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EXTRACTS FROM POLISH UNDERGROUND PUBLICATIONS

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1. "Don't Wait for Instructions: An Interview with Anna Walentynowicz"

from *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski*, no. 1 (59), January 1985

Introduction: In its regular series of interviews under the title "What Kind of Poland?" the monthly underground publication *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski*, which has been appearing in Wroclaw since 1979, interviews Anna Walentynowicz. *Biuletyn* is now connected with Fighting Solidarity. Walentynowicz is one of the founders of the Free Trade Unions set up in Gdansk in 1978. Her dismissal from her job in the Lenin Shipyard in Gdansk, where she was employed as a crane operator, actually sparked off the strike in August 1980, which led to the emergence of Solidarity. Despite poor health (she had cancer some years ago) Walentynowicz has been extremely active in the union movement and has been in and out of jail since the imposition of martial law in December 1981. Lately, she was participating in a hunger strike in a church in Bierzanow, near Cracow, to protest the attacks against the Church.

* * *

Biuletyn For a long time you have now been a living legend, the embodiment of our union, and an example of honorable and dignified behavior. We welcome you most warmly and ask for a few words of advice for *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski* and the Fighting Solidarity Information Agency [Polish acronym AISW]. How do you evaluate the strength of the union now, from the viewpoint of Gdansk and from a national perspective, not as an all-national resistance movement but as an underground organization?

A. W. I think that the party has failed to liquidate us, or turn us into servile boot-lickers; we have not been thrown to our knees. This is proof of our strength. [Minister of Internal Affairs General Zenon] Kiszczak once said that if he were given the use of the entire force of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, he could liquidate the whole of Solidarity within a couple of years. Increasingly, I have come to see this harassment of the movement as similar to the survival of Christianity in the early centuries. Let us recall that Christianity emerged strengthened from its persecution. The Holy Father has said that we value more highly things that cost us dearly. Our country is very dear to us, so many people have given their lives

for it, so much blood has soaked into its earth; and this too is our strength. Each sacrifice, and especially sacrifices of the innocent, strengthens our stand, our belief in victory, and yields fruit many times over. Father Jerzy [Popieluszko] is more dangerous today than he was while alive.

Biuletyn

On no account may we give up the struggle for our basic rights and our social independence. How would you define the main targets of our struggle? What are we fighting for. . . ?

A. W.

Above all for dignity, independence, and a free Poland. But in order to achieve this, we must be aware of our rights. We should also learn from the experiences of the Home Army [the main resistance movement under Nazi occupation]. I am not a supporter of armed struggle, but I do think that we must defend ourselves, we must know how to oppose evil. We should fight for every penny that they withhold from us at work. We should not allow them to extend the work day and the work week. Our fathers have already fought for an eight-hour day! We must fight for everyone who is dismissed from work, everyone who is treated unjustly. There are many people like that. I myself spent two years out of work and without the right to a pension. I got my pension 3 months ago: 7,000 zloty for 32 years of work. Still, at least I have it now. And anyway, our aim should not be to secure a somewhat thicker slice of bread today, even if this would make us happy; we must not forget what our real aim is. Our main duty is to consider the needs of others. If we become alive to this duty, there will be no unjustly treated people in our midst, and we, in turn, shall not be treated unjustly. Our day-to-day motto should be: "Your problems are also my problems." We must extend our friendship and strengthen our solidarity. These are not empty words. All of us should adopt an attitude of solidarity. And another thing--while on the subject of attitudes--at the same time as I am full of admiration for the people of Wroclaw, they have this feeling of dissatisfaction with themselves. This is a good attitude, for our aspirations should always reach higher. I ask more and more of myself, and yet I always have this feeling that I am not doing enough, that I am actually doing nothing. It would be good if everyone were to strive for perfection.

Biuletyn

Certainly, things are not as we should like them to be, and the state of affairs varies from region to region. How can the "stronger" regions influence the weaker ones?

A. W.

Through encounters, through getting to know each other, by getting rid of the suspicion that any activist may be a UB [secret police] agent. We must get rid of our UB-mania, but in order to achieve that, we must first know each other well. If we do not meet and become friends, we can never extend the range of our acquaintances. "Solidarity" is one great family, but what kind of family is it if people do not know each other? At the same time, we must unmask all collaborators and rid ourselves of them. If there is a UB agent in the neighborhood, he should know for sure that nobody will say hello to him.

Biuletyn

Many people believe that the only possible Christian attitude toward persecutors is that of forgiveness.

A. W.

Take the assassination attempt on the Pope. The Pope forgave, the Pope went to see his would-be assassin in jail and freely forgave him. But he did not ask that he should be set free. Legal precepts should be upheld. And this is why I was not pleased when, on the day of Father Popeluszko's funeral, there were appeals for forgiveness. Even according to Christian rule, forgiveness must be preceded by repentance on the part of the sinner, not to mention a redress of the evil done. How can one redress a death though? Neither the murderers nor their masters showed any repentance; quite the contrary, they do not want our forgiveness. On the other hand, what right have I to forgive anyone for the death of Father Popieluszko, in his name, in the name of his mother? How can anyone forgive on our behalf?

Biuletyn

One often hears opinions identifying Solidarity with the Church. What do you think? Perhaps the Church is the only legal institution that can exert pressure on the authorities?

A. W.

We are the Church. Or do you mean the priests? A priest is also only a man. I believe we should gather in churches, because they offer an asylum for free expression. But the struggle must not take place in churches. The Church, [that is,] priests, should support and inform us. The pulpit must serve the people, since we have no other means of communication. Television serves [Jerzy] Urban,

Kiszczak, Jaruzelski--they send us their messages in a Goebbels-like style. This we should reject. When martial law started I gave back my television license; now I never turn it on, never watch it. I tell you, the flow of information--outside of underground publications and structures--should come through the pulpit. I think that we should gather in churches, we should get to know each other in churches, but we should not expect the Church to fight our battles for us.

Biuletyn

There are underground organizations that put their programs over directly: We want to take power away from the Communists in our country. I have in mind especially Fighting Solidarity. How do you evaluate radical attitudes? Can we, in your opinion, expect support throughout the country?

A. W.

It is hard for me to say, for I am not a politician. One cannot hope for change in the form of a renewal of our government, because "socialist morality" has by now been so corrupted that it cannot be restored and must be eliminated instead! I cannot offer suggestions about how this can be done, but I am certain that throughout the country there will be support for such a course. It is a good thing that some people have already taken this path; and it is most certain that society will give them support, because the people are truly fed up. There is no longer any doubt. There have been stifled uprisings in Poznan (1956) as well as on the Baltic coast and in Radom (1976); and today you are not even allowed to lay a bunch of flowers in places where workers' blood has flowed. I paid with four months of jail for an attempt to place a memorial tablet at the site where the Wujek Colliery miners were killed. This year I went there again and, wonderful to say, we did manage to do something! One must truly desire to do something [in order to achieve it]. I think our nation truly desires freedom.

Biuletyn

I would also like to ask about organizational matters and how methods of struggle should be adapted to present-day needs.

A. W.

In order to organize, one must train people. Like KOR used to, one must conduct courses, seminars, and flying universities. Each person should be aware of his rights, his possibilities, and be prepared for the struggle. Before we organize an underground state, a strong underground state, we must prepare the ground. We know that no struggle

can be won without preparing the ground. This is very important. I think this is more important to us today than our daily bread.

Biuletyn

Which methods of struggle do you think are best? What do you think about well-organized, mass street demonstrations?

A. W.

Street demonstrations are necessary and good, but they must be prepared. They must take place in all towns. They should not take place just in Gdansk, say, for ZOMO forces would be brought in from all over the country, and then we should lose; in such cases ZOMO beat us up and imprison us. Andrzej Gwiazda was a recent victim of such treatment. He went to lay flowers at the monument to the Shipyard Workers. He was the very man who negotiated the construction of that monument, and it was he who said that the monument should serve as a reminder that conflicts could not be resolved by force. If this anniversary in December had been celebrated everywhere at the same time, or at least everywhere where blood had flowed, then there might not have been any arrest. This anniversary, December 16, as Walesa said at the monument, should be a national holiday, by which he meant that the nation should celebrate it: in every town people should come out into the streets. Then the ZOMO could not be concentrated in a single location. If we play safe and do not dare to venture into the street, then we allow the authorities to reduce the scope of our freedom. Let us not allow them to take our freedom away.

Biuletyn

What is your opinion of Walesa and his leadership, because even if his role is a symbolic one, he does remain the leader? He is often accused of being too ready to compromise, lacking consistency in a feverish search for an agreement with the Communists, lacking a clear program for struggle now and in the future, and political naivete. What do you think?

A. W.

I have said a lot about Walesa before, at the time of Solidarity. Today, I think that his duties have exceeded his abilities. Everyone can have his own opinion of Walesa--should have one. For me, Walesa is a symbol, but we must do our work, because he can offer us no program. He failed several times to go to the monument. For me, the worst was his writing to the authorities several times. In 1983 he asked the voivod for permission to go to the monument and received it. I think that was a move unworthy of the leader of Solidarity. All right,

anyone can make mistakes. I would not do that, nobody has ever done that. Nowadays, we must start from the base and build our network as we did in August (1980)--we had no leaders but we were well organized.

Biuletyn

We all have the same hope: a free Poland. But we sometimes differ in our expectations. What are your expectations for the next day, the next year?

A. W.

We must not wait passively. A free Poland is our aim, but no one will give us that freedom. Our passivity will result in their murdering more and more of us, in more and more people suffering. We must educate, because even when a free Poland is achieved, the nation will be so exhausted that there will be no one to lead it. I think that the underground organization Fighting Solidarity should train cadres for the future. I don't want to hear anyone say that nothing can be done, or that nobody knows what can be done, or that it is best to stay away for the sake of peace and quiet. Today we must look further than our pockets. As the Pope said: keep watch! Only a sober person looking to the future and seeing our cause realistically can keep watch. The most important thing is for the people not to wait for instructions and appeals. Every one must be able to think and make decisions. Let us learn to make courageous decisions. And I think that there is another important matter that must be mentioned and about which you have not asked me. The elections to the Sejm are approaching. The [municipal] elections last year were a test, and the fact that 50% of the population went to the polls shows that we have still not paid enough attention to this matter. The events that have taken place since last year should have opened the eyes of many. We cannot support any regime proposal, and we cannot use our vote to show our trust in murderers.

Biuletyn

Thank you very much for this interview.

2. "An Interview with 'Konrad'"

from *Kontra*, no. 83, 20 December 1985

Introduction: *Kontra is published by Solidarity in the Torun Region. "Konrad" is the chairman of the underground Regional Executive Committee of Solidarity for the area.*

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- Kontra* This is our first conversation, and the first meeting of our readers with a Chairman of a Regional Executive Commission (RKW) of Solidarity. Let us then lift the mask of conspiracy a bit and let you tell us something about yourself. What made you take up conspiratorial activities?
- Konrad* It is difficult to speak about myself, especially when I cannot divulge information that might help identify me. I have no intention of giving the secret police a Christmas present. A few details about myself: Age--thirty odd, college education, employment in an industrial enterprise, a wife, and one child. I began so-called social work in 1980, together with thousands of other people carried away by the ideals of Solidarity. Then martial law presented me with the necessity of a choice. One had to draw conclusions from one's beliefs. An attack on basic human and civil rights, on the hopes of millions of union members, on the unique opportunity of improving the situation in Poland by peaceful means could cause only one reaction--a firm rejection. In my case, it was expressed through undertaking underground activities. I believe I am psychologically suited for it; furthermore, I decided that this was the most unequivocal and the most effective means of struggle.
- Kontra* How did you become the chairman of the regional commission?
- Konrad* It was a plain changing of the guard. It is necessary to introduce a system of rotation for the entire commission, both for reasons of secrecy and because of plain exhaustion and overwork--somehow we have to combine our work as conspirators with regular employment and at least a half-normal family life.
- Kontra* How do you manage personally?
- Konrad* I cope, you should ask my family the same question.
- Kontra* How does it feel to be a chairman of a regional commission, what does it mean to you?

Konrad More work and greater responsibility.

Kontra All right, let us now move from personal remarks to general ones. Would you explain to us what is meant by the name, Regional Executive Commission?

Konrad The commission coordinates all the conspiratorial work in the region both as far as decision making goes and the implementation of decisions.

Kontra Meaning that the Regional Executive Commission is now the only union authority on the regional level?

Konrad Yes.

Kontra Who makes up the regional commission?

Konrad Members of the regional commission coordinate various areas of conspiratorial action; actually each is generally in charge of several sections.

Kontra Meaning that the number of members is very limited. What are these separate "areas" of which they are in charge?

Konrad For obvious reasons, I cannot talk about everything. I can reveal the following activities: editing, printing and distribution of the press; the import of press and publications from other regions; distribution of books; the organization of lending libraries, contacts with individual industrial plants, adult education, posters and leaflets; cooperation with youth; cooperation and communication with the Interim Coordinating Commission of Solidarity [TKK] and with other regions, cooperation with farmers, Radio Solidarity, the technical department for [supplies], the financial department, and so on and so forth.

Kontra We can see that it is a highly developed structure requiring the work of many people. So the next question would be about the numbers involved in conspiratorial work in the region.

Konrad It is hard to tell, because it is hard to tell how many people are actually involved in each plant and factory. In enterprises that are part of the external network there are about 200 people. In my evaluation, about 1,000 people are "conspiring" in the Torun region. Naturally, I do not include among them readers of the underground press and supporters who continue to pay their Solidarity dues, but only people actively engaged in underground work, such as distributing more than 10 copies of underground papers.

- Kontra* Aren't you afraid that the information you are providing reveals too much about the underground structures?
- Konrad* As a rule, there have been no arrests in our area connected with the regional commission network.
- Kontra* Excuse me, does it mean that we can feel really safe?
- Konrad* We treat safety as the number one priority at all times. The regional commission network is at present so well concealed and organized that, should some people be arrested, it would be possible to reorganize the missing link, even if it were the entire Regional Executive Commission.
- Kontra* Does this mean that despite complaints that can be heard here and there, there is no shortage of people prepared to work, to take on the hardships and the dangers [of working with the underground]?
- Konrad* It's not too bad. Any person who decides to take up conspiratorial work is always precious to us, yet the actual number of people involved in it does not decrease but increases. There is, however, a limit beyond which an underground network should not be extended. Since mass conspiracy is out of the question, some people who express their readiness to help are held back as reserves. Moreover, we periodically exchange the most exhausted and the most greatly burdened activists. Still this doesn't mean that everything is rosy, since shortages do arise in certain departments.
- Kontra* This is on the regional level, what about within the factories?
- Konrad* In the majority of larger industrial enterprises there are either clandestine workers' councils or active groups capable, at the very least, of distributing underground press or books. Until now, unfortunately, there has been very little interest in adult education, and the influx of information from various factories is also poor. I have the feeling that the number of people reading the uncensored press, paying union dues, and engaging in other forms of activity is actually diminishing. This is understandable to the degree that all of society or even a large part of it cannot remain constantly in a state of alert. It does not mean that the people are not emotionally attached to Solidarity, as shown by the continued mass boycott of the new labor unions, but it arises from the wear and tear of day-to-day problems. Therefore, activists in factories should concentrate their efforts on the

active minority, while reminding passive supporters of the existence of Solidarity through leaflets or other spectacular undertakings such as distributing copies of underground papers to people who do not receive it regularly. It is the task of active supporters to continue adding to the number of libraries in enterprises and organizing adult education courses.

Kontra We know little of Solidarity activities in subregions, that is, outside Torun itself.

Konrad It is much more difficult to be active outside the center, and the scope is more limited. We keep in touch with almost all subregions and we try to collect information about their activities and problems. In general, some underground publications are distributed (and there are some smaller publications, *Iskra* [Spark] in Grudziadz and *Biuletyn Informacyjny* in Wabrzezno). When one considers the difficult prevailing conditions and the slowly growing circles of activists and readers, one must say that the situation in subregions is not all that bad.

Kontra Could you tell us where you get the funds for such extensive activities?

Konrad We have already submitted our budget and published it in *TIS* [*Torunski Informator Solidarnosci*--The Torun Solidarity Informer]. About 20% comes from membership dues, individual grants add up to about 30%, about 10% comes from our own commercial undertakings (sales of stamps, etc.), and about 40% are grants from the Interim Coordinating Commission (TKK). I would like to explain that these are not CIA dollars, but aid from Western labor unions, in foreign currency, and we neither conceal the fact nor are we ashamed of it. It is solidary aid from labor unions, in the same way the striking British miners get aid. It should be added that there are not political conditions attached to the grants. In the name of this distant Regional Executive Commission, I would like to thank our benefactors from the free trade unions for their aid. . . .

Kontra How do you know what the level of support is for you from the rank and file today?

Konrad Our popularity index is the number of requests for our services--the independent press and books--the contacts we have with various enterprises through the channels of the Clandestine Factory Commissions, and finally by the number of candidates who come to us offering their services.

Kontra Asked when he would come to Torun, Walesa answered: "Torun is doing all right." How do you see Torun in comparison with other regions?

Konrad One must bear in mind that Torun is a medium-sized center and cannot be compared with Warsaw or Wroclaw. A positive aspect is the fact that divisions within Solidarity, apparent before the imposition of martial law, are a thing of the past. Torun has a unified and united organizational structure. We need not be ashamed in front of other regions. We have laid great emphasis and still do on the creation of service cadres, perhaps this is why our activities are less obvious from the outside. We cooperate closely with groups in individual enterprises and subregions, in order to coordinate activities (obviously, as far as it is possible). One example is the collection of signatures on the petition to free political prisoners; within a short time 3,000 signatures were collected and no one got into trouble [with the police].

Kontra And what is the cooperation with the Interim Coordinating Commission like? Readers noted that certain proclamations of the commission were also signed by representatives of our region.

Konrad The Torun Regional Executive Commission is a part of a network that is led by the Interim Coordinating Commission. We are in constant touch with them. As a representative of the region I participate regularly in meetings. It is worthwhile stressing that Torun is one of only ten regions that have a permanent representative in the Interim Commission, even if one includes in that figure regional representatives signing with their own names. This is probably due to the appreciation of our work by the Interim Coordinating Commission. At the same time, we stay in touch and cooperate with the major regions throughout the country.

Kontra Over three years have passed since the imposition of martial law and the beginning of underground activities by Solidarity. Where do such activities lead?

Konrad I would prefer to use the expression conspiracy rather than underground activities--and it is not a question of choice. We have been forced into it. Our whole work is directed toward influencing the public mind, shaping public attitudes so that the people will reject the evil that surrounds them. We are preparing a communication network that would enable us, when conditions become more propitious, to take up overt

activities and at the same time bear constant witness to the fact that there is resistance to the attempts to enslave the people.

Kontra Meaning that we want to return to overt Solidarity activities. But this broad conspiracy also has its political aspects. Is the only aim the reactivation of Solidarity?

Konrad The dream of every Pole is an independent, democratic, and lawful Poland. But it would be irresponsible to undertake action in ignorance of outside factors. We believe that any extension of the sphere of social freedom, including the restoration of overt Solidarity, brings us nearer this dream and at the same time is an aim in itself.

Kontra Is there an alternative, overt movement as opposed to the clandestine one?

Konrad As I have said, the conspiratorial action by Solidarity is a necessary evil. Only when it cannot be done otherwise should clandestine action be undertaken. This is why all open activities aimed at targets similar to ours shall find our support. People working clandestinely, however, must choose between working in the open or in the underground.

Kontra What is your attitude, then, to the rather controversial problem of workers' self-management?

Konrad Initially, soon after December 13, all official approaches met with a negative reception, both on the part of underground Solidarity and the population as a whole; this was a fully justified attitude. Now, with the extension of the period of pseudowar, it is necessary to implement tactics adjusted to the changing circumstances. As a result, while maintaining a boycott of all sham actions and organizations such as PRON, or the neo-unions, I do believe that wherever involvement may produce real [benefits], such as in workers' self-management or city bloc self-management, such involvement should be encouraged, since this would help develop organizational and civic skills.

Kontra What is your view on the creation of underground political parties?

Konrad The fact that no political parties of any importance have appeared as yet seems to show that it is too early for them. If there should emerge political parties that enjoy the true support of important social groups, it would further help society to

identify itself, and--should [these parties] follow the basic principles set up by Solidarity--they would meet with our approval and support.

Kontra Yet doubts continue to be expressed about whether the present form of Solidarity has a chance of survival in the future, whether the labor movement should not be extended to become a social movement.

Konrad From its inception Solidarity was not just a labor union but also a social movement. Under the present circumstances the possibilities for improving the working and living conditions of employees are very limited. This is why the primary aims remain the defense of legality and free exchange of ideas and information.

Kontra Finally, I would like to ask you about the underground press. What is its role, in your opinion?

Konrad This is the most obvious and the most extensive way of reaching the union masses. It should ensure the circulation of true (this is most important!) information, extend knowledge, form attitudes, and develop a social and political consciousness. This is probably the most important part of our activities.

Kontra Do you think that the union press in a given region should represent only the opinions of the Regional Executive Committee (RKW)?

Konrad I do. It does not mean that it cannot criticize certain decisions of the RKW, it would also be welcome to make suggestions about different forms of activities and to offer new ideas. A line different from that of the RKW, however, should be represented by other underground publications, a fact that we would welcome and even promise to aid.

Kontra For the moment, we are only a political publication [as opposed to information bulletins] in the region--

Konrad --and this is why you should publish along the lines of a regional program.

Kontra Do I understand rightly that, although we are guaranteed the right to be our own conscience and the "conscience" of our readers, there are limits? And does this mean that you support censorship of the union press?

Konrad Certainly not! Actually, such a need has never arisen.

Kontra But if it should arise?

Konrad Then the Editor in Chief of *Kontra* would be changed and the former one could start his own independent publication.

Kontra Thank you for being so frank. Since it is bad manners to ask for compliments, how about the main reproaches you would make about *Kontra*?

Konrad Cerrtainly. First of all, there are not enough articles about the region. This is true both for the local activities of Solidarity and the various events in the life of the community. Secondly, there is too little original political commentary, and thereby an unclear "image" of the publication. However, the standards are improving and, compared with other regional publications, *Kontra* has nothing to be ashamed of.

Kontra A compliment after all. Thank you in the name of the editorial board--thank you also for the critical remarks. One more thing, don't you get the feeling that this interview sounds too optimistic? Is it justified?

Konrad If one gives the conspirators realistic tasks--such as the construction of an underground network and the circulation of independent information, and not the immediate overthrow of the present regime--then my evaluation of the situation in the Torun Region is that this optimism is justified.

Kontra Thank you for this interview, I trust it will not be our last one.

3. "An Interview with Kornel Morawiecki"

from *Czas*, no. 1, October 1984

Introduction: This is an interview with the chairman and founder of the underground Fighting Solidarity Organization formed in Wroclaw in June 1982, which today has branches in many Polish cities. *Czas* [Time], "a sociopolitical bimonthly," is published by Fighting Solidarity in Poznan. Kornel Morawiecki is a physicist by profession and has been active in the opposition since the late 1970s when he edited *Biuletyn Dolnoslaski* [Lower-Silesian Bulletin], one of the oldest underground publications still in circulation. Morawiecki has been in hiding since 13 December 1981. The interview below was conducted in early September 1984.

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Czas What was the origin of and aim in creating Fighting Solidarity?

Kornel Morawiecki It was like this: my friends and I who were publishing *Z Dnia na Dzień* [From Day to Day], the Regional Solidarity paper in Lower Silesia, became dissatisfied with the line represented by the union at that time, it was the spring and summer of 1982. It was a line that aimed at finding common ground with the authorities, and this at a time when the Primate's Social Council had published its theses, which, though very moderate and toned down, had met with no response whatsoever from the authorities. So we thought that the time for agreements was over.

The second reason, and at the same time a controversial point, that led to the founding of Fighting Solidarity was the problem of street demonstrations. The leader of the Solidarity Regional Strike Committee (RKS), Wladyslaw Frasyniuk, was at that time a strong opponent of all street actions, while I and a number of people close to me thought that Wroclaw had a social base for allowing such undertakings.

One could mention other, more detailed problems: such as the organization of the Regional Strike Committee and of the body representing the union on a national level, etc. But this is all history. What we want to talk about is Fighting Solidarity. Well, first of all, in May or June, *Solidarnosz Walczaca* [Fighting Solidarity] appeared, which a

month later, in its fourth issue, announced the creation of an organization called the Fighting Solidarity Agreement. This was connected with the formation of a Council and the creation of a formal organizational structure. This was the origin.

You also asked about the aims. Our target is to build a free, democratic, solidary republic. Further, our movement wants to go beyond the boundaries of certain typically Polish nationalistic attitudes. After all, we call ourselves not Fighting Poland but Fighting Solidarity. Solidarity is a value independent of what is going on in Poznan, or Wroclaw, or on the banks of the Vistula. It contains proposals for the entire communist system.

Czas Don't you think that it is all very vague and nebulous, indeed, so imprecise that there is a danger that the social base [of the organization] may not grow? Slogans such as yours are proposed by other organizations and oppositional groups, and by General Jaruzelski as well.

Kornel M I accept this reproof.

Czas It's not a reproof, it's a fact.

Kornel M When Jaruzelski says the same thing, then it is already a reproof, for it means that we speak the same language, use the same expressions. The fact that the subject is mentioned from so many quarters only shows that the base for the movement is very broad, perhaps too broad for the targets to appear realistic. [Juliusz] Mieroszewski [late political comentator of the Paris *Kultura*] once said: [one's] politics should first be right and only then realistic. And this is the truth I hold to. We do not have the power, the tanks, with which we could overcome the Red Army; but on the other hand, all those who think that extensive demands are unrealistic in Poland today fail to consider that this brief period of Solidarity has changed the psychology of the nation, and that people, especially young people, realize that certain things will not be easy to achieve. But aspirations are high. I do not count on the mass apeal of Fighting Solidarity, nor even on mass participation in opposition in general, but I do believe that there are enough dreams and that there are certain parts of the social psyche into which Fighting Solidarity fits.

Czas If coming to an understanding with the authorities is out of the question, what should we undertake now, to come closer to the final target we have set for ourselves?

Kornel M Various activities bring us closer to this target. These activities are conducted by Fighting Solidarity, by the union, by Walesa, and by Cardinal Glemp, too. There are various fields of action; I do not believe that there exists just one recipe for appropriate activity in Poland today, or in the communist bloc as a whole.

The very fact of the existence of an underground corrodes the whole system. And this fact must be appreciated. Obviously, despite all this, the whole underground will not overthrow Mister Jaruzelski--even less so Mister Chernenko. It won't happen like that! But the very knowledge that the underground has now lasted over three years in Poland, and that there are people crazy enough to stay in hiding for three years, and that they are active in various ways, and that the knowledge of it keeps spreading, not just among us [Poles], this is very important, indeed. I do not maintain that I have a recipe, but I tell you that one of the ways that must be followed is the way of a smooth organization. If we want to take ourselves seriously, and take our work seriously, particularly in the underground, then we must know what we are fighting for, or at least know the shape of the target we are aiming at. Then we must have a structure that implements this idea and, finally, we must be capable of publicizing the idea. One must combine these three elements.

Czas Do you think that this nebulous and distant target you've mentioned is sufficient for the general public, which is crushed under the weight of the problems of daily existence?

Kornel M I don't know if it's sufficient, as I have said; conspiracy is an undertaking for a select few, slightly crazy people. There are various ways of supporting our movement without taking an active part in conspiracy.

Czas Fighting Solidarity rejects the idea of seeking an understanding with the authorities. In this context, how do you evaluate the ties that developed between a communist party and the public in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968, and the August Agreements in Poland in 1980?

Kornel M We simply want to put our aims clearly, and this is why we reject the idea of an agreement [with the authorities]. I think that if one doesn't do that, there is a threat of ambiguity, as there was during the 16 months when Solidarity was a powerful organization. We believed much too simply that the communist powers would agree to a certain limitation of their prerogatives, their omnipotence, that we might be allowed to control them. If one aims too hard at a compromise, one ends up compromised.

In Hungary there was a regular uprising. Actually, also at the time of Solidarity people from the authorities changed sides. In my opinion, the turning point came with Bydgoszcz [where Solidarity leaders attending a meeting were beaten up by the police in March 1981]; it transpired then that Solidarity had no executive power, and the authorities realized that it was just a scarecrow and that Solidarity could easily be defeated. To my mind, self-limiting revolution ended on December 13 [1981]. The authorities could not agree to a true understanding with the people, they have to hang on as long as they can. August 1980 was a tactical withdrawal; and if Solidarity were allowed [to reemerge] now, it would be a similar concession.

Czas You made some critical remarks about the activities of the underground. What, in your opinion, are the reasons behind its inefficiency?

Kornel M One can make at least one critical statement about the activities of Solidarity after December 13, or rather the activities of its leaders: the entire organizational structure of the union was wasted. The idea of an underground society predominated. Actually, it predominated back in the summer of 1982. The whole regional structure was abandoned. Today, there is no Solidarity as a labor union on national scale. There is the Interim Coordinating Commission, true; but it lacks any executive power. At the other end of the scale there are local commissions in a number of large enterprises. But this is a loose structure, maintained along moral rather than organizational principles. I do believe that a mistake has been made here.

Czas But could this have been avoided?

Kornel M I think it could. Men such as Bujak and Frasnyniuk could have sent their men to places like Lublin or Nowa Sol and created a multilayer structure. This road was abandoned at once, and today it would very

difficult to rebuild Solidarity as a structure. The lack of smoothly functioning organizations is responsible for the weakness of the underground.

Czas Is the lack of organization not due, above all, to the fact that the activists on the lower and lowest level in many enterprises fell apart after December 13?

Kornel M This is why they fell apart: because organization was lacking, because, in a sense, those at the top did not really want them. It must be a two-way exchange, not just from the top down.

Czas Don't you think that the Interim Coordinating Commission made a mistake in this way, that it was actually incapable of outlining the overall union strategy? Is this not more a programmatic crisis rather than an organizational one?

Kornel M I think it is not, I think it is an organizational crisis. There might be different programs. The Interim Commission had the program of forcing concessions through strikes and demonstrations.

Czas This conversation is taking place after several important events--after the elections [to the People's Councils] on June 17, after the amnesty, and after August 31 [the anniversary of the founding of Solidarity]. Why did the government decide to proclaim an amnesty, and can the public feelings that came to light during the elections and on August 31 point to any prognoses?

Kornel M I think the government announced the amnesty to eliminate the underground from the game. The other aim was to improve the economic situation in Poland by obtaining new credits (in the West). The amnesty was supposed to show that, see here, we are not afraid, there is no serious threat, so there is nothing left for you but to join in. This was an attempt to pacify public feelings.

Czas Was it successful?

Kornel M I think it was. To a certain extent, amnesty played its part, it is enough to look at August 31. Obviously, the directives were somewhat ambiguous, there was no appeal from Walesa or from the Interim Coordinating Commission. A month earlier, Walesa spoke out against demonstrations, right before the date, he spoke in favor of them. It was rather confusing. But I think that August 31 showed that the amnesty had done, at least in part, what the

authorities were aiming at. The public is lost, somehow. Indeed, everyone would like to defeat the Reds, but there is a lack of faith. There is less motivation for further opposition when everybody has been let out [of jail]. What are we fighting for now?

The Communists have managed to persuade us that all undertakings, even ones as modest as Solidarity's activities, are unrealistic, and since this is so, we should give up.

Czas How do you evaluate the outcome of the elections?

Kornel M The boycott was limited. It is true that a large number did not vote, it is true that there is a large social base; but on the other hand, one does not know how to make use of such people. Still, Solidarity calculated that 15,000,000 did go to vote.

Czas So what can the underground, including Fighting Solidarity do to attract those 15,000,000, if not 21,000,000? After all, these are no Communists.

Kornel M Well, it is obvious that it will be tough to get them to join Fighting Solidarity.

Czas Whose political customers are they, though, the authorities' or ours? What criterion should we apply?

Kornel M The criterion of reality. There is no visible victory of the outstretched hand. Many people went to vote for the sake of peace and quiet, and, moreover, the authorities have privileges they can still grant, what can we offer?

Czas Don't you think that the independent movement (let us not enter into differences between various groupings here) seems unable to trace for the people the consecutive stages whereby the final aim, a democratic and independent Polish society, can be brought nearer?

Kornel M I think that the creation of an organizational network is one such stage. This is a different angle, though, from aiming at the creation of an underground society, although--in the final stage--such a society could emerge. I admit that this is a weakness. The basic thing is to capture minds: if we can produce good propaganda, if we put out a good press, and if we make our presence known, this will be a success.

The Communists want to persuade the people that nothing can be done, and this carries with it a threat of an uncontrollable explosion, a madness. On the other hand, there is the underground, there is Fighting Solidarity, and plain Solidarity; there are various regional strike committees; and there are times when the Church conducts negotiations and when Walesa has his say, while someone else is working at the base. There is no single way. This movement has many currents.

Czas In view of the experiences of the last August 31 [commemoration], and with many opinions coming from many areas that street demonstrations are an easy form of political activity, don't you think that we should reconstruct our attitude toward demonstrations?

Kornel M It is a means of peaceful struggle, one of the many, and I don't think that it should be given up, even if it does not come out quite right. I would even agree to give up demonstrations if anyone could offer something better in their place. But what else do we have as a means of peaceful struggle other than strikes, boycotts, and demonstrations?

Czas But don't you think that the cost of demonstrations is high? People suffer, they are beaten up, our money is spent on paying the financial costs.

Kornel M Look, everything results in costs. The cost of doing nothing is higher than the cost of doing something.

Czas Shouldn't the union then restrict the number of appeals for demonstrations, so as not to depreciate the value of this form of protest?

Kornel M I think we should restrict ourselves to two holidays: May Day and August 31. This is my opinion.

Czas Is the Church policy the right one?

Kornel M I believe the Church should never forget that if the authorities manage to disarm the public, then the Church will be exposed to the next attack. Of the three, Solidarity, the Church and the authorities, the Church has come out ahead, because it remains something with which the people identify themselves; still, I believe the Church is not always able to fulfill the expectations placed in it. And it is not an institution from which one should expect political activities. A situation in which all

social hopes are placed in the Church is not a good one, because the Church is an institution created for other aims. On the other hand, the Church is an element of enormous support for the population, whatever the Primate or some other member of the hierarchy might say from time to time.

Czas In your opinion, did the Church take advantage of all its opportunities?

Kornel M I believe the Church gave up on Solidarity a bit too soon, Solidarity as a social institution, not as a labor union. But is it just the Church, didn't millions of Poles withdraw their support?

Czas What role should Walesa play?

Kornel M Walesa does not really want, and probably cannot, take responsibility for everything. He takes partial responsibility. He maintains his moral leadership, he does not slip up, he is honest, only sometimes he sends some stupid letters to Jaruzelski.

Czas What opportunity do you see for legal activities?

Kornel M Personally, none. But that does not mean that all attempts should be abandoned. I doubt very much, for instance, that the Communists would agree at present to any form of union pluralism.

Czas What are present relations with the Regional Strike Committee (RKS)?

Kornel M Nowadays, our relations consist of exchange of letters. Not a working relationship, really. I know the chairman, Marek Muszynski, very well. He was a colleague of mine. We don't have a very warm relationship. This may to some extent be a natural outcome, when two organizations in the same area are competing with one another. Probably both sides made mistakes. The fact that we failed to agree on the matter of August 31 is certainly a bad thing.

Czas And what is the situation in factories? Is there a strict choice between cooperating with the RKS or with Fighting Solidarity?

Kornel M No, I wouldn't think that it is a strict one. I don't think people have any trouble choosing.

Czas How would you put the meaning of your organization in a few words?

Kornel M The movement should aim at social self-assurance, so that the public should not give way to "Czechoslovakization," a situation in which one loses faith that anything can be done and believes that one must give in. Organizations such as Fighting Solidarity might not be strong enough to threaten the Communists directly, but they should serve as symbols with which people can identify.

Czas Thank you for this interview.

4. "I Am a Technician of Socialism"

from *Most*, no. 2, 1985

Introduction: *This is an interview with an officer of the secret police that was published in a new periodical called Most [The Bridge]. The young man being interviewed tells us that he joined the secret police out of stupidity and stays in it because of cupidity and because others would always suspect him of being an informer.*

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Question How does it happen that a man becomes an employee of the secret police?

Answer I have the impression that efforts have been made for many years to turn Poland into a country in which it is difficult not to be a scoundrel. Contrary to the prevailing opinion, however, there are many reasons why one joins the secret police, not just the material advantages. A number of failures end up there, having lost out in other jobs or in their private life. It is here that they try to find their necessary ration of admiration. Many think that the institution is necessary, that such an institution has been active in every country since time immemorial. Many have come to the conclusion from their own experiences that the way to a career is open only to those who rule and those who ingratiate themselves with those who rule. I also think that in the case of this profession the way into the "firm" is through the family. Many join because Dad or Uncle or some other relative is in it, and he seems to live better than others do.

Question What psychological make-up does one need in order to work in this profession?

Answer This, again, is not a clear-cut matter. We are presented as degenerates and cold-blooded killers, as calculating and cynical. It is not necessarily cynicism that motivates us, but rather what I would call muddled thinking. This muddle creates a self-assurance that has no foundation: the conviction that one is making the right choices in life. There are also those who are susceptible to the orders of others, who like to work under orders, just as there are those who want to rule over others and give orders, who want to be important at any price. There are also devotees of the dictum of "a job well done," and there is little doubt that this firm works well, as few other do. These men are not just scoundrels and

drunks, they are also loving husbands and tender fathers who have their children christened in secrecy. Personal qualities have no chance of coming to light here, however. Consequently, there are some who feel isolated and look for escape in bad habits (alcohol, drugs) or in cheap showing off. I can observe among my colleagues an incredible degree of insensitivity, egocentrism, and a viewing of one's survival in day-to-day terms alone. The character of an employee of the secret service is shaped by the fact that his possibility of advancement is determined by a particularly perverse evaluation of his moral and political attitudes.

Question How did you get into the secret police?

Answer Through stupidity. Stupidity, mindlessness, and a lack of information--although stupidity is no excuse. I come from a Catholic family. Like many of my contemporaries, as a youth I was in love with the Beatles and looking only to the West. And I could not cope, somehow. I made enough money to pay for an occasional taxi and a packet of Marlboros. My work gave me no satisfaction and no prospects; furthermore, I lived in a dump with my family, my sisters, their husbands, and howling kids. It so happened that my girlfriend had family connections with the cops. Well, she wanted us to have money; she was raised like that at home. Money meant a lot to her, and she meant a lot to me. She began to encourage me--to put it mildly--to join the secret police. Initially, I didn't pay attention to her. But when I suffered my next blow of bad luck I began to think about it. Then I went along. I was received with the greatest courtesy: a smiling guy, functional elegance, and the full acceptance of me as a person. I finally felt I was somebody. And at that time I did not stop to think about the consequences.

Question How did you adapt?

Answer In the beginning I thought I could maintain my separate identity. I did not even want to join the party. It seems ridiculous looking back now. You know, it is like wanting to work in a bordello while keeping one's virtue intact! Anyway, they took care of me most meticulously. I was quickly made to realize that I not only spy on others, but that others spy on me. I was rather scared by this. For instance, I would be called in and asked why did my wife go to Church, was it really necessary, and so on. I was taught how to work, how to take down what I heard in ordinary, private conversations, and much more. I was worked over by psychologists and psychotherapists.

When I behaved well, the next day I would find an envelope with money on my desk--in addition to my regular pay; there was no wage list, no fuss. I got used to getting a bonus for each successful action. Finally, I began to have money, lots of money. It gave me a feeling of security, and this security helped me not to think why I was being paid this money. I did not have time to think, I had to spend it! I could afford nights on the town, to go to bars, and I could afford girls--and without any great risk, my wife got used to the fact that I was working odd hours. I also studied the bulletins I was handed each morning. Until the Pope's visit I believed every word I read in them. When I attended Pyjas's funeral [a student assassinated under suspicious circumstances] in my official capacity I had no scruples. I thought more about my self-importance than about what was truly going on.

Question Does this mean that the papal visit changed something?

Answer I think it did. Yes, for sure. I was dumbfounded. Well, it was like a psychological KO; I was invaded by doubts. When on duty during the ceremonies I realized that I was on the other side: us here and the masses there. For the first time I felt the contempt that the masses feel for us.

Question What could you tell us about the working rules in your firm?

Answer I would begin by saying that the system has ceased long ago to be an ideological problem and has become a technical one. Quite simply, we are the technicians of socialism. We fix it when something breaks down or starts leaking; we do the dirty work that the ideologists unload on us. The secret police are an organization that is mixed in its attitudes but consolidated in action. It is a fine-tuned system of dependencies and connections: a perfect bureaucracy made in Moscow. I think that not only I but many others feel that we are the cogs in the machinery. Nevertheless, we have been given, next to the material advantages, the feeling of impunity, because we realize that we are outside the law and can act within the country on different rules. There are the natives and then there's us! I know of many cases in which my colleagues, under different circumstances, would have landed in court. They did not, though; the matter was always covered up--at most they got a reprimand in the office. This treatment pays, for we respond to it by being totally subservient. After the killing of Father Popieluszko it was being said among us that Milewski's people had done this. Some even condemned

the crime privately. But I know that all of us, well, almost all, would have done it if ordered to do so. This is no place for discussion. This is a place where anyone with a trace of sensitivity is happy if he is able to carry out the lesser of two evils. Someone said that gangsterism is the highest stage of socialism. This is true to date. This institution is ruled very precisely using the law of the Mafia, and fear is infectious. Fear of failing to do the job or of being suspected of insufficient zeal is stronger than any scruples or conscience.

Question So why don't you change your job, your firm?

Answer Don't be naive! I have got myself into a mess from which there is no way out. Suppose that I did take on a normal job, all the time and everywhere I went I would be treated as an informer. Who would believe me when I said that I had no contacts with the firm? And, in fact, would I have any contacts any more? No, not then.

Question How do our authorities look from your worm's eye view?

Answer I can tell you nothing very revealing. I read somewhere, and this fits the picture, that "cheats call for honesty, prostitutes for virginity, miscreants for piety, and layabouts write treatises on working like ants."

Question Why did you accept to talk with me?

Answer You would not believe me if I told you that my conscience moved me. So I'll tell you that I did it out of an instinct for self-preservation and the like. Anyway, a true cop never says why he does something. In this way he does not realize that he himself does not know.

Question How much do you make?

Answer How much do you make as an engineer?

Question 16,000 zloty.

Question I make more, much, much more.