would have stood on the opposite sides of the barricades in Poland. And precisely for these reasons, I think that the theses on Poland were unprincipled and (to be honest) somewhat rotten. Instead of dealing in a precise and clear way with those questions (which were the heart of the dispute at the conference), the theses chose either to ignore them completely, or to beat around the bush with foggy and confused formulations. Given the zeal for a fused organization, I think it would be wrong to accuse anyone of conscious maneuvering. But facts are objective; and it was just a matter of time before the fusion which was based on unprincipled theses showed its strains.

It is important to note that the phrase 'standing on opposite sides of the barricades' is something of an exaggeration. Later I will show in detail that there was no civil war, nor was the question of defense of collective property forms posed directly, as the theses wrongly stated. On December 13, 1981, the main question that was posed was the defense of the working class against its criminal suppression by the Stalinist bureaucracy. Not even the CIA—only the sick boys on Warren St. (the SL)—really believed that the Solidarnosc leadership was seriously capable of taking power, and intended to do so.

The differences between the ex-LTTers and the ex-SLers are deep. What is involved, in the last analysis, is the general method of thinking. As I will show later on, the ex-SL comrades reduce everything to the question of program. The sectarian methodology inherited by the ex-SLers from the SL is simply the mirror image of the methodology of the right-wing centrists. While the centrists claim that the movement is everything, and ignore the betrayals of the movement's leadership, the SL's methodology reduces the biggest and the most important social and political movement against the Stalinist bureaucracy in Eastern Europe to certain sections of its program, while ignoring the actual process of the revolution, i.e., the

contradictions between the program of the leadership and the actual actions and resolutions of the masses in the factories and the regions. As we'll see later, the September program resulted from a growing differentiation within Solidarnosc, and not from the consolidation of the entire working class behind a restorationist leadership and program, as the SL tries to teach us.

What is involved here is, of course, one's general view on Stalinism and the political revolution. Those who understood the Polish events mainly as a gigantic working class movement to restore capitalism, gave up on the possibility of a political revolution in the deformed workers' states, and capitulated to the pressure of the Stalinist bureaucracy. Spartacism today shares the exact same method of analysis with Pablo and company. As we'll see in the chapter on Stalinism and Spartacism, the SL deviation on Stalinism came directly from their position on Poland and didn't just happen by accident around the same time as the ex-SL comrades perceive.

The question of the political revolution is one of the most important questions that separates Trotskyism from anything else. We must have clarity and agreement on this question. This question is tied closely to the question of Internationalism and the Fourth International. Building a genuine International Trotskyist Tendency is the most important task for revolutionists today. Without such a tendency, the Fourth International will never be recreated. I believe that with the current position of the BT on Poland (and the big importance that the comrades attach to Poland; i.e., that it is the most important programmatic point for any national or international regroupment), it will never be able to build a real international tendency. In most cases only those in and around the SL will be attracted to the BT. This question became very clear to me in the last trip to England and the LO fête. I have to admit that in the discussion on Poland with the comrades in England, the LTT had much more in common with their positions than with the ex-SLers. When comrade Smith said in the discussion with them that he had only secondary and 'cosmetic' differences with the SL on Poland, the big alarm started to buzz very loudly.

It is for these reasons that I decided to write a very lengthy document, incorporating a lot of empirical data when I deal with the main political and theoretical questions. In order to have a rich discussion and to avoid emotional outbursts (i.e., the repeat of the last conference), I will deal with each political difference at length, with the hope that comrades will read the material carefully and think about it.

To write a good document, like a good book, takes a lot of time (particularly for someone who makes a lot of spelling mistakes!). It is very unfortunate that the EC, with its extreme pragmatic outlook, voted against my proposal to delay the conference to November. The decision to sacrifice an entire month of additional pre-conference time in order to gain one day of additional conference time may prove in the long run to be very costly to the organization. Once again, it will compress the discussion and may not allow sufficient time for response and clear thinking.

III. DID SOLIDARNOSC STOP BEING A CONTRADICTIONARY MOVEMENT?

A. SEPTEMBER CONGRESS AND PROGRAM

1. DID THE CONTRADICTIONS OF SOLIDARNOSC END IN SEPTEMBER?

The main argument of the SL to which the ex-SLers still adhere was that in September 1981 Solidarnosc stopped being a contradictory movement and in effect became a restorationist counterrevolutionary movement; i.e., the movement had to be suppressed. Although the adopted theses on Solidarnosc avoid the crudeness of the SL position, they nevertheless reflect basically the same view (see theses #1 and #3).

While the program proposed by the LTT to the conference indicated in several places that Solidarnosc still remained a contradictory movement up to the December coup, we agreed, as a compromise (which was the LTT biggest mistake), to the formulation that it stopped being contradictory in September '81. The LTT resolution to the Congress said that the "September 1981 congress must be seen as a confirmation of the political transformation of Solidarnosc into an organization with a top leadership that supported capitalist restoration" (DRAFT THESES ON SOLIDARNOSC [ADOPTED BY LTT] Page 3). In contrast, the main document adopted by the conference stated that "the September 1981 Congress must be seen as a confirmation of the political transformation of Solidarnosc into an organization openly supporting capitalist restoration" (Theses on Solidarnosc, 1917 Spr '87 page 11).

What a rotten compromise!! While the LTT understood that the September '81 congress confirmed the nature of the leadership, the ex-SLers managed to smuggle into the theses a line that defined the *entire* movement as: 'openly supporting capitalist restoration.'

In reality the exact opposite was taking place. The September congress was the result of increasing differentiation that was taking place within the union. This differentiation sharpened and exploded in the latter months of the fall, up to the December coup. While on the surface, and of course according to the bourgeois media (which some comrades in the BT still use as their prime source of information), it looked as though the right wing was winning power, the October program was a temporary compromise among three forces: (1) those who advocated a free market capitalist economy (whose program is in fact very similar to Gorbachev's reforms); (2) the KOR and the 'moderates,' who wanted to reform the system and combine central planning with some market economy; and (3) the working class base that wanted to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy by means of the self-management bodies and workers' councils. The working class base basically argued that the factories and the regions should take power and introduce genuine workers' democracy, without destroying central planning. This tendency was presented in the September congress in a distorted way. But nevertheless it was there.

The openly nationalist and antisemitic forces, i.e., those who openly supported the KPN, had very little following in the congress. Groups like the 'True Poles' also did not get much support. Daniel Singer, who wrote a book faithfully representing the Social Democratic view of the KOR, declared with a sigh of relief that "the comforting sign was that the 'true Poles' as these rightwing nationalists were called derisively, fared badly in the elections to the leading organs of Solidarity." (The Road to Gdansk, page 262). And he was absolutely right. The True Poles and the KPN were indeed gaining some followers, mainly among young people and even young workers (which is classic when the workers are confused and demoralized). But the majority of the working class did not support them, nor did the great majority of the Solidarnosc leadership, who wanted to compromise with the Stalinists and 'reform' the bureaucracy, but not to overthrow it.

The relationship between the open restorationist bourgeois nationalists and the workers in Solidarnosc is best illustrated by the 'Left Wing' bourgeois writer Timothy Garton Ash, who wrote one of the most accurate and most interesting books on Solidarnosc. He describes very vividly how:

"In Katowice a vendor had a regular stall on Market Square, selling photographs of Marshal Pilsudski and the graves at Katyn, KPN badges and a booklet entitled "*Under Soviet Partition*", as well as regular union publications. At noon on 20 October five car-loads of plainclothes police arrived to arrest him. The result (predictably) was that an angry crowd gathered, demanding his release. Riot police responded with tear gas to chants of 'Gestapo', while Solidarity unionists attempted to calm the crowd and at one point actually formed a cordon between the police and the demonstrators."

(The Polish Revolution: Solidarity, pp. 249-250)

What an interesting description! The Solidarnosc members restrained the nationalist supporters, and put themselves between the police and the KPN to allow the arrest of the KPN member! And all this happened in the fall, after the September congress!

Contrary to the superficial and empiricist understanding of the SL-ers, the September congress brought a major crisis within Solidarnosc, which was illustrated by deep disillusionments with the leadership, particularly within the industrial proletariat. This situation gave rise to independent actions and slogans in many regions that were to the left of the leadership. It also brought, of course, a growing right wing that got some support among the workers.

The example of Katowice is very typical. Katowice, which is the most industrialized area in Poland, was one of the centers for independent pro-socialist and anti-capitalist actions, and at the same time a center for the KPN. But such is the logic for a huge working class movement that, albeit in a confused way, was moving toward the political revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy, although with a reactionary leadership that they had stopped trusting. This is a logic that, unfortunately, the ex-SLers, who were educated in the sectarian logic of SL (by which a few sentences in the program are everything), cannot grasp.

But before we continue to examine the differentiation that took place within Solidarnosc in the fall after the congress, let us return to the congress itself.

2. THE PROPOSED AUGUST PROGRAM VERSUS THE ADOPTED OCTOBER PROGRAM

The economic section of the October program was a compromise between the more openly restorationist current—those who called for the free play of the Market—and the 'moderate' activists of the KOR. The latter had combined themselves in an alliance with a significant 'reformed' Stalinist current who stood for continued central planning that would allow some market play, without destroying the fundamental structure of the workers' state. The moderate current, which was best represented by Ryszard Bugaj, was absolutely not restorationist and had some illusions about the CP. The following quote, from a debate within the leadership of Solidarnosc on the eve of the September congress, vividly illustrates how little the ex-SLers know, and how removed they are from what was actually happening within Solidarnosc. In the debate, Ryszard Bugaj argued against Jerzy Milewski, who was the leader of Network and was prone toward market economy. Bugaj said:

"Mr. Milewski claims that reform cannot be imposed on any specific works, that each self-management knows best what should be done [i.e., let the free market play]. But the essence of the reform is a system of economic cooperation, certain rules of coordination by which everyone abides. **THE RULES MUST BE DRAWN UP CENTRALLY.**" (Labor Focus on Eastern Europe, Spring 1982, page 17 (emphasis added))

We will return to Bugaj's political views later on in the chapter on the Sejm and self-management. But apparently, even in the Solidarnosc leadership, not everybody was for capitalist restoration. Isn't it so, comrades from the SL? Bugaj, who represented a very significant current within the ranks of Solidarnosc and the leadership, stood for some progressive economic reforms, and for the reform of the CP itself. (Bugaj himself was very disappointed in the results of the extraordinary Congress of the CP in July '81.) In our arguments that a very significant portion of Solidarnosc did not stand for restoration, we will cite much more empirical evidence. As you'll find out, there was even within the Solidarnosc leadership, oh horror of horrors!, a centrist current which was to the left of Bugaj. Contrary to the bourgeois method of thinking of the SL (which is borrowed directly from the CIA!), a Marxist understands that a huge massive movement of the entire working class which rises up against the Stalinists will always have different currents even within the leadership (restorationist, reformist, centrist). It is the duty of revolutionists to intervene in the movement, to expose the limitations and dangers of each current, and to propose the road of the political revolution.

The 'Free Market' tendency at the congress, which was headed by Stefan Kurowski, had a program which is essentially very similar to Gorbachev's reforms. This tendency, which was composed of a section of Solidarnosc experts, was the most dangerous (outside, perhaps, of the KPN groupings). It was quite openly supporting the restoration of full capitalist markets, and even called for

bringing back free enterprise. In August 1981, Solidarnosc 'experts' wrote a proposed program that was largely influenced by the 'Free Market' tendency. There is a lot of confusion between the program proposed to the congress in August and the actual program adopted in October. I believe that some comrades who talk about Solidarnosc's program are referring to the August program. So please be careful! There are big differences between the two programs.

The October program came as a compromise among the Gorbachevites, the CP reformists, and the confused but honest working class elements who wanted to smash Stalinism through the means of self-management. For Marxists, the October program was a good indication of growing conflicts within the mass movement Solidarnosc.

There were many important differences between the August proposed program and the adopted October program. For example, the following items were proposed in the August program, but were scrapped in the final program of October: (a) the open undermining of the state monopoly on foreign trade; (b) the call for private enterprise; (c) total elimination of central planning; and (d) the endorsement of unemployment. Each of these changes, with its implications, is discussed in detail in the sections that follow.

a) *The open undermining of the state monopoly on foreign trade*

The August program not only openly stated that every enterprise would be allowed to trade independently with foreign companies, but it also stated that "each enterprise must be entitled to sign foreign contracts independently regardless of bloc divisions," that each foreign trade enterprise "must work on the basis of self-financing," and that this would allow "unprofitable foreign trade enterprise to go out of business." (Labour Review, January 1982, page 475). No doubt, open 'free market' with all the consequences.

The October program, which was pretty bad, was nevertheless much more careful and moderate. While it declared that "international trade must be accessible to all enterprises" (Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Spr 1982, page 5), it never specified how, nor did it declare that these enterprises should be free of central control and be self-financing (which would have meant the introduction of state capitalism). True, the October program supported free internal marketing. But this by itself does not automatically bring the dangers of restoration. In fact, the economic portion of the October program *WAS MUCH MORE MODERATE AND REASONABLE THAN THE PRESENT ECONOMIC PROGRAM OF THE USSR!*

We will deal specifically later on with the relationship between Solidarnosc's program and Gorbachev's reforms. But for now, it suffices to say that the October program not only paid attention to central planning, but in a distorted and confused way even raised our (the Trotskyists') demand for democratic workers' control over central planning. In this respect, the October program reflects the aspirations of millions of Polish workers, who wished to overthrow the Stalinist bureaucracy while retaining and expanding the gains of the October (Russian) Revolution.

And indeed, right after the section on market economy, the October 1981 program stated that:

"The reform must socialize planning, so that the *CENTRAL PLAN* reflects the aspirations of society and is freely accepted by it. Public debates are therefore indispensable.... Access to comprehensive economic information is therefore absolutely essential, requiring social control over the Central Statistics boards." (Labour Focus on Eastern Europe, Spr '82, page 5)

If this sentence were rewritten with the appropriate Marxist language, it could be taken directly from the transitional program. Of course, the October program talks about control by 'civil organizations'—a bad terminology that can be interpreted by restorationist elements as 'civil bourgeois organizations.' But this is why there was a need for a Trotskyist party to come forward and declare that such democratic control over central planning could be done only by working class organizations that support central planning. Trotskyists should have said that all those who call for free capitalist markets and 'free' enterprise in Poland should be thrown out of Solidarnosc, together with the 'True Poles'. In this way the contradictions between the aspirations of the workers and the leadership who chained these aspirations would have been exposed.

The proposed program of the LTT stated that: "The February-March 1981 program was

contradictory, however, because the counter-revolutionary leadership had to take into account the aspirations of millions of Polish workers and CPers who wanted to reform or smash Stalinism" (Draft theses on Solidarnosc [adopted by the LTT]). But the stomachs of the ex-SLers could not digest that the program of Solidarnosc was contradictory even in February! Hence, the adopted theses stated that: "This program was SEEMINGLY contradictory because the counterrevolutionary leadership had to take into account the aspirations of millions of Polish workers [etc.]" (Theses on Solidarnosc, 1917 Spr. 1987, page 11 [emphasis added]).

But alas, comrades, the program of Solidarnosc did *IN FACT* reflect in a distorted way the real aspirations of millions of workers toward the political revolution, and did not only 'seemingly' reflect them, as stated in the adopted theses of the BT. The addition of the word 'seemingly' to the LTT proposed amendments to the theses, which the LTT reluctantly agreed to as a concession for the fusion, encapsulates an entirely opposite approach, and perhaps a different world outlook, on the part of the two sides.

b) The call for private enterprise

Perhaps the worst aspect of the August program, which was totally scrapped in October, was the call for private enterprise. This was the most openly restorationist call. The August program stated that "private enterprises are based on the private ownership of the means of production. To establish such enterprises it is necessary to obtain an adequate license from the local authorities." It added that "Private enterprise is an equal participant in the economic activities in the country along with other enterprises and can enter production, service and commercial agreements with them." (Labour Review, Feb. 1982, pp. 541-42). How nice! a fifty/fifty mixed economy!! And in addition to the call for private enterprise, our restorationist 'friends' did not forget to ask for a mixed state and private owned banking system (see Labour Review, Feb. '82, page 549). But there was not a trace of all this, not a single word about it, in the October program.

c) Total elimination of central planning

The August program called for total elimination of central planning; in effect, it called openly for a structure of state capitalism (which would be a transitional state leading to a full restoration of capitalism). The August program included the following:

"It is necessary to eliminate the necessity for social enterprises to belong to any intermediate structures. These structures should be liquidated by the end of 1981. Decision making powers of the former units intermediate between central administration and the enterprises have to be eliminated immediately. Their place should be taken only by voluntary associations of independent social enterprises." (Labour Review, Feb. 1982, page 542)

Contrast this with the adopted October program's passage on the exact same subject:

"A new economic structure must be built. In the organization of the economy, the basic unit will be a collectively managed social enterprise, represented by a workers' council and led by a director who shall be appointed with the council's help and subject to recall by the council. The social enterprise shall dispose of the national property entrusted to it, working in the interest of society and the enterprise itself. It shall apply economic calculation in the affairs of management. The state may influence enterprise activity through various regulations and economic instruments—prices, taxes, interest rates, *FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES*, and so on." (Labour Focus, Spr. '82, pages 4-5 [emphasis added].)

What a difference!! The proposed August program calls for completely independent, capitalist type 'social enterprises,' while the October program places primary emphasis on workers' control over the factories through the creation of workers' councils. Compare the latter to the transitional program, which demands, in the chapter on the USSR, a "revision of *planned economy* from top to bottom in the interests of producers and consumers! *FACTORY COMMITTEES SHOULD BE RETURNED THE RIGHT TO CONTROL PRODUCTION*. A democratically organized consumers' cooperative should control the quality and price of products." (Documents of the 4th International, page 213 [emphasis added]).

The October program also clearly recognised the need for planned economy. It acknowledged the essential role of the state in planned economy, and viewed the 'social enterprise' as part of the 'national property,' i.e., collective property, a portion of which is 'entrusted to it.'

This is not to say that there are not parts in the October program that are contradictory (for example, it calls for a more flexible market economy). But those who said that the October program was merely a reflection of a leadership that was busy planning to bring Wall Street into Poland were either extremely uninformed or deliberately misleading.

One must bear in mind that the call for workers' control over the production of individual factories, including the right to control the pricing to some degree, was initiated not by Solidarnosc, but by Leon Trotsky, as indicated by the passage from the transitional program that was quoted earlier. And indeed, workers' control over production (output, etc.) and pricing were very progressive demands, as long as basic central planning stayed intact. Such demands are essential parts of the demand for workers' democracy, which is one of the most important demands in the political revolution. Demands of this sort were clearly brought into the Solidarnosc program, and the program thus reflected the contradiction between the gigantic political revolution initiated by the working class against the Stalinist bureaucracy, and its conservative leadership which tried to veer the revolution into different directions (reforms, collaboration with the bureaucracy, and capitalist restoration).

d) *The endorsement of unemployment*

The solutions proposed by the August program are obviously similar to the Yugoslav 'experiment.' This program stated that "Self-financing is recognised as the fundamental principle of a financial system." (Labour Review, Feb. 1982, page 546). This 'fundamental principle' was carried through to all its consequences. The program went so far as to admit that "it is necessary to limit employment in administration in some factories *OR EVEN WHOLE BRANCHES OF INDUSTRY*" (Labour Review, Feb.'82, page 556 [emphasis added]).

The October program not only scrapped this reactionary call for unemployment, but it demanded full employment. The program also contained a long list of benefits for the workers, a subject the August program did not touch. This reflects the pressure of the working class base. In contrast to August, the October program said:

"We demand the right to work for all; there should be no unemployment Thus, if an enterprise envisages a decline in activity, working conditions should be changed in such a way that jobs are retained or working hours reduced without loss of pay." (Labour Focus, Spr. '82, page 6).

The entire contradiction of the October program is expressed in this single sentence! The workers want workers' control, the overthrow of the corrupt Stalinist bureaucracy, and full employment. Their 'advisors' tell them that this can be implemented only through some increase in market economy mechanisms ("an enterprise envisages a decline in activity"). The workers agree to this, as long as it will not affect their pay or employment.

3. *THE SOURCES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTRADICTIONS IN THE OCTOBER PROGRAM*

The film maker Andrzej Chodakowski perhaps expressed best these contradictions in the program. When interviewed by a New Yorker reporter in the middle of the congress, he explained that:

"Of course there are contradictions...—the status quo itself is so loaded with contradictions—that any response will also have certain contradictions. Basically, we are struggling to find some way of introducing competition without private ownership, in such a way that the losers in the competition will still be somehow protected." (Lawrence Weschler, *Solidarity: Poland in the Season of its Passion*, pp. 105-06.)

And in the struggle to 'somehow protect' the losers (i.e., the workers), the 'advisors' were forced to concede more than the point against unemployment. In addition, the October program

called for "creating a socially controlled national fund to transfer capital from one region to another and thereby to reduce inequalities" (Labour Focus, Feb. '82, page 6). Such a provision is a very important aspect of central planning, which today is being rudely undermined in the USSR by the Stalinist bureaucracy that proposes layoffs in those factories and regions which cannot make it in the 'free' 'socialist' market!

Indeed, in many aspects the October program was much more progressive than the present reforms in the USSR, because the Solidarnosc program was based on the contradictions generated by the mass movement of the working class that started a revolution against the Stalinist bureaucracy, while the recent reforms in the USSR are based on the narrow reactionary interests of the bureaucracy, which is using the present reforms to protect its interests and has no mass movement behind it.

However, the October program did have some severe limitations, and in the last analysis opposed the interests of the Polish political revolution. The Polish reform Stalinists, who supported the October program, wanted to increase market economy, with increased state [i.e., Stalinist] intervention to guard against unemployment. But they had no real solution to the contradictions of this proposal. Squeezed between the workers and market economy, this tendency proposed as a solution to create advisory bodies to the government, which would counsel the Stalinist bureaucracy while collaborating with it *AGAINST ANY INDEPENDENT ACTION OF THE MASSES*. This is expressed most clearly in point 5 of the October program, which proposes the creation of "a social council of the National Economy, whose tasks would be to assess government economic policy, to examine the economic situation and relevant legislation.... The council must have a right to present draft legislation ... and its members should be able to communicate with society through the media" (Labour Focus, Feb. '82, page 5). In other words, the 'social council of the National Economy' would be an advisory body, but the decisions still would be left to the government, i.e., the Stalinists.

In a deformed workers' state, all of the economic solutions tend to involve continuing state intervention, in which monstrous bureaucratic distortion is inevitable, resulting in increasing dependence on market economy. But even in a healthy workers' state, it is not possible to avoid some increase in internal market economy, as 1917 will correctly explain in the next issue. To guarantee workers' democracy, and also central planning without bureaucratic distortion, it is necessary even after a healthy political revolution to expand it to other countries, and in the last analysis to destroy imperialist economic domination totally through social revolutions in the imperialist countries. There was nobody in Poland who had this perspective, of course. And without a Trotskyist party, the other alternatives are reforms of Stalinism, either with orientation toward market economy (the Gorbachev solution), or without it.

In the October program, because the workers asked questions, presented their interests and grievances, and were not ready to accept an open market economy, the open Gorbachevites were defeated. The compromises reflected in the October program were the result of the increased polarization within Solidarnosc. Those who claim that Solidarnosc ceased being a contradictory movement, and became simply a CIA front (even the Stalinists were not as crude and stupid as the SL!) would end later on in the reactionary camp of the Stalinist bureaucracy—and, yes, the church—as we'll see later on. The question was of reactionary and reformist leadership—not movement.

Two additional differences between the August and October programs should be noted in passing. First, the October program recognised the obligation of Poland to the Warsaw Pact and the USSR, which the August program did not. Second, it also recognised the August 1980 agreements between the Stalinists and Solidarnosc, in which Solidarnosc recognized "the leading role of the party," i.e., the Stalinists. The "free market" right wing proposals in August did not recognise these August 1980 accords.

All of these differences clearly illustrate that, contrary to the myth that was promoted by the SL, the October program was essentially a victory to the KOR and the Walesa leadership, i.e., those sectors of the Solidarnosc leadership who wanted to compromise with the Stalinist bureaucracy, and not to the open nationalists and restorationists.

More importantly, the program was a temporary muzzle that the leadership put on the working class. Programs and resolutions adopted by mass organizations of the working class do not necessarily represent objectively or even subjectively the thinking or direction of the masses as a finished product. What they always do represent are the contradictions, particularly if the masses are not dormant (like the unions in the U.S., for example), but in a gigantic revolutionary motion. The best

example is, of course, the Russian Revolution. How many times did the Mensheviks pass conservative and counterrevolutionary motions in the Soviets? The masses usually went in the opposite direction the next week!!

The method of thinking that the ex-SLers inherited from the SL is extremely sectarian and sterile. In the fusion conference, it took a lot of blood, and almost the break-up of the entire conference, to change the ex-SLers' original proposal for the Polish theses, to the effect that the leadership and program were everything, and to insert language reflecting that there was also a contradiction between the leadership and the base. But the ex-SLers did not really change their thinking on the subject. They still view the September Solidarnosc congress as the 'end' of the contradictions within Solidarnosc, and the beginning of the period when practically the entire working class became a toll of reaction, and thus Solidarnosc had to be destroyed. And behind this bad (or, more accurately, reactionary) position lies an entire sectarian method of thinking which is the opposite of the rich and dialectic method of Marxism. Thus, indeed, in the last analysis the differences between the ex-LTT and the ex-SL are not about Poland, but about Marxism.